

CHAPTER V

AUDIT REPORTS ON BIODIVERSITY

Irregular retention of CAMPA funds in the Consolidated Fund of Gujarat and resultant loss of interest

Failure to credit the amounts realised towards Net Present Value of forest land in fixed deposits resulted in irregular retention of CAMPA funds of Rs 39.79 crore in the Consolidated Fund of the Gujarat for periods ranging 30 months to 36 months and loss of interest of Rs 3.03 crore.

The Hon'ble Supreme Court in their order (October 2002) directed the Government of India (GOI) to create a Compensatory Afforestation Fund (CAF) in which all moneys received from the user agencies towards all compensatory afforestation dues was to be deposited. Since the matter of constitution of CAF was under deliberation, GOI directed (March 2004) all the State Governments to keep all these moneys in fixed deposits (FDs) with any nationalised bank in the name of the concerned Divisional Forest Officer.

Though GOI created (April 2004) Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) under the provisions of Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, it was not operational for a long time due to inability of GOI to take formal decision to operationalise CAMPA. GOI, therefore, constituted (May 2006) an *ad-hoc* CAMPA and directed State Governments to remit the moneys to the said CAMPA account.

Scrutiny of records (January 2006) of Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF) and information collected (August 2006) from them revealed that an amount of Rs 39.79 crore realised (April 2004 to May 2006) by various Conservators of Forests (CFs) towards net present value (NPV) of forest land were credited into the Consolidated Fund of the State Government; this resulted in loss of interest of Rs 3.03 crore. Of the amount credited into Consolidated Fund of the State, Government remitted (August 2006) Rs 36.87 crore to the CAMPA account and balance amount of Rs 2.92 crore were not credited to the CAMPA fund, but retained in the Consolidated Fund (March 2007).

Thus, failure to credit the amounts realised towards NPV of forest land in the FDs resulted in irregular retention of CAMPA funds of Rs 39.79 crore with the Consolidated Fund of the Government of Gujarat for periods ranging 30 months to 36 months (March 2007) and resultant loss of interest of Rs 3.03 crore to the CAMPA Fund.

When reported, Government stated (May 2007) that prime concern of a welfare State is to sagaciously utilise State funds for welfare activities. The reply of the Government is not

tenable as State Government is under obligation to carry out the orders of the Supreme Court and GOI.

Performance audit of Implementation of Forest Conservation Act, 1980 Forest Department, Madhya Pradesh

Highlights

Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 was enacted with the objective of maintaining a sustainable balance between the development needs of the country and the conservation of natural environment. As per the provisions of the Act, prior permission of the Government of India was essential for diversion of forest lands for non forest purposes. While approving a proposal under the Act, the Central Government stipulates mandatory compensatory conservation measures such as compensatory afforestation, catchment area treatment etc., the cost of which was borne by the user agencies. Performance Audit of the implementation of the Act in Madhya Pradesh revealed significant cases of violation of the Act and absence of execution of compensatory conservation measures in most of the cases where forest land had been diverted for non-forest purposes. As a result, objectives of the Act largely remain unachieved in the State. Salient points noticed during performance audit are as follows:

In 43 cases, 1515.997 hectare forest land was illegally diverted without proper permission of the Government of India during the last 10 years. (Paragraph 3.2.5.1)

Compensatory Afforestation (CA) was not carried out in 70 per cent of the projects where forest land was diverted for non-forest purposes during the last 10 years. Only 6 per cent of the funds received from user agencies on account of CA were utilised during this period. (Paragraph 3.2.6.2)

53 out of 56 CA plantations raised on Jhabua 'Land Bank' during the period 1997 to 2000 failed due to non allotment of funds by the government for maintenance and protection of plants, resulting in wasteful expenditure of Rs.2.04 crore. (Paragraph 3.2.6.4)

Department failed to recover Net Present Value amounting to Rs.350.99 crore from nine user agencies in 18 projects. (Paragraph 3.2.7.1)

Catchment area treatment (CAT) was not carried out in six of the eight projects where it was stipulated by the GOI as a condition for diversion of forest land. Funds of Rs.30.51 crore on account of cost of catchment area treatment were not/short realised from the user agencies. Only 2.2 per cent of the total funds required for CAT had been spent. (Paragraph 3.2.8)

Introduction

The objective of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, referred to as Act hereafter, is to regulate the indiscriminate diversion of forest land for non-forest uses and to maintain a logical balance between the developmental needs of the country and the conservation of natural heritage. Under the provisions of this Act, prior approval of the Government of India (GOI) is essential for diversion of forest lands for non-forest purposes. While approving a proposal, the Central Government stipulates certain conditions to reduce the environmental damage on account of forest loss. These conditions include mandatory carrying out of compensatory afforestation (CA) and other project specific conservation measures such as catchment area treatment in water resources projects, creation of safety zone, reclamation of opened areas in mining projects and strip plantation in case of highway projects etc. The cost of conservation measures is borne by the user agency. Further, as per directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, the GOI has also stipulated for realization of net present value of the diverted forest land from the user agencies. The proposals for diversion of forest land for non-forest use are processed by the Forest Department. It is the responsibility of the Forest Department to ensure that no forest land is diverted without the permission of the GOI and conditions of the GOI and State Government, if any, for diversion of the forest land are complied to.

Organisational set up

The Department of Forests is headed by the Principal Secretary (Forests) at the Government level. Chief Conservator of Forests (Land Management) in the office of the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF) has been designated as the Nodal Officer, who deals with the cases of diversion of forest land for non-forest use in the State. He is assisted by Conservators of Forests and 60 Divisional Forest Officers (Territorial/General) at the field level.

Audit objectives

Objectives of the performance audit were to assess whether: □ provisions of the Act were followed by the State Government in case of diversion of forest land for non-forest purpose; conditions imposed by the GOI and the State Government for diversion of forest land were adhered to; mandatory conservation measures such as compensatory afforestation, catchment area treatment etc. were carried out effectively and efficiently; □ financial management was effective; and □ system of monitoring and evaluation was in place and effective.

Audit scope and criteria

The scope of performance audit included test check of records in the Nodal office and 17 forest divisions. Selection of divisions was done after discussion with the State Government during Entry Conference (April, 2007). Divisions were selected to represent all the major geographical areas of the State and various types of projects such as irrigation,

mining, power, roads etc. for which forest land were diverted. Records pertaining to the period from 1997-98 to 2006-07 were examined in detail. The performance audit was conducted by this office during April to July, 2007. Exit conference was held in November 2007 and comments of State Government have been incorporated accordingly.

Performance of the forest department was evaluated against the provisions of the Act, rules and guidelines framed by the Central Government under the Act, conditions stipulated by the Central and the State Government while granting approval for diversion of forest land and the instructions issued by the forest department to territorial forest divisions.

Audit findings

3.2.5 Cases of violations of the Act

3.2.5.1 Utilization of forest land for non-forest purposes without obtaining prior approval from the Central Government

The Act stipulates that no forest land should be utilized for non-forest purpose without prior approval of the Government of India. Scrutiny of the records of eight forest divisions revealed illegal diversion of 1507.391 hectare forest land in 41 cases by eleven user agencies.

The Act stipulates that no forest land should be utilized for non-forest purpose without prior approval from the Government of India. This was not obtained in these cases. Scrutiny of records in Sehore and Satna territorial divisions revealed illegal diversion of 8.606 hectare forest land by two user agencies. Approved by the Central Government in excess of the area

As per the provisions of the Act, cases of violation of the Act were required to be reported by the State Government to the Central Government so that penal action under section 3-A and 3-B of the Act could be initiated. It was noticed during audit that neither 43 cases of violation of the Act were brought to the notice of the Central Government nor any penal action was initiated in any of the cases.

The State Government stated that the cases were under scrutiny and would be reported to the Government of India after establishing violation of the Act. However, the fact remains that not a single case was reported to the Government of India despite lapse of one year to eight years since violation of the Act. Further, section 468 of Criminal Procedure Code, 1973 bars Courts to take cognizance of an offence after lapse of the period of limitation. Period of limitation is one year for offences under the Act, as the offence is punishable with imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year.

3.2.6 Compensatory Afforestation: Non carrying out and failure of compensatory afforestation plantations and other issues

In order to mitigate the adverse effects of diversion of green forest lands the Central Government, while granting approval under the Act, stipulated to carry out the compensatory afforestation (CA) over equivalent area of non-forest land or double the

degraded forest land. The cost of such CA was to be borne by the user agency.

3.2.6.1 Scrutiny of records in the Nodal office revealed the following status of compensatory afforestation since the implementation of the Act in 1980.

Total number of projects since 1980	Total forest land diverted since 1980 (in hectare)	Area on which CA was stipulated (in hectare)	Number of projects where CA has not been done at all	Stipulated area where CA has not been done at all (in hectare)	Funds made available by the user agencies (Rupees in crore)	Funds utilized for CA till June, 2006 (Rupees in crore)
734	51,018	73,213	289	13,441	109.77	27.17

75 per cent of the CA funds remained unutilized.

Only 25 per cent funds had been utilized for compensatory afforestation out of Rs.109.77 crore made available by user agencies since implementation of the Act in 1980. Also, CA has not been carried out at all in 289 projects (39 per cent) and 13,441 hectare (18 per cent) of the stipulated land. In other words, there has been no compensatory conservation effort against the diversion of 9,853 hectare of forest land to 289 projects for non-forest use.

