



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# Spirit of Cooperation

## *Wildlife Without Borders - India*

India, the world's 7th largest country in area, ranks 6th among the earth's major centers of biological diversity, encompassing 21,000 plant, 500 mammal, 1,500 bird, and 20,000 insect species. Home to animals, such as tigers, elephants, rhinoceros, Siberian crane, and many more, it is identified by both U.S. and Indian biologists as extremely important to our diverse cultural heritages.

India is among a limited number of countries where a little known, yet highly valuable pool of funds, can be leveraged for conservation purposes. These funds or special foreign currencies are comprised of U.S.-owned funds that cannot be converted in U.S. dollars and must be spent in that country. Special foreign currencies were originally accumulated through sale of surplus agricultural commodities under the Agricultural Trade

Development and Assistance Act of 1954 and through the repayment of loans by the local government. Congress built a provision into the Endangered Species Act of 1973 that authorized the Service to use these currencies, where available, for wildlife conservation.

Leveraging \$11 million from special foreign currencies between 1977 and 2000, *Wildlife Without Borders - India* provided \$600,000 in funding for more than 30 major wildlife conservation projects to assist India with the conservation and management of its diverse biological resources. *Wildlife Without Borders - India's* long-term commitment to conservation in India has spawned significant improvements for wildlife despite challenges of balancing the needs of wildlife with those of India's large human population.



*U.S. Advisor providing guidance to Indian partners in field techniques under the U.S. India Fund project entitled "Ecology of Hillstreams of Himachal Pradesh and Garhwal regions, with special reference to the fish community"*

Kimberly McClurg, FWS

### **Wildlife Research and Management**

Seventeen multi-year conservation-oriented wildlife research studies have resulted from a long-term partnership between *Wildlife Without Borders - India* and the highly regarded Bombay Natural History Society. Conducted by Indian biologists, these projects have focused on conservation of Indian endangered species including the Asian elephant, Great Indian Bustard, and Siberian Crane. Compilation and organization of ecological data on these species has provided an important foundation for decision making.

### **Habitat Protection**

*Wildlife Without Borders - India's* approach to habitat management is illustrated by research conducted at Keoladeo National Park, located near Bharatpur. Keoladeo occupies 11 square miles, one-third of which is wetlands and provides habitat to 375 species of birds, including the endangered central flock of Siberian cranes, 77 species of mammals, and a diversity of fresh water fish and flowering plant species.

Keoladeo is an integral component of a highly populated area that includes 7 local villages. Analysis of multiple factors governing the ecology of

Keoladeo is the basis for recommendations developed for the long term. These have in turn been incorporated into management of the park as well as into development patterns of the surrounding communities.

### **Training**

*Wildlife Without Borders - India* coordinated a comprehensive training program for nearly 20 faculty instructors from the Wildlife Institute of India (WII), located at Dehra Dun, India. These faculty have provided instruction for the over 1,000 Indians who have received graduate-level diplomas and other certificates in wildlife and natural resource management from WII. *Wildlife Without Borders - India* is currently engaged in the second phase of a 5-year commitment with WII to assist the Institute develop field applications of its academic courses. *Wildlife Without Borders - India* has also assisted hundreds of other Indians to attend training in India, the United States, and other countries.

### **Conservation Education**

*Wildlife Without Borders - India* fostered a multifaceted environmental communication program including

production of television segments and accompanying educational materials in partnership with the Centre for Environmental Education in Ahmedabad and the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry at Syracuse. Through the television medium, environmental programs have reached millions of Indians, who would not otherwise receive this information on environmental issues. *Wildlife Without Borders - India* has also sponsored teacher training, development of publications and field guides, brochures and posters, and two major films primarily for Indians but for use with other audiences as well.

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**  
**Division of International Conservation**  
**4401 N. Fairfax Dr. Suite 730**  
**Arlington, VA 22203-1622**  
**Phone 703-358-1825**  
**Fax 703-358-2849**  
**<http://international.fws.gov/>**  
**[FW91A\\_DIC@fws.gov](mailto:FW91A_DIC@fws.gov)**

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