



WILDLIFE CONSERVATION THROUGH WILDLIFE TOURISM: A CASE STUDY OF TADOBA-ANDHARI TIGER RESERVE IN CHANDRAPUR DISTRICT.

Dilip B. Choudhari

Assistant Professor, Dept. of Geography

Chhatraveer Raje Sambhaji Prashasakiya Seva Mahavidyalaya,
Morwa Dist. Chandrapur, Maharashtra, India. 442401

Email: dilipbchoudhari@gmail.com

Abstract:

Wildlife tourism is generally understood to mean visiting wildlife in their natural habitat. But from the very beginning, wildlife has been a fascination for humans. As the distance between human and wildlife habitats increased, wildlife became the focal point of human attraction.

Each coin has two sides. Similarly, there are two streams of opinion regarding wildlife tourism. One view is that wildlife should be kept separate from tourism. So that endangered wild species can be protected. On the other hand, a stream of opinion sees wildlife tourism as a means of wildlife conservation and promotes wildlife tourism. In Indian scenario, the second stream of opinion seems more convenient, as wildlife hunting in India is a hobby for some and a means of subsistence for others. Therefore, if there is an increase in wildlife tourism, the number of wildlife-loving citizens may increase and the above may be curtailed. This case study is a little step to understand the relationship between wildlife conservation and Wildlife Tourism.

Keywords: Conservation of Wildlife, Wildlife Tourism, Challenges, Mitigation

Introduction:

Wildlife tourism is an important component of the travel industry of many nations. Wildlife tourism is an important part of the tourism industry in many African and South American countries, including Australia, India, Canada, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and the Maldives. Wildlife tourism around the world has experienced wonderful and rapid growth in

recent years. Many factors have been linked for eco-tourism and sustainable tourism. The importance of wildlife tourism as a multi-billion-dollar international industry is growing day by day.

Recently, people's interest in wildlife conservation and environmental issues has been increasing rapidly.¹ Most of the people living a stressful life in the industrial world believe that environmental conservation is the most important public issue. Therefore, there seems to be a growing trend towards sustainable management of ecologically important areas and things that guarantee the sustainable life of plants or organisms². Wildlife tourism provides exactly such experience; it has resulted in wildlife tourism becoming one of the fastest growing branches of tourism.

Another important aspect of wildlife tourism is that the revenue collected from wildlife tourism is used for the maintenance of national parks and sanctuaries. A (2012) study of three national parks, Nagarhole, Kanha and Ranthambore, found that international tourists spent about \$ 600 on their visits. Studies have also shown that tourists are willing to visit again, and are willing to pay higher fares because they like such trips. The funds thus raised are used for the welfare of wildlife living in various parks and sanctuaries. In addition to financial support, wildlife tourism raises awareness about animal and plant species.

¹AUEssays. (November 2018). An Overview of Wildlife Tourism.

².Patrikcarson, Julia Moulden (1991). "Green is Gold-Business Talking to Business about The Environmental Revolution:., Harper Business Publication.

Wildlife tourism brings people closer to nature and explains the environmental importance of wildlife.

In the past, the question of wildlife survival was exacerbated by misconceptions about wildlife tourism (wildlife hunting) and government policies and also lack of awareness. But at present, the growth among wildlife lovers and practitioners through wildlife tourism is really supporting the various conservation initiatives taken by the government for the benefit of plants and animals. As a result, today India has 103 national parks and 544 wildlife sanctuaries.³ These sanctuaries become safe houses for various native and exotic animals and plants. Project Tiger was launched on April 1, 1973 under the initiative of Indiraji Gandhi. It was started under the leadership of Kailash Sankhala. The first tiger reserve in the country was started in 1973 at Jim Corbett National Park under the tiger conservation campaign Project Tiger through the National Tiger Conservation Authority. In which there were only 9 tigers at that time. At present, 231 tigers are found in this tiger reserve. There are total 50 Tiger Reserve in India and today near about 1923 tigers are living in these tiger reserve.⁴ The success of this conservation campaign is that today 75% of the world's tigers are only in India. The one-horned rhinoceros, a rare species, is found in the largest numbers in Kaziranga National Park, Assam. Gir National Park in Gujarat is the only habitat of Asiatic Lions. So, I feel that Wildlife Tourism is nothing but a way of wildlife conservation campaigns.

Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve is an important wildlife tourist destination in the Chandrapur district of Central India, famous for its tiger density. There is a need to analyse the relation between tourism development and wildlife conservation in Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve (TATR).

