Implementation of POWPA in India: Challenges and Opportunities (Appendix III of FNR)

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"Earth provides *enough*
to satisfy every man's *need*,
but not every man's *greed*."

Mahatma Gandhi

A Protected Area is..

A geographically defined area, which is designated or regulated and managed to achieve specific conservation objectives (CBD Article 2)

Protected areas have always been the cornerstones of biodiversity conservation

Various designations

- National parks
- Reserves
- Sanctuaries
- Sacred sites
- Taboo areas
- Royal hunting reserves
- Restricted fishing areas
- Seasonal closures etc.

Functions

- Wilderness protection
- Preservation of genetic, species, community and landscape diversity
- Protections of specific natural and cultural features
- Tourism and recreation
- Education
- Scientific research
- Maintenance of cultural and spiritual attributes
- Sustainable use of resources from natural ecosystems
- National security etc.

Objectives of POWPA

▸ Establishment and maintenance of comprehensive, effectively managed, and ecologically representative national and regional systems of protected areas
- – by 2010 for terrestrial areas
- – by 2012 for marine areas

▸ Contribution to
- – overall   objectives of the Convention
- – 2010 target
- – sustainable development including poverty alleviation

Programme elements

1. Direct actions for planning, selecting, establishing, strengthening, and managing PA systems and sites.

2. Governance, participation, equity and benefit sharing.

3. Enabling activities.

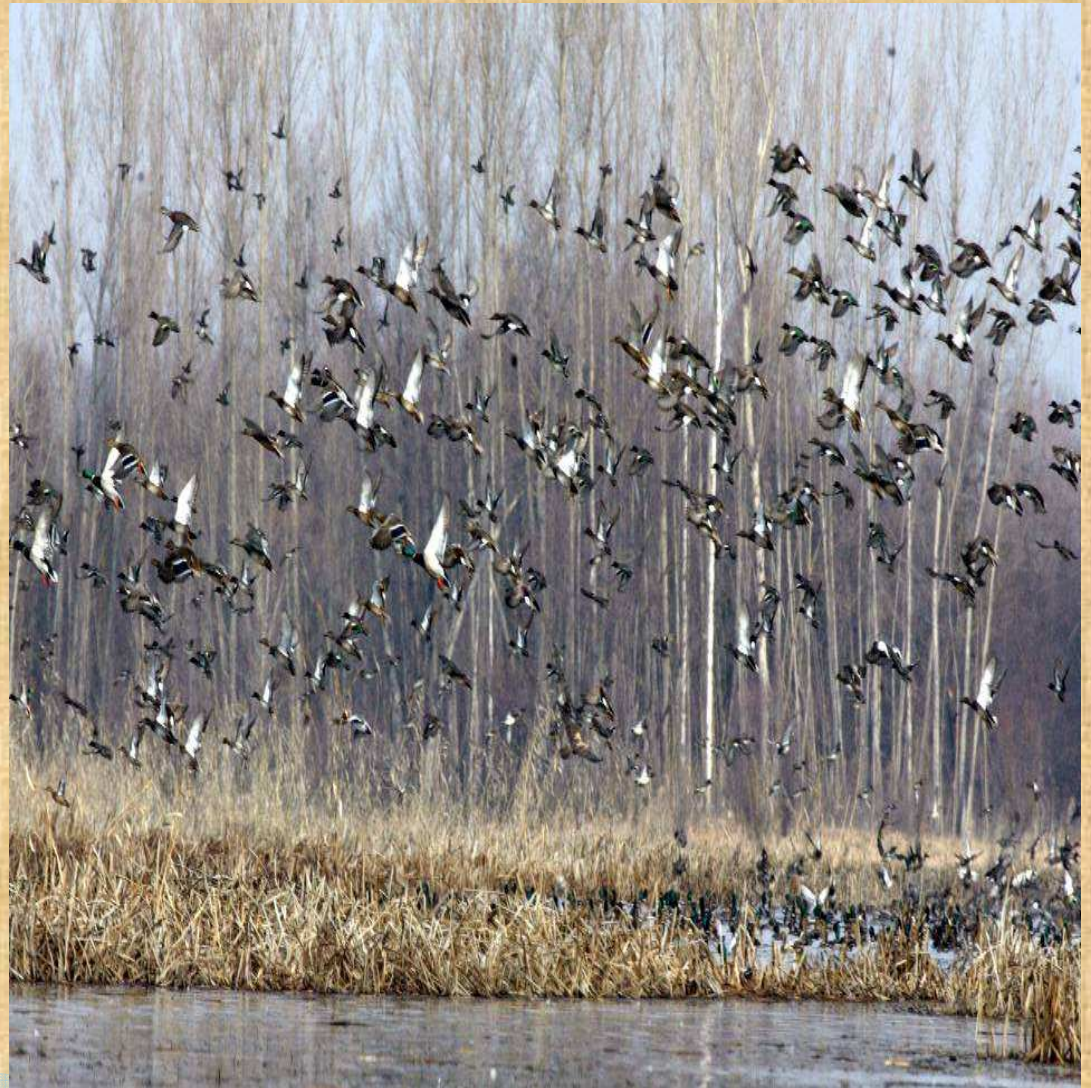4. Standards, assessment and monitoring.

