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Protected Areas and Social Justice: The View from South Asia

September 2000 was an unusual month in the life of the Sariska Tiger Reserve. Located in the western Indian state of Rajasthan, the reserve witnessed a meeting of several hundred resident villagers, senior wildlife officials of the state and union government, conservation experts and activists, social activists, representatives of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and university academics. A set of interesting factors had conspired to bring them together, at the root of which was the increasingly successful initiative of a community-based organization, Tarun Bharat Sangh, to conserve water, forests, and wildlife around several dozen villages in the area. For years prior to this, the reserve had seen conflicts: between local people intent on eking out a living inside the forests and government officials who believed their mandate was to stop them from doing so; and between commercial forces intent on short-term profits through mining and poaching and the reserve officials who were often helpless against the political and economic clout of these forces. Increasingly, government agencies had realized that laws and policing were simply not adequate to conserve the reserve's biodiversity, and that the cooperation of local people was absolutely necessary. At the meeting, those gathered committed to reducing human pressure on the one hand and enhancing conservation benefits to community members on the other, and pledged to protect the tiger and all creatures that lived with it. A decision was taken to form an overall Sariska Tiger Reserve Management Committee consisting of villagers, officials, and NGOs.

Sariska can well be considered as a microcosm of the larger situation prevailing in protected areas in most countries of the world. For the past century or more, governmental management of wildlife habitats has been centralized in the hands of a small bureaucracy. It has been based on the assumption that local people are, at best, helpful in labor-intensive works, and, at worst, destructive individuals who should be removed from the site as soon as possible. It has also assumed that all human use of natural resources must necessarily be destructive, and therefore that wildlife reserves should be devoid of human presence (except, for some strange reason, tourism!).

For communities in South Asian countries, the most important stake in nature is an assured access to biomass resources: to fuel, fodder, medicinal plants, thatch, honey, grass, fish, and the dozens of other natural products that they depend on for livelihood and cultural sustenance. That is where official wildlife policies and laws have gone wrong in the past: in curtailing not only destructive resources uses

(which was justified) but also sustainable ones; in converting legitimate users into criminals almost overnight; in forcing people to "steal," bribe, collude with poachers, and in other ways undermine conservation efforts; and in alienating people from their own homes. Coupled with the obvious hypocrisy of the elite conservation class, which zoomed about in cars in core zones from where villagers were kicked out, or which did not bat an eyelid in lining their houses with marble and granite possibly mined from a wildlife habitat, it is not surprising that the rural masses have developed a strong antipathy to "government tigers" and "government forests" (for a more detailed exposition of this trend, see various authors in Kothari et al. 1996; and Kothari 1999).

This is changing, though slowly. What happened in Sariska is the cutting edge of a silent revolution that is taking place in the way that conservation is envisioned and practiced across South Asia. From a centralized, elitist strategy, it is becoming decentralized, participatory, mass-based. From a sole focus on wildlife protection, it is moving towards more holistic biodiversity conservation, integrated with livelihood security of communities, and stretching across landscapes. In so doing, of course, it will encounter pitfalls and hurdles. Participatory conservation is by no means a panacea, nor is it smooth sailing…but as a direction, it is inevitable and unmistakable.

This paper attempts to delineate the major new initiatives towards participatory conservation in South Asia. Drawing lessons from the experiences so far from successful, and not so successful, initiatives, it points towards the direction in which changes are, or should be, taking place.

The South Asian Context

South Asia, consisting of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, contains over one-fourth of the world's population, and some of earth's most diverse ecosystems. Three of the 18 global biodiversity "hotspots" identified by Myers et al. (1988, 1990) occur here.

The region's countries are culturally and politically extremely diverse, with three major world religions holding sway, and political regimes ranging from royal monarchy to democracy to dictatorship. Yet, there are many points of commonality: they have a common colonial past, they share a great deal of biodiversity amongst them, and their current natural resource management regimes are fairly similar (the discussion below is adapted from Kothari et al. 2000, which has a more detailed treatment of countrywide trends; see also essays in Kothari et al. 1998).

Bangladesh is best described as a country of wetlands, though the upland areas are also significant. Fishing occupies 75-85% of all rural households and a new policy — an aquatic version of land reform — aims to negotiate more secure leases and a greater share of income to those most dependent on fishing. Some initiatives have been recently started on community-based fisheries management and involvement in forest and protected area conservation. These are largely under the influence of external

donors, though of course there are a number of local NGOs, academics, and activists who have been advocating such an approach.