3.2.6.2 A detailed scrutiny of the records of 17 forest territorial divisions was done by audit where forest land was diverted for non-forest use during the last ten years i.e. 1997-98 to 2006-07. The results are as below :

Total number of projects where forest land was diverted between 1997-98 and 2006-07	Total forest land diverted (in hectare)	Area on which CA was stipulated (in hectare)	Number of projects where CA has not been done at all	Stipulated area where CA has not been done at all (in hectare)	Funds made available by the user agencies (in crore)	Funds utilized for CA as on 31.03.07 (in crore)
96	8915.214	7060.979 ⁶	67	5340.197	38.37	2.31

The above table shows that only Rs.2.31 crore (six per cent) were utilized for CA out of Rs.38.37 crore made available by user agencies during the last ten years. Also, CA has not been carried out at all in 67 cases (70 per cent) and 5340.197 hectare (76 per cent) of the stipulated land.

The DFOs stated that CA could not be carried out due to non-allotment of funds by the Government in 64 cases and non-transfer of non-forest land by the user agency in one case. It was, however, noticed during audit that the divisions also did not pursue for allotment of funds from the Government. In the remaining two cases, it was noticed that CA was not carried out despite availability of funds with the divisions.

Further, 29 compensatory afforestations that were carried out during the review period were evaluated between August 2004 and April 2007 by the forest divisions. These plantations had failed as the survival ratio of plants ranged from nil to 10 *per cent*. Thus Rs.15.68 lakh spent on these plantations were rendered wasteful. Main reasons for failure of these plantations were improper protection and maintenance of plants, and selection of unsuitable land for plantation by the forest divisions. Responsibility for failure of these plantations was not fixed in any of these cases by the Forest Department.

3.2.6.3 Compensatory afforestations are also evaluated by the regional office of Chief Conservator of Forests (Central), Ministry of Environment and Forests, GOI, Bhopal. Scrutiny of 67 inspection reports made available to audit revealed that CA was not carried out in 34 cases (51 *per cent*) due to non-allotment of funds by the Government in 25 cases, non-depositing of funds by user agencies in five cases, non-availability of non-forest land in two cases and non-suitability of land for CA in the remaining two cases. Out of the 33 cases where CA was carried out, had failed resulting in wasteful expenditure of Rs.8.82 lakh. In seven of these failed plantations raised in the year 2000 survival rate of plants was zero. Reason for failure was non-allotment of funds by the Government for maintenance of plants.

3.2.6.4 Scrutiny of records of Jhabua territorial division revealed (May 2007) that 56 plantations were raised in 2608.018 hectare of Land Bank during the period from 1997 to 2000 at a cost of Rs.2.23 crore. DFO, Jhabua was requested for evaluation of these plantations in March 2007. Assessment of these plantations by the forest department personnel between March and May 2007 revealed low survival of plants (zero to 20 *per cent*) in 53 plantations resulting in wasteful expenditure of Rs.2.04 crore.

The DFO Jhabua stated that the main reason for failure of these plantations was non-allotment of funds for maintenance and protection of plants by the State Government. It was, however, noticed during audit that the division also did not pursue for allotment of funds from the Government. The Forest Department failed to monitor these plantations and accountability/ responsibility for failure of these plantations was not fixed in any of these cases which reflected the indifferent attitude of the department.

In six similar cases in Harda Division (May 2005), compensatory afforestation plantations had failed. These plantations were raised by Narmada Valley Development Authority (NVDA) during 1997-98 and were assessed in the year 2002. As the survival ratio of plants was six to 17 *per cent*, the expenditure of Rs.40.89 lakh proved wasteful.

The Government while accepting the audit observation assured that responsibility would be

fixed for failure of plantations.

3.2.6.5 Non/short realization of charges for compensatory afforestation

The departmental instructions (February 2004) for preparation of project report for compensatory afforestation, prescribe that provision for monitoring and evaluation charges should be made at the rate of 20 *per cent* per hectare of the estimated cost of plantation.

Test check of the records relating to diversion of forest land for non-forest use in 12 forest divisions revealed that requisite provision for monitoring and evaluation charges at the prescribed rate was not made in 34 compensatory afforestation project reports. This resulted in non/short-realization of Rs.3.90 crore from 12 user agencies .

The DFOs stated that action would be taken after obtaining guidance from the higher authorities. Reply of the DFOs was not tenable in view of clear departmental instructions (February 2004).

Non-forest land not transferred to the forest department for carrying out CA

Similarly, requisite provision for works relating to entry point activities and human resource development at the rate of and three *per cent*, respectively, was not made in 46 project reports prepared by forest division despite departmental instructions for the same in February 2002. This resulted in short/nonrealization of Rs.3.17 crore.

The Government while accepting the audit observation assured that the Nodal Officer would issue instructions to the forest divisions for recovery of the above mentioned charges from the user agencies.

3.2.6.6. Non-forest land not transferred for CA and not notified as Reserve/ Protected Forest

As per guidelines issued under the Act by the GOI, equivalent non-forest land (NFL) identified for the purpose of CA was to be transferred to the ownership of the State Forest Department and declared as reserved/protected forest under the Indian Forest Act, 1927 so that the plantation raised could be maintained permanently. The transfer of NFL was to be made prior to the commencement of the project scrutiny of the records of 13 forest divisions revealed the following status of transfer and subsequent notification of the non-forest land that was to be made available for CA since the implementation of the Act.

Total projects where NFL was to be made available	Total NFL that was to be made available (hectare)	Number of projects where NFL not transferred	NFL not yet transferred (hectare)	NFL transferred (hectare)	NFL not declared as Reserve Protected forest (hectare)
49	4,859	8	2,994	1,865	1,141

About 62 *per cent* of the total NFL identified for carrying out CA had not been transferred by the user agencies despite diversion of forest land for non-forest use. In eight projects where NFL of 2,994 hectare had not been transferred by user agencies, forest land was diverted during the period 1982 to 1996. Forest Department failed to take any effective steps to obtain non-forest land from the user agencies. Also, 61 *per cent* of the NFL transferred to the forest department by user agencies had not been declared Reserve/ Protected forest by the forest department.

The DFOs stated that efforts were being made to obtain and notify the non-forest land. The reply is not tenable in view of guidelines issued by the Ministry of Environment and Forests and the delay of 11 to 24 years in transfer of land and one to 17 years in getting the transferred land notified as reserve/ protected forest was not justified. The State Government stated that the cases would be examined to assess possibility of carrying out CA on double the degraded forest land instead of equivalent non-forest land in such cases, where NFL had not been transferred to forest department for many years.

3.2.6.7 Deviation in working circle for compensatory afforestation

Departmental instructions (February 2002) require that compensatory afforestation should be done only for Rehabilitation of Degraded Forest (RDF), Rehabilitation of Degraded Bamboo Forest (RDBF) and Plantation working circles as the density of forests in these working circles is less than 0.4. If forest divisions do not have any of these working circles, CA should be carried out in another forest division having these working circles.

Scrutiny of records of Indore and Badwah forest division revealed (April 2007) that five plantations were carried out over 71.994 hectare at a cost of Rs.12.30 lakh in Improvement Working Circle (IWC). The DFO Indore stated that CA was done in IWC due to non-availability of RDF working circle in the division. DFO, Badwah and Shivpuri stated that the proposed area for CA was equivalent to RDF areas. The reply is not tenable in view of departmental instructions.

3.2.6.8 CA project of Omkareshwar project not revised

As per GOI guidelines and departmental instructions (December 2001 and February 2002), project report for compensatory afforestation should be site-specific.

Scrutiny of the records of Nodal Office revealed (July 2007) that the GOI granted in-principle/formal approval (October 1993/August 2004) for diversion of 5,829.85 ha forest land to Omkareshwar Project subject to condition of carrying out of CA over 11,660 ha degraded forest land. The action plan for CA was prepared in the year 1991 at a cost of Rs.21.98 crore (Rs.18,851 per ha.) whereas the work of CA was started by Narmada Valley Development Authority (NVDA) in the year 2002-03 (in Khandwa and Badwah). It was noticed during audit that site-specific project was not prepared before carrying out CA taking into account the cost escalation during the last 12 years.

Further, as per scrutiny of 23 project reports of Badwah and Khandwa prepared during 2002-04, the average cost of CA comes out to Rs.1.18 lakh per ha. Accordingly, CA project of Omkareshwar needs revision by taking into account the cost escalation.

3.2.7 Non/short realisation of Net Present Value and Pratyasha Mulya

3.2.7.1 Non/short-realization of Net Present Value (NPV) of diverted forest land

As per instructions of the Government of India, Ministry of Environment and Forests (September 2003), NPV of the diverted forest land shall be charged from the user agency in all those projects which were granted in principle approval after 30 October 2002. The underlying principle for recovery of NPV is that the plantations raised under the CA scheme can never adequately compensate for the loss of natural forests as the plantations require more time to mature and even then these plantations are poor substitute to natural forests. Further in compliance of the orders of Hon'ble Supreme Court (September, 2006), the Ministry instructed (October 2006) that NPV should be charged in those cases also where formal approval was granted after 30 October 2002 irrespective of the date of in-principle approval by the GOI.

Scrutiny of records of nine forest divisions revealed that NPV amounting to Rs.350.99 crore was not short in 18 projects recovered from nine users/user agencies.

The Government stated that the demand for recovery of Rs.350.99 crore had been raised from the user agencies at the instance of audit. An amount of Rs.11.21 lakh was recovered by DFO Dewas at the instance of audit.

3.2.7.2 Non-realization of "Pratyasha Mulya"

The Government of Madhya Pradesh (GOMP), Forest Department prescribed (April 2000) realization of "*pratyasha mulya*" from user agencies in lieu of diversion of forest land for non-forest use under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. The rates were prescribed between Rs.5.80 lakh and Rs.9.20 lakh per hectare depending on site quality and density of the diverted forest land.