Each Programme element contains:

- Goals

  - Targets

    ✓ Activities

▸ 16 goals,
16 targets and
92 activities

Programme element 1

Direct action for planning, selecting, establishing, strengthening, and managing PA systems and sites

GOALS

- Establish and strengthen national and regional systems
- Integrate PAs into broader land- and sea-scapes and sectors
- Establish regional networks, transboundary PAs and partnerships

- Improve site-based PA planning and management
- Prevent and mitigate negative impacts of key threats

TARGETS

- By 2010 global network for terrestrial & 2012 for marine areas
- By 2015 integrate all PAs into wider land and seascapes and sectors
- By 2010 for terrestrial & 2012 for marine areas transboundary PAs and partnerships
- By 2012 all PAs have effective management
- By 2008 effective mechanisms for preventing and mitigating impacts of key threats

Programme element 2

Governance, participation, equity and benefit sharing

GOALS

- Promote equity and benefit-sharing
- Enhance and secure involvement of indigenous and local communities and stakeholders

TARGETS

- By 2008, establish mechanisms for equitable sharing of costs and benefits from PAs
- By 2008, ensure full and effective participation

Photo: Mori Kanai

Programme element 3

GOALS

- Provide an enabling policy, institutional and socio-economic environment
- Build capacity
- Develop, apply and transfer appropriate technology
- Ensure financial sustainability
- Strengthen communication, education and public awareness

