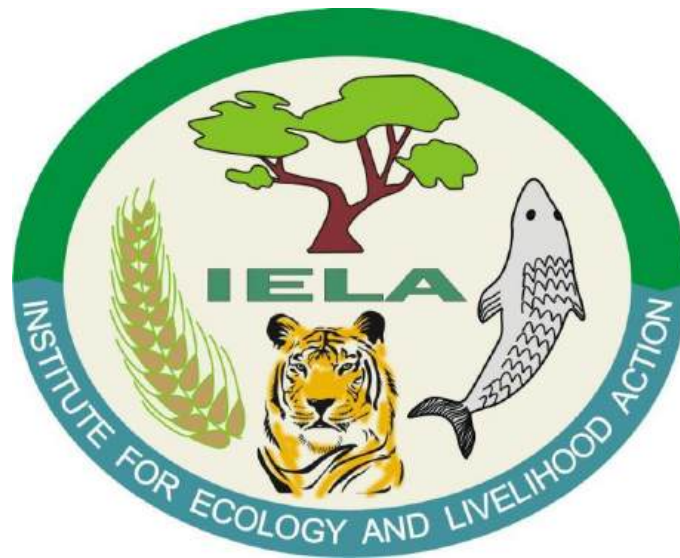


Institute for Ecology and Livelihood Action (IELA)



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Institute for Ecology and Livelihood Action

One Health principles: A way to engage with Man Animal conflict at Ecosystem Level



Training Workshop in May 2024

Background:

In the beginning of the financial year 2024-25, IELA initiated a process to consolidate its approach to Health and Nutrition by Facilitating a workshop in collaboration with Ashankur and Habitat Ecological Trust. The workshop used Ayurvedic principles as a backdrop to examine the links being between biodiversity, nutrition, health, livelihood and overall well being.

http://ielaind.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Action-Research-Training-and-Orientation-Workshop-at-Ashankur- -1st-4th -May_2024-compressed-1.pdf

This workshop provided concrete focus to provide direction to work related to mapping the biodiversity in Ashankur project region. In the meantime, IELA was requested by Jagran Jan Vikas Samiti (JJVS) to help consolidate the significance of their work so that relevant proposals could be written to take these forward. Given the expertise with JJVS an attempt was made to integrate the two approaches through a training programme for Ashankur organised at JJVS. The output was discussed in Ashankur in February and resulted in the preparation of two micro plans. This process will be shared in more detail later on in the report.

Separate to this process, two important developments have taken place. In connection with the ongoing collaboration with Science Centre, the process of development of the online interactive portal for teachers and video clips on the training process for different aspects of the Eco Eureka kit continued. The other relates to studies done by IELA to help the Forest Department prepare Management plans for Jhalana Dungri in Jaipur and Baghdarra Nature Park in Udaipur. These were studies with a difference as there was a serious attempt to document the biodiversity, issues related to impact of invasive species and examine the linkages to other forests in the vicinity in terms of corridors and related movement of species. The Management plans developed as a result also took into account the latest legal provisions and concerns reflected in various Acts and guidelines related to the development and Management of such locations.