Test check of records relating to diversion of forest land for non-forest use in eight forests divisions revealed that 1330.539 hectare of forest land was diverted to four user agencies for non-forest use between July 2000 and September 2002 but "*Pratyasha mulya*" of Rs. 78.14 crore was not realized from the user agencies resulting in loss of revenue to the Government. Government replied that action for recovery of *Pratyasha Mulya* would be taken in cases where forest land was handed over to the user agencies between April 2000 and October 2002.

3.2.8 Catchment Area treatment

Catchment area treatment is one of the important conditions imposed by Government of India, while granting permission under the Act for diversion of forest land for medium and

major irrigation projects and hydro-electric projects of 10 MW and above capacity. It involves treatment of erosion prone areas in the catchment area of a water resources project through engineering and biological works and is essential for preventing siltation of reservoirs and maintaining environmental balances preventing siltation of reservoirs and maintaining environmental balances.

Scrutiny of records of Vidisha, Shivpuri, Umaria, Satna, Indore and North Seoni forest divisions revealed the following status of catchment area treatment in water resources projects for which forest land had been diverted under the Act.

s 1 . N o	Name of the division	Name of the project	Diverted forest land area (ha.)	Final sanction by GOI	Amount to be deposited by user agency (Rupees in lakh)	Amount deposited by user agency (Rupees in lakh)	Expenditure incurred till 31 March 2007
1	2.	3.	4.	5.	6	7	8
1.	Vidisha	Sanjay Sagar (Wah)	304	31 October 2005	816.20	Nil	Nil
2.	Umaria	Van Sagar Project	293	10 July 1989	3.70	Nil	Nil
3.	Shivpuri	Madhar Tank	180	15 Septemb	18.00	Nil	Nil
4.	Shivpuri	Mohini Sagar Dam Phase-II	3106	05 Decemb er	5070.19	2922.00	Nil
5.	North Seoni	Upper Van Ganga	923	14 June 2002	-24	Nil	Nil
6.	Indore	Katiajhiria Tank	11	31 August 2002	2.50	2.50	Nil
7.	Satna	Watershed under Van	2550	10 July 1989	217.00	151.58	109.66
8.	Vidisha	Rajeev Sagar (Maksudanga	129	20 April 1993	61.52	61.52	28.20
	Total	8	7496		6189.11	3137.60	137.86 (2.2%)

Audit observed that catchment area treatment was not carried out at all in six of the eight projects inspite of the GOI's condition for diversion of forest land. Reasons for non-carrying out catchment area treatment in these six projects were non-recovery of funds from the user agencies (four projects) and failure to spend the funds recovered from the user agencies (two projects) by the State Government.

As a result, only 2.2 *per cent* of the total funds required for catchment area treatment were spent while forest land of 7,496 hectare has been transferred for non-forest use two to 18

years ago.

The DFO Vidisha and Satna stated that necessary action was being taken to collect the money and complete the work. The State Government replied that the cases of non-carrying out of catchment area treatment would be examined in detail and reasons would be communicated to audit.

Status of Compliance on other conditions

3.2.9.1 Safety zones not created around the mining area

As per guidelines issued by the GOI (October 1992) under the Act, safety zones were to be created around the forest areas diverted for mining operations. Further, project authorities were required to deposit funds with the forest department for the protection and regeneration of such safety zone areas and bear the cost of afforestation over one and half times the safety zone area in degraded forest elsewhere.

Scrutiny of the records of Jhabua, Vidisha and North Betul divisions revealed that safety zones were not created in seven mining projects involving diversion of 504.739 hectare of forest land. In a case of Jhabua Division, provision for Rs.14.97 lakh was made for safety zone, but funds were not demanded from the user agency Madhya Pradesh State Mining Corporation Ltd., Meghnagar. In six mining cases of Vidisha and North Betul, no provision for safety zone was made by the Forest Department, in contravention of the guidelines, while sending proposals to the Central Government.

The DFO Jhabua stated that demand of Rs.14.97 lakh would be raised from Madhya Pradesh State Mining Corporation Ltd., Meghnagar. The Government stated that instructions would be issued to the divisions to ensure provision of safety zones are made as per the GOI guidelines.

3.2.9.2 Non-reclamation of mining area

According to the guidelines issued under the Act, the diverted forest land opened for mining was to be systematically reclaimed according to a phased reclamation plan and the cost of reclamation was to be borne by the user agency.

Scrutiny of records of Jhabua, Vidisha and Satna forest divisions revealed that the GOI stipulated reclamation of opened mining areas while granting approval for diversion of 65.671 hectare of forest land to four user agencies for six mining projects. In one case of Jhabua Division, provision for Rs.66.43 lakh was made for reclamation, but funds were not demanded from the user agency viz. State Mining Corporation. Forest land of 37.7 hectare was diverted in this case in February, 2007. In two cases of Vidisha Division, reclamation was not initiated despite expiry of the lease period in July, 2003 and January, 2006. In remaining three cases of Satna Division, partial reclamation was done by the user agency viz.

Maihar Cement Company after expiry of the lease period between February 2001 and April, 2005.

The DFO's Jhabua and Vidisha stated that the necessary action would be taken. The State Government stated that a uniform policy for collection of charges for reclamation of opened mined areas would be devised.

3.2.9.3 Environment clearance not obtained

Scrutiny of records of four division revealed that the GOI granted permission for diversion of 1440.597 hectare forest land in six projects with the condition that environment clearance under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 be obtained by the user agencies. It was noticed during audit that the user agencies were permitted by the Forest Department to use the forest land for non-forest purposes without obtaining environment clearance. The Government assured to take action for obtaining environment clearance in these cases.

Monitoring and Evaluation

3.2.11.1 Monitoring of implementation of conditions

According to departmental instructions (December 2001), CA plantations should be monitored and evaluated at the level of Conservator of Forests twice in a year, at headquarters level once in a year and by an outside agency after three years. Further, GOI guidelines require that the nodal officer should monitor the implementation of the conditions of compensatory afforestation and the survival ratio of the seedlings planted.

Scrutiny of records of 10 forest division revealed that 27 out of the 29 CA plantations were not monitored and evaluated at all by the nodal officer, the Conservators of Forests or an outside agency or any of their representatives.

The nodal officer stated that monitoring and evaluation could not be done due to shortage of staff. Though the Conservators of Forests were directed to constitute monitoring committees for CA plantations in April, 2005, it was, however, noticed in audit that monitoring of CA plantations was not done by such committees. Regarding evaluation by an outside agency, the nodal officer requested (June, 2007) the State Forest Research Institute (SFRI), Jabalpur and Tropical Forest Research Institute (TFRI), Jabalpur consequent to audit. As per guidelines issued by the Central Government (October 1992), the nodal officer should submit quarterly progress report regarding implementation of the stipulations laid down by it. Scrutiny of records of CCF (LM) revealed (July

2007) that no such quarterly progress report was found to be sent to Government of India (GOI) up to March 2007. The nodal office did not have a comprehensive database of cases alongwith the conditions stipulated by the GOI for effective monitoring.

Conclusion

Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 was enacted with the objective of maintaining a sustainable

balance between the developmental needs of the country and the conservation of natural environment. This objective largely remains un-achieved in the State of Madhya Pradesh due to poor implementation of compensatory conservation measures. Non-carrying out of conservation measures in large number of cases; non-utilization of funds received from user agencies; and failure of significant number of compensatory plantations reflect that the State Government was unable to mitigate the adverse effects of degradation of the environment resulting from diversion of green forests for non-forest purposes. Further, there were significant cases of violation of the Act where neither any penal action was initiated by the Government nor any compensatory conservation measures was carried out after getting these cases regularized from the Central Government.

Recommendations

- Funds received from user agencies which are required to be remitted to CAMPA should be identified and made available to CAMPA.
- Compensatory afforestation and catchment area treatment projects that have not been carried out for many years due to various reasons should be implemented as per the guidelines and costs.
- Proper monitoring and timely disposal of cases should be ensured at the nodal office. Also, a comprehensive computerized database of the cases may be maintained for better monitoring.
- User agencies such as State Water Resources, Mineral Resources, and Public Works departments etc. may be sensitized by organizing workshops on the provisions of the Act. Workshops for field level officers of the Forest Department may also be organized on latest instructions/guidelines of the Central Government under the Act.

Performance audit of Afforestation Programme, Orissa

4.5 Afforestation programme

4.5.1 Delayed release of funds

As per the schedule of operation for plantations under Afforestation programme, major activities involved in plantation were required to be completed before onset of monsoon (July) and therefore the timely release of the funds to the forest divisions was to be ensured. During 2001-06, the release of funds to seven was only Rs 14.50 crore (56 *per cent*) against Rs 25.75 crore required for the major activities. The balance funds were released during the fag end of the financial years (February). The Divisional Forest Officers stated (June 2006) that such delayed release of funds affected the soil conservation measures and maintenance operations of the existing plantations. Besides, peoples' participation through entry point activities could not be ensured. This apart, delay in release of funds led to surrender of Rs 64.82 lakh by two divisions in Balangir and one division in Sonepur district during 2001-05.

4.5.3 Shortfall in achievement under NTFP plantation

As per Annual Action plans, the plantation under „Non Timber Forest Produce“ (NTFP) was to be undertaken so as to increase the forest products and to ensure generation of employment on a sustainable basis. During the years 2002-06, as against the target of 10000 hectares, only 6175 hectares of NTFP plantations were undertaken resulting in shortfall of 3825 hectares (38 *per cent*).