TARGETS

- By 2008 review and revise policies to support effective establishment and management of PAs.
- By 2010 implement comprehensive capacity building programmes
- By 2010 develop, validate and transfer of appropriate technologies
- By 2008 secure sufficient financial resources to manage PAs.
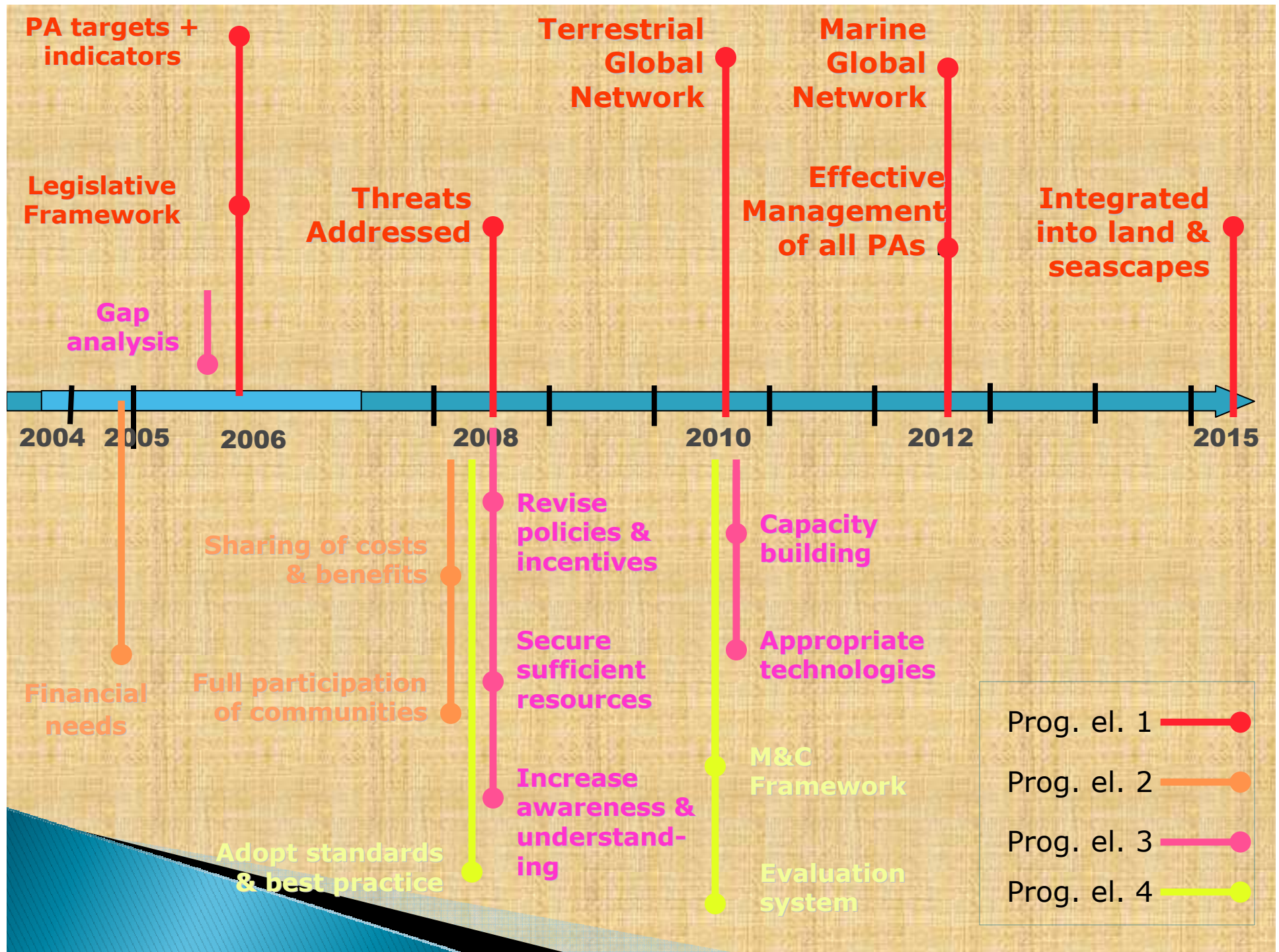- By 2008 increase public awareness

Programme element 4

Standards, Assessments and Monitoring

GOALS

- Develop and adopt minimum standards and best practices.
- Evaluate and improve effectiveness of PAs.
- Assess and monitor PA status and trends.
- Ensure contributions of scientific knowledge in establishment and management of PAs.

TARGETS

- By 2008 standards and best practices are developed and adopted.
- By 2010 frameworks to be developed and implemented.
- By 2010 systems are established to enable effective monitoring of PAs.
- Further develop scientific knowledge

Goal 1.1: Plan, establish & manage PAs

Increase in coverage of PAs in India

- Pre CBD – 1988 : 426 (54 NPs, 372 WLS)
- Post CBD:

1998 (NRI)	533 (85 NPs, 448 WLS) – 4.2%
2001 (NR2)	585 (89 NPs, 496 WLS)
2005 (NR3)	595 (94 NPs, 501 WLS)
2008 (NR4)	659 (99 NPs, 514 WLS, 42 Cons. R. 4 Comm. R.) – 4.8 %

▶ Since adoption of PoWPA in 2004, 60 PAs and two new categories added.

▶ 31 MPAs and over 100 PAs which include both terrestrial and fresh water eco-systems.

NFP for POWPA designated as per decision IX/18.

Goal 1.1: Plan, establish and manage PA

▸ National Wildlife Action Plan (2002-16) identifies strengthening and enhancing PA network and its effective management as priority actions.

▸ Bio-geographical classification of India developed in mid 1980s by Wildlife Institute of India (WII) identifying 10 biogeographic zones and 26 biogeographic provinces in India.

▸ 19 out of the 26 provinces adequately represented.

▸ This classification being currently revisited to identify gaps and taking remedial actions.

▸ WII maintains database on upto date information on PA network.