Two perspectives on Mandve¹

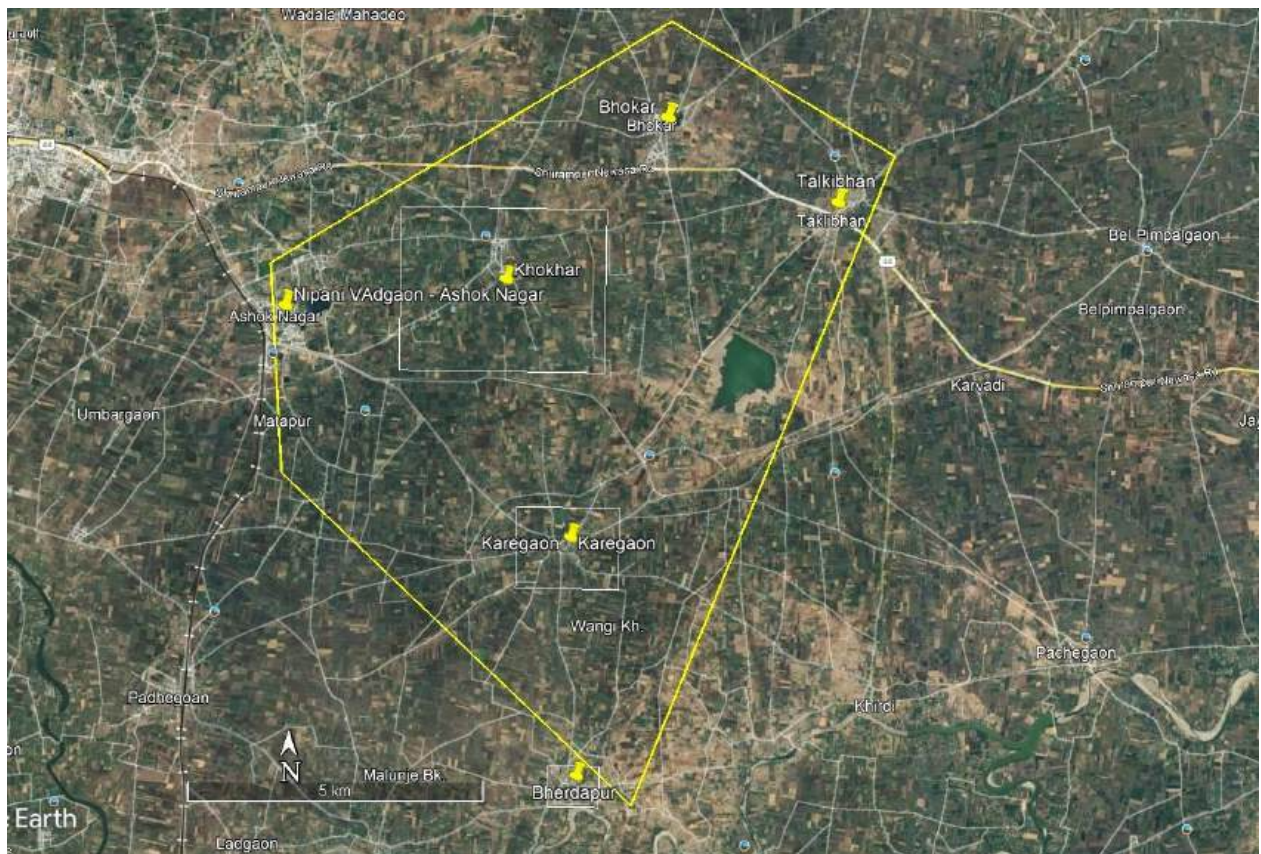
Combined with other studies done by IELA, it is becoming possible to develop an integrated perspective on Man Animal Conflict taking into account historical traditions and current conditions facing the region. The studies indicate a connection between the nature of Habitats, livelihoods and wildlife in these regions. With the loss of Habitats, there is an increasing shift to the following:

- a. Survival of wildlife that has the ability to adapt to multiple vegetational conditions. This seems very noticeable in the dominance of leopards across different Habitats studied.
- b. The increasing dependance on Human dominated habitats which includes the following
 - Water bodies available.
 - Places to hide.
 - Feed available in this livestock.

¹ Two perspectives represent two different processes of thinking. One market oriented and looking at Government schemes/approaches this put issues in neat little boxes based on Government categorisation/ classification. The other people oriented, not so tidy, reflecting complexities on the ground and a peep into people's homes the way they actually live. Both place the panther in the sugar cane fields. The colours used and shades also reflect a different outline. One clearer and distinct. The other more murky and dark.

Given the above, there is a need to develop studies with a different type of lens than the one currently in vogue, namely:

- Careful study of the pressure points leading to Man animal conflicts.
- Categorisation of wildlife in terms of those better able to adapt to human intervention and those seriously threatened by human intervention.
- Look at those interventions that promote restoration of the Native biodiversity and its potential to recreate conducive conditions for wildlife conservation, restoration and management.
- The relevance of local communities for the conservation, restoration and management of forests and corridors.