4.5.4 Non-supply of fuel-efficient chullahs

Annual Action plans sought to promote use of fuel-efficient chullahs among the rural households to reduce the demand on forest for firewood. Accordingly, the PCCF Orissa (January 1999) instructed all forest divisions to distribute such chullahs to all the families of the fringe villages (8203) out of the funds under entry point activities. Scrutiny of records of 12 forest divisions showed that only one division (Khariar) supplied fuel-efficient chullahs to 1703 (60 *per cent*) families out of the total 2850 families in Nuapara district while the remaining 11 divisions did not supply fuel-efficient chullah at all. Thus, the demand on forest for firewood could not be stemmed.

4.5.5 Deviation from scheme guidelines and resultant loss

The Scheme of IAEP, AOFFP and NTFP provided taking up plantation on watershed catchment area to prevent high mortality in drought-like situation. Deviating from the scheme guidelines two divisions (Sambalpur South and Bolangir East) took up plantation outside the watershed catchment areas during 1999-2003 by incurring expenditure of Rs 56.40 lakh. The plantations did not, however, survive due to drought condition.

4.5.6 Joint Forest Management system

For ensuring better management of forest, the Government constituted Vana Smarakshana Samitees (VSS) in July 1993 comprising officials from Forest & Environment Department and representatives from households living in adjoining forest area for joint forest management (JFM) in all the 8203 villages. The work of VSS included protection of forests against grazing, fire, illicit felling, theft and encroachment of forest land through patrolling. A review of the functioning of the VSS during 2001-06 disclosed the following:

Against 8203 number of VSS scheduled to be formed; only 3160 were formed as of March 2006. Of these only one VSS had been registered under the Societies Registration Act. Thus, the VSS, barring one which was registered, did not have legal status for enforceability.

Out of plantations raised in 73615 hectares by 12 Forest Divisions in the KBK districts during 2001-06, the survival of plantations in 11558 hectares was partially (below 50 *per cent*) successful as of March 2006.

Plantations raised over 1160 hectare during 2001-06 under three divisions were damaged by drought conditions (820 hectare), destroyed by the cattle (140 hectare) and internal conflicts of VSSs (200 hectare). Evaluation (January 2005) by Conservator of Forest, Bhawanipatna over 38 sites indicated that growth of plantation over 210 hectare was poor and the survival was only 10 *per cent* due to non-involvement of the VSS. 1.34 crore were paid to them as wages. In fact, this fund was for creation and maintenance of assets like renovation of ponds, creation of water bodies etc. Besides, by engaging them for security and treating as paid labourers, the spirit of beneficiary ownership could not be developed.

4.6 Monitoring

The guidelines of CSP schemes viz. SGRY and SGSY clearly provided that the officers from State level were required to visit the districts and the district level officers in turn should visit the Blocks. Field level monitoring were to be made for ascertaining the progress of implementation of the programmes, deviations etc., through regular reporting from the Block level to the State level through the district level officials. It was, however, noticed that the monitoring was inadequate.

Reports of progress of work, deviations and decisions for corrective action etc. were not available on record. Besides, a sum of Rs. 6.15 lakh was paid to the Orissa Remote Sensing Application Centre. (ORSAC) for concurrent and independent evaluation of project performance, which too did not materialise due to non-supply of required maps by the Forest Divisions to the ORSAC.

4.7 Abstract of Audit findings

The SGRY scheme implemented in the KBK districts failed to generate targeted number of employment days under RLTA. The afforestation programme aimed at conservation and extension of forests coupled with employment also showed a dismal performance.

4.8 Impact assessment

Poverty alleviation through rural employment programmes was given high priority under RLTA to address unemployment and check migration of labour in the region. However, the data maintained by the Labour and Employment Department indicated that migration of labourers to other States was on the increasing trend ranging from 8,845 in 2001-02 to 14,787 in 2005-06. These numbers however did not include migration through unregistered contractors. From the available information it was reasonable to conclude that efforts for generation of employment did not achieve satisfactory results. Graduation of SHGs into potential micro enterprises did not show impressive result as only a few of them entered into economic activities and very few were earning the desired monthly income. The beneficiaries did not have a sense of community ownership on the community assets created. Improvement in rainfall and increase in forest cover in the KBK districts were among major performance indicators for determination of success of afforestation programme. As per the rainfall reports maintained by the Special Relief Commissioner (SRC), the average annual rainfall in the region was 1323 mm during 1993-97 whereas the same averaged

1319 mm during 1998-2006 indicating there was marginal reduction instead of increase in precipitation. The survey by the XIMB revealed that while 25 *per cent* of the beneficiaries felt that the RLTA had little impact on alleviation of their poverty, another 25 *per cent* felt the impact to be of a fair level. The remaining 50 *per cent* rated the impact as satisfactory. Some benefit, however, accrued to them in the form of employment generated by the schemes.

4.9 Recommendations

- Requirement of fire wood and fodder should be assessed and plantation carried out under Non Timber Forest Produce (NTFP) schemes to provide sustained employment and to check illicit felling of trees.

All India report on Conservation & Protection of Tiger in Tiger Reserves in India (2006)

The Government of India launched Project Tiger, a centrally sponsored scheme, in April 1973 to protect tigers and to ensure a viable population of tigers in India. The Management Plans were to form the bases for the implementation of the project. These were not approved by the State Governments and the Central Government in many cases. The Annual Plans of Operation also did not always have correlation with the management plans. The activities on the ground were very often dictated by the immediate needs of the project and the funds released by the Government.

The State Governments did not, in many cases, release their share of funds. Cases of diversion of central funds for other purposes were also noticed during audit. The norms decided in 1972 to create Tiger Reserves stipulated an average area of 1500 sqkms. The actual areas of the Tiger Reserves were mostly less than the prescribed area.

15 out of the 28 Tiger Reserves created had area less than half the prescribed area which was definitely not conducive for conservation, protection and sustenance of a viable tiger population. Besides, the boundaries of many of the Tiger Reserves had not been demarcated nor the areas falling within the Tiger Reserves notified legally.

The Project Tiger Directorate did not have the wherewithal to undertake any monitoring of the implementation of the project. It had only seven personnel including non-ministerial staff and could not even process the periodical reports and returns received from the Tiger Reserves or to critically examine the Management Plans and issue appropriate directions. Implementation of the project was thus entirely in the hands of the State Governments whose priorities did not always coincide with those of the Project Tiger Directorate.

Relocation of the people living within the Tiger Reserves as well as removal and prevention of encroachment is essential to ease the biotic pressure on the tiger population. Efforts in this direction did not succeed primarily because of lack of resources. Against the requirement of around Rs.11000 crore to relocate 64951 families living within the Tiger Reserves, the allocation in the Tenth Five Year Plan was a meager Rs.10.50 crore. Even this money was not properly utilized by the State Governments.

The implementation of the project was severely hampered by understaffing at the level of Tiger Reserves. The personnel actually employed were also found to be overaged, undertrained and underequipped in many cases. The intelligence and communication network at the Reserves level was also weak.

Many tiger reserves neither prepared the tourist management plans nor assessed the tourist carrying capacity of the reserves despite guidelines issued by the Project Tiger Directorate. The conflict between promotion of tourism and earning of revenue on the one hand and ecological protection of the tiger habitat on the other was thus not resolved.

Various activities under the village eco-development component of the India Eco-Development Project were not carried out efficiently and avoidable extra expenditure of Rs.5.17 crore was noticed in audit.

The census of tigers was generally carried by counting pugmarks which is not considered a fool-proof methodology. The census was not conducted annually in most of the Tiger Reserves and it was also not uptodate.

In the 15 Tiger Reserves created up to 1984, the total number of tigers increased from 1121 in 1984 to 1141 in 2001-02, a rate of increase which highlights the ineffectiveness of the measures taken under the Project Tiger to attain a viable tiger population. During the same period, the overall tiger population in the country declined from 3623 to 2906.

Highlights

There were wide gaps between the financial projections made in the Management Plans and the Annual Plans of Operations and the actual release of funds by the Project Tiger Directorate and the State Government. (Para 4.3)

As per the decision of the Special Task Force in 1972, Tiger Reserves should consist of a sizeable core area and a buffer zone around the core. These requirements were not met in many Tiger Reserves. Most of the Tiger Reserves do not have a designated, functional buffer zone, which is essential for redressing the park-people interface problems and to elicit local public support for conservation. (Para 6.1, 6.1.1)

Out of the six new Tiger Reserves approved for creation by the Government in the IX Plan, only four were created. (Para 6.1.3)

Since tiger population breeds well and grows rapidly in habitats that are without disturbance, 64,951 families including 17,650 families living in the core areas were to be relocated outside the Tiger Reserves. Relocation of 64,951 families needs Rs 11,041 crore against which only Rs 10.50 crore was provided in the X Plan. (Para 6.2.1)

Though directives regarding computation of visitor carrying capacity had been issued, many Tiger Reserves have unregulated tourism. Very little effort has gone in for recycling the tourism receipts to the stakeholder host communities. (Para 6.5.2, 6.5.3)

Though the need for a network of corridors connecting the Tiger Reserves and the adjacent forest areas, to enable tigers to migrate through the corridors was recognized in 1985, there is slow progress in the efforts for creation of the corridors. (Para 7.5)

Irregularities involving Rs 12.06 crore were noticed under the village eco-development component in Pench, Buxa, Gir and Nagarhole. (Para 7.6.2.1, 7.6.2.2)