Bhutan has 70% of its area covered in forest, a relatively low population, and development strategies that the state claims are closely monitored from the environmental and cultural sustainability point of view. A unique feature of this country is its continuation of a royal monarchy. There may have been a significant conservation tradition, building on Buddhist culture, but not much appears to be documented on its precise nature, and whether it is still in use or being built upon by the state.

Conservation policy and decision-making, following a period of alienation of local communities, is slowly moving back in the direction of local involvement. For example, local communities are managing pastures within the Jigme Dorji National Park through a system of rotational grazing and levying of taxes on the grazing of yak herds. Traditional boundaries between village forests have also been recognized by the park's planning. Recent government forestry programs seek to transfer forest management responsibilities to local management groups, akin to the Nepal example discussed below.

India, a vast country with a multitude of ecosystems and peoples, has many traditions of conservation and restrained resource use (Gadgil, Berkes, and Folke 1993; Deeney and Fernandes 1992; Gokhale et al. 1997). The effectiveness of these measures has changed over the years. For example, sacred sites may have covered about 10% of the land and water in pre-British India, but only about a thousandth of this area may still be protected.

Official wildlife conservation policy has managed to reverse, to some extent, declines in wildlife populations. However, it has until recently retained the exclusivist and alienating tendencies mentioned above. A number of people's agitations have highlighted these issues. The government has responded during the last two decades with programs of joint forest management in degraded forest areas, and ecodevelopment in and around protected areas. These two main programs have a mixed record: in some cases they have helped local people to gain sustainable livelihoods, but both suffer from a lack of actual power-sharing with these people, and from the same exclusionary focus that characterized conventional policies. Several NGOs, community representatives, and some officials are advocating joint management strategies for wildlife reserves, but this has yet to gain formal acceptance. Recent legal measures, especially the devolution of powers to village-level institutions, have boosted such advocacy.

Nepal has become famous, in recent years, amongst advocates of local resource management for handing over rights (though not ownership) to some 400,000 ha of national forest to more than 7,000 community forest user groups. This has been accompanied by progressive changes in forest-related policy. With very little investment by government, community forest management capacity has been enhanced, some of the mid-hills

forests are now richer, and wildlife has significantly increased.

Wildlife conservation policies, however, have not been so community-sensitive until very recently. Issues similar to India's have been raised here too. Some protected areas have in fact been protected by the Royal Nepal Army, whose role has been "effective" from the wildlife point of view, but controversial with regard to local communities. There are signs of change, the strongest being recent measures which assist in devolution of management responsibilities to communities in so-called Conservation Areas (mostly in the mountains; see the case of Annapurna Conservation Area below). In the plains, legal amendments have mandated revenue-sharing with communities surrounding protected areas.

Pakistan, like India, is still pursuing a state-dominated approach to conservation of forests and wildlife that stems from the colonial era. However, compared with India there is less evidence of a history of local resistance to these top-down strategies. Combined with the recent record of more autocratic forms of governance, this may explain why participatory conservation efforts are a recent phenomenon catalyzed by donor-supported projects and national NGOs.

A number of such area-based projects have sought over a period of some twenty years to address conservation objectives, through efforts which prioritize development of village organizations and improvements in local livelihoods. Some recent government initiatives have begun to improve the potential for community-based conservation (see the cases given below). A feature of some of these initiatives is the focus on "sustainable harvest" of wild mammal species as a means of generating benefits for local people; this is extremely rare in the South Asian context, the only other example being from Nepal.

Sri Lanka, it is said by many, has only one truly traditional community (the Veddhas) left, as almost all sections of society are involved in some way with the modern mainstream economy. Yet there are still several million people dependent on natural resources for survival. There is significant human-wildlife conflict, e.g. related to elephants. A dominant historical feature with current bearings is the almost total take-over of lands and waterways by the colonial administration, a move that created strong alienation amongst local communities that earlier had significant traditions of sustainable management.

NGOs and donors are proving catalytic in an increasing number of participatory resource management initiatives. Possibly most far-sighted are the changes in coastal management, with significant community-based projects, which other maritime countries in the region can learn from.