Six pilot villages in Ashankur taken up for biodiversity study

Annual Report 2024-25

One Health Principles: The relevance of the Ecosystem approach to develop necessary linkages



Looking for crabs while doing the biodiversity mapping: Enjoying field work

Having kept SDG 3 (Health and Overall Well Being) at the core of IELA functioning and recognising that women and children being the most affected are the key stakeholders providing the essence of what it takes to give shape to this agenda, IELA has been partnering actively with Ashankur to bring this about. As mentioned above under the leadership of IELA and Habitat Ecological Trust the essence of this was articulated at the training programme held in May 2025 at Ashankur. Along with Ashankur staff, 35 women from the neighbouring villages participated actively in the training programme. Following this training programme, two programmes were held in July 2024 and December 24. The December training programme resulted in the consolidation of the work being done by Ashankur

<http://ielaind.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/An-experiment-at-linking-theory-with-practise.pdf>

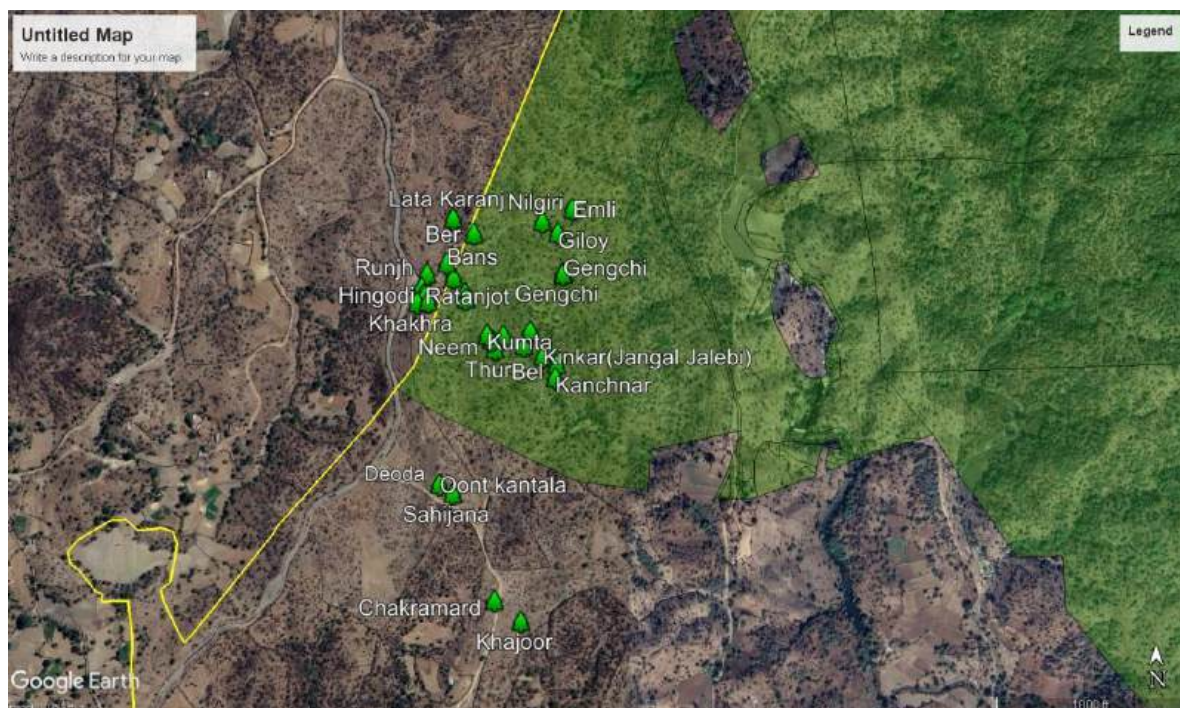
The report underscored the necessity of giving basic training in GIS to key Ashankur staff. Accordingly a training programme was organised at Udaipur with the help of Jagran Jan Vikas Samiti in January 2025. This was followed up with another action oriented training workshop at Ashankur in February 2025. This training workshop culminated in the development of two village microplan templates

<http://ielaind.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Development-of-a-Template-for-Model-Village-Development-based-on-the-SDGs-compressed-1.pdf>

children in giving shape to One Health Principles. What is emerging from this process will be clearer the next year.