Funds of Rs 13.90 crore accumulated under Village Development Fund in Buxa, Ranthambore, Nagarhole and Periyar were not utilized for post project sustainability. Besides there was short realization of Village Development Fund of Rs 89 lakh at Nagarhole (Para 7.6.2.4)

Even after more than three decades of Project Tiger, the research activities in various Tiger Reserves were adversely impacted by lack of requisite laboratories or research officers. (Para 7.7)

Protection measures in the Tiger Reserves were weak due to absence of measures to combat poaching, poor communication network, inadequate provision of arms and ammunition, deficiencies in creation of strike force, poor intelligence gathering, inadequate patrolling camps and tardy progress in concluding the cases of wildlife crimes. As a result, poaching of tigers continued and touched an annual level of 22 over a period of six years. (Para 8,8.1.1 to 8.1.5 and 8.3.1)

Most of the reserves suffer from deployment of aged field staff, which has adversely affected the protection efforts. (Para 8.3.3.2)

MoEF had not taken any action to strengthen the organizational structure of the Project Tiger Directorate in as much as against 38 posts identified in the initial project report in 1972, it was functioning with only seven personnel against the sanctioned strength of 13 posts as of May 2006. (Para 8.4)

The watch over majority of exit/ entry points at airports, seaports, land ports and check posts was inadequate to monitor the illegal passage of wildlife and wildlife products through these points. (Para 8.5.3.3)

The Steering Committee, the Apex body which reviews the progress of the Project Tiger met only four times during 1997-2006, as against 18 meetings required to be held at an interval of six months. (Para 9.1.1)

The system of watching the receipt of returns regarding tiger estimation from the reserves and the compilation of figures at the Project Directorate was poor. (Para 9.2.1.2)

The concurrent monitoring mechanism for the assessment of the effectiveness of the management plan and its various components at the various Tiger Reserves by the Project Directorate was completely derailed due to non-receipt of the monthly progress/summary reports and the quarterly, half yearly and annual reports from most of the Tiger Reserves. (Para 9.3)

1. Introduction

Recognising the need to protect tigers, Government initiated several measures aimed at conservation and protection of the species. Significant among them were Project Tiger, a centrally sponsored scheme launched in April 1973 and the India Eco-development Project (October 1997-June 2004) funded by external agencies. Besides, efforts were made to prevent illegal wildlife trade to ensure a viable population of tiger in India. The main activities of Project Tiger include wildlife management, protection measures, and specific eco- development activities. Twenty eight Tiger Reserves were created in 17 states between 1973-74 and 1999-2000. The Project Tiger Directorate (PTD) in the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) at New Delhi is responsible for providing technical guidance, budgetary support, coordination, monitoring, and evaluation of Project Tiger while the management and implementation of the Project rests with the State Governments concerned. The India Eco- development Project (IEDP) was a pilot project initiated with the assistance of the World Bank and the Global Environment Facility to conserve biodiversity through eco-development. The project addressed both the impact of the local population on the Protected Areas and the impact of the Protected Areas on the local population and envisaged to improve the capacity of the Protected Area management to effectively conserve biodiversity and support collaboration between the States and the local communities in and around ecologically vulnerable areas. The project was implemented at five Tiger Reserves and two national parks. In order to curb illegal trade in wildlife, MoEF created four regional wildlife offices at Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai and Mumbai for preservation of wildlife. These regional offices are headed by Regional Deputy Directors (RDDs) and are under the direct administrative control of the Wildlife Division of MoEF.

2. Audit objectives

The performance audit of conservation and protection of tigers in Tiger Reserves seeks to assess whether -

- (i) the efforts made by the government in conservation and protection of tigers has ensured a viable population of tigers in India;
- (ii) the planning for conservation and protection was adequate and the resources were allocated as per the identified needs and approved prioritisation of various activities of the Tiger Reserves;
- (iii) the targets set in the plan documents were achieved through judicious utilisation of resources;
- (iv) the efforts made to reduce the biotic disturbance from the tiger habitats caused by human settlements and other land uses were effective; and

(v) there existed an effective system for monitoring and evaluation and a prompt follow up mechanism.

3. Audit methodology

An entry conference was held with MoEF on 18 November 2005 where the audit objectives and methodology were explained. The effectiveness of the financial, managerial, compliance and regulatory inputs used in the project was examined during the course of performance audit through test checks of records in MoEF, PTD and the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) by the Principal Director of Audit (Scientific Departments). The records of the Chief Conservator of Forest-cum-Chief Wildlife Warden, Project Directorates and Range Offices of 24 out of 28 Tiger Reserves were scrutinized by the Principal Accountants General/Accountants General of the States where these Tiger Reserves are located.

4. Planning for Tiger Reserves

4.1 Management Plan and Annual Plan of Operations

4.1.1 The IX Plan proposal for the continuation of the Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) “Project Tiger” was approved by the Government in June 1999 with the direction that for monitoring purposes, a master plan for development of each of the reserves should be prepared. Achievement of physical targets was to be compared with the master plan. PTD stated in March 2006 that the Management Plans (MPs) of the Tiger Reserves were the master plans.

4.1.2 The Management Plan is prepared by the Tiger Reserves and is to be approved by the State Governments concerned and the PTD. The Annual Plans of Operations (APOs) were drawn based on these MPs every year and it depicted the physical and financial targets. The MP serves as the basic document for the preparation and approval of the APO.

4.2 Deficiencies in Management Plans

4.2.1 MPs were not prepared and PTD failed to follow up: It was noticed that MPs of nine Tiger Reserves were not available at the Project Tiger Directorate (PTD). There was no evidence to indicate that these had indeed been prepared. It was seen that MPs of Tiger Reserves at Valmiki (2000-04), Melghat, Pench Maharashtra (2000-04), Kalakad

(2001-02 onwards) and Kanha (2000-01) had not been prepared. In a circular issued in July 2005, PTD requested all the Tiger Reserves to clarify whether they had approved MPs and whether APOs were submitted as per MPs. This indicated that PTD was not keeping track of the receipt of approved MPs for processing APOs. It also reflected the absence of any internal control mechanism in the PTD regarding MP.

4.2.2 MPs remained to be approved

As per the guideline from the WII in November 1997, MPs would come into force only if these were approved by the State Government and the Government of India. However PTD did not have a mechanism to ensure that MPs received from Tiger Reserves had approval of the State Governments concerned. Besides, there was no system for technical scrutiny at PTD. It was seen in audit that the MPs of Tiger Reserves at Namdapha (1997-2006), Manas (2002-07), Valmiki (2004-14), Indravati (2000-10), Simlipal (2001-11), Katarniaghat and Dudhwa (2000-2010) and Corbett (1999-2009) had not been approved by the State Governments concerned. Lack of State Government approval would affect the project, the State's approval being critical in ensuring the flow of matching funds from them.

4.2.3 MPs not formulated properly

A test check of some of the MPs available at the PTD revealed that in many cases, due care had not been taken in the preparation of MPs. They were based on very old statistics and physical and financial milestones were not clearly laid down. Some problems noticed in the reserves are indicated in the table below:

Name of Tiger Reserve and period of Management Plan and lapses observed in the MPs

1. Corbett (Uttaranchal) - MP for the period 1999-2009

Audit observed that the yearly activities/strategies laid down in the Management Plan were not reflected in the Annual Plan of Operations for the corresponding period as indicated below:

Name of Tiger Reserve and period of Management Plan and lapses observed in the MPs

③ Though there was no provision for construction of quarters in 2000-01 as per Management Plan, the same was included in the APO of the same year.

③ Target as per Management Plan was to strengthen the existing 29 patrolling chowkis, however as per APO construction of new patrolling camps was approved.

Issues relating to topography maps, vegetation, animal distribution and migration, water holes, roads and boundaries were not properly addressed.

2. Panna (Madhya Pradesh) - MP for the period 2002-12

The Management Plan was based on statistics dated five to ten years back from the period of the Plan as follows:

③ Statistics for the period 1982-95, 1985-96, 1983-96 were reckoned for annual rainfall, animal population and poaching cases including fishing respectively. Statistics relating to fire incidences were for the period 1991-92 to 1995-96.

③ There were no records of any diseases/epidemics in wild animals or in cattle.

③ Summary of problems faced by the people that affect the management of Protected Area pertains only up to 1996.

③ The Theme Plans spelling out future strategies did not spell out yearly targets.

③ Financial projections of the activities in the Management Plan had not been spelt out.

③ No time frame has been laid down for achievement of the theme plans/strategies depicted.

3. Buxa (West Bengal) - MP for the period 1998-2010

No financial projections were made to give an idea of the funds that would be required for achievement of objectives laid down in the Management Plan.

4. Kanha (Madhya Pradesh) - MP for the period 2001-11

- ③ No clear definition of yearly physical and financial targets was laid down.
- ③ No time frame was set for achievement of the envisaged objectives.
- ③ There was no clear correlation of activities envisaged in the MP to that laid down in the APO.

5. Bandipur and Bhadra Wild Life Sanctuary (Karnataka) – MP for the period 2000-05

Issues relating to role of Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in development of the reserves, training plans for the staff, Degraded Habitat Restoration Plan, Buffer Zone Development Plan and Tourism Management Plan were not addressed.

6. Sunderbans (West Bengal) – MP for the period 2001-10

Physical targets under various activities were not depicted. Similarly analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the Tiger Reserve area were not addressed in the MP.

