Integrated Tiger Habitat Conservation Programme (ITHCP)

Grantees Workshop Report

16 – 18 January 2024, Bangkok, Thailand

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1. INTRODUCTION

The second ITHCP Grantees Workshop was held in Bangkok, Thailand for three days from 16 to18 January 2024. The workshop was organised in collaboration with the IUCN Asia Regional Office and took place at the Hotel Holiday Inn. Thailand was chosen as the venue because of its accessibility and convenient central location in the region.

To ensure that the workshop addressed the interests and expectations of the grantees, an online survey was conducted among the ITHCP project focal points in July 2023. The purpose of the survey was to gather insights from grantees in order to shape the content, structure, and methodology of the workshop. The survey collected information from 17 respondents from all ITHCP projects on specific areas of interest, challenges faced during project implementation, preferred learning formats, and other additional suggestions and requirements. Based on the survey responses, the workshop objectives and sessions were developed.

The majority of the grantees expressed interest in learning about tiger monitoring, human-wildlife conflict, sustainable livelihoods, and acquiring good practices from other projects. A few grantees mentioned their interest in learning about environmental and social safeguards, project reporting, anti-poaching efforts, and the effective management of protected areas.

Other important areas identified by the ITHCP Secretariat for the grantees workshop include effective project management and reporting, ESMS, habitat management, capacity building and knowledge sharing. Considering these priorities, four technical thematic sessions and four project related sessions were included and delivered during the workshop as per the workshop agenda provided in **Annex 1**.

1.1 Purpose of the Workshop

ITHCP supports tiger conservation by protecting and preserving tiger habitats, promoting sustainable livelihoods for local communities, and ensuring the long-term survival of tigers. Since its inception in 2014, ITHCP has funded 25 projects across six tiger range countries. Currently, 12 of these projects are actively being implemented by a variety of partner organizations. The main purpose of the workshop is to share knowledge and best practices among these projects and organizations in order to replicate and expand successful conservation approaches, and at the same time build capacity and enhance collaboration.

1.2 Objectives of the Workshop

The main objectives of the workshop were to:

Share best practices: The workshop aims to facilitate knowledge sharing among grantees by providing a platform for participants to share their experiences and success stories enabling them to learn from each other's best practices.

Enhance technical knowledge: The workshop intends to enhance the technical knowledge and skills of the grantees through expert-led sessions. Participants will have an opportunity to deepen their understanding of scientific research, conservation strategies, and innovative

approaches relevant to tiger conservation leading to a strong foundation of expertise within the ITHCP network.

Strengthen collaboration: The workshop aims to foster collaboration and networking among grantees by creating a conducive environment for interactions. Participants can establish valuable connections, exchange ideas, and explore potential collaborations. Strengthening relationships between grantees will enhance the collective impact of the ITHCP, facilitating the sharing of resources, expertise, and lessons learned.

Address challenges and solutions: The workshop seeks to identify common challenges faced by grantees in implementing their conservation initiatives. Through interactive discussions and case studies, participants will work together to develop practical solutions and strategies to overcome these challenges effectively during ongoing and future projects.

1.3 Workshop Participants

A total of 55 participants attended the workshop. These included representatives and project managers from 19 organisations from across tiger range countries who received funding from ITHCP, ITHCP Programme Advisory Committee members, ITHCP Programme Council, KfW representative, staff from IUCN Headquarters, IUCN Asia Regional Office and IUCN Country Offices in Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia, Nepal, Bangladesh and India. A list of participants is provided in **Annex 2**.

2. OPENING SESSION

Dr. Dindo Campilan, IUCN Regional Director for Asia, kicked off the workshop by welcoming the participants, acknowledging the presence of representatives from the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation (DNP), KfW Development Bank, ITHCP Programme Advisory Committee (PAC), grantees from across Asia, and IUCN colleagues from Thailand, Cambodia, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Bangladesh. He expressed IUCN's gratitude for the generous funding provided by German Cooperation (BMZ) through KfW Development Bank, totalling €47.5 million to ITHCP.

Highlighting the ITHCP significant achievements, Dr. Campilan commended the 40% increase in tiger populations across 12 project sites in six tiger range countries. He also lauded the 6,717 km² of habitat restored and the planting of over 482,000 native trees, emphasizing the programme's commitment to safeguarding both tigers and local communities through initiatives such as sustainable livelihood activities, eco-tourism development, and human-wildlife conflict mitigation.

Citing the tripling of Nepal's tiger population from 121 to 355 in 2022, Dr. Campilan underscored the collaborative efforts of IUCN, the Government of Nepal, WWF, ZSL, and local communities in achieving this remarkable milestone. He also shared IUCN's work in Thailand to strengthen tiger monitoring through camera trapping and SMART trainings for rangers, emphasizing the importance of data-driven conservation strategies.

As the program moves forward in Phase IV, Dr. Campilan expressed optimism about the expansion of funding opportunities to additional countries and the inclusion of leopards and clouded leopards in the programme's scope. He further emphasized the need to align

ITHCP with the global effort to conserve species under threat, particularly in light of the IUCN Red List's alarming findings.

The introduction of GTRP 2.0 marked a turning point for ITHCP, according to Dr. Campilan, as it calls for a more targeted engagement with key tiger stakeholders both at policy and field levels. He stressed the importance of addressing human-wildlife conflict in line with Target 4 of the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) and emphasized ITHCP's role in serving as a model for conservation efforts around the world.

In closing, Dr. Campilan reiterated IUCN's unwavering support for the grantees, leveraging the organization's knowledge products, expert network, and partnerships with other initiatives in the region. He also introduced the IUCN Global Species Action Plan (GSAP) as a transformative tool for countries to integrate species actions into their national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) to achieve the GBF's goals.

Dr. Campilan concluded by encouraging workshop participants to seize the opportunity to share best practices, strengthen collaboration, and address challenges effectively as they move forward in their conservation efforts. He expressed pride in the achievements of ITHCP and the collaborative spirit that has driven these successes.

This was followed by a keynote address by Dr. Somying Thunhikorn, Forestry Technical Officer, representing Department of National Park and Plant Conservation (DNP), Thailand.

Dr. Thunhikorn highlighted the ongoing commitment of DNP to tiger conservation in Thailand and commended the ITHCP for its significant contributions to the global tiger conservation effort. She expressed her gratitude to IUCN and KfW for inviting DNP to the workshop. She then praised the ITHCP for its role in supporting tiger conservation initiatives in the region.

Dr. Thunhikorn noted that the DNP has been involved in tiger conservation for many years and has a long track record of success. "The latest camera trapping survey conducted in 2022, in collaboration with our partners, revealed that there are currently 148 tigers in Thailand," she stated, "and we are committed to continuing our efforts to ensure the long-term survival of this iconic species."

Dr. Thunhikorn also highlighted the captive breeding and prey species reintroduction programmes. "We are working with our partners to captive breed tigers and release prey species into the wild," she explained, "and we are committed to restoring and managing tiger habitats to create a more conducive environment for tiger populations to thrive."

Dr. Thunhikorn concluded her presentation by emphasizing the importance of holistic conservation approaches taking into account the entire ecosystem, including the habitat, prey species, and the surrounding communities for ensuring the long-term success of tiger conservation.

The third keynote address was delivered by Nina Otto, Senior portfolio manager from KfW and Elke Hellstern, ITHCP Programme Council member.

Nina began by reflecting on her six years as the ITHCP Programme Manager from the KfW side. She highlighted the contributions of ITHCP to tiger conservation and its status as a flagship programme for the global tiger conservation effort. She also provided a brief overview of the ITHCP funding structure, noting that it is primarily supported by the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) through KfW. She emphasized

the workshop's central purpose of gathering insights from ITHCP grantees, who have been at the forefront of tiger conservation efforts across the landscape. She thanked IUCN for organizing the workshop and invited all participants to actively engage in the discussions and share their experiences.

Elke expressed her delight in participating in the workshop as a member of the ITHCP Programme Council. She shared her role in reviewing and approving ITHCP grant proposals and emphasized the importance of information exchange between KfW and ITHCP grantees. She reiterated the role of ITHCP as a flagship programme for tiger conservation and its commitment to working collaboratively with partners to achieve its goals. She thanked IUCN for organizing the workshop and looked forward to learning from the grantees' experiences.

This was followed by introduction of the participants allowing everyone to get acquainted. Following the introduction, the group gathered for a photo to commemorate the event followed by a coffee break which provided a chance for informal networking and conversation.

Following the break, Phurba Lhendup, the ITHCP coordinator presented an overview of the Integrated Tiger Habitat Conservation Programme (ITHCP) offering a broad picture, starting with the overall goals and vision and then focusing on the successes highlighting positive impacts achieved during Phase I and updates on Phases II through IV.

Recognizing the value of past experiences Phurba presented the Phase I evaluation report placing a particular emphasis on the recommendations outlined in the report, underlining their importance in guiding future actions for the programme.

3. TECHNICAL THEMATIC SESSION

The Technical Thematic Sessions focused on providing grantees with in-depth knowledge and experience in key areas of tiger conservation. These sessions covered Tiger Monitoring, Human-Wildlife Conflict, Habitat Management and Community Engagement. Each session was facilitated by ITHCP Programme Advisory Committee (PAC) members following the sequence below:

- **Session introduction**: Each of the Technical Thematic Sessions was opened by a facilitator, who was a PAC member and an expert on the particular topic being discussed. The facilitators played a crucial role in setting the stage for the sessions by providing a comprehensive introduction to the topic and highlighting its importance in tiger conservation.
- **Grantees presentations**: Following the expert introductions, each of the Technical Thematic Sessions featured presentations from three grantees who shared their experiences implementing their ITHCP projects. These presentations provided valuable insights into the practical application of the session's topics in real-world conservation settings.
- **Group discussion**: Following the presentations, participants engaged in structured group discussions to encourage peer-to-peer learning and exchange of ideas, facilitated by IUCN staff in each group. Among the groups a note taker was selected to take notes on the key takeaways and action points. These note-takers were responsible for summarizing the group discussions and presenting their findings to

the plenary session, allowing all participants to benefit from the collective insights and recommendations. Guided by the session lead and the group facilitator, each group work session followed a structured process:

- Contextual understanding: Participants delved into the thematic topic of the session, gaining a comprehensive understanding of its significance, challenges, and potentials.
- Challenge identification: Groups collaboratively identified challenges and obstacles related to the session's theme, drawing from their own experiences and knowledge.
- Opportunity exploration: Group explored opportunities and innovative approaches that can address the identified challenges.
- Solution development: Group collectively crafted practical solutions and strategies tailored to the challenges discussed. These strategies encompassed a range of perspectives, combining scientific insights with on-the-ground realities.

The session format and questions used is provided in **Annex 3**.

3.1 Session 1 - Tiger Monitoring

Session introduction

This session focused on sharing knowledge and skills related to conducting research and monitoring activities for tiger conservation including methodologies, data analysis and interpretation techniques to collect and analyze data using appropriate techniques and effectively communicate research findings. The session aimed at gaining insights into the best practices and challenges of assessing tiger populations, monitoring distribution and abundance, and evaluating habitat quality, which aid in identifying priority areas for conservation and developing evidence-based management plans.

The session was opened by Dr. Sunarto, a tiger expert with extensive experience in tiger monitoring techniques, especially with the Sumatran tigers in Indonesia, and also Co-chair of the IUCN SSC Indonesia Species Specialist Group. Dr. Sunarto began by emphasizing the critical role of tiger monitoring in understanding tiger populations, identifying trends, and informing conservation management decisions. He also shared the lessons from monitoring of tigers in Central Sumatra.

Grantees presentations

Presentation 1: *Tiger Research and Monitoring in Bhutan* - Tashi Dhendup, Head of the Bhutan Tiger Centre

The first presentation kicked off with an engaging presentation by Tashi Dhendup, Head of the Bhutan Tiger Centre. He delved into the intricate world of tiger monitoring in Bhutan, emphasizing the country's rich biodiversity and the unique challenges posed by high-altitude environments.

Bhutan's extensive network of protected areas serves as a haven for diverse ecosystems and habitats, including the critically endangered tiger population. Tashi highlighted the remarkable adaptability of tigers, inhabiting altitudes ranging from 100 meters to 4,000 meters above sea level. To effectively monitor tiger populations in these challenging landscapes, Bhutan employs a multifaceted approach, utilizing advanced techniques such

as conservation genetics, radio telemetry, and eDNA monitoring. These methods provide invaluable insights into tiger movements, interactions, and population dynamics.

Tashi acknowledged the transformative impact of ITHCP Phase I in supporting tiger conservation efforts. The funding and expertise have enabled the development and implementation of effective monitoring strategies, leading to a deeper understanding of tiger populations and improved conservation outcomes. Building upon these successes, ITHCP Phase III is poised to strengthen tiger conservation in high-altitude regions in Bhutan on enhancing monitoring efforts, addressing human-tiger conflict, and promoting sustainable livelihoods for local communities, ensuring the long-term persistence of tigers in these pristine landscapes.

Despite the remarkable progress, Tashi acknowledged the enduring challenges associated with operating in remote high-altitude areas. The high costs of monitoring, limited availability of equipment and laboratory facilities, and the need for adequate human resources remain critical factors that need to be addressed.

Presentation 2: *Tiger population monitoring in Tanintharyi Landscape, Myanmar - Ngwe Lwin and Saw Soe Aung, Fauna & Flora International, Myanmar Programme*

Ngwe Lwin provided an overview of tiger population monitoring efforts in the Tanintharyi Forest Landscape of Myanmar, highlighting the region's significance for tiger conservation and the challenges faced in conducting effective monitoring.

Myanmar plays a crucial role in tiger conservation, harboring a significant portion of the tiger population in Southeast Asia. Among the country's diverse ecosystems, the Tanintharyi Forest Landscape in Southern Myanmar stands out as a vital stronghold for tigers and other endangered species. It forms a critical link between Myanmar and Western Forest Complex (WEFCOM) in Thailand, enabling tiger movement and maintaining genetic connectivity across the broader region which is essential for long-term tiger conservation.

Camera trapping has emerged as a valuable tool for monitoring tiger populations in the Tanintharyi Forest Landscape. This technique has enabled the identification of tiger habitats, home ranges, and movement patterns, providing valuable insights for conservation planning. ITHCP Phase I played a pivotal role in strengthening tiger monitoring efforts in the Tanintharyi Forest Landscape. The project supported the deployment of camera traps, data analysis, and capacity building for rangers and community members involved in monitoring activities. Building upon the successes of Phase I, ITHCP Phase II is focused on community-based tiger conservation. This approach empowers local communities to actively participate in tiger monitoring and conservation initiatives, fostering a sense of stewardship and responsibility for the tiger population.

The presentation highlighted the challenges encountered in tiger monitoring, including remoteness, political instability, and the threat posed by hunters. Despite these challenges, the project has made significant progress, including establishment of trust with armed groups and the Karen Forest Department, engagement of 16 communities in no-hunting commitments, formation of 16 village conservation groups, collaboration with the Freeland Foundation in Thailand and partnerships with both the Myanmar and Thai governments.

Presentation 3: *Conserving tigers and indigenous knowledge in the Dawna-Karen Hills, Karen State, Myanmar* **- Demelza Stokes, Wildlife Asia**

Demelza Stokes of Wildlife Asia presented the ITHCP initiative, challenges, and opportunities, highlighting the importance of collaborative conservation approaches and the unique role of Indigenous communities.

The presentation focused on the ITHCP project sites within the Kawthoolei Dawna Range Landscape, a critical tiger habitat within the larger Dawna Tenasserim Landscape. The Salween Peace Park, an indigenous-led conservation effort, is the main site of the project.

The presentation delved into the development of a tiger species distribution model, utilizing data from camera trapping and other monitoring methods to map tiger presence and identify potential areas for conservation interventions. It highlighted the achievements of ITHCP Phase I, which focused on law enforcement, ranger station development, equipment provision, wildlife monitoring, capacity building, and sustainable livelihood initiatives. These interventions contributed to improved tiger conservation outcomes in the Dawna-Karen Hills. Then it outlined the progress and plans for ITHCP Phase II, which aims to expand protected areas, enhance wildlife protection measures, promote sustainable livelihoods, and further strengthen tiger monitoring efforts.

The presentation acknowledged the significant challenges faced in conserving tigers in the Dawna-Karen Hills, including political instability, security concerns, remoteness, health and safety risks, travel restrictions, population displacement, human capacity shortages, and the 'brain drain' due to relocation of potential workforce. Despite these challenges, the presentation emphasized the immense opportunities for conservation in this region. The involvement of local Indigenous leaders and communities is crucial for inclusive and rights-based conservation approaches. The remoteness of the area, stemming from the ongoing civil conflict, has slowed down habitat destruction and poaching compared to other regions in Southeast Asia.

Key message from the presentations: The key takeaway message from these three presentations is that tiger monitoring is crucial for understanding tiger populations, identifying trends, and informing conservation management decisions. Different methods are used to monitor tiger populations, such as camera trapping, radio telemetry, and eDNA monitoring. These methods provide valuable insights into tiger movements, interactions, and population dynamics. The importance of using a multifaceted approach to tiger monitoring, employing advanced techniques and collaborating with local communities is paramount.

Group work

This exercise consisted of four groups and each of the groups answered four questions as follows:

1. *What challenges have you encountered in collecting and analysing tiger and prey monitoring data, and how have you overcome them?*
2. *Are there specific technologies or innovations that have improved the effectiveness of your tiger and monitoring efforts?*
3. *How can the collected data be used for evidence-based conservation decisions?*
4. *How effective are the protection (patrolling/monitoring) measures used and what are the challenges?*

The group work report for this session is provided in **Annex 4** and the summary is provided below:

1. What challenges have you encountered in collecting and analysing tiger and prey monitoring data, and how have you overcome them?

Challenges	Solutions sought
Securing government permission: Obtaining necessary permits and approvals from relevant government agencies is a lengthy and complex process.	Engaging with government agencies from the project inception to foster a collaborative approach and facilitate the securing of necessary permissions.
Data sharing challenges: Effectively sharing data with government agencies can be hindered by differing data formats, incompatible software, and privacy concerns.	
Technical capacity limitations: Implementing effective monitoring protocols and interpreting data accurately require specialized technical expertise.	Consulting with members of the ITHCP Programme Advisory Committee to provide technical support. Collaborating with research institutions and universities to provide access to specialized equipment, expertise, and training in monitoring techniques.
Camera trap theft: Camera traps are often targeted by poachers or individuals seeking to disrupt conservation efforts.	Offering incentives to communities for their cooperation and incorporating livelihood programs to strengthen local support for conservation efforts and reduce resistance to monitoring activities.
Remote and difficult terrain: Tiger habitats often extend into remote and rugged areas, making fieldwork difficult and expensive.	The use of innovative technologies, such as drone surveys and remote camera traps to expand monitoring coverage even in remote and challenging locations.
Lack of standard monitoring protocol: The absence of standardized monitoring protocols can lead to inconsistencies in data collection and analysis.	Standardize monitoring and data collection methods across project considering the local context
Lack of resources: Conservation organizations often face financial constraints that limit their ability to invest in equipment, training, and data analysis infrastructure.	Integrating project activities with existing government plans and policies to enhance project legitimacy, facilitate collaboration and leverage sharing of resources
Limited access to equipment: Conservation organizations and local communities often lack access to specialized equipment required for tiger and prey monitoring.	
Huge area to cover: Monitoring tiger populations and their prey over vast and remote areas poses a significant challenge.	The use of innovative technologies, such as drone surveys and remote camera traps to expand monitoring coverage in remote and challenging locations.
Challenges in installing camera traps in mangroves: mangrove forests are often inaccessible, and challenging to navigate, making it difficult to deploy and maintain camera traps effectively.	*This is a case in Sundarbans and no solutions were discussed*

Security concerns especially in Myanmar: Political instability and armed conflicts in some tiger range countries, such as Myanmar, pose significant challenges to conservation efforts and data collection activities.	*No solutions were discussed for this*

2. Are there specific technologies or innovations that have improved the effectiveness of your tiger and monitoring efforts?

The group discussions highlighted the adoption of various innovative technologies and innovations that have enhanced the effectiveness of tiger and prey monitoring efforts. The most common technologies or innovations being used are discussed below.

Vertical camera trapping: Traditional camera traps are often mounted at eye level, which can limit the coverage. Vertical camera trapping involves positioning camera traps at higher elevations, capturing images and video of tigers and other animals moving through the canopy. This approach has proven particularly effective in dense forests and areas with steep terrain.

Environmental DNA (eDNA): eDNA is a revolutionary technique that detects and identifies the genetic material of organisms found in environmental samples, such as water, soil, and scat. By analysing eDNA, conservationists can assess the presence and abundance of tigers and prey species without the need for direct observation. This approach is particularly useful in areas with limited access or where direct monitoring is challenging and has proven effective in Bhutan.

Real-time AI camera: Real-time artificial intelligence (AI) cameras incorporate AI algorithms to identify and classify animals in real-time, providing immediate alerts when a tiger or other target species is detected. These cameras are strategically placed in areas where poaching or other threats are prevalent, allowing rapid response and intervention.

Thermal Camera: Thermal cameras detect heat signatures, enabling night vision and monitoring of animals in low-light conditions. This technology is particularly useful for detecting tigers and other nocturnal species in dense forests or areas with limited visibility.

Poachers Cams: Hidden cameras that can capture evidence of poaching activities, helping to identify poachers and deter future offenses. These cameras can also provide valuable insights into poaching methods and patterns.

Tiger Collaring: Satellite collars track the movements of tigers, revealing their home ranges, migration patterns, and interactions with other wildlife. This information is crucial for understanding tiger ecology and developing effective conservation strategies.