Goal 1.1: Plan, establish & manage PA

- WL P Act, 1972 recognizes 4 types of PAs:
  - National Parks (IUCN PA category II) : 99, 1.17% of area.
  - WL Sanctuaries (IUCN PA category IV): 514,3.60% of area
  - 42 Conversation Reserves covering 0.03% of area
  - 4 Community Reserves
- Total 659 PAs covering 4.80% of country's area.
- NWLAP (2002–16) envisages 10% of country's area under PA network.

Goal 1.1: Plan, establish and manage PA

- Most of Govt. owned forest areas outside formal PAs systems also have operational management working plans.

- 36 Tiger Reserves and 25 Elephant Reserves as exclusive conservation zones for tigers and elephants.

- During 11th National Five Year Plan, support to be extended to wildlife rich areas outside PAs, including corridors in otherwise fragmented PA network, and to initiate special species recovery programmes for critically endangered species.

- Thus, though only 4.8% of area under formal PA network, around 20% is under some kind of conservation planning and management.

Goal 1.2: Integrate PAs

- Marked shift from earlier concept of managing PAs as stand-alone entity, to adopting ecosystem approach and managing PAs on landscape level.

- Adoption of 'core-buffer strategy', delineation of management zones in PAs, promotion of ecodevelopment activities in buffer area, part of this process.

- Proposed to declare ecosensitive zones around PAs under EP Act, 1986.

- PAs being used as poverty reduction tool through non-consumptive use of biodiversity (e.g. community based eco-tourism programmes).

Goal 1.2: Integrate PAs (contd)

- Implementation of GEF "India Eco-development Project" (1996-04) in 7 selected PAs.
- GEF project on 'Biodiversity conservation and improving rural livelihoods', for 6 landscapes around PAs.
- UNDP/GEF Project on Gulf of Mannar BR
- Under GEF-4, programmatic approach for 'Mainstreaming coastal and marine biodiversity into production sectors' under preparation.

Goal 1.3: Establish TBPAs

- An inter- ministerial task force constituted for TBPAs.
- 12 PAs identified as potential TBPAs covering mountains (4), forests (5), deserts (2) and coastal marine (1) biomes, to enhance cooperation with Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Nepal and Pakistan.
- Of these, 5 identified as priority areas :   Buxa TR (WB), Manas TR (Assam), Valmiki TR (Bihar), Sunderbans TR (WB), Dudhwa TR (UP), along India's border with Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal.
- Proposed to extend financial and technical support for TBPAs during 11th Plan.
- As Party to CMS, India has signed MoUs for marine turtles,dugongs, Siberian crane etc.
- Bilateral arrangements with Nepal and China on Wildlife conservation.

Goal 1.4: Improve site based PA planning

▸ Almost all PAs prepare Annual Plan of operations outlining management interventions and fund requirements.

▸ About 39% NP and 34% of WLS have operational MPs, for 22% of NPs and 16% of WLS are under preparation, and 39% of NPs and 50% of WLS have no MPs.

▸ Major constraints: inadequate manpower, insufficient funds.

▸ Several PAs have undertaken elaborate management planning process on landscape basis adopting ecosystem approach (e.g. Gulf of Mannar NP, Keoladeo NP, Kanha TR)

Goal 1.5: Negative impact of key threats

- Identifying, preventing, mitigating negative impacts of key threats to PAs is major challenge in view of diversity of biomes.
- Major threats confronting PAs, on generic level are:
- Land use issues (habitat degradation, incompatible land use practices, IAS, poaching, illegal trade)
- Human issues (limited livelihood opportunities, heavy subsistence dependency)
- Institutional issues (inadequate manpower, financial and technical resources)
- Independent evaluators appointed to assess management effectiveness of PAs.

Goal 2.1 : Promote equity and BS

- WL P Act amendment in 2006 provides for involving local communities in PA management, and ecodevelopment activities for generating livelihoods while ensuring conservation. Benefits generated to be ploughed back into conservation of PA and surrounding landscape, and community welfare.

- Also provides for Conservation Foundation in all TRs, to support leveraging independent financial resources for PA management and community welfare.

- Provincial (State) Govts have enabling legal and institutional arrangements to facilitate this process of allowing benefits to be shared at the site level.

- GOI has enacted "Scheduled Tribes and Other Forest Dwelling Communities (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act in 2006.