4.3 Deficiency in the Annual Plan of Operations

Annual plans are to be prepared on the basis of management plans. PTD is expected to process and approve the APOs on the basis of the respective MPs. Audit however revealed that APOs of Manas, Nameri, Pakke, Pench (Madhya Pradesh), Periyar, Bandhavgarh, Kalakad and Valmiki Tiger Reserves for the period 2000-06, Melghat Tiger Reserve for 2000-04 and Bandipur, Bhadra, Indravati, Sariska, Satpura, Nagarjunsagar Tiger Reserves for 2005-06 were processed and central assistance released without ensuring availability of approved and valid MPs at PTD. Besides, in reserves where MPs existed, there were wide deviations between the MPs and the corresponding APOs. Further the actual release of assistance was not based on either the MP or the APO as indicated in Annexure-1.

The table below illustrates the activities not carried out due to differences in funds demanded as per APO and funds sanctioned by MoEF during 2001-05 in some Tiger Reserves.

(Rupees in crore)

Tiger Reserve/ State	Funds demanded	Funds sanctioned	Activities not taken up due to shortage of funds
Ranthambore, Rajasthan	78.94	10.87	Periodicity for vaccination of animals,
Tadoba-Andhari, Maharashtra	0.06	0.02	Soil and water conservation,
Pench, Maharashtra	0.31	0.09	development of meadows.

In March 2006, PTD attributed the variations to restricted release of funds to States depending upon their capacity. PTD further contended that the financial projections were not really required in the MPs. In essence, thus the Plan outlays were prepared by the PTD without obtaining inputs from Tiger Reserves and there was no system to ensure that the resources were allocated as per the identified needs and the approved

prioritisation of various activities and needs of the Tiger Reserves. The existence of an inbuilt procedure in the system for accountability and involvement of the Tiger Reserves in the implementation of the schemes was missing. PTD stated in March 2006 that a bill had been introduced in Parliament for amending the Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972 to insert a Chapter for according statutory authority to Project Tiger and to have a say in the planning process of the States and to redress difficulties on these issues.

4.4 Mapping of National Parks

4.4.1 In March 2004, MoEF sanctioned a project at a the cost of Rs 1.39 crore for mapping of Wildlife Sanctuaries/National Parks by Wildlife Institute of India (WII), Dehradun. The project was to be completed within 36 months. It aimed to generate accurate, reliable and latest base line spatial information on forest types and density (using satellite imagery) and topographic features (supplemented by latest satellite imagery), which could be of direct relevance for preparation/revision of Management Plans of wildlife sanctuaries and national parks. The project objective further stated that efforts would be made to incorporate the compartment-wise plant and animal density, diversity and richness in management plans to enable the wildlife managers to use the information directly for conservation and management purposes. After completion of this pilot project in five specified National Parks/Wildlife Sanctuaries, the countrywide mapping and monitoring of the wildlife sanctuaries and national parks were to be continued by WII in coordination with the Indian Institute of Remote Sensing (IIRS), National Remote Sensing Agency (NRSA) and Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) for the generation of baseline digital data of all Protected Areas for effective management.

4.4.2 Out of the five sites selected for this pilot project, three were Tiger Reserves namely Corbett, Tadoba-Andhari and Dudhwa. The identified targets included generation of satellite data by July 2004 and securing Survey of India (SOI) topographic maps by September 2004. However, both activities were not completed even as of March 2006. As against the projected expenditure of Rs 1.20 crore in the first two years, Rs 0.73 crore was released of which only Rs 0.30 crore was spent till the end of February 2006 indicating poor progress of the project. A project review committee was constituted in December 2004 and though the project envisaged half yearly review, so far only one project meeting was held in March 2005. While accepting the facts, WII attributed (March 2006) the shortfall in achieving the targets to delay in the induction of research personnel for the project and also the delay on the part of SOI in providing the topographic maps. It further stated that all the bottlenecks have been resolved and SOI maps would be made available to the researchers shortly and the results would provide new insights for the development of spatial database, which would be useful for other Protected Areas in the country. The tardy implementation of the project meant lack of quality information to the reserves for framing their management plans.

Recommendations:

- All Tiger Reserves should have a well-formulated management plan to ensure that long and medium term targets are not lost sight of. The annual plans of operations should be based on the management plans to ensure judicious allocation of resources. While enabling a planned approach to tiger conservation, it would provide a measure for achievement of targets against efforts made.
- Efforts may be made to complete the mapping of Tiger Reserves on time so that the management plans are based on reliable information.

5. Financial Management

5.1 Funding pattern

Project Tiger was launched in 1973 with 100 per cent Central Assistance. From the VI Five Year Plan (1980-81 to 1984-85) onwards recurring expenditure was shared by Central and States in equal proportion. However, the Centre continued to meet 100 per cent of the non-recurring expenses. The Central Government also meets the entire cost of Project Allowance introduced during the IX Plan to the staff working in the Tiger Reserves as well as the entire cost of relocation of families from the Tiger Reserves. The projects on Eco-development and Beneficiary Oriented Tribal Development (BOTD) which were pursued as independent Centrally sponsored projects till the end of the IX Plan were merged with the Project Tiger in the X Plan. A provision of Rs 150 crore was made for Project Tiger in the X Plan. Central Government had provided Rs 237.75 crore as financial assistance to the Tiger Reserves till 31 March 2005 since the commencement of the project in 1973. In addition, an India Eco-development Project (IEDP) was conceived in October 1997 with the assistance of the World Bank and the Global Environment Facility (GEF). IEDP was implemented in five Tiger Reserves and two National Parks. The cost of the project was US\$ 67 Million. The project was financed partly by the World Bank loan (US\$ 28 Million) and the GEF grant (US\$ 20 Million). The rest of the contributing agencies were Government of India and the participating States (US\$ 14.60 million) and the project beneficiaries (US\$ 4.40 million). The project was completed in June 2004.

5.1.1 EFC clearance not obtained

The Ministry proposed creation of eight new Tiger Reserves in the Xth Plan period. This involves requirement of Central Assistance for several new items of work such as providing ex-gratia payment to villagers residing in the vicinity of the project area in the event of loss of life. Inclusion of the new activities in the Plan proposals called for the clearance of the Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC). MoEF sought EFC clearance only in February 2005 after a delay of 34 months. The Planning Commission in July 2005 held that EFC approval should be sought for the total cost estimates including the State share and desired that the criteria adopted for the creation of the new Tiger Reserves be

specified. Besides, the Planning Commission desired that the success criteria to be adopted

for assessing the impact of the scheme be laid down. PTD did not furnish the information and as a result, EFC clearance for the X Plan proposal of PTD was pending even as of March 2006. PTD stated in reply (March 2006) that though a proposal for inclusion of the above additional items was drawn up, it was not processed and kept in abeyance for reconsideration and a fresh proposal with appropriate modifications would be sent to the Planning Commission after the constitution of National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA). The decision to defer the creation of new Tiger Reserves till the constitution of National Tiger Conservation Authority has to be viewed against the need to bring more areas under protection as emphasized in the report of the Working Group on Wildlife Sector of the Ministry for the X Five Year Plan.

5.2 Adhoc allocation of funds to Tiger Reserves

5.2.1 Funds allocated without norms

PTD did not project their plan requirements based on the inputs received from the Tiger Reserves. No Reserve wise break up of allocations and budget was available at PTD. Thus it was not possible to ascertain if the funds earmarked for a particular Tiger Reserve were not diverted to other Tiger Reserves. PTD in reply stated in March 2006 that it projected the demand for its plan and annual allocation based on the expenditure over the years vis-a-vis the MPs and the APOs. However, specific information about areas where funding was to be provided in each Tiger Reserve was essential to ensure that projection and release of funds were consistent with the identified priority areas. While admitting this fact, PTD stated in March 2006 that it was in the process of improving the norms for providing funding to Tiger Reserves and once the system was streamlined, the depiction of financial allocation to Tiger Reserves and their phasing would be more meaningful and the National Tiger Conservation Authority by virtue of its statutory provision, would address these issues through rules.

5.2.2 Allocation of funds to Tiger Reserves widely divergent

Audit analysed the fund allocation across Tiger Reserves against the area covered and the number of tigers. In both cases wide divergences were noticed. The funds released for different Tiger Reserves could not be correlated to the areas of the Tiger Reserves or the tiger population. During the period 1997-2005, the average funds released per sq. kilometre of Tiger Reserve area amounted to Rs 5560 but the amount actually released varied from Rs 25,968 per sq. km in respect of Panna to only Rs 640 sq. km to Nagarjunsagar. Similarly, the average allocation per tiger during the period 1997-2005 was Rs 1.33 lakh but the amount actually allocated varied from Rs 10.99 lakh in case of Dampa to Rs 0.94 lakh in case of Melghat.

In the face of such wide divergences in allocation and absence of formal criteria to explain the divergence, it was not possible to link the targets with fund allocation. PTD stated in March 2006 that the fund release was site specific and could not be correlated with the area of the Tiger Reserves and the population of the tigers in a reserve. However, it added that action has been initiated for categorising the Tiger Reserves under four categories viz. (i) established Tiger Reserves without any major problems, (ii) problematic old reserves, (iii) upcoming reserves not consolidated and (iv) new reserves. According to the PTD, prioritisation of various activities for providing funds under recurring and non-recurring heads would be taken up in a rational manner in the coming years.