Map of Kojo ka Guda showing the area granted under CFR title in green



Mapping the Biodiversity of Kojo Ka Guda as a step towards development of village micro plans inclusive of Forest ecosystems

Man Animal Conflict: It's intimate relation with one Health Principles

Shortly after the initiation of the collaboration with Ashankur, the base study in Mandve indicated the presence of the leopard in sugarcane fields. The completion of the base line study of six pilot villages indicate that sugarcane fields, ginni grass and maize fields have become the habitat of the leopard feeding on dogs and small ruminants. Studies elsewhere have also corroborated that due to loss of forest habitat and resultant loss of wild prey, the leopard which is a highly adaptable species has increased its intake of domesticated animals.



Jawai Oran Location Map

Three studies of Jawai Conservation Reserve, Jhalana Dungri WLS and Baghdarra Nature Park done by IELA Deputy Managing Trustee Sunil Dubey indicate the need for examining leopard habitat beyond the confines of Nature Parks, Conservation reserves and Wildlife Sanctuaries. This finding is relevant for other species as well. The conditions of corridors and status of the forests indicate that the health of wildlife is related to the overall conditions prevalent in the ecosystem and connected pathways. In Baghdarra and Jawai the crocodile is an important species, its health is not just related to condition of the lake at Baghdarra or Jawai but also conditions of the corridors and links to other wetlands as well. In Jharkhand, we noticed how the closure of certain pathways for the elephant put pressure on the forests and corridors in Jharkhand.

The studies done by us in Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Jharkhand indicate that conditions relates to Human well being also relate to Wildlife as well. The increasing presence of invasive species, cost of cultivation and declining water tables as productivity is sought to be enhanced in agricultural fields on one hand wildlife to be conserved in Nature Parks, Conservation Reserves and Sanctuaries indicate the disconnect between the current development paradigm and the needs of rural communities. Engagement with local

communities in these three States indicate that the loss of traditional knowledge about the biodiversity, nutrition and health practises very much related to the changing production scenario and market rather than consumption orientation resulting in a breakdown of the traditional nutrient and water cycles.

Fragmentation of the forests is one of the major reason for the breakdown of microrhysal populations and one the factors in the increase of vector borne diseases. The increased use of pesticide and fertilizer have also resulted in pollution of water bodies and declining soil health. It is not surprising therefore that the resultant increase in cost of cultivation and cost of living have rendered many farmers helpless and dependant on wage labour for survival.

This crisis of employment has resulted in an increased attack on wildlife through the unlikely path of eco-tourism as well. This was observed very sharply during our participation in a multi stakeholder Workshop to Save Jawai. Shortly after this workshop, a leopard made its first human kill in Jawai bring home sharply the need for a wholistic and balanced approach to sustainable development and livelihoods in eco-systems.

Prakriti Media Shala: Development of an online platform and video instruction toolkit to supplement the Eureka kit for user friendly application of science by Children

Sponsored by National Council for Science Technolgy and Communication (NCSTC), Science Centre, Bhopal Madhya Pradesh continues with its ongoing responsibility of training and facilitating teachers in the use of the Eureka Kit developed by them on behalf of NCSTC and development of an online platform for sharing experiences amidst the teachers. Dr Sunil Dubey, Joint Managing Trustee IELA was among those who helped Science Centre, Bhopal bring this about. After the training programme jointly held with Science Centre in Udaipur, the what's app group to facilitate sharing is being run by IELA teachers have not shared their experiences on this platform, they have also shared presitigious awards received by them as a result of the work related to promoting science with the students. Among the initiatves was one where the Deputy Managing Trustee of IELA was called to give a talk on ecological issues to the students of Goa. The work of development of the interactive web site is still on going as also the video modules providing a snap shot of the various training modules for the teachers using the Eco Eureka Kit.

Following the exposure of some of the teachers to the development perspective facilitated by IELA, the teachers of St Mary of the Angels prepared for their annual exhibition organised in October. Keeping in mind the new education policy 2020 and the relevance of the SDGs to provide a modern global framework and direction with which to integrate the theory and practise of education the teachers used the opportunity provided by the exhibition to prepare numerous pedagogical tools in collaboration with the students. Learning by doing, learning through better visuals, integrating different disciplines were different ways in which the cognitive abilities of the students were brought to bear on how the students prepared the assignments and explained them.