M-STrIPES: Monitoring System for Tigers - Intensive Protection and Ecological Status (M-STrIPES) is a software-based monitoring system launched across Indian tiger reserves by the Indian government's National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) in 2010. This is being widely used in India.

SMART: Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool-based application utilizes mobile phones to collect data on tiger and prey sightings, expanding monitoring coverage to remote areas. This is the most widely used tool for tiger monitoring and protection.

Citizen science: Citizen science initiatives to leverage the collective knowledge and participation of volunteers to collect valuable data on tiger and prey populations. This approach can significantly expand monitoring coverage, particularly in remote and inaccessible areas. It can foster a sense of ownership and stewardship among local communities, helping to align their interests with conservation goals. However, this has not been practiced widely and it is rather a recommendation.

The adoption of these innovative technologies and innovations revolutionized tiger and prey monitoring, providing a more comprehensive understanding of population dynamics, habitat use, and the effectiveness of conservation interventions. These tools have also enabled more efficient and cost-effective monitoring strategies, particularly in remote and challenging landscapes. However, not everyone uses these tools.

While the technologies are making headways, there are also challenges in disposing the used camera and batteries (e-waste): responsible disposal of used camera traps and batteries is critical to minimize the environmental impact of monitoring activities. Proper e-waste management practices help protect human health and the environment, ensuring that these materials are not disposed of in ways that can lead to pollution and harm wildlife.

3. How can the collected data be used for evidence-based conservation decisions?

The group discussions highlighted the crucial role of tiger and prey monitoring data in informing evidence-based conservation decisions. Some of the common use of data that emerged from the group discussions are provided below.

Developing action plans and strategies: Comprehensive tiger and prey monitoring data provides a foundation for developing robust conservation action plans and strategies. The data can be used to identify areas of concern, prioritize conservation interventions, and track the effectiveness of conservation efforts over time.

Sharing with local conservation groups: Sharing monitoring data with local conservation groups empowers them to make informed decisions about their own conservation activities. This collaboration fosters a sense of ownership and stewardship among local communities, contributing to long-term conservation success.

Evidence of site importance for the policy makers: Presenting monitoring data to government agencies, especially policy makers, can serve as compelling evidence to support the protection and management of critical tiger habitats. This data can influence policy decisions, resource allocation, and the implementation of effective conservation measures.

Landscape and protected area management planning: Tiger and prey monitoring data plays a vital role in landscape and protected area management planning. This data can inform the design of protected areas, the allocation of resources, and the development of sustainable land-use practices that support tiger conservation across broader landscapes.

Addressing wildlife crime: Monitoring data can be used to identify hotspots for poaching and illegal wildlife trade, enabling law enforcement agencies to target their efforts more effectively. Sharing data with local communities can empower them to participate in anti-poaching activities and deter illegal activities in their areas.

Transboundary collaboration: Sharing tiger and prey monitoring data across different countries and jurisdictions can enhance understanding of population dynamics and threats, facilitating transboundary collaboration.

Tiger reintroduction programmes: Monitoring data can be used to identify suitable sites for tiger reintroduction, considering habitat quality, prey availability, and potential threats.

Countering human-wildlife conflicts: Data can be used in identifying areas with frequent human-tiger interactions and help focus conflict mitigation efforts, such as community education and alternative livelihood programs.

It has been recommended that establishing a data repository is very crucial in order to manage and use the data effectively. Creating centralized data repositories, developing data sharing guidelines and promoting data sharing is paramount. On the other hand, providing training to conservation staff on data management techniques, including data collection, processing, and analysis, ensures the quality and integrity of the data which is crucial.

In conclusion, the group discussion underscored the transformative power of tiger and prey monitoring data in guiding evidence-based conservation decision-making. By leveraging this valuable information, conservationists can develop effective strategies, engage local communities, and advocate for policies that safeguard the future of tigers.

4. How effective are the protection (patrolling/monitoring) measures used and what are the challenges?

The most widely adopted tool for protection measures is SMART. The group discussion highlighted real-time SMART patrolling as an effective tool for tiger conservation. This application utilizes technology to enhance traditional patrolling methods, providing real-time information and enabling a more proactive approach to anti-poaching operations. Some of the advantages experienced from using these tools are discussed below:

- Real-time GPS tracking and communication enable rangers to monitor their position, coordinate with each other, and receive alerts about suspicious activities.
- Armed forces, for example in Nepal, are deployed with this tool in areas of concern, reducing the likelihood of successful poaching attempts.
- Real-time data collection can facilitate the identification of poachers, confiscation of illegal wildlife products, and prosecution of offenders.
- Information can be shared with local communities, fostering collaboration in conservation efforts and discouraging poaching.
- It improves habitat connectivity and reduces human encroachment that helps reduce human-tiger interactions and associated conflicts.
- It protects existing tiger habitats and restoring degraded areas, which is essential for providing tigers with suitable habitat for survival and reproduction.

However, there are a number of challenges in implementing SMART as discussed below:

- The implementation and maintenance of technology is expensive, potentially limiting its wider adoption and sustainable financing to support the continuation of program is necessary.
- Reliable communication infrastructure and power sources are essential for real-time data transmission, which are limited to remote areas.

- Rangers and other field personnel require training in the use of technology and data management to effectively utilize SMART patrolling systems.
- Ensuring the acceptance and trust of local communities is crucial for the success of SMART patrolling, which sometimes is challenging.

3.2 Session 2 - Human Wildlife Conflict

Session introduction

The Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC) session was facilitated by Dr. Ashley Brooks, ITHCP Programme Advisory Committee member, and explored the ongoing challenges and potential solutions for mitigating conflicts between humans and wildlife. Dr. Brooks' presentation, titled "Human-Wildlife Conflicts: Humanity's Oldest Unsolved Challenge?", highlighted key themes throughout the session.

Dr. Brooks acknowledged the long history of HWC, dating back to ancient times when people employed rudimentary methods like fencing, scarecrows, and guarding livestock to protect themselves and their resources. This historical perspective emphasizes the enduring nature of this challenge and the continuous efforts to address it. He then reviewed currently used HWC mitigation actions, providing insight into common strategies employed across various contexts.

The session emphasized the importance of understanding six key elements for effective HWC management:

- **Policy and Legislation**: Protocols, principles, provisions and measures undertaken by authorities which are stipulated in legislation and government plans.
- **Prevention**: Stopping or preventing HWC before an event occurs.
- **Mitigation**: Reducing the impacts after a HWC event occurs.
- **Understanding the Conflict**: Research into all aspects of the conflict profile.
- **Monitoring**: Measuring the performance and effectiveness of HWC management interventions over time.
- **Response**: Immediate and short-term measures taken to alleviate a specific or ongoing HWC event.

By acknowledging the historical context, understanding current practices, and focusing on the six key elements, the HWC session provided a valuable framework for participants to approach this complex challenge.

Grantees presentation

Presentation 1: *Transcending Boundaries for Tiger Recovery: The Chitwan-Parsa-Valmiki Complex in Nepal and India- Phase II – Ananta Ram Bhandari, Kamlesh K. Maurya and Katjuscha Dörfel, WWF*

The presentation presented overall achievements and specific conservation challenges of the project and delved into the complexities of HWC within the project area. Statistics provided valuable insights into the frequency and nature of these conflicts, highlighting the need for multifaceted solutions. The approach to mitigating HWC encompassed preventative measures, awareness programs, and alternative livelihood options. Preventative measures aimed to address the root causes of conflict, while awareness programs fostered community understanding and support for conservation efforts.

Notably, the presentation emphasized the importance of offering alternative livelihoods to reduce reliance of the communities on resources that might bring them into conflict with wildlife. A successful working model for the human wildlife coexistence was presented.

Presentation 2: *Protecting Tigers, People, and their Vital Habitats in the Sundarban Delta in India and Bangladesh* **– Samir Kr. Sinha, Wildlife Trust of India**

The presentation provided a concise overview of the project, outlining its primary goal: safeguarding tigers, local communities, and the critically important Sundarban Delta ecosystem. Conservation challenges in this unique landscape were acknowledged, including human-tiger conflict, high dependency on forest resources, and the ever-present threat of climate change.

With these challenges in mind, the project team embarked on various activities, including community engagement programmes and conflict mitigation strategies. Their efforts yielded promising outcomes, most notably a reduction in human fatalities due to tiger encounters. Engaging local communities as active participants in conservation proved instrumental in achieving this success.

Monitoring prey base in the Bangladesh Sundarbans was another crucial aspect of the project, to inform decision-making and effective conservation strategies. However, the presentation also highlighted ongoing challenges, such as securing long-term funding and addressing the complex issue of human-wildlife coexistence in densely populated areas.

Despite these challenges, the project shared valuable best practices in managing human-tiger conflict. These included community-based monitoring initiatives, fostering alternative livelihoods to reduce dependence on forest resources, and promoting tolerance and understanding between humans and tigers.

Presentation 3: *Human wildlife Co-existence in Nepal* **- Naresh Subedi, National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC)**

The presentation began by offering a brief introduction to the organization, highlighting their dedication to conservation efforts across the country.

Recognizing the significant challenges posed by human-wildlife conflicts in Nepal, NTNC presented various measures they have adopted to manage them. This included their involvement in the ITHCP-supported "High Altitude Tiger Project," aimed at safeguarding tigers and fostering peaceful coexistence in these critical habitats.

The presentation delved into the project's objectives and key activities, including:

- Drafting a provincial strategy for big cat conservation.
- Identifying, mapping, and assessing crucial wildlife habitats, including bottlenecks and corridors.
- Conducting camera trap surveys, line-transect surveys, and occupancy surveys to monitor wildlife populations.
- Establishing and mobilizing six alternative livelihood sub-committees (community banks) to address potential resource conflicts.
- Rescuing 12 wild animals and training 26 frontline staff on wildlife rescue and rehabilitation.
- Training 26 youths as master trainers in human-wildlife coexistence.

Key message from the presentations: The key takeaway message from these three presentations is that there is no one-size-fits-all solution to mitigating human-wildlife conflict. However, by understanding the historical context, current practices, and focusing on six key elements (policy and legislation, prevention, mitigation, understanding the conflict, monitoring, and response), stakeholders can develop effective strategies to address this complex challenge. There are a number of successful strategies that can be employed to mitigate human-wildlife conflict, including preventative measures, awareness programs, and alternative livelihood options.

The presentations also highlighted the importance of community engagement, alternative livelihood options, and fostering tolerance and understanding between humans and wildlife.

Group work

This exercise consisted of four groups and each of the groups answered three questions as follows:

1. *What are the local or regional nuances in human-wildlife conflicts (HWC) in your project areas, and how can they be effectively addressed?*
2. *Are there any successful case studies or innovative solutions from your projects that can be shared with others?*
3. *What are some of the challenges faced in managing HWC and what potential solutions could be considered?*

The group work report for this session is provided in **Annex 5** and the summary is provided below:

1. *What are the local or regional nuances in human-wildlife conflicts (HWC) in your project areas, and how can they be effectively addressed?*

Across all four groups, several key themes emerged regarding the local or regional nuances of HWC and potential solutions.

Understanding the Specifics

- Variation in conflict species: Different regions experience conflicts with diverse wildlife, requiring tailored approaches.
- Cultural and traditional ties: Local beliefs and practices significantly influence both conflicts and solutions.
- Socio-economic factors: Livelihoods, land use, and community dynamics play a crucial role in shaping HWC.
- Ecological pressures: Prey depletion, habitat degradation, and corridor disruption contribute to increased conflict risks.
- Psychological impacts: The stress and fear associated with HWC extend beyond economic losses.

Addressing the Challenges

- Community-based solutions: Empowering local communities, incorporating traditional knowledge, and fostering collaboration are crucial for effective and sustainable management.
- Addressing root causes: Tackling underlying issues like habitat loss and resource depletion is essential for long-term solutions.

- **Context-specific approaches**: Flexible policy frameworks and solutions adapted to regional variations and cultural contexts are key.
- **Education and awareness**: Raising awareness among both communities and stakeholders about HWC, its impacts, and solutions fosters understanding and behavior change.

Effective Strategies

- **Rapid response and mitigation**: Implementing quick response mechanisms and effective mitigation measures minimize damage and build trust.
- **Livelihood and resource management**: Promoting sustainable livelihoods and managing resources responsibly can reduce conflict drivers.
- **Compensation and incentives**: Establishing fair compensation systems and providing incentives for conservation efforts encourage community participation.
- **Monitoring and early warning**: Tracking wildlife movements and informing communities about potential risks helps prepare for incidents.
- **Collaboration and knowledge sharing**: Partnering with different stakeholders and sharing successful practices across regions fosters collective learning and progress.

By acknowledging the diverse nuances of HWC and emphasizing community-based, context-specific solutions, the groups offered valuable insights for achieving more harmonious coexistence between humans and wildlife.

2. Are there any successful case studies or innovative solutions from your projects that can be shared with others?

Across all four groups, several key themes emerged regarding successful practices and innovative solutions to address HWC.

Knowledge and Empowerment

- **Leveraging local knowledge**: Understanding animal behavior through local wisdom to empower communities and inform targeted mitigation strategies.
- **Bridging the knowledge gap**: Combining scientific knowledge with local understanding for effective education and community engagement.
- **Community empowerment**: Building capacity and providing resources to local communities to equip them to actively participate in conflict management.

Financial Considerations

- **Compensation programs**: Financial support for HWC losses fosters tolerance and reduces retaliatory actions.
- **Quick relief funds**: Immediate financial assistance minimizes hardship and encourages cooperation after incidents.
- **Policy advocacy for compensation**: Securing policy support ensures fair compensation, minimizing resentment and encouraging tolerance.

Rapid Response and Preparedness

- **Rapid response teams**: Well-trained and equipped teams for immediate intervention minimize damage and promote safety.

- **Proactive management**: Identifying problematic animals for relocation to offer a targeted approach to address specific conflict concerns.
- **Preparedness measures**: Training communities in first aid and wildlife encounter response to equip them for various situations.

Community Engagement and Sustainability

- **Community-based response**: Forest and community rapid response team to demonstrate the power of local engagement and ownership.
- **Indigenous knowledge and practices**: Integrating traditional practices into conflict mitigation to foster cultural sensitivity and community ownership.
- **Community engagement and investment**: Involving communities in developing and implementing solutions to build capacity and ensures long-term sustainability.

Collaboration and Advocacy

- **Policy advocacy**: Lobbying for broader-level support to secure resources and long-term solutions for HWC management.
- **Stakeholder collaboration**: Engaging all stakeholders for a comprehensive and inclusive approach to HWC management.
- **Influencing customary leaders**: Collaborating with community leaders to encourage widespread participation and positive action.

3. What are some of the challenges faced in managing HWC and what potential solutions could be considered?

Analyzing the discussions from all four groups reveals a comprehensive picture of the complex challenges and promising solutions surrounding human-wildlife conflict (HWC) management:

Key Challenges

- **Diverse conflicts**: Different regions and communities experience varied HWC types, requiring context-specific solutions.
- **Knowledge gaps and communication**: Differing understandings and limited knowledge exchange between stakeholders necessitate inclusive communication and knowledge sharing.
- **Resource constraints**: Lack of funding, manpower, and data hinder long-term implementation of effective strategies.
- **Community impacts**: Financial losses, safety risks, and psychological trauma disproportionately burden local communities, leading to resentment and resistance.
- **Unsustainable solutions**: Short-term, top-down approaches and inadequate benefit sharing hinder long-term effectiveness and community buy-in.
- **Climate change**: Shifting animal behavior due to climate change necessitates adapting management plans and incorporating climate projections.

Promising Solutions

- **Community empowerment**: Capacity building, training, and resource provision empower communities to actively participate in HWC management to foster ownership and agency.

- <u>Financial incentives</u>: Exploring compensation, insurance schemes, and livelihood alternatives incentivizes participation to reduce community burdens.
- <u>Equity and benefit sharing</u>: Transparent and equitable distribution of benefits, involving communities in decision-making to build trust and promote sustainable solutions.
- <u>Collaboration and knowledge sharing</u>: Partnering with diverse stakeholders, sharing knowledge, and disseminating successful practices through open communication to strengthen collective efforts.
- <u>Context-specific strategies</u>: Tailoring solutions to the unique needs and circumstances of each region and community to solve context specific conflict.
- <u>Long-term sustainability</u>: Designing holistic and comprehensive projects with a long-term perspective ensures lasting impact to address root causes.
- <u>Addressing psychological impacts</u>: Recognizing and providing mental health support and community-based coping mechanisms for those affected by HWC.

3.3 Session 3 - Habitat Management

Session introduction

Hasan A. Rahman, a member of the ITHCP Programme Advisory Committee, facilitated this session. His introductory presentation, titled "Managing habitats for tigers and their prey: Challenges and Solutions," laid the groundwork for further discussions by exploring fundamental concepts and best practices.

Rahman began by establishing the importance of habitat, defining it as the space where tigers and their prey find everything they need to survive and thrive. He discussed the structure and composition of tiger habitats, highlighting key elements like prey availability, water sources, cover for hunting and raising young, and corridors for movement.

The presentation then shifted focus to the specific needs of tigers within their habitats, emphasizing the importance of adequate prey populations, minimal disturbance, and connectivity between suitable areas. Recognizing the dynamic nature of habitats, Rahman addressed the question of "when" management becomes necessary, outlining situations like habitat degradation, fragmentation, or insufficient prey base.

Drawing on experiences across tiger range countries, the presentation explored various habitat management techniques employed, including anti-poaching patrols, fire management, prey base enhancement, and community engagement initiatives.

A critical aspect of the presentation was the analysis of challenges identified during the Final Evaluation of ITHCP Phase I regarding habitat management. By acknowledging these challenges, such as limited resources, community involvement, and conflicting land-use practices, Rahman paved the way for discussions on potential solutions and improvements.

To conclude, the presentation shared valuable insights into best practices for effective habitat management. These included collaborative approaches, data-driven decision-making, and long-term planning that considers the needs of both tigers and humans. Additionally, different types of habitat management were categorized, providing a framework for understanding the diverse strategies employed in various contexts.

Grantees presentation

Presentation 1: *Investigating and addressing Tiger conservation in Sikkim-The Eastern Himalayas* **- Amar Nath Choudhary, Global Tiger Forum (GTF)**

The Global Tiger Forum (GTF) brought their expertise to the habitat management session with a presentation titled "Investigating and Addressing Tiger Conservation in Sikkim-The Eastern Himalayas." They began by offering a brief introduction to their organization, highlighting their global commitment to tiger conservation efforts.

Shifting the focus to Sikkim, the presentation shared insights into tiger presence within this Eastern Himalayan state. Following this, they provided background information on their ITHCP-supported project in Sikkim, outlining its expected outcomes and key activities. The project updates revealed progress made in various areas. Notably, the development of data collection protocol for tiger conservation, ensuring systematic monitoring of populations and their habitats. Recognizing the importance of capacity building, they developed a training manual on protected area management and equipped frontline forest staff and community monitors with the necessary tools and techniques for wildlife and habitat monitoring. Additionally, camera trap surveys are being conducted to gather valuable data on tiger distribution and activity patterns.

Beyond monitoring, the GTF actively engaged in habitat management interventions. These included forest restoration initiatives, awareness programs to foster community understanding and participation, and the restoration of vital water sources like lakes and water holes. These efforts aim to address critical threats to tiger habitat and contribute to long-term conservation success.

Presentation 2: *Supporting transboundary tiger recovery in India and Nepal* **- Matthew Woolf, Abarta Pandey and Harish Guleria, Zoological Society of London (ZSL)**

The Zoological Society of London (ZSL) began their presentation by introducing themselves as a global conservation organization and outlining their modality of implementation.

The focus then shifted to their ITHCP-supported initiatives in the Terai Arc Landscape, spanning Nepal and India. The presentation covered all their Phase I-III projects, highlighting the objectives and the outcomes achieved. These included a demonstrable increase in both tiger and prey species populations, a positive shift in community perceptions towards conservation, a notable reduction in human-wildlife conflict incidents, and an overall improvement in the well-being of local communities.

Zooming in on habitat management specifically, the presentation showcased a series of achievements. These included the development and management of 11 water holes, the maintenance of 104 fire lines to prevent uncontrolled burns, and the management of 130 hectares of grassland to ensure optimal grazing conditions for prey species. Additionally, ZSL undertook the restoration of 8.05 hectares of degraded land, contributing to habitat rehabilitation. Recognizing the importance of human capacity, they provided training to 208 frontline staff on effective protected area management practices. Furthermore, the development of two protected area management plans ensured a strategic and long-term approach to habitat conservation.

Beyond these achievements, the presentation emphasized the significance of transboundary collaboration and learning. ZSL actively fostered knowledge exchange and joint conservation efforts between Nepal and India, recognizing the interconnected nature of the Terai Arc Landscape and the shared responsibility for tiger recovery. While celebrating successes, the presentation also acknowledged few challenges encountered during project implementation.

Presentation 3: *Multilayer approach for habitat management in Indonesia* **– Ina Nisrina, WCS Indonesia**

Taking a unique approach with a poster presentation, WCS Indonesia shed light on their multifaceted strategy for habitat management in their session. They emphasized the importance of a multilayered approach, encompassing various crucial elements:

- **Habitat protection**: Achieved through SMART patrolling methods, ensuring effective surveillance and intervention to safeguard critical tiger habitats.
- **Financing**: Recognizing the need for sustainable funding mechanisms, WCS actively explored innovative solutions to support long-term habitat management efforts.
- **Capacity building**: Equipping frontline staff and communities with the necessary knowledge and skills was identified as a key factor in successful conservation initiatives.
- **Community participation**: Vital role of local communities in protecting tiger habitats. Their approach actively engaged communities, fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility for conservation goals.
- **Research and monitoring**: Data-driven decision-making was underscored through ongoing research and monitoring activities, allowing for targeted interventions and adaptations based on scientific evidence.
- **One Health approach**: Recognizing the interconnectedness of human and animal health, WCS incorporated a One Health approach, addressing potential disease transmission risks and promoting healthy coexistence between communities and wildlife.

