
ANALYSIS OF HUMAN–WILDLIFE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

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Abstract: Human–wildlife conflict refers to the interaction between wild animals and people and the resultant negative impact on people or their resources, or wild animals or their habitat. The paper discusses the occurrence of human-wildlife conflict, when growing human populations overlap with established wildlife territory, creating reduction of resources or life to some people and/or wild animals. It also highlights about the conflict that takes many forms ranging from loss of life or injury to humans, and animals both wild and domesticated, to competition for scarce resources to loss and degradation of habitat. People lose their crops, livestock, property, and sometimes their lives. The animals, many of which are already threatened or endangered, are often killed in retaliation or to 'prevent' future conflicts. It is one of the main threats to the continued survival of many species in different parts of the world, and is also a significant threat to local human populations.

Keywords: Human-wildlife conflicts, Poaching, Gurugram, Leopard.

Introduction: Human Wildlife Conflict is emerging as a significant wildlife management issue. The conflict results in severe impacts on communities in the form of crop depredation, property damage, loss of livestock, human injury and human killing. Although a lot of studies have been done world wide [Distefano, 2008] but such studies are limited in India. Recent studies in Aravali [Dutta et al., 2014] about effects of mining and its effects have shown negative impacts on bio-diversity and climate change as well [Kaur et al., 2014]. On the part of wild animals, the sufferance finds expression through retaliatory response from the affected people or the accidents leading to injury or death of the animals [Woodroffe et al. 2005]. There are many dimensions to the whole issue of Human Wildlife Conflict, which can chiefly be understood in two broad categories viz., wildlife and habitat dimensions and human dimensions [Barua et al. 2013]. The wildlife and habitat dimensions are natural geographical features of animal habitat, increase in wildlife number, migratory pattern of animals, occurrence of stray/isolated animal population, shrinkage/degradation of habitat and corridors, diminution of habitat quality. Human dimensions include cultivation up to boundary of forests, cropping pattern and intensity, higher road density, railway lines and canals in wildlife habitats, development of human habitat space and urban infrastructure, large human presence in animal-dominated landscapes, life style pattern, retaliatory response from people, unscientific restraint measures, lack of awareness and inadequacy of frontline staff [Ogra 2008]. Various management responses from the Forest Department, which include prevention and mitigation measures, have been described. The paper discusses the occurrence of human-wildlife conflict, when growing human populations overlap with established wildlife

territory, creating reduction of resources or life to some people and/or wild animals. It also highlights about the conflict that takes many forms ranging from loss of life or injury to humans, and animals both wild and domesticated, to competition for scarce resources to loss and degradation of habitat. The problem is universal, affects rich and poor, and is bad news for all concerned. It is one of the main threats to the continued survival of many species in different parts of the world, and is also a significant threat to local human populations. The conflict results in severe impacts on communities in the form of crop depredation, property damage, loss of livestock, human injury and human killing. On the part of wild animals, the sufferance finds expression through retaliatory response from the affected people or the accidents leading to injury or death of the animals. This present paper critical reviews about the expanding human populations and shrinking natural habitats because of which people and animals are increasingly coming into conflict over living space and food.

Discussions: Human-wildlife conflict is fast becoming a critical threat to the survival of many endangered species, like wild buffalo, elephants, tiger, lion, leopard etc. such conflicts affect not only its population but also has broadened environmental impacts on ecosystem equilibrium and biodiversity conservation. Laws are man-made, hence there is likelihood of anthropocentric bias towards man, and rights of wild animals often tend to be of secondary importance. But in the universe man and animal are equally placed, but human rights approach to environmental protection in case of conflict, is often based on anthropocentricity.

Wildlife-human conflicts are a serious obstacle to wildlife conservation and the livelihoods of people worldwide and are becoming more prevalent as human population increases, development expands,

and global climate changes and other human and environmental factors put people and wildlife in greater direct competition for a shrinking resource base.

Conflicts between wildlife and humans cost many lives, both human and wildlife, threatens livelihoods, and jeopardize long-term conservation goals such as securing protected areas and building constituencies in support of biodiversity conservation.

Human-Wildlife Conflict is any interaction between wildlife and humans which causes harm, whether it is to the human, the wild animal, or property (Property includes buildings, equipment, livestock and pets, crops fields or fences).

