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Can tigers survive in human-dominated landscapes?

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Curriculum Vitae

Shekhar Kolipaka was born in the town of Vizianagaram in Andhra Pradesh state of India in the year 1973. He studied mathematics, physics and chemistry at the intermediate level and commerce for his bachelors degree at the Andhra University in Visakhapatnam, India. He has a broad education with master's degrees in business management from the Symbiosis Institute of Management Studies, India. Natural resource management from the Indian Institute of Management Studies, India and environmental sciences from the KwaZulu-Natal University, South Africa. Shekhar combines his interdisciplinary education to find solutions for wildlife conservation outside protected areas of India. During 2007-08 when wild tigers became locally extinct in his study area of Panna in Madhya Pradesh, he involved himself in tiger recovery efforts and undertook a series of action research projects to support the tiger reintroduction program in Panna. During his work with tigers, he was always bothered by the realistic prospects of tiger survival in human-dominated landscapes. He approached Prof. Dr. Hans de longh and Prof. Dr. Gerard Persoon at the Leiden University with the same question and requested their support to study human-tiger relations leading to coexistence academically. His study became a collaboration between the Institute of Cultural Anthropology and Development Sociology (CA-OS (FSW)) and the Institute of Environmental Sciences (CML) of Leiden University. In the biosocial investigation he carried out, he examined local people and tigers and studied their ability to adapt and coexist in the same area. The research that he conducted resulted in the present PhD thesis.

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I would like to thank my PhD committee members, Prof. Dr E.H.M. Sterck, Dr Nobuyuki Yamaguchi, Dr Hans Bauer and Prof. Dr Peter Pels (Secretary) for serving as my evaluation committee members and for their constructive comments and suggestions on an earlier version of the manuscript. I wholeheartedly thank the Madhya Pradesh Forest Department and the Panna Tiger Reserve for issuing me research permits to work in the state forests. I am particularly grateful to forest offices Mr Suhas Kumar and Mr R. Sreenivasa Murthy for encouraging my research.

During my work at Panna, I met and befriended several generous local people who have welcomed my staff and me to stay and use their homes. I am highly indebted to their generosity. My research work would not be possible without the support of Mr. Shyamendra Singh and Mrs. Bhavana Kumari of Ken River Lodge in Panna. I also owe much to their lodge staff and naturalists who have provided me useful local information. I thank Pugdundee Safaris and Mr. Manav Khanduja for his support for my work.

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Notes to the reader

- Chapters 2 to 5 are published articles, and the appendix sections, supplementary data, hard data used in the analysis and supporting information on these articles are all available on the online repositories of the journals.
- Chapter 3 is in preparation for submission to a journal at the time of printing of this thesis. The final published article may be restructured to accommodate the journal's style and therefore may look slightly different than the version presented in the thesis, but will not impact the findings. After publishing, appendix sections, data used in the analysis and supporting information will be available for download from the journal. The status of the publication and links to the data repository will be made available on www.wildlifetracking.in (Project Updates).
- The author of this thesis, Shekhar Kolipaka can be directly contacted for any relevant questions on the thesis. E-mail: kolipaka.s.s@gmail.com