



Art for Conservation

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Project Abstract

The Art for Conservation Project launches a Paper Maché Cottage Industry in Bandhavgarh National Park (Tiger Preserve in Central India). Bandhavgarh National Park (BNP) is one of the highest tiger density reserves in the world. BNP, because of its high density of prey base animals, has a great number of Tigers in a relatively small area and earns its popularity from them.

However, unsustainable livelihood practices, poor resource management, unrestrained biomass extraction for fodder, wood for fuel/fencing, livestock grazing etc. has led to high depletion of the forest, causing the habitat to shrink considerably, inducing serious human-animal conflict and reduction in the wildlife population.

The National Forest Policy declared by the Government of India in December 1988 is a unique admission of the poor state of forests in the country and its consequential effects on the environment. It recognises poverty to be the main reason why the forest dwellers destroy forests, stating, "Poverty compels people to claim forestland for cultivation as well as to take to axe for domestic fuel, snowballing into a whole-sole destruction of biodiversity."

After Agriculture there is no defined income for the population. Agricultural yields are very low and used for self consumption rather than profits. Landowners and landless villagers work as manual laborers and resort to odd jobs provided for through tourism in the area. The average annual income of a family in the area is 350-400 U.S. Dollars. This creates a huge dependence on forest resources thereby leading to human animal conflict and loss of forest habitat.

This is a model project that can be disseminated to other similar areas of India and used as a model the world over for helping marginalized populations.

The Art for conservation Project strives to address local poverty due to lack of livelihood and poor agricultural yields, human-animal conflict and lack of awareness/incentives to support conservation in the area.

Objectives & Benefits

The primary objectives of The Art for Conservation project are:

- Creating an alternative income source for the community around Bandhavgarh National Park.
- The first year target being 50 Individuals from the villages in the area.
- Train and retain 50 Villagers in the BNP Area in Paper Maché art creation and business operations.

The indirect benefits being:

- Reducing dependence on the forest for income resources (collection of forest produce—fruits and seeds, wood and fodder).
- Reducing human-animal conflict in the region.
- Create awareness about wildlife conservation issues.
- Create a model that can be replicated in other similar areas.

Key Tactics

1. Set up a Paper Maché Cottage Industry in the Bandhavgarh National Park area
2. Sell "official" tiger art/merchandise in areas around the tiger preserve and globally through an online Web site.
3. The launch product line consists of museum-quality, tiger-depicted art: Masks, plates, figurines, coasters, paw castings etc. and offset printed fine note cards and posters.

4. Public relations, online and direct mail marketing to educate, raise awareness in India and abroad and drive visits to the tiger preserve and Web site.

Project Partners

Bandavgarh National Park Villagers

The Art for Conservation Project is based on the principle of total community collaboration. Building community participation and involvement ensures community ownership of a project, suits local circumstances and increases the project's sustainability. Thus, the development is aimed to start from the grass-root level—instead of being imposed from the top down—making it acceptable, effective, longer lasting and influential on other areas.

EDGE | Communication by Design

Theresa Fogle, *Principal and Chief Creative Officer*

Collaborating with EDGE:

Peter Connor, *Writer*

Michael (Hub) Hubbell Selto, *Designer*

Joe Vasos, *Videographer*

Gaylon Wayne Wampler, *Photographer*



Communication by Design

EDGE is a values-based firm building boundary-pushing visual platforms, communication strategies, and solutions by design since 2001. Founder and creative director, Theresa Fogle enjoys improving our world through vocation. She's a "Bigger Thinker." Thinking big makes big things happen; "Bigger Thinkers" collaborating makes even bigger things happen.

EDGE is responsible for creative services coordination, execution and management in India and the U.S.

GEO – Guardian Environmental Organisation

Surinder Kaur, *Chairperson and ED*

Collaborating with GEO:

Bharat Mandhyan, *Naturalist*

Dianne Aigaki, *Project Consultant*

Anuj Anand, *Marketing Consultant*



GEO's immediate focus is "To ensure tiger biodiversity for the long term by developing sustainable livelihood for the inhabitants of the villages surrounding the tiger preserves." GEO was established in 2004 with the express mission to work towards conservation of the environment and wildlife, specifically those that are threatened or endangered, by:

- Restoration of forest to its natural state through reduction of human dependence on forests
- Providing support in combating poaching and the escalating illegal wildlife trade
- Dealing with human-animal conflicts and lead and/or provide support for related research.

GEO is responsible for on-the-ground coordination, execution and management in India.

"GEO Aur Jeene Doh," English language translation, Live and Let Live