

Project Update: December 2009

Between September and December 2009, fieldwork has been carried out in the Valparai plateau. Following habitats have been studied: forest fragments, coffee plantations and tea plantations with 6, 8, and 10 replicate line/belt transects in each of the habitats, respectively for direct and indirect sign surveys of prey species and large carnivore scat collection with double repeats over the sampling period.

During this time 59 large carnivore scats have been analysed for predator diet. Based on the analysis of these scats carnivore diet in the Valparai region, a landscape with commercial plantations and surviving forest fragments, was found to consist mostly of wild prey species in terms of relative numbers (98.64%) as well as relative biomass (93.94%). Wild ungulates were found to be important in large carnivore diet both in terms of relative numbers (86.53%) and relative biomass (84.72%). Domestic prey contributes relatively less to the carnivore diet in this region.

A questionnaire has been developed for surveying people's livelihood dependencies, their losses, and attitudes towards wildlife. It has been translated into Tamil, the local language.