Some Case Studies

A few case studies would be illustrative of the different approaches used and the different stages reached in these countries, vis-à-vis participatory conservation in protected areas:

Annapurna Conservation Area, Nepal. This is a large (over 7,600 sq km), high-altitude area which had once become considerably degraded

due to local over-use and unregulated tourism. Peasant and pastoral communities had a serious lack of livelihood options. Over the last 15 years or so, through significant community involvement in managing tourism, conserving forests, and using other natural resources, the forests and wildlife populations have revived. This is perhaps Asia's first completely NGO-controlled conservation area. Out-migration remains an issue, as does the somewhat unequal distribution of benefits being generated from community-based conservation and ecotourism. (Krishna et al. In press).

Sariska Tiger Reserve, India. In the semi-arid zone of western India, agricultural communities have perceived serious problems due to local forest degradation and severe water shortages. With local NGO support, community-initiated water harvesting structures were built over the last decade and a half. This work is spread over several hundred villages, including a few dozen within the Sariska Tiger Reserve. With water harvesting initiatives, catchment forests have been regenerated through customary rules and regulations such as banning the cutting of live trees. *De facto* village control over the regenerated area has been asserted. The return of wildlife is a source of local pride. As noted above, this initiative has directly led to the official (if yet informal) acceptance of a joint management model. Outside the reserve, some villages have declared their own public wildlife sanctuaries (Shresth 2001).

Hushey Valley, Central Karakoram National Park, Pakistan. This high-altitude area, spread over 800 sq km, had witnessed considerable declines in wildlife populations until recently, caused by hunting and habitat degradation. Earlier distrust between local people and government officials was slowly broken down by a NGO- and government-initiated project that promised considerable benefits from an integrated conservation and development project. This is one of South Asia's few examples where revenue from mammal hunting (of the ibex) is the major incentive for habitat conservation. There is a small tourism component, and recent attempts have been made to diversify the livelihood options. The specific area of the participatory conservation initiative has been declared the Hushey Community Conservation Area, though with no legal backing (Raja et al. 1999).

Chakrashila Wildlife Sanctuary, India. Situated in the tribal region of northeast India, this rich forest area had serious problems of hunting and over-extraction of forest resources by timber merchants and poachers. An NGO, Nature's Beckon, established itself in the area and built up good rapport with local youth, who began confronting poachers and smugglers. Projects on kitchen gardens and non-timber forest products raised villagers' incomes slightly, while illegal activities were brought to an end. The area has regenerated well, and 45 sq km have been declared an official wildlife sanctuary at the instance of the NGO. Informally, local management remains with the villagers and the NGO, though formally the area belongs to the Forest Department (Datta 1998).

Kalakad-Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve, India. One of the first major ecodevelopment projects of the government of India and the Tamil Nadu state government, funded by the World Bank, this is reported to have been relatively successful in reducing the excessive pressure of human use on the tiger reserve, and to have generated livelihood benefits from alternative sources for the affected villagers. The residents are now supportive of the reserve, and have helped to oppose a major road that would have cut through it. The approach, however, does not yet include community involvement in decisions regarding the management of the reserve, which would be logical next step (Melkani 1999; Dutt 2001).

Makalu-Barun National Park, Nepal. Somewhat akin to the path-breaking Annapurna Conservation Area initiative, this effort is unique in that it is a collaborative effort between the Nepalese Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation and a foreign NGO, the Woodland Mountain Institute. Covering 2,330 sq km of valuable mountainous habitat, participatory management of the park has been promoted through empowerment of user groups. These groups function by building on existing customary rules, institutions, and practices. There is a strong focus on livelihoods and community welfare measures. However, gender issues and monitoring have been identified as areas of weakness (DNPWC and WMI 1990; DNPWC and WMI 1993; Rodgers and Uprety 1997).

Kailadevi Wildlife Sanctuary, India. A dry forest area of 674 sq km., this sanctuary is part of the Ranthambhor Tiger Reserve. Facing considerable erosion of their fuel/fodder base, resident villagers created institutions to protect forests independent of the government. Initially cold to these efforts, the Forest Department has recently tried to emulate them by establishing ecodevelopment and forest management committees in some villages. Officials and villagers have worked together in the matter of stopping the incursions of massive herds of migratory livestock. There is extensive vegetative regeneration, though changes in wildlife populations are not clear. NGO-initiated dialogues have discussed the issue of joint management of the sanctuary by the villagers and the Forest Department, but there is resistance from the latter. On the contrary, there are indications that the World Bank-funded ecodevelopment project, in which the department has initiated village-level committees, may be undermining the long-term self-sustaining nature of the villager-initiated committees (Das 1997; and Das, pers. comm., 2001).