Methodology:

I used Primary and Secondary data for this research Paper. Primary data was collected through personal visits to TATR. Secondary data was collected by visiting the TATR office,

various government departments and Government's reports. I use some mathematical tools for calculate the Tiger density. Charts and graphs are used to represent data.

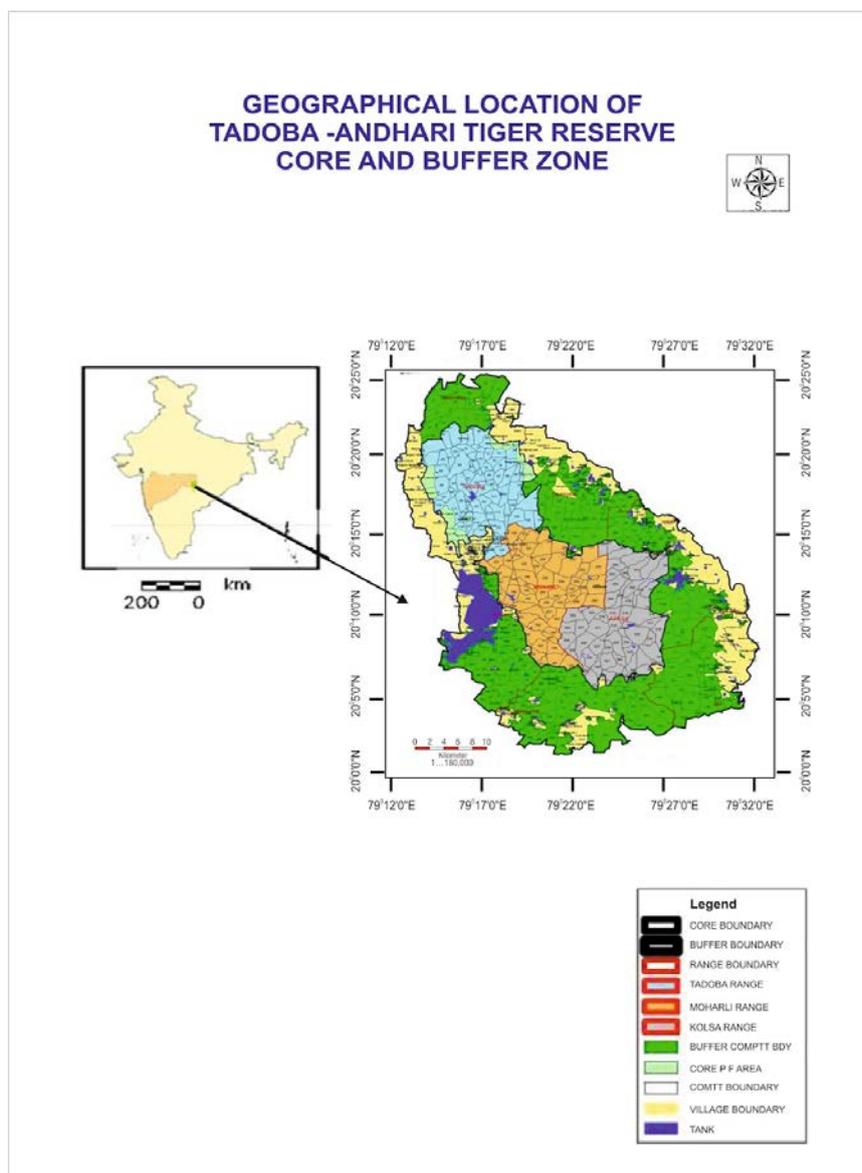
Study Region:

The Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve is located in the eastern district of Chandrapur in Maharashtra. 20° 4' 53" North to 20° 25' 51" North Latitude and 79° 13' 13" East to 79° 33' 34" East Longitude. The Reserve will be extended to 1727.17 sq.km. is spread across the area. This includes 625.40 sq. km. of core zone and 1101.77 as the buffer zone.

On April 9,1955, Tadoba National Park was formally created enclosing an area of 116.55 sq. km. area. Also on 25/02/1986, Andhari Wildlife Sanctuary had been established in 508.85 sq.km. area. The TadobaAndhari Tiger Reserve came into existence in 625.40 sq. Km. area on 27/12/2007 by merging Tadoba National Park and Andhari Wildlife Sanctuary on 23/02/1995 (116.55 + 508.85 = 625.40), both Tadoba National Park and Andhari Wildlife Sanctuary were declared as Core or Critical Tiger Habitat. Then after on 5/5/2010 1101.77 sq. km. area was declared a buffer zone around Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve. It covers a total of 79 villages.

