

## Project Update: February 2018

### The Project Put Emphasis on the Following Components:-

- ❖ Telkoi – Pallahara elephant corridor and habitat protection.
- ❖ Social and behavioural change communication on conservation and protection of elephants and mitigation of human-elephant conflicts.
- ❖ Orientation, refresher and hands on training to tribal community to function as trackers.
- ❖ Change in cropping pattern with non-lure crop variety to reduce conflicts.
- ❖ Sustainable management of forest, reserves and water bodies through regeneration, conservation and judicious use and management practices.

### Backdrop and Context

The goal of the project is to support conservation of elephant, their habitats/ associated Telkoi-Pallahara biological corridor adopting public-private and community partnership and to improve livelihoods of the identified HEC hotspots villagers with non-lure crop promotion. The project's innovative approach and strategies to mitigate human–elephant conflicts relies on promoting environmental, social and economic development simultaneously, which will strengthen tribal/forest dependent community's conservation initiatives and capabilities for management of habitat. Project outcomes promote community's skills to deal with human-elephant conflicts and in turn they will mobilise community as strong advocates for elephant conservation and save them from extinction.



Paribartan team has continued elephant conservation and corridor management activities since 2009. Paribartan team dedicated to protecting endangered species, protect their habitats, and defending biodiversity with participation of tribal /forest dependant community. The Paribartan team fosters an entrepreneurial spirit in conservation and partners with community-based tribal women group, conservationists and forest administration to develop solutions especially to mitigate human-elephant conflict. Eighty per cent of India's elephant population is in eastern region of India and elephants in Odisha constitute 74% of the total elephant of the eastern region of India. The elephant population in Odisha today faces serious conservation challenges which could be broadly classified into elephant related issues and habitat related issues. Between the year 2000 and 2016, Odisha lost 887 elephants, while Odisha now with 1,954 remaining elephants. Elephants are fighting

a tough battle to survive in the Telkoi-Pallahara elephant corridor, if we do not help them fast, they could become extinct in less than a decade or two. Internalising that, the applicant has instrumental in mobilising tribal community, forest administration and local CBOs to chalk out long range strategic plan emphasising public, private, community partnership approach for conservation of elephants and their habitat.

### **Summarised Activities Undertaken Their Results**

#### Refresher Training to Existing 120 Trackers

During the May and June 2017, 120 trackers were refreshed with training inputs on various approaches and techniques to deal with the conflict situations, on early warning systems, the use of lights and sirens to drive back elephant herds and also to inform the Forest Department and villagers regarding the presence of elephant herd. The duration of the training programme was of 4 days.

The trackers delivered services:

- ❖ Regular awareness activities and information to villagers and forest department on movements of elephant herds.
- ❖ Supporting community based patrolling squad for monitoring of elephant herd movement.
- ❖ Lead community based guarding groups, equip young people with knowledge and skills on elephant deterrents such as fireworks, noise makers, chilli paste, wild ant and heightened vigilance to deter all visiting wild elephants before they were able to damage crops.
- ❖ Trackers will be entrusted with skills on value addition to non-lure crops and facilitate opportunities for marketing of the produces.

### **Revival of Telkoi-Pallahara Elephant Corridor Health with Plantation of Bamboo and Elephant Friendly Fruits Bearing Plants**

To optimise the output, the tribal community was capacitated to sustain their participation for protection, regeneration and conservation of Telkoi-Pallahara elephant corridor, plantation activities undertaken during rainy season (July to September 2017). The identified fallow land vegetated with bamboo and fruit-bearing plants which will facilitate habitat restoration and long term solution to meet the food facility/chain of the elephants.

### **Village Level Sensitization Meeting**

Trained trackers were entrusted with the responsibility to organise regular village level meetings in close coordination with the trained farmers and Paribartan team. 456 attended village meetings organized in 60 villages. During village level meetings, the womens' groups were encouraged to draw resource map of elephant corridor/sub-corridor and transfer related information to their fellow members, so that they can assess the health of that corridor regularly and community members will monitor the corridor. It is observed that community initiated action for protection, conservation and management of elephant corridor/sub corridors. Villagers were also sensitised regarding the urgency of patrolling team and how it is supporting the illegal poaching of wild life especially the bull elephant.



### **Enforcement cum Anti-Poaching Operation**

Regular enforcement cum anti poaching operation was undertaken at nine identified poaching hotspots. Local young individuals were imparted with the skills for ground patrols, appropriate equipment, human elephant conflict mitigation tools, legal information, and record keeping and on monitoring of elephant movement. The trackers along with the enforcement cum anti-poaching team regularly monitoring the high tension and extra high tension eclectic transmission line passes inside the corridor and sub corridor and in case of discrepancies/ lowering down of electric wire immediately inform the forest department and the appropriate authority to avoid electrocution.