Khunjerab National Park, Pakistan. Conventional conservation strategies had created a situation of hostility and distrust in this 2,270-sq-km mountainous protected area. NGOs and donors got together to plan a new management strategy that focused on alternative sources of livelihood, education, and inter-institutional coordination, backed by solid field research. Implementation of the plan is at a nascent stage, and continued hostility from one section of the area's population remains a constraint

(Ahmed 1996; Jamal 1996; Slavin 1993).

Ritigala Strict Nature Reserve, Sri Lanka. Rural populations around one of the country's most strictly protected areas (covering 15 sq km), have serious livelihood problems. Once-high levels of illegal activity by these villagers have declined with the initiation of employment and livelihood opportunities as part of a donor-aided project. The nature reserve being a major botanical store-house, medicinal plants and their processing are a major focus, and have attracted funding from a national Medicinal Plants Conservation Project. Interesting social re-alignment has also taken place, with people of different religions coming together under the initiative (Jayatilake et al. 1998; and personal conversations with participants of the initiative).

Hikkaduwa Marine Sanctuary, Sri Lanka. A degraded coral reef and marine area, heavily used by tourists, a tiny part of 48 hectares was declared a sanctuary. But there was not much protection effort until a community-based initiative was sponsored by donor agencies. A bold attempt to bring together disparate groups — local fisherfolk, glass-bottom boat owners, hoteliers, and others — was initially successful, but when donor-funded catalysts were withdrawn, the effort reportedly collapsed. Problems of inter-departmental coordination also remain an issue (HSAM 1996; and personal conversations with participants of the initiative).

Muthurajawela Marsh, Sri Lanka. This is coastal lagoon and marsh area of about 62 sq. km. north of Colombo, very rich in aquatic wildlife, but with severe pressure from several human activities. A part of it is declared a wildlife sanctuary. NGO initiatives towards conservation with local fisherfolk have helped to stave off large-scale diversion of the marshes for infrastructure development. Integrated conservation and development planning has been initiated with donor funding, starting with considerable social and ecological research. Community participation is reportedly uneven, being strong among the fisherfolk living near the lagoon, but weak among the communities in the marshes, whose members mostly work outside the area (CEA and Euroconsult 1994; Samarakoon 1995; and personal conversations with participants of the initiative).

Periyar Tiger Reserve, India. As part of a Global Environment Facility ecodevelopment project, a community that derived a substantial part of its income through poaching has become engaged in ecotourism and now has a major stake in conservation. The effort is being expanded, and the situation is ripe for a formalized participatory conservation approach for the buffer part of the reserve (Bagla 2000; P. Krishan, ecodevelopment officer, Periyar Tiger Reserve, Kerala Forest Department, pers. comm.).

Royal Chitwan National Park, Nepal. As part of the People and Parks Project of Nepal's Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation, villagers in the buffer areas of this and other national parks in the plains of Nepal are receiving a substantial share of the tourism and other revenues that the protected areas

make. Participatory institutional structures are attempting to ensure decision-making by the local people in many aspects of the project (DNPWC 2000). However, management role of the villagers in the parks themselves remains limited.

There are other examples of innovative participatory approaches. The World Wide Fund for Nature, for instance, is proposing a series of landscape or ecoregional conservation initiatives, such as the Terai Arc across the Indo-Nepal border, and a similar initiative is being started by state governments and NGOs across the Satpura hill range in central India.

Community Conservation Areas

An interesting complementary trend to the one described above is that of communities conserving or regenerating natural habitats on their own. To some extent one sees this even in the examples above, as in Sariska and Kailadevi. But since these are within officially declared areas, the scope for community control and management is limited. There are, however, hundreds, perhaps thousands, of areas where village communities have converted degraded forest lands into lush forests, protected landscapes considered traditionally sacred or important, sustainably managed wetlands and grasslands, and in other ways revived or maintained the biodiversity values of natural ecosystems. A more detailed exposition on this by Pathak and Kothari appears separately in this volume. The analysis and conclusions here derive as much from the cases mentioned above as from these community conserved areas.