Students of the Eco Club explaining their work to the Chief Guest and Guest of Honour

The ecoclub students who were exposed to issues related to the ecosystems and the SDGs and the Eco Eureka toolkit taught in Pragati media shala had prepared many exhibits related to the biodiversity, its relevance for nutrition, health and overall well being. Displays of the uses of various medicinal plants, terrarium, different ecosystems namely the polar ice caps, montane, desert and wetlands, preparation of soap and herbal pesticide sprays were among those done very creatively by the students. There was also a slide presentation on the SDGs and a play on the destruction of the jungle and the wildlife. The detailed report can be made available on request.

Participation in Echo Network on issues related to Ecosystem Stewardship

During the year as a result of various initiatives aimed at furthering the agenda of Echo Network, related to Ecosystem Stewardship IELA initiated a process of collaboration with Xavier Institute of Social Sciences where five interns were selected to do studies in four Districts of Jharkhand and one of West Bengal. The studies covered diverse topics like impact of coal mining, flouride contamination, issues related to Man Animal conflict with respect to elephant corridors in Jharkhand, issues related to the promotion of millet cultivation in Jharkhand and issues related to Climate Change and relevance of the work done by SPWD in Purulia. Following participation at the annual conference in Bengaluru and creation of a whats app group for the ecosystem stewardship network IELA highlighted the relevance of the ecosystem approach to linking issues related to sustainable development and man animal conflict. Given the distinctly different approach of IELA to the project based one being applied for the work in Sikkim and Raichur it was mutually decided that a qualitatively different type of forum was required to facilitate such a process. Accordingly this has been integrated into the whats app forum on Ecological Democracy being run by IELA.

This activity has taken a different turn when IELA was called upon to facilitate the internship of a student from IIM Rohtak. Taking this opportunity, IELA decided to take the opportunity to expand the ecosystem stewardship approach to the State level based on two thematic concerns namely issues facing farmers and development issues related to industrialisation of the State. What emerges out of this study will be clear next year.

Participation in National Platform of Small Scale Fish Workers and the question of Wetland conservation.

In order to give shape to the work on the ground around the three lakes of Jaisamand, Mahi and Kadana, NPSSFW provided limited support to create a union of fishers in the region. The detailed reports of the activities done have been submitted to NPSSFW. Given the larger issues related to invasion of Tilapia and the consequent reduction in the availability of the indigenous species of the region the need for a broader approach taking into account the local specificities as against the top down union based one was acutely felt. While continuing participation in National Platform of Small Scale Fishers Workers (NPSSFW), IELA is in the process of evolving its own approach to the question of wetlands and related organisation building. This is reflected in the way this years Wetland Day call.

<http://ielaind.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Jaisamand-Consortium-Call-for-World-Wetland-Day-2025.pdf>

Given the complexities of the issues to be engaged with, the need for decentralisation of the approach was more acutely felt. IELA has therefore decided to take time out to reflect on it and come with an approach that also embraces the wetland wildlife as well. The study of the wetlands of Bagdarra, Jawai, Bharatpur and elsewhere indicates that these might be more important than the issues related to leopards and land based wildlife.

Radio Madhuban and awareness on the Aravallis, Ecology

Dr Sunil Dubey, Deputy Managing Trustee IELA in an ongoing series on Radio Madhuban has highlighted various aspects of ecology, the most important being a series of three talks on different aspects of the Aravallis, two talks on Fisheries resources of Rajasthan and different aspects of tree plantation, removal of invasive species and other aspects of the environment and ecology.

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLRx5TNDmTsHaCWlZJ-qkE-xbvtP4fZxaX>

Joint Agra- Northern Region Eco workshop on Integral Ecology

There were 45 participants attending this workshop from 17 different dioceses of Agra and Northern Region. The workshop covered the importance of developing a movement in favour of Ecological democracy, one that would help rebuild the broken societal threads that have undermined the ecology and livelihoods of communities. On behalf of the diocese of Udaipur, the efforts taken up by different organisations within the diocese were presented at the workshop.

<https://ielaind.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Update-on-Laudato-Si-from-Udaipur-Diocese.pdf>