### **Refresher cum Field Training at Demonstration Sites to Farmers on Farming and Management of Non Lure Crop**

Under this activity 234 farmers were trained on farming and management of non-lure crop. It is recorded that the farmers of the identified hotspot villages (42 villages) totally changed their cropping pattern and motivating their fellow community members to adopt the same practices. It is observed the frequency of crop raiding is reduced and Paribartan team will prepared a checklist which will be administered to assess the impact of the adopted approach during April 2018 and the same will be shared with Rufford Foundation.



It is one of the important outcomes that women participation in non-lure crop is widely visible and we are hopeful it will reduce the gender disparity and enhance the economic status of women furthering their dignity.

### **Participation in Rufford India Conference – Fostering Grass-Roots Conservation in India- A Rufford Initiative 2017 at Sawai-Madhopur Rajasthan**

Rufford India Conference, Fostering Grass-roots Conservation in India - A Rufford Initiative, 2017

Venue: Sawai Madhopur, Rajastha

Mr Subhransu Bhusan Swain, the project lead got the opportunity to participate in the conference that was held from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> April 2017 at Madhopur Rajasthan. It was indeed a good platform to share the initiative of Paribartan to reduce human-elephant conflict also to share the public-private and community partnership approach and how it is helping to manage the natural habitat and facilitate the process of community participation in management of elephant corridor and the water resources. A short 8 minute video presentation was done by Mr Swain and 50 copies of the same distributed among the participants.

The presentation got wide appreciation and bring visibility of Paribartan initiated activities with funding support of Rufford Foundation, UK the applicant and the project team also shared various adopted methods of human-elephant mitigation approaches and the participatory community centred conservation of elephant and their habitat/Telkoi-Pallahara elephant corridor initiatives during local/state and national level work shop seminar and interfaces.

### **NEWS ON MAN - ELEPHANT CONFLICTS - November 28, 2017**

<http://www.odishabytes.com/man-injured-elephant-attack/>

Man Injured in Elephant Attack by OB Bureau

Angul: A human was injured after being attacked by a wild elephant at Jhiliripali village under Dimaria panchayat in Angul district on Tuesday morning. The victim was identified as Meenaketan Sahu. According to reports, Sahu had gone out of his house to a nearby pond to answer nature's call when he came across the lone elephant that strayed into the human settlement. Though he tried to flee the area, the animal chased and attacked him with its trunk and fled the area. Hearing his cries, some locals rushed to the spot and admitted him to a local hospital for treatment.

<http://pragativadi.com/odisha-youth-trampled-death-elephant-taking-selfie/> **By Pragativadi News Service- December 11, 2017**

Odisha youth trampled to death by elephant while taking selfie

Angul: A youth in Odisha's Angul was trampled to death by a wild tusker in Nuapada forest under Khamar Forest Range while trying to take a selfie with the animal today.

The deceased identified as Jayakrushna Nayak of Nimidibeda village under Pallahara village in the district approached the loan animal near Madhapala Temple in Nuapada village with an intent to click a selfie. He took the tusker lightly which had strayed out from a herd and entered into the village as it looked sick and was moving at a slower pace. However, the wild tusker attacked Jayakrushna while he was trying to click the selfie. He was rushed to the Khamar CHC by the locals immediately in a critical condition where he breathed his last while undergoing treatment.

<http://english.samajalive.in/post.php?ref=9209&post=elephant-kills-woman-in-angul>  
December 16, 2017

**Elephant Kills Woman in Angul...**Published On: Dec 16, 2017 01:18 PM IST |  21  
**Angul:**

A wild tusker gored to death a 32-year-old woman during wee hours today in a forest-side village of Odisha's Angul district.

The incident occurred in Patamura village under Sankhamura gram panchayat under Khamara forest range under Pallahara block of the district. The victim Ujwalla Behera was taking bath in a pond on the backyard of her house when the wild tusker came from nowhere and trampled her to death, forest officials said.

The village where tragic death was reported is close to elephants' habitation corridor. The animals stray into the village to devour the crop field, which leads to frequent outbreak of man-elephant conflict.

The next kin of the bereaved family is being covered Rs 4 lakh ex-gratia financial aid as per rule prescribed for human death due to attack protected animals, said Khamara Forest Range Officer, Sukesh Kumar Satrushalya.

This is the second human death in the village since past 72 hours, he said adding that drive is on to chase the tusker back to its habitation corridors in Khamara forest.