³Directory of Wildlife Protected Areas in India, ENVIS Centre, WII, Deharadun

⁴Status of Tiger, Co-predictors and Prey in India report for 2018, NTCA Authority, Govt. of India, 29 July 2019.



Result and Discussion:

The Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve is a region known as an animal paradise. Considering the numbers of wildlife in terms of wildlife tourism, Tadoba is one of the largest tiger reserves in Central India. About 581 different species of animals, including tigers, leopards, deer, nilgais, sambars, dogs, cats, bears, birds, insects, butterflies, etc., are seen living in the Tadoba-Andhari tiger Reserve. These include 80 species of Mammals, 192 species of Aves, 54 species of Reptiles, 84 species of Pisces, 68 species of

Butterflies, 11 species of Amphibians, 76 species of Insects. Centipede 12 species, Scorpionida 34 species. In addition to the wildlife that is commonly found everywhere, the number of rare species is also significant. It includes a total of 11 rare species included in the Red Databook, 2 endangered reptiles and 2 fish species, 5 mammals and 9 reptiles on the IUCN endangered species list, 2 reptiles and 2 fish species on the IUCN endangered species list. This explains the biological value of the Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve.

Table 1 Tiger Estimation in Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve

| Year | Number of Tigers in Core | Number of Tigers in Buffer | Total |
|------|--------------------------|----------------------------|-------|
| 2006 | 34 | - | 34 |
| 2010 | 69 | - | 69 |
| 2014 | 51 | 12 | 63 |
| 2018 | 82 | 19 | 101 |

The Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve is famous for its dense forest including 87% of the total area is reserved. These forests have a variety of mixed forests. It has a main forest with teak, Ain, Bamboo, Bija, Dhavada, Haldu, Salai, Semal, Tendu, Hirda, Karaya, Gum, Mahua, Madhuka, LanneaCormendalia. The mixed teak and bamboo forest is famous. Apart from these, Arjuna, Mango, Purple are also found in large numbers. Flowers like Palas, etc. are also found in large numbers. We found Teak forests cover 11.48%, mixed forests 76.16%, grasslands 7.17% and treeless areas 5.19% of total area in Core Zone.

The rich flora and fauna of the Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve proves the potential for wildlife tourism here. Tigers are the main attraction for about 80% of the tourists who visit here. The TadobaAndhari Tiger Reserve has about 101 tigers in 2018, including core and buffer zones. The Tiger density in TadobaAndhari Tiger Reserve is 1 tiger in 17.10 sq. Km. The TadobaAndhari Tiger Reserve is on the 6th rank among the Tiger reserve in the India in terms of tiger density. Therefore, more opportunities for tiger sightings at the TadobaAndhari Tiger Reserve are available to tourists here.

Tourist Arrival in TadobaAndhari Tiger Reserve

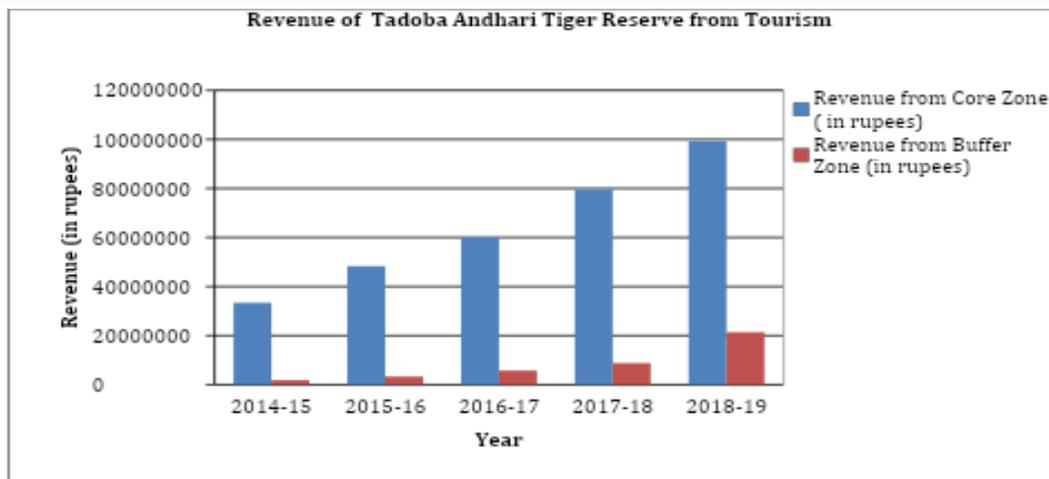
| Year | Core Zone | | Buffer Zone | | Total |
|----------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| | Domestic Tourist | Foreign Tourist | Domestic Tourist | Foreign Tourist | |
| 2014-15 | 111608 | 4625 | 23896 | 678 | 140808 |
| 2015-16 | 128216 | 8152 | 42504 | 1049 | 179921 |
| 2016-17 | 128412 | 4080 | 55318 | 1612 | 189422 |
| 2017-18 | 99200 | 5205 | 60925 | 1453 | 166783 |
| 2018-19 | 75463 | 6064 | 97796 | 2144 | 181467 |