Lessons from Ongoing Initiatives

Experience from a range of participatory conservation initiatives is providing crucial insights for the future of protected area management in South Asia (and is perhaps applicable to the rest of the tropics). For instance:

1. Communities need a strong stake in conserving the local ecosystems and species. This is more often than not likely to be economic or livelihood-based, but it could also be social recognition, political empowerment, and cultural sustenance. Tenurial security over natural resources essential for survival and basic livelihoods is most important.
2. This means that in most cases there is a need to integrate conservation values and imperatives with livelihood requirements. This is by no means easy, and may call for some give-and-take, but in the long run such integration is critical for both conservation and for social justice.
3. Conservation can often be approached from the "development" angle. Water security has been the incentive for forest regeneration in many instances; it could as well be rural development aimed at meeting basic needs, from which conservation is launched.
4. The above also means that the sharp and artificial boundaries between different line agencies or departments of government, and between different academic disciplines, need to be broken. An ecosystem or a community does not work in such compartmentalized manner. Nor can the protected area be seen

as a compartment in itself, isolated from its surrounds; hence the increasing thrust towards a "landscape" or "ecoregional" approach.

5. No single formula is going to work across the region, indeed even within the same country. Decisions taken at faraway centers rarely take into account local concerns or local ecological and cultural specificities. There could be a broad framework of conservation, but within that there has to be flexibility to allow for alternative management—and even legal—arrangements.
6. Transparency and openness in decision-making, and full access to information by all relevant stakeholders, is critical.
7. Communities often sustain conservation initiatives through recourse to customary laws and social sanctions. Yet they often require the backing of statutory legal authority, especially in tackling 'outsiders' who are not subject to customary laws.
8. The role of government officials, NGOs, donors, or individual leaders within a local community can be crucial. However, long-term sustainability requires that the characteristics of such leadership or catalysts need to be transferred to larger number of people, and to some extent institutionalized, if the initiative is not to collapse.
9. A strong coalition between wildlife officials, local communities, and NGOs is often able to tackle serious commercial and industrial threats to wildlife habitats, where any one of these actors may have failed on their own. The role of people's mass movements is critical, there being several examples where such movements were able to stop mining or dams or industries when official agencies were unable to do so.
10. Serious inequities within communities can confound participatory initiatives, and need to be tackled from the start. It is critical that the most disadvantaged sections of society, including women and children and the landless, are centrally involved in making decisions and receiving benefits. This requires the identification of "primary" stakeholders, i.e. those most critically dependent on the area's resources, and with the ability and willingness to anchor the conservation initiative.
11. Finally, sustainability of the initiative is dependent on building the capacity of local actors to understand and monitor the ecosystem, manage institutional structures, and become relatively self-sufficient in technical and financial resources. Where successful local institutions and customs already exist, these should be built on rather than replaced by new ones.

Policy and Legal Measures in the Region

Slowly but surely, initiatives such as those described above are forcing, or being facilitated by, increasingly participatory policies and laws. Until recently these have been mostly non-participatory, with powers and functions for planning and implementing conservation programmes being largely held by centralized bureaucracies.

Local communities have had virtually no legally enforceable means of involvement, and even where they are involved, it is either through self-attained empowerment, or at the discretion of government agencies.

Changes in this situation require that policy and legal measures be taken with at least three basic objectives:

- facilitating the empowerment of local, resource-dependent communities to manage and protect adjoining ecosystems and species, and the participation of all other stakeholders in various capacities;
- ensuring the biomass and other subsistence and livelihood rights of these people, including appropriate tenurial arrangements;
- regulating human activities to ensure their compatibility with conservation and sustainable livelihood values; in particular, prohibiting destructive commercial-industrial activities in areas of conservation or cultural value.

Table 1 summarizes some major new policy and legal initiatives in this direction.

Additionally, government programs and schemes are also moving in this

Table 1. Policy and legal measures towards participatory conservation and natural resource management in South Asia. For an for annotated list of these and other relevant laws/policies, see Kalpavriksh and IIED 2000.