Some examples of human-wildlife conflict include:

- Predation on livestock or domestic animals by wildlife
- Ungulate damage crops and fences
- Flooding caused by beavers
- Wildlife strewing about residential garbage
- Squirrels or bats in home attics
- Birds nesting in undesirable residential locations
- Vehicle/wildlife collisions

Man-animal conflicts are common in various parts of the country. In India, wild elephants probably kill far more people than tiger, leopard or lion. But, surprisingly, human conflict involving leopard draws great amount of public attention compared to other animals. Other carnivores -tigers, lions and wolves, which have been known for causing a large number of human deaths in the past, are now mostly restricted in range and their impact is not as widespread as that of the leopard.

The key reasons for human-animal conflict are encroachment of human being in wildlife habitat for development purpose & survival purpose as well as allowing livestock for grazing purpose in the forest area, forest fire. This conflict leads to loss to both human & animal. The result of this conflict is severe which result into the loss to crops of farmers and decline in wildlife conservation as well. Among these the human -leopard conflict is common in many States. The incidences of killing of leopard by public have been hitting headlines of news media along with or their poaching. It is a challenge to ensure the peaceful coexistence of leopards among high densities of humans Research indicates that even in such high human density areas, attacks on humans and domestic animals in most cases can be kept to very low levels. Conflict with wildlife may be due to the abnormal behavior of wild animals like aggressiveness of monkey, cattle lifting by carnivore, injury by bears during Mahua season etc. Development of people is always welcome but not at the cost of negative ecological aspect in the ecosystem. Development activities causes more interference in forest and also the privacy of wildlife

and these ultimately cause conflict with wildlife. Man-animal conflict often takes place when wild animals cause damage to agricultural crop and property, killing of livestock and human beings. Human population growth, land use transformation, species loss of habitat, eco-tourism, too much access to reserves, increase in livestock population bordering the forest, depletion of natural prey base etc., often stated to be reasons for such conflict. Central Govt. the State Governments, and the Union Territories should evolve better preservation strategies, in consultation with Wildlife Boards so that such conflicts can be avoided to a large extent. Participation of people who are staying in the Community Reserves is also of extreme importance. Environmental justice could be achieved only if we drift away from the principle like sustainable development; polluter pays principle, precautionary principles which are based in the interest of humans and environment. Ecocentrism is nature centered where humans are part of nature and non-human has intrinsic value. In other words, human interest does not take automatic precedence and humans have obligations to non-humans independently of human interest. Ecocentrism is therefore life-centered, nature-centered where nature includes both human and non-humans.

ANALYSIS OF TWO CONTRASTING CASES:

Leopard in Gurgaon: We visited Mandawar village where a leopard ran amok on the streets for three hours. This incident took place on 24 November, 2016. We investigated from the villagers about the whole incident. The animal was spotted around 8:10a.m. The leopard attacked a few people and the gathered crowd, around 1500 people, beat it repeatedly. The villager alleged that the police and wildlife officials were inadequately equipped with just one net to capture the leopard and no tranquilliser shots. The leopard was beaten to death by the villagers despite repeated requests of the officers.

Leopard in Bangalore: In February this year, a leopard entered a school in Bangalore. A forest department team and leopard biologist Sanjay Gubbi were summoned to tranquilise the leopard. But a 5,000 strong crowd not only impeded the challenging operation but also put their lives to risk. After the chaos that lasted about 10 hours the leopard was finally caught and released elsewhere.

Conclusion: These incidents points towards the negligence of the government towards the existence of these animals. So many animals are killed daily, but no action is taken upon those who murder these animals. If killing a human is a crime, then why is killing animals so mercilessly not considered to be a crime? If so the culprits should be brought to law. There might be laws for the protection of wildlife, but the major issue in India is the implementation of

these laws. Special provision must be made for human-wildlife conflict cases with severe punishments. No doubt, we have the best constitution and the best laws, but due to the failure of implementation of these laws, there is no fear among the minds of people. It is us who have taken over the forest covers to build houses and cities, and not the animals who have took over our area. We need to respect their space, and not kill them for no reason whatsoever. In conflict situations, rather than

the management of animals, it is often a management of people that assumes primacy. Sensitisation Programmes should be organised to educate both rural and urban residents on precautionary measures. Most of the efforts to mitigate human-wildlife conflicts is directed towards the animals. These conflicts can be eliminated only when we reach out to people, make them understand the issue, and help them lead safer lives.

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