One noteworthy highlight of their project was the successful reduction in human-wildlife conflict incidents. This was achieved through the establishment of tiger-proof enclosures for livestock, addressing a major source of conflict and mitigating risks for both communities and tigers. Furthermore, WCS actively engaged with local communities, fostering support for conservation efforts.

Key message from the presentations: A key takeaway message from these three presentations is that effective habitat management for tigers requires a multifaceted approach that considers various elements beyond just protecting the physical habitat itself. The importance of collaboration was also emphasized, especially in transboundary landscapes where tiger conservation efforts require cooperation and coordinated action across national borders. It highlighted the need to move beyond a narrow definition of habitat management and embrace a broader approach that considers the ecological, social, and economic aspects of tiger conservation.

Group work

This exercise consisted of four groups and each of the groups answered four questions as follows:

The group work report for this session is provided in **Annex 6** and the summary is provided below:

1. What are the most critical tiger habitats issues in your projects, and how can they be mitigated?

Habitat management issues identified include:

- **Habitat loss and degradation**: Deforestation, infrastructure development, agriculture, mining, and human encroachment are shrinking and degrading tiger habitats.
- **Habitat fragmentation**: Roads, railways, and other infrastructure create barriers, isolating tiger populations and hindering movement.
- **Inadequate prey availability**: Poaching, habitat loss, and grazing competition with livestock is reducing prey availability, threatening tiger survival.
- **Livestock grazing and habitat alteration**: Unsustainable grazing practices is degrading habitat, compete with prey, and increase conflict with communities.
- **Climate change impacts**: Rising temperatures, changing precipitation patterns, and extreme weather events are threatening habitats and prey availability.
- **Emerging diseases**: New threats like Canine Distemper Virus pose additional challenges to tiger populations.
- **Land use change**: Development projects and changing land-use practices are leading to habitat loss and fragmentation.
- **Absence of habitat management guidelines**: Lack of clear guidelines leading to inconsistent practices, ineffective management, and potential harm to habitats.
- **Lack of resources and capacity**: Limited funding, personnel, training, and equipment hinder effective habitat management.

Potential mitigation strategies identified include:

- **Smart green infrastructure**: Constructing wildlife corridors and safe passages across barriers.
- **Habitat management**: Enhancing prey populations through restoration and management.
- **Sustainable grazing practices**: Implementing carrying capacity studies, rotational grazing, and alternative livelihoods for communities.
- **Landscape-level approach**: Managing entire landscapes to create corridors, minimize fragmentation, and build resilience.
- **Invasive species management**: Early detection, rapid response, and control programs.
- **Climate-resilient management**: Integrating climate considerations into plans and focusing on building habitat resilience.

- **Improved land-use planning**: Developing spatial plans that prioritize tiger conservation and minimize conflict with human activities.
- **Strengthened regulations and law enforcement**: Enacting and enforcing stricter regulations to protect habitats and deter unsustainable practices.
- **Regular monitoring and intervention**: Implementing patrolling, monitoring, and habitat restoration activities.
- **Capacity building**: Providing training, resources, and equipment to conservation personnel and communities on habitat management.
- **Sustainable management practices**: Promoting rotational grazing, predator-proof enclosures, and alternative livelihoods to reduce pressure on habitats.
- **Develop evidence-based guidelines**: Collaborate with experts, researchers, and stakeholders to create context-specific guidelines for different habitat types and species.

2. Are there specific habitat restoration or protection techniques that have worked well in your projects?

Some of the habitat restoration or protection techniques that have worked well are discussed below, but it should be noted that these techniques are not explicitly being implemented.

- **Connectivity restoration**: Reconnecting fragmented habitats crucial for animal movement, gene flow, and population health. Techniques include wildlife corridors, green bridges, and underpasses.
- **Smart green infrastructure**: Integrating ecological considerations into infrastructure development that minimizes fragmentation and promotes coexistence. Examples include wildlife crossings, green roofs, and permeable surfaces.
- **Water resource management**: Ensuring adequate water availability, especially in drought-prone areas supporting diverse ecosystems and benefiting various species, for example water hole management.
- **Native species restoration**: Reestablishing native plant communities to provide essential food, shelter, and breeding grounds for wildlife, and for the natural ecosystem functions.
- **Adaptive management**: Continuously monitoring and evaluating to allow flexible adjustments to strategies, ensuring their effectiveness over time.
- **Mechanized management**: Large-scale tasks like invasive species removal, vegetation control, and planting site preparation addressed with machinery.
- **Integrated development planning**: Combining community development goals with habitat management for long-term sustainability and addresses both conservation and human needs.
- **Local needs integration**: Addressing community concerns and incorporating their needs into management plans to generate local support for conservation efforts.
- **Stakeholder consultation**: Regular and transparent communication with all stakeholders to build trust to incorporate diverse perspectives and leads to more effective solutions.
- **Local knowledge utilization**: Leveraging valuable insights and traditional practices from local communities to enhance the effectiveness of conservation strategies.

3. How can habitat management strategies be integrated with the conservation goals of local communities?

All four groups identified key strategies for integrating habitat management with community conservation goals as follows:

Community engagement and empowerment

- Participatory planning: Involve communities from the outset, allowing them to voice concerns, priorities, and traditional knowledge in decision-making processes.
- Benefit sharing: Ensure communities directly benefit from conservation efforts through income generation, resource access, or improved livelihoods.
- Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES): Compensate communities for protecting and restoring habitats that provide essential services like water purification or flood control.
- Sustainable livelihoods: Support communities in adopting sustainable practices like responsible forestry, fishing, or agriculture to minimize habitat degradation.

Communication and Awareness

- Education and awareness: Increase understanding of the value of habitat conservation and its link to community well-being, fostering responsible behavior.
- Transparency and consultation: Ensure open communication and regular consultation with all stakeholders throughout the process, building trust and incorporating diverse perspectives.

Collaborative Management

- Integration of community needs: Address community concerns and integrate their needs into habitat management plans to gain support and ensure long-term sustainability.
- Local knowledge utilization: Leverage valuable insights and traditional practices from local communities to enhance the effectiveness of conservation strategies.
- Zoning and protected areas: Create designated protected areas for strict habitat protection while minimizing human impact and considering community needs for access and benefits.

Additional Considerations

- Context-specific approach: Tailor strategies to the unique cultural, social, and ecological context of each community.
- Conflict resolution mechanisms: Establish clear and accessible channels for addressing grievances and conflicts related to habitat management.
- Monitoring and evaluation: Regularly assess the impact of strategies on both conservation and community development goals, adapting them as needed.

4. *What are some of the challenges faced in habitat management and what potential solutions could be considered?*

Some of the common challenges faced in habitat management included:

- **Absence of clear and context-specific habitat management guidelines**: This leads to inconsistent practices, ineffective management, and potential harm to habitats.

- **Limited knowledge and expertise in habitat management**: This hinders effective decision-making and implementation of best practices.
- **Lack of capacity and resources**: This makes it difficult to implement necessary actions, train personnel, and acquire proper equipment.
- **Lack of effective methodologies**: Inefficient or inappropriate practices fail to achieve conservation goals and can even harm habitats.

Some of the common proposed solution in habitat management included:

- **Developing habitat management guidelines**: Collaborate with experts, researchers, and stakeholders to create context-specific guidelines for different habitats and species.
- **Building capacity through training and knowledge sharing**: Offer training programme, workshops, and knowledge exchange opportunities for local communities, managers, and stakeholders.
- **Securing funding and resources**: Seek grants, explore innovative financing mechanisms, and advocate for increased government support.
- **Developing and adapting new tools and methodologies**: Conduct research and pilot projects to create innovative solutions tailored to specific needs.
- **Building partnerships**: Collaborate with NGOs, research institutions, and private sector actors to share resources and expertise.
- **Decentralizing decision-making**: Empower local communities to participate in planning, implementation, and monitoring of habitat management.
- **Understanding the cause of habitat loss and degradation**: Addressing root cause of habitat degradation, such as unsustainable resource use or infrastructure development.
- **Monitoring and evaluation**: Regular monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of implemented solutions necessary for adapting and improving conservation efforts.

3.4 Session 4 - Community Engagement

Session introduction

The fourth thematic session on community engagement was designed with the objective of sharing information on integrating sustainable livelihood development with tiger conservation. Participants shared about some of the best practices of working with communities, in term of promoting their participation in conservation efforts, empowerment and addressing their socio-economic needs. Participants shared about their insights in diversifying livelihood options, reducing dependence on unsustainable practices, and fostering economic incentives for conservation activities. The session also emphasized capacity building, skill development, market access, and value chain development for community-based products and services.

The session was facilitated by Neema Pathak Broome, member of the ITHCP Programme Advisory Committee from Kalpavriksh India & ICCA Consortium South Asia. Neema kickstarted the session highlighting the importance of community engagement, in terms of acknowledging and respecting communities who have been co-existing and co-evolving with tigers for centuries, decolonizing conservation, and collectively build upon conservation knowledge recognizing local communities as central to achieving conservation goals. She

shared examples of how tigers are regarded as elder brothers in certain tribes. Neema also shed lights on community engagement being a compliance and enabling factor for various targets under the Convention on Biological Diversity's Global Biodiversity Framework, and that inclusive policies are imperative for community engagement. As a stark contrast Neema also shared the lack of inclusive policies for tiger conservation, with lack of role in formal management and conservation by the local communities. This then proceeded with some examples of tiger conservation with community involvement and engagement. The session therefore started with a strong focus on community engagement as a tool to using people's own system with respect to customary rules vs. having a reserve that enforces regulation beyond their control.

Grantees presentation

Presentation 1: *Securing the population of tigers, habitats and biological corridors in Assam, India* – Firoz Ahmed and Jayanta Kumar Sarma, Aaranyak

The presenters shared about their organization and their journey towards turning their focus on being a community-based organization. Firoz shared about working in the Kaziranga Karbi Anglong Landscape and Manas Landscape, which has had a history of seize and how it came back to being community managed in 2003. The presentation focused on the project's approach for community mobilization and engagement, as well as impact and learning from the previous and existing phases. The presentation covered mechanism of community engagement, challenges as well as means of overcoming these challenges, and best practices associated with community engagement.

The team have prioritized consultation with village institution for willingness assessments, identification of beneficiaries, and have also worked with community to identify training and capacity building activities. The team also prioritizes participatory monitoring for periodic review and adaptive planning. The major livelihood activity supported by the project include farming, handicrafts, eco-cultural tourism, agroforestry and eco restoration.

The team shared that through their first phase they have found that traditional and cultural values about nature is what drives communities' interest in conservation, and livelihood activities are also more acceptable and sustainable when it matches with their cultural practices. Jayanta shared that the willingness, doubts, and expectations of communities to projects can differ with time, alongside change in their priorities. He also shared about how the forest floor biodiversity assessment and management has been an ideation by the communities of their project sites themselves, and Aranyak has been collaborating with them for the same. The team shared that they have found an increased acceptance for alternative sustainable livelihood, habitat improvement, participatory natural resource management planning, and eco-cultural tourism through community engagement.

The team also highlighted the message that traditional knowledge systems of the communities should be core while designing livelihoods interventions related to agriculture, agroforestry, plantations and eco-cultural tourism.

Presentation 2: *Advancing human and tiger harmony in Rimbang Baling Wildlife Reserve, Central Sumatran Tiger Landscape* – Agustinus Wijayanto, Khaerul Anwar, Fauzia M. Kusmarani, YAPEKA-INDECON-FHK

The second presentation of the session was conducted by the KERABAT Consortium. The team shared right at the beginning that the reason Khaerul Anwar himself came into

conservation was when he encountered a tiger in the wild, which is similar to the sentiment of the other local people as well, who revere tigers as grandfather. The team started the presentation by giving an overview of Rimbang Baling, starting out from the 1200s, and how conservation has been carried out in the area since.

The team also shared the impacts and outcomes from the earlier and existing phases. The project has been applying various community engagement processes including strengthened coordination with key stakeholders that include village, sub-district, district, province, central levels of Government, as well as NGOs. The team shared that they have signed a pledge of commitment for Rimbang Baling Wildlife Reserve Conservation and Sustainable Livelihood as well. The project has supported at least 20 agricultural demonstration plots in 8 villages benefiting at least 300 households, with improved production of rubber and paddy. Similarly, the project has also worked with communities for ecotourism development, supporting in income generation. The project has also been doing effective conservation outreach in Rimbang Baling through community radio, awareness campaigns, cultural events and jungle treks.

For Phase III, the team shared about community engagement for habitat management as well through effective participatory community-based patrolling and monitoring. A community-based forest survey group was established as Kader Konservasi (Conservation Cadre). Similarly, the project has supported creation of sustainable livelihoods for local communities both inside and adjacent to the Rimbang Baling. This includes agroforestry system, ecotourism, and handicrafts. The team shared that they also emphasize effective governance supported by all stakeholders and communities. They also presented about their activities with customary youth groups, who have been trained for management of tiger habitats in 9 villages.

Overall, the presentation highlighted the various linkages of community engagement with tiger conservation. The team shared that community-based forest patrol/conservation gives the community a sense of security, increases the community's respect for nature and tigers, and promotes harmony between humans and tigers. The team also shared the need of providing incentives and alternatives to reduce community dependence forest to help reduce habitat loss for tigers, and that the project is trying to promote alternative livelihood as a method to reduce human-wildlife encounters as well.

Presentation 3: *Partnering with communities for conservation in critical tiger habitat areas* – **Bano Haralu and Manish Chandi, WCS India**

Bano Haralu and Manish Chandi from WCS India shared about the ITHCP project in Nagaland, in the Indo-Myanmar border. Over 90% of the land ownership in the area falls with the communities, and around 3% is owned by the government. Bano and Manish shared about the project activities in the project site, as well as the means of engaging communities in tiger conservation.

The team highlighted community engagement in the project through initiating community collectives for conservation. The project is working to strengthen community conserved areas in 4 of the 6 project villages. To facilitate knowledge exchanges, the team have also conducted exposure trips to successful conservation sites, and community share to have benefitted from these visits. Similarly, this project also employs a very different approach of livelihood identification through livelihood ideations contests to identify intervention areas. Bano and Manish shared that the community have been very receptive of the contest and

have been participating very actively in the contest. Alongside this, the project has also been working with youths through collaboration with 20 village young partners.

The team also shared challenges to community engagement in their presentation. For example, the area has the Naga tradition of hunting, without the local communities being aware of the reality of extinction. The team noted that sharing with the local communities that the biodiversity is in critical condition facilitates in getting communities interested and engaged in conservation. However, the team also highlighted the need to take into account local communities' reliance on forest, and the challenges of identifying and employing alternative livelihood opportunities. This can also be especially challenging in areas that is difficult to reach owing to lack of social mobility infrastructures. The team presented a method to tackle the pressing challenges and argued that the challenge of hunting that is impacting the local biodiversity can only be addressed by persistent dialogue over time and incentivizing. Similarly, the challenge of forest dependency can be tackled through livelihood enhancements over time, which in turn would also require enterprises promotion and scaling up intervention areas over time.

The team also highlighted the need to pay attention to alienation with the community members, which would be a normal response of sudden visits by NGOs to their place, and shared the importance of building trust and collaboration. The presentation ended with a strong message that "inclusive conservation is not *for* the people but *with* the people."

Key message from the presentations: The key takeaway message from thee three presentations is that community engagement is absolutely crucial for tiger conservation, and that when projects are designed, due respect and consideration should be given to the indigenous and local communities who have been coexisting and living alongside the wildlife. The three projects that presented during this session have included community engagement and livelihood intervention as key components of the project to support and foster tiger inclusive tiger conservation. The trend in all three projects demonstrates that dialogues with communities and collaboration for project activities is what support success and sustainability.

Group work

This exercise consisted of four groups and each of the groups answered one of the questions as follows:

1. *How do you identify sustainable livelihood opportunities that are ecologically sustainable and economically viable in your project area? (Group 1)*
2. *Can you share examples of livelihood projects that have successfully balanced economic development with conservation goals? (Group 2)*
3. *What are some of the challenges faced in engaging local communities and what potential solutions could be considered? (Group 3)*
4. *How do you ensure that awareness raising and sustainable livelihood activities are effectively fostering behavioral change within the communities? How do you measure the impact and success of community engagement efforts in your projects? (Group 4)*

As the questions asked were only one per group, there is no separate report for annex for this session. The group discussions outcomes are outlined below:

Group 1: How do you identify sustainable livelihood opportunities that are ecologically sustainable and economically viable in your project area?

Group 1 discussed about the methods of identifying sustainable livelihood opportunities that are also ecologically sustainable and economically viable in the project area. They identified the following mechanisms:

- **Consultation:** During assessment and situational analysis to identify needs. This would also include review of existing documents and studies. The group also discussed the needs for inception meetings that can help effective consultation by allowing gaps identification from community and stakeholders through a participatory process and also share information about the project. This would need factoring in sufficient time availability for a series of effective consultations. Similarly, the group also discussed smaller focused groups being an effective method to ensure maximum participation, followed by bigger consultation meetings where participatory activities are designed.
- **Stakeholder identification:** Identifying key stakeholders, primary and secondary, to discuss about, identify and implement sustainable livelihood measures.
- **Group work methodologies:** The team discussed effective group work methodologies and activities to ensure equal representation during consultations and identification processes. The facilitators would play an important role in making sure that all voices get equal representation.

Group 2: Can you share examples of livelihood projects that have successfully balanced economic development with conservation goals?

Group 2 discussed about and compiled a list of livelihood projects successfully balancing economic development with conservation, and also listed out factors by which they considered these projects to be successful.

The examples list include:

- **Ibis rice** – from Cambodia, which was able to provide livelihood through rice while also conserving the habitat of Ibis.
- **Village level seed funds for diverse livelihood activities in Nepal** – which allows the community members to have direct access and ownership to the funds, while also enabling its scale up.
- **Small scale solar fence in India** - which deploys ecofriendly measure to mitigate human wildlife conflict, which in turn also secures their homes and fields.
- **Home stays and eco-tourism in Nepal and India** – which supports livelihood as well as promotes biodiversity, with part of the ecotourism revenue also going towards conservation activities.
- **Tiger tolerant village in Sundarbans –** where community are actively engaged in conservation, and improved cooking stoves are helping reduce community dependence on fuelwood, therefore reducing their time in the forest with potential wildlife encounters.
- **Honeybees in Indonesia and India –** where honey bees are proving to be one effective components for bio fence, and also provide income opportunities to the local communities.

- **One village one product schemes in India and Nepal –** where communities work together to develop and market one product for each village, which supports the communities in identifying markets more easily and also scaling up their activities.
- **Income generation through local products –** for example Darjeeling Tea and red rice from India, which helps communities to generate income from the local sources and reduce their forest dependence.
- **Palm plantation and vegetable diversification in Indonesia –** which has helped generate revenue for local people and also diversify their food option.

The factors for success listed out be the group includes:

- Economic scale of the project / increase in profit.
- Participatory land use planning.
- Increase in number of species.
- Local entrepreneurship and market demand for the project.
- HWC mitigation / crop protection.
- Integration with local and governmental plans.
- Reduced pressure and dependence on forest that also reduces changes of encounters with wildlife.
- Time saving owing to reduced dependence on forest.
- Associated trainings and quality maintenance.
- At least 50% of income generation from the livelihood project.

Group 3: What are some of the challenges faced in engaging local communities and what potential solutions could be considered?

Group 3 discussed about both the challenges in engaging local communities in conservation, as well as potential solutions for the same.

The challenges identified included:

- Lack of inter community collaboration and coordination that could help in identification of common problems and solutions.
- Low representation of women (especially difficult challenge in Myanmar).
- Attention to having larger quantity of beneficiaries, instead of qualitative engagement with the beneficiaries. This challenge also holds true for donor requirement that focuses on beneficiaries' number.
- Lack of awareness in terms of conservation and sustainable livelihood.
- Challenge in bridging resources and people.
- Limited timeframe, both in terms of project duration and time schedule of local community members.
- Fatigues of village council and community members.
- Lack of continued engagement, especially post project, that potentially hampers hope and relationship.
- Higher expectation from the project especially in the presence of multiple community-based organization.
- Conflict among the community members, example among different classes/categorization of communities.
- Lack of understanding of ground reality during project design and development.

The solutions identified by the group includes:

- Creating a platform for collaboration.
- Co-financing for diversified livelihood, that also helped in creating ownership.
- Empowerment of local women.
- Hands on approach e.g. approaching safe spaces like home, rather than through formal settings for consultations.
- Listening and building trust, and consulting with an open mind.
- Identification of key community members and relevant stakeholders.
- Create a model that can be replicable, and owned/continued by government, making it sustainable.
- Use competitions for livelihood schemes.
- Create a chain from production to retail, to ensure marketability of identified livelihood opportunities, which should be site specific.
- Tap into and integrate religion and culture into conservation.

Group 4: How do you ensure that awareness raising, and sustainable livelihood activities are effectively fostering behavioral change within the communities? How do you measure the impact and success of community engagement efforts in your projects?

Group 4 discussed about the linkage between awareness raising and behavioural change, sustainable livelihood activities and behavioural change as well as the ways to measure the impact and success of community engagement efforts in their projects. They are broken down below:

Awareness raising leading to behavioural change:

- The group discussed first and foremost being aware about and learning about the project area and community by the project staffs themselves to be able to carry out effective conservation. The group shared that awareness raising of the project staff to local context and knowledge would lead to them being more sensitive and aware and develop context specific project activities.
- Awareness raising and situational analysis often helps communities to be aware about their surrounding environment and biodiversity from a wider context and scientific perspective and analysis, which in turn facilitates them to make sound and community led decision.