Facilitating a community-based approach	*Policy*	*Law*
No or minimal recognition	Past policies, such as Indian Forest Policy (1952)	• Indian Wild Life (Protection) Act (1972) • Bangladesh Wildlife (Preservation) Amendment Act (1974) • Islamabad Wildlife (Protection, Preservation, Conservation, Management) Ordinance (1979) • Sri Lanka Fauna and Flora Protection (Amendment) Act (1993)
Partial recognition	• National Environmental Management Plan, Bangladesh • New Fisheries Management Policy, Bangladesh (1986) • National Conservation Strategy, Bhutan • National Conservation Strategy and Policy Statement, India (1992) • National Conservation Strategy, Nepal [date?] • National Conservation Strategy, Pakistan (1992); Forest Policy Statement, Pakistan (1991); Proposed Wildlife Policy, Pakistan [date?] • The Sri Lanka Forestry Sector Master Plan (1995); Coastal Zone Management Plan (CZMP), Sri Lanka (1990) • Joint Forest Management and Ecodevelopment guidelines, India [date?]	• Bhutan Forest and Nature Conservation Act (1995) • Indian Forest Act (1927) • Nepal Forest Act (1993) • National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act, Nepal (1973, amended 1993) • Proposed Indian Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Act • Pakistan Forest Act (1927) • Sri Lanka Coast Conservation Act (1981) • Sri Lanka Forest Ordinance (1907, amended 1995)
Substantial recognition	• National Forest Policy, India (1988) • National Forest Policy, Nepal (1995) • National Conservation Strategy, Pakistan (1992) • Draft Wildlife Policy, Pakistan [date?] • National Forestry Policy, Sri Lanka (1995) • Forestry Sector Master Plan, Sri Lanka (1995) • Coastal Zone Master Plan, Sri Lanka (1997)	• Sri Lanka Fisheries Act No. 2 of 1996 • Indian Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (1996) • Proposed Biological Diversity Bill 2000, India

direction. In India, the proposed new National Wildlife Action Plan, and the ongoing process of preparing a National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), promise to facilitate participatory conservation.

Next Steps

Participatory conservation initiatives point towards the urgent need to carry out the following broad steps (which may be manifested in myriad ways depending on local situations):

1. Reviving biomass resource rights of traditional communities, where this is sustainable, to strengthen the stake in conservation as well as for reasons of social justice. Where unsustainable, participatory development of alternatives is needed.
2. Recognizing and continuing existing positive links between natural habitats and villagers, e.g. in the use of medicinal plants for *bona fide* personal or local consumption, or in the protection of sacred spaces and land/seascapes.
3. Helping enhance livelihoods based on forest or wetland produce, coupled with increasing the sense of responsibility towards conservation.
4. Moving towards an expanded set of protected area (preferably renamed "conservation area") categories, which range from strictly protected ones (where all but the protection staff are barred entry, such as Ritigala in Sri Lanka), to those with minimal traditional use (e.g. current protected areas with tiny human populations, such as Anshi National Park, Karnataka, southern India), to sustainable resource-use ones (such as Annapurna Conservation Area, Nepal, and most of the region's non-protected area forests, grasslands, wetlands, and coasts), to community protected ones (such as sacred groves, community protected village forests and tanks, larger wetlands, and so on). Seen in this way, the conservation area network in countries such as India could expand to over 10% of its territory, double the current extent. And inviolate areas could easily be more than 1% of that territory—provided they are declared in consultation with local people (see Bhatt and Kothari 1997).
5. Creating new institutional structures or strengthening existing ones, from joint management boards at the level of each protected area to participatory advisory bodies at provincial and national levels. Some countries are already experimenting with such structures. One radically new approach being advocated is joint protected area management, but its advocates are careful to point out that this is one of several new possible models, and may not be applicable in every situation (Apte and Kothari 2000).
6. Furthering legal and policy changes of a much bolder nature than generally witnessed so far.

Perhaps most important, a change in attitude at all levels within and outside government is essential. Wildlife officials, NGOs, and community members must be able to sit on an equal plane and chalk out joint strategies. Most important, they must be able to join hands to fight the 'devel-

opmental' juggernaut which otherwise threatens to consume every wildlife habitat as raw material and every local community as cheap labor.

In India, the recently set up Conservation and Livelihoods Network (CLN), aims to build such bridges, synthesize lessons being learnt from field experiences, document positive examples of community-based and collaborative conservation, and in other ways advocate and encourage the shift towards new models of achieving wildlife conservation and livelihood security. The CLN has been born out of a series of national consultations initiated in 1997 called "Building Bridges: Wildlife Conservation and People's Livelihood Rights," and held annually since (see successive issues of *Protected Area Update,* Kalpavriksh, Pune). The Sariska meeting, with which I started this essay, is partly an outcome of these dialogues…a wonderful example of how attitudinal change and practical demonstration can bring erstwhile enemies to sit, eat, and conserve together.

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