Source: Office of the Field Director and Chief Conservator, TadobaAndhari Tiger Reserve, Chandrapur

Revenue of TadobaAndhari Tiger Reserve from Tourism

| Year | Revenue from Core Zone (in rupees) | Revenue from Buffer Zone (in rupees) | Total Revenue (in rupees) |
|----------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2014-15 | 3,33,97,502 | 18,48,450 | 3,52,45,952 |
| 2015-16 | 4,82,87,668 | 33,09,335 | 5,15,97,003 |
| 2016-17 | 6,00,70,779 | 57,55,350 | 6,58,26,129 |
| 2017-18 | 7,95,04,468 | 87,79,570 | 8,82,84,038 |
| 2018-19 | 9,93,77,299 | 2,14,07,031 | 12,07,84,330 |
| Total | 32,06,37,716 | 4,10,99,736 | 36,16,37,452 |

Source: Office of the Field Director and Chief Conservator, TadobaAndhari Tiger Reserve, Chandrapur



Along with the growing number of tigers, the number of tourists is also on the rise. There is a steady increase in the number of domestic as well as international tourists. In 2014-15, 135504 domestic tourists and 5304 international tourists visited the Tiger Reserve. In 2018-19, 173,259 domestic tourists and 8,208 international tourists visited the Tiger Reserve. Domestic tourist growth rate is 5.57%. The growth rate of international tourists is 10.59%. This suggests that the growth rate of international tourists is high. The increase in the number of international tourists compared to domestic tourists is satisfactory in terms of wildlife tourism development at the Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve.

By increasing the number of tourists, the revenue is also increasing. The total revenue received from TadobaAndhari Tiger Reserve in 2014-15 was 3 crore 52 lakh 45 thousand 952 rupees which has increased to 12 crore 07 lakh 84 thousand 330 rupees in 2018-19. The entire amount of revenue generated from tourism is used for wildlife conservation along with tourism development at the Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve.

Conclusion:

Along with the development of wildlife tourism in TadobaAndhari Tiger Reserve, the project management is also paying attention to wildlife conservation. The number of tigers and other animals is increasing. Along with this, the number of rare species in TadobaAndhari Tiger Reserve is also significant. This includes a total of 11 rare species included in the Red Data Book, 2 reptile and 2 fish species that are on the verge of extinction according to the Red Data Book, 5 mammals and 9 reptile species on the IUCN endangered list, 2 reptile and 2 fish species on the IUCN rare animal list. From this,

we can say that the goal of wildlife conservation is being achieved through wildlife tourism in TadobaAndhari Tiger Reserve.

References:

1. Aftabuddin S. K., Dr. Kadambari Jain 2017. "Scope of Wildlife Tourism in India." International Journal of Advance Research in Science and Engineering, Vol. No. 6, Issue No. 08, August 2017
2. Borges de Lima, Ismar Green, Ronda J.(Eds.) 2017. Wildlife Tourism, Environmental Learning and Ethical encounters".
3. C. Kunhikannan, N.Rama Rao, and S. S. Bisen,(2018). " Vegetation Ecology of Tadoba National Park, Chandrapur, Maharashtra.", A Research Article published in Journal of Interdisciplinary Biosciences, Issue - I, Vol. 1 Page. 40 (Dec. 2018).
4. Dr. J. A. Sheikh, Dr. Vanashree Lakhe, Dr. Y. Y. Dudhpachare 2014. "A study of wildlife management and tourism development in Tadobaandhari tiger reserve in Chandrapur District, Maharashtra ", Vol. No. May 2014.
5. Karen Higginbottom 2003. " Wildlife Tourism: Impact, Management & Planning." Common Ground Publishing Pvt. Ltd.
6. Status of Tigers, Co-predators and Prey in India report for 2018' by National Tiger Conservation Authority, Govt. Of India. 29 July 2019.
7. Tiger Conservation Plan, (2008-09 to 2017- 18) Volume- I (CORE), by Shri. V. R. Tiwari, IFS & Shri. G. P. Garad, IFS, Chief Conservator of Forest and Field Director, TadobaAndhari Tiger reserve, Chandrapur.