Sustainable livelihood leading to behavioural change:

- The group discussed the linkage of sustainable livelihood with behavioral change, showing that sustainable livelihood helps in supporting the economic wellbeing of the people, which in turn supports them in reducing their dependence on forests.
- The sustainable livelihood component in the ITHCP project also has knowledge exchanges as its integral component, fostering collaboration within the community, between communities, and even at transboundary and landscape level. This facilitates learning from each other, equal benefit sharing, identifying best practices to mitigate conflicts, and ensures sustainability of the livelihood groups as well.

Measuring the impact and success of community engagement efforts in the projects:

The team also discussed about the ways to measure the success of community engagement, including the following:

- Qualitative studies and analysis including participatory monitoring, surveys and participatory project design processes.
- Quantitative assessments for e.g. biological monitoring.
- Development of tools for both longer term and shorter-term assessments.
- Integrated measurement of economic, behavior, perspectives, leadership, and responsiveness changes.
- Policy changes owing to community engagement and behavioral changes.
- Communities building their own strategies and taking ownership of the project.
- The project working as a model with scale up possibilities.

4. PROJECT MANAGEMENT SESSION

4.1 ITHCP Project Management and Reporting

This session aimed to engage grantees in a discussion about the project management aspects of ITHCP projects, including technical and impact reporting, and communication requirements.

The session was led by Elisa Facchini, ITHCP Programme Officer, who presented the main Project Management and Reporting requirements for ITHCP grants, including:

- Technical Reporting
- ESMS Reporting
- Impact Reporting and ITHCP indicators
- Communication requirements
- Monitoring Missions recommendations and management response

The presentation was followed by a Q&A session, where the following points concerning impact reporting were discussed:

- It would be helpful if IUCN provided more specific guidelines on how to best manage/avoid double counting across indicators, as well as the definition of crop raiding by herbivores.
- It was suggested that it could be useful to measure indicators on 1) the impact of anthropic activity on tiger numbers and 2) the number of tigers released in the wild.
- It was discussed that income-related indicators are difficult to be measured in the short term, and that it can be challenging to request private information related to income (e.g. it is easier to ask for expenses rather than income).
- It was recommended that wellbeing should be measured at both individual and household levels.
- It was suggested that, together with METT and CATS scores, MEE score (which is used in India and measured every 2 years) should be added to the list of measurement tools for management effectiveness in protected areas.

4.2 ITHCP Finance and Procurement

This session aimed to engage grantees in a discussion about the financial management of ITHCP projects, including financial reporting, forecasting and procurement.

The session was led by John Karuri, Senior Manager Grant Finance, who presented the main financial reporting and procurement requirements for ITHCP grants, including:

- Financial Reporting (every 6 months)
- Forecasts (in April and October) and expenditure on tourism
- Budget Modifications
- Audits
- Documents retention after project closure
- KfW Procurement Guidelines, thresholds and processes
- Procurement Plan

The presentation was followed by a Q&A session, where the following points were discussed:

- It would be useful if more flexibility on budget amounts and proportions was provided. IUCN clarified that fixed budget proportions are a requirement from KfW, which is transferred to ITHCP grantees. However, it was explained that budget deviations can be requested when there is a strong justification, which can be submitted to IUCN for formal approval.
- It was discussed that KfW Procurement Guidelines require advance payments to be maximum 20% of the total value of the contract, but this can sometimes be challenging, as in certain situation full payment in advance is required.

4.3 Environmental and Social Management System

The Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) session was conducted by Anuska Joshi, ITHCP ESMS Officer. The session included overview of the ESMS at IUCN, as well as the application of ESMS in ITHCP projects. Anuska presented about what the ESMS is, what its purposes are and what kind of risks and impacts the ESMS considers in ITHCP. This included gender equality and associated risks, risks affecting vulnerable groups, risk of violating human rights, community health, safety and security risks, labour and working conditions, resource efficiency, pollution, waste and chemicals, and risks of project design failing to take climate change into account. The presentation included details and examples of each of these environmental and social risks. The session also covered the ESMS policy framework for IUCN, including the ESMS standards and principles. Anuska also shared the history behind the development of the existing framework. The four standards, on Involuntary Resettlement and Access Restrictions, Indigenous People, Cultural Heritage, and Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use of Natural Resources, were also covered with examples on when they are applied. The presentation also included an overview of how ESMS is applied throughout the ITHCP project cycles, from concept note submission to project evaluation. The presentation was followed by brief open floor session on question answers and experience sharing, as below:

- **Discussion on child labor risks:** YAPEKA raised how in certain communities it is a practice of the community members to allow children to work with them to help them learn, and how the risk of child labor could be associated with such scenarios. Other grantees also shared similar scenarios in certain rural communities. There was a general discussion about this topic, and the essence was that such scenarios should always be treated with sensitivity, context specific basis, and keeping in mind that

children are not harmed and barred from their rights, while also being sensitive to the dynamic of the particular communities.

- **Existing access restrictions and legacy issues:** the mechanism of applying ESMS in places that already has access restrictions and legacy issues were discussed. For example, YAPEKA shared about the division of blocks for conservation and natural resource management, and other grantees also shared about working close to protected areas. It was discussed that the ideal way forward during such events would be to make sure that our project is not adding onto the existing issues, and also using leverage where possible with continued dialogue with authorities, communities, and respective stakeholders.
- **ESMS jargons as barriers:** Grantees shared that ESMS jargons can be a barrier for effective understanding and implementation. It was discussed and reiterated that the ESMS guidance notes and manuals should be used by project team and safeguard experts, while the documents shared with communities would need to be adapted in a form understandable by them.
- **Capacity building:** A need for capacity building was also identified for grantees, as well as for partners working with them, in regards to ESMS, its concepts, application and monitoring. Similarly, it was also discussed that orientation of ESMS to the community is also crucial.
- **Engagement fatigues:** Grantees shared about the risks of engagement fatigues, for the community members as well as the grantees themselves, as the ESMS is perceived to be quite vast with many elements. It was discussed and reiterated that the purpose of ESMS is not to demand certain number of engagements, but to make the engagements meaningful, and that should also be determined with the community themselves.
- **Documentation process:** Similarly, as the grantees shared about the ESMS documentation been a tedious task, it was also shared that any duplications and redundancies in ESMS documents would be worked upon, although there are also compliances with ESMS that needs to be followed. It was also discussed that for ESMS documentation it is important for everything to be included, which is why the documents might be lengthier.
- **ESMS facilitating participatory processes:** There was a general discussion on how ESMS helps in formulating participatory processes for the project. Participants reiterated ESMS being an integral component of the project emphasizing participatory processes, rather than being standalone checklists. Some of the grantees shared how adopting ESMS helped them in co-designing with communities, and having adaptive approaches aligned to the interests and needs of communities. They shared about ESMS allowing transformational community-led conservation, steering away from protection based conservation.
- **Grievance mechanism:** the most effective protocol for grievance collection, handling and documentation were discussed. Similarly, it was also perceived by KfW that some of the information boards in the project sites have only processes of grievance mechanism laid out, instead of having information on the project as well.
- **ESMS integration into existing processes:** It was reiterated during general discussions that ESMS, along with its grievance mechanisms, are to be built upon and integrated into existing systems in the project site in the most efficient way possible, without missing its standards, principles, and elements.

The session facilitated sharing of ESMS technicalities, as well as an open discussion on the same. The key takeaway from the session was that ESMS has been an important component of ITHCP, also supporting participatory project development. There are certain aspects of ESMS documentation that have been tedious for the grantees, and an effort will be made to avoid any duplications and redundancies in the ESMS documentation. Grantees will also liaise directly with IUCN ESMS Officer for implementation and monitoring of ESMS in ITHCP. Similarly, one on one sessions, as well as trainings and capacity building, will be planned based on requirements. ESMS will also be integratedand built into existing community systems and dynamics.

4.4 Capacity Building and Knowledge Sharing

This session focused on engaging ITHCP grantees in the identification of key capacity building needs and knowledge sharing opportunities. The session aimed to identify specific knowledge gaps and capacity strengthening priorities, expanding peer learning options and develop strategies to promote networking and collaboration among ITHCP grantees.

The session was led by Elisa Facchini, ITHCP Programme Officer, who presented the objectives of the session and the group works exercise.

The first group work consisted in a **self-assessment exercise,** during which ITHCP grantees were asked to identify the following:

a) Core **strengths**, best practices and innovations that could be useful for other ITHCP grantees.

b) Major **challenges**, where ITHCP grantees could benefit from the experience and expertise of other grantees, the PAC or IUCN.

c) Key **opportunities** for capacity building and knowledge sharing among ITHCP grantees.

Each participant identified strengths, challenges and opportunities, and wrote them on post-its (indicating their name in the back of the post-it). The strengths, challenges and opportunities were grouped into main topics and shared with the workshop audience. The self-assessment exercise report is provided in **Annex 7** and a summary of the key points raised is provided below:

Strengths	Community engagement
	Wildlife monitoring
	Government collaboration and engagement
	Indigenous People and traditional knowledge
	Transboundary collaboration
	Monitoring & Evaluation
	ESMS
	Awareness raising
	Tiger rescue / Vet
	Meeting / workshop organization
	Land use planning
	Landscape approach
Challenges	ESMS capacity building

	Data analysis
	Habitat management and Human-Wildlife Conflict
	Community engagement
	Social science / sustainable financing
	Gender
	M&E / Reporting / Communication
	Policy
	Limited resources
	Connecting landscapes
Opportunities	Workshops
	Trainings
	Field visits / exchanges
	Share best practices
	Email threads
	Networking groups
	Dedicated knowledge platforms / resources
	Regular communication
	Publications

Group discussion

Participants were divided in four groups and each group was asked to discuss and identify the following:

- Key capacity needs
- Priority (High/Medium/Low)
- Activities
- Delivery modalities

The group discussion report for this session is provided in **Annex 7** and a summary of the key points raised across the different groups is provided below:

Key capacity needs	Activities	Delivery methodologies
Species monitoring and data analysis	- Trainings on specific techniques or on standard methods - Data analysis - Sharing country best practices	- Online / in person trainings - Exchange visits / peer-to-peer learning
Human-Wildlife Coexistence / HWC monitoring	- Focus group discussions - Training on data collection / analysis - Sharing of best practice	- Effective communication / professional counselling - Online / in person trainings - Exchange visits / peer-to-peer learning
Stakeholder engagement / Participatory techniques	- Checklist of challenges - Identify success stories - Participatory mapping exercise	- Involve community leaders - Trainings / workshops
Policy advocacy	- Advocacy at different levels of government - Transboundary cooperation - Gap Analysis of existing laws / policy - Negotiation training	- White paper - Policy brief - Trainings / workshops

Project management / ESMS	- Meeting of all ESMS coordinators - ESMS monitoring - Project management trainings - Social / economic analysis	- Smaller sharing groups - Trainings / workshop
Knowledge sharing / Knowledge management	- Sharing of findings - Develop case studies / best practice - Trainings and training documents	- Compile findings (emails) - Sharing SOPs - Guidelines & manuals - Trainings

5. WORKSHOP EVALUATION

An evaluation survey was conducted using Google Survey to understand the workshop effectiveness and gather valuable insights for future events. The results of the survey are presented in **Annex 8**, which summarizes the key findings from the evaluation responses of 33 participants. The evaluation aimed to assess the workshop's content, structure, and achievement of its stated objectives. It also explored the effectiveness of expert presentations, group discussions, networking opportunities, facilities, and thematic sessions. By understanding participant experiences and areas for improvement, the evaluation strives to guide the development of future workshops that are even more relevant, impactful, and valuable for ITHCP grantees.

Additionally, the IUCN Asia Regional Office hosted an internal debriefing meeting, fostering reflection among IUCN staff on the workshop's strengths and opportunities for improvement. This report consolidates the findings from both the participant survey and the internal debriefing, aiming to identify a holistic picture of the workshop's impact and shape the development of future events.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Enhancing Tiger Monitoring

The session on tiger monitoring yielded comprehensive recommendations and strategies aimed at enhancing both the programme and grantees' effectiveness in conservation efforts. Key areas of focus include data collection and analysis, evidence-based decision-making, and protection measures.

To ensure data consistency and comparability, the implementation of standardized monitoring protocols and data formats across projects is recommended. Grantees should receive training and technical support in data collection, analysis, and interpretation, leveraging innovative technologies like AI and eDNA. A secure and user-friendly data sharing platform is proposed to facilitate collaboration among stakeholders. Involvement of the local communities in data collection through citizen science programs should be considered to enhance coverage, reduces costs, and fosters stewardship.

Centralizing monitoring data into a repository enables informed decision-making, with grantees equipped with skills to analyze and interpret data effectively. Knowledge exchange among grantees through workshops and online platforms enhances understanding and strategy development. Encouraging grantees to present monitoring data to relevant authorities influences policy decisions and secures protected area management.

Expanding the adoption of SMART patrolling systems and improving infrastructure in remote areas are highlighted as essential for effective anti-poaching efforts. Building partnerships with local communities to enhance collaboration in patrolling activities and addresses human-wildlife conflicts through targeted mitigation strategies such as community education and alternative livelihood programs are recommended.

Additional recommendations emphasize establishing long-term monitoring programs to track population trends and assess conservation intervention effectiveness. Exploring innovative financing mechanisms and tailoring strategies to project-specific challenges and contexts are vital for sustainability. Regular monitoring and evaluation are essential for adapting strategies over time.

6.2 Managing Human-Wildlife Conflict

In addressing human-wildlife conflict, understanding the nuances of HWC is foundational. It is essential to facilitate knowledge exchange among grantees and communities, leveraging local wisdom, and embracing context-specific approaches that consider cultural contexts, ecological pressures, and community dynamics. Tackling root causes, such as habitat loss and resource depletion, should be prioritized for sustainable, long-term solutions.

Community-based solutions are pivotal in empowering communities with resources, training, and decision-making power enabling them to actively manage HWC. Offering sustainable livelihood alternatives and fair compensation schemes reduces conflict drivers and fosters tolerance. Establishing well-trained rapid response teams and community preparedness measures minimizes damage and builds trust.

Collaboration and innovation are key in supporting grantees in sharing successful practices and innovative solutions across regions fosters collective learning. Engaging with local communities, policymakers, researchers, and other stakeholders is crucial for comprehensive HWC management. Advocating for policies promoting community involvement, fair compensation, and long-term solutions strengthens the foundation for sustainable coexistence.

Sustainability and long-term vision should guide efforts in investing in building long-term community capacity for HWC management through training and resource provision is essential. Designing projects with a holistic, comprehensive perspective that addresses psychological impacts, climate change adaptation, and root causes ensures effectiveness. Regularly monitoring HWC trends and evaluating implemented solutions facilitate adaptation and improvement of strategies over time.

6.3 Addressing Habitat Management Issues

The session on habitat management yielded significant recommendations for enhancing tiger habitat management, aiming to benefit both the program and its grantees. Key areas of focus include addressing critical issues, implementing effective strategies, engaging communities, and strengthening program support.

To tackle critical issues such as habitat loss and fragmentation, it is recommended to prioritize landscape-level planning, enforce stricter regulations, and promote sustainable grazing practices. Prey availability can be enhanced through habitat restoration and managing competition with livestock, while emerging threats like disease and invasive species require proactive control measures.

In terms of implementing effective strategies, the emphasis lies on restoring connectivity through wildlife corridors and green infrastructure, promoting sustainable management practices, and embracing adaptive management principles. It is crucial to integrate local knowledge and community needs into planning and implementation processes to ensure long-term sustainability.

Engaging communities is paramount, with recommendations including participatory planning, benefit sharing, and education initiatives to increase awareness of habitat conservation value. Transparency and consultation are essential for building trust and incorporating diverse perspectives.

To strengthen habitat management programme, it is advised to develop context-specific guidelines, build capacity through training and knowledge sharing, secure resources through advocacy and innovative financing, and promote research and collaboration among stakeholders. Regular monitoring and evaluation are essential to assess the impact of implemented strategies and adapt accordingly.

6.4 Effective Community Engagement

The session on community engagement emphasized the importance of effective strategies within the ITHCP projects, including extensive consultations with a wider range of community members, particularly women. Smaller focus groups followed by larger meetings to ensure maximum participation and equal representation is regarded as particularly important. Utilizing hands-on approaches (like visiting homes for consultations) can further bridge the gap between project staff and the community. Furthermore, collaboration through platforms and co-financing livelihood projects is crucial to empower communities, promotes a sense of ownership, and addresses knowledge gaps. Sustaining engagement with the communities beyond project lifecycles is vital, and one way of achieving this is by integrating cultural aspects and ensuring continued support, which helps maintain trust and fosters long-term change.

The discussions also highlighted the importance of strengthening sustainable livelihood practices. Focusing on projects with a clear path to increased income and economic benefits for communities, as well as establishing market access through production-to-retail chains to strengthen the economic viability of these initiatives is recommended. Encouraging a diverse mix of livelihood options is another key element recommended.

Measuring the success and impact of these initiatives by combining qualitative methods like participatory monitoring and surveys with quantitative assessments was considered important. By tracking changes in economic well-being, behavior, perspectives, leadership, and responsiveness within communities, a comprehensive picture of the project's effectiveness can be obtained. Furthermore, a crucial aspect for long-term sustainability by monitoring the development of community-owned strategies and project ownership should be considered.

6.5 Effective Project Management

In the project management session it has been recommended that IUCN develops specific guidelines providing clear definitions for each indicator, including addressing the issue of double counting across indicators. In terms of measuring income, exploring alternative metrics is recommended, due to the difficulties in assessing changes in income in the short-term. Furthermore, it is suggested to measure wellbeing at both individual and household levels to gain a more comprehensive picture.

6.6 Effective ESMS

The recommendations from the ESMS session included the following:

Addressing child labour concerns: A context-specific approach is crucial, prioritizing child protection while acknowledging cultural dynamics. Community work involving children should ensure their well-being and safeguard their rights.

Navigating existing access restrictions: Projects should strive to minimize their impact on existing limitations and leverage dialogue with relevant stakeholders to identify opportunities for improvement.

Simplifying ESMS communication: Clear, understandable materials free from technical jargon are essential for effective communication with communities. Project teams should utilize separate, targeted information channels for technical guidance and community outreach.

Building capacity: Training and support programs are recommended for grantees, partners, and communities to enhance their understanding and application of ESMS concepts, monitoring procedures, and community engagement strategies.

Mitigating engagement fatigue: Focusing on meaningful engagement through collaborative strategies with communities is crucial. Collaborating with community members to determine appropriate engagement approaches can help address potential fatigue.

Streamlining documentation: While adhering to compliance requirements, efforts should be made to reduce redundancy within ESMS documents. However, transparency and comprehensiveness remain essential, even if it leads to lengthy documents.

Strengthening participatory processes: ESMS should be utilized as a tool to facilitate collaborative project design with communities. Adaptive management approaches that address the evolving interests and needs of communities are highly recommended.

Enhancing grievance mechanism: An efficient and clear protocol for grievance collection, handling, and documentation needs to be established.

6.7 Capacity Development and Knowledge Sharing

Building on the valuable insights gained from the capacity building session, other sessions' discussion and the recommendations provided by the ITHCP Phase I Final Evaluation, the following capacity building programmes should be considered. However, these are only some suggestions among others that will be considered or explored as the project implementation progresses.

a) Species Monitoring and Data Analysis

The grantees should be trained in advanced techniques for species monitoring, such as camera trapping, eDNA, and AI related technologies. This will equip them to collect robust data tailored to target species. Data analysis knowledge is also essential to be able to manage and analyze collected data. Grantees would benefit from gaining additional skills in data processing, statistical analysis, and interpreting the results to inform sound conservation decision-making. Another aspect is to ensure data consistency and comparability, hence implementation of standardized monitoring protocols and data formats across projects through such trainings. In addition, it is essential to fosters exchange and collaboration, while enabling the adoption of the most effective approaches within a specific context.

b) Collaborative HWC Management

It is recommended a unified capacity building approach that recognizes the knowledge gaps in community engagement and human-wildlife conflict management. Grantees should be equipped with techniques for gathering field data on wildlife activity, conflict incidents and damage assessments, as well as learning to utilize relevant software and tools to analyze these data, identify hotspots and measure the effectiveness of mitigation efforts. Besides, facilitation skills to conduct focus group discussions to understand community perspectives and priorities related to HWC is required. Interactive workshops on participatory mapping exercises would also equip them to involve communities in visually representing conflict zones and collaboratively developing solutions. The training should lead to development of platforms for sharing successful HWC mitigation strategies. Case studies and best practice documentation should be developed to capture valuable lessons learned and promote knowledge exchange among participants.

c) Habitat Assessment and Management

Recognizing the current limitations of habitat management practices, a comprehensive capacity building program is recommended to address the critical gap in scientific application of habitat management and monitoring. This should aim to equip grantees with the necessary tools and knowledge to conduct effective habitat assessments, develop science-based restoration plans, implement practical restoration techniques, and establish robust monitoring programs. It should include hands-on training and field exercises to gain expertise in utilizing standardized methods for assessing habitat quality in various ecosystems like grasslands, forest, and wetlands. To ensure the long-term viability of these interventions, a crucial component such as robust monitoring protocols should be included using relevant indicators like changes in vegetation cover or species diversity, and establishing data collection procedures. This would further emphasize data analysis and interpretation skills, enabling grantees to assess progress towards restoration goals and adapt their strategies based on the findings.

d) Project Management and ESMS

Training on essential project management skills are recommended to help grantees gain expertise in project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, enabling them to deliver projects more effectively and efficiently. ESMS training and sharing among grantees is also encouraged, to allow grantees to conduct project activities in a responsible and sustainable manner in bringing a positive impact on both the environment and society.

e) Knowledge Sharing

In general, it is strongly recommended that knowledge sharing among ITHCP grantees is strengthened, including sharing of materials, best practices and experiences, exchange visits and peer-to-peer learning. This could be promoted for specific themes or landscapes, considering grantees identified strengths and challenges. Knowledge sharing should also be included as a key component of all the trainings mentioned above.