5.3 Distortions in release of funds

5.3.1 Central Assistance not released by States timely

As per the directive issued by the PTD in May 2000, the State Governments were to release Central Assistance to Tiger Reserves within six weeks from the date of its receipt. A test check in Audit revealed that there were delays ranging from 1 to 8 months in the release of Central Assistance to the reserves in Assam, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu etc. as detailed in Annexure-2. Delay in the release of Central Assistance to the field formations has to be viewed against Honorable Supreme Court's direction in February 2005 that the State Government should release the Central Assistance within 15 days of its receipt. The PTD in March 2006 cited delay in the release of Central Assistance by States as one of the difficulties faced in the implementation and monitoring of the scheme.

5.3.2 Late release of funds leading to low utilization by the reserves

As of March 2005, out of Rs 87.11 crore released to 28 Tiger Reserves during the period 2002-05, Rs 77.53 crore was utilized. In Karnataka, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh against liberal Central Assistance of Rs 10.45 crore, Rs 11.06 crore and Rs 25 crore respectively, only Rs 8.16 crore, Rs 4.13 crore and Rs 19.50 crore were utilised during the period 2002-2005. PTD in reply stated that the poor utilization of Central Assistance was due to late release of central funds by States to field formations. The PTD also informed that the unspent central assistance was adjusted in subsequent releases or revalidated and as of March 2006 no huge unspent Central Assistance under the Project Tiger was left with States. However Audit observed that out of Rs 4.63 crore provided to Tadoba in Maharashtra for relocation during 2002- 03, Rs 1.27 crore only was spent even as of March 2006.

5.3.3 Short release of matching contribution by State Government

As per the funding pattern of Project Tiger, the recurring expenditure was to be shared by the States and the Central Government in equal proportion. However, a test check in Audit revealed that in Valmiki Tiger Reserve, Bihar as against the State share of Rs 1.13

crore, Rs 80.85 lakh only was made available by the State Government during 2000-05. The short release of matching contribution thus worked out to more than 28 per cent. This depicts low commitment of the State in conservation measures in the Tiger Reserve.

5.3.4 Diversion of Central Assistance by States

Test check in audit revealed diversions of Central Assistance in some States. A few such cases are mentioned below.

Name of the Reserve/ Details of diversion of Central Assistance

1. Melghat, Maharashtra

A proposal to include 350 km² area of Wan, Ambabarwa and Narnala Sanctuary under Melghat Tiger Reserve was submitted to MoEF in June 2003 by the Government of Maharashtra. However, as of March 2006, MoEF had not approved the proposal. Notwithstanding these facts, the Deputy Conservator of Forest, Akot incurred an expenditure of Rs 50.16 lakh on various wildlife related activities during 2001-05 out of the Central Assistance of Rs 54.06 lakh in the area not included in the Melghat Tiger Reserve. The expenditure amounted to unauthorized diversion of Central Assistance.

2. Manas, Assam

MoEF sanctioned Rs 51.40 lakh in 2000-01 for the creation of a Strike Force consisting of four police platoons for protection of Manas Tiger Reserve. Of this, Rs 20.40 lakh was meant for recurring expenditure and the balance Rs 31 lakh was for non-recurring items. However, no expenditure has been incurred for creation of strike force till March 2004. It was observed in Audit that Rs 84.30 lakh including Rs 51.40 lakh of unspent balance of 2000-01 was revalidated and released for the APO for 2004-05 for various activities, other than creation of the Strike Force. Thus, the purpose for which Rs 51.40 lakh was initially sanctioned remained unfulfilled and funds were diverted for other purposes.

3. Nagarhole Extension of Bandipur Tiger Reserve, Karnataka

Grant of Rs 7.75 lakh was provided to Nagarhole National Park at Karnataka during 2003-04 for the construction of quarters, anti-poaching camps, formation of armed police, patrolling tracks and census under non-recurring items. In addition, Rs 6.54 lakh was provided under the recurring head for maintenance of roads and employment of tribal people for protection duties. However, the entire provision of Rs 14.29 lakh under these heads were diverted towards payment of outstanding wages of anti-poaching watchers engaged on daily wage basis for the reason that no separate allocation of funds was provided for the same.

5.3.5 Booking of recurring expenditure to non-recurring head

Non-recurring expenditure on the project is borne by the Central Government. Expenses booked by 20 reserves over the five-year period of 2000-2005 were checked in audit. It was seen that in 43 cases out of 100, expenditure on annual estimation, a recurring expense, was booked as non-recurring. Depicting the expenditure on annual estimation under non-recurring head entailed an additional burden of Rs 36.99 lakh on the Central Government. This accounted for 50 per cent of the bookings under non-recurring heads (Rs 73.98 lakh booked under non-recurring). PTD accepted in March 2006 that expenditure on annual estimation/census qualifies for matching grants only under the recurring head. A comparison of Management Plan targets and the proposals included

in the APO of Dudhwa revealed that certain items of works were shifted from 'recurring' to 'non-recurring' heads putting extra burden on the Central Government. The target for 'non-recurring' expenditure was increased to Rs 16.80 crore from Rs 9.35 crore and that for 'recurring expenditure' was reduced from Rs 26.14 crore to Rs 14.69 crore. Dudhwa Tiger Reserve did not intimate any reason for this change.

5.3.6 Payment of Project Allowance without safeguards

Considering the harsh and difficult condition in which the officers and staff of Tiger Reserves work, the Government in June 1999 approved 100 per cent Central Assistance for the payment of project allowance. PTD sanctioned project allowance to Tiger Reserves without insisting on any certified list of staff from the States. Some Tiger Reserves registered steep increase in the expenditure on project allowance over 2000-05 as shown in the table below. However, PTD neither ascertained the reasons for such steep increase in the payments nor ensured that the Tiger Reserves were not claiming project allowance on vacant posts.

(Rupees in lakh)

Sl. No.	Name of the Tiger Reserve	Project allowance expenditure	
		2000-01	2004-05
1.	Bandipur	6.	18.23
2.	Palamau	2.	24.00
3.	Sariska	7.	20.00
4.	Nagarjunsagar	8.	11.50
5.	Panna	3.	6.00
6.	Bhadra	2.	7.30
		42	
7.	Kalakad	4.	10.00
8.	Indravati	3.	6.32
9.	Tadoba-Andhari	3.	6.05
		00	

Test check in Audit revealed weaknesses in regulation of the project allowance expenditure by various Tiger Reserves. The allowance was paid to ineligible personnel and funds demanded on this account were more than what could actually be spent as shown in the table below:

Name of Tiger Reserve /Remarks
<p>1. Simlipal, Orissa</p> <p>Out of Rs 15 lakh released to Simlipal Tiger Reserve in 2005-06, Rs 7.31 lakh were to the staff working in three divisions outside the Tiger Reserve.</p>
<p>2. Sariska, Rajasthan</p> <p>There was an unspent balance of Rs 11 lakh as of 31 March 2005 against the release made for the payment of project allowance to Sariska Tiger Reserve during 2003-04. During 2005-06, again Rs 20 lakh was released for payment of project allowance. However, expenditure for payment of project allowance during 2005-06 was only Rs 11.65 lakh.</p>

Thus, the release of Rs 19 lakh for the payment of project allowance during 2005-06 to Sariska Tiger Reserve lacked financial propriety in as much the unspent balance of Rs 11 lakh on project allowance carried forward by it to 2005-06 was almost enough to meet the expenditure of Rs 11.65 lakh on project allowance during 2005-06.

3. Sunderbans/Buxa, West Bengal

Project allowance though admissible only to the field staff, Sunderbans Tiger Reserve utilized Central Assistance of Rs 6.96 lakh for the payment of project allowance to the ministerial staff. Similarly, Buxa Tiger Reserve had also used Central Assistance of Rs 54.37 lakh for the payment of project allowance to the staff who were not eligible for it during 2000-05.

4. Indravati, Chattisgarh

Indravati Tiger Reserve at Chattisgarh claimed Central Assistance for the project allowance on the basis of sanctioned strength where as the disbursement was made on the basis of men-in-position. Men-in-position was less than sanctioned number of posts during 2000-01 to 2004-05. As against a financial sanction of Rs 25.42 lakh, only Rs 14.00 lakh was spent on project allowance.

PTD stated in March 2006 that certified list of posts sanctioned and detailed reasons for the steep increase in the payment of project allowance would be obtained from the States and made available to Audit.

5.3.7 Non realization of revenue

A test check in Audit revealed lack of promptness in realization of revenue due to the Forest Departments in Andhra Pradesh, Uttaranchal, Maharashtra and Karnataka as indicated below :

Name of Tiger Reserve/ Remarks

1. Nagarjunsagar, Andhra Pradesh

Over the years, 65.13 km² were diverted for 12 items of work for Irrigation, Hydro-electric power, Road/bridge construction and mining activities at Nagarjunsagar Tiger Reserves. Even though, the beneficiary organizations had deposited Rs 11.99 crore as of April 2006, the Andhra Pradesh Government had transferred only Rs 60 lakh to the Forest Department. No details were available for the balance items of works.

2. Corbett, Uttaranchal

Outstanding revenue on account of petty demand, royalty, marking fees, late fees, extension fees and lease rent etc. to the extent of Rs 1.50 crore accrued before 2001-02 from the Uttar Pradesh Forest Corporation were pending to be recovered by Uttaranchal Government as of March 2006. An amount of Rs 3.48 lakh was also due from the Uttaranchal Forest Development Corporation

3. Melghat, Maharashtra

Rates of entry to Melghat Tiger Reserve for tourists were revised from 17 May 2004. Deputy Conservator of Forests however continued to levy entry fees at the old rate, which led to loss of Government revenue to the tune of Rs 14.37 lakh from tourists during 2004-05.