- Empowers forest dependent communities and protects their access and use of forest resources.

- Also provides for setting apart high value biodiversity areas as Critical Wildlife Habits as inviolate areas of conservation.

Goal 2.2: Enhance involvement of communities

- WL (P) Act amendment in 2003 has added two new legal categories of PAs : Conservation Reserves on Govt. owned areas, and Community Reserves on private or community land.

- So far, 46 such new generation PAs established.

- WL Act also recognizes involvement of local communities in PA management through eco-development initiatives, and sharing of resources and benefits.

Goal 3.1: Provide enabling environment for PAs

- Enabling, policy, institutional and socio-economic frameworks are in place.
- For economic valuation of goods and services from PAs, efforts are underway to develop expertise for Natural Resources Accounting.
- In view of their direct tangible and indirect intangible benefits, PAs now identified as poverty reduction tool in national development planning process.
- Major impediments include: inadequate capacity and resources for economic valuation, and conflicts with local communities for restriction of access and use of resources inside PAs and increase in wildlife human conflicts.
- Some strategies in place to mitigate these conflicts, but more needs to be done.

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Goal 3.2 : Build capacity for PAs management

- Established WII as premier training and research institution in wildlife and PA management.
- WII organizes customized training programmes for policy makers, defense, customs, revenue, enforcement agencies.
- 5000 personnel sensitized so far through such programmes.
- WII imparts regional training programmes for countries in South and SE Asia.
- UNESCO and IUCN recognize WII as a regional partner institution.
- Capacity building of PA managers, staff and community recognized as priority areas in 11th National Plan.
- National WL Control Bureau set up in 2007 with mandate to tackle illegal trade in Wildlife.
- Strong institutional research support (eg. WII, SACON, GEER, WTI, KFRI etc.)

Goal 3.3 : Develop and apply technologies

- Modern tools/technologies being used for effective PA management, e.g. remote sensing, GIS, information technology, wildlife forensics, satellite imagery, telemetry, cameral traps.

- WII has collaborative projects with FAO, UNDP, UNESCO, IUCN, UNEP, UNITAR, USFWS, USFS, NORAD, ICIMOD etc for developing capacity of the region.

- Need to expand scope of regional collaboration, including through involvement of CBD.

Goal 3.4: Ensure financial sustainability

- Functional needs for PA management identified at Federal (Central) and Provincial (State) levels, also articulated in planning process.
- Projected requirement for wildlife sector at Federal level for 11th Plan (2007-2012) is 3660.30 crores INR or 840 m USD, though actual funds being made available are only 50% of projected requirement.
- Most PAs are dependent exclusively on funds from Central and State Govts.
- Few externally aided project, some support from NGOs etc.
- To widen streams of financial resources, WL Act now provides for setting up Tiger Conservation Foundations in all TRs, with a view to solicit and generate independent financial resources and thus contribute to financial sustainability of PAs.
- CAMPA NPV amount to be utilized for development of PAs.

Goal 3.5: Strengthen CEPA

- Nature education and other awareness programmes organized regularly.

- NGOs and others play important role.

- Several PAs have Conservation Education/Interpretation Centres.

- Environment education introduced by GoI in formal education system.

Goal 4.1: Develop & adopt minimum standards & best practices

- Comprehensive and exclusive system of standards, criteria and best practices not yet established.

- Some guidance through WII.

- Monitoring methodology and protocols formalised by MoEF for 17 Tiger Range States, and applied in field during 2006-07.

- Proposal to extend and expand these in remaining states for comprehensive countrywide standardized monitoring system.

Goal 4.2 : Evaluate and improve effectiveness of PA management

- Management Effectiveness Evaluation (MEE) of PAs initiated in systematic way by adopting IUCN-WCPA framework.
- Expert evaluation teams constituted, so far 10% of PAs assessed at national, state and site levels.
- Recommendations from MEE being incorporated at policy level to enhance effectiveness of PA management.
- In 2005-06, 28 TRs (area 37,761 km) were evaluated.
- Report peer reviewed by IUCN, offered useful suggestions to improve methodology.
- Under UNESCO/IUCN Project, MEE carried out for Keoladeo NP and Kaziranga NP.

"You must be the change you want to see in the world."

Mahatma Gandhi

Thank you