6.8 Improving Future Workshops

Based on the evaluation questionnaires filled by participants, the workshop achieved positive outcomes in fostering collaboration, knowledge sharing and capacity building among participants. Feedback from the evaluation questionnaires indicates the workshop was well-received, with participants particularly appreciating:

- Opportunities to learn from other grantees' best practices and experiences.
- Sessions on community engagement, human-wildlife conflict mitigation and project management.
- Having a platform for networking and establishing connections with fellow grantees.

The participants' evaluation also identified areas for improvement to enhance future workshops:

Increased time for interaction and discussion: Allocate more time for group discussions, Q&A sessions, and knowledge sharing among participants.

Incorporation of field visits: Include field trips to project sites for practical learning and networking opportunities.

Improved time management: Consider stricter time limits for presentations or focus on key points to ensure concise information delivery.

Interactive formats: Explore diverse facilitation methods like world cafes, incorporating games or activities, and inviting guest experts for interactive sessions.

Content and focus: Tailor workshop content to address specific grantee needs, such as successful advocacy approaches and practical knowledge sharing.

Strengthening collaboration: Create more opportunities for transboundary collaboration and facilitate discussions on shared regional challenges.

Focused grantee presentations: Implement pre-workshop mentoring or review processes to ensure presentations clearly focus on project results, successes, challenges, and lessons learned.

Streamlined group work: Reduce the number of questions for group discussions to allow for deeper exploration and follow-up discussions.

Sustainable financing: Include session on sustainable financing and sustainability of the projects.

Annex 1. Workshop Agenda

Integrated Tiger Habitat Conservation Programme

Grantees Workshop Agenda

16-18 January 2024, Bangkok, Thailand

Session	Time	Topic	Facilitator/Speaker
DAY 1 - Tuesday 16 January 2024			
Registration	08:30-09:00	Registration	IUCN
Workshop Opening	09:00-09:10	Welcome address	Dr Dindo Campilan, Regional Director, Asia, and Hub Director for Oceania, IUCN
	09:10-09:20	Keynote address	Department of National Park and Plant Conservation, Thailand
	09:20-09.30	Keynote address	Nina Otto and Elke Hellstern, KfW
	09:30-09:40	Workshop objectives and agenda	ITHCP Coordinator
	09:40-10:15	Participants introduction	IUCN
	10:15-10:30	Group Photo	IUCN
	10:30-11:00	Coffee break: Meet and Connect (30 min)	
	11:00-12. 12:30	Overview of ITHCP	ITHCP Coordinator
		Phase I Final Evaluation	ITHCP Coordinator
	12:30-13:30	**Lunch Break (1 hr)**	
Thematic session 1: Tiger Monitoring	13:30-13:45	Introduction of the session	Sunarto, PAC Member
	13:45-14:00	Project 1 presentation	3601 HAT Bhutan
	14:00-14:15	Project 2 presentation	2MB1 FFI Myanmar
	14:15-14:30	Project 3 presentation	2MB2 Wildlife Asia, Myanmar
	14:30-14:45	Coffee break (15 min)	
	14:45-15:30	Group discussion (4 groups)	Group members
	15:30-16:15	Group reporting	Group members
	16:15-16:30	Conclusion of the session	Sunarto, PAC Member
ITHCP Project Management	16:30-17:20	Discussion on lessons learnt and challenges (with Q&A)	ITHCP Programme Officer / ITHCP Coordinator
	17:20-17:30	Closing of Day 1	ITHCP Coordinator
	18:30 onwards	**Dinner reception**	

Session	Time	Topic	Facilitator/Speaker
DAY 2 - Wednesday 17 January 2024			
Thematic session 2: Human-Wildlife Conflict	09:00-09:10	Introduction of Day 2	ITHCP Coordinator
	09:10-09:25	Introduction of the session	Ashley Brooks (PAC Member)
	09:25-09:40	Project 4 presentation	2309 WWF India and Nepal
	09:40-09:55	Project 5 presentation	2491 Sundarbans, Bangladesh and India
	09:55-10:10	Project 6 presentation	3603 HAT NTNC, Nepal
	10:10-10:30	Coffee Break (20 min)	
	10:30-11:15	Group discussion (4 groups)	Group members
	11:15-12:00	Group reporting	Group members
	12:00-12:15	Conclusion of the session	PAC Member
	12:15-13:15	**Lunch break (1 hr)**	
Thematic session 3: Habitat Management	13:15-13:30	Introduction of the session	Hasan Rahman (PAC Member)
	13:30-13:45	Project 7 presentation	2327 ZSL, Nepal and India
	13:45-14:00	Project 8 presentation	3601 HAT GT, India
	14:00-14:15	Project 9 presentation	4485 WCS Indonesia
	14:15-14:30	Coffee break (15 min)	
	14:30-15:15	Group discussion (4 groups)	Group members
	15:15-16:00	Group reporting	Group members
	16:00-16:15	Conclusion of the session	Hasan Rahman (PAC Member)
	16:15-16:20	Short break (5 min)	
ITHCP Finance and Procurement	16:20-17:20	Discussion on lessons learnt and challenges (with Q&A)	Senior Grants Manager
	17:20-17:30	Closing of Day 2	ITHCP Coordinator

Session	Time	Topic	Facilitator/Speaker
DAY 3 - Thursday 18 January 2024			
Thematic Session 4: Community Engagement	09:00-09:10	Introduction of Day 3	ITHCP Coordinator
	09:10-09:25	Introduction of the session	Neema Pathak (PAC Member)
	09:25-09:40	Project 10 presentation	4334 Aaranyak, India
	09:40-09:55	Project 11 presentation	3610 Yapeka, Indonesia
	09:55-10:10	Project 12 presentation	2337 WCS India
	10:10-10:30	Coffee Break (20 min)	
	10:30-11:15	Group discussion (4 groups)	Group Members
	11:15-12:00	Group reporting	Group Members
	12:00-12:15	Conclusion of the session	Neema Pathak (PAC Member)
	12:15-13:30	**Lunch (1 hr 15 min)**	
ESMS	13.30-14.00	Presentation on ESMS	ESMS Officer/ Global ESMS coordinator
	14:00-15:00	Group discussion	Grantees
	15:00-15:15	Coffee break (15 min)	
ITHCP Capacity Building and Knowledge Sharing	15:15-15:30	Introduction of the session	ITHCP Programme Officer
	15:30-16:15	Group activity	Grantees
	16:15-16:45	Discussion and conclusions	Grantees / ITHCP Programme Officer
	16:45-17:00	Workshop evaluation and closing of Day 3	ITHCP Coordinator

Annex 2. Workshop Participants List

Sl. No	Name	Organization	Country
1	Naresh Subedi	National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC)	Nepal
2	Laxmi Raj Joshi	National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC)	Nepal
3	MD. Anwarul Islam	Wild Team	Bangladesh
4	Mohammad Abdul Aziz	Jahangirnagar University	Bangladesh
5	Samir Kumar Sinha	Wildlife Trust of India	India
6	Amar Nath Choudhary	Global Tiger Forum	India
7	Arun Kumar	Global Tiger Forum	India
8	Katjuscha Dörfel	WWF Germany	Germany
9	Ananta Ram Bhandari	WWF Nepal	Nepal
10	Kamlesh K Maurya	WWF India	India
11	Tashi Dhendup	Bhutan Tiger Centre	Bhutan
12	Sapana Sunar	Bhutan Tiger Centre	Bhutan
13	Ngwe Lwin	FFI Myanmar	Myanmar
14	Saw Soe Aung	FFI Myanmar	Myanmar
15	Matthew Woolf	ZSL	UK
16	Abarta Pandey	ZSL Nepal	Nepal
17	Harish Guleria	ZSL India	India
18	Firoz Ahmed	Aaranyak	India
19	Jayanta Kumar Sarma	Aaranyak	India
20	Bano Haralu	WCS India	India
21	Manish Chandi	WCS India	India
22	Ina Nisrina	WCS Indonesia	Indonesia
23	Agustinus Wijayanto	Yapeka	Indonesia
24	Fauzia Maulidiastuti Kusmarani	Forum HarimauKita	Indonesia
25	Khaerul Anwar	INDECON (Indonesia Ecotourism Network)	Indonesia
26	Teuku Reza Ferasyi	Faculty of Veterinary Medicine Universitas Syiah Kuala	Indonesia
27	Dedy Yansyah	Leuser Conservation Forum (KFL)	Indonesia
28	Demelza Strokes	Wildlife Asia	UK
29	Saw Moe Aung	KESAN	Myanmar (living in Thailand)
30	Hasan Arif Rahman	University of Delaware	Bangladesh
31	Ananya Mukherjee	University of Cardiff	UK
32	Ashley Brooks	Rewild	Australia

33	Sunarto	Permian Global	Indonesia
34	Neema Pathak Broome	Kalpavriksh	India
35	Nina Otto	KfW	Germany
36	Elke Hellstern	KfW	Germany
37	Phurba Lhendup	IUCN HQ	Switzerland
38	Elisa Facchini	IUCN HQ	Switzerland
39	Anuska Joshi	IUCN HQ	Switzerland
40	John Karuri	IUCN HQ	Switzerland
41	Dindo Campilan	IUCN (Asia Regional Office)	Thailand
42	Kosuke Terai	IUCN (Asia Regional Office)	Thailand
43	Areila MacDonald	IUCN (Asia Regional Office)	Thailand
44	Alex McWilliam	IUCN (Asia Regional Office)	Thailand
45	Kulkanya Hiranyasthiti	IUCN (Asia Regional Office)	Thailand
46	Nattanpong Kasemsanta Na Ayudhaya	IUCN (Asia Regional Office)	Thailand
47	Pratheep Mekatitam	IUCN (Thailand)	Thailand
48	Pheakdey Sorn	IUCN (Cambodia)	Cambodia
49	Meenal Pahuja	IUCN (India)	India
50	Seint Sann Zaw	IUCN (Myanmar)	Myanmar
51	Amit Poudyal	IUCN (Nepal)	Nepal
52	Raquibul Amin	IUCN (Bangladesh)	Thailand
53	Somying Thunhikorn	DNP Thailand	Thailand
54	Somphot Duangchantrasiri	DNP Thailand	Thailand
55	Somphon Pakpien	DNP Thailand	Thailand

ITHCP Grantees Workshop - Thematic Session Format

Duration: 2 hours and 45 minutes for each session

1. Introduction (15 minutes)

The facilitator gives a brief presentation of the topic and its importance for tiger conservation, and summarizes the key objectives and outputs for the session.

2. Presentations by grantees (45 minutes)

In each session, there will be three concise presentations (15 minutes each) given by selected ITHCP grantees. The Q&A session is omitted as it will be addressed within the group work discussions. Participants are tasked with identifying key takeaways and notable project examples from the presentations, which will be discussed during the group work. The presentations should pertain to the topic of the session and also offer a brief summary of the main achievements and challenges faced throughout the project.

3. Group Discussion (45 minutes)

Participants will be divided into four groups of approximately 10 members each. The group will be preassigned for each session to ensure that each group has diverse representation of expertise and all participants get the opportunity to interact with everyone. Participants within each group will engage in a discussion, focusing on the following points:

- *Experience sharing*: Share experiences related to the session topic and discuss what aspects of their projects worked well and what didn't. Explore good practices and innovative solutions and discuss how these practices can be considered as scalable models.
- *Challenges*: Identify the challenges or obstacles related to the session topic. What difficulties do grantees face in implementing strategies or best practices in their projects?
- *Way Forward*: Brainstorm and propose solutions, strategies, or best practices to address the challenges identified. What can grantees do to enhance their efforts in the context of the session topic?

4. Group Reporting (45 minutes):

Each group selects a spokesperson to summarize their discussion and findings. The spokesperson presents key insights, challenges, and proposed solutions to the larger workshop audience. Each group will be allotted 11 minutes to present and answer questions.

5. Conclusion of the session (15 minutes)

The facilitator provides reflections on the session and group discussions to outline the key takeaway from the session. Participants will be encouraged to consider how they can apply the discussed strategies or best practices in their own projects.

Guiding questions of Thematic Sessions

Please note that each session has some guiding questions to facilitate the discussion, but these questions can be modified if required.

Session 1: Tiger Monitoring

- What challenges have you encountered in collecting and analysing tiger and prey monitoring data, and how have you overcome them?
- Are there specific technologies or innovations that have improved the effectiveness of your tiger and monitoring efforts?
- How can the collected data be used for evidence-based conservation decisions?
- How effective are the protection (patrolling/monitoring) measures used and what are the challenges?

Session 2: Human-Wildlife Conflict and Co-existence

- What are the local or regional nuances in human-wildlife conflicts (HWC) in your project areas, and how can they be effectively addressed?
- Are there any successful case studies or innovative solutions from your projects that can be shared with others?
- How are HWC data collected, managed and used? How can HWC data collection and management be improved?
- How can we ensure that conflict mitigation strategies are sustainable in the long term?
- What are some of the challenges faced in mitigating HWC and what potential solutions could be considered?

Session 3: Habitat Management

- What are the most critical tiger habitats issues in your projects, and how can they be mitigated?
- Are there specific habitat restoration or protection techniques that have worked well in your projects?
- How can habitat management strategies be integrated with the conservation goals of local communities?
- What are some of the challenges faced in habitat management and what potential solutions could be considered?

Session 4: Community engagement

- How do you identify sustainable livelihood opportunities that are ecologically sustainable and economically viable in your project area?
- Can you share examples of livelihood projects that have successfully balanced economic development with conservation goals?
- How do you ensure that awareness raising and sustainable livelihood activities are effectively fostering behavioural change within the communities?
- How do you measure the impact and success of community engagement efforts in your projects?
- What are some of the challenges faced in engaging local communities and what potential solutions could be considered?

Group questions:

1. What challenges have you encountered in collecting and analysing tiger and prey monitoring data, and how have you overcome them?
2. Are there specific technologies or innovations that have improved the effectiveness of your tiger and monitoring efforts?
3. How can the collected data be used for evidence-based conservation decisions?
4. How effective are the protection (patrolling/monitoring) measures used and what are the challenges?

Group 1 Report

Question 1. *What challenges have you encountered in collecting and analysing tiger and prey monitoring data, and how have you overcome them?*

The group discussion identified several challenges that arise in collecting and analysing tiger and prey monitoring data, including:

- **Securing government permission**: Obtaining necessary permits and approvals from relevant government agencies can be a lengthy and complex process, often requiring stakeholder engagement and demonstrating the project alignment with government priorities.
- **Data sharing challenges**: Effectively sharing data with government agencies are hindered by differing data formats, incompatible software, and privacy concerns.
- **Technical capacity limitations**: Implementing effective monitoring protocols and interpreting data accurately require specialized technical expertise, which is limited in certain regions or among project staff.
- **Camera trap theft**: Camera traps, an essential tool for tiger monitoring, are often targeted by poachers or individuals seeking to disrupt conservation efforts.

To address these challenges, the group proposed several solutions:

- **Early engagement with the government**: Engaging with government agencies from the project inception to foster a collaborative approach and facilitate the securing of necessary permissions.
- **Providing incentives and livelihood options**: Offering incentives to communities for their cooperation and incorporating livelihood programs to strengthen local support for conservation efforts and reduce resistance to monitoring activities.
- **Embark on long-term programs**: Establishing long-term monitoring programs to provide stable framework for data collection and analysis, allowing for better understanding of tiger and prey populations over time.
- **Discussion and incorporation of government plans**: Integrating project activities with existing government plans and policies to enhance project legitimacy and facilitate collaboration.
- **Need assessment**: Conducting thorough needs assessments to identify specific challenges faced by communities and project stakeholders, enabling targeted interventions.
- **Community involvement and citizen science**: Engaging local communities in monitoring activities and establishing citizen science programs to reduce camera trap theft and enhance data collection efforts.
- **Collaboration with universities and experts**: Partnering with universities and experienced experts to provide access to technical expertise, capacity building, and guidance in data analysis and interpretation.

- **Integrate capacity of all stakeholders**: Providing capacity building and training among all project stakeholders, including government officials, local communities, and field staff, to ensure effective data collection and analysis.
- **Engage ITHCP programme advisory committee members**: Consulting with members of the ITHCP program advisory committee to support in addressing data management challenges.

Question 2. *Are there specific technologies or innovations that have improved the effectiveness of your tiger and monitoring efforts?*

The group discussion highlighted the adoption of various innovative technologies and innovations that have enhanced the effectiveness of tiger and prey monitoring efforts.

Vertical camera trapping: Traditional camera traps are often mounted at eye level, which can limit the coverage. Vertical camera trapping involves positioning camera traps at higher elevations, capturing images and video of tigers and other animals moving through the canopy. This approach has proven particularly effective in dense forests and areas with steep terrain.

Environmental DNA (eDNA): eDNA is a revolutionary technique that detects and identifies the genetic material of organisms found in environmental samples, such as water, soil, and scat. By analysing eDNA, conservationists can assess the presence and abundance of tigers and prey species without the need for direct observation. This approach is particularly useful in areas with limited access or where direct monitoring is challenging.

Artificial Intelligence (AI): AI algorithms can be trained to identify individual tigers and prey species from camera trap images and video, providing valuable insights into population dynamics and movements. AI-powered identification tools can automate the analysis of vast amounts of data, accelerating the process and reducing the need for manual intervention. However, this is not been used at the moment.

Real-time AI Camera: Use of real-time AI cameras to identify and classify animals in real-time, providing immediate alerts when a tiger or other target species is detected. These cameras are strategically placed in areas where poaching or other threats are prevalent, allowing rapid response and intervention.

Thermal camera: Thermal cameras detect heat signatures, enabling night vision and monitoring of animals in low-light conditions. This technology is particularly used for detecting tigers and other nocturnal species in dense forests or areas with limited visibility.

Question 3. *How can the collected data be used for evidence-based conservation decisions?*

The group discussion highlighted the crucial role of tiger and prey monitoring data in informing evidence-based conservation decisions. This data can be leveraged to develop effective conservation strategies, engage local communities, and advocate for policy changes that support tiger conservation.

Developing action plans and strategies: Comprehensive tiger and prey monitoring data provides a foundation for developing robust conservation action plans and strategies. The data can be used to identify areas of concern, prioritize conservation interventions, and track the effectiveness of conservation efforts over time.

Sharing with local conservation groups: Sharing monitoring data with local conservation groups empowers them to make informed decisions about their own conservation activities.

This collaboration will provide a sense of ownership and stewardship among local communities, contributing to long-term conservation success.

Providing government as evidence of site importance: Presenting monitoring data to government agencies can serve as compelling evidence to support the protection and management of critical tiger habitats. This data can influence policy decisions, resource allocation, and the implementation of effective conservation measures.

Landscape and protected area management planning: Tiger and prey monitoring data plays a vital role in landscape and protected area management planning. This data can inform the design of protected areas, the allocation of resources, and the development of sustainable land-use practices that support tiger conservation across broader landscapes.

Question 4. *How effective are the protection (patrolling/monitoring) measures used and what are the challenges?*

The group discussion highlighted the potential of real-time SMART patrolling as an effective tool for tiger conservation. This approach utilizes technology to enhance traditional patrolling methods, providing real-time information and enabling a more proactive approach to anti-poaching operations.

Key Advantages of Real-time SMART Patrolling:

Enhanced surveillance and monitoring: Real-time GPS tracking and communication devices enable rangers to monitor their position, coordinate with each other, and receive alerts about suspicious activities.

Proactive intervention: Armed forces can be rapidly deployed to areas of concern, reducing the likelihood of successful poaching attempts.

Evidence collection and law enforcement: Real-time data collection facilitates the identification of poachers, confiscation of illegal wildlife products, and prosecution of offenders.

Community engagement and awareness: Real-time information can be shared with local communities, fostering collaboration in conservation efforts and discouraging poaching.

Despite its potential, real-time SMART patrolling faces several challenges that need to be addressed:

Cost-effectiveness: The implementation and maintenance of advanced technology are expensive, potentially limiting its wider adoption.

Infrastructure and connectivity: Reliable communication infrastructure and power sources are essential for real-time data transmission are limited in remote areas.

Training and capacity building: Rangers and other field personnel require training in the use of technology and data management to effectively utilize SMART patrolling systems.

Community acceptance and trust: Ensuring the acceptance and trust of local communities is crucial for the success of SMART patrolling, as their cooperation is essential for gathering intelligence and deterring poaching.

Group 2 Report

Question 1. *What challenges have you encountered in collecting and analysing tiger and prey monitoring data, and how have you overcome them?*

The group discussion highlighted the various challenges encountered in collecting and analysing tiger and prey monitoring data, emphasizing the importance of addressing these challenges to ensure effective conservation efforts.

Cost for monitoring logistics and facilities: Conducting effective monitoring often requires substantial investments in logistics and facilities, such as transportation, accommodation, and field equipment. These costs are particularly challenging in remote and challenging landscapes.

Remote and difficult terrain: Tiger habitats often extend into remote and rugged areas, making fieldwork difficult and expensive. Access to these areas are limited due to factors such as road conditions, dense vegetation, and political instability.

Limited access to equipment: Conservation organizations and local communities lack access to specialized equipment required for tiger and prey monitoring, such as camera traps, GPS devices, and data analysis software.

Theft and Damage: Camera traps and other equipment are valuable assets, but they are also susceptible to theft and damage in remote and insecure areas.

The group proposed the following solution:

Collaboration with Local Communities: Engaging local communities in monitoring activities to reduce costs, as they can provide essential logistical support, knowledge of the local terrain, and access to remote areas.

Embrace innovative technologies: The use of innovative technologies, such as drone surveys and remote camera traps to expand monitoring coverage even in remote and challenging locations. These technologies can provide valuable data without the need for extensive field visits.

Partnerships with research institutions: Collaborating with research institutions and universities to provide access to specialized equipment, expertise, and training in monitoring techniques.

Community involvement in equipment protection: Engaging local communities in monitoring efforts can help deter equipment theft and damage. Communities can also provide valuable insights into local threats and potential solutions.

Question 2. *Are there specific technologies or innovations that have improved the effectiveness of your tiger and monitoring efforts?*

The group discussion highlighted the adoption of innovative technologies and approaches that have significantly enhanced the effectiveness of tiger and prey monitoring efforts.

Technology to monitor prey base in hilly terrain: Traditional methods for monitoring prey populations, such as line transect surveys, may be less effective in hilly terrain due to limited visibility and access. Innovative technologies, such as thermal imaging and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) overcomes these limitations and provide a more comprehensive understanding of prey distribution and abundance in hilly areas.

Vertical Camera Trapping: Traditional camera traps are often mounted at eye level, which can limit the coverage of arboreal species like tigers. Vertical camera trapping involves positioning camera traps at higher elevations, capturing images and video of tigers and other animals moving through the canopy. This approach has proven particularly effective in dense forests and areas with steep terrain.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) for scaling up technical systems: AI algorithms can automate the analysis of large datasets from camera traps, enabling faster and more efficient identification of tiger and prey species. This automation significantly reduces the time and resources required for data analysis, allowing conservation organizations to scale up monitoring efforts and cover more areas.

Transparency in data sharing: Open and transparent data sharing among conservation organizations, research institutions, and local communities is crucial for ensuring effective conservation outcomes. Sharing data facilitates collaborative research, identify patterns and trends, and inform decision-making at all levels.

Disposal of used camera and batteries (e-waste): Responsible disposal of used camera traps and batteries is critical to minimize the environmental impact of monitoring activities. Proper e-waste management practices help protect human health and the environment, ensuring that these materials are not disposed of in ways that can lead to pollution and harm wildlife. However, there are no mechanisms in place at the moment.

Question 3. *How can the collected data be used for evidence-based conservation decisions?*

The group discussion emphasized the crucial role of tiger and prey monitoring data in guiding evidence-based conservation decisions. This data can be leveraged to develop effective conservation strategies, engage local communities, and advocate for policy changes that support tiger conservation.

Establish data repositories: Creating centralized data repositories, developing data sharing guidelines and promoting data sharing.

Utilising data to address wildlife crime: Monitoring data can be used to identify hotspots for poaching and illegal wildlife trade, enabling law enforcement agencies to target their efforts more effectively. Sharing data with local communities can empower them to participate in anti-poaching activities and deter illegal activities in their areas.

Data management and training: Providing training to conservation staff on data management techniques, including data collection, processing, and analysis, ensures the quality and integrity of the data. Creating user-friendly data management tools can simplify data entry, analysis, and visualization, making it easier for staff to effectively utilize data for decision-making.

Question 4. *How effective are the protection (patrolling/monitoring) measures used and what are the challenges?*

The group discussion highlighted the challenges and opportunities in effectively implementing tiger protection measures, particularly in the context of funding, local involvement, and capacity building.

Limited funding for monitoring and patrolling: The allocation of adequate funding is crucial for supporting effective monitoring and patrolling activities. However, conservation organizations often face financial constraints that limit their ability to deploy adequate staff, purchase necessary equipment, and maintain infrastructure.

Sustainable funding mechanisms: Developing sustainable funding mechanisms is essential to ensure the long-term viability of tiger protection efforts. This may involve exploring alternative funding sources, such as eco-tourism, carbon finance, and private donations, to complement government support.

Local officials and community engagement: Engaging local communities and government officials in conservation efforts is essential for fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility for tiger protection. Collaboration with local communities needs to be enhanced to provide invaluable insights into local realities and enhance the effectiveness of patrolling and monitoring activities.

Community-based patrols: Empowering local communities to participate in anti-poaching patrols have proven significantly in reducing poaching incidents and deter illegal activities. By building trust and cooperation with communities, conservation organizations can create a network of local guardians for tiger habitats. Such initiatives need to be upscaled.

Training and skill development: Providing training and skill development opportunities for rangers, conservation staff, and local community members remains essential to enhance their effectiveness in monitoring and protecting tigers. This includes training on wildlife biology, patrolling techniques, data management, and conflict resolution.

Strong political commitment: Securing strong political commitment from government leaders has played a crucial role in providing the necessary resources, legal frameworks, and enforcement mechanisms to protect tigers effectively. This includes enacting and enforcing strong anti-poaching laws and policies.

Group 3 Report

Question 1. *What challenges have you encountered in collecting and analysing tiger and prey monitoring data, and how have you overcome them?*

The group discussion highlighted the various challenges encountered in collecting and analysing tiger and prey monitoring data, emphasizing the importance of addressing these challenges to ensure effective conservation efforts.

Remote and inaccessible locations: Tiger habitats often extend into remote and rugged areas, making fieldwork difficult and expensive. Access to these areas are limited due to factors such as road conditions, dense vegetation, and political instability. The use of innovative technologies, such as drone surveys and remote camera traps, can expand monitoring coverage even in remote and challenging locations. These technologies can provide valuable data without the need for extensive field visits.

Lack of standard monitoring protocol: The absence of standardized monitoring protocols leads to inconsistencies in data collection and analysis, hindering the comparison of data across different sites and organizations. Establishing clear and standardized monitoring protocols will ensures consistency in data collection, analysis, and interpretation.

Difficulties in sharing data: Sharing monitoring data across different organizations and jurisdictions, especially at transboundary level is challenging due to concerns about data confidentiality, data ownership, and data security. There should be a clear and transparent data sharing agreements and guidelines that protect sensitive information while facilitating collaboration and data exchange.

Limited expertise and training: Conservation organizations and local communities lacks the necessary technical expertise to effectively collect, analyze, and interpret tiger and prey monitoring data. Investment needs to be made in training and capacity building programs for conservation staff, local community members, and government officials to enhance their skills in monitoring techniques, data management, and statistical analysis.

Question 2. *Are there specific technologies or innovations that have improved the effectiveness of your tiger and monitoring efforts?*

The group discussion highlighted the adoption of innovative technologies and approaches that have significantly enhanced the effectiveness of tiger and prey monitoring efforts.

Citizen science: Citizen science initiatives is required leverage the collective knowledge and participation of volunteers to collect valuable data on tiger and prey populations. This approach can significantly expand monitoring coverage, particularly in remote and inaccessible areas. But currently, such initiatives are limited.

Poachers Cams: Hidden cameras are used that captures evidence of poaching activities, helping to identify poachers and deter future offenses. These cameras also provide valuable insights into poaching methods and patterns.

eDNA (Environmental DNA): eDNA is a revolutionary technique that detects and identifies the genetic material of organisms found in environmental samples, such as water, soil, and scat. By analysing eDNA, conservationists can assess the presence and abundance of tigers and prey species without the need for direct observation. This approach is particularly useful in areas with limited access or where direct monitoring is challenging but needs to be upscaled and replicated in other areas.

Tiger Collaring: Satellite collars to track the movements of tigers, revealing their home ranges, migration patterns, and interactions with other wildlife has proven very useful. This information is crucial for understanding tiger ecology and developing effective conservation strategies.

Question 3. *How can the collected data be used for evidence-based conservation decisions?*

The group discussion emphasized the crucial role of tiger and prey monitoring data in guiding evidence-based conservation decisions. This data can be leveraged to develop effective conservation strategies, engage local communities, and advocate for policy changes that support tiger conservation.

Planning for landscape and corridors: Monitoring data provides insights into tiger and prey habitat requirements, informing the planning and management of protected areas, wildlife corridors, and buffer zones.

Transboundary collaboration: Sharing tiger and prey monitoring data across different countries and jurisdictions can enhance understanding of population dynamics and threats, facilitating transboundary collaboration.

Tiger Reintroduction Programmes: Monitoring data can be used to identify suitable sites for tiger reintroduction, considering habitat quality, prey availability, and potential threats.

The group discussion highlighted the effectiveness of SMART (Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool) as a monitoring and protection approach for tigers and their habitats, while also acknowledging the challenges that need to be addressed to ensure its long-term success.

Enhanced monitoring and data collection: SMART provides a standardized framework for collecting and analysing tiger and prey data, enabling conservation organizations to track population trends, identify threats, and inform management decisions.

Challenges:

Capacity building: Building the capacity of rangers and conservation staff in SMART implementation and data analysis is crucial to ensure the effective use of this tool.

Equipment availability: Providing rangers with adequate and reliable equipment, such as GPS devices, communication systems, and vehicles, is essential for effective patrolling and monitoring.

Funding adequacy: Securing sustainable funding sources to support SMART implementation, ranger training, and the provision of necessary equipment is critical for long-term success.

Safety concerns: Ensuring the safety of rangers operating in remote and potentially dangerous areas is paramount, requiring adequate training, equipment, and support protocols.

Consistency and sustainability: Maintaining consistent and sustainable SMART implementation requires strong leadership, institutional support, and a commitment to continuous improvement.

Group 4 Report

Question 1. *What challenges have you encountered in collecting and analysing tiger and prey monitoring data, and how have you overcome them?*

Lack of capacity for camera installation and data analysis: Conservation organizations and local communities lack the necessary technical expertise to effectively install and maintain camera traps, as well as analyse the vast amounts of data generated.

Challenges in installing camera traps in Mangroves: Mangrove forests are often inaccessible, and challenging to navigate, making it difficult to deploy and maintain camera traps effectively.

Pirates involved in Illegal poaching: Pirates pose a threat to the safety of conservationists and can steal camera traps, hindering data collection efforts.

Security concerns especially in Myanmar: Political instability and armed conflicts in some tiger range countries, such as Myanmar, pose significant challenges to conservation efforts and data collection activities.

Lack of resources: Conservation organizations often face financial constraints that limit their ability to invest in equipment, training, and data analysis infrastructure.

Huge area to cover: Monitoring tiger populations and their prey over vast and remote areas poses a significant challenge.

Question 2. *Are there specific technologies or innovations that have improved the effectiveness of your tiger and monitoring efforts?*

M-Stripes: Monitoring System for Tigers - Intensive Protection and Ecological Status, is a software-based monitoring system launched across Indian tiger reserves by the Indian government's National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) in 2010.

SMART: Spatial monitoring and reporting tool-based application, utilizes mobile phones to collect data on tiger and prey sightings, expanding monitoring coverage to remote areas.

AI and Local Knowledge Science: AI algorithms to automatically identify tiger and prey species in camera trap images, reducing the time and effort required for manual analysis.AI can be combined with traditional ecological knowledge from local communities, providing a more comprehensive understanding of tiger ecology and conservation needs.

Satellite Collaring: Satellite collars provide real-time tracking of tiger movements, revealing their home ranges, migration patterns, and interactions with prey and other wildlife.

eDNA methods: eDNA is a revolutionary technique that detects and identifies the genetic material of organisms found in environmental samples, such as water, soil, and scat. By analysing eDNA, conservationists can assess the presence and abundance of tigers and prey species without the need for direct observation. This approach is particularly useful in areas with limited access or where direct monitoring is challenging.

Question 3. *How can the collected data be used for evidence-based conservation decisions?*

The group discussion emphasized the crucial role of tiger and prey monitoring data in guiding evidence-based conservation decisions. This data can be leveraged to develop effective conservation strategies, engage local communities, and advocate for policy changes that support tiger conservation.

Patrolling and monitoring tiger hotspots: Monitoring data can help identify areas with high tiger concentrations and potential poaching hotspots, enabling rangers to focus patrolling efforts and deter illegal activities.

Decision and policy formulation: Monitoring data provides insights into tiger and prey population dynamics, informing conservation decisions regarding habitat protection, prey management, and human-wildlife conflict mitigation.

Countering human-wildlife conflicts: Identifying areas with frequent human-tiger interactions can help focus conflict mitigation efforts, such as community education and alternative livelihood programs.

Question 4. *How effective are the protection (patrolling/monitoring) measures used and what are the challenges?*

Reduction of poaching: SMART-based patrolling strategies have proven effective in reducing poaching activities by focusing ranger efforts on areas of high tiger density and potential poaching hotspots.

Minimizing human-wildlife conflicts: Improving habitat connectivity and reducing human encroachment helps reduce human-tiger interactions and associated conflicts.

Controlling wildlife diseases: Effective protection measures controls wildlife diseases.

Improving habitat: Protecting existing tiger habitats and restoring degraded areas are essential for providing tigers with suitable habitat for survival and reproduction.

Group questions:

1. What are the local or regional nuances in human-wildlife conflicts (HWC) in your project areas, and how can they be effectively addressed?
2. Are there any successful case studies or innovative solutions from your projects that can be shared with others?
3. What are some of the challenges faced in managing HWC and what potential solutions could be considered?

Group 1 Report

Question 1. *What are the local or regional nuances in human-wildlife conflicts (HWC) in your project areas, and how can they be effectively addressed?*

The discussion highlighted interesting nuances specific to their project areas:

Variation in conflict species: While tigers are often the focus, black bears and leopards pose bigger threats in certain regions like Sikkim, where no tiger conflict has been reported.

Low prey driving conflict: Tigers venturing into villages due to dwindling forest prey necessitates solutions beyond traditional mitigation methods.

To effectively address these nuanced conflicts, the group identified two key approaches:

Revitalizing spiritual/religious connections: Rekindling the traditional reverence for animals held by local communities could foster respect and coexistence.

Understanding ecosystem's role: Promoting a deeper understanding of how healthy ecosystems benefit both humans and wildlife can incentivize conservation efforts.

Question 2. *Are there any successful case studies or innovative solutions from your projects that can be shared with others?*

Leveraging local knowledge: They emphasized the effectiveness of understanding animal behaviors based on local knowledge. This approach empowers communities and allows for targeted mitigation strategies tailored to specific species and contexts.

Financial support: Compensation programs for HWC incidents were acknowledged as a valuable tool for communities directly affected by conflicts, fostering tolerance and reducing retaliatory actions.

Bridging the knowledge gap: Awareness activities integrating science and local knowledge were highlighted for their ability to effectively educate communities while respecting their existing understanding. This blended approach ensures messages resonate and resonate deeply.

Community-based response: The success of forest and community rapid response teams demonstrates the power of local engagement. These teams provide immediate intervention, reducing damage and fostering a sense of ownership in conflict resolution.

Advocacy for change: Lobbying for political support showcases the importance of broader-level engagement in securing long-term solutions and resources for HWC management.

Proactive management: Studying animal behaviors and identifying problematic animals for relocation offers a proactive approach to managing conflict. This targeted strategy addresses specific individuals causing issues, minimizing wider impacts.

Question 3. *What are some of the challenges faced in managing HWC and what potential solutions could be considered?*

Climate change impact: One of the concerns was climate change altering tiger behavior, making traditional mitigation strategies less effective. Adapting management plans and incorporating climate projections into decision-making will be crucial.

Rapid response challenges: Weak and untrained rapid response teams in some areas hinder effective intervention. Sustainable operation in terms of resources also requires attention. Capacity building, adequate training, and secure funding are essential for these teams to function efficiently.

Rescue and rehabilitation gaps: Limited capacity and facilities for rescuing and rehabilitating injured or displaced animals leave critical gaps in conflict management. Expanding these capabilities and establishing dedicated rescue centers are crucial.

Problematic animal management: Dealing with animals exhibiting persistent conflict behavior poses a complex challenge. Developing relocation facilities and protocols guided by ethical considerations and ecological understanding is needed.

Psychological impact: Recognizing the often-overlooked psychological impact of HWC on affected families. The Group called for solutions that address this emotional toll. Providing mental health support and community-based coping mechanisms are essential steps.

Group 2 Report

Question 1. *What are the local or regional nuances in human-wildlife conflicts (HWC) in your project areas, and how can they be effectively addressed?*

Cultural and traditional ties: Local communities often have established cultural and traditional beliefs relating to wildlife, which can influence both conflict and potential solutions.

Traditional hunting rights: Existing practices of traditional hunting, if not managed sustainably, can contribute to HWC.

Conservation awareness: A lack of awareness about conservation principles and the importance of wildlife can hinder efforts to mitigate conflict.

Conflict mitigation measures: In some areas, previously implemented conflict mitigation measures might need to be reactivated or adapted to current circumstances.

Livestock grazing: Livestock grazing within forests can create opportunities for conflict with wildlife, especially when populations are large or poorly managed.

Trespassing protected: Trespassing into protected areas by humans can increase the risk of conflict. Additionally, limited knowledge about managing conflicts with wildlife within these areas can pose challenges.

Suggested solutions to address these challenges included:

Quick response mechanisms: Implementing efficient systems for rapid response to HWC incidents can minimize damage and build trust with affected communities.

Awareness raising: Raising awareness about HWC through targeted campaigns that consider local contexts and cultural sensitivities can foster understanding and encourage behavior changes.

Understanding the root causes: Identifying the underlying reasons behind HWC in each specific context is crucial for developing effective and sustainable preventative measures.

Question 2. *Are there any successful case studies or innovative solutions from your projects that can be shared with others?*

Bridging the knowledge gap: Sharing scientific knowledge with communities about HWC and wildlife conservation to empower communities to understand the issues and become active participants in solutions.

Community empowerment: Building capacity and empowering local communities by involving them in training, providing resources, and fostering leadership within communities to manage conflicts effectively.

Quick response and relief: Establishing a quick HWC relief fund to allow immediate financial assistance to affected communities, reducing hardship and fostering cooperation.

Policy advocacy: Securing policy support for HWC compensation to help ensure communities are fairly compensated for losses, minimizing resentment and encouraging tolerance.

Rapid response teams: Well-trained and equipped rapid response teams for immediate intervention, minimizing damage and promoting safety.

Preparedness measures: Providing first aid training for wildlife rescue and encounters to equip communities to respond safely and effectively to various situations.

Context-specific prevention: Implementing preventative measures like net fencing, adapted to specific contexts and needs that can reduce conflict instances.

Stakeholder collaboration: Engaging all stakeholders, including government agencies, conservation organizations, and local communities to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive approach to HWC management.

Question 3. *What are some of the challenges faced in managing HWC and what potential solutions could be considered?*

Challenges included:

Variation in conflicts: Different project areas experience varied HWC types, demanding solutions tailored to specific species, behaviors, and contexts.

Varying understandings: Differing perceptions and understandings of HWC among communities, stakeholders, and even experts necessitate inclusive communication and knowledge sharing.

Lack of sustained resources: Limited funding and manpower hinder long-term implementation of effective HWC management strategies.

Solutions included:

Women-led cooperatives and insurance schemes: Empowering women through cooperatives and establishing insurance schemes for crop and livestock losses to provide financial security and incentivize wildlife conservation within communities.

REDD+ and biodiversity finance: Leveraging REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) schemes and biodiversity credit and carbon financing mechanisms can generate funds for compensating HWC victims and supporting wildlife protection initiatives.

Group 3 Report

Question 1. *What are the local or regional nuances in human-wildlife conflicts (HWC) in your project areas, and how can they be effectively addressed?*

Nuances in human-wildlife conflicts included:

Varying tolerance: Indigenous communities often exhibit higher tolerance for HWC due to cultural values and traditional practices, compared to newer settlers who may lack such understanding.

Socio-cultural shifts: Changing land use, migration to urban areas, and cultural shifts can impact traditional conflict management practices and community dynamics, potentially exacerbating HWC.

Top-down approaches: Reliance on top-down HWC management does not necessarily consider local contexts and community needs, leading to resentment and ineffectiveness.

Prey base depletion: Declining prey populations due to habitat degradation force carnivores to seek food closer to human settlements, increasing conflict risks.

Corridor pressures: Increased human activity and infrastructure development within wildlife corridors disrupt animal movement patterns and increase the likelihood of conflict.

Solutions included:

Community-based solutions: Empowering local communities through participatory approaches, incorporating traditional knowledge, and fostering collaboration with indigenous groups can lead to more culturally sensitive and effective conflict management.

Addressing root causes: Tackling the underlying reasons for HWC, such as habitat degradation and resource depletion, requires holistic solutions that address ecological pressures and promote sustainable practices.

Flexible policy frameworks: Developing flexible policy frameworks that adapt to regional variations and consider cultural contexts can ensure more effective implementation.

Education and awareness: Raising awareness about HWC, its ecological impacts, and solutions among both local communities and new settlers can foster tolerance and encourage behavior changes.

Question 2. *Are there any successful case studies or innovative solutions from your projects that can be shared with others?*

Indigenous knowledge and practices: Integrating customary rituals and traditional practices into conflict mitigation strategies to tap into cultural values and promote community ownership.

Immediate government action: Prompt intervention by authorities during HWC incident to foster trust and demonstrates commitment to addressing the issue.

Behavior change: Promoting behavior changes within communities to reduce actions that attract or provoke wildlife.

Influencing customary leaders: Engaging and collaborating with leaders within communities to create champions for positive action and encourage widespread participation.

Community engagement and investment: Involving communities in developing and implementing HWC solutions to foster ownership, builds capacity, and ensures long-term sustainability.

Question 3. *What are some of the challenges faced in managing HWC and what potential solutions could be considered?*

Challenges included:

Low motivation: Addressing HWC effectively is sometimes hindered by a lack of motivation among stakeholders, potentially due to competing priorities or limited understanding of the long-term benefits.

High cost to locals: HWC often places a disproportionate burden on local communities in terms of financial losses, property damage, and safety risks. This creates resentment and resistance.

Inadequate benefit sharing: When initiatives addressing HWC are implemented by external groups, ensuring equitable distribution of benefits and involving local communities is challenging.

Potential Solutions included:

Capacity building: Empowering local communities through training, resources, and skill development to increase their motivation and ability to participate actively in HWC management. This can foster ownership and a sense of agency.

Incentivize participation: Explore ways to incentivize local communities to engage in HWC management, such as through direct financial compensation, infrastructure development, or alternative livelihood opportunities.

Promote equity: Ensure fair and transparent benefit sharing from any HWC initiatives, involving communities in decision-making processes and ensuring their voices are heard.

Build trust and communication: Maintain open communication and collaboration between government agencies, conservation organizations, and local communities to address concerns and build trust.

Context-specific solutions: Recognize that challenges and solutions will vary depending on the specific context of each region and community. Tailor approaches to address the unique needs and circumstances of each situation.

Group 4 Report

Question 1. *What are the local or regional nuances in human-wildlife conflicts (HWC) in your project areas, and how can they be effectively addressed?*

Nuances in human-wildlife conflicts included:

Crop destruction and livestock depredation: These primary concerns, causing significant economic losses and impacting livelihoods.

Psychological impact: The stress and fear experienced by communities due to wildlife encounters require attention beyond financial losses.

Diverse conflict species: Besides other conflict species, snakes are also involved in conflicts.

Solutions included:

Protection measures: Implementing physical barriers, deterrents, and habitat management strategies adapted to specific species and contexts is crucial.

Community awareness and engagement: Educating communities about HWC causes, risks, and mitigation methods empowers them to participate actively in solutions.

Monitoring and early warning systems: Tracking wildlife movements and informing communities about potential encounters to help reduce risks and prepare for incidents.

Compensation mechanisms: Establishing fair and transparent compensation systems for losses due to HWC to increase tolerance and cooperation.

Disaster management preparedness: Integrating HWC risks into disaster management plans to ensure that the communities are equipped to respond effectively during critical situations.

Policy support: Advocating for policies that support compensation, resource allocation, and community based HWC management strategies is crucial for long-term sustainability.

Question 2. *Are there any successful case studies or innovative solutions from your projects that can be shared with others?*

Identifying problems and conflict species: Accurately pinpointing the source and type of HWC to targeted solutions and resource allocation. This could involve wildlife tracking, camera traps, or community reporting systems.

Policy influence: Advocating for policies that support HWC management, compensation mechanisms, and community empowerment ensures long-term sustainability.

Community engagement and awareness: Educating and involving communities in HWC monitoring, mitigation strategies, and decision-making fosters ownership and responsible behavior.

Village tiger rescue team: Empowering local communities to respond to conflict situations safely and effectively through trained and equipped rescue teams builds trust and reduces risks.

Quick response team: Having a dedicated team for rapid intervention to minimize damage and provide immediate assistance during HWC incidents.

Security and safety precautions: Implementing measures like deterrents, barriers, and safety training for communities to minimize the risk of injuries and promotes responsible interactions with wildlife.

Question 3. *What are some of the challenges faced in managing HWC and what potential solutions could be considered?*

Challenges faced and suggested solutions in managing HWC included:

Emotional trauma: Recognizing the significant emotional toll HWC inflicts on both staff and communities is crucial for providing appropriate support and building resilience.

Lack of data and information: Addressing data gaps through comprehensive monitoring and information sharing ensures evidence-based decision-making and targeted interventions.

Short-lived impact from livelihood initiatives: Shifting towards longer-term, sustainable livelihood interventions empowers communities and reduces dependence on resource exploitation that might contribute to HWC.

Inadequate resources: Addressing staff shortages, capacity limitations, and financial constraints requires innovative resource mobilization strategies and collaborative partnerships.

Unshared success stories: Disseminating successful HWC management practices through knowledge sharing platforms and capacity building workshops can benefit wider communities.

Capacity building: Training and equipping staff and communities with knowledge, skills, and resources is crucial for effective HWC management.

Monitoring and prevention: Implementing robust monitoring systems and preventive measures tailored to specific contexts can minimize conflict risks.

Rescue and rehabilitation: Establishing efficient rescue and rehabilitation programs for injured or displaced wildlife minimizes suffering and promotes coexistence.

Carrying capacity studies: Understanding the ecological and social carrying capacity of an area informs sustainable resource management and reduces conflict potential.

Working with vulnerable groups: Recognizing and addressing the specific needs of vulnerable groups disproportionately affected by HWC ensures equitable solutions.

Collaboration and knowledge sharing: Partnering with different institutions, communities, and experts fosters knowledge exchange and strengthens collective efforts.

Holistic project design: Designing HWC management projects with a comprehensive and long-term perspective ensures the sustainability and impact of interventions.

Group questions

1. What are the most critical tiger habitats issues in your projects, and how can they be mitigated?
2. Are there specific habitat restoration or protection techniques that have worked well in your projects?
3. How can habitat management strategies be integrated with the conservation goals of local communities?
4. What are some of the challenges faced in habitat management and what potential solutions could be considered?

Group 1 Report

Question 1. *What are the most critical tiger habitats issues in your projects, and how can they be mitigated?*

Identified issues related to habitat management included:

Habitat loss and degradation: Deforestation, infrastructure development, agriculture, and mining all contribute to shrinking and degraded tiger habitats.

Habitat fragmentation: Roads, railways, and other infrastructure projects create barriers, isolating tiger populations and hindering movement.

Inadequate tiger prey: Poaching, habitat loss, and competition with other carnivores can reduce tiger prey availability.

Livestock grazing and habitat alteration: Unsustainable grazing practices degrading tiger habitat and increase conflict with communities.

Climate change impacts: Rising temperatures, changes in precipitation patterns, and extreme weather events threatens tiger habitats and prey availability.

Emerging diseases and pathogens: Diseases like Canine Distemper Virus (CDV) pose new threats to tiger populations.

Mitigation measures identified included:

Smart green infrastructure: Constructing structures for tigers to safely crossroads and other barriers.

Habitat management: Enhancing prey populations through habitat restoration and prey species management.

Fire and invasive species management: Adopting appropriation regulations and managing fire and invasive species.

Question 2. *Are there specific habitat restoration or protection techniques that have worked well in your projects?*

Restoring wildlife corridors and connectivity: Reconnecting fragmented habitats, allowing for vital animal movement, gene flow, and population expansion. Reduces human-wildlife conflict by providing safe passageways.

Smart Green Infrastructure: Integrates ecological considerations into infrastructure development, minimizing habitat fragmentation and promoting coexistence with nature. It includes wildlife crossings, green roofs, etc.

Managing water reserves: Ensures adequate water availability for wildlife, especially in drought-prone areas. Creates diverse aquatic habitats and supports wetland ecosystems crucial for numerous species.

Question 3. *How can habitat management strategies be integrated with the conservation goals of local communities?*

Engage local communities from the outset: Involve community members in decision-making processes, allowing them to voice their concerns, priorities, and traditional knowledge. This will ensure that the communities directly benefit from conservation efforts through income generation, resource access, or improved livelihoods.

Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES): Compensate communities for protecting and restoring habitats that provide essential services like water purification or flood control. Develop sustainable tourism opportunities that generate income for communities while promoting conservation awareness and support communities in adopting sustainable practices like responsible forestry, fishing, or agriculture that minimize habitat degradation.

Question 4. *What are some of the challenges faced in habitat management and what potential solutions could be considered?*

Challenges included:

Absence of habitat management guidelines: Lack of clear guidelines leading to inconsistent practices, ineffective management, and potential harm to habitats.

Limited knowledge in habitat management: Lack of knowledge and expertise which hinders effective management and decision-making.

Empowering local leadership: Lack of local involvement and empowerment leading to resentment and resistance to conservation efforts.

Proposed solutions included:

Develop evidence-based guidelines: Collaborate with experts, researchers, and stakeholders to create context-specific guidelines for different habitat types and species.

Capacity building: Offer training programs, workshops, and knowledge exchange opportunities for local communities, managers, and stakeholders.

Decentralize decision-making: Empower local communities to participate in planning, implementation, and monitoring of habitat management.

Group 2 Report

Unlike other group, this group instead of focusing on the four questions provided, the group focused their discussions on challenges and solutions for habitat management which basically answers questions one, but also incorporates other three questions as well.

Question 1. *What are the most critical tiger habitats issues in your projects, and how can they be mitigated?*

Identified issues related to habitat management included:

Overgrazing by livestock: Habitat degradation, competition for resources, potential conflict with tigers.

Disrupted habitat connectivity: Fragmented habitats hinder tiger movement, breeding, and gene flow.

Invasive species: Outcompete native species, disrupt ecosystems, and threaten prey availability.

Climate change Impact: Shifting weather patterns, increased droughts, and extreme events that alters habitat and affect prey availability.

Disasters (forest fire, landslides): Direct habitat damage, disruption of ecological processes, and potential displacement of wildlife.

Land use change: Habitat loss and fragmentation due to deforestation, infrastructure development, and other human activities.

Lack of resources and capacity: Limited ability to effectively manage and protect tiger habitats.

Mitigation measures identified included:

Carrying capacity studies: Assess the grazing capacity of the habitat and develop sustainable grazing plans.

Landscape-level approach: Implement management across entire landscapes, creating wildlife corridors and minimizing fragmentation.

Early detection of invasive species and rapid response: Implement control programs to eradicate or manage invasive species populations effectively.

Climate-resilient management: Integrate climate change considerations into management plans, focusing on building habitat resilience.

Improved land-use planning: Develop spatial plans that prioritize tiger habitat conservation and minimize conflict with human activities.

Secure funding and capacity: Seek grants, explore innovative financing mechanisms, and advocate for increased government support and also provide training and resources for conservation personnel and community members.

Group 3 Report

Question 1. *What are the most critical tiger habitats issues in your projects, and how can they be mitigated?*

Identified issues related to habitat management included:

Habitat Loss and degradation: Palm oil plantation, mining and linear infrastructure

Invasive species: Aggressive invasive plant or animal species which disrupt ecosystems and outcompete native species.

Succession (woody encroachment): Natural forest succession towards denser vegetation can reducing prey availability in open habitats.

Habitat encroachment: Expansion of human settlements and activities that encroach on tiger habitats and increase human-wildlife conflict.

Forest fire: Uncontrolled wildfires damaging habitats.

Low prey density: Insufficient prey availability that forces tigers into conflict with humans. lead to starvation.

Climate change: Rising temperatures and extreme weather events can alter ecosystems and affect prey availability.

Mitigation measures identified included:

Strengthening regulations and law enforcement: Enacting and enforcing stricter regulations to protect tiger habitats and discourage unsustainable practices like illegal logging and poaching.

Proper land use planning: Implementing land-use plans that prioritize tiger conservation and minimize habitat loss through deforestation and development.

Wildlife-friendly infrastructure: Designing and constructing infrastructure like roads and bridges with wildlife passages and mitigation measures to minimize fragmentation and ensure safe movement.

Provide adequate resources and capacity: Equipping conservation agencies and local communities with adequate personnel, training, and equipment to effectively manage and protect tiger habitats.

Question 2. *Are there specific habitat restoration or protection techniques that have worked well in your projects?*

Restoring with native species: Reestablishing natural plant communities crucial for specific ecosystems, providing food, shelter, and breeding grounds for native wildlife.

Adaptive management: To allow flexible adjustments to implement strategies based on ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

Mechanized management strategies: Efficient for large-scale tasks like removing invasive species, controlling vegetation growth, or preparing planting sites.

Question 3. *How can habitat management strategies be integrated with the conservation goals of local communities?*

Participatory habitat management planning: Empowers communities, fosters ownership, and ensures strategies to address their needs and concerns.

Education and awareness: Increases understanding of the value of habitat conservation and fosters responsible behavior.

Regulating resource use: Ensures sustainable resource utilization and minimizes habitat degradation.

Zoning protected areas: Create designated areas for strict habitat protection and minimizes human impact.

Question 4. *What are some of the challenges faced in habitat management and what potential solutions could be considered?*

Challenges included:

Absence of habitat management guidelines: Lack of clear guidelines leading to inconsistent practices, ineffective management, and potential harm to habitats.

Proposed solutions included:

Develop evidence-based guidelines: Collaborate with experts, researchers, and stakeholders to create context-specific guidelines for different habitat types and species.

Group 4 Report

Question 1. *What are the most critical tiger habitats issues in your projects, and how can they be mitigated?*

Identified issues related to habitat management included:

Livestock grazing: Unsustainable grazing practices degrading habitat, compete with prey species, and increase conflict with tigers.

Land encroachment: Expanding human settlements, agriculture, and infrastructure fragmenting habitats and reducing available space for tigers.

Lack of capacity and resources: Conservation agencies and local communities lacks the personnel, training, and equipment needed for effective habitat management.

Natural succession: Natural forest changes reducing open areas preferred by tigers and their prey.

Landmines in conflict areas: In some areas landmines pose a risk to both tigers and humans, hindering movement and creating unsafe conditions.

Linear infrastructure: Roads, railways, and power lines fragmenting habitats, disrupting movement patterns, and increasing mortality risks for tigers.

Mitigation measures identified included:

Regular intervention for management: Implement regular patrolling, monitoring, and habitat restoration activities to address threats and maintain healthy ecosystems.

Develop tools for effective habitat management: Utilize spatial planning tools, remote sensing, and ecological modeling to guide conservation efforts and prioritize interventions.

Sustainable management practices: Promote rotational grazing, predator-proof enclosures for livestock, and alternative livelihoods for communities to reduce pressure on tiger habitats.

Question 2. *Are there specific habitat restoration or protection techniques that have worked well in your projects?*

No specific technic mentioned.

Question 3. *How can habitat management strategies be integrated with the conservation goals of local communities?*

Integration of community development plan with tiger habitat management: Develop a unified vision that addresses both conservation and community needs, fostering long-term sustainability.

Integration of local needs in habitat management: Addresses community concerns and gain support for conservation efforts.

Adequate stakeholder consultation throughout the process: Ensures transparency, builds trust, and incorporates diverse perspectives.

Taking advantage of local knowledge in habitat management: Leverage valuable insights and traditional practices that can enhance conservation effectiveness.

Question 4. *What are some of the challenges faced in habitat management and what potential solutions could be considered?*

Challenges included:

Lack of capacity and resources: Difficulty implementing necessary management actions, training personnel, and acquiring appropriate equipment.

Lack of effective methodologies: Inefficient or inappropriate management practices that causes habitats and fail to achieve conservation goals.

Proposed solutions included:

Building partnerships: Collaborate with NGOs, research institutions, and private sector actors to share resources and expertise.

Develop new tools and methodologies: Conduct research and pilot projects to create innovative solutions tailored to specific needs.

Annex 7. Capacity Building and Knowledge Sharing Session

Self-assessment exercise

STRENGTHS

Key Topic	Strengths	Organization
Community engagement	- We could change the behaviour of the community - Now the hunters turned protectors – we could engage community to conserve tigers in the Sundarbans - Thus, we could build a social capital who are the guardians of tigers	Wild Team (Md. Anwarul Islam)
	- Community based conservation - Habitat management - Prey monitoring	NTNC
	- Community engagement - The collaboration among local community, local leaders and anyone in the protected area	KESAN (Saw Moe Aung)
	Previous community conservation work which the current community knows about has helped access their opinion	WCS India (Bano Haralu)
	- Project planning - Community mobilisation - Long term project implementation - Landscape approach	WTI (Samir Kumar Sinha)
	Multi-stakeholder engagement (from communities to government)	WWF
	- Community and cultural study - Documenting traditional knowledge - Want to share way of community engagement and traditional knowledge and NRM Planning	Aaranyak (Jayanta Sarma)
	- Community engagement - Community exchange - Networking (community) - Community led biodiversity monitoring - Alternative development models - Policy advocacy	PAC Member
Wildlife monitoring	Wildlife study design & data analysis	BTC (Tashi Dhendup)
	- Hunter to hermit program of Bhutan - E-DNA use to asses wildlife in other project sites	BTC (Sapana Sunar)
	- Tiger & prey monitoring - Camera trapping, field surveys and data analysis	Jahangirnagar University (Mohammed Abdul Aziz)
	Assisting TRC in accepting SME best practices e.g. security audit, CA/TS and GTRP	GTF (Amar)
Government collaboration and engagement	- Government collaboration & engagement - Scientific experts in species and habitats, community engagement	ZSL (Matt)
	- Inter-governmental body can provide platform to any governments in one place - Policy / planning - Strategy making	GTF (Amar)
	- Government Engagement - Integrating conservation in development planning	WCS Indonesia (Ina)
	Provide assistance towards implementing a kickstart new program in TRC by involving the government / local electoral / NGOs e.g. HAT project	GTF (Arun Kumar)

Indigenous People and traditional knowledge	- Learning and documentation of traditional knowledge (indigenous wisdom) - Working with Indigenous People in rights-based approach	Wildlife Asia (Demelza Stokes)
	Ethnographic documentation & Field based exponential learning	WCS India (Manish)
	Communication skills with indigenous communities – my journalism background provides access to decision makers	WCS India (Bano Haralu)
M&E	- Monitoring and evaluation (biological and social) Community engagement on NRM and livelihoods	Aaranyak (Firoz Ahmed)
	- Analytical thinking - Evaluation of shared ideas	WCS Indonesia (Reza)
ESMS	Own safeguard standards & process in place	WWF
Transboundary Collaboration	- Monitoring linked to government protocols - Technical expertise & support for government policy - Transboundary cooperation	ZSL
	Transboundary cooperation	WWF
Site Protection	Habitat and population protection	FKL (Dedy)
Awareness raising	Organization is developing more creative ways to raise awareness	HarimauKita (Zia)
Tiger rescue / Vet	Tiger rescue, conflict mitigation response team (vet skills for tiger / wildlife rescue)	FKL (Dedy)
Meeting / workshop organization	Good experience with hosting / organising meetings / workshop / training at national / international levels	BTC (Tashi Dhendup)
Land use planning	- Participatory land use planning - Integration of village development plan and conservation area management plan	Yapeka (Agustinus)
Landscape approach	- Landscape approach - Longterm presence in landscapes - Dedicated team - Our global network and knowledge	WWF
Boat driving	- Exceptional boat driving skills on the Salween river	Wildlife Asia

CHALLENGES

Key Topic	Challenges	Organization
ESMS capacity building	ESMS capacity building including training on orientation of ESMS to local comms & local partners	Wildlife Asia (Demelza Stokes)
	May conduct workshop / meeting / capacity building of ESMS documents most of the implementors do not understand the object of each document	BTC (Sapana Sunar)
Data analysis	Data analysis for camera data	FFI Myanmar
	My organisation needs experience / capacity building for financial management / capacity building for data analysis (tiger monitoring, habitat connection model)	FKL (Dedy)
Habitat management and HWC	- Business development & networking - Sustainable approaches for HWC mitigation & livelihoods	NTNC
	- Habitat management - Human Wildlife Conflict	KESAN (Saw Moe Aung)
	Habitat Management	FFI Myanmar
	Appropriate biological assessment (PAC) relevant to tiger habitat and community benefit	WCS India (Manish)
Community engagement	- Advocation and consultation with stakeholders - Skills to manage villagers / people impacted by project implementation	WCS Indonesia (Reza)

	Wish to learn about best practice community engagement techniques from IUCN & other grantees	ZSL
Social science / sustainable financing	- Learn more social science as conservation is heavily dependent on social science - Sustainable financing	WildTeam (Md Anwarul Islam)
Gender	- Gender transformative approach - Inclusive conservation (learning phase)	WWF
M&E / Reporting / Communication	Communication: access to resources, skills	BTC (Tashi Dhendup)
	Simplification but retaining the various reporting requirements	WCS India (Manish)
	- Communication of project outcomes - Data analysis – qualitative date - Maintaining 'MEL'	WTI (Samir Kumar Sinha)
	- Monitoring & evaluation – wish to learn other best practice techniques - Best software tools - External training opportunities	ZSL
	- Documentation - Channel of communications / description required because of lack of local context understanding	ZSL
Policy	How to navigate obstacles that arise from policies / regulators	HarimauKita (Zia)
	Policy & governance at grassroots level	Aaranyak (Firoz Ahmed)
	- Park management / habitat management - Policy approach	Yapeka (Agustinus)
	Lobby & advocacy for governance and policy change - want to learn more in the aspects	Aaranyak (Jayanta Kumar Sarma)
Limited resources	- Limited Budget and political commitment for conservation - Limited human resources vs deliverable	WCS Indonesia (Ina)
Connecting landscapes	Request for an overview from PAC / IUCN & project managers working on similar or neighbouring landscapes to project teams e.g. Myanmar team share their work with Naga team	WCS India (Bano Haralu)

OPPORTUNITIES

Key Topic	Opportunities	Organization
Workshops	- Having the grantees workshop - something that all grantees can learn from one another - Field visit (if possible)	KESAN (Saw Moe Aung)
	Networking workshops & training workshops	BTC (Tashi Dhendup)
	Thematic based technical workshops should be supported by IUCN/ ITHCP	NTNC
Trainings	- Compendium of best practices - Thematic training sessions (recorded videos) - Sharing interpretation / contact if each grantee and brief of the project - Frequent meetings at regional level	GTF (Arun Kumar)
	- Training - Knowledge sharing - Exposure visit to best practices areas	BTC (Sapana Sunar)
	- Capacity building training ESMS - Cross learning visits and network	NTNC
	Training need assessment for grantees	WCS Indonesia (Ina)
	Training – peer learning (to other regions)	Yapeka (Agustinus)
	- Training packages on biological survey data analysis - Conservation project communication skills	NTNC (Laxmi)

	Training for all project coordinators working on ESMS documentation together, it would be useful to hear how others are doing / the challenges the encounter	Wildlife Asia (Demelza Stokes)
	- Training & discussion on community-based conservation - Building capacity on how to develop and co-design systems mapping in a participatory way for institutions / grantees	PAC Member
	- Training / knowledge on community-based approaches, especially theoretical and analytical skills (from PAC) - IUCN ITHCP can plan for a special journal issue to publish learnings	WTI (Samir Kumar Sinha)
Field visits / exchanges	There should be exchange programme among grantees and communities. Seeing is believing – if they believe it's possible, they will start practicing.	WildTeam (Md. Anwarul Islam)
	Cross-learning events among grantees	WWF
	- Creating opportunity and team exchanges - Sharing data and information with each other through a common forum - Creating a grantee alliance where old and new grantees can stay connected and share.	PAC Member
	Cross exchange with other groups working with indigenous people would be excellent	Wildlife Asia (Demelza Stokes)
Share best practices	Documenting leaning and best practices of the region	NTNC
	Compile best practices from grantees and share the documents	Jahangirnagar University (Md. Abdul Aziz)
	Share research outcomes / reports e.g. shared database	WWF
	- Shared knowledge, experience among the grantees working with IPLC - Common sharing platform	Aaranyak (Jayanta Kumar Sarma)
Email threads	PAC or IUCN facilitators sharing key insights from various project sites with all – common email thread.	WCS India (Manish Chandi)
	Email group for technical questions – e.g. methods for estimating species abundance and best camera trapping practice	PAC Member
Networking groups	For networking – have a smaller group for specific interest (e.g. population research, novel technology etc)	HarimauKita (Zia)
	- Creating networks such as ESMS team; livelihood team; tiger monitoring - If one team has strengths that they can share they could train other teams	FFI Myanmar
	- Establish technical working groups that bring experts together – virtually or face to face to tackle specific issues - Peer to peer learning should be supported	NTNC
	ESMS – sharing among grantees	FFI Myanmar
Dedicated knowledge platforms / resources	Dedicated website for best practice material, case studies etc.	PAC Member
	Capacity and resource for the best practice ESMS approaches and impact of staff departure for specialised role	ZSL
	- Provide funding and knowledge with site specific outcomes and reports relevant to similar landscapes with similar challenges - More interaction / workshops for sharing of knowledge	GTF (Arun Kumar)
Regular communication	Co-sharing learning on wildlife monitoring methods from established projects on a (quarterly) basis	Wildlife Asia (D. Stokes)
	Regular knowledge sharing platforms meetings (in person or virtual)	WWF
	- Regular meetings – online & offline	WCS Indonesia (Reza)

	- Benchmarking program by visiting projects locations of other grantees	
	- Sharing of project progress of each project to all - Conducting annual project meet up	BTC (Sapana Sunar)
	- Regular meetings of grantees - Exchange learning among grantees - Channel Exchange & update regularly	Aaranyak (Firoz Ahmed)
Publications	- Joint publications in peer reviewed journals - Sponsor staff members for advanced training	WTI (Samir Kumar Sinha)

Group Discussion

Group 1

Key capacity needs (in order of priority)	Activities
1. Exchange visits (field sites)	1. Best practices
2. Shared Findings (bi-annually)	2. Compiling findings (email)
3. Knowledge sharing for habitat management	3. Sharing SOPs among grantees
4. A) Species identification B) Data analysis	4. Online trainings
5. Flexible Standard Guidelines ESMS in every level	5. Meeting of all programme coordinators working on ESMS

Group 2

Key capacity needs	Priority	Activities	Delivery modalities
1. Human- wildlife coexistence (translation of integrated model >> local level)	High	Focus Group Discussion	- Comms material / repository of IUCN Guidelines - Messaging / narrative/ framing / effective comms (e.g. how to communicate tiger conservation to people who lost someone to tigers) - Professional counselling behaviour courses - Series of online training - Exchange visits / study tours - Cross-country exchange
2. Engagement and representation: holistic representation of society stakeholders (influences, religious leaders, educators)	High	- Checklist of challenges food / water / transport / forest produce - Identify success stories	- Community leaders - Socio-anthropology training - Instant response action

Group 3

Key capacity needs	Priority	Activities	Delivery modalities
Biological monitoring and data analysis	High	- Training on tiger monitoring (specific methods e.g. eDNA, or standard method) - Sharing of country best practice - Data analysis	- Online / in person - Exchange visits
HWC monitoring method	High	- Training on data collection / analysis - Sharing of best practice	- Online / in person - Exchange visits

Policy advocacy	High	- Advocating with different levels of government (central state, local) - Transboundary cooperation - GAP Analysis of existing laws / policy - Negotiation training	- White paper - training - Workshop - Policy brief
Knowledge management	High	- Develop case studies / best practice - Training – 'how to' training documents	
Project management	High	- ESMS monitoring - Project management training - Social / economic analysis	Training / workshop
Participatory techniques	High	- Training on PRA & RRA, ERA - Participatory mapping exercise	Training / workshop

Group 4

Key capacity needs	Priority	Activities	Delivery modalities
1. Monitoring / species & social	High	Integrated trainings - Identifying participants - Developing modules - Identifying trainers - Feedback mechanisms - Advocacy trainings	- Hands-on - Online platforms - Hybrid - Peer-to-peer - Guidelines & manuals - Internships - Field visits / exchange - Learning from experts - Smaller sharing groups - Courses
2. Process Methodology	High		
3. Community & social engagement aspects	High		
4. Data analysis	High		
5. Knowledge management & communication	Medium		
6. Training for trainers	High		
7. Policy & advocacy	High		

1. Introduction

A workshop evaluation was conducted using google survey to understand its effectiveness and gather valuable insights for future iterations. This report summarizes the key findings from the evaluation which is responded by 35 participants. The evaluation aimed to assess the workshop content, structure, and achievement of its stated objectives. It also explored the effectiveness of presentations, group discussions, networking opportunities, facilities, and thematic sessions. By understanding participant experiences and areas for improvement, the evaluation strives to guide the development of future workshops that are even more relevant, impactful, and valuable for grantee communities.

 Additionally, an internal debriefing meeting was conducted at IUCN Asia Regional Office among IUCN staff and KfW day after the workshop to reflect on the strength and opportunities of the workshop. This report consolidates the finding from both the participant survey and the internal debriefing, aiming to paint a holistic picture of the impact of the workshop and shape the development of future events that are even more relevant, impactful, and valuable for grantee communities.

2. Workshop Content and Structure

Questions were asked to the participants with regard to how they felt about the overall content of the workshop, their expectation, and how it was structured and organised well. They are being asked to rate on the sale of 1-5, 5 being the best. The figure 1 below shows the result which indicated that the participants are overwhelmingly happy with the overall content of the workshop, indicating it was relevant and engaging. The workshop largely met their expectations, showcasing good planning and alignment with participant needs. While not as strong as the other aspects, over half still found the workshop to be well-structured and organized, suggesting overall positive execution.
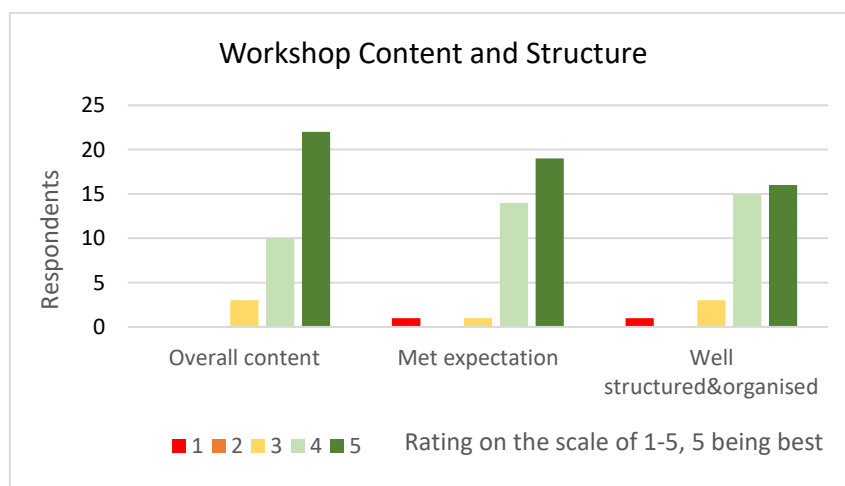

Figure 1. Workshop content and structure

3. Workshop objectives

The workshop aimed to share best practices, enhance technical knowledge, strengthen collaboration, and address challenges and solutions. Participants rated how each objective were met on the on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 representing the highest achievement. The result in the Figure 2 indicates that the collaboration was perceived as the most successful objective, followed closely by sharing best practices. While over half agreed that technical knowledge and challenge solutions were addressed.
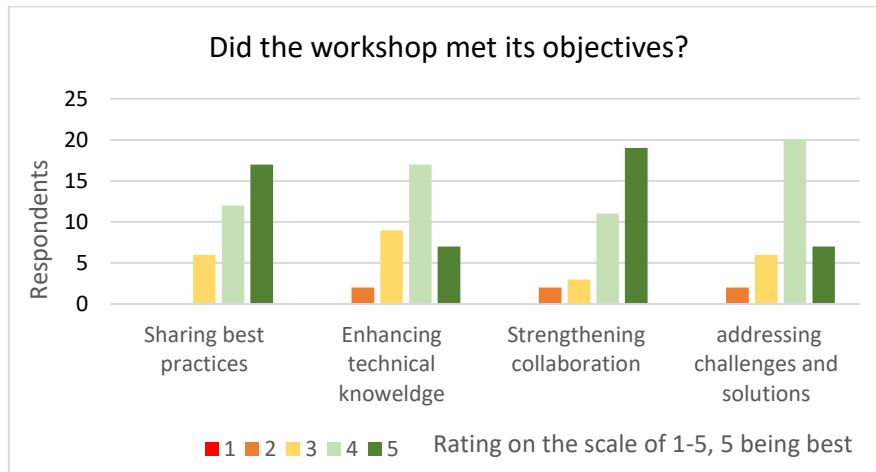
Figure 2. Workshop objectives

4. Session effectiveness

Three questions were asked to rate the effectiveness of the sessions delivered during the workshop.

1) Which session did you find most valuable, and why?

Community Engagement and Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC) were the most frequently mentioned sessions as being valuable. Overall, participants valued sessions that provided practical insights and best practices. Examples include presentations on community engagement approaches, HWC mitigation strategies, and project management techniques.

Several participants appreciated opportunities to learn from other grantees. Group discussions and project presentations were seen as valuable for knowledge sharing and networking. Some found all sessions valuable, indicating the workshop's well-rounded content.

Specific session feedback included:

Community engagement: Praised for presentations on successful approaches, community ownership, and citing specific examples from Nepal and Indonesia. Human-wildlife conflict: Appreciated for discussions on mitigation strategies, learning from other projects, and understanding different approaches across countries.

<u>Project management and reporting</u>: Valued for understanding the process, providing guidance, and building capacity for grantees.

<u>Habitat management</u>: Seen as informative and valuable for its link to other topics and group   discussions.
<u>Other sessions</u>: Capacity building, knowledge sharing, finance and procurement, ESMS, and tiger monitoring were also mentioned as valuable by some participants.

2) Were the presentations informative and engaging, and why?

Overall, participants found the presentations informative highlighting the value of learning from other projects. Engagement varied, with some presentations seen as more engaging than others. However, Some noted concerns like excessive text, lack of focus, or lengthy durations.

3) How effective were the group discussions in promoting peer-to-peer learning?

Overall, participants found the group discussions to be effective in promoting peer-to-peer learning, but some mentioned limitations. Sharing experiences and best practices was seen as a major benefit of the discussions appreciating the opportunity to learn from other grantees' contexts and approaches. However, time limitations were a common concern, with participants wishing for more extended discussions or fewer questions suggesting it hindered deeper learning and exchange.

Some participants felt that the facilitators for the group work could have played a more active role in ensuring balanced participation and discussion flow suggesting interventions to encourage quieter participants and avoid domination by a few. The format of changing groups after each session was appreciated by many participants as it facilitated wider interaction.

5. Group work

The question asked was how helpful was the group work in terms of enhancing learning experience, encouraging collaboration and addressing challenges and solution. Participants rated each benefit from the group work on a scale of 1 to 4, with 4 representing the highest achievement. The result from the Figure 3 shows that the group work was most effective in encouraging collaboration followed by enhancing learning experience and addressing challenges and solutions.
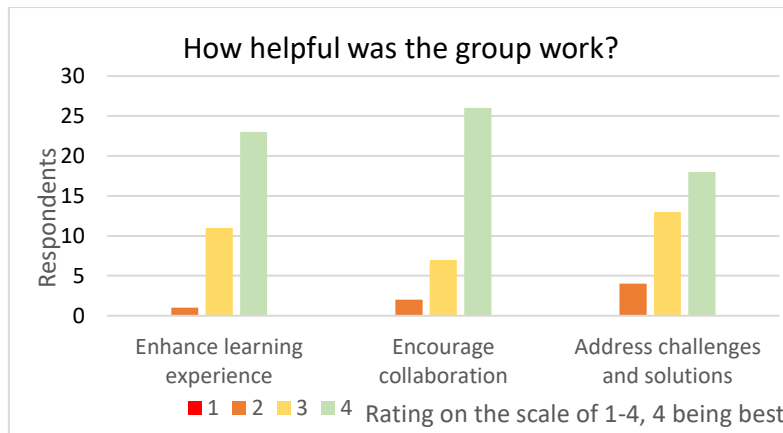
Figure 3. Group work

6. Network and collaboration

The question asked was how helpful was the group work in terms providing opportunities for networking and establishing collaboration. Participants rated on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 representing the highest on scale. The result from the Figure 4 shows that the workshop was very effective in establishing collaboration and a platform for networking.
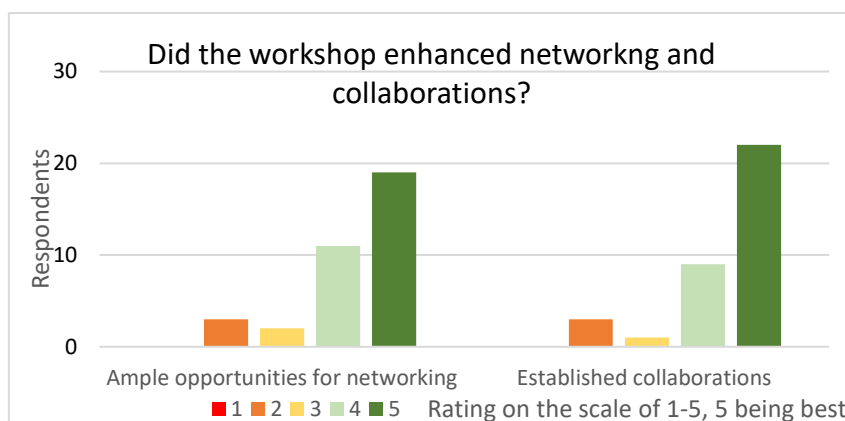

Figure 4. Networking and collaboration

7. Logistics and facilities

The question asked was how the participants rate the logistic arrangement and facilities. Participants rated on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 representing the highest on scale. The result from the Figure 5 shows that there is a high degree of agreement on the satisfaction in terms of the arrangement and the facilities provided.
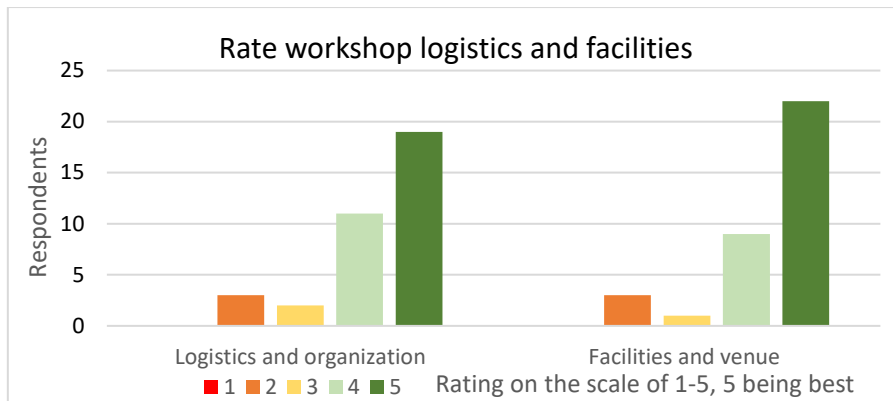
Figure 5. Workshop content and structure

8. Grantee Presentations

Participants were asked how helpful the grantee presentations were in sharing practical experiences and how well were they delivered. Participants rated on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 representing the highest on scale. The result from the Figure 6 shows that the presentations were most useful in sharing best practices and was delivered well.
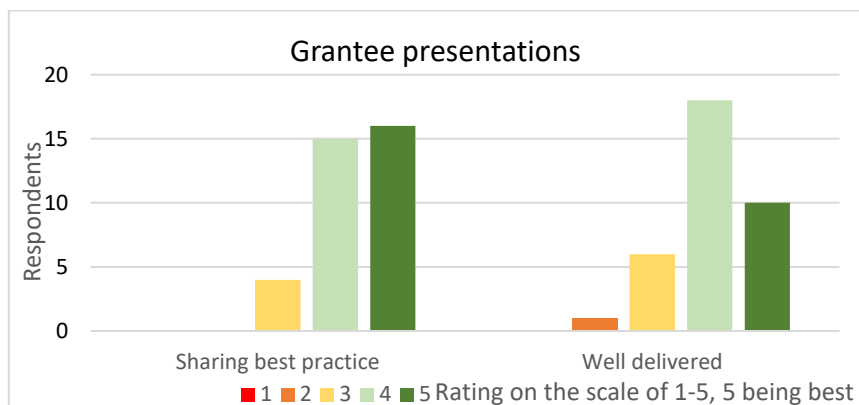
Figure 6. Workshop content and structure

9. Workshop duration

Two questions were asked to find out if the workshop duration was appropriate and if there were any sessions the participants felt if it was so sort or long.

1) Did you find the workshop duration appropriate? Yes/No, and why?

Participants were split on whether the 3-day workshop duration was appropriate. 50% of the respondents found it suitable, while other half expressed concerns that it was short.

Those satisfied with the duration appreciated its conciseness and coverage of key topics. They felt it provided sufficient time for knowledge and experience sharing. Concerns about the duration cantered around limited time for group discussions where it felt discussions were rushed hindering deeper exploration and peer-to-peer learning. Some participants suggested including a field visit for practical learning and networking and some wished for more time to cover additional topics or delve deeper into existing ones.

2) Were there any sessions that you felt were too short or too long?

Opinions on session length were mixed, with some participants satisfied and others suggesting adjustments. 50% respondents found the lengths appropriate, while other half expressed concerns. Group discussions were most frequently mentioned as being too short and felt they needed more time for in-depth exploration and knowledge sharing. Grantee presentations were also perceived as lengthy by some exceeding optimal time limits and hindering interaction.

10. Future workshop improvement

Two questions were asked to sought the future improvement of the workshop.

1) What improvements would you suggest for future workshops?

More time for interaction and discussion: Participants frequently requested more time for group discussions, Q&A sessions, and knowledge sharing among grantees.
Field visits and practical learning: Many participants suggested incorporating field trips to project sites, wildlife areas, or relevant locations for hands-on learning and networking.
Conciseness and time management: Some participants felt presentations were too long and recommended stricter time limits or focusing on key points.
Interactive formats and engagement: Suggestions included using diverse facilitation methods like world cafes, incorporating fun activities, and inviting experts for interactive sessions.
Logistics and venue: Hosting workshops near project sites, allowing virtual participation for additional project staff, and choosing natural settings were among the mentioned improvements.
Content and focus: Some participants suggested including sessions on specific issues faced by grantees, successful advocacy approaches, and practical knowledge sharing.
Collaboration and networking: Creating more opportunities for transboundary collaboration, facilitating discussions on specific regional challenges, and fostering stronger connections among grantees were highlighted.

2) Are there specific topics or areas you would like to see covered in future workshops?

Project management and skills development: Several participants requested sessions on project management, including technical report writing, achievement sharing, and training packages for staff.
Sustainable financing: Exploring sustainable financing approaches, tools, and best practices was a common suggestion.
Community engagement: Enhancing skills and knowledge in community

engagement, including participatory planning, monitoring, and respect for local communities, was highlighted.

Habitat management: Participants expressed interest in sessions on habitat management strategies and effective practices.

Data collection and analysis: Training on qualitative data collection and analysis, particularly for community-level data, was requested.

Law enforcement and monitoring: Some participants suggested sessions on law enforcement techniques, patrolling methods, and camera trap/DNA analysis.

Transboundary collaboration: Many participants called for sessions on transboundary work, regional initiatives, best practices sharing, and advocacy/policy work in this area.

Environmental and social safeguards: Participants requested learning opportunities on lessons learned from implementing the Environmental and Social Safeguards Framework.

Specific topics: Other suggestions included sustainable livelihood decision-making, education and awareness tools, and traditional ecological knowledge exchange.

Feedback from IUCN debriefing meeting

Sustainable financing session: This would equip the grantees with knowledge of the available funding landscape and empower them to proactively secure resources for their project continuity beyond the grant period. Think about practical workshops on fundraising techniques, grant writing, and exploring diverse funding sources.

Focused grantee presentations: Feedback suggests presentations often strayed from the provided guidelines. In future workshops, consider pre-workshop mentorship sessions or review processes to ensure presentations clearly focus on project results, including successes, challenges, and lessons learned. This allows more impactful information sharing and avoids last-minute rushes.

Interactive sessions: A dedicated Q&A time after both individual and group presentations should be considered. Allocate specific slots for questions to encourage meaningful discussions, clarifications, and knowledge exchange.

Streamlined group work: The current number of questions for group work seems overwhelming. Consider either shortening individual questions or combining them strategically to allow for deeper exploration, insightful answers, and subsequent Q&A opportunities.