Recommendations:

- Allocation of financial resources to Tiger Reserves needs to be streamlined. PTD should establish formal criteria for allocation of funds and prioritize the Tiger Reserves based on their threat perception.
- The issues relating to late release of central funds, diversion of funds and short release of counterpart funds by the States need to be addressed at appropriate levels to ensure that tiger conservation efforts become fruitful.
- The expenditure authorized under the 'recurring' and 'non-recurring' heads should be explicitly defined and actual classification of funds should be checked.

6. Biotic Pressure

6.1 Norms for Tiger Reserves

Tiger population breeds well and grows rapidly in habitats without incompatible human uses. They cannot co-exist with people particularly in a situation where both human impacts and live stock grazing is continuously on the increase. The long-term survival of the tiger therefore depends on how secure and inviolate are the Protected Areas they live in. Expert international advisers had suggested in 1972 that the best method of protection of the tiger was to have a large area of at least 2000 km² with a similar contiguous area to ensure a viable population of about 300 tigers in each such area. Considering the difficulty to locate such a large area in the Indian context, Special Task Force decided in 1972 to create Tiger Reserves with an average area of 1500 km² with at least 300 km² as core area. Thus, for management purposes, each Tiger Reserve is broadly divided into two parts namely core and buffer. In the core area, forestry operations, collection of forest produce, grazing, human settlement and other human disturbances are not allowed. In the buffer zone, strictly controlled wildlife oriented forestry operations and grazing are allowed.

6.1.1 Creation of Tiger Reserves inconsistent with norms

28 Tiger Reserves were created under Project Tiger. In 15 Tiger Reserves the minimum area was less than 720 km² i.e. less than half the prescribed area. In six out of these fifteen reserves, Palamau, Ranthambore, Pench (Madhya Pradesh), Tadoba-Andhari, Bhadra and Pench (Maharashtra), even the core area was less than the prescribed 300 km². In 14 of them, there were human settlements. Human settlements existed even in the core areas of Palamau, Ranthambore, Sariska, Kalakad, Panna and Pench (Maharashtra) Tiger Reserves. Further, four Tiger Reserves, viz., Pench (Maharashtra), Pakhui, Panna and Satpura Tiger Reserves were created without ensuring existence of any buffer zones. While admitting that the biotic disturbance in the form of human settlements and other land use disturb tigers and that there were no functional buffer zone under the

unified control of the Field Directors in several reserves, PTD stated in March 2006 that these areas were brought under the project coverage considering the threat faced by the tiger population there. It also stated that the core area of the Tiger Reserves can be increased once the surrounding buffer zones are freed from disturbances and a National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) with statutory powers is being established to address such issues. The reply has to be viewed against the fact that the core area in the Tiger Reserves at Palamau and Ranthambore continued to be less than 300 km² even 34 years after their creation (1973-74).

6.1.2 Tiger Reserves not notified

As per Section 35 of the Wildlife Protection Act 1972, the State Government notifies an area as a National Park. The notification provides the legal basis for ensuring protection. However, in many Tiger Reserves, the final declaration procedures of National Park (Core) and Sanctuary (Buffer) were pending even as of March 2006 even though the amended Wildlife (Protection) Act 2003 set a time-limit for completion of acquisition proceedings. The details of the Tiger Reserves where the final notification and boundary demarcation are pending are given in Annexure-3. The Annexure reveals that in case of Indravati, Kanha, Pench, Palamau, Bandhavgarh, Panna, Simlipal and Kalakad Mundanthurai Tiger Reserves, the final notification has not been issued even as of March 2006 though these reserves were created during 1973-95. In the case of Tiger Reserves at Bandipur, Corbett and Namdapha, notification for inclusion of additional areas in the Tiger Reserves were not issued. Similarly, in the case of the Tiger Reserves at Manas, Indravati, Ranthambore, Sariska and Buxa boundary demarcation was not completed. This depicts lack of commitment and seriousness of the concerned State Governments while denying legal backing to the boundaries of the reserves.

6.1.3 Creation of new Tiger Reserves

Though the Government approved the proposal for creation of six new Tiger Reserves in the IX Plan, only four were created. Similarly, though PTD proposed to create eight new Tiger Reserves in the X Plan, none was created till March 2006. PTD stated in March 2006 that the proposals were not dropped but only kept in abeyance and would be processed further after creation of National Tiger Conservation Authority. The time lost in the creation of the Tiger Reserves has to be viewed against PTD's own contention that one of the considerations for the creation of new Tiger Reserves was to reduce the disturbance to the tigers. Besides, the report of the Working Group on Wildlife Sector for the X Plan of MoEF had also emphasised the need to bring more areas under Project Tiger.

6.2 Relocation of families residing in the Tiger Reserves

One of the main thrusts of Project Tiger is protection and mitigation of negative human impacts for comprehensive revival of natural ecosystems in the Tiger Reserves and

to create favourable atmosphere to increase the tiger population. Hence, to a great extent, the success of the Project Tiger depends on the relocation of persons living in the core and the buffer areas of the Tiger Reserves.

6.2.1 Absence of a road map for the relocation of families

The records in PTD indicated existence of 1487 villages with 64,951 families in the core and buffer areas in 26 out of the 28 Tiger Reserves as of July 2005. The distribution of villages and families in the Tiger Reserves since their creation is indicated in Annexure-4, which reflects the increasing encroachment of the Tiger Reserves and the ineffectiveness of the efforts to keep them encroachment free by moving out the families.

Out of the families residing in the Tiger Reserves 17,650 families were in the core area and the remaining 47,301 families were in the buffer zone. The current cost of relocation of a family is Rs 1 lakh which has been suggested to be enhanced to Rs 2.5 lakh by experts, appointed by the Government. At current rates, the cost of relocation of all the families living in the Tiger Reserves works out to Rs 649.51 crore which will increase to Rs 1623.78 crore if the enhanced rates are implemented. When the payment for land is also considered, the total cost of relocation would be Rs 11041.68 crore as shown in the table below:

(Rupees in crore)

Cost of relocation	Core Area	Buffer Zone	Overall Tiger Reserve
	No. of villages : 273	No. of villages : 1,214	No. of villages : 1,487
	No. of families: 17,650	No. of families: 47,301	No. of families: 64,951
1. Estimated cost at the current rate of Rs 1 lakh per family	176.50	473.01	649.51
2. Estimated cost at the enhanced rate of Rs 2.5 lakh per family	441.25	1,182.53	1,623.78
3. For payment for land @ Rs 5.8 lakh per hectare and 2.5 hectare per family	2,559.25	6,858.65	9,417.90
Total cost assuming enhanced cost	3,000.50	8,041.18	11,041.68

As against this huge fund requirement, a meagre allocation of Rs 10.50 crore was provided for the relocation of families under Beneficiary Oriented Tribal Development scheme in the X Plan. The amount provided could at best relocate 1050 families (at current rates) which is approximately 5 per cent of the families residing in the core areas of the Tiger Reserves. Thus the fund allocation was wholly disproportionate to the magnitude of the problem.

While accepting the above facts, PTD stated in March 2006 that even though the Wildlife

Protection Act, 1972 gave the mandate for settlement of rights of affected people, many States have not accomplished the task due to problems associated with displacement including the resentment of local people. PTD further stated that MoEF has directed the WII in December 2005 to assess the inviolate spaces required in all the Protected Areas in the country including Tiger Reserves after standardising the norms within a time frame of five years. The financial requirement for relocation would be included in the XI plan. The reply indicates absence of a road map or firm commitment for the relocation of villages/families living even in the core area of the Tiger Reserves, after 34 years of implementation of the project.

6.2.2 Lapses in the relocation strategies pursued by the States

Shortcomings were noticed in the relocation efforts of the States. MoEF released Rs 21.89 lakh in 1989-90 for the relocation of families at Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve. The entire fund was kept in civil deposits and not utilised for the stated purpose. In Maharashtra, Rs 4 crore released by MoEF in 2002-03 for the relocation of families from Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve remained unutilized. Relocation from Kalakad Tiger Reserve was not taken up by the Tamil Nadu Government despite payment of Rs 55 lakh in March 1992 to the Collector and allotment of alternative site in 2004. Similarly, out of Rs 1 crore released by MoEF in March 2003 for the relocation of families from Corbett Tiger Reserve, Uttranchal Government kept Rs 95 lakh under forest deposit while rehabilitation programme were included in the APOs of Corbett Tiger Reserve during 2000-05. In the Simlipal Tiger Reserve, relocation of the families had not succeeded, as the alternate site offered was not suitable for irrigation. Similarly, it was observed that in the Dudhwa Tiger Reserve, villagers filed a petition against relocation, as Court's order for financial help to villagers for construction of houses was not implemented. These cases indicated lack of concern by the State Governments in relocation of the villagers from the Tiger Reserves.

6.3 Encroachment of Protected Area

As per Section 27 of the Wildlife Protection Act 1972, no person other than that specified in the Section shall enter or reside in a Sanctuary or a National Park except and in accordance with the conditions of a permit granted under Section 28 of the Act. Section 34 A ibid vested powers in an officer not below the rank of Assistant Conservator of Forests to evict any person who occupies Government land in contravention of the provisions of the Act from the National Park. Such Officer was also delegated powers to remove unauthorized structures, buildings or constructions erected on any Government land and tools and effects belonging to encroachers shall be confiscated. Test check in audit revealed that encroachments were widespread in several Tiger Reserves affecting the quality of conservation adversely. Land pertaining to Tiger Reserves were encroached upon either by communities or by private companies and the States had not been able to remove the encroachments with the result that Protected Areas were subjected to increasing biotic pressures. The problems of encroachments observed in some Tiger Reserves were as below: