RETTERRITORIALIZATION AND ENCLAVIC TOURISM DEVELOPMENT: A HISTORY OF ZONING AND ITS IMPACTS IN CORBETT TIGER RESERVE LANDSCAPE, INDIA

Rajiv Bhartari

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RETTERRITORIALIZATION AND ENCLAVIC TOURISM DEVELOPMENT:
A HISTORY OF ZONING AND ITS IMPACTS IN
CORBETT TIGER RESERVE LANDSCAPE, INDIA

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Dissertation
presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

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In Forestry and Conservation Sciences

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Zoning has become the *sine qua non* in protected area management around the world. Yet zoning as an assemblage of policies, practices and especially politics is not well understood, especially through a critical geographical/political ecology lens. In this research, I used the concepts of territorialization, reterritorialization and enclavization as a framework for examining the creation and impacts of zoning in the Corbett Tiger Reserve (CTR) landscape over past five decades (1973-2023). The Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape has the largest wild tiger (*Panthera tigris tigris*) population in any protected area in the world. The framework helped to understand successive phases of core, buffer and tourism zone-making, the proliferation of resort tourism, and their negative implications for local communities. As a critical qualitative case study, the research utilized mixed methods including interviews, document analysis, focus groups and semi-structured surveys with a variety of CTR staff and local villagers.

The research traces the designation of core/buffer zones under Project Tiger in CTR, a territorialization process informed by the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act 2006. Legislation prescribed the core area be inviolate for tigers (i.e., strict prohibition on human activities) while the buffer zone was to be managed for coexistence of human activities with tiger conservation. However, this study traces the forces over time that led to the diminishing of the distinction between the two zones. Official policy to meet tiger conservation objectives through fostering ecotourism and community-based conservation in the buffer zone did not occur. Instead, the cumulative zoning processes produced an archipelago of enclavic tourism zones dominated by private, resort tourism – a reterritorialization process involving reregulating and rebranding zones as territories for new forms of economic production. CTR policies privileged vehicle-based safari tours and restricted angling and other foot-based tourism activities, reducing the ability of local communities to benefit from tourism. Prior rights of villagers in reserved forests were curtailed, nor were community forests (*panchayat van*) in the landscape recognized and used to build community-based conservation and tourism. The politics of zoning requires further study in tiger reserves, especially on the production of enclavic tourism and vastly uneven social and ecological impacts.
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CA/TS  Conservation Assured Tiger Standards
CAMPA  Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority
CBC  Community-based Conservation
CBET  Community-based Ecotourism
CBT  Community-based Tourism
CF  Conservator of Forests
CNP  Corbett National Park
CTR  Corbett Tiger Reserve
CWLW  Chief Wildlife Warden
CZA  Central Zoo Authority
DCF  Deputy Conservator of Forests
DFO  Divisional Forest Officer
DM  District Magistrate
EDC  Eco-development Committee
FD  Forest Division
FGD  Focus Group Discussion
FRH  Forest Rest House
GO  Government order
GoI  Government of India
GTF  Global Tiger Forum
IFA  Indian Forests Act 1927
IFS  Indian Forest Service
IUCN  International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources
JFM  Joint forest management
LAC  Local Advisory Committee
LEAD  Leadership for Environment and Development
MoEFCC  Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
MoT  Ministry of Tourism
MOU  Memorandum of Understanding
NP  National Park
NTCA  National Tiger Conservation Authority
PA  Protected Area
PCCF  Principal Chief Conservator of Forests
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>PCR</td>
<td>Pawalgarh Conservation Reserve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PIL</td>
<td>Public interest litigation</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPP</td>
<td>Public–private partnership</td>
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<tr>
<td>PWD</td>
<td>Public Works Department</td>
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<tr>
<td>RF</td>
<td>Reserved Forest</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDM</td>
<td>Sub-divisional Magistrate</td>
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<tr>
<td>TCF</td>
<td>Tiger Conservation Foundation</td>
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<td>TCP</td>
<td>Tiger Conservation Plan</td>
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<td>TIES</td>
<td>The International Ecotourism Society</td>
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<td>TR</td>
<td>Tiger Reserve</td>
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<tr>
<td>WLPA</td>
<td>Wildlife (Protection) Act</td>
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<td>WLS</td>
<td>Wildlife Sanctuary</td>
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<td>WP</td>
<td>Working Plan</td>
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### GLOSSARY

**Aayog**
A judicial, governmental, or parliamentary commission set up for a particular task or inquiry

**Bandobasti**
Settlement of rights

**Bhabhar**
The geographical region south of the Outer Himalayas (Shivalik Hills) in Uttarakhand that is composed of alluvial sediments

**Bigha**
Traditional unit of land area. Equivalent to 0.0632 ha or 0.0156 acres

**Chak**
A piece of land, generally agricultural in nature

**Chowki**
Check post

**Civil soyam**
Parcels of land owned by the revenue department, these areas constitute the unsurveyed ‘waste’ lands in several districts of Uttarakhand, India

**Conservation Reserve**
A category of protected area according to the Wildlife Protection Act of India. Conservation reserves typically act as buffer zones or connectors and migration corridors between established national parks, wildlife sanctuaries and reserved and protected forests of India. They are administered by local agencies like the *gram panchayat*

**Ecodevelopment**
A strategy aimed to link the conservation values of protected areas with the livelihoods of local people and development processes in the surrounding landscapes

**Forest Division**
The administrative area comprising one or more protected or resource-managed forests, usually equivalent to a district.

**Gram Pradhan**
A person elected by the village-level constitutional body of local self-government called the *Gram Sabha* (village government) in India

**Gujjar**
A pastoral semi-nomadic community, practising transhumance, living in the Shivalik Hills at the foot of the Himalayas

**Indian Forest Service**
One of the three civil services of the Government of India. Its officers manage the forest resources of the country, including National Parks, Tiger Reserves, Wildlife Sanctuaries and other Protected Areas

**Joint forest management**
The concept of partnership between the state forest departments and local communities with the aim of management and protection of forests

**Lantana**
*Lantana camara* – an invasive woody shrub, considered among the most problematic weeds globally

**Machan**
A platform or a watchtower built to keep a watch over wildlife

**Mahaseer**
Specifically, Golden Mahaseer (*Tor putitora*) is an endangered species of cyprinid fish found in rapid streams, riverine pools, and lakes in the Himalayan region

**National Park**
An area notified under the Wildlife (Protection) Act by the state government because of its ecological, faunal, floral, geomorphological, or zoological association or importance, needed to for the purpose of conserving wildlife and/or its habitat. No human activity (grazing, settlement, extraction of...
timber and forest produce) is permitted inside the national park except for the ones permitted by the Chief Wildlife Warden of the state

National Tiger Conservation Authority
Statutory body of the Federal Government responsible for the management of Tiger Reserves

Niyamavali
List of rules and regulations

Panchayat
Village council that represents local government at the village level

Panchayat van
Legally demarcated village/community forests formed for sustainable management and protection of forests and natural resources

Panchayati Raj
Local self government

Project Tiger
A nationwide programme launched in 1973 to help establish a network of tiger reserves in India for the conservation of tigers

Reserved Forest
An area notified under the provisions of India Forest Act or the State Forest Acts having full degree of protection. In Reserved Forests all activities (e.g. logging, grazing, passage, collection of fodder and forest produce) are prohibited unless specifically permitted

Revenue village
A small administrative unit comprising a village with demarcated borders recognized by the State Administration

Sarpanch
Elected head of the panchayat or village council

Tiger Reserve
A protected area statutorily designated under the Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act 2006, for the conservation of tigers under the guidance of the National Tiger Conservation Authority

Tiger Task Force
A think tank set up by the Prime Minister of India in 2005 to assess the status of conservation of tigers and recommend ways to strengthen the measures for their conservation

Van panchayat
Village forest council or governance institution for managing community forests under community or village authority

Wildlife Institute of India
An autonomous institution under the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Government of India, set up for research and training for wildlife

Wildlife Sanctuary
A protected area demarcated for the conservation of only wildlife and habitat under the Wildlife (Protection) Act. Human activities like harvesting of timber, collecting minor forest products and private ownership rights are permitted provided they do not interfere with well-being of animals

Working Plan
A guiding document that regulates wood production, silviculture and tending activities of forests in an area for a specific period of time (usually 10 years) through the application of prescriptions specifying targets, action and control arrangements
PROLOGUE

If one were to consider tourism development within the Corbett Tiger Reserve (CTR) and its adjoining landscape in northern India over the last three decades as a project, I was undoubtely an integral part of that project. I was closely involved in this enterprise of tourism development in various capacities and at multiple points of time, including serving as the Director of Corbett Tiger Reserve from 2005 to 2008 (3 years). My involvement as a senior forest official with tourism development responsibilities within the Corbett Tiger Reserve gave me opportunities for experimentation, learning and creating meaningful contributions. However, the boundaries of tourism stretched far beyond and many things happened that I was uncomfortable about, such as the rapid changes in land use from agriculture to tourism in villages adjoining Corbett Tiger Reserve and the Kosi River, or the growth of traffic on Ramnagar–Mohan state highway leading to increase in casualties of wild animals. Some developments such as tax concessions given by the Government of India for eco-resort development or plans of investors were not in my knowledge then. My dissertation “Reterritorialization and Tourism Development: A History of Zoning and its Impacts in Corbett Tiger Reserve Landscape, India” represents yet another step in this long, varied, and somewhat tumultuous process of learning especially through reflection guided later on through my graduate education.

The objective of balancing conservation with tourism is perhaps one of the most challenging tasks for a protected area manager. Indian Forest Service (IFS) officers, a cadre of the civil service to which I also belong, enjoy considerable clout in what happens within forests and protected areas, but there is a sharp difference of opinion among officers in their approach to tourism. A majority of IFS officers like to believe that their primary mandate is conservation; they consider tourism a nuisance and would rather not have visitors enter tiger
reserves. A smaller proportion of IFS officials believe in entertaining visitors and indulging in infrastructural improvements and programs for the benefits that accrue from park interpretation and visitor involvement; and an even smaller fraction advocate for bringing in the participation and involvement of local residents and user groups in the name of community-based work. I think I belonged to the rare group of IFS officers who would strive to reconcile all of these often opposing viewpoints.

However, not once while serving in an official capacity did I question my involvement with tourism development in the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape! I was not obliged to develop tourism as an officer of the Indian Forest Service. Yet, my behavior and decisions were not wholly mandated by my official position and some of my actions could rightfully be regarded as voluntary or accidental. My involvement in the tourism development enterprise, I think now, was also partly a product of my personality and belief system. Hospitality comes naturally to me, and as a protected area manager, I strove to make visitor experiences as rewarding as possible. Stemming from my wildlife management training and consideration of Project Tiger documents and other readings, I firmly believed that tourism could positively impact conservation by increasing awareness and enabling citizens to see and experience nature, but that managing wildlife tourism was a highly dynamic, complex and political process. There are contradictions in the making as well as implementation of Indian wildlife policies. Many are well known. For example, policies simultaneously require local community involvement in conservation and respect for their rights, yet create inviolate areas in tiger reserves where local community residents are prohibited, despite prior use and customary rights claims (Lewis 2015). This is a dilemma that has burned in my thoughts and beliefs throughout much of my career.

I was involved in tourism development within the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape in four different capacities: as a protected area manager, a faculty at the Wildlife Institute of
India, a community-based tourism (CBT) practitioner, and as a tourism department official/ecotourism official. Each of these positions merit separate mention.

For nearly a decade, I worked in Corbett Tiger Reserve during the following two stints: as a Deputy Director (1993-1999) and as a Director (2005-2008). It is not uncommon in tiger reserves for officers to stay for long periods at one posting, however, my six-year tenure as the Deputy Director was an unusually long tenure by the forest department standards. My close and long association with Corbett Tiger Reserve has provided me insights into the challenges of tiger conservation and tourism development. Additionally, having had the privilege of working in Corbett Tiger Reserve as a manager, I have an insider’s perspective of the unfolding of developments in Corbett Tiger Reserve's since 1993.

As Deputy Director of Corbett Tiger Reserve, I oversaw the creation of tourism zones and community-based tourism (CBT) programs. Upon my taking charge, one of the first tasks assigned to me by my superiors was to conduct a two-and-a-half month training program for nature guides. I launched the Corbett Birdwatching Program to promote birdwatching activity as an alternative to tiger viewing. My superior saw my natural and spontaneous interest in visitor management and asked me to develop the Jhirna tourism zone in 1995 after the relocation of villages from the buffer area. Relocation is a loaded term and one that is used by the National Tiger Conservation Authority and forest department officials, but I realized that academic paper would require that I define it and contextualize it, as I will do later. When I was involved in creating tourism zones, I believed that what happened was necessary for nature conservation, not fully realizing its social and political impacts. My association with the development of Jhirna tourism zone is particularly relevant to this research as it is the subject of my critical investigation. I wrote the Management Plan for Corbett National Park for the ten-year period 1999-2010 (Bhartari 1999). This was also the period when there was a widespread public demand for a separate Himalayan state, culminating in the formation of

As a Director, I had immense authority but was extremely busy. I struggled with regulating tourism, renovating infrastructure, and promoting Corbett as a tourist destination. Corbett Tiger Reserve entered an intense period of tourism growth under my directorship, as evidenced by soaring rates of tourist arrivals and revenue receipts. Likewise, the vibrancy of the newly formed state contributed to heightened tourism growth generally. This growth period culminated in 2009 when Corbett Tiger Reserve received “India’s Best Managed Tourist-Friendly National Park Award” from the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. However, conflicts soon began to appear between tourism development and villagers’ rights and resources, and between factions within tourism industry, often drawing the park management into it.

More recently, I became the Chief Wildlife Warden (CWLW), Uttarakhand in July 2018. This position reestablished my involvement with Corbett Tiger Reserve, placing once again Corbett Tiger Reserve under my supervision for one-and-a-half months in 2018 and for another year from July 2019 to July 2020. By then tourism in Corbett Tiger Reserve was the subject of my research, which I began in 2016; and I was hesitant to making major policy decisions. It is not surprising then that the Pakhro tourism zone was formed before I took charge as the CWLW, and the Garjia tourism zone and the Pakhro tiger safari were initiated after I relinquished my charge as Chief Wildlife Warden in July 2020.

I was closely involved with the promotion of ecotourism in Uttarakhand since the State’s inception in 2000. I was the first Conservator of Forests (CF) for Ecotourism in the Uttarakhand Forest Department (2002-2003) and the Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) for Ecotourism (2010-2015). As the CF Ecotourism, I set up the Center for Ecotourism and Sustainable Livelihoods at Chunakhan, located outside Corbett Tiger Reserve, yet still within
the CTR landscape. I assisted in the formulation of the pilot Public Private Partnership (PPP) Ramganga Mahaseer Conservation Project. As the Chief Conservator of Forests for Ecotourism, I mobilized funds for Corbett Tiger Reserve and conducted programs for capacity building and promotion, including producing a series of ecotourism maps. Building upon my experience with establishing the Corbett Birdwatching Program, I launched the Uttarakhand Birdwatching Program (Shahabuddin 2014). In 2015, a major highlight was the organization of the Second Annual Spring Bird Festival at Pawalgarh Conservation Reserve.

Besides these two longer engagements during which I administered as a park manager and ecotourism official, I maintained my involvement with Corbett Tiger Reserve via two other smaller assignments. From 1999-2002, I participated in two significant projects as a faculty member at the Wildlife Institute of India. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) supported a project titled, “Planning and Development of Interpretive Facilities in Corbett National Park,” which gave me the opportunity to research the history of Corbett National Park and Jim Corbett’s legacy. Additionally, the Leadership for Environment and Development (LEAD) Fellows Project titled, “Corbett-Binsar-Nainital (CBN) Ecotourism Initiative” allowed me to engage with communities and supervise the preparation of model community-based tourism (CBT) plans for three villages (Kyari, Bhakrakot, and Chhoti Haldwani) situated in the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape (WTO 2004). The CBN Ecotourism Initiative enabled me to implement the community-based tourism projects in four villages. I also served as the Additional CEO of the Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board (UTDB) and the Additional Secretary Tourism, Government of Uttarakhand from 2008-2010. During this tenure, I actively secured funding for tourism development in Corbett Tiger Reserve through a Destination Development Project funded by the Government of India.
As evident from the description above, since 1993, I have been involved with tourism development within the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape in an almost uninterrupted manner in one capacity or another. Owing to the visibility associated with tourism, my involvement with tourism often eclipsed my other engagements in the tiger conservation program. The bitter truth is that in all this time, I believed that I was practicing nature conservation! I was equally involved in tiger protection, ecological research and various other park administrative matters. I took several initiatives for the protection of the tigers. The first All-India Tiger Assessment conducted by the Wildlife Institute of India in 2008 revealed that Corbett Tiger Reserve was the only tiger reserve in India to have more tigers than had been previously reported (NTCA 2008). In addition, the All-India Tiger Assessment stated that Corbett Tiger Reserve had one of the highest densities of tigers reported in the scientific literature (NTCA 2008). Another remarkable development other than tourism during my tenure was the development of the “cut root-stock method” for Lantana (*Lantana camara*, an invasive shrub) removal and ecological restoration for grassland development, a practice that has now been widely adopted in India (Babu, Love and Babu 2009).

However, not all went well with tourism in Corbett Tiger Reserve. From 2009 onward, the CTR landscape started receiving national attention for its rampant resort development and conflicts between tourism development and tiger conservation (Bindra 2010). Some community-based tourism projects in the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape became major legal controversies (e.g., Ramganga Mahaseer Conservation Project in Corbett Tiger Reserve buffer area) (Mazoomdaar 2012); or they stagnated and did not take off. The “Center for Ecotourism and Sustainable Livelihoods,” established in the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape with much fanfare, is an example of an initiative that began with great promise but went nowhere. And sometimes, events dragged me into controversies including
the most recent connected with the violations during the construction of the Pakhro Tiger Safari being developed in the Corbett Tiger Reserve buffer area (Kumar 2021).

During my IFS career in Corbett Tiger Reserve, I managed to cross institutional boundaries. I am an insider for the Uttarakhand Forest Department, Project Tiger, the Wildlife Institute of India, and, to a limited extent, the Uttarakhand Tourism Department. My insider's knowledge provided me with easy access to documents and information. Additionally, my connections as an insider enabled me to contact key actors for my research. My past engagements with specific villages, and villagers, provided me with considerable reach with local community leaders.

However, my involvement with the development and promotion of tourism in the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape presented a considerable challenge for my research, because to look critically at this messy field of action also meant interrogating my own role in it. Moreover, being objective created ongoing challenges for me as a researcher. I had studied Botany with specialization in plant molecular biology for my Master’s Degree from the Delhi University. During my graduate education and research, I learned social science and studied how development and tourism schemes worked, changed, and impacted different organizations and individual people over time. My research became even more complex once I decided that my study's subject would focus on the politics of tourism development; this is because I was an important actor and player in these very politics. I am also aware that myself, and what my scholarship produces, will continue to affect both policies and future actions on the ground. How will my results further impact Corbett Tiger Reserve, and potentially other tiger reserves, as well as resident communities? I have thus become drawn into the politics of the Corbett Tiger Reserve practically and academically.

Nothing in tourism in Corbett Tiger Reserve is apolitical! Hence, this project would have been a challenge for any researcher. However, I sought to conduct my research with full
awareness of the limitations and advantages of my past involvement and my position in the forest department hierarchy. In the light of the multiple ways I have been connected to Corbett, I endeavored to be very self-aware and reflexive. More poignantly, I realized I held a manager's perspective and that this influenced my research on Corbett's history, possibly sugar-coating or justifying what I and other managers believed and did in our work. However, there were truly conditions that I was unaware of until commencing this research. The most important examples were the existence of the *panchayat vans* in the buffer area, laws regarding the role of local communities in *van panchayat* and the degree of the tigers' presence in *panchayat vans* (*Panchayat van* refer to the legally demarcated village forests formed for sustainable management and protection of forests and its natural resources whereas *van panchayat* refers to the village forest council or governance institution which the Indian state of Uttarakhand granted authority to as an autonomous local institution for managing these lands under community or village authority).

I also am aware that my perspective on what has happened in the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape as reported in this dissertation is only one viewpoint – mine – and it is strongly informed by my previous training, jobs and experiences over the past decades as well as new filters for interpretation gleaned through my graduate education in conservation and tourism. I strove to include other participants’ voices in my research that conflicted with my position, but clearly, I could not include all viewpoints. Additionally, I plan to present the results to the participants and obtain their feedback. All of these actions would, I hope, increase the rigor and especially the honesty of my research.

I have tried to overcome the limitations of my situation by doing especially three things. Firstly, I chose to use document analysis and maps as the primary data source to minimize subjectivity (though I recognize this still required interpretation as well as which documents I chose to analyze). Secondly, I tried to triangulate with other research methods,
including surveys, focus group discussion and interviews to augment information and enrich validity. Lastly, to test the validity, I did my best to continually share my findings with my research committee, knowledgeable forest officers, and forest staff at various levels of my research for their views. I tried to include the differences in my analysis.

My previous research on the history of Corbett National Park and Jim Corbett represented an unfinished agenda. Except for a thirty-minute documentary film titled, “Corbett’s Legacy”, most of the material generated remains unpublished. I wanted to tie this information together in the form of a book. This desire prompted me to attend graduate school, necessitating that I take three years off from my professional work to dissociate from the field, reflect, learn the literature and theory on these topics and analyze my experiences and the data I collected to make sense of what happened in Corbett Tiger Reserve, hopefully all contained in this dissertation.
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Corbett Tiger Reserve (CTR) as in other protected areas highlight how tourism development can both support and pose challenges for nature conservation and for the well-being of its varied stakeholders. Over the last three decades, Corbett Tiger Reserve and its adjoining landscape have experienced tourism development at an ever-increasing rate. The rapid growth in resort tourism in particular has occurred despite Indian Government policies to promote community-based tourism in tiger reserves. The extent of resort tourism in Corbett Tiger Reserve has been previously documented, including problems it poses for both local communities and tiger conservation (Buckley 2013; Karanth and Karanth 2012; Pandya 2022; Rastogi et al. 2015). However, the role zoning itself played in fostering the creation of tourism zones and the proliferation of enclavic, resort tourism has not been the subject of past research.

Zoning is an inherently spatial phenomenon. As such, it became the focus of this dissertation which initially set out to examine how space was transformed within the Corbett Tiger Reserve since its inception, broadly from 1973 to 2023. Further, since claiming, renaming and regulating space into zones is essentially a political practice, the approach I chose had to engage the politics involved in this transformation. The transformation of space to zones is backed by laws and prior practice, hence this research had to understand how national legislation and policies operated in Corbett Tiger Reserve, especially how areas officially became zones. Since zoning as a process that doesn’t happen all at once, this research sought to learn how these zones were developed over time, including what forces were the triggers for their change. Towards this objective, I have tried to not just understand the official, legal mandates but what actually was occurring in these actual spaces/places.
Throughout, I kept my attention on not just what was happening in the physical landscape, but on underlying assumptions and meanings of different people, policies and practices; an approach known as critical. By this, I mean the data and analyses I employed strove to continually look over and across time and place to ask questions challenging the status quo and conventional wisdom regarding transformations occurring in the Corbett landscape. These questions included who actually benefits from these changes or not. As the research progressed, the main questions began to focus on why and how zoning served as a major force in the transformation of space in Corbett through zoned, land and resource use regulations and especially how zoning practices served to foster enclavic, resort tourism with little attention to community-based tourism, or to local communities that Indian tiger conservation and tourism legislation and policies were supposed to benefit.

**Territorial Approaches to Conservation**

The past decades have witnessed an ongoing (global) debate among scientists, academics, and practitioners regarding what constitutes an appropriate model for conservation. The Conference for the Protection of Flora and Fauna held in London in 1933 provided the first global definition for protected areas and especially agreements on zoning (Stewart 1934). Since the 1960s, the dominant form of conservation around the world has been to establish protected areas to conserve biodiversity, endangered species, and representative ecosystems. The International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) recognizes six categories of protected areas. National Parks (e.g., Corbett National Park) established under India’s Wildlife (Protection) Act of 1972 (WLPA 1972) fall into the IUCN Category Ia, the most restricted category of Protected Area (PA) i.e., strict nature reserves (Lewis 2015). In contrast, Wildlife Sanctuaries (e.g., the Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary in India) fall into Category IV of wildlife and habitat management areas (Lewis...
A third and new category of protected areas in India, namely conservation reserves (e.g., the Pawalgarh Conservation Reserve) falls under IUCN Category VI of protected areas with specific attention to the sustainable use of natural resources (Ghosh-Harihar et al. 2019).

Conflicts between Conservation and Local Communities

As a conservation strategy, creation of strict nature reserves and protected areas are a spatial strategy; they involve “land sparing” rather than “land sharing.” The first refers to setting space aside for strictly nature conservation while the second sees conservation able to function on the same space with integrating human use into conservation. Conservation via the land sparing/protected area approach excludes most human resource uses and development. Such an approach is based on the assumption that natural resource extraction related human activity is harmful for conservation and by removing these activities and protecting the land from people, nature can be restored and maintained (Brockington 2002; Kabra 2019; Neumann 2004; Peluso 1993). Those favoring the land sharing approach disagree. The disagreement tends to be along two lines: for social/environmental justice and for ecological/conservation reasons.

The social/environmental justice critique of strict, protectionist approaches to conservation upholds that the two most restricted types of protected areas, nature reserves and national parks, should be critiqued as “fortress conservation” and “coercing conservation” (Brockington 2002; Peluso 1993). Salafsky and Wollenberg (2000) while outlining various positions on the linkages between rural livelihoods and conservation, argue that the strict protected areas approach require that people need to be kept separate from the ‘natural’ habitats within protected areas. Despite generations of use and management, these types of conservation entail “injustice and inefficacy” on indigenous people and communities, especially for forcibly ejecting/removing them from lands and resources they hold
generation-long customary rights to, or even if permitted to remain, to prohibiting them from continuing to practice historic livelihoods and community-based social and governance institutions (Belsky 1999; Kabra 2022). Peluso and Lund (2011) see these restrictive protected areas as a definitive form of land control utilizing enclosures that restrict resource access like a physical fence demarcates and controls space. As such, many see an inherent conflict between the conservation of ecosystems/threatened species in strict protected areas and the rights/economic interests of the local populations who live in and around these areas (Barry 2022; Bosak 2008; Uddhammar 2006).

The second set of reasons are ecological. Scholars have argued that some historic livelihoods (such as swidden) entailed deep knowledge by its practitioners of ecosystem processes and conditions enabling natural resources under their control to be used and managed equitably and sustainably over generations (Siebert and Belsky 2014). Continuing with the swidden example, disturbances created by this form of rotational forest-farming have been argued to produce early vegetation succession favored by prey that tigers and other carnivores need to survive (Namgyel et al. 2008; Siebert and Belsky 2014). Strict protected areas and reserves are increasingly critiqued for failing to recognize the value of some human activities for actually creating and maintaining conditions for target species (Barry 2022). The critique is extended to lost opportunities for building conservation upon the traditional knowledge, nature-based livelihood practices and customary governance institutions of these local communities (Siebert and Belsky 1994, 2014). If the latter were to be followed, both social/environmental and ecological factors could possibly be addressed. Tigers have been found to coexist with humans at fine spatial scales (Carter et al. 2012).

The role tourism plays in conservation and development has furthered exacerbated people-park conflicts. Many protected areas depend on tourist visits for their political/social relevance and funding (Eagles 2014). Perhaps not surprisingly, then, they privilege outsiders’
profit and pleasures over residents’ livelihood and cultural survival (the latter ironically even when tourism emphasizes heritage and cultural tourism). Striking the right balance between making tourism profitable and conservation viable emerge for many as a big challenge. “They [protected areas] almost certainly must forge links with tourism, yet not be dominated by tourism’s demands (Eagles 2014, 544).” Greater priority to tourism over local economic and cultural self-determinism and development has led to conflicts between tourism and local people.

**Tiger Conservation**

Tiger-centric conservation is a particular type of conservation concern in protected area, and one with intense global attention and concern (Lewis 2015; Yumnam et al. 2014). Tiger conservation has been both highly praised for its success (Jhala et al. 2021) as well as deeply criticized for its social and political impacts (Simlai 2022). The fraught relationship between tiger conservation and local people is related to its colonial, top-down and restrictive approach (Read 2016). Tiger conservation in India largely follows the colonial forestry model by ignoring historic local property rights and privileging the nation-state’s (herein the state) interests. It uses the modern legal system to remake property rights and in so doing delegitimizes local relational mechanisms of access to and control over natural resources. Read (2016, 142) postulated that “where local communities are concerned, tiger conservation remains focused on short-term, proximate challenges that delegitimize local authority by relying solely on state-driven solutions, ultimately undermining long-term conservation goals.” Read (2016, 143) stated that “strategies that conservationists propose all largely rely on state authority to enforce property rights as a means to control access.” As such, he concludes:
“By focusing on the proximate sources of tension between tiger conservation and local people (i.e., human–tiger conflict, habitat degradation, and prey depletion), these programs have reinforced the ultimate causes of such tension: the structural inequalities that exists between local people and state organizations.”

Towards Reconciling Conflicts in Tiger Conservation

Various “new” approaches to conservation including tiger conservation have been pursued in attempts to better integrate ecological and social objectives, especially pertaining to local community interests and livelihoods. Chief among such approaches is ecotourism. The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) defines ecotourism as “responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of local people and involves interpretation and education” (TIES 2015). Campbell et al. (2008) point out that even though tourism in parks and protected areas was taking place long before the term ‘ecotourism’ was coined, ecotourism does not require the existence of protected areas (Campbell et al. 2008). The Government of India and the Government of Uttarakhand adopted a vision of promoting/implementing ecotourism and specifically community-based tourism, for reconciling conservation and development. Ecotourism following a community-based approach in tiger reserves was meant to be a key means to conserve tigers in India.

Project Tiger, launched in 1973, established a network of tiger reserves in India (Panwar 1982). Following a legislative amendment, the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) was established in 2006 as India’s statutory body for regulating and funding the management of tiger reserves. In 2012, NTCA issued “Guidelines for Tourism in and around Tiger Reserves” that recognize the potential of ecotourism “to enhance public awareness, education and wildlife conservation, while providing nature compatible local livelihoods and greater incomes” (NTCA 2012, 106). The NTCA Tourism Guidelines further
propose that, given India's conditions, “ecotourism includes tourism that is community based and community driven” (NTCA 2012, 106). The NTCA Guidelines laid down the framework for the creation of tourism and ecotourism zones in tiger reserves.

Any type of tourism, but especially resort tourism, may upset some imagined goal of balance between conservation and economic benefits. These are often in conflict. Engaging in tourism often shifts conservation programs and their concerns to be less important than economic performance, output and profitability. As noted by Reynolds and Braithwaite 2001, 32: “Values of conservation, animal welfare, visitor satisfaction and profitability are often in conflict in wildlife tourism and tradeoffs are necessary.” But how to identify and pursue appropriate tradeoffs?

Community-based conservation (CBC) has been promoted as one possible alternate to strict protectionist, top-down led conservation by providing an opportunity for greater flexibility in resource use, community participation and benefits in conservation (Dressler et al. 2010). Within community-based conservation, community-based tourism (CBT) has been imagined as a means to alleviate poverty, provide alternative livelihoods, offset costs of protected areas, and generate incentives (by giving ‘value’) to the conservation of natural areas (Yanes et al. 2019; Zielinski et al. 2020). Community-based ecotourism (CBET) in particular has been promoted as a win-win strategy for providing financial benefits to local communities that can act as incentives for conservation (Stone 2015; Sène-Harper and Séye 2019). Even without the label of ecotourism, some forms of community tourism emphasize a role for conservation. Hiwasaki (2006, 677) defined community-based tourism objectives in the following manner:

“Increasing local community empowerment and ownership through participation in the planning and management of tourism in protected areas;

having a positive impact on conservation of natural and/or cultural resources
in and around protected areas through tourism; enhancing or maintaining economic and social activities in and around a protected area, with substantial benefits—economic and social—to the local community; and ensuring that visitor experience is of high quality and is socially and environmentally responsible.”

Just as tourism and ecotourism require (physical) space to be set aside in protected areas for tourism activities to occur, community-based approaches also require designated and regulated space, and in this case spaces with authority delegated to the communities themselves. Many community-based tourism projects require the creation of new territories because historic community-based regimes have been destroyed or ignored because of modern nation-state rules and laws – be it within or outside protected areas – and in some cases because they never existed. The rise of community-based tourism in places without historic community-based governance institutions and traditions of collective action can be difficult (Belsky 1999). But in all cases, they reshape property and property relations (Bluwstein 2017).

Both community-based tourism and community-based ecotourism have their own set of challenges. Community-based tourism and ecotourism models assume that land is in the form of pristine nature as in never been used, and that it is available for tourists' activities (Bluwstein 2017). Furthermore, these models also assume that local communities have power over tourism development, which is not true because either the state or some other governing body such as a non-governmental agency (NGO), or partnership between an NGO and agents of the nation-state, retain that authority. Also, and very importantly, that the distribution of power and livelihood trajectories within communities are never homogeneous despite the representation by outsiders of such communities as small, ethnically and economically similar and with shared vision (Belsky 1999). Even small, rural communities contain
populations characterized by differences across class, caste, ethnic, gender and other lines (including their intersections) that defy assumptions that they are in consensus, such as about their livelihoods, use and management of natural resources, in addition to other important considerations concerning property rights, geographic marginality, lack of markets and other impediments to “development.” Furthermore, ties (or factions) within communities can be politically tied to interests outside, even ranging to national level politics, and influence conservation programs at the community level profoundly (Belsky 1999; Campbell et al., 2008). These conditions suggest some of the difficulties in bridging the imagined community and idealized community-based (eco) tourism model with realities on the ground, and the dream of reconciling tourism development with conservation and community-wide equitable and sustainable livelihoods.

**Wildlife and Tourism Zoning in Corbett Tiger Reserve**

Corbett Tiger Reserve is India’s flagship tiger reserve. The results of the All India Tiger Monitoring exercise, conducted once in four years, revealed that Corbett Tiger Reserve has the largest tiger population in any protected area in the world (Jhala et al. 2020). The results also showed that Corbett Tiger Reserve along with Ramnagar Forest Division and the Pawalgarh Conservation Reserve has one of the highest tiger densities in the world (Bisht et al. 2019). Zoning was adopted as a principal strategy and a technique in management of protected areas to overcome many of these conflicts (Linnel et al. 2005). In order to avoid conflict in the strictest protected area management categories, the model assumes that interests of communities and conservation can be reconciled by allocating space in the form of buffer zones and other types of zones outside protected areas (Ebregt and de Greve 2000). It further assumes that the impacts of visitation within protected areas can be minimized by
confining visitor use to tourism zones, regulating access and involving all stakeholders in the planning process (Eagles et al. 2002; World Bank 2020).

The role of claiming, legalizing and partitioning space – including what can or cannot be done in those distinct spaces – is an important arena for critical examination in Corbett Tiger Reserve (and other PAs in this category, for that matter). Why? Because India’s tiger reserves followed the fortress conservation model by following the core/buffer zoning and confining area under tourism zones to one-fifth of the total core or critical tiger habitat and restricting all tourism activities to within tourism zones.

Wildlife zoning was enacted to reconcile conservation and associated tourism development, and community livelihoods within Corbett Tiger Reserve, located in Uttarakhand in India. Tourism in and around tiger reserves, such as Corbett Tiger Reserve, is regulated by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) Guidelines for Tourism (NTCA 2012). However, during the last three decades, large-scale and unplanned tourism development in the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape has grown considerably, adversely impacting local communities (Pandya 2022; Rastogi et al. 2015). The increase in popularity of Corbett Tiger Reserve has caused excessive growth of resorts on the periphery of the reserves, degenerating the landscape into “a playground for resort tourism (Cohen 2012,198).” Resort tourism development also has proved detrimental to tiger movement by blocking crucial ecological corridors (Buckley 2012; Karanth and Karanth 2012). But how has the proliferation of resort tourism influenced ecotourism and community-based tourism including local community livelihoods and conservation, including what role has zoning played in these transitions?

To understand how I sought to answer these questions, including the organization of this thesis, some historical background is required. Corbett Tiger Reserve was born as Hailey National Park later renamed as Corbett National Park. The Corbett National Park evolved
into the present day Corbett Tiger Reserve through a long and tumultuous process. To orient
the reader, I first provide in Table 1 a summary of the major events in over a century old
history of conservation in the area that is today Corbett Tiger Reserve. The Corbett National
Park was designated as Corbett Tiger Reserve under the Project Tiger in 1973. Corbett Tiger
Reserve will complete 50 years of its existence on 1st April, 2023. Wildlife zoning of
core/buffer areas through wildlife management plans was introduced in Corbett Tiger
Reserve as per the Project Tiger Guidelines. The understanding of core/buffer zones in tiger
reserves has evolved over time and these changes in understanding have been reflected in
legislation and policies. Zoning within Corbett Tiger Reserve too has evolved along with the
changes in understanding and legislation, from being a land management decision for the
forest department to increasingly stricter regulation of uses. To enable the reader to
understand this process and for my analysis I divide the evolution in wildlife zoning of
Corbett Tiger Reserve during the last five decade in three distinct phases based on (a) the
changes in the area of Corbett Tiger Reserve, (b) the legal provisions and (c) the principles
adopted for zoning of core/buffer areas.

**Phase I:** refers to the period 1973-1990 of the Corbett Tiger Reserve. This is the period
when the Wildlife Protection Act 1972 was enacted and the area under Corbett Tiger Reserve
remained the same as that of Corbett National Park. It is also the period when the core/buffer
zone was first introduced under Project Tiger. During this period, wildlife zoning was more
of a land management policy of the forest department to regulate its own activities within the
Corbett National Park/Corbett Tiger Reserve with a core area or sanctum sanctorum.

**Phase II:** refers to the period 1991-2005. This is the period when Amendments in the
Wildlife Protection Act 1972 led to prohibition of most activities in wildlife sanctuaries.
During this period, new areas were added to Corbett Tiger Reserve. This included adding the Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary and reserved forests to create a large buffer area, and the entire Corbett National Park was designated as the core area.

**Phase III:** refers to the period 2006 to present. This is the time when the Wildlife (Protection Act) Amendment Act 2006 led to legal definitions of the tiger reserve core and buffer area. During this period the area of Corbett Tiger Reserve remained unchanged. Nevertheless, the zones acquired a legal basis; and the Corbett National Park and Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary were both legally notified as the ‘inviolate’ core area or the critical tiger habitat. Table 2 summarizes the three phases in the development of the Corbett Tiger Reserve.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>List of Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>Kalagarh Forest Division (FD) formed by the colonial administration.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>Government of United Province notified rights and concessions of villagers in the Kalagarh Forest Division.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>International Conference for the Preservation of Fauna and Flora held in London.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>Hunting in shooting blocks proposed to be developed as national park stopped.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>Government of United Province notified ‘United Province National Park’ Act. India’s first National Park with an area of 323.75 km² carved out of Kalagarh Forest Division and Ramnagar Forest Division.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>Rules of Hailey National Park came into force on August 8, 1936.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Hailey National Park renamed as Corbett National Park (CNP).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>Government of Uttar Pradesh (formerly United Provinces) increased area of Corbett National Park to its present area (520.84 km²).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>Hunting of tigers stopped throughout India.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>Project Tiger launched by Govt. of India. Corbett National Park becomes Corbett Tiger Reserve. Tiger declared as India’s national animal replacing lions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Government of Uttar Pradesh notified Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary (301.18 km²).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Entire Kalagarh Forest Division, including Sonanadi Sanctuary, and parts of Ramnagar Forest Division and Terai West Forest Division added to Corbett Tiger Reserve as buffer area; CTR area increases to 1318.54 km².</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Uttarakhand was formed as a new state by bifurcation of Uttar Pradesh. Part area of CTR (30.23 km²) transferred to the adjoining state of Uttar Pradesh. Total area of CTR reduced to 1288.31 km².</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Laldhang village relocated outside CTR buffer area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Tiger Task Force submits its report to Govt. of India.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Government of India constitutes National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- First All India Tiger Assessment initiated by Wildlife Institute of India using camera trap methodology.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- NTCA issued Guidelines for “Tiger Conservation Foundation” and “Guidelines for Preparation of Tiger Conservation Plans”.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Government of Uttarakhand notified CTR Core and Buffer Areas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>NTCA issues “Guidelines for Tourism in and around Tiger Reserves” and “Guidelines for establishment of Tiger Safaris”.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Government of Uttarakhand notified Pawalgarh Conservation Reserve (58.25 km²) in Ramnagar Forest Division.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Uttar Pradesh government notified Amangarh Tiger Reserve (95 km²).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Government of Uttarakhand bans land use change in 46 chaks (enclaves) located within CTR buffer area and within 2 km of boundary of CTR.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>181 nomadic Gujjar families relocated from Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary to Haridwar district.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Corbett Tiger Reserve, ‘Tiger Conservation Plan’ approved by NTCA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>NTCA issued supplementary guidelines for establishing tiger safaris.</td>
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### Table 2. Three Phases in the Wildlife Zoning of Corbett Tiger Reserve

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. Area of Corbett Tiger Reserve</td>
<td>Corbett Tiger Reserve and Corbett National Park synonymous, 520.84 sq kms.</td>
<td>Increased in 1991 to 1318.54 sq kms. Reduced in 2000 to present area of 1288.31 sq kms.</td>
<td>No change in area, remains at 1288.31 sq kms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Basis of core/buffer zoning</td>
<td>Introduction of core/buffer zoning as a land management decision within the Corbett National Park boundary.</td>
<td>Multi use buffer area outside the Corbett National Park boundary for protection, conflict resolution and participation.</td>
<td>Legal notification of core/buffer areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Core Area</td>
<td>Part area of Corbett National Park as a sanctum sanctorum where forestry operations were stopped.</td>
<td>Entire Corbett National Park with a sanctum sanctorum where tourism activities were prohibited.</td>
<td>Corbett National Park &amp; Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary notified as “inviolate” core area.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Territories and Territorialization**

The process of setting aside or allocating space for conservation and tourism creates territories (Neumann 2004). Territories are bounded spaces where human activities are regulated, the key question being regulated by whom and for whose benefit or loss; and they exist within different scales including nested scales (Bluwstein 2017). Space is conceived,
perceived, and lived differently from the perspectives of different interest groups. In this light, so called “protected areas” in conservation models (while organized through prototype and attendant global discourses) are the territory of nation-states, bounded, claimed, and closely regulated by agents of that particular nation-state following that state’s laws. There are also territories developed within territories; within and beyond protected areas. For example, private resorts make their own territories in the form of private enclavic spaces (Sidaway 2007). Communities have their own territories in the form of private land, community land, and village forests, (Bluwstein 2017). In Uttarakhand, community forests are known as panchayat van. The model for panchayat van comes from the past when common lands were claimed, used and managed under (local) customary laws and traditions, but in modern times have been remade and enforced under the guidance of non-governmental agencies and nation-state authorities (Agrawal 2001).

The concept of territory, then, brings together space and power. Territories, as with property, are a reflection of power and a reflection of values. If the agent creating the territories is different than those who live and work there, there is a potential for conflict (Basset and Gautier 2014; Bluwstein 2017). The development of protected areas (representing one type of territory) as we will see later is a highly contested process (Neumann 2004). As noted above, protected areas are influenced by (global) IUCN models and nation-state cultures and interests. They reflect a set of assumptions (separation of nature/people in strict categories, some integration possible in other categories) which are different than those of people who have historically used and/or resided in those places, or who seek to make tourist places out of them as well (Robbins 2019; Brockington 2012). While zones within protected areas, let alone creating and calling some place a “protected area” itself, are rife with understandings and potential conflicts regarding the “right” way to
do “conservation” let alone how to live, make a living, or get along with others in multiple use areas such as buffer zones (Neumann 1997).

Firstly, I use the concept of internal territorialization to analyze the development of wildlife core/buffer zones in Corbett Tiger Reserve: how boundaries were set, how rights were affected, and how the spaces are used within CTR. The official documents related to Corbett Tiger Reserve were analyzed along with the data from the focus group discussions and interviews to reveal how the tiger conservation discourse is utilized and community needs are met within the buffer area. I analyzed the findings from the survey on van panchayat to understand how the panchayat van are addressed in the territorialization process. I also analyzed results of this survey to assess how community rights were affected by stopping angling and the forest department's implementation of the Ramganga Mahaseer Conservation Project in the buffer zone of Corbett Tiger Reserve to benefit eight villages.

Secondly, I use the political economy conceptual framework of reterritorialization to look at the processes by which zoning for tourism has been accomplished in Corbett Tiger Reserve. In political ecology theory reterritorialization has been defined as “a redefinition of territory that can displace resource users and enable others to benefit from newly created economic values (Barry 2022, 9).” Reterritorialization describes a redefinition of the purpose of the land and land use that determines which activities are appropriate, and shapes who will benefit from permitted uses. Reterritorialization creates a form of capital accumulation where new sources of funding flow to third parties. Reterritorialization as a process leads to “intense forms of physical and social displacement of people and practices and the subsequent capturing of such places by capital, state, or hegemonic interests (Vasavi 2020, 431).” The concept has been applied to tiger conservation. For example, Vasavi (2020, 434) writes that, "Tiger has become an icon in conservationism, the reterritorialization of forests, and the reordering of human-animal relationships.” The conceptual framework of reterritorialization
applied here is used not only in its original sense of territorialization (claiming lands, prioritizing one set of interests - tigers over people) but in the analyses of the financial benefits from the tourism zone formation within the Corbett Tiger Reserve and its relationship to the private resort development.

Lastly, I use the concept of enclavization to look at the relationship between tourism zone formation and resort development. Resort tourism refers to the large scale, standardized package tours in popular resort destinations. Such development is often backed by high capital investment with non-local control (Britton 1982). Community-based tourism, on the other hand is opposite to resort tourism as it refers to dispersed, small scale enterprise run by and for some denoted community (usually defined by shared residence and collective governance). This form of tourism requires less financial investment and has greater local authority and ideally ownership. The two forms of tourism differ not in their character and actors, but also of their spatial requirements. Resort tourism generates enclavistic spaces where there is separation of tourists from local residents to maximize capturing of benefits (Saarinen 2017; Saarinen and Wall-Reinius 2019), while community-based tourism requires heterogeneous spaces where tourists intermingle with residents and there is shared use of space and local infrastructure (Edensor 2001). In community-based tourism, the livelihood practices of communities including agriculture and livestock rearing and their traditional historical relationship with nature is maintained and supplemented by income generated by tourism.

**Research Questions**

This research seeks to deepen our understanding of what transpired in Corbett Tiger Reserve using a critical geographical/political ecology lens (discussed in more detail in both the literature review and methodology chapters). It sought to understand the pathways to
achieving tiger conservation while enabling tourism development, the considerable tensions produced in the process, and especially the central role played by zoning. A key concern of this research was how did tourism resorts come to dominate the landscape, and why community-based tourism projects, advocated by Indian policies and legislations, were not able to take off and be sustained?

While this research is focused on Corbett Tiger Reserve in India with its unique laws, histories and actors, I hope that the conceptual framework and the processes uncovered here contribute to a more critical understanding of zoning and its impacts in a protected area (including unintended ones). I also hope it contributes to a broader understanding of how resort tourism in and around protected areas (and especially tiger reserves) can overtake community-based tourism and gravely limit approaches to conservation. The question remains why and how did this happen, as well as what are the implications of this transformation for different actors: resource managers, conservationists, tourists, local residents, and of course, tigers? My study does not attempt to answer this last question for all of these actors.

As I became familiar with the critical conservation literature, I realized that concepts from the critical geographical/political ecology literature notably territorialization (and reterritorialization) could help to better frame and guide the research to answer the questions I was posing in my research. Critical thinking entails going beyond the instrumental or practical level by asking about assumptions and socio-political structures underlying how larger conditions were conceived and designed. Similarly, critical analysis requires looking at what dominant actors and policies say explicitly and implicitly, understanding how key institutions prescribe practices, and deciphering how power and knowledge intersect. While seeking to provide a critical analysis, I also have kept my eye on the implementation and managerial dimensions of zoning and its implementation in tiger reserves to a lesser extent. I
do this while recognizing the limits to technological fixes without addressing underlying socio-political conditions; my hope is that this research provides a means to better understand the politics of zoning and its impacts while also attending to the other practical constraints that they pose. Both demand scrutiny and attention.

With above in mind, my key research questions are the following: (a) How has zoning been conceived and implemented over time in Corbett Tiger Reserve? (b) How have the major zones and their allocated spaces and regulated uses - core, buffer and especially tourism zones – changed over time and across space? (c) What are the impacts of the proliferation of resort tourism in the CTR landscape, especially on other forms of tourism notably community-based tourism?

Road Map

My dissertation is composed of eight chapters. In this first Introduction chapter, I introduce the background and significance of the research and major research questions.

In the following second chapter, Literature Review, I review relevant literature especially related to zoning. I draw the literature from diverse academic fields: from geography, political ecology of protected areas and tourism studies. The literature review is helpful for noting the distinction between proponents of zoning from a managerial standpoint versus those that take a more critical geography/political ecology perspective. The latter identify underlying assumptions and especially politics on the ideas and practice of zoning. I also define and explain key concepts I found to be most useful for my examination of zoning and its impacts in Corbett. The chapter ends with a discussion of the conceptual framework I adopted for the study, which importantly incorporates the following three key concepts: territorialization, reterritorialization, and enclavization.
In the third chapter, *Research Methodology and Methods*, I present the rationale for the research approach and adopted methodology, a qualitative critical case study, and the specific methods and procedures I used for data collection and analysis. These include document analysis, focus group discussions, semi-structured interviews, and survey of *van panchayat*. I also present some of the limitations of my research.

The fourth chapter presents the history and social-ecological context of Corbett Tiger Reserve, my study site. I describe how the landscape was divided in the Kalagarh and Ramnagar Forest Divisions from which the Corbett Tiger Reserve emerged and what activities were permitted during British colonial rule. I describe the emergence of Hailey National Park as India’s first national park and its evolution after India gained independence as Corbett National Park, and changes thereafter until the early nineteen seventies.

The fifth through the seventh chapters present my major findings. Together, these three chapters examine the rise and impacts of zoning in Corbett in three phases, especially tourism zoning. The fifth chapter traces the Phase I (1973–1990) on the early development of Corbett Tiger Reserve when zoning was first introduced as a strategy in tiger reserves and Corbett National Park was remade into Corbett Tiger Reserve.

The sixth chapter traces the Phase II (1991–2005) of Corbett Tiger Reserve. In this chapter I discuss the development of a buffer area outside the (core) boundary of Corbett National Park and the first tourism zones. I look at how private resorts emerged on the landscape and the initial efforts made towards community-based tourism (CBT). I also trace the operation and especially challenges of specific CBT projects in the Corbett buffer area in the wider landscape (i.e., . the Ramganga Mahaseer Conservation Project and experience of Camp Kyari in Kyari village in Ramnagar Forest Division).

The seventh chapter traces the final Phase III (2006-2023) bringing the examination up to the present day. Chapter seven is divided into two parts. In Part A I present a detailed
analysis of the Wildlife Protection (Amendment) Act 2006. This legislation and associated policy documents govern tourism development in tiger reserves in India. I examine how these laws and policy set conditions for tourism development in tiger reserves and the role tiger conservation discourse plays in this process. I analyze what the documents also say about tourism zones, private resorts around tiger reserves, and community-based tourism. In Part B of chapter seven, I discuss the implications of Wildlife Protection (Amendment) Act 2006 and resultant policies in Corbett. I show how the legal designation of core/buffer area zoning and operationalization of the NTCA Guidelines for Tourism 2012 led to development of tourism zones within Corbett Tiger Reserve. I discuss their relationship with resort development and community-based tourism outside the tiger reserves. This section highlights how tourism development had come to be centered around resorts clustered in districts, or enclaves, with little or no advances in community-based conservation. A significant finding discussed in this section is a lack of recognition of panchayat van (or community forests) in the landscape. The section ends with a discussion on how the findings relate to the formation of tourism zones as reterritorialization and enclavization for tourism development.

In the final eighth chapter of my dissertation, Conclusion, I summarize and discuss the key findings of the research, highlighting their contribution to various literature and debates on zoning and tourism in protected areas, especially tiger reserve. I end the dissertation with some ideas for future research, noting both those for a more critical understanding of the politics of zoning and their impacts as well as practical implications for improving tiger reserve management more generally.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter summarizes research in protected areas through territorial approaches, notably through zoning. I focus on territorial strategies because this approach is particularly relevant to understanding how space has been conceptualized, allocated and especially zoned in Corbett Tiger Reserve, notably into core, buffer, and tourism zones. I review literature related to territorial approaches generally, and to zoning in particular, as a means to develop a theoretical and methodological approach to examine the practices followed in Corbett Tiger Reserve, and especially on what have become the legal, authorized uses of that space, and the dynamics regarding how different people and communities think about and actually use these spaces in real life. Importantly territorial approaches help to uncover the various underlying politics entailed in reterritorializing the landscape for mass tourism development, and who this benefits or not. With regard to the latter, the political ecology of protected area literature more broadly has been very useful to understand how local communities have been further marginalized because of zoning and, in the case of Corbett Tiger Reserve, through the development of tourism zones enabling mass tourism.

There is a substantial amount of literature on zoning in protected areas, such as national parks, biosphere reserves, world heritage sites and wilderness areas (Geneletti and Duren 2008; Job, Becken and Lane 2017; Hass et al. 1987; Herera-Montes 2018; Hull et al. 2011; Kraus, Merlin and Job 2014; Shen et al 2019; Thede, Haider and Rutherford 2014; Xu et al. 2016). Buffer zone management in protected areas in particular has been a focus of sustained research (Ahmad et al. 2012; Dhakal and Thapa 2015; Ebregt and de Greve 2000; Hart 1966; Lamichhane et al. 2019; Martino 2001; Oldfield 1988; Sayer 1991; Shafer 1999;
Zoning practices have also been evaluated with reference to the conservation needs of the large carnivores (Larson 2008, Linnel et al. 2005). Zoning, more broadly, is an important subject of studies in tourism and sustainable tourism (Drumm et al. 2005; Eagles et al. 2002; Leung et al. 2018; Mason 2012; World Bank 2020). Territorial units in protected areas such as core/buffer zones and tourism spaces (e.g., tourism zones, resort enclaves, and community-based tourism) are produced through processes of legal designations, planning and management practices on the ground what scholars refer to as territorialization and reterritorialization (Adams, Hodge and Sandbrook 2013; Bluwstein, 2017).

Zoning of forest areas as a territory making activity leading to internal territorialization has been a subject of study for a long time (Vandergeest and Peluso 1995; Peluso and Lund 2011). Similarly the process of producing protected areas as enclosures and their variable impacts also have a long, detailed research history (Brockington, Duffy and Igoe 2012; Botteron, 2001; Corson 2011; Kelly 2013; Neumann 1997; Rai et al. 2019; Robbins 2019). A particularly recent and thorough study on the processes of territorialization and reterritorializing in protected areas is found in Barry (2022), as well as a discussion of protected areas as enclaves (Kroeker-Maus 2014). However, these research studies tend to focus on an analysis of forests for understanding zoning in forested protected areas. In contrast, my research builds on this foundation but is focused on understanding the specifics of core/buffer zoning model in protected areas for large carnivore conservation. My argument is that zoning as a technique and practice has political and social impacts that are in addition to and different from the protected area itself.

I first review the concept of territorialization because it has been crucial to explaining allocation/control of space, especially by nation-states, and which has led ultimately to
Territorialization, Protected Areas and Dispossession

Territory is a type of physical space. Territories are “discrete, distinctive, bounded, measurable, communicable spaces that are deliberately created in an effort to achieve certain social goals (Murphy 2012, 164).” Territories are “spaces that are defended, contested, claimed against the claims of others (Cox 2008, 1).” Claims to and control of territory lead to complex ways in which power is expressed, legitimated and maintained (Hipwell 2007). Control of territories in a given landscape and protected area leads to power and certain benefits.

Territoriality, on the other hand, is the act of claiming and maintaining the territory through the deployment of territorial strategies. One of the earliest definitions of territoriality was provided by Sack (1986, 19) who defined it as “an attempt by an individual or a group to affect, influence or control people, phenomenon and relationships by delimiting and asserting control over a geographical area.” Sack (1986) argued that territoriality is geographically and socially rooted, as opposed to an individual and adaptive behavior. Territoriality is “the activity of defending, controlling, excluding, including (Cox 2008, 1).” The concept of territoriality is significant as it brings together the ideas of space and power – as in protected areas and tiger reserves through government regulations, plans and practices. Power dynamics are difficult to see and measure, but the territorial control of space can provide a tool to comprehend power – such as how resource access and use changes within a protected area over time, or tourism development occurs in a landscape.

Having described territory and territoriality, I now describe territorialization. Territorialization refers to specific territorial projects in which various actors deploy further application of territorial processes such as to zoning. I end by discussing literature on zoning and conclude with my conceptual framework.
territorial strategies (territoriality) to produce bounded and controlled spaces (territory) to achieve certain effects. A common goal of territorialization is to govern people and resources located within and around the territory (Scott 1998). Territorialization works through prescribing and proscribing certain activities that affect resource access, control, and management and lead to bordering for exclusion and inclusion. Territorialization is about deploying power to control space. Control of space in protected areas and how resources are used is a classic example of elite power usurping space and justifying their material seizure through the discourse of “saving nature” (Rutherford 2007). Describing how this control is achieved through the process of territorialization, authors state that, “This socio-spatial reconfiguration is typically achieved by establishing new laws, regulations, and authorities that alter human-environmental relationships (Bassett and Gautier 2014, 2).”

Territorialization then is a concept that is helpful for uncovering how powerful people and organizations use it to control space, such as a tiger habitat or tourism places.

The term territorialization in the context of conservation has been used to refer to the demarcation and mapping inherent in the creation of protected areas (Adam, Hodge and Sandbrook 2013). The conceptual framework of “internal territorialization” first provided by Vandergeest and Peluso (1995) has been widely used in the studies on protected areas and in conservation. As opposed to the nation-states' international boundaries, internal territorialization is the contested process by which a state institution “establishes control over natural resources and the people who use them (Vandergeest & Peluso 1995, 385).” The three key components of internal territorialization are – “mapping boundaries, establishing and enforcing new rights, and determining acceptable resource uses (Corson 2011, 705).”

Nation-states have by definition a predominant role in maintaining territories. In and of itself, nation-states are an expression of territorial power over an area it claims jurisdiction. The nation-state then has the recognized, legitimate authority (as well as military, legal and
other powers to back up its authority) to determine and defend boundaries, and it can influence (through the real threat of arrest and seizure) peoples’ movement and actions within any part of its jurisdiction. The state acts “as a means of regulating space relations, as vehicle for exclusionary and inclusionary policies (Cox 2008, 8).” In trying to understand space as territory, therefore, understanding the role of the state is crucial.

The powers of state agencies, private firms, and markets in making territories are relative. This depends in large part on the particular state context, configurations and particular historical time period. The relationship between territorialization and the state is socially mediated. This means that it depends on relationships between different people (again in particular places, times) to understand if or why particular people within each jurisdiction are willing or not to go with official rules (i.e., how to get such conformity). Therefore, along with the state's role, understanding real social relationships and processes is equally imperative.

Bassett and Gautier (2014) provide great insight into territorialization, especially that territorial strategies are not confined to the state. They explain that firstly, territory making can come from everyday people as well as from elites. For example, many protected areas have been established though the efforts of individuals, scientists or non-governmental organizations. Similarly, sacred forests are an example of a territorial unit established and maintained through generations of community-based customary rules, institutions and practices. Secondly, motivations for territory making are as varied as the range of actors. Territorialization may be carried out not just for conservation, but for economic production or to establish monopolies. Thirdly, who succeeds where depends on the power relations and negotiations. Power may reside in centralized state authorities or “territorial alliances” composed of a variety of actors located in a diversity of social, institutional and geographical locations. Fourthly and lastly, all territorial projects have both “winners and losers” (Bassett
and Gautier, 2014, 6). This makes the concept particularly useful for examining zoning practices in tiger reserves to analyze the relative impacts of zoning on for example, the mass tourism industry and/or local communities.

Various actors struggle to protect their territories. “The politics of territory making (and remaking) have always been marked by conflict including violence” between those who use resources locally, the state, and international environmental organizations (Bassett and Gautier 2014, 4). Conflicts over territory occur because people have interests in areas and resources across landscapes that are not always recognized nor respected by states (and/or their bureaucracies) as they make and remake attempts at state-controlled entities. The situation and perspectives of those who reorganize the space and those affected by it are often different and hence in conflict (Scott 1998). Therefore, the contested circumstances and viewpoints need to be thoroughly examined to understand the politics of remaking of landscapes. “What is a territorial strategy for some is a threat to the territorial strategies for others (Cox 2008, 6).” For example, in one process of territorialization, state actors encounter pre-existing resource claimants who defend what they perceive as their legitimate rights to resources. In regards to the conflictual nature of territorialization across space and time, Gatrell and Collins-Kreiner (2006) explain:

“The socio spatial dialectic asserts the materiality of everyday life on the ground and in place seldom meets the idealized expectations of planners, public officials and global capital. The result is some form of conflict to one degree or another between the various actors seeking to realize their own individual and group objectives (767).”

Such conflicts contribute to deterritorialization and reterritorialization of contested spaces. As opposed to territorialization, deterritorialization is the erasure of territoriality of one group or individual by another group or individual (Hipwell 2007). The erasure need not
be undertaken just physically; it may be conducted legally, discursively, militarily, psychologically, culturally, or linguistically (Hipwell 2007). As a result of deterritorialization, the differences of distance, local characteristics, and national context between territories begin to lose relative significance for the agents of the network within that space. Tourism scholars may recognize this as the globalization, commodification, and homogenization of tourism destinations. Territorialization can lead to dispossession, we see this done in the name of not only nation-state building but conservation and protected areas (Fairhead, Leach and Scoones 2012; Peluso 2011; Rai et al 2019). But territorial strategies don’t end there. As implied above, indigenous people may resist and pursue their own forms of counter reterritorialization to reassert their territorial claims and history. We can understand the enterprise of community-based conservation, and especially community forests, as a tactic to regain legal rights to resources once under community control; or for other groups to use the discourse of community-based conservation to gain new resource rights (Brosius and Russel 2003). However, in such instances where the state feels its hegemony over resources threatened, and/or an actual decrease in their control over territory, they may respond with reterritorialization of contested spaces to regain and/or expand control leading to enclavization and uneven development (Sidaway 2007).

**Reterritorialization, Protected Areas and Tourism Development**

The concept of reterritorialization has been used widely both in the fields of conservation (Adams, Hodge and Sandbrook 2013; Barry 2022; Hipwell, 2007) and tourism (Bluwstein 2017; Hazbun, 2004; Xie 2015). In the context of protected areas, reterritorialization has been used to analyze land use conflicts (Barry 2022) and spatial claims for conservation (Adam, Hodge and Sandbrook 2013). Reterritorialization has been implicated in tourism development in the changes in land tenure system for ecotourism.
(Bluwstein 2017), in transformation of landscapes (Xie 2015), and in political economy studies on globalization and tourism development (Hazbun 2004).

These studies bring out how reterritorialization is the socio-spatial reorganization of previously territorialized areas in new spatial forms. Just like in territorialization, the process of reterritorialization involves reinforcement of territory and border making. However, reterritorialization differs from territorialization in that in addition to boundary making, new economic values are created within the territory; this can lead to the displacement of one set of resource users and usage by another set as users and usage that provides benefits to new users (Corson 2011). Peluso and Lund (2011, 677) argued that it is the “confluence of territorialization, property rights and commoditization of land resources and space making (that) enables spatial and more complex forms of enclosures.” This explains well the process of reterritorialization.

Barry (2022) revealed several facets of reterritorialization. Barry (2022) defines reterritorialization as “a redefinition of territory that can displace resource users and enable others to benefit from newly created economic values and capital accumulation.” According to Barry (2022), reterritorialization leads to: (a) a redefinition of the purpose of the land and land use, (b) a new enclosure, (c) a determination of activities considered appropriate within the enclosure and (d) determination of who will benefit from the permitted usage. In the process of reterritorialization, “the state establishes control over people’s activities and use of natural resources within a defined area” and “interest groups redefine commodity values and achieve the power to rearrange rights to a natural resource system so that earlier commodity values become obsolete and disprivileged (Barry 2022).”

Hipwell (2007) articulated that the reterritorialization process can be accomplished by establishing new property regimes, laws, language, and political and administrative boundaries (885). Reterritorialization can lead to changes in property relations and
restrictions on access (Bluwstein 2017). The process of reterritorialization may be adopted to independently or simultaneously accomplish two different objectives: to repurpose and transform territory to create productive territorial assets and to counter global and national changes causing economic deterritorialization (Hazbun 2004). Within each territory, interactions between local agents and transnational flows produce political, economic, and cultural forms and conditions.

According to Hazbun (2004), state-led policy changes achieve reterritorialization, but transnational agents and other societal agents can also achieve reterritorialization. As with territorialization, reterritorialization can happen at multiple scales, at a regional level, national level, landscape level, and at local levels; in many different types of places including tourism spaces. Reterritorialization at different scales may or may not happen simultaneously. For example, successful reterritorialization in tourism spaces at a place may spread throughout the entire landscape (Hazbun 2004).

There is often an intense struggle across local, state and transnational actors with rival objectives and interests in the (re)development of territorial resources and the symbolic representation of territorially based identities and cultures. “All actors simultaneously seek to selectively promote processes of deterritorialization and reterritorialization in an effort to exert power over territories, flows and networks that connect them all (Hazbun, 2008, xxxi).” The success in capturing benefits of economic reterritorialization often depends on two things: (a) the control of the reterritorialization process, and (b) control of the spaces that generate economic benefits. Control of the territorial assets and reterritorialization process leads to increased political power and regulatory influence of the state, societal, and transnational agents (Hazbun 2008).

Reterritorialization can result in challenges as well, lead to new forms of political control and, as noted above, conflicts (Hazbun 2004). Generally speaking, new forms of
political control, frequent conflicts accompany the reterritorialization process that disrupt culture and human-environment relationships (Hipwell 2007; Xie 2015). Reterritorialization also disrupts the local heritage and history (Xie 2015). As such, it is therefore essential to understand the historical context of any proposed community-based tourism effort.

Reterritorialization is politically significant as it can increase the power and the regulatory influence of state agencies, private firms, and societal actors who control such spaces. Reterritorialization occurs in both economic and political forms with very different results.

**Political Reterritorialization**

The goal of political reterritorialization is to create protected economic spaces to ward off adverse consequences of competing interests, such as towards decolonialization and independent nation-state making, and more recently under globalization. In its political form, reterritorialization consists of policies and ideologies that enhance territorial identities and promote rebordering to limit or extend flows or movements across borders. Processes of political and cultural reterritorialization include rebordering of economies, regionalism, territorial attachment, and control (Hazbun 2004). Demand for political reterritorialization may be less when the networks that support the flow lead to economic and cultural reterritorialization. Political reterritorialization may lead to economic deterritorialization.

**Economic Reterritorialization**

Hazbun (2004) argued that economic reterritorialization is the most feasible means for territorially confined actors to influence the processes of globalization affecting their territories, societies, and economies, as the transnational processes are beyond their reach. Still, these territorially confined actors have the ability to reorganize their territory. Unlike
The purpose of economic reterritorialization is to take advantage of processes of globalization by distinguishing a particular territory from other similar places. Reterritorialization leads to “an intensification of location and territory for economic activity” (Hazbun 2004, 314). The economic activity is grounded to specific place and cannot be shifted elsewhere (Hazbun 2004).

In its economic form, reterritorialization leads to spatially defined economic benefits for firms and property owners. Reterritorialization entails a form of production where firms are able to exploit spatially defined economic benefits (Britton 1991; Hazbun 2004). Economic reterritorialization can be said to occur when spatially defined economic benefits increase in specific locations. These benefits are of two types: rents and economic externalities. “Rents are incomes gained by holders of scarce property rights in excess of what would be earned without the addition or improvement of existing factors of production (Hazbun 2004, 316).” The other is locational external economies, defined as “public goods or common pool resources that can be regulated by control over the infrastructure that sustains them (Hazbun 2004, 316).”

Reterritorialization can serve to open up a development process. More often than not, reterritorialization may be implemented to increase the land value, direct growth, and improve living conditions and quality of life (Xie 2015). Reterritorialization can lead to a change in the landscape's purpose for use by the industry and consequently produces a new territorial identity (Xie 2015). Reterritorialization can lead to transformation of the landscape by reconfiguring spaces and creating of new spaces of consumption via different uses of area and buildings, thus opening up a development process (Xie 2015).

An odd feature of economic reterritorialization is that it is advantageous for firms to establish themselves in clusters in specific localities to capture territorially defined economic benefits. The benefits of location increase as more firms agglomerate in the reterritorialized
zone (Hazbun 2004). Geographical proximity is advantageous for firms as they can benefit from regional specialization, skilled pools of labor, well-developed infrastructure, locational branding, inter-firm relationships, and specialized service firms (Hazbun, 2004). This can lead to an enclavistic form of development such as in clusters of hotels and resort towns.

Multiple actors can drive a reterritorialization process. We see this in tourism development. The reterritorialization process may be driven by transnational organizations, nation-states or local communities who try to assert control over tourism spaces and determine the processes that convert places, cultures, and experiences into territorially-defined tourism commodities (Hazbun 2004). In so doing, these groups can gain control of the generation of rents and external economies, which draw both tourists and capital investment (Hazbun 2004).

Economic reterritorialization leads to rival local authorities competing against each other for territorial benefits. Economic reterritorialization may lead to enhanced state control, more political power given to the societal actors or private capital’s dominance. Fragmented control over the reterritorialization process and territorial assets can impede the process of economic reterritorialization (Hazbun 2002).

**Reterritorialization and Tourism Development**

Processes of territorialization and reterritorialization have much relevance to the making and remaking of space in tourism. Under today’s conditions, tourism is the most likely means to transform landscapes to generate economic benefits and the state is a key agent to do so (Hazbun 2004). In the context of tourism development, economic reterritorialization is possible. Rather than creating barriers, rebordering is achieved through the creation of new territorial identities and rebranding to attract both more tourists and business. In reterritorialization for tourism, the state (through its agencies and agents) exert
control of tourism spaces by developing plans, devising regulations and directing resources and investment to produce tourism spaces that generate an experience of place for tourists and territorial based economic rewards for itself and tourist firms (Hazbun 2004).

Territorially-based powers at the local level are more restricted, but can include the development of tourism sites and regulation of the local firms' behavior in the tourism sector. How benefits are shared or not depends on local conditions and negotiations. Nonetheless, the process of reterritorialization infuses new meanings and possible new revenue streams into heritage sites leading to rejuvenation of new tourism projects (Xie 2015).

Not all forms of tourism are equally associated with reterritorialization. One example in which reterritorialization occurs is refocusing tourism as ecotourism and unlike mass tourism. This is because ecotourism in inherently place-based, and ideally a particular people (culture)-based as well. As such, ecotourism products cannot be shifted elsewhere. Reterritorialization is more associated with place-based tourism, such as ecotourism and community-based ecotourism. In particular, ecotourism territories are often created through a process of reterritorialization involving changes in property ownership, relations and resource control. In the context of tourism, reterritorialization is achieved by creating areas with unique qualities that become attractive to both tourists and well as to investment; and which are spatially congregated. At the same time, community-based tourism can be particularly vulnerable to these reterritorialization processes, as communal lands may have weak legal status (Bluwstein 2017).

The production of tourism spaces from natural and cultural features often requires the technical and financial assistance of experts, organizations, and international development agencies. However, these agents often have rival objectives and interests to state and private firms in the tourism industry owing to their different individual values and organizational policies towards conservation or social justice including the symbolic representation of
territorially based identities and cultures (Hazbun 2004). Additionally, the reterritorialization of tourism development often forces states and their agents at different levels to engage in more intense struggles with local and transnational actors, such as indigenous people, communities, private landowners, tourist firms, and archaeologists (Hazbun 2004).

The above review brings out why attention to ecotourism development should be viewed as a form of economic reterritorialization, possibly leading to economic growth but also simultaneously to exacerbating conflicts. The importance of approaching tourism through the reterritorialization lens is because one way in which ecotourism is developed is through zoning in protected areas. While the literature brings out how the designation (and redesignation) of boundaries and uses are rife with conflicts, there are no studies on how the process of zoning in protected areas contributes to enclavization, and its attendant impacts. I review the literature on enclaves and enclavization next to understand the relationship how it contributes to uneven tourism development and inequitable impacts.

**Enclaves and Tourism Development**

Since 1982, the practice of tourism, especially in the global South, has been noted to develop as an “enclave” (Britton 1982). The model of enclavic tourism development, according to Britton (1982), entails concentration of tourism within a confined area, capital used to finance tourism activities originating from outside powerful banks and markets, which also entail a large degree of control, and attract tourists from outside as well. The development and governance of these tourism enclaves are, by definition, externally-driven with high capital investment from large national and multinational corporations, or “powerful interests” (Healy and Jamal 2017). Since enclave tourist destinations are designed to maximize spending within the confines of the enclave and to limit tourist access to areas outside the enclave, they often create a loss of local ownership and control over tourism
spaces, creating a highly commodified “bubble” space for tourists. As a result, there is not much scope for the involvement of local communities in this mode of tourism development, particularly on community owned, governed lands. Not surprising, enclavic tourism is often perceived as incompatible with sustainable tourism, particularly regarding social and economic sustainability (Saarinen and Wall-Reinius 2019). Hence, the role of enclaves in local and regional tourism development is highly questionable (Saarinen and Wall-Reinius 2019). The extent to which ecotourism (and community-based ecotourism more specifically) can provide a more positive alternative to mass tourism characterized by enclavic resorts remains to be seen (Edensor 2001; Stronza, Hunt and Fitzgerald 2019).

The literature on enclaves draws attention to how space is engineered to capture profits. It thus provides a link with territorialization and zoning for economic profit.

**Heterogeneous Tourism Spaces**

Edensor’s (2000) distinction between enclavic and heterogeneous tourist spaces provides an alternative theoretical approach to what makes a destination an “enclave”. Edensor (2001, 63) argues that ‘tourist performance is socially and spatially regulated to varying extents.” He argues that there is a continuum of tourism development formed on the basis of a division between conceptually two kinds of contrasting spaces: enclaves and heterogeneous spaces. Enclaves are tourism spaces that are single purpose, centrally regulated, carefully planned and managed, and homogeneous. The borders in enclave tourist spaces are not porous. In contrast to enclaves, heterogeneous spaces are unplanned, multi-functional and have blurred boundaries; they also have a different labor pool. “The tourism economy here is labor-intensive, often typified by small family-run concerns (Edensor 2000:331).” Heterogeneous spaces enjoy local infrastructure that is used both by locals and visitors alike. Such spaces have mixed purpose to meet the requirements of both visitors/
tourism and local communities. The “facilities coexist with businesses” and may be cheap, of lower standards, and less subject to bureaucratic constraints. However, the principles of exclusion are rarely applied (Edensor 2000). These are clearly differentiated with smaller scale tourism, as well as when tourism is organized by and for a local community, as will be discussed later on.

Resorts is another way to conceptualize territorial tourism spaces outside the protected areas which also tend to follow the enclavic model. The word ‘resort’ is often used to describe a tourism destination. These are villages and towns where a high proportion of the jobs and businesses are connected to tourism. Resorts have a range of accommodation and include many attractions and other tourist facilities. When organized at a rather large scale, they can be referred to as “mass tourism.” Defined tourism spaces such as resorts can be differentiated further as enclavic (Healy and Jamal 2017; Saarinen and Wall-Reinus, 2021). Tourism spaces that are severely bounded, and which mostly entail tourism activities, have been called “enclaves”. Enclaves are defined as “inclusive, controlled, social and spatial environment in which tourists are set apart from local people, other than those who serve their immediate needs and wants within the environs of the resort (Bowen et al. 2017, 727).” In enclavic tourism spaces, all tourists’ needs are met within the tourism space, and tourists are separated from economic and cultural interaction beyond the resort gate (Shaw and Shaw 1999). By confining tourists to the enclaves, the firms can contain and capture the external economies generated by the tourists (Hazbun 2004). Enclaves, and enclavic tourism development, provide an extremely important tool to examine different types of space that is claimed and reclaimed in the political economic transformation of tourism.

The literature recognizes several types of enclaves. These include resort enclaves, backpacker enclaves, urban tourist enclaves, religious tourist enclaves, and mobile enclaves (Saarenin 2017). Privately owned beaches, liners, and islands are also water-based enclavic
development (Saarenin and Wall-Renius 2019). Even the vehicles used for wildlife safaris and tourist museums in protected areas have been regarded as enclavic in nature because the vehicles are used to segregate the tourists from the local communities to capture and retain benefits (Goodwin 2002; Saarenin 2017).

Saarenin and Wall-Renius (2019) emphasize that enclavic tourist spaces are characterized by the separation between us and them, leading to a large degree of isolation of enclavic tourist spaces from the local socio-cultural environment. They note that the exclusive spaces are simultaneously created within the boundary and differentiated from the outside. Also, enclaves lead to homogenization as they try to become similar to other such areas, and as they differ from their surroundings. Reports show that tour operators have been uninterested in taking visitors to areas outside enclavic resorts (Saarenin and Wall-Renius 2019).

Additionally, Saarinen and Wall-Renius (2019) point out that the enclaves are not entirely disadvantageous, especially for mass tourism as well as for local communities. According to these authors, the tourism industry finds the enclaves useful to organize the value chain with minimal economic spillover. This is similar to the findings of reterritorialization where place-based industry profits by growing in clusters. In this line of thought, the authors suggest that many tourists also enjoy being resort tourists, that is, they enjoy the confinement of their tourism activity to one area where all their needs can be met, and with limited contact with the host country. Saarinen and Wall-Renius (2019) also suggest that in situations of highly developed resort tourism, even some local communities prefer a clear distinction between tourism and non-tourism space to avoid the negative consequences of tourism. However, they conclude that disadvantages of the enclaves far outweigh their advantages when local economic benefits are considered.
Protected Areas as Enclaves

Even protected areas and Indian national parks have been regarded as enclaves (Goodwin 2002; Hannam, 2004; Kroeker-Maus, 2014). This is particularly true in national parks which maintain strict rules and regulations, are open for visitors only during certain seasons and for certain periods (Hannam 2004). Furthermore, tourist behavior in national parks is highly regulated. Similarly, the behavior of villagers whether for residence or for collection of forest produce is highly regulated (indeed in national parks its typically prohibited). Other types of protected areas have also been conceptualized as enclaves. Rather, they have been characterized as inter-connected globalized ‘enclaves’ and as “technocratically governed spaces where opportunities for meaningful political contestation are eliminated (Kroeker-Maus, 2014, 796).” Sidaway (2012) suggests a paradoxical feature of enclavic protected areas. While they exhibit a disarticulation from the ‘local’ and integration into the ‘global,’ “...they are often gated, but they are linked to each other and to other nodes of power (Sidaway 2012: 57).” Protected areas as well as resorts are networked enclaves (Kroeker-Maus 2014). However this commonality has not been widely discussed in the protected Areas literature (Kroeker-Maus 2014). The enclavization of protected areas is occurring owing to the narrowing of the conservation discourse and practices with businesses and their becoming spaces of consumption of commodified nature (Kroeker-Maus 2014). The variegation and specialization in protected area categories further contributes to this process of enclavization.
The Process of Enclavization

Enclavization refers to the process by which enclavic spaces are produced. Enclavization is a widespread phenomenon and is significant as it is happening in many spheres/sectors. Enclavic spaces are produced both for production (export processing zones) and consumption (special tourism zones). In urban settings, enclavization leads to the formation of an archipelago of gated communities that are characterized by the promises of security, control, governance and increased surveillance. The processes of territorialization and reterritorialization are encompassed in the larger process of enclavization. A unique feature of enclavization in which it differs from territorialization is that it refers not just to mere closure but, as noted above, the simultaneous closure and opening.

Enclavization is important as a subject of protected area and tourism research as the degree of enclavization determines how widely the benefits of tourism development will spread within the local communities. Protected areas have been long regarded as a kind of enclosure (Neumann 2004). Authors have followed how the process of internal territorialization (Vandergest and Peluso 1995) helps in reorganizing spatial production and the relationship between state led internal territorialization and private capital accumulation (Barry 2022; Corson 2011). In addition, there are several studies on how populated landscapes have been reconstructed and de/reterritorialized as natural and suitable for ecotourism production. The resistance against territorialization projects embedded in protected areas, and how such processes have been negotiated through counter territorialization and counter mapping, has been documented (Peluso 1995). Kroeker-Maus (2014) points out that the literature on territorialization and protected areas, and theorization of protected areas as enclaves, have much to inform each other, yet these intersections are not well examined. Similarly, connections between protected areas to other enclavic tourist sites,
particularly to spaces of financial and discursive power which construct and regulate enclavic spaces, have not been widely studied (Kroeker-Maus, 2014). My research tries to fill this gap.

**Zoning and Protected Areas**

As described above, territoriality is the process of a powerful entity claiming and organizing space, creating boundaries and gaining control within these boundaries; zoning is the major transformational tool for this process in protected areas. Zoning of forest areas as a territory making activity leading to internal territorialization has been a subject of study for a long time (Vandergeest and Peluso 1995; Peluso 2003). Similarly, as noted above, scholars have treated protected areas as a kind of territoriality process (Neumann 1997). While there has been considerable attention in the protected area literature on zoning, especially into core/buffer areas, there has been less attention to the process and impacts of zoning in wildlife management, especially with regard to its intersection with tigers and to tourism zones. Below I try to summarize the key literature related to a better understanding of this intersection.

While zoning is a foundational planning tool for spaces, both in urban environments and rural settings (Goldberg & Horwood, 1980), zoning has far broader applications such as its application to conservation, tourism and other land uses (Eagles et al. 2002). With regard to zoning in conservation, Eagles et al. (2002) defined zoning as the process that “allocates geographical areas for specific levels and intensities of human activities and of conservation (98). " Likewise, Mason (2012) defined zoning as a “technique driven by ecological data in order to balance the demands between protection and use (268).” The formulation of zones is claimed by so called elites, who identify the goals and values of a specific space, analyzes all possible current and future uses, i.e., “activation,” of that space, and puts forward what they see as the best planning scheme for the space.
Different actors use zoning generally to spatially separate and control what goes on in these spaces (such as resource use) that they consider incompatible; in the case of land use planning, this is ostensibly to protect public health, preserve valued features and/or maintain property values (Hodge 1991; Mason 2012). Land-use zoning helps in “establishing a territorial structure” by allocating lands for specific purposes (Thede, Haider and Rutherford 2014). Zones indicate which type of development has been deemed to be legitimate, that is, what is permissible to take place or not (Mason 2012).

Zoning is claimed by the planners as a primary means by which they hope to reconcile conflicting aims for development and protection of natural resources and ecological processes (Job, Becken and Lane 2017; Kraus et al., 2014; Rotich, 2012). As such they see zoning as a valuable tool for developing resource monitoring and restoration programs (Thede, Haider and Rutherford 2014). Mason (2012) argued that benefits of zoning is that it is easy for visitors to comprehend, can be visually represented through maps, and is also suitable for electronic data handling through GIS. However, not all agree with these positive claims.

Zones are typically established as part of a broader protected area management plan and focus on defining the acceptable and unacceptable uses of a given space within a protected area. As such, zoning serves as the cornerstone in management planning in protected areas and is regarded as fundamental to all other management strategies (Drumm et al. 2005). Different zones have different management objectives (Mason 2012). Allocation of a zone is a prescriptive step where opportunities and values are created (Eagles et al. 2002). Such a belief in zoning has led some to claim that zoning is one of management plan tools to achieve the desired future state or condition through the most efficient and equitable path (Eagles et al. 2002).
Especially through the IUCN globally accepted and utilized model, zoning in protected areas is a common spatial strategy to approach conservation and development. Zoning has become so entrenched in the protected area model of development that most say it is critical for protection as well as the integration of conservation and development (Job, Becken and Lane 2017). Zone designations in protected areas follow the basic concept of demarcating a core area with high conservation value under strict protection surrounded by zones that allow successively greater resource use to support human needs (Shen et al. 2020). The number of zones varies according to areas' complexity and type (Thede, Haider and Rutherford 2014). UNESCO’s Biosphere Reserves have a standardized and straightforward three-tier zoning approach of a core zone, buffer zone, and a transition zone (Job, Becken and Lane 2017). World Heritage Sites also follow the core buffer principle, though it is not obligatory to have the buffer zone (Jones, Huong and Katsuhiro 2020). Parks Canada has a national zoning system for terrestrial parks with five defined zoning categories (Thede, Haider and Rutherford 2014). In more recent years with the recognition of the importance of landscape-level dynamics, corridors have been developed to link protected areas themselves.

Zoning frameworks delineate individual protected areas into territories with varying levels of ecological integrity and different intensities of uses in the park. Thede, Haider and Rutherford (2014) recognized the following two levels of policy making: Firstly, a higher constitutive level where goals, rules, and authority are established for the zoning systems. Secondly, the operational, i.e., the site-level of policy-making, is at the scale of individual PAs, where zoning is an applied tool for implementing the agency’s mandate. The former establishes a standard system-wide approach to address existing or expected patterns of use in individual PAs. At the operational level managers select and apply the appropriate zoning categories for each park's different spatial regions (Thede, Haider and Rutherford 2014).
Zoning for Large Carnivore Conservation

Another element of the alleged benefits of zoning is in assigning overall management objectives and priorities in species conservation (Drumm et al. 2005). Zoning to promote species conservation has relied on planning around protecting keystone species. The concept of “ecosystem zones” has been prompted to identify and protect flagship species – species that are a recognizable symbol of conservation efforts. Additionally, these zones contain umbrella species – other species whereby protecting their habitat will defend many other species' habitats.

Conservation of large carnivores poses one of the biggest challenges in wildlife conservation (Larson 2008). Protected areas have been criticized for being of little relevance to large carnivore conservation because of their much smaller size compared with the area requirements of carnivores (Linnell et al. 2005). Large cats such as tigers situated on top of the food chain occur in relatively low densities, have relatively large home ranges and require large tracts of land for conserving viable populations (Linnell et al. 2005). As such, conservation of large cats require habitat contiguous forests/grasslands (i.e. management units) that are much larger than those required for other species and human presence increases chances of conflict. Conservation and management units for large cats need to be much larger than those normally for other species. Large carnivore conservation strategy therefore requires creation of large zones.

In the case of the conservation of large carnivores, zoning has been implemented to accommodate these requirements to achieve a balance by conserving “viable populations of large carnivores and minimizing conflicts with humans (Linnell et al. 2005, 162).” Separation of uses through zoning are implemented to reduce human-wildlife conflicts such as livestock depredation, human killing/mauling, with human deaths found to be amongst the highest in the case of tigers (Linnell et al. 2005). Larson (2008) has categorized single species zoning
for large carnivores in four types each with distinct goals and methodologies, strengths and
limitations: (1) ‘density driven’ zoning which seeks to regulate the density of the carnivore in
geoographically separated zones; (2) ‘core area’ zoning involves a binary system based on the
degree of protection given to the species, being greater in core area and to a lesser degree in
buffer area; (3) ‘game species’ zoning which uses hunting quotas to limit the population size
in different zones and (4) ‘pest species’ zoning uses lethal control measures in some areas
and allows the species to thrive in other areas (Larson 2008). This typology helps in the
recognition that there are alternate approaches to managing carnivore numbers being
practices in addition to the core/buffer model. However, the core/buffer zoning model
continues to be the more widely approach owing to its general applicability and past usage.

Protected areas with a two-type designation of core/buffer model of zoning for large
cat conservation entail core zones where needs of carnivores are privileged, and buffer zones
that give preference to human uses to offset restrictions placed on human activities in core
zones. Linnell et al. (2005) suggests that this type of zoning is advantageous as it allows for
intensive conservation measures and costly conflict reduction measures to be concentrated in
limited areas, for targeting management procedures, and, if the rules are followed, for
predictability of peoples’ behaviors.

Creating zones to protect keystone and umbrella species has a long, albeit contested,
history (Shen et al. 2020). While zoning as a technique has had wide applicability, some
zoning strategies are found to be more successful than others (Larson 2008). Sufficient space
has been identified by some as the most important factor in the success of the zoning system.
“Without a certain threshold of space on which a carnivore population can survive, there is no
hope for conservation of the species, regardless of the other factors. Conflict is exacerbated
by a lack of space, which causes humans and carnivores to interact competitively (Larson
2008).” However conflict in wildlife zones is created by many factors, many pertaining to
the specificities of a particular place and protected area governance approach, others are more generic. For example, local people and communities with prior resource claims and often generations of use and management, resist such regulations raising huge challenges for the core/buffer zone concept (Linnel 2005).

Botteron (2001) argues that the idea of inviolateness was agreed upon in the IUCN General Assembly 1969 and later adopted for Project Tiger. While analyzing policies for zoning in tiger reserves she questions some of the defining features of Project Tiger that determined the type of relationship tiger reserves would have with the communities. This importantly included removal of all villages from the core area to make it inviolate and exclude other forms of resource use such as grazing by domestic livestock and collection of minor forest produce. She questions the efficacy of the goal of tigers spilling out into surrounds as it would lead to increased human tiger conflict. This pushes the villagers into a double dilemma of how to face increase in animal populations in the face of their inability to defend themselves and the property when attacked by animals. She concludes that models from one context cannot be exported to another without adaptation and the interests of impacted communities need to considered at various stages of planning.

**Wildlife and Tourism Zoning**

Wildlife zoning, or zoning in areas designated to protect wildlife, has been presented as useful for managers, visitors, and tour operators. Advocates of wildlife zoning claim it is advantageous for providing clear objectives and directions for what is appropriate behavior for both managers and visitors in particular spaces or zones (Eagles et al. 2002). Zones eliminate what managers view as existing or potential negative visitor impacts and conflicts (Drumm et al. 2005). Wilderness area managers and enthusiasts defend zoning to enable limiting numbers of visitors and regulating behaviors to achieve their desires for creating a
natural, wild, uncrowded, and free landscape (Cole 2000). The wilderness ideal or model has been enormously pervasive, influencing even traditional tourism and ecotourism areas (Cole 2000; Mason 2013). As with zoning in general, wildlife zoning is used to reduce conflicts between recreationists in the same activities, between different activities, and between recreationists and non-recreationists (Eagles et al. 2002), helping visitors make informed choices for the type of experiences (Mason 2013), and enabling operators to claim that they are providing sustainable experiences (Mason 2013). However, what happens in real life is often more complicated and complex.

Wildlife zoning often entails designating particular tourism zones in the area. These too follow different types according to degree of human/tourism activities. The model typically entails: 1) an ‘intensive zone’ with concentrated tourism activity; 2) an ‘extensive zone’ with low impact use and 3) an ‘untouchable zone’ with little or no human use. Though larger compared to the more intensive use zones, the extensive use zone would still be only a fraction of the total size of the protected area (Drumm et al. 2005).

Tourism-related zoning is most commonly used in national parks “having high landscape value, important heritage, significant cultural value or are in need of preservation (Mason 2012, 267).” Zoning of tourism land usage is usually concerned with protecting what park managers view as fragile and sensitive environments especially from visitor impacts (Mason 2012). Zoning serves as a principal method for concentrating or dispersing visitor use (Eagles et al., 2002). Zoning can be both spatial and temporal (Eagles et al. 2002). Typically, areas enclosed within protected areas are allocated to two or more types of zones for visitor use or a range of spatial zones with differences in permissible developmental activities (Drumm et al. 2005). Zoning, along with facility development and visitor services, is one of the three approaches, providing a range of recreation opportunities in the national parks (World Bank 2020, 20). A zoning system determines the type of accommodation,
transportation, and tourist activities, including group size (Leung et al. 2018). Governments set the conditions for tourism development in protected areas through policies and planning frameworks that include zoning, infrastructure and local communities' involvement (World Bank 2020, 24). Zoning is one of the actions that changes visitor use conditions in order to manage diverse recreation opportunities (Leung et al. 2018; World Bank 2020). Zoning allows in ensuring that visitation happens in places and ways within the management capacity.

Those defending the use of tourism zones see it as useful and helpful (Drumm et al. 2005). Whether or not zones are officially designated as tourism-focused, destination managers will readily admit certain advantages of having zones or spaces where different type of tourism activity is permitted. Eagles et al. (2002) list several benefits of tourism zoning (many are similar to zoning in general). For example, the process of tourism zoning enables stakeholders to “understand what park values are located where and the impacts” (98). Eagles et al. (2002) stated that by prescribing acceptable levels of impact through zoning, it becomes possible “to control the spread of undesirable impacts” (98). Eagles et al. (2002, 98) regarded that zoning also helps provide a better understanding of “the distribution and nature of different recreation and tourism opportunities within and around protected areas”. The advantage of zoning is that it is “easy to understand, communicate, and implement” (Eagles et al. 2002, 58). Zoning has become a key tool in the pursuit of what has been called “sustainable tourism” (Thede, Haider and Rutherford 2014). In one of the early studies of sustainable tourism planning, Lane (1994) refers to zoning several times, particularly in the context of low impact in fragile ecosystems, contrasted with concentrated development in other areas.

The IUCN published a series of “how-to” manuals for visitor management in protected areas advocating the establishment of tourism zones and stating the criteria,
methods, and benefits of zoning (Eagles et al. 2002; Lascurian et al. 1996; Leung et al. 2018). Tourism zoning provides recreation opportunities, education, and the production of economic benefits (Job, Becken and Lane 2017). Additionally, several studies found that integrating tourism planning – most commonly through zoning – into the management of protected areas is a key success factor in conservation outcomes (Drumm et al. 2005; Job, Becken and Lane 2017; Kraus et al. 2014).

**Issues with Zoning in Protected Areas**

As in all territorially processes, there are some who benefit, and some who lose, with the latter contesting and protesting the new uses and boundaries of such space as appropriated and illegitimate (Scott 1998; Thede, Haider and Rutherford 2014). Despite its wide use, zoning for protected area management and conservation is a highly contested approach (Neuman 1997, 2004). Criticisms include social, economic and ecological concerns that are often overlapping, and with specific concerns arising in particular contexts.

One criticism of zoning is its rigidity and inability to embrace change and adaptation. The conventional zoning systems is not flexible. Standardized frameworks and zoning systems do not have the capacity to be modified as conditions change (Drumm et al. 2005). Most zoning frameworks were introduced in the 1970s and have remained unchanged in many countries. Such zones within protected areas are based on old frameworks that do not match recent conservation approaches, such as more participatory approaches that seek to spread out governance responsibility, benefits and the capacity to adapt to new conditions and challenges.

The paper by Thede, Haider and Rutherford (2014) on zone use in Canadian national parks is particularly insightful on the problem of protected area zones based on old frameworks as ill-suited for contemporary conservation. The inherently political nature of
historical zoning frameworks has become more evident especially the clash between their earlier top-down and biological expert-driven bias over more participatory approaches which seek to bring in other interests and disperse protected area benefits. Thede, Haider and Rutherford (2014) criticize the old process as rigid, static, and out of step with more equitable participatory and flexible planning that allows for forms of adaptive governance in the face of uncertainty and change. The inflexible definition of zones and the coexistence of historical zoning framework with prevailing management policies constitute significant challenges, as park management today incorporates much more “flexible management philosophies” and “participatory decision making” (Thede, Haider and Rutherford 2014, 641). Thede, Haider and Rutherford (2014) argue that because zoning has a strong status quo bias, such practices need to be reviewed and remade.

Drumm et al. (2005) also emphasize the politics of zoning. They explain how management objectives, political considerations, and the natural and cultural characteristics of the actual (physical) resource play a role in determining the zoning parameters and the allowed/disallowed types of uses. For example, they regard the decision to use ecotourism principles for guiding public use, is in itself, a political decision that affects zoning; ecotourism can be permitted in some types of zones where conventional tourism may not be possible.

There are additional problems with zoning. Zone planning does not incorporate a range of social and economic factors, such as values and activities besides conservation and tourism (Roman et al. 2007). The history, culture, value, subsistence needs and resource use and governance by ethnic, tribal communities is a glaring example of such missing values and activities in zoning. The centrality and privilege of biologists in protected area zoning (notably for wildlife) has occluded their attention to social and economic factors. As such the challenge of integrating interdisciplinary information has been noted as a key limitation in
zoning (Roman et al. 2007). Geographical Information Systems (GIS), technique, which has been applied for determining allocation of areas to zones, is not robust enough to ground truth many ecological patterns; it is particularly not adept at including social processes and especially political disagreements about land use.

A major challenge to zoning is how to recognize and reconcile a wide range of actors and activities that have historically occurred within the area, and bring these into consideration for future planning. This is particularly difficult in areas where so called “stakeholders” have different degrees of official recognition and “voice”. What is deemed important by those in charge of making zones is what becomes the practice on the ground, even when the causes of degradation are strongly different (Leach and Fairhead 2000).

There are also many practical challenges to zoning. Martino (2001) highlights that there is often a lack of clarity about zoning goals and confusion about their objectives leading to difficulties in analyzing their success and failure (when monitoring is even conducted). Enforcement of zoned uses and boundaries is perhaps not surprisingly difficult. Designation of clear zone boundaries and their strict enforcement are critical for the project of zoning to work (Shen et al. 2020). Blurred boundaries of zones present a challenge for managers. Where there is ambiguity, it is difficult for managers (as well as those living on or using or visiting the areas) to recognize “where one zone ends and another begins (Mason 2012, 273).” Since enforcement is difficult, managers may rely on soft approaches such as codes of conduct and interpretation (Mason 2012). Or they may entail strong law enforcement machinery and even violence (Peluso 1993).

Alteration in the zone boundaries with changing natural and social conditions can be difficult and challenging. Once zones have been prescribed and officially implemented, it is difficult to change the allocation of zones or alter their boundaries, as interests become entrenched and backed by law and military-like forces. Revisions often operate in the
development arena and not for biodiversity conservation (Xu 2016). Less often are they altered for local livelihood or cultural survival, perpetuating critiques of zoning – indeed parks and protected areas more broadly – as socially unjust.

The core/buffer zoning model has been critiqued on ecological grounds as well. This model is an expression of the underlying approach of land sparing—setting aside sections of land for conservation and human use - rather than land sharing (integrating conservation and human use). The land sparing approach has been challenged on both grounds of politics as well as ecology (Barry 2022; Rai 2012). Across continents, biodiversity related to species richness, landscape heterogeneity, and function have been increasingly understood as declining on protected lands when some forms of traditional management is not maintained (Barry 2022). Traditional management entails generations-long understanding and adaptation to changing conditions, as well as community-based governance institutions. Studies suggest that landscape-level biodiversity was maintained when low to intermediate resource use (or disturbance) was employed, such was typically the case with historic livelihoods (e.g. swidden) (Siebert and Belsky 2014). The mosaic landscapes achieved by some historic land use and livelihoods (again the example of swidden) has been connected to the prevalence of prey species supporting for example tigers, and hence why tigers found to be present in low-middle level (human) disturbed areas. The land sparing model undergirding zoning seeks to make core areas as ‘inviolate.’ It is based on the assumption that tigers and humans are not compatible, and hence both tigers and villagers be relocated out of core areas. Yet high numbers of tigers have been found in tiger reserves where there are tourists and resident communities (Rai 2012). Collection of forest produce has been found to have little impact on population dynamics of tigers (Rai 2012), a finding not surprising given the studies on historic land sharing and land uses of low-mid disturbance. Humans and tigers can coexist at
fine spatial scales (Carter et al. 2012). The debate on having inviolate core areas or not is thus intense and yet unsettled.

**Conceptual Framework**

To understand the history of allocation and reallocation of space in Corbett Tiger Reserve through zoning, and for whom these changes benefit or not, this dissertation research builds on theories and concepts derived from the varied literature discussed above. Key among them are the inter-connected processes of territorialization, reterritorialization and enclavization; these processes inform how “space” becomes enclosed and bordered, and governed by specific rules and regulations regarding who has (or lacks) access and control of resources within these borders, as well as the ideas surrounding the legitimacy of these arrangements. We can view this as a process of territorialization (Indian state claims land and resources from historical locals and turns it into a tiger reserve with core/buffer zones), which both reflect and reinforce the power of outside agents, supported by Indian government authority. Concurrently, the process of territorialization through zoning can also produce a whole set of (perhaps) unintended consequences, in this case leading to the process of reterritorialization of conservation spaces for tourism zones, and a particular type of tourism development – resort tourism—and resort tourism characterized by enclaves. The latter reterritorialization and enclavization processes has been accompanied by the creation of overlapping tourism spaces, including a mixture of public and private lands as well as official promotion of community-based tourism, and explicitly ecotourism. Zoning strategies for large carnivores need to be evaluated (Larson 2008), and I argue that such an evaluation would be best achieved through the concepts of territorialization, reterritorialization and enclavization. Territorialization (territoriality) has been widely used to understand land and resource claims, enclosure including for conservation and protected areas. Even though
reterritorialization has been used to analyze multiple contexts and situations, there is no specific study to look at reterritorialization in protected areas through zoning. Likewise, studies on the role played by zoning in enclavization of protected areas and tourist spaces are lacking. These concepts bring out particular dimensions of the zone-making process, one which highlights the politics entailed in the history. It helps us to understand the impacts of zoning in Corbett Tiger Reserve which led to the proliferation of resorts and conventional tourism, to the detriment of ecotourism, and community-based ecotourism – approaches nonetheless advocated by the leading tiger authorities and NTCA in India.

In this dissertation research, I pay close attention to the history of which actors and agencies have been able to control the material space that has become Corbett Tiger Reserve as well as the ideas behind why that was permitted. The latter refers specifically to the rise of tiger conservation concerns and ideas (discourse) and legal policies from around the world and how interpreted in India. At its core, this study highlights the reterritorialization processes as a strategy for resort-based tourism development in a (tiger) conservation landscape, and suggests the ways this process impacts local communities. I use the multiple and overlapping processes of (re)territorialization and enclavization to understand tiger conservation and its impacts on communities in India.

Below is a schematic map to illustrate my approach.
Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Conceptual Framework for Analysis of Zoning in Corbett Tiger Reserve

**Territorialization** (Conservation)
- Creation/mapping of boundaries.
- Allocation of rights.
- Designation of specific resource uses.

**Reterritorialization** (Tourism Development)
- Redefinition of the territory.
- Repurposing of land/land use.
- Economic Production
- New uses, new beneficiaries.
- Rebrand of territorial identity.

Tiger Reserve

- Enclavie Core Zone
- Buffer Zone
- Enclavie Tourism Zone
In this chapter I present my research design, including how the purpose of my research link to the methodology and the data collection methods I utilized. I begin by describing my research approach and the rationale behind the selection of the methodology, and then the procedure I adopted for data collection and data analysis. I include a discussion of some of the limitations of this research. To help orient the reader, I provide a table (Table 3) with an overview of my research questions and their objectives, method chosen to collect the relevant data, and method of analysis.

**Table 3. Research Question Matrix**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Research Objective</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Method of Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RQ 1: How has zoning allocated (i.e., territorialized) space in the Corbett Tiger Reserve?</td>
<td>To understand the history of how space was allocated via zoning in the Corbett tiger reserve.</td>
<td>– Documents&lt;br&gt;– Media&lt;br&gt;– Articles</td>
<td>Document Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ 2: How have tourism zones and their uses been re-allocated (i.e., reterritorialized) in the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape?</td>
<td>To explain more recent uses of the tourism zones</td>
<td>– Documents/Maps&lt;br&gt;– Secondary data analysis&lt;br&gt;– Focus Group Discussions&lt;br&gt;– Interviews</td>
<td>Document Analysis&lt;br&gt;FGD Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ 3: What are the impacts of the proliferation of tourism especially resort tourism (i.e., enclavization) on different stakeholders in the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape?</td>
<td>To explain the impacts of tourism zones, especially the proliferation of resort tourism</td>
<td>– Documents&lt;br&gt;– Focus Group Discussions&lt;br&gt;– Interviews&lt;br&gt;– Survey</td>
<td>Document Analysis&lt;br&gt;FGD Analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Critical Qualitative Approach

I chose a critical qualitative approach to understand how space has been allocated (and reallocated) in Corbett Tiger Reserve through zoning and its impacts. I used this approach for a variety of reasons. A qualitative approach to research is designed to develop a profound understanding of a particular situation with depth and detail, especially to produce a detailed picture of why people act in certain ways, including their feelings about these actions. To interpret meanings of research subjects from their points of view, or “gain(ing) an emic or insider’s perspective,” a qualitative methodology focuses “on studying things in their natural settings (Goodson and Phillimore 2004, 4).” It aims to create openness and encourage research subjects to not just be an “object” of what the researcher thinks is important to study, but be able to open up new topic areas not initially considered and expand upon them. As such, while it is not the purpose of a qualitative methodology to generalize and predict (necessitating large, random samples and statistical analysis), it can draw inferences and explore new areas, and as such, be able to contribute to production of knowledge including theory (Goodson and Phillimore 2004; Tracy 2013). This methodology then would enable me to pursue an in-depth, nuanced understanding of one tiger reserve, but be able to also consider how its particular situation may speak to knowledge and theory about the broader subject.

I chose a “critical” approach because from my personal experience described in the foreword, I knew that there was a backstory to the allocation of space in Corbett, especially via zoning, that has not been told, and that it would not likely follow a conventional understanding. Critical approaches in the environmental and conservation arena are the mainstay of political ecology (Robbins 2019). Critical political ecology scholars ask hard questions of the status quo, and are “critical” of received wisdom or claims of truth. They also pursue historical understandings because they recognize that present conditions are the
product of earlier conditions, knowledge claims, institutions, and structures operating across multiple scales, that while not directly observable (hence the need for qualitative research!) are necessary to examine and interpret (Robbins 2019). In this research, the critical questions I asked probed the assumptions, actions and laws of the Indian nation-state and its agencies, as well as key (global) conservation organizations and the scientific tiger community, over time and across space.

In my research, I was interested in how and why the Indian state and tiger conservation authorities (across space) were able to institutionalize their views and interests in the allocation of spaces via zoning in Corbett Tiger Reserve, as well as how did other stakeholders in the landscape view them? As such I needed to pay attention to power. A critical political ecology perspective is particularly suitable to examining inequitable power and its dynamics at multiple scales, especially related to environmental and conservation concerns. Attention to who has power (to get their way) as well as authority (where power is legitimated) enabled me to ask questions regarding the dominance of particular knowledge systems over others, such as tiger, protected area and tourism discourses; and the actions taken to put these ideas into laws, policies and especially everyday real on the ground, practices. I found Forsyth (2004) summary of the differences between “orthodox” and “critical” thinking about the environment to be very relevant and helpful to my choice to pursue a critical approach to my research. He explains that while orthodox thinking relies on the authorized, dominant way of thinking, a critical approach accepts that there are multiple perspectives that exist due to “different social and political values or positions” in how different people and communities use, value, and define for example environmental degradation, depending on their class, identity and other intersecting positions (Forsyth 2004, 270). All perspectives are considered valid in a critical perspective, there is not an expectation of one particular truth but many perspectives. Forsyth (2004) calls for
examination of beliefs “in order to see how far they [the beliefs] represent framings from different social groups (270).” This view opened my eyes that even dominant narratives or discourses such as science, government and conservation planning, approaches that guided my professional career for decades, cannot or should not be taken as inevitable truth, but belief systems that may be, in fact, are different and strongly contested by others.

**Case Study**

This research is a case study of what happened in one tiger reserve in India. A case study is suitable for understanding complex phenomenon in one specific place, over time and within its real world context (Yin 2014). I have used the establishment of Corbett National Park prior to 1970s and subsequent zoning dynamics under Project Tiger over the past five decades as the phenomena under investigation. I find a huge strength of the case study method is that it is holistic, encouraging collection of data from multiple sources including: documents, archival records, interviews, observations, focus groups and others; and importantly from interdisciplinary and historical perspectives. Mixed methods and an historical approach are most capable of understanding complex, inter-related political-economic-cultural and ecological processes, rather than relying on a single (disciplinary) method pursued for a narrow time period. While the conventional case study approach does not permit wide generalizability per se, and is vulnerable to accusations of not being able to establish objective “truth” (e.g. as claimed with statistical analyses), pursuing a chain of evidence from mixed methods and investigating and testing rival explanations help to “triangulate” and increase rigor of case studies (Yin 2014). Throughout my research I tried to implement such procedures for increasing rigor and validity.

My research utilized a two-phase case study approach. The first phase of the research consisted of interviews with key informants to identify emergent themes in tiger conservation
at multiple scales. The purpose of this phase was to gather data on the historical context of Corbett to inform and refine the data collection for phase two. Phase two consisted of document analysis and then field work. Fieldwork involved focus group discussions, interviews with key informants and a preliminary survey to investigate the existence of local communities and their social institutions (van panchayat/panchayat van) in the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape. Combined, I thought this approach would enable me to understand guidelines for tourism formulated in tiger reserves, and their specific relevance to Corbett; and especially their particular impacts in that landscape.

**Phase One: Interviews**

I chose key informants through purposive sampling. Initially, I sent interview requests to ten professionals who had a long and deep relation with Corbett Tiger Reserve and conservation. Subsequently, another request was sent due to snowballing, and three additional requests were sent to broaden the sample, making the total interview requests to fourteen. Two interviewees from the initial list and all four subsequent interviewees were unavailable for an interview due to either a lack of response or inability to participate in a Skype call. As a result, I conducted eight interviews with individuals to whom the initial request was sent. All interviewees were males, as requests sent to two female respondents failed to materialize, representing a potential gender bias.

The interview focused on tiger conservation, tourists, and villagers at multiple scales, and used an interview guide that was semi-structured (see Annexure II). It provided a sequence of topics with largely open-ended questions. An open-ended approach to interview was adopted to give the participants an opportunity to speak freely and allow for new views to emerge during the discussion (Huberman and Miles, 2002; Tracy 2013).
I conducted all the interviews between April and May 2016 via Skype due to geographical distance between myself and interviewees. A major handicap of using technologically mediated approach was that only English-speaking and computer savvy respondents could be interviewed. The interviews lasted from 12 to 52 minutes. I recorded the interviews using MP3 Skype Recorder software. The recordings were stored carefully under pseudonyms and transcribed using the same names. A total of 280 minutes of interview recordings was transcribed into 95 pages. I tried to maintain self-reflexivity both during data gathering and analysis. By this I mean I made analytical memos to myself, noting down ideas for further consideration as well as to document the process. I tried to recognize biases and make a conscious effort to minimize or correct them.

**Data Analysis of the Interviews**

Data analysis of interviews followed procedures outlined in Corbin and Strauss (2014). Initially, I coded the transcripts using open coding. However, the data turned out to be voluminous. I recoded the data through axial coding, splitting within axial codes to group details. The initial list was reanalyzed and placed into six themes. I developed a code guide documenting axial codes, ideas that guided the coding process and themes' purpose, and suggesting interrelationships among them.

These interviews were intended to inform further phases of the research, and they did so by enabling me to distinguish three periods to my research based on key policy changes. Development of policies is often marked by “rupture points’ when there are significant changes in the policy framework (Tracy 2013). Three “rupture” points serve as useful landmarks to mark periods within my research and for comparing policy changes (Table 2). The first rupture point in the 1970s consisted of the ban on hunting of tigers, enactment of the Indian Wildlife Protection Act 1972, declaration of Corbett National Park as Corbett Tiger
Reserve and the introduction of core/buffer zoning. The second rupture point in the 1990s consisted of the expansion of Corbett Tiger Reserve, creation of a large buffer zone and emergence of first private resorts and tourism zones for day visits. The third rupture point (2006) consisted of the Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act 2006 (herein Amendment Act 2006) which established the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) at the national level for comparing policy changes before and after the amendment. Additionally, the Amendment Act 2006 ultimately accorded legal status to Tiger Reserves with the requirements of creating an inviolate critical tiger habitat in the core zone. I have tried to broadly cover the nearly five-decade period from 1973 to 2023. This period begins with the creation of Corbett Tiger Reserve in 1973, its expansion in 1991; this was also the period when India began liberalizing its economy. This period ends with the re-emergence of tourism in 2023 from the shadows of Covid-19 and its associated lockdowns. The “rupture points” are situated in the beginning and somewhere in the middle of this five-decade period.

**Phase Two: Document Analysis, Focus Groups, Key Informant Interviews, Survey**

The purpose of Phase Two of the research was to answer the research questions more fully by expanding on what was learned prior. Phase Two data collection was carried out from February to August, 2018. The focused fieldwork for informal interviews and focus group discussions was conducted from June to August 2018. I did not personally conduct participant observation as I am a senior official, and my presence would have disrupted normal life, so this method was not used. Before beginning the study, I received approval from the Institutional Review Board at the University of Montana to conduct interviews with human subjects. The Chief Wildlife Warden, Uttarakhand Forest Department granted permission to research before proceeding with data collection in Corbett Tiger Reserve.
During phase two three types of data were collected. First, I collected documents pertaining to the policies that affect Corbett Tiger Reserve and the allocation of space, specifically zoning. These were primarily government documents. The document analysis was extremely important to answering all of the questions posed in this research. Second, I conducted focus group discussions to gain a perspective of village-level impacts as a result of zoning in Corbett Tiger Reserve. Thirdly, I myself conducted interviews with key informants to pursue deeper insight into key processes and impacts. Lastly, as I became aware of village communities in Corbett Tiger Reserve who had authorized community forests, I initiated a preliminary survey of them to collect information about their location, status and involvement with tourism.

**Document Analysis**

In India, all territory is ultimately under the control of the Indian State. Therefore, government documents are a key source of information about what at least officially or legally is supposed to happen on government-owned lands. These documents are easily accessible, especially to someone like myself who works within the state governmental system. Documents are an essential source of information for describing legal boundaries, rights, and resource use on government-owned lands. They reveal change over time. Documents provide background and context, additional questions to be asked, supplementary data, a means of tracking change and development, and verification of findings from other sources (Bowen 2009). Documents are of immense value in case study research (Bowen 2009).

However, relying on documents has certain limitations too. Many kinds of information and facts are not contained within the documents. Not all documents may be available. While the documents reveal how land had been formally gazetted they did not tell
much about how such land is valued and represented, lived in the everyday life of people, nor how land ownership may have shifted over time and even viewed as an illegitimate “land grab”. Government documents are biased towards the government’s view, and fail to represent the industry and community views. This lack of representation raises the need for using other sources of information. Additional information may be of two kinds: information that covers gaps and leads to the production of additional documents, and information from participants themselves, capable of fleshing out, validating or refuting official views. Together they can reveal multiple perspectives, a concern I note above as an integral part of a critical research project.

I collected documents regarding Corbett Tiger Reserve to understand the process of zoning within the Corbett landscape. This was achieved by collecting the relevant policies, legislations, working plans, management plans, and maps. Records from the colonial period were collected to establish the Hailey/Corbett National Park in 1936. Records of the early phase of the launch of Project Tiger during the seventies were collected to determine how the initial policies for tiger conservation were formulated, and zoning was determined. Information regarding the relocation of nomadic Gujjars and villages was collected as well, to further understand who had (or lost) rights within the production of tourism spaces. Documents were also collected for understanding changes in the boundaries and legal status of conservation territories in recent times, especially those after the establishment of the National Tiger Conservation Authority in 2006.

The documents regarding tourism development were collected cover a period of nearly three decades, from approximately 1990 to the present. A variety of documents and maps were collected to gain a fuller understanding of the spatial changes. The documents that were collected included: (a) legislations, notifications, guidelines, and government orders, (b) management plans, working plans, and community-based tourism plans, (c) task
force/committee reports, minutes of the meetings, office memorandums, letters, (d) court orders, (e) press articles, (f) internet-based information, and (g) scientific reports. The maps that were collected included (a) forest department maps, (b) Survey of India topographical sheets, (c) civil administration maps, (d) management plan maps, and (e) maps associated with scientific reports.

Documents regarding tourism development are not as direct as tourism development, rarely proceeding according to prescribed plans. Information regarding tourism development was collected from multiple and diverse sources. Information was acquired from government offices, individuals, personal records, and the internet. Additional data facilities include the Uttarakhand Forest Department and Wildlife Institute of India. In particular, data were collected on the following: (a) jurisdictions, boundaries, zoning, (b) rules and regulations, access and resources for tourism management, (c) tourist arrival, activities and revenues from tourism, (d) incentives for tourism, (e) survey reports of resorts, and (f) community-based tourism plans.

**Focus Group Discussion**

Focus group discussions (FGD) were held to identify current uses of tourism zones by a variety of potential users. Additionally, information gained from conducting focus group discussions were intended to identify conflicts caused by the allocation and appropriation of space for tourism development by the government, private sector, and even local communities.

A focus group discussion as a method has advantages and limitations. It has the following advantages over interviews: it can engage a broader range of people and collect information in a shorter time, a range of representative people can potentially be involved, it permits the opportunity to seek clarifications and checks, and benefit from the interaction of
people themselves participating in the group discussion. Discussions were facilitated by (a) asking for their understandings of the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape and asking participants to mark their views on a map, (b) discussing changes in the boundaries and regulations within core/buffer and tourism zones, (c) probing their views regarding tourism activities in the adjoining villages, and resort development, (d) and identifying conflicts associated with activities within tourism zones.

For the focus group discussions, as well as interviews conducted during this phase, I began with an explanation of my research objectives. I obtained all participants' consent before beginning. The focus group and interviews were conducted in either Hindi or English depending upon the preference of the interviewee. There was no need for translators.

I carried out a trial focus group discussion to find out about the Dhikala tourism zone in the Dhikala amphitheater on June 16, 2018, as the Dhikala tourism zone was closing for the rainy season. Subsequently, I facilitated a second meeting at the Bijrani forest rest house to find out about the Bijrani tourism zone on June 29, 2018, as this was also about to close. I conducted a third meeting at the Dhela forest rest house to understand the Jhirna and Dhela tourism zones. Finally, I carried out a fourth focus group discussion at the Vatanvasa gate for the Sonanadi tourism zone. Except for the first meeting at Dhikala, all the other meetings were recorded and points were listed with the help of flip charts. Separate meetings were also planned for the Domunda tourism zone but could not be conducted; this zone was discussed in the focus group discussion meeting in the community-based tourism villages.

I conducted the focus group discussion exercise with various stakeholders in tourism zones, including in villages where community-based tourism projects occurred (see consultation methodology Annexure III). I held a total of seven focus group discussions, four in tourism zones within the Corbett Tiger Reserve and another three with community-based tourism villages within the Ramganga Mahaseer Conservation Project area and the Ramnagar
Forest Division. The villages of Baluli, Kyari, and Sayat were chosen as I was also looking closely at their community-based tourism projects. I personally ran all of the seven focus groups, which were recorded, and later transcribed; the data is available in the research files. Table 4 describes the Focus Group Discussions.

Focus group discussions were conducted in the buffer area of Corbett Tiger Reserve in Jhudungu villages and Baluli village for the Ramganga Mahaseer Conservation Project. Focus group meetings were conducted in the landscape adjoining Corbett Tiger Reserve in Sayat and Kyari villages in the Ramnagar Forest Division to understand their experience with community-based tourism. Also, a focus group discussion was planned for the Sitabani tourism zone but logistics could not be arranged so it was not conducted; however, attention to activities in this zone were included in discussions at the other community-based tourism villages' meetings.

**Table 4. Focus Group Discussions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zones of Concerns</th>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Number of focus groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bijrani tourism zone</td>
<td>June 29, 2018,</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jhirna and Dhela tourism zones</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonanadi tourism zone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within tourism zones in CRT</td>
<td>June-August 2019</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within villages outside CRT (Baluli, Kyari, and Sayat)</td>
<td>June-August 2019</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key Informant Interviews

Key informant interviews were also conducted during Phase Two. Table 5 describes these interviews. These interviews were collected between February to May 2018. I personally conducted these interviews (total n=15).

The sampling strategy was purposive for choosing who to interview. However, as during the first phase there were no respondents interviewed from the two areas of interest: resort owners nor villagers. Seven face-to-face interviews were conducted with key informants to obtain specific and additional information and clarify facts collected during the focus group discussions. Four informants were key officials involved with policy formulation and management of tourism at the national, provincial, and landscape levels. Three key informants were selected for their involvement in the Ramganga Mahaseer Conservation Project and the community-based tourism in Jhudungu village. There were two female respondents, and the rest of the interviewees were males. Women were more reluctant to grant interviews as they claimed they were too busy with household activities. It is unknown what bias was introduced as a result of the gender imbalance in these data.

Table 5 Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Type</th>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Participants (n=15)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Interviews| April-May 2016    | • One nature guide  
                      • One tour operator  
                      • Three academicians  
                      • Two officials  
                      • One regular visitor |
| Interviews| July-August 2019  | • Three officials  
                      • One NGO  
                      • One resort owner  
                      • One villager  
                      • One CBT Practitioner |
This set of key informant interviews focused questions around tiger conservation, tourists, and villagers at multiple scales. I prepared an interview guide to conduct a semi-structured interview (see Annexure II). I prepared a list of questions to guide the interview, but the interviewee's prior knowledge influenced the subjects that were actually discussed, and in what sequence. Interviews were conducted in the villages or offices, depending upon the preferences of the interviewees. The interviews lasted from 12 minutes to 52 minutes. Recordings were stored carefully under pseudonyms and transcribed using the same names. A total of 286.25 minutes of recorded interviews was transcribed in 98 pages.

Survey of Panchayat van within the Corbett Tiger Reserve and Adjoining Landscape

During this second phase of data collection, panchayat van or community forests emerged as a territorial category within the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape. Panchayat van refers to the legally demarcated village forests under the control of the Village Forest Council formed for sustainable management and protection of forests and its natural resources, whereas van panchayat refers to the Village Forest Council or governance institution which the Indian state of Uttarakhand granted authority to as an autonomous local institution having legally demarcated village forests for managing these lands under community or village authority.

There was no official recognition of these forests in the documents I reviewed earlier, but their presence came about within the focus groups and interviews. I also disclosed in the foreword to this dissertation that even while serving as Corbett Tiger Reserve Director years earlier, I was unaware of their existence within the Corbett Tiger Reserve buffer area. This of course sounds surprising but says something about what the focus of my work was on in those years, and a general inattention to villagers. However, almost a decade after I was no longer Director, the Uttarakhand Forest Department in 2018 engaged in the revision of an
atlas of van panchayat in Uttarakhand. As then in a different position, as the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, I was required to supervise this exercise. I became familiar with the names of many of the villages situated around Corbett Tiger Reserve. During my supervision of this exercise, I discovered that the van panchayat atlas draft report mentioned many of these villages. Furthermore, discussions during a preliminary visit to the villages indicated the possibility that some panchayat van were included within the boundaries of the buffer area of Corbett Tiger Reserve and the community-based tourism villages (e.g., Sayat village has a van panchayat). Newspaper reports regarding an important, high-profile legal case relating to a survey of encroachments by private resorts on forest, government, and communal land, required ascertaining if any of this encroachment was on panchayat van; the case began from Bohrakot village, which has van panchayat.

The panchayat van thus emerged as an essential topic in my research for four reasons. Firstly, panchayat vans were situated within the Corbett Tiger Reserve buffer area but were not mentioned in official Corbett Tiger Reserve tiger conservation plan or the maps, nor included in the 2010 notification of Corbett Tiger Reserve. Secondly, even though the panchayat van forests are owned by the state, they are under the control of the communities and the sarpanch — the elected head of the van panchayat is a “forest officer” designated under the Indian Forest Act, 2005. Thirdly, because the area under panchayat van appeared to be a significant part of the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape; the list of van panchayat revealed that their number could be more than one hundred. Importantly, most of the panchayat van or the village forests appeared to have the presence of both tigers and tourism activities. Since my research question pertained to how space had been allocated for tourism via zoning, and ostensibly all tying back to tiger conservation, it became evident that I needed to have reliable information and a map of all the panchayat van. But even more importantly as the research continued, and my own understandings shifted, how could it be that tigers and
As a preliminary step to answer the questions I carried out a survey in the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape on both the forest territory (*panchayat van*) and governance institution (*van panchayat*). To carry out the survey I prepared a questionnaire in consultation with the forest department staff appointed for the administration of *van panchayat*. The survey had limited but clear objectives. For the forest territory, I was interested in learning the area under *panchayat van*, location on the map, and details regarding funding under government schemes, tourism activity. The survey would also ask about the presence of tigers. Regarding the governance institution, I asked general information about the demographics of the communities involved, income-expenditure schemes of the community forest, local livelihoods, *panchayat van* management, and tourism activities pursued. The survey consisted of 48 questions. A copy of the questionnaire can be found in the appendices (Annexure IV).

The survey led to the identification and collection of data on 118 individual *panchayat van*, spread over a total area of nearly 50 km² of the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape in the Pauri Garhwal, Nainital, and Almora Districts of the state of Uttarakhand. I assembled a survey team consisting of officers of the forest department who were briefed about the survey. The advantage with the team was that they all were familiar with *van panchayat* and were trained on a regular basis how to work with this community entity. However, the disadvantage was that they would carry the typical bias state-employed forest staff wielding authority over local villagers. This team executed the survey in three phases in fourteen meetings of the *sarpanch* and conducted over eleven days. In the first phase, we
conducted a pilot survey in the Ramnagar Forest Division during the four days from June 18 to 21, 2018. In the second phase from July 3 through 5, 2018, we surveyed the Ramnagar Soil Division. In the third and final phase from July 11 to 14, 2018, the remaining van panchayat in the Ramnagar Soil Division and the Lansdowne Forest Division were surveyed. A total of 97 sarpanch from van panchayat participated in these meetings, whereas the questionnaires for the remaining 32 van panchayat were collected through the Range Offices.

The survey confirmed the presence of over six panchayat van in the Corbett Tiger Reserve buffer area, and in Jhudungu and Sayat village. The panchayat van area are incorporated in the results to reveal how the territorialization process of the Corbett Tiger Reserve buffer area included them, and some of the conflicts villagers reported regarding their traditional resource use and problems with current zoning and competing tourism resorts. The data collected from the questionnaire survey was collated in the form of a report. The forest department's IT Cell prepared a map showing the location of panchayat van in the Corbett Tiger Reserve and the landscape.

Limitations of the Overall Methodology and Data Sets

I was appointed as the Chief Wildlife Warden, Uttarakhand during the second phase of my data collection, on June 30, 2018. This posting provided me with ready access to documents and files. I could also direct subordinates to collect information regarding the Corbett landscape, but the enormous responsibilities of the position considerably limited the time that I could devote to field research. As a highly placed official, I also knew I could not easily mingle with employees further down in the forestry bureaucracy or with local residents; my status would undoubtedly influence our conversations and how forthright the others would be talking with me. Therefore, I let others actually administer the surveys (the Statistical Officer, forester and forest guards posted in the Van Panchayat Directorate at
However, as I said above, I conducted the key interviews and ran the focus groups myself as I carried out similar activities in the past and enjoyed doing so. I can relate well to village people and respected their views and opinions. But my discussions with participants, villagers, tour operators, guides, and resort owners were also impacted by the fact that they wanted to take advantage of their access to me to see how I could solve their particular administrative issues and problems, but this also yielded interesting insights into their concerns with tourism, and to my overall research project.

In the initial interviews carried out in Phase I in 2016, none of the respondents were resort owners or villagers, two distinct actors in my research. During Phase II, the majority of the field data were collected from January to August 2018. By the time my field research gained momentum, widespread forest fires during April and May restricted engagement with officials and villagers. Tourism in Corbett Tiger Reserve closed for monsoon from June 15, 2018 onward, bringing the tourism season to an end, and there were no visitors inside the core area. The research has perforce relied on document analysis to a large extent.

Nevertheless, I conducted one pilot and six other focus group discussions on tourism zones and community-based tourism projects. I facilitated all of these sessions. Data from the focus group discussions was supplemented by seven face-to-face interviews that I conducted myself with key informants, including forestry officials, tourism operators, and villagers.

Comprehensive data on tourism in tiger reserves are lacking, especially regarding visitor arrivals, financial earnings, implementation of policies, and their impacts. NTCA did not have any ready information on how guidelines formulated at the national level had been implemented into tiger reserves and their consequences. On my request, the Wildlife Institute of India initiated a national questionnaire survey to collect baseline data for “Review of Progress in Implementing the Guidelines for Tourism in and Around Tiger Reserves.” I jointly prepared the questionnaire for this survey with the help of an Australian researcher
and my adviser. This questionnaire was circulated by the Director, Wildlife Institute of India vide his letter dated 19th July 2018 to all the fifty tiger reserves for data collection. However, NTCA vide its letter dated 20th July 2018 directed Director, Wildlife Institute of India from not proceeding with this questionnaire survey and to keep it in abeyance on the grounds that the said guidelines were being debated in a court of law and the matter was sub judice. As a result, data from only two tiger reserves in Uttarakhand — Rajaji Tiger Reserve and Corbett Tiger Reserve — could be collected through questionnaires, as they were under my jurisdiction.

As noted above, a questionnaire survey of the van panchayat was not part of the original research proposal. I had not anticipated that the research would uncover the presence of community forests in the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape. Given my standing and potential bias, I decided that others should administer the survey these and the villagers involved in them. As described above the survey on panchayat van and van panchayat were collected by a team of forest department staff and from the Sarpanch, and not by myself. Not being there personally I do not know what biases were part of the process, be it how the team presented or received the material or how they interacted with the villagers. Also, monsoon conditions limited the time that they could spend in the field conducting the survey.

Much of the information on tourism zones is based on official records and the researcher's prior experience. Owing to the large number of tourism zones, only one focus group discussion could be conducted for each tourism zone. As a result, only the broad patterns of tourism zone formation and transformation could be unearthed.

The visitor perspective was not covered. Perhaps this is justified as it is assumed that the power of tourism development resides predominantly with the managers and brokers (Cheong and Miller 2000). The financial data on the tourism development was also confined to the figures regarding revenue collection from government records. It was beyond this
project's reach to collect financial data related to taxation and earnings/profits of the private resorts or the community-based tourism projects.

**Conclusion**

In this research methodology and methods chapter, I provided the rationale for selecting a critical qualitative research approach with a case study at its center. To get at the complex research questions I posed, I sought a historical perspective using a variety of methods. My hope is they complemented each other, filled each other’s gaps, and helped to uncover key multiple perspectives operating in the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape. Document analysis played a key role in helping me to learn important laws and official plans, but was insufficient to understand the underlying dynamics of the transformation of spaces via zoning in Corbett Tiger Reserve. To understand these, including the politics involved, I turned to key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and a survey. The latter was developed only as the research process itself revealed the need to study phenomena I only became aware of in the midst of conducting the study. As the methodology I chose insists, I needed to stay open to exploring what the research was revealing. Although I was also not predominantly testing one big theory from the literature, the approach was heavily informed by prior research and concepts from critical geography and the political ecology of protected areas. They led me to choose the methods I did, with all their advantages and disadvantages.

Having laid out my research design and the methods I used to collect and analyze the data, I turn now to the context of my research, the Corbett Tiger Reserve – its location, characteristics, and history of people as well as the place.
CHAPTER FOUR
THE MAKING OF HAILEY NATIONAL PARK: INDIA'S FIRST NATIONAL PARK

Introduction

My study site, Corbett Tiger Reserve (CTR), is situated in the foothills of the Western Himalayas in the state of Uttarakhand in India. More specifically, the Corbett Tiger Reserve is located at the junction of the Garhwal and Kumaon regions of Uttarakhand, principally in the districts of Pauri Garhwal and Nainital but with some area in the district of Almora.

Corbett Tiger Reserve falls within the terai bhabhar tract of the Shiwalik and the foothills of the Western Himalayas. The elevation ranges from 365 m to 1200 m.

Ramganga river is the lifeline of Corbett Tiger Reserve and the major perennial source of water. The Kosi river is another perennial water source for Corbett Tiger Reserve; it runs outside and along the eastern boundary of CTR. The Kalagarh dam constructed in 1970s at Kalagarh (about 24 km from Dhikala) resulted in a vast reservoir spread over an area of about 80 km² out of which 42 km² falls in Corbett National Park and the rest in Sonanadi wildlife sanctuary. The land is very porous and is composed of boulder and sand deposits. The water received through rainfall easily seeps-off and then resurfaces in the Terai area which runs as a belt below the southern boundary of Corbett Tiger Reserve.

The flat grassy plains sometimes quite extensive and locally termed as 'chaurs'. These chaurs are generally a result of man-made clearings, made in the past for cultivation and settlements subsequently abandoned. Apart from these extensive grasslands, many other smaller ones of varying extent are also found in the tiger reserve. These grasslands are characterized by rich dense growth of various medium size to tall grasses, both palatable as well as unpalatable in varying density. The largest chaur at Dhikala is maintained by annual cyclical Inundation from the Ramganga reservoir (Babu, Choudhary and Kumar 2019)
The vegetation consists mostly of dry and moist deciduous forests dominated by *Sal* (*Shorea robusta*), scrub savanna, and alluvial grasslands. The forest, are mainly northern deciduous forest (Moist Shiwalik Sal, Moist Bhabar Dun Sal, Western Gangetic moist mixed deciduous forest and Alluvial Savannah woodland), Northern Tropical Dry Deciduous Forest (Dry Shiwalik, Northern dry mix deciduous and Khair Sissoo Forest) and Himalayan Subtropical Pine Forest. There are 617 species of the flora under 410 genera 111 families of Angiosperms (Monocot-132, Dicots-462), 1 Gymnosperm and 22 Fern and fern allies. There are more than 110 tree species in the forests.

Corbett Tiger Reserve is rich in faunal diversity owing to the rich and diverse habitats and prey base, with nearly 50 species of mammals, 685 species of birds, 39 reptilian species, 10 amphibians and 36 species of Pisces amongst vertebrates and significant tiger and elephant populations (Sinha 2015).

The history of zoning though the establishment of reserved forests and national park in Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape spans over a century. Zoning began with the creation of reserved forests by the British and the mapping of the forest territories. Carved out of the reserved forests, Corbett Tiger Reserve began as a small national park in 1936, named Hailey National Park. After India’s independence in 1947, the Hailey National Park was renamed as Ramganga National Park in 1955 (Rangarajan 2001). Following the death of Jim Corbett, a great hunter and naturalist, the national park was renamed a third time as Corbett National Park in 1957. When India launched “Project Tiger” in 1973, the Corbett National Park was designated as Corbett Tiger Reserve, one of India’s first nine tiger reserves (Botteron 2001). However, before I can present my analysis of evolution of the core/buffer zoning practiced in Corbett Tiger Reserve during the five decades of Project Tiger (1973-2023), it is first necessary to establish the evolution of forestry and conservation practices in the Corbett landscape leading to the establishment of India’s first national park later designated as
Corbett National Park. This understanding of the historical context of the Hailey/Corbett National Park is essential to understand how the Indian colonial and later independent state gained control of forest areas, how the areas were zoned as reserved forests and later as protected areas, and how the area became protected for tigers and a major tourism attraction. Data for this background come from Indian government documents, past park management plans, published literature and the personal knowledge of the author. The following section summarizes the development of scientific forestry during the colonial period and the enactment of the Indian Forest Acts of 1865 and 1878.

**Scientific Forestry, Forest Divisions and the Forest Councils (Van Panchayat)**

In the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, the British colonial administration in India carried out a project of systematic conversion of vast tracts of diverse forest areas and barren lands into state-ownership. For generations prior, these areas were under varied ownership and uses by individuals and communities, notably for subsistence-based livelihoods. The basis of the annexationist position was the claim that all land not actually under cultivation belonged to the state (Guha 1990, 68). In the initial phase, the demand for timber was for ship building, both in Europe and in India. Logging was further propelled by the colonial policy of extending cultivation of agricultural crops into former forest lands. The clearing of the forests drastically reduced the age-old practice of shifting cultivation and other historic forest-based livelihoods. The administration was also under pressure by the British Government for revenue generation for its own sustenance as well as profit. After 1853, there was huge demand for wood, especially Teak (Tectona grandis), Sal (Shorea robusta) and Deodar (Cedrus deodara), to construct railway sleeper cars, railway tracks and as fuel for locomotive engines (Gadgil and Guha 1992). The widespread destruction of the forests and
the need to ensure sustained availability of wood for railway sleepers led to the establishment of the (British) Imperial Forest Department in 1864 (Gadgil and Guha 1992).

The Indian Forest Act (IFA) of 1865 was the first legislation drafted to provide a legal mechanism to ensure state control over forests, especially to facilitate state acquisition of areas earmarked for railway supplies. However, the provisions of the IFA of 1865 were subject to continuation of existing rights of villagers described below (Gadgil and Guha 1992). A more elaborate Indian Forest Act of 1878 provided the British colonial government the power for the annexation of vast tracts of woodland, jungle and hills as part of government assets (Rangarajan 2001). It removed ambiguity about absolute proprietary rights of the state enabling centuries-old customary uses to be replaced with state control and state priority uses (Gadgil and Guha 1992). The new and expansive state control drastically changed the landscape bringing sharp division especially between agriculture and forestry, land uses and sectors that were formerly highly integrated (Rangarajan 2001).

The Indian Forest Act 1878 divided and segregated forest land uses further. It legislated three types of forests: 'reserved forests' that consisted of compact areas with valuable timber where timber harvest could take place and where private rights were either extinguished, transferred elsewhere or were confined; 'protected forests' where rights were recorded but not settled and where control was maintained by detailing provisions for particular tree species and through provisions for closing the forest to uses such as grazing and fuelwood collection; and lastly 'village forests' in which use was governed by local villages, a type that was sparingly used (Gadgil and Guha 1992). Over time, protected forests were converted into reserved forests for fuller state control (Gadgil and Guha 1992). Reserved forests were tightly regulated and rules were strongly enforced. The Indian Forest Act 1878 enhanced punitive sanctions and provided penalties to regulate the extraction and transit of forest produce in reserved forests. In essence, “(t)he regulation of access and use
was designed to promote one kind of use of the forested land use over another (Rangarajan 2001, 52).” This was for timber, and timber to be used or sold by the state.

The Indian Forest Act 1878 was amended in 1927 (Guha 1990). The amendment led to changes in the preamble and provisions for shifting cultivation (Paquet 2018). The Indian Forest Act 1978 (and its amendment in 1927) redefined the relationship between the forests and the people who had used and managed the landscapes historically (Gadgil and Guha 1992). Rights which were previously customary and based on community connections and relationships were redefined as strict legal rights that were recorded in land settlements records and could not be questioned, while use rights were treated as privileges and defined as concessions (grazing, firewood, small wood etc.). These could not be claimed as legal rights but were rather granted through a government policy to enable some public access but not control (Gadgil and Guha 1992). The rights permitted some families (not communities as was the institutional management unit historically) for specific quantity of timber and fuel for personal use only; the sale of forest produce was completely prohibited (Gadgil and Guha 1992).

British colonial government-controlled commercial timber production was managed through forms of “scientific” forestry imported from Europe. Sustained yields were managed through alternating fellings along compact forest blocks. Transportation networks in reserved forests for extraction of timber and other natural resources were developed through expansion of cart roads and paths for opening up the jungles (Gadgil and Guha 1992). The proportion of commercially valuable species in the growing stock was increased through following these models, drastically altering the way the landscape was managed and used over centuries (Gadgil and Guha 1992).

The British colonial government extended scientific forestry to the hill lands and forests in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century for
commercial extraction of timber. The British established a hierarchy of territorial units in forests and of officials in the forest department to manage these units. They zoned forests into territorial management units. These consisted of forest blocks, compartments and administrative units of “forest divisions” to be managed by the divisional forest officers, “ranges” to be headed by range officers and “beats” (the smallest administrative unit of territory under the control of the forest department) to be managed by forest guards. The British forest officers developed working plans that strictly controlled management of the forests including tree felling, fire protection, and regulation of villagers’ access to the forests, including control of grazing and farming. The changes in the species composition of forests, development of arterial road networks and relationship between villagers and forests were extensive. These changes were monumental in the hill forest divisions of Kalagarh Forest Division and Ramnagar Forest Divisions, parts of which later became Hailey National Park. The following section summarizes the development of scientific forestry in the Ramnagar and the Kalagarh Forest Divisions.

Ramnagar and Kalagarh Forest Divisions

Corbett Tiger Reserve is situated in the Patlidun valley of the Ramganga River. Patlidun was an elevated valley with a wide level floor through which Ramganga flowed in westerly direction before turning south at Boxar to the plains (Pant 1936). Prior to the establishment of scientific forestry, the Patlidun, and Palain (tributary of Ramganga River) valleys were occupied, used and managed by villagers. The valley was a property of the princely state of Tehri Garhwal and forests in the valley formed a source of subsistence food as well as revenue. Signs of human occupation and activities were littered throughout the area, though such areas were not extensive. While describing the human population in the first “Working Plan of the Patli Dun Hill Forests, British Garhwal” for the period 1881-82 to
1893, Dansey wrote, “remains of terraces, even of houses, are so very common that there are but few compartments that are void of some such evidence of cultivation or habitation at some former period of time (Dansey 1881, 16).” Crops were cultivated, and there was evidence of old canals near Boxar (a Forest Rest House within Corbett National Park, now submerged in the Ramganga Reservoir), and an old well near Dhikala; the latter was irrigated by canal water from the Ramganga River (Bedi 1985). The grasslands are locally known as *chaurs*. In several *chaurs* bricks, carved stones and other remnants of old settlements have been found; ruins of an old temple were found in the Dhikala *chaur* (Bedi 1985). Permanently-field based agriculture was practiced in winters when hill villagers from Garhwal region came down to these tracts. *Buxas*, a tribal community from the *terai* region, practiced shifting cultivation in the forests (Bedi 1985). Raja of Garhwal signed a treaty with the British and ceded this part of the state to the British government and thus this area came under British occupation.

The British colonial government took possession of areas between 1815 and 1820. The principal aim of the British from 1820-1858 was collection of revenue through heavy fellings of standing trees, predominantly *Sal*. Private contractors were given *Sal* forests on lease for fellings according to a contract system. Soon after the first war of independence in 1857, the control of forests was passed on to Major Henry Ramsey, a British General in the Indian army who later became the Commissioner of Kumaon (1856-1884) based at Nainital. Ramsay drew a plan in 1861-62 to protect the forests: felling of trees without license was prohibited, cultivation in the Patlidun valley was stopped, cattle stations were removed and the *Buxas* and nomadic *Gujjars* were restricted from using the land (Bedi 1985). Ramsay introduced systematic forest use involving controlled fellings, and occupants were assigned land outside the forest boundaries to use for grazing and fixed-field cultivation/settlement (V. B. Singh 1974).
The management of the forests acquired from the Raja of Tehri Garhwal was transferred to the British-controlled Indian Forest Department in 1868. The forests were constituted as reserves under the Indian Forest Act 1878. System of control through lessees with conservancy continued. The first working plans were formulated for Patlidun for the periods 1881-1893. The earliest and main silvicultural approaches made in 1881-82 were the ‘conversion to uniform’ Sal and bamboo forests. The ‘selection system’ was instituted for hill Sal forests, meaning Sal trees were felled in a grid system with designated blocks harvested one at a time, with enough time left for regrowth before the block was revisited for an addition harvest. All other trees above exploitable diameter were removed subject to reservation of trees as seed bearers. Sample plots for Sal were established in 1912-1923 in areas now mostly within Corbett National Park. Preservation plots and seed plots were also established. Bamboo harvesting begun in 1880 followed a similar system and followed a four year cycle. The extension of scientific forestry by the British in hill areas for extraction of Sal timber led to the establishment of the Ramnagar and the Kalagarh Forest Divisions. Foundations of scientific forestry and silviculture in these forest divisions were laid in 1916-17 to 1935-36.

Ramnagar town, where the headquarters of Corbett Tiger Reserve are based today, served as the main hub for exporting timber. Ramnagar was a bazzar (market) town well connected with motorable roads and a railhead (Hall 1929). The main mode of transportation in Ramnagar and Kalagarh Forest Divisions was the sub montane Kandi sarak (road), a cart road that ran from Haldwani via Kalagarh to Kotdwar at the foot of the Himalayas along the East West axis. The Kandi road was used both for trade and public transportation. Local cart roads from the accessible parts of the foothills joined this main road (Hall 1929). The Kandi road formed the dividing line between the terai-bhabar tract of plains and the hill districts.
The Kandi road, which I discuss later, has become a bone of contention between conservation and development to this very day.

The Ramnagar Forest Division which includes around 300 sq miles was established in 1911; it was one of the oldest forest divisions of the United Provinces. The United Provinces was one of the provinces in British India that came into existence in 1921 with the renaming of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh. It consisted of areas presently under the State of Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand. The entire area of Uttarakhand under British rule in United Provinces was included in Kumaon Division that had three districts: Almora, Nainital and Garhwal. The colonial Forest Division headquarters was situated at the hill station of Nainital with winter headquarters at Ramnagar. The forest stock of the Ramnagar Forest Division mostly consisted of Sal which was considered a very durable timber owing to its slow growth. As noted above, fellings of Sal were mostly for constructing railway sleepers; 43,456 Sal sleepers were supplied by contractors in one year in 1928 (Hall 1929) and provided the bulk of timber revenue. Until the early twentieth century there were very few villages in Ramnagar Forest Division that were settled throughout the year. The area was used largely for seasonal grazing and rotational agriculture/shifting cultivation. The hill folk from Kumaon region came down and seasonally resided in temporary grass villages at the foot of the hills during a five-month period from November to March, providing the much needed labor for the colonial forestry operations (Hall 1929).

The Kalagarh Forest Division was crafted in 1918 during the British rule from parts of old Ramnagar and Lansdowne forest divisions in the Kotdwar Tehsil of District of Garhwal, and with some parts of Nainital and Almora districts. It was one of the most important forest divisions constituted by the British in the Himalayas for carrying out forestry operations; with an area of 400 sq miles it was somewhat larger than the Ramnagar Forest Division. The division formed the main drainage area of the Ramganga River along with its tributaries.
Sonanadi and Palain and was a solid mass of forests consisting of thirty-four forest blocks and an additional isolated Kartiya block (thirty-fifth) on the North side of the Mandal River. Unlike the Ramnagar Forest Division, the Kalagarh Forest Division was highly inaccessible with a near absence of motorable roads, as a result of which timber had to be dragged by buffaloes and bullocks, carted by camels and floated on the Ramganga in rafts (Robertson 1930). The road along the Ramganga River served as the main line of transportation. The expansion of forestry included path-making, fire protection and construction of buildings. Nearly 200,000-300,000 cubic feet of Sal timber was extracted every year for railway sleepers (Robertson 1930). It is this lack of accessibility and rich tiger presence that would later qualify this area as suitable for conversion into a national park.

There were no permanent villages within the boundaries of the Kalagarh division, except for a few chaks with houses generally occupied all around the year. There were 32 chaks (a demarcated village land within a forest reserve) in the division. Of these, except for Dhara and Kothirao that were situated along the Kandi sarak, the rest were all scattered along the northern boundary of the division (Pant 1936). Seven out of 30 chaks were uncultivated (Pant 1936). Dhara and other villages were allowed cultivation in exchange for the Patlidun valley (Pant 1936).

There are evidences of earlier occupation of forested areas, perhaps by villagers who were forced to flee during the Gorkha occupation by Nepal that lasted until 1815. Ancient carved stone artifacts continue to be found in the area. Many such engraved stones were used in the construction of the forest department buildings, and testify to earlier human settlement (Robertson 1930). As in the other forest divisions, seasonal grazing and shifting cultivation were the chief forms of use, with grazers and cultivators returning to the area at appropriate times of the year. The British Forest Department established eleven goths (cattle stations), three inside the Kalagarh division including one at Boxar and remaining eight along the
Kandi sarak. The former were used mostly for raising calves for sale while the latter were inhabited throughout the year and supplied forest labor besides their main concern of dairy products and intermediaries in Bhabbar contracts (Pant 1936). There were two permanent shops at Boxar and at Morghatti on forest land to provide provisions for purchase (Pant 1936). Gujjas sought permission to come and settle in the division, but the Gothiyas and Kabadis were given preference over Gujjars.

Kanda, Teria and Pand were the only villages within Kalagarh Forest Division (Pant 1936). These villages were surrounded by the reserved forests on all sides. However, numerous villages were located along the northern boundary of the division, main cultivation being in the hills north of reserve, and along the banks of the Ramganga River on the south eastern boundary. The surrounding population of the Kalagarh division consisted of Garhwali and Kumaoni hill people. Agriculture in these villages was not quite productive, but the villagers maintained livestock in large numbers. In cold weather groups of men from these villages periodically came to the forest to look for work as fellers, sawyers, carters or as daily labor on road work and other forestry operations (Pant 1936).

Some legal use rights in reserved forests were conferred to the villages that were situated on the northern and eastern boundary of the Kalagarh Forest Division. These were established in the British Forest Department notification no. 955/XIV, dated 6.11.1925 and enabled these villagers to use the forests only for their subsistence needs for fodder, fuelwood, small timber and medicines. Except for grasses, that could be collected for sale, all other rights to forest resources of right holders were for their home use only. More settled livelihoods and villages were encouraged by the colonialists, and villagers were given rights to remove timber to build dwelling houses, cattle sheds and agricultural implements per cubic feet per annum. In addition, rights were given to collect fallen wood for firewood defined as head loads for each village per annum; collection of grasses for thatching, building dwelling
houses, cattle sheds, as fodder and for sale; collection of green leaves/dry leaves; bamboos as scores per annum; stones, slate, lime stone for building; making of charcoal; collection of bark of creepers, fruits and roots; fishing in rivers within the reserved forests; construction of irrigation channels, and impoundment of water for mills; establishment of burning ghats for funeral pyres along the rivers. Village rights and concessions were included in the working plans for management of the reserved forests and have remained largely unaltered in the documents to today (Pant 1936).

Over 400 hundred villages in the districts of Garhwal and Almora were given subsistence rights, with some 56 villages permitted rights in Ramnagar Forest Division; however the number and kinds of rights they enjoyed varied greatly between villages (Pant 1936). The most important rights were those related to grazing, and cutting timber and bamboo. Out of a total of 345 villages, only 80 villages had rights for grazing, 43 for timber for dwelling houses, 179 for wood for agricultural implements, 50 of timber for cow sheds, and 305 for bamboo cutting (Pant 1936). Another 46 villages were permitted concessions for grazing and bamboo collection, 9 villages had concessions for bamboo and 21 villages for grazing (Pant 1936). There were no concessions for timber. The area enabling rights was confined to a narrow strip along the northern boundary of the division totaling a sum of 33 sq. miles; the villages of Birna, Dhara, Jhirna and Khotirao had rights along the southern boundary for about 8.5 sq miles. Against an annual settlement of 10,045 cubic feet, hardly 800 cubic feet was demanded by the villagers as most of the villages met their requirements from the neighboring civil forests instead of from the more distant reserved forests.

Management of grazing rights was a contentious issue as the villagers had large livestock population. These grazing rights, defined in 1925, were expressed as a maximum number of buffaloes, cows, sheep and goats allowed to be grazed by villages listed in the notification. Limited grazing rights and concession for grazing were granted in various
reserved forest blocks. The notification provided entrances only in forests adjoining villages; this discounts the seasonal migratory customs of nomadic pastoralists. Similar to the rights to timber, against the settlements’ figures of 27000 head of cattle, 13000-14000 head of cattle (mostly cows and bullocks) appeared to annually graze, representing half of the potential of the grazing areas. While some areas were heavily grazed, other distant areas were not grazed at all (Pant 1936).

The grazing rights were mostly used by neighboring villages, difficult to use by remotely spaced villages. On the Southern boundary of the Kalagarh Forest Division, cattle from the Bijnore district grazed in the plains and posed a problem to forest officials for management.

The colonial state’s focus on forestry, and especially *Sal*, led to a decrease in supply and value for products that historically provided subsistence and income to villagers. *Bhabbar* grass was sold on ten year leases from 1921 onwards (Pant 1936). Camels were the favored transport for *Bhabar or Baib* grass which was reserved on long term contract for a Calcutta firm (Robertson 1930). Revenue from the bamboo dwindled (Robertson 1930). Gold panning was also carried out along the Sonanadi River (Robertson 1930). Gold washing in Sonanadi and Paterpani rivers was given on three year leases and was done by *Boxa* families (Pant 1936).

It was not only the land and resources themselves that was taken over by colonial administrations, straying far from historical rights, but the rules and governance traditions as well. The following section summarizes the events that led to the formulation of rules for forests councils called *van panchayats* and community forests called *panchayat van* that are still prevalent in the state of Uttarakhand today.
Forest Councils (Van Panchayat) and Community Forests (Panchayat Van)

As a result of the enforcement of the new forest laws under the Indian Forest Act 1878, many customary practices that governed land rights and uses were restricted or rendered illegal, foremost being the restrictions imposed on lopping trees for fodder and grazing, use of non-timber forest products and extension of agriculture in forest areas (Agrawal 2001). There were widespread forest fires in 1916 and 1921 in Kumaon region started by villagers as a form of retaliation. The ‘incendiary fires’ in Kumaon region in 1921 affected 320 sq miles of exclusive pine forests, while the broadleaved oak forests useful for the villagers were spared (Gadgil and Guha 1992). To resolve this situation, the government formed the Kumaon Forest Committee in 1921 to look into the complaints of the villagers against the British controlled-forest department (Agrawal 2005). Based on the recommendations of the Kumaon Forest Committee, parts of reserved forests created in the preceding years particularly (a) those forests consisting of broadleaved forests used by villagers, (b) situated close to the villages and (c) in small patches were reclassified as Class I. Class I forests refers to forests that were dereserved and were transferred from the forest department to the revenue department. Class II forests continued to be reserved forests and were stocked with species the British forest department desired because of their commercial values (Agrawal 2001).

Of particular importance, the government passed the Forest Council Rules or the “Kumaon Panchayat Forest Rules” of 1931. These rules permitted villagers to create single village forest councils, obtain control of forest land transferred to the revenue department, and “craft the specific rules for everyday use to fit local conditions (Agrawal 2001, 15).” The forest councils were called van panchayat and the forests in control of the council were known as panchayat van. The van panchayat set limits for harvesting by villagers and ensured their enforcement. The Forest Council Rules of 1931 were more in the nature of
framework for the management of forests and endowed van panchayat with powers to prevent certain types of use from forests and facilitate others. Villagers were not able to do as they did in the past or what they desired in the present, they had to follow the views of the government. As such, “Instead of protesting the governmentalization of nature, Kumaonis [i.e., villagers from Kumaon] became active partners in that governmentalization (Agrawal 2005, 167).” Under these rules Diyori Pokhran, situated in the Lansdowne Forest Division, was the first village to have a van panchayat constituted in 1935, in the area which is now Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape. The rules governing the institution of van panchayat have been modified after independence (i.e., in 1976, 2001 and again in 2005) but they still retain the key power for making rules in the hands of the Government, and authority how to enforce them by van panchayat. This study found the existence of 118 panchayat van in the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape spread over 49.03 km².

Closely paralleling the legislation, categorization, and replacement of forest use and governance authority in the Corbett landscape for timber production during the colonial era were the alteration in regimes for management of wildlife and the rise of concerns for conservation. I turn to these changes next. The following section summarizes the transition in the use of wildlife from hunting for subsistence to shooting as a sport, development of legislation to regulate sport hunting, and the spread of sport hunting in Ramnagar and Kalagarh Forest Divisions.

**Critical Transitions from Hunting to Sport Shooting**

The British colonialists’ appropriation of forests and forested land uses importantly included its wildlife (Mandala 2015). In the case of wildlife, elites always had power over who used them and how. However, during the colonial era, “(w)ildlife was transformed from an open access resource whose use was very loosely regulated by the landed classes, into an
exclusive privilege by the ruling race (Rangarajan 2001, 48).” In practice, the eighteenth century in colonial India was marked with the indiscriminate slaughter of wild animals in the name of exploration and hunting (Mandala 2015; Rangarajan 2001). Changes in the law, administration and practices by the colonial administration marked the transition of hunting in the *shikargahs*, or the royal hunting grounds of the princely states, and in the forests by indigenous tribes to shooting as an organized sport. Access of hunting and gathering communities to forest resources became highly restricted and their practices were considered by the colonial government and other elites to be primitive in comparison to how they organized the sport. Sport was a mark of being “civilized” with specific hunting techniques considered superior to others and specific animals to be hunted (Rangarajan 2001). Shooting became regulated under the Indian Forest Act 1878 (revised in 1927). Thus began a policy for declaring some animals as “vermin” and encouraging their shooting, with the government giving generous rewards for exterminating animals deemed dangerous (Rangarajan 1998). This approach reached its peak in the last decades of the nineteenth century (Mandala 2015).

These practices permitted the intrusion of the government administration in remote areas, collection of information and building of alliances to accomplish their goals (Simlai 2021).

Despite burgeoning government laws and rules, the end of the nineteenth century was marked by rampant hunting of wildlife for sport. Sport hunting was closely linked with attempts at conservation to safeguard specific game for recreational activity. Scholars have argued that this approach led the British to how they treated elephants and tigers in a vastly different manner (Mandala 2015). Elephants were valued as a resource for communication and transport and used in commercial timber operations, during hunting operations and for official transportation in remote and inaccessible areas (Mandala 2015); and as such elephants were provided state protection as early as 1870s with the enactment of the Wild Elephant Preservation Act 1879. Tigers, on the other hand, were perceived by the government as an
obstacle to clearing forests for expansion of agriculture and an impediment in engineering projects such as construction of dams, reservoirs and expansion of the railway network. Tiger attacks on humans led to disruption and delays in the projects. As such, tiger was classified and exterminated as a vermin until 1925 (Mandala 2015); and even financial rewards were offered for killing of tigers. “Fewer tigers meant more cultivation and more revenue. Larger rewards were given out for killing tigresses and special prizes for finishing off cubs (Rangarajan 2001, 23).” During 1875 to 1925, over 80,000 tigers were slaughtered in this manner (Rangarajan 2001). Those that survived did so by staying in the hill forests protected by the British interest in timber, or heading to less accessible regions such as marshes (Rangarajan 2001). This is how tigers came to seek shelter in areas such as the Ramnagar and the Kalagarh Forest Divisions.

An elaborate system of rules and regulations was developed in the early 20th century for hunting, shooting and fishing. The Wild Bird and Animals Protection Act passed in 1912 brought about a spate of hunting regulations including the declaration of closed and open seasons, mandating a license for hunting, and imposing restriction on the numbers of animals of game that could be shot (i.e. bag limits) (Mandala 2015), and for helping species that were becoming scarce (Champion 1934). The Wild Bird and Animals Protection Act 1912 gave power to the provinces to declare closed season and make rules (Sarmah 2021). In the United Provinces, tigers could not be shot during the close season and with the help of artificial light at night (Champion 1934). These rules influenced how space was mapped and regulated for hunting. For example, specific shooting blocks in reserved forests were demarcated with permits issued by the colonial forest department. The Act prescribed penalties for “killing, selling and possession of listed species (Botteron 2021, 140).” However, the species list was highly selective; the list included those that were important for tribal people and other villagers while species that were hunted for trophy were not included in the list (Botteron 2001). The same happened with the provisions for hunting in which subsistence and
ceremonial hunting by tribals was effectively banned (Gadgil and Guha 1992), but hunting by the elite was not (Botteron 2021). In addition to regulating hunting, entry restrictions into shooting blocks also affected collection of fuel wood, grass, medicine, bamboo or small game for food or sale (Rangarajan 2001). The forest rules simultaneously provided penalties for illegal access while game rules exempted license holders. Sport hunting, as commercial timber extraction earlier, compelled the British to install their own property notions in the colony, leading to more “…control over major timber trees or key fauna but often ended up trying to restrict a spectrum of activities (Rangarajan 2001, 53).” The latter activities had major impacts on local villagers and others not able to gain permits and licenses, and on how physical space was being territorialized and further controlled by Government on its and its cronies behalf.

The organized sport of shooting was extended to the Himalayan foothills, offering even greater challenge to the sportsmen, owing to the more variable topography and the ability for animals to take refuge in ravines. The imperial capital of British India was shifted from Calcutta to Delhi in 1911 and the Ramnagar and the Kalagarh forest divisions came to be located close to the national capital. Thus, the region that is today the Corbett Tiger Reserve became a popular site for elite sport. In addition to forestry, the area became important for recreational activities, used mostly by colonialists, local elites and their guests.

In the early 20th century, the Kalagarh and the Ramnagar forest divisions, out of which Hailey National Park was carved, were speckled with nearly a dozen shooting blocks where tiger hunting was permissible and regulated by the Imperial Forest Department. Kosi and Ramganga Rivers were popular areas for fishing, especially with anglers from North India (Hall 1929). The Ramnagar Forest Division had several shooting blocks; three tigers were shot in a ten day shoot in Jaspur shooting block (Hall 1929). The Division had 18 *pucca* (permanent) forest rest houses (or bungalows), at distances never greater than 10 miles apart.
where visitors could stay (Hall 1929). Stevens (1911), who became the Divisional Forest Officer of Ramnagar Forest Division, mentions that such was the rush for securing permits for shooting blocks in the division that he received over 542 letters and telegrams for shooting for a single shooting season even before the season was over, and many requests had to be turned down. Several species such as the Gond or swamp deer (*Rucervus duvaucelii*), black buck (*Antilope cervicapra*), hog deer (*Axis porcinus*) and florican (*Houbaropsis bengalensis*) were sought for shooting (Hall 2029); these have all now become locally extinct.

Likewise, Kalagarh Forest Division had a high density of tigers with the Sonanadi shooting block particularly amenable for tiger hunting. Colonial hunters came in large numbers, but captive elephants were required for shooting as access was difficult. A Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) “put up” (i.e., presented) five tigers at Nibu Bojhi for a visitor (Robertson 1930). Such was the inflow of visitors that even the 20 *pucca* (permanent) forest rest houses (or bungalows) for stay were insufficient (Robertson 1930).

Two different methods were employed for shooting of tigers. Either the hunters tied a bait, usually a buffalo calf, to a tree and set on top of a *machan* (tree hide) and waited for the tiger to arrive to kill the animal, shooting the tiger while it was killing or eating the bait. Another method that was more elaborate required large number of villagers and use of several captive elephants involving a *haka* (a drive). In this method villagers took a long ream of cloth and slowly moved in a line making loud noises and clamping, driving the animals (including tigers) in grassland to come out in the open, while the hunters atop elephants could shoot them when they came out. In both the situations, shooting provided employment sometimes to entire villages for long periods. Archival footage taken by F. W. Champion and Jim Corbett analyzed for this study revealed that in both these methods, it was the white Europeans who were the hunters, dressed in formal field hunting costumes, while the role of
the villagers was confined to driving out the animals, conducting the captive elephants and lifting the carcasses of tigers, leopards and bears shot by the hunters.

**Early Efforts for Territorial Forms of Conservation**

Declining wild animal numbers caused concern among hunters and forest officers; it was becoming apparent that game laws alone were not sufficient for the protection of wild animals. In the early 20th century, the advances in natural history with identification of species and the impact of the indiscriminate destruction of wildlife through hunting led to a change in British attitudes towards wildlife. As such, colonial forest officers and hunters were becoming interested in conservation and started working towards the preservation of wild animals from both within and outside the government.

The first game reserve in India was established in 1908 in Kaziranga in Assam in North East India with complete restrictions on resource use by villagers (Sarmah 2021)—ironically not by sport hunters. The game reserve was subsequently upgraded into a game sanctuary in 1916 bringing hunting to a halt and regulations and area expanded (Sarmah 2021). However, regulations were mostly ineffective outside reserved forests (Champion 1934). This realization stimulated government to move to territorial forms of conservation. There seemed to be some hesitation in setting up a sanctuary in the United Provinces and initial efforts for such an approach to conservation did not meet with much success. The local government through Sir Michael Keene, Chief Secretary of United Provinces raised the possibility of creating a game sanctuary in 1907, but the proposal was rejected by the then Governor Sir John Hewett in 1909 (Mandala 2014). In 1916 and 1917, E. R. Stevens, the then Divisional Forest Officer of Ramnagar Forest Division and E. A. Smythies “actually planned the scheme for the creation of a sanctuary respectively” but their proposal was turned down by the then Commissioner of Kumaon, Percy Wyndham “who feared the loss of his shikar
(i.e., hunting) opportunities (Mandala 2014, 600).” “There was great opposition (from sporting interests) to the formation of the park (Gee 1964, 131).” This is likely because the area was a popular attraction for sport shooting by forest and other governmental officials.

**Establishment of India’s First National Park**

The initiative for conservation in the area now known as Corbett Tiger Reserve was brought about by many pioneers such as E. A. Smythies, and Fredrick Walter Champion who were both officers of the Imperial Forest Service and individuals such as Edward James Corbett. Smythies worked as a Conservator of forests of Western Circle at Nainital. F. W. Champion was a naturalist and wildlife photographer who advocated the use of a camera instead of gun (Mandala 2015). A pioneer of wildlife photography, Champion was arguably the first to use an early form of camera trap device. In his book, *‘With a Camera in Tigerland’* Champion exposed the western audience to never before seen pictures of animals in their natural habitat (Simlai 2021). These pictures provided a stark contrast to the typical pictures of imperial hunters and Rajas (kings) standing against mounds of big game carcasses (Mandala 2015). Champion advocated the establishment of protected areas, sanctuaries and national parks, where the general public can see wild animals in their natural state, as well as the permanently phasing out of government rewards for destroying wild animals (Champion 1934).

Unlike Champion who was British and a forest officer, Edward James Corbett, popularly called “Jim” Corbett, was a legendary hunter and naturalist. He was a third generation Irishman born and brought up in the Indian hill resort town of Nainital. Early in his life, Corbett became famous for his role in eliminating man-eating tigers. Yet as he grew older, Corbett raised his voice against the indiscriminate slaughter of wildlife and directed his passionate efforts towards the conservation of wild animals, specifically towards tigers
In the middle stages of his life, Corbett began and was part of the editorial board of a journal “Indian Wildlife” for three years (Gee 1964; Mandala 2014). In the 1930’s, Corbett founded a provincial association for the preservation of wildlife (Rangarajan 2001) and was the secretary of the United Provinces branch of the “Preservation of the Fauna of the Empire Society” (Champion 1934). Inspired by Champion, Corbett also took to film-making, managing to record seven tigers including a white tiger near his house in Kaladhungi (Mandala 2014). Corbett used this footage to deliver school lectures to students for raising awareness. In 1915, at the age of forty, Corbett purchased a village, Chhoti Haldwani, where he settled forty tenant families and promoted agriculture. Beginning with the ‘Man Eaters of Kumaon’ published in 1944 when he was 69 years old, Jim Corbett authored six books that recounted his stories. Corbett’s multifaceted contribution in writing books, editing journals, forming associations, giving lectures and displaying photographs, managing human-tiger conflict and sponsoring development that stewarded resources, all established him as a pioneer in conservation. More than the others, Corbett saw early that the tiger, the “large-hearted gentleman”, was not the main threat to people. Instead, he along with Champion called attention to the deleterious impacts to nature by indiscriminate hunting aided by the spread of road networks, increased availability of guns and the increased use of motorcars. It is to Corbett’s credit that he brought widespread attention to the threat modern development posed to tigers. Corbett Tiger Reserve is named after Jim Corbett, because he played such a pivotal role in bringing awareness to wildlife and conservation, and especially to this park’s establishment; he personally assisted in the demarcation of this to be national park’s boundaries.

Corbett lobbied with senior officials of the colonial government, the Governor of United Province and ultimately the Viceroy of India, on conservation issues. Mandala (2014) highlights the manner in which Corbett used his influence with Hailey for the cause of
conservation. Corbett knew Malcolm Hailey at a personal level. Corbett had organized a
shikar (hunting party) for Hailey near his home in Kaladhungi in 1929. Corbett frequently
accompanied Hailey for fishing trips in Ramganga River, a fact supported by others (Gee
1964). Corbett used these visits to make Hailey aware of the richness of wildlife in the region
and persuade him to establish a national park. Jim Corbett lent support from outside and
played an important role by lobbying for the creation of the India’s first national park.
Together Corbett and Hailey mobilized support for the establishment of the first national park
of India.

**London Conference**

The situation for wildlife conservation changed dramatically throughout the world
after the ‘International Conference for the Protection of the Fauna and Flora of Africa’ held
in London during November, 1933 to discuss the threats to wild animals in Africa and
globally. The Conference marked a global landmark in the movement for wildlife protection
as well as promotion of territorial forms of conservation. Even though the Government of the
United States of America established the first national park in the USA in 1872, the national
parks until then were restricted to only a few countries including the USA, Canada, New
Zealand and South Africa. The main proposal of the Convention adopted at the Conference
was the establishment of three principal types of reserves: national parks, strict reserves and
other less restrictive reserves. The Convention also proposed special protection of certain
species and regulations to govern the trade in all animal trophies. The Conference had two
major outcomes. First, the Conference led to a consensus among global leaders on the
definition of national parks to be established under legislative authority as areas sufficient in
size for the migration of the fauna preserved, where destruction of flora and fauna was
completely prohibited except for administrative purposes and which were set aside “for the
benefit, advantage and enjoyment of the general public (Stewart 1934, 155).” Settlements of any human beings inside the national parks were prohibited, but facilities and development of roads could be carried out for the movement of public admitted for observation and education under special permits such as in Kruger National Park. However, any existing rights of the natives were not to be interfered with (Stewart 1934). Secondly, and equally importantly, the Conference recommended the establishment of an ‘intermediate zone’ akin to what later was called buffer zones to make the reserves more effective. The Conference proposed a zone around the national parks in which settlers were permitted and “hunting, killing and capturing of animals may take place under the control of the authorities of the park or reserve (Stewart 1934, 156).” The purpose of this zone was to drive back wandering fauna to the national parks, and to prevent their invading adjoining agricultural districts. Settlers near the protected areas could be given power to kill in defense of life or property but could not lay claims on account of depredation by fauna (Stewart 1934). The extent to which the latter was achieved remains debated. Globally, the ideas of both National Parks and buffer zone were thus born at the same moment.

India had its own early wildlife conservation Acts that functioned as rules if not demarcated spaces or territories with conservation as their primary objective. ‘Indian Wild Birds and Animal Protection Act 1912’, ‘Wild Elephant Preservation Act 1879’ and ‘forest regulations’ under the Indian Forest Act 1927 all had provisions for the regulation of hunting and the protection of wild animals. But a legislation that covered all aspects provided in the convention and could apply to various states and provinces throughout India was lacking, particularly a legislation for the establishment of national parks. Furthermore, unlike elephants and many other mammals, tigers did not find a place in the global schedule of species to be protected in the convention. The legal protection to tigers was missing in Indian legislation as well.
The International Conference held in London in 1933 caught the imagination of various governments and led to a worldwide beeline to create a national park in their countries. Several countries in Asia established their first national parks soon after the Conference: Philippines in 1933, Japan in 1934 and Indonesia in 1935 (Yui 2014). The Wild Bird and Animals Protection Act 1912 was modified in 1935 when the provincial governments were given authority to declare any area as a sanctuary (Botteron 2001). The Conference simultaneously also marked the beginning of later global debates on what are the appropriate forms of conservation, what role for national parks and other conservation areas, how the latter should be managed - including the practice of zoning. To understand this, below is the history of what eventually is to become Corbett Tiger Reserve – initially named Hailey National Park and later Corbett National Park before being renamed for a third time, Corbett Tiger Reserve.

Initially, in early 1934 Sir Malcolm Hailey, the Governor of United Provinces (1928-1934), suggested that the Indian forest department should prepare a proposal for the creation of a game sanctuary or a national park with legislative authority on the lines recommended by the International Conference of 1933 and an area of 150 to 200 sq miles was suggested (Smythies 1936). Smythies was deputed for this task and asked to prepare a concrete proposal in the reserved forests of the Western Circle (Smythies 1936). Smythies consulted Jim Corbett on the determination of the boundaries. The colonial forest department in 1934 banned hunting totally in the area proposed to be declared as the national park. Forest officials informed the Governor that a sanctuary had been created.

Both the area of the proposed national park and what should be included and excluded within the boundaries was not without its share of disputes. The initial announcement by Hailey in 1934 in Lucknow, as Governor of United Provinces, was for setting up a national park of 200 sq miles (Statesman 1934). The first proposal included a total area of 170 sq
miles (Smythies 1936). Corbett later claimed that the area of the park was reduced from 180 to 125 sq miles after Hailey’s departure from India (Gee 1964). Similarly, when the park boundaries of the Hailey National Park were being determined, there were negotiations. The Dhikala chaur (a large patch of grassland) near the forest rest house was deliberately kept outside the proposed Hailey National Park, to ensure that the forest officers on tours could carry out “hunting for the pot,” that is, to provide them with their food during work periods. Another aspect that merits attention is that Ramganga River was not included in the newly formed park. This is intriguing as it is the Ramganga River that gives Corbett Tiger Reserve its fabled scenic beauty and tiger’s habitat: its waters and river banks are full of wild animals in water, land and air and its floodplains the haunt of the tigers. In all likelihood, Ramganga was excluded from the initial boundaries of the national park as the road from Kalagarh to Boxar and other forest roads ran along the river course. The river was used for transportation of timber as well. Unlike the forests included in the national park, villagers had rights to catch fish in the Ramganga River and carry out other uses admissible under regulations. Above all, the river-bed at that time would have provided some of the best opportunities for shooting tigers, which the hunters were reluctant to forgo. In fact, in the late thirties after the formation of the national park, the then Viceroy Lord Linlithgow came with Jim Corbett for a stay in Dhikala, and the two together went for a tiger hunt in the Phulai area across the Ramganga overlooking Dhikala forest rest house. Also, the pilgrims annually visited the Sagar Tal, a pool below Boxar as part of their cultural practices, where according to a legend the gods came annually to take a bath on the auspicious occasion of the festival of Makar Sankranti that falls on 14th of January every year (Gee 1964). Inclusion of Ramganga River in the proposed national park would have raised many challenges.

The correspondence between Canning, the Chief Conservator of Forests of United Provinces (Letter dated 10th April 1935) and R. M. Brahmawar, the Divisional Forest Officer
of Kalagarh Forest Division (Letter dated 1st June 1935), provides particular insights in the concerns at the time the proposal was being finalized. Visitors and game viewing were of central importance, as was how to have tigers lose their fear of humans and bait them for viewing. Other attractions such as fish for angling were considered and a bounty on killing of otters too was weighed. There was a clear shift of sensibility in this zone to viewing animals for aesthetics and not to hunt, shoot or kill. But when hunting was permitted it was principally for the colonizers and other elites.

It was to Hailey’s foresight that he expressed a desire for conservation that was more permanent with legislative authority. Through the Governor’s initiative, a new legislation “The United Provinces National Parks Act” was passed in 1935 to facilitate the formation of the national park, inspired by what occurred with Yellowstone National Park. It is important to distinguish that Yellowstone NP was formed in United States through national legislation, while the Act passed in India was a provincial one. The speed with which the legislation in India was enacted reveals the importance given to national park formation. The United Provinces National Parks Act was passed by the legislative council in February 1935, received assent of the Governor of United Province in March 1935 and of the Governor General in April 1935 (Smythies 1936). The appendix of the Act defined the national park's boundaries, which is comparable to the United States practice. But many features were borrowed from the London Convention. Lord Hailey refused to approve the proposal until he was assured that visitors could drive within the national park. Lord Hailey personally drove in a car from Dhangarhi gate to Dhikala and returned via Gajipani and Malani to Bijrani, on a road that is today the core and buffer zone of the Corbett Tiger Reserve, before giving his assent to the proposal. The passing of the United Provinces National Parks Act meant lengthy debates in the legislative assembly to determine the national park boundaries. India’s other national parks and protected areas have been notified later under the Wildlife (Protection) Act.
of 1972. The 1972 Act provides the procedure for declaring national parks and empowers the State Governments to declare protected areas through executive orders. The boundaries of protected areas need not be debated in the state assembly or the parliament as happened with Hailey National Park. However, Hailey had already left United Provinces by the time the Act reached the governor, and the Act was passed by his successor Harry G. Haig, who took over as Governor of United Provinces in December 1934.

An area of 125 sq miles (323 km²) was carved out of the Kalagarh Forest Division and Ramnagar Forest Division in the South Patlidun valley to form Hailey National Park (Gee 1952). Hailey National Park was formed in 1936 and became the first national park not only in India but also in the Asian mainland (Ashok Singh 1986). The national park was named after Governor Hailey (Gee 1964). Figure 2 provides a map of Hailey National Park.

The rules became effective on 8th August 1936 and Hailey National Park formally came into existence on this date. The rules for Corbett National Park were borrowed from Kruger National Park in South Africa (Simlai 2021). The rules of the national park were elaborate and strict. The term “animal” was defined as any mammal, reptile (excluding snakes except python) and birds. It was an offence “to kill, injure or capture, or disturb any animal or to take or destroy any egg or nest of any bird (Smythies 1936).” Except for officials and forest contractors, a permit had to be obtained for entry or residing inside the national park and the conditions were specified (Smythies 1936). Photography was permitted but no flashlight apparatus could be taken inside the national park (Smythies 1936). This provision irritated Champion, much to the amusement of Corbett, who could no longer take night pictures with the help of tripwire. F. W. Champion was later posted as the Divisional Forest Officer of the Kalagarh forest division from 1937-1940 to lead the formation of the national park (Sinha 2015).
Hailey National Park was created to protect tigers from excessive hunting for sport. It was hoped that the tiger protected in the national park would disperse into adjacent shooting blocks (Rangarajan 2001). As such, a major portion of the Kalagarh Forest Division was designated as a part of the national park, but the territory's administration remained with the forest division. Thus, it is clear that while making the boundaries of the Hailey National Park at the time of its inception in 1936, there were two aims: protection of tigers and promotion of tourism.
Figure 2. Map of Hailey National Park (Source: Survey of India)

Figure 3. Map of Corbett National Park (Source: Survey of India)
Nomads and Indigenous Communities

The creation of national parks, sanctuaries, and reserves in India exacerbated the issue of native communities’ customary rights to land and forest resources, under assault by colonial and other states (Mandala 2015). The area notified as Hailey National Park in 1936 (and which later will become Corbett Tiger Reserve/National Park) did not give any rights to villagers who seasonally used or lived in the area. The area was used and periodically inhabited for centuries by the nomadic Gujjars, and the now scheduled tribes of Tharus and Buxas (Simlai 2021). Observers report that by the late 19th century, there were no permanent human habitation as they were all moved outside the park (Rangarajan 2001; Simlai 2021). But after the declaration of Hailey National Park as a human habitation-free area, a few villages were in fact still present along the fringes of the national park (Ashok Singh 1986). These villages reportedly experienced human–wildlife conflicts in terms of crop-raiding, predation of livestock, and loss of human life (Ashok Singh 1986).

Gujjars are one of the historical peoples using what is today the buffer area of Corbett Tiger Reserve. Originally from the District of Jammu, Gujjars are Muslims who raise livestock through the historic practice of transhumance pastoralism. They are believed to have come to Himachal Pradesh as part of dowery of the King of Sirmaur who married a princess of Jammu. The Gujjars then entered western Uttar Pradesh (which later became Uttarakhand). Today, they are found in all forest areas in the Western Terai. They generally speak Hindi but their mother tongue is “Gujri” which resembles to but is not identical to Gujri spoken by Muslim Gujjars of Jammu (Paquet 2018). The Gujjars in the neighboring state of Himachal Pradesh enjoy the status of “scheduled tribe’ since the 1960s (Paquet 2018). They are buffalo herders and earn their income from sale of buffalo milk (Paquet 2018). Van Gujjars communities are today both nomadic and sedentarized. Sedentary Van Gujjars also supplement their income with agriculture.
As nomadic herders, the Gujjars seasonally move their herds to access pasturelands. They rear herds of buffaloes as well as cows, goats and mules. During the season where their livestock graze, the Gujjars historically lived in huts built from poles and grasses from the forests called *deras*; they built these huts in open patches inside the forest and located near a water source. Gujjars have been reported from the Kalagarh Forest Division since 1950s where they were permitted to settle in Pakhhro, Kalusahid, Nalkatta and Dhara forest blocks, all in Corbett Tiger Reserve. There were small number of buffalos in the Sonanadi valley in areas of Laldarwaja Shisham *khata* and Chipalgatti blocks. Gujjar nomadic grazing practices were disrupted during the Chinese aggression in 1962. In the 1970s, the working plan set-aside areas for the Gujjars to lop forest trees for fodder on a two year cycle. Subsequently, the movement within the sanctuary to its outer fringes coincided with the rise in water level of the Ramganga reservoir and subsequent flooding of the low lying *deras* (Sinha 2000).

The Gujar settlements in forest areas were formalized through a permit system for lopping and grazing rights in demarcated forests some 80 years ago. This required the herders to pay annual fees for use rights in forest compartments. The permits were mostly issued in the name of men. The permits were issued for two seasons, one for the plains and another for the hills (Paquet 2014). A large number of Gujjar families that were in reserved forests were forcefully sedentarized in 1990s. The forest department stopped issuing permits in the 1990s. The Gujjars maintain their access to forests through *ad hoc* arrangements and everyday negotiations with forest staff (Paquet 2018).

*Buksas* are an indigenous ethnicity whose distribution is confined to the Terai areas in the districts of Nainital and Dehradun of Uttarakhand and adjoining Bijnor district of Uttar Pradesh. Buksas occupied the forest areas that now form part of Corbett Tiger Reserve (Simlai 2021).
Unlike the nomadic Gujjar pastoralists, the Buksas are small farmers and fishermen. As noted above they historically farmed through shifting cultivation. Their populations is limited to around 50,000 spread in around 150 villages mostly in rural areas of Bazpur and Gadarpur block of Udham Singh Nagar and Dehradun districts. The Buksa villages are known as Buxar; Boxar was the name of a location in Corbett National Park which was submerged under the Ramganga reservoir in 1974. The Buksa villages were previously inhabited exclusively by only the Buksa people and they remained isolated; but now Kumaoni Pahari and Muslims have also started to reside in their villages (Saxena and Saxena 2014).

The Buksa cultivated small farms through shifting cultivation and served as agricultural laborers. Small scale communal fishing was another important part of their culture and marked their social gatherings such as marriage and birth of new ones (Simlai 2021). However, they cannot practice their historic fishing traditions due to strict regulations in Corbett Tiger Reserve and other reserved forests. Officials and upper caste villagers enforce caste rules which limit what the lower caste Buxas can do (Simlai 2021) They were also classified as “Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)” but only in 1981, decades after India gained independence, by which time much of their land had been sold. They have suffered owing to the delays in granting of the tribal status to them as this status would have led to restrictions on the sale of their land. The majority of Buksa living near Ramnagar have been ghettoized in a village (Simlai 2021) near Corbett Tiger Reserve. Simlai discusses a ninety-two year Buksa woman who claims that their village was located in Dhikala, but was burnt down by the forest officials (Simlai 2021, 72).

**National Park Development, Tourism in Early Years, and the Dam (1936-1973)**

Even after the formation of Hailey National Park, forestry operations and extraction of timber continued unabated. “The park itself was carved out of reserve forest with shooting,
but not timber cutting, being disallowed (Rangarajan 2001, 72).” Forest management followed the colonial scheme, similar to their use for the expansion of railway network, during the second world war years of 1939-45 to meet the demand when larger quantities of timber, bamboo and fodder grasses were supplied by overturning working plan prescriptions (Gadgil and Guha 1992). Around the time India gained independence in 1947, damage to crops and livestock by wild animals emerged as a prominent issue and there was a demand from the agriculture department to permit shooting in Hailey National Park to control wild animal populations. But this pressure was rebuffed by the forest officials and resolved by providing firearm licenses to farmers who lived near the park (Strahorn 2009). Timber extraction by felling mature trees of selected species in forest blocks within the national park on rotation yielded Rs 5-6 lakhs per annum as revenue (Gee 1952). As such, the national park was not more than a well-managed reserved forest where shooting had been prohibited permanently (Gee 1952). The preservation plots were limited to only one square mile in extent (Gee 1952). Buffer zones or intermediate zones of sufficient width were advocated between national park and sanctuary and human occupation for ensuring that wild animals did not suffer any deleterious effects (Gee 1952).

The Kalagarh Forest Division maintained four shooting block adjacent to the national park: Kalushahid, Hathikund, Adnala and Palain comprising a total area of 599.47 km² (Sinha 2000). The shooting season extended from October 16th to May 31st every year. Table 6 provides the details of the shooting blocks in the Kalagarh Forest Division. The newly created national park was a haven for tigers as shooting was permitted in the shooting blocks surrounding the national park. On an average, six tigers and two leopards were shot annually during 1949-50 to 53-54 in the Kalagarh forest division with the numbers declining in subsequent years (Sinha 2000). It was only after 1982 that there was a complete ban on hunting of any kind.
The creation of Hailey National Park led to a change from one form of tourism activity to another: from sport hunting to wildlife viewing and photography. The park had two entrances at Sultan and at Kalagarh (Champion 1941). Visitors could drive on undeveloped forest roads which were motorable during fair weather. In the initial years, tourism development occurred gradually and there was some promotion of tourism in the national park through published photographs and articles, as well as small-scale industries. For example, the forest department developed poultry in Buxar to supply fresh eggs to the visitors coming to Dhikala, as well as a fruit orchard. Visitors were encouraged to stay in forest rest houses built by the colonial government, view wild animals and practice wildlife photography. Hunting was prohibited, but angling was permitted. The entire national park area was open to tourists and at that time there was no demarcation of separate areas for tourists. Champion did not favor “no go zones” where all sport were prohibited. He defended shooting blocks and reserved forests (Rangarajan 2001). The forest rest houses of Bijrani (situated outside Corbett National Park) and Melani were booked by the DFO Ramnagar forest division, while those of Sultan, Sarpduli, Dhikala, Boxar, Paterpani, Gaujpani and Jamunagwar were booked by the DFO Kalagarh forest division (Champion 1941).
Over time, management practices in Hailey National Park developed clearly for the promotion of tourism. *Sher batias* (trails in grasslands cut annually to encourage tigers to move along them so that the visitors could see them) began to be cut annually to enable tiger sighting. Sightings of wild elephants were not so common. *Gud chana* (a mixture of jaggery and roasted horse gram beans loved as food by the elephants) was scattered by staff to encourage elephants to stay in a place that visitors could be ferried for viewing. Eight watch towers were developed at strategic places for wildlife viewing similar to the tree tops of Africa (Soni 1961). Visitors had to sit on *machans* (hides on trees) to see the animals.

The national park suffered from some limitations such as tree felling by contractors and grazing by domestic cattle near places visited by visitors such as Dhikala, Boxar, Paterpani, Sariduli and Bijrani, administration by two separate forest divisions necessitating permissions to be obtained from two different offices, and lack of publicity (Gee 1955). Even as late as 1950’s the park did not experience much visitation, either by the Indian public or foreigners (Gee 1955).

The area's geography underwent a significant change with the decision for setting up a hydroelectric project at Kalagarh that led to the construction of Asia’s highest earthen dam for control of floods and irrigation for agriculture. A large part of Corbett National Park came under the submergence of the proposed dam’s reservoir. Effort was made by forest officials to ensure that the reservoir remain under the control of the park authorities (Gee 1964). To compensate for the loss of area of the national park due to submergence in the reservoir, the then Government of Uttar Pradesh vide notification number 4229/XIV-A-867-62 dated August 24, 1966 added an additional area of 197.07 km$^2$, so that the national park area was increased from 323.75 km$^2$ to its present size of 520.84 km$^2$. This was accomplished by adding the Mandal shooting block, Jhirna shooting block and part of Bijrani shooting block to the Corbett National Park. Out of this 284.94 km$^2$ was part of the Kalagarh forest division.
Figure 3 shows the extended boundaries of the Corbett National Park. With the expansion of the Corbett National Park, Dhikala became part of the national park. Initially, Dhikala was just a forest rest house but additional tourist facilities were developed in 1970.

Forest management practices continued with both felling of trees and plantations. Many exotic tree species such as teak (*Tectona grandis*), Cuth Sagon (*Ailanthus*) and Eucalyptus hybrid were planted during the late fifties. Plantations were carried out during 1955-58 of Shisham (*Dalbergia sisso*), Teak (*Tectona grandis*), Cuth Sagon (*Ailanthus*) in Pakhro and Dhaulkhand forest blocks. In 1966 Khair (*Acacia catechu*) Shisam (*Dalbergia sisso*), Semal (*Bombax ceiba*) were planted. Bamboo planting occurred in 1966 in Kugadda and Bijorgarh blocks (Sinha 2000).

The newly included forest areas within the boundary of the national park were overlaid with rights of eight villages that were situated outside the boundary of the national park: Dhara, Jhirna, Birna, Kothirau, Laldhang and Dhela villages on the Southern side and Teria and Kanda villages on the Northern side. The rights were confined to 1.61 km² in Mandal Range (10.9 ha in Kanda Block and 150.2 ha in Teria Block) and 22.04 km² in Dhara Range (650.8 ha in Dhara Block and 1553.5 ha in Jhirna Blocks) (V. B. Singh 1974). The villagers could graze in Dhara and Jhirna Blocks 7720 cow units (cows 4648 and buffaloes 1536 – one buffalo taken as 2 cows). The villagers’ rights were to graze livestock, to remove timber for dwelling houses, cow shed and agricultural implements. Other rights included collection of fallen firewood, fodder and thatching grasses stones etc. Trespassing by cattle from other grazers was common. Migratory cattle from Kumaon hills grazed by *Kumaoni* villagers during winter months added to the grazing pressure. *Gujjars* lived and camped outside the park.

Prior to the launch of the Project Tiger in 1973, the irrigation department developed viewpoints for tourists at the Saddle Dam, which is very rich in wild animals and provides a
spectacular view of the Ramganga reservoir. A three-star hotel was proposed by the Government of Uttar Pradesh at Khinanauli with the foundation stone laid around the 1970s, but the project was shelved after Project Tiger was announced.

The form of administration in Corbett Tiger Reserve changed. For three decades, from the formation of Hailey National Park in 1936 until 1966, the Kalagarh forest division and Ramnagar forest division that formed parts of the national park were independently managed by the divisional forest officers under their respective jurisdiction. Subsequently, after the creation of Wildlife Preservation Organization in erstwhile state of Uttar Pradesh (earlier United Provinces) in 1966, a separate warden with wildlife guards was posted as the national park administrator. However, the management functions of the wildlife wing were still limited to tourism management and conducting anti-poaching only.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have presented a detailed background to understand historical features of the territorialization of the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape. Two legislations played a key role in bringing this landscape under the ownership and governance authority of the colonial state, the Indian Forest Act 1878 and the United Provinces National Park Act 1935. Importantly the latter law evidenced how territorialization was accomplished through the lens of conservation. In the process, much changed: how these areas were used, managed, revenue sought, and later resources, especially wildlife, were valued for hunting and how that spurred concerns for conservation including setting aside or “reserving” land and resources as a park.

The foundations for how space – land and other resources – are demarcated, regulated and transformed through “zoning” can be glimpsed in this historical background section. Initially forests were categorized and their uses and management “zoned” accordingly by the British colonial government. During this period we saw the creation of the colonial forest
department, and the enactment of the forest legislation by British-colonial administration in India, including their belief in the practice of scientific forestry developed elsewhere in the world and transported in particular to Kalagarh and Ramnagar forest divisions, key areas to be developed into Corbett Tiger Reserve. These practices were instrumental to bringing the forests under state control, redefining (and limiting) historic livelihoods based on villagers’ generational use of local resources regulated by their customary institutions, replaced by formal rights and concessions determined by the colonial and later independent Indian state, and in their own interests. This history brought out how the preservation of good Sal forests for timber production and the hilly terrain prompted tigers to take refuge in this area. The forest divisions acquired infrastructure and a well-developed network of roads for movement of timber. Ramnagar township emerged as a center of trade in forest produce with rail connectivity for transportation of timber.

Governance regime changes in Kumaon region led to the formation of a government introduced village-based institution of local management councils known as van panchayats, with management authority over designated forests called panchayat van. While their existence elsewhere in Uttarakhand may be well known, there is not a lot of published material about them in the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape – a topic however I will return to later in this dissertation.

Within the forest divisions, the shooting blocks represented another kind of zoning, notably for recreation (and recreation for elites and tourists). During the early part of the 20th century wildlife laws and regulations permitted recreational shooting (and the concomitant criminalization of indigenous hunting and fishing). Corbett landscape increasingly became an attraction for recreation though sport hunting. Large scale destruction of wildlife led to a
change in British and Indian attitudes for wildlife conservation. This enabled a large role played by key individuals in establishing Hailey National Park.

Drawing on the history of Hailey National Park, which later became Corbett National Park, I presented the events that led to the rezoning of a part of the reserved forests as a national park. I summarized Corbett National Park’s over three decade history (1936-1972) to bring out how the foundations for tourism based on wildlife viewing was first established. However, unlike the reserved forests which acquired shooting blocks, there was no zoning for tourism within the national park. The boundaries laid for reserved forests and Hailey /Corbett National Park, and the rights determined during this period, would continue to influence events in the landscape.

By providing some description of indigenous and nomadic villages and communities, I tried to provide a background to understand how early peoples in the Corbett landscape used and governed resources. This is not a pristine, uninhabited region. To the contrary, there is ample physical evidence as to their presence and activities. In my account, I described how over time many groups were evicted and/or were replaced by villagers seeking livelihoods under strict restrictions on forest-farming, grazing, forest product collecting as well as fishing.

In the following chapters I build on the context provided above to examine the process of zoning and especially its variable impacts. In the next chapter I turn to an examination of the Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972. This Act, I argue, is critical to understand the operationalization of the core/buffer area and tourism zoning within Corbett Tiger Reserve during the formative years from Phase I (1973 to 1990) when Corbett Tiger Reserve and Corbett National Park were synonymous and the buffer zone was limited to the area within the boundaries of the National Park. This phase marked the development of two
successive wildlife management plans. This period was marked with growth in tourism predominantly based on accommodation inside the Corbett National Park.
CHAPTER FIVE
CORBETT TIGER RESERVE: PHASE I (1973–1990)

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I presented background on Hailey National Park, later renamed Corbett National Park and even later Corbett Tiger Reserve, to establish the historical context. Here and in subsequent chapters I present and discuss the key findings regarding the implementation and impacts of the core/buffer model of zoning applied in Corbett Tiger Reserve. These findings are presented in three phases. While each phase manifests particular dynamics pertaining to the time period, an overarching prism that colors the entire process is an exclusionary agenda dominated by the views and interests of state and tiger conservation authorities, which I argue, produce major unforeseen opportunities for resort development and major barriers for the production of community-based (eco) tourism.

Zoning of forest areas has a long history around the world. As described in the previous chapter, bounding, mapping and prescribing forest uses in particular areas was a key strategy for colonial powers in India to claim and appropriate land, notably by modern-states, and in the latter’s attempt to employ a western imported, scientific approach to increasing yields and profits through sustained yield forest management. Towards this objective, zoning was done in working plans developed by state forest departments for managing forest divisions for these outcomes. For example, the declaration of reserved forests was to promote management of forests for (commercial) timber production. Importantly zoning and legislation often work in tandem. The zoning efforts were backed in the case of reserved forests by the Indian Forest Act 1878 and 1927, which was uniformly applied throughout India. The subsequent zoning of reserved forests in parts of Kalagarh and Ramnagar forest divisions as Hailey National Park was a more localized effort to promote wildlife
preservation through the United Provinces National Parks Act 1935. The history of wildlife zoning while sharing many dimensions with zoning in general, nonetheless has its own trajectory; these are propelled by specific actors, interests, and laws. This assemblage of forces is well illustrated in the case of what becomes Corbett Tiger Reserve.

The enactment of the Wildlife (Protection) Act in 1972 followed by the launch of Project Tiger in 1973 together marked the first phase or “rupture point” in the development of Corbett Tiger Reserve. I refer to this period from 1973 until 1990 as Phase I of the Corbett Tiger Reserve wherein the boundaries of Corbett Tiger Reserve remained coterminous with those of Corbett National Park i.e. the two were synonymous. Government of India introduced wildlife zoning in tiger reserves as part of the guidelines of Project Tiger. Corbett National Park (a legal entity) was designated Corbett Tiger Reserve (a management entity) under Project Tiger thus giving it a new identity and the core/buffer zoning model was adopted in Corbett Tiger Reserve as well.

The core/buffer zoning in tiger reserves differed from zoning undertaken in the past in the purpose, method of planning, scale and outputs. The core/buffer model of zoning was introduced under Project Tiger as a spatial strategy for reducing conflict with large carnivores especially tiger conservation. This approach to zoning was based on the premise that the tigers could not coexist with humans as they needed human free area for breeding and presented a huge challenge for human safety. The core/buffer zoning model applied in Corbett Tiger Reserve represented a new and different approach presumably for resolving potential conflicts between tigers and people. The demarcation of core/buffer zoning was achieved through the management planning exercise prescribed for tiger reserves. Zoning during Phase I was limited to the area within tiger reserves only. The core/buffer zones that were created were essentially a new territory created within Corbett National Park.
This chapter discusses how under Project Tiger the national level tiger reserve policy prescriptions for zoning began to operate in one particular place, Corbett Tiger Reserve (CTR). I first discuss the international concern regarding dwindling numbers of tigers and the initiatives taken by Government of India to arrest their decline in the early 1970s. Subsequently, I discuss the launch of core/buffer zoning in Corbett Tiger Reserve (CTR). I argue that the during this phase the core/buffer zoning was adopted under the authority of Project Tiger more in the realm of management rather than legislation as was the case later on. During this period, the buffer zone was enclosed within the boundaries of the Corbett National Park and as such zoning was largely a land management decision of the (then) Uttar Pradesh Forest Department. I now turn to presenting the notable findings from the analysis of the WLPA Act 1972, management plans and other documents.

**Early Efforts at Wildlife Protection**

As per the new Constitution of India adopted in 1950, ‘forests and wildlife protection’ was a provincial level subject and “all powers regarding legislation for the protection of wild animals and birds were vested with the state (provincial) governments (Gee 1952, 6).” This implied that only provincial governments were free to enact laws for wildlife and forestry. At the time, the central government could not act unilaterally but rather had to obtain provincial level state approval of proposed legislation as provided in article 252 of the Constitution. The role of the national government was limited to advising the provincial governments and coordination.

The Government of India established the Central Board for Wildlife in 1952 to aid and advise the Central and provincial governments for matters concerning wildlife conservation (Gee 1952). This board was later renamed the Indian Board for Wildlife (IBWL). The Indian Board for Wildlife became the primary framer of wildlife conservation
policy in India. The IBWL's power was enhanced further in the 1980s when Prime Minister Indira Gandhi became its Chairperson. The National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) was constituted in 2003 as a statutory body under Section 5A of the WLPA 1972. It replaced the IBWL which was only an advisory body.

In the early period after India gained independence, the wildlife in reserved forests was protected through legislation. In addition, there were many wildlife sanctuaries and a few national parks. The sanctuaries were places where rare and indigenous wildlife, animals and birds representative of the region and in good numbers were given protection. The sanctuaries were established by gazette notifications and so could be altered or abolished, while national parks were established though Acts of the provincial legislature and were of a permanent nature (Gee 1952). The IBWL defined national parks as

“All area dedicated by statute for all time, to conserve the scenery and natural and historical objects of national significance, to conserve wildlife therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations with such modifications as local conditions may demand (Gee 1955, 721).”

Even at that time, there was debate amongst policy makers and conservationists whether resources within the sanctuaries and national parks should be exploited or not. Adherence to the international concept of protected areas and loss of original state of nature were the key concerns of policy makers and biologists, respectively. These groups were even more concerned as to whether the provincial state governments could forego the revenues from timber exploitation. The Corbett National Park model was regarded as idealistic. This is because unlike in the U.S.A. and Africa, Indian sanctuaries and national parks contained forests with timber of high value and given the precarious financial situation, the provinces could ill afford to forgo the revenue (Gee 1952). One view was that the provinces would be
unwilling to forgo revenues, and if too strict a criteria were applied, the national parks would be abolished altogether. Arguments against exploitation by forest department included not only disturbance to wildlife but also rampant poaching by forest contractors and their labor (Gee 1952).

To resolve the situation, the Central Board for Wildlife (later IBWL) provided guidelines for sanctuaries that included zoning. The zoning scheme in these guidelines recommended that the sanctuaries and national parks have islands of “sanctum sanctorum” or “Abhyaranas” where forestry operations were prohibited (Botteron 2001), and where animals could roam about without fear of man (Gee 1955). The Central Board for Wildlife recommended “... that there should be inner sanctuaries within sanctuaries, where such (forestry) operation may not be carried out” and “where the plant life would be preserved unspoilt and undisturbed (Gee 1955, 721).” The remaining protected area would be left for meeting other needs so as to strike a balance between protection and prevailing land use practices and resource use (Botteron 2001). The Central Board for Wildlife also recommended that “that buffer belts of sufficient width be declared around all sanctuaries within which no shooting, other than that required for legitimate crop protection, will be permitted (Gee 1955, 722)” and furthermore, “(that) within which no professional graziers would be allowed to establish cattle pen (726).” The Bandipur sanctuary of the Venugopal Wildlife Park was presented as a good example of such an arrangement. The Central Board for Wildlife further recommended that most important wildlife centers in India be created as national parks.

The Central Board for Wildlife and its supporters hoped that the upgrading of existing sanctuaries into national parks would make them permanent, increase the effectiveness of their administration, enhance their significance and status, improve their public profile, lead to decrease in poaching, receive publicity and attract visitors, and as national parks they
would attract funding as well (Gee 1955). The national parks in India were still in a nascent stage. The Bombay National Parks Act 1950 led to the establishment of the Kanheri National Park spread over nine square miles near Bombay (now Mumbai). The Madhya Pradesh National Parks Act 1955 led to the establishment of Kanha (1955), Tadoba (1955), Madhav (1959) and Bandhavgarh (1968) national parks in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. Until the 1970s, there were only five national parks in India (Sankhla 1969). The definition of the national park provided by the London Conference held in 1933 had clearly failed to galvanize national park declaration by other provinces in India.

**International Concerns**

Organization of the IUCN Tenth General Assembly in November 1969 in New Delhi was a landmark event in the conservation history of India. Participants in the Assembly expressed widespread international concern on decimation of tigers through hunting and trade (Botteron 2001). The following resolution was adopted at the event for protection of tigers (IUCN 1970):

“In view of the grave threat to the tiger populations in the countries where the animal occurs, due to direct and indirect methods of destruction, such as licensed hunting, indiscriminate use of crop protection guns, commercial hunting, poisoning, burning of breeding cover, destruction of habitat, and biotic activity such as grazing, and the fur and skin trade, the 10th General Assembly of IUCN meeting at New Delhi in November 1969 recommends the Governments of these countries the declaration of a moratorium on killing of this animal until such time as censuses and ecological studies, which are in operation or are proposed, are completed and reveal the correct positions regards
population trends; **further recommends** that the tourist and economic contribution of the tiger should be shifted from killing by a few licensed or commercial hunters to enabling it to be watched and photographed wild in sanctuaries and national parks for the benefit of many; **expresses satisfaction** that the export of tiger (and leopard) skins commercially has been forbidden, but regrets to find on open sale of tiger skins and other trophies and articles, and **requests** the Government of India to take measures in order to close any remaining loopholes either in the scope or the enforcement of the relevant legal restrictions (IUCN 1970).”

In addition to drawing attention to the plight of the tiger, the General Assembly also adopted a new definition of “national park” specifying the types of interactions that would be permitted between humans and nature in a national park, bringing in the concept of **inviolate** that was later incorporated in the Indian model for Project Tiger (Botteron 2001). The notion of inviolate is built on the idea that, “We can visit, appreciate and recreate; we cannot exploit or occupy (Botteron 2001 139).” Because of the influence of national park model on tiger reserves, it is relevant to consider in detail the definition of national park that was agreed upon in the IUCN General Assembly. It was as follows:

“a National Park is a relatively large area...

1) where one or several ecosystems are not materially altered by human exploitation and occupation, where plant and animal species, geomorphological sites and habitats are of special scientific, educative and recreative interest or which contains a natural landscape of great beauty and

2) where the highest competent authority of the country has taken steps to prevent or to eliminate as soon as possible exploitation or occupation in the whole area and to enforce effectively the respect of ecological, geomorphological or aesthetic features which have led to its establishment and
3) where visitors are allowed to enter, under special conditions, for inspirational, educative, cultural and recreative purposes (IUCN 1970).”

At the same time, World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) International offered to mobilize financial support to Government of India for tiger conservation. As a result of the international concern and offer of support, there were widespread changes in the legal regime in India for the protection of wildlife in general, and specifically for conservation of tigers. The period 1970-73 witnessed one initiative after another for the protection of tigers. These included a total ban on hunting of tigers in India (1970), enactment of a new legislation in the form of the Wildlife Protection Act (WLPA) (1972), designation of tiger as India’s national animal replacing lion (1973), and the launch of India’s ambitious species conservation scheme ‘Project Tiger’ in 1973.

**Wildlife Protection Act (WLPA) 1972**

The need for a uniform legislation for wildlife protection in India had been deliberated in the Indian Board of Wildlife established by the Government of India in 1952 (Gee 1952). It was only in 1976, that the Forty-second Amendment Act transferred forests and protection of wildlife from the provincial list to the concurrent list of the Constitution whereby both the provincial levels and the Central Government could legislate on the subject. This transfer gave the Central Government the power to act directly as it wished to protect forests and wildlife. For national government to pass a legislation on wildlife in the nineteen seventies, it required the support of at least two provincial state governments. Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the then prime minister of India, wrote to the Chief Ministers of the state governments to ban hunting for tigers and sought their support for a proposed legislation for wildlife protection. There was an overwhelming positive response. Tiger hunting was banned
throughout India in 1970. The Wildlife Protection Act (WLPA) was passed by the parliament in November 1972 and became a law in 1972.

The Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972 became the principal law for protecting wildlife, and for understanding the legal framework and ensuing policies for setting up tiger reserves in India, and specifically Corbett Tiger Reserve. The Indian WLPA 1972 fulfils functions of both the U.S.A. National Parks Acts and the Endangered Species Act 1973. The WLPA 1972 provided a mechanism for the setting of national parks and sanctuaries in India and thus provided the much needed legal basis. The WLPA 1972 also provided protection to endangered species, though hunting of selected species was still permissible. In theoretical terms, the application of the WLPA 1972 marked a second wave of territorialization as the designation of national parks and sanctuaries mostly in areas already enclosed as the reserved forests brought about another phase of curtailment of the rights of villagers and nomadic communities. The WLPA 1972 led to banning or stricter regulations of practices especially grazing, shifting cultivation, collection of minor forest produce and fuelwood collection that were regulated but permissible under the Indian Forest Act 1927 (Rai et al. 2019).

The definition of national park adopted by Government of India under the WLPA 1972 differed vastly from the one proposed by IUCN in 1969 with respect to recreation. The Section 35 of WLPA 1972 defined national park as

“Whenever it appears to the State Government that an area, whether within a sanctuary or not, is, by reason if its ecological, faunal, floral, geomorphological, or zoological association or importance, needed to be constituted as a National Park for the purpose of protecting, propagating or developing Wild Life therein or its environment, it may, by notification, declare its intention to constitute such area as a National Park.”
Section 35 (4) specified that the final notification of a national park may be issued only when

“all rights in respect of lands proposed to be included in the National Park have become vested in the State Government.”

Section 35 (6) said that

“No person shall destroy, exploit or remove any Wild Life from a National Park or destroy or damage the habitat of any wild animal or deprive any animal of its habitat within the National Park except under and in accordance with a permit granted by the Chief Wildlife Warden and no such permit shall be granted unless the State Government being satisfied in consultation with the National Board that such removal of wild life from the National Park is necessary for the improvement or better management of wildlife therein, authorizes the issue of such permit;

In 2003, Section 35 (6) was substituted as follows

“No person shall destroy, exploit or remove and Wild Life including forest produce from a National Park or destroy or damage or divert the habitat of any wild animal by any act whatsoever, or divert, stop or enhance the flow of water into or outside the National Park, except under and in accordance with a permit granted by the Chief Wildlife Warden and no such permit shall be granted unless the State Government being satisfied in consultation with the National Board that such removal of wild life from the National Park or the change in the flow of water into or outside the National Park is necessary for the improvement or better management of wildlife therein, authorizes the issue of such permit; Provide that where the forest produce is removed from a National Park, the same may be used for meeting the personal bonafide needs of the people living in and around the National Park and shall not be used for any commercial purpose.”
Section 35 (7) said that

“No grazing of any cattle shall be permitted in a National Park and no cattle shall be allowed to enter therein except where such cattle is used as a vehicle by a person authorized to enter such National Park.”

The word “cattle” was substituted by “livestock” in 2003.

The WLPA 1972 gave the Chief Wildlife Warden (CWLW) of a state the responsibility of control of sanctuaries and national parks, and the powers to grant permits. Section 28 of the WLPA 1972 authorized CWLW to issue permits to enter or reside in a sanctuary for study of wildlife, photography, scientific research, tourism and for transaction of lawful business with residents in a sanctuary. Section 33 of the WLPA 1972 designated CWLW as the authority who shall control, manage and maintain all sanctuaries. Section 35 of the WLPA 1972 gave CWLW powers in national parks similar to those in sanctuary except for grazing.

The WLPA 1972 as originally legislated in 1972 did not mention tiger reserves. Similarly, the word ‘zone’ is not mentioned in the WLPA 1972 anywhere in relation to land; it is mentioned only in relation to territorial waters in the definitions. Tourism is permitted under the WLPA 1972 as a legitimate activity in sanctuaries and national parks, and the Project Tiger Task Force report specifically justified the creation of tiger reserve on the basis of tourism. The WLPA 1972 mentions tourism in the following two places.

Firstly, tourism is mentioned in Section 28. Section 28 1 (d) empowers the Chief Wildlife Warden (CWLW) of a State to grant any person a permit to enter or reside within a sanctuary for tourism and thus implies this legitimacy. Additionally, as Section 28 1 (d) applies to national parks vide section 35 (8), the same provision applies to national parks also. Since national parks and wildlife sanctuaries form the core area of tiger reserves after
the Amendment in 2006, the provision now applies to tiger reserves as well. Section 28 of the Wildlife Protection Act 1972 states:

“Grant of permit. (1) The Chief Wildlife Warden may, on application, grant to any person a permit to enter or reside in a sanctuary for all or any of the following purposes, namely: (a) investigation or study of wildlife and purposes ancillary or incidental thereof; (b) photography; (c) scientific research; (d) tourism; (e) transaction of lawful business with any person residing in the sanctuary. (2) A permit to enter or reside in a sanctuary shall be issued subject to such conditions and on payment of such fee as may be prescribed.”

Section 33 (a) of the Act provides for construction of commercial tourist lodges inside a Sanctuary with the prior approval of the National Board for Wildlife (NBWL). This section also applies to national parks vide Section 35 (8). Since national parks and wildlife sanctuaries form the core area of tiger reserves after the Amendment in 2006, the provision now also applies to tiger reserves, as stated below:

“The Chief Wildlife Warden shall be the authority who shall control, manage and maintain all sanctuaries and for that purpose, within the limits of any sanctuary (a) may construct such roads, bridges, buildings, fences or barrier gates, and carry out such other works as he may consider necessary for the purposes of such sanctuary. Provided that no construction of commercial tourist lodges, hotels, zoos and safari parks shall be undertaken inside a sanctuary except with the prior approval of the National Board of Wildlife.”

Project Tiger

In 1973, India launched Project Tiger, an ambitious species conservation scheme that created and augmented a network of Tiger Reserves. Project Tiger was launched initially as a
Central Sector scheme of Government of India for six years (last year of the Fourth Five Year Plan (1973-74) and the Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-75 to 78-79)). In India, land is a state subject. During this phase, the role of the Government of India was limited; it was to lay down the framework, provide funds and exercise regulatory control through outlining the procedures for the approval of the management plans.

At the inception of Project Tiger in 1973, the Government of India set up a Project Tiger Directorate in New Delhi. The role of the Directorate, however, was limited to broad policy making, issuing advisories and funding of tiger reserves as it did not have any legal authority under the WLPA 1972. Under the project, tiger reserves were under the control of the provincial governments and were to be administered by the respective state forest departments. Even though India’s initial tiger reserves were created in 1973 with the launch of the Project Tiger, the tiger reserves, unlike protected areas such as national parks and wildlife sanctuaries, remained a “management unit” with no separate legal basis. Tiger Reserves were created from existing protected areas with emphasis of future expansion, intensive management, greater research, better enforcement and more accountability. Reserves were viewed as “... not new parks, but existing parks and sanctuaries that would be expanded and managed more carefully, with more research, accountability and enforcement (Lewis 2015, 30).” It is national parks or sanctuaries later designated as tiger reserves that had a legal identity.

While the Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972 and Project Tiger were launched in close succession in 1972 and 1973 respectively, they were different – especially in their approaches to tourism. Unlike national parks and sanctuaries that were created primarily for protection of wildlife and endangered species, along with preservation of tigers, tourism was used to justify the Project Tiger and creation of tiger reserves in the Project Tiger Task Force report (Lewis 2015). As noted in a prominent review of the WLPA 1972, “The Act [WLPA 1972] makes
practically no mention of recreation or tourism, other than in stipulating the various bureaucrats in charge of restricting it (Lewis 2015, 229).” This is a crucial point, and source not only of difference between the WLPA 1972 and Project Tiger Task Force, but a great deal of future problems. That it was to become a future issue has been noted in the literature. “The Project Tiger Task Force diverged considerably from the WLPA 1972; this has continued to be a point of contention between government officials — who want tiger reserves to make money — and scientists/foresters who perceive tourists (and the things local guides do to impress them) as impediments to ecosystem and tiger health (Lewis 2015, 231).”

**Wildlife Zoning in Tiger Reserves**

Two types of zones were initially envisioned as part of Project Tiger: core and buffer zones. The revised proposal of the Indian Board for Wildlife (IBWL) in 1972 mentioned the areas to be included in tiger reserves as core and buffer area (IBWL 1972). The Project Tiger Guidelines contained explicit provisions for zoning (Ashok Singh and Pandey 1986). The Project Tiger Guidelines were issued vide Government of India’s Letter dated 14th January 1974 (PT 1974), wherein zoning was introduced for the first time. Ashok Singh and Pandey (1986, 147) summarize the conditions of the two key zones: **Core areas** were areas where work envisaged by the Project only shall be done to the exclusion of all other works, and there will be no forestry operations, collection of minor forest produce, bamboo extraction, grazing of domestic cattle and any human interference including tourism; **Buffer areas** were defined as residual areas in every reserve that can be used for wildlife oriented forestry purposes.

From the very beginning, zoning in tiger reserves was to be accomplished through wildlife management plans based on sound wildlife conservation science. Zoning, along with compensation, relocation and enforcement was assumed to be one of the key strategies for
enhancing prey base for building tiger population (Read 2016). Protected area managers have traditionally managed tiger reserves through the prescription of several types of zones in the wildlife management plans: core zone, buffer zone, administrative zone, tourism zone, and ecodevelopment zone. Unlike Corbett National Park, which was free of human settlements, other national parks had villages located within their boundaries. Project Tiger to some provided a rationale for relocation of villages by providing the need to create disturbance free habitat for tigers (Lewis 2015). The assumption that all human disturbance must be eliminated to save tigers will be explored later on in this dissertation.

**Corbett Tiger Reserve**

The Indian Government launched Project Tiger on April 1, 1973 from Corbett National Park for symbolic reasons. Corbett National Park was India’s first national park, it was valued for its tigers and it had a global renown because of Jim Corbett’s books which were widely translated in several languages both in India and globally. At the inception of the Project Tiger in 1973, Corbett National Park (CNP), spread over an area of 520.84 km², was designated a tiger reserve, making it one of the first of nine tiger reserves in the country. The boundaries of Corbett Tiger Reserve remained coterminous with Corbett National Park.

Corbett National Park, which had been so far managed by the forest officers of the Kalagarh and Ramnagar forest divisions, acquired an independent administrative apparatus when Project Tiger started functioning in Corbett Tiger Reserve almost ten months later from 1st February 1974. An independent Field Director of Project Tiger was posted at Ramnagar in 1975. In the first decade of its development, the Corbett Tiger Reserve continued to be administered by multiple authorities. Forestry operations were under the charge of a territorial conservator, wildlife protection and tourism were under the Wildlife Preservation Organization of Uttar Pradesh and, over and above all of these was the Field Director with
Project Tiger; protection and management of wildlife remained the highest mandate of the project authority. As part of the implementation of the Project Tiger Guidelines, it was only two and half years later in October 1975 that Corbett Tiger Reserve was constituted into a single administrative and territorial unit. Even then, wildlife tourism remained with the Wildlife Preservation Organization; this would be brought under the direct control of the Field Director only in April 1980.

**Zoning through Management Planning**

Project Tiger Guidelines marked the birth of zoning in Corbett Tiger Reserve, however how zoning was done differed greatly throughout the phases of the reserve’s development. As noted above, the guidelines specified that a core and buffer area be developed in Corbett Tiger Reserve, and they were established 318 km² and 207 km² respectively (Ashok Singh and Pandey 1986). The Central Government of India was able to just demarcate these zones with little consideration to village rights, as there were no villages located inside the national park at that time, though as noted above there was a long history of human use of the area. Village land rights were limited to two tracts in the Southern and the Northern side because of the notification issued in 1925. As a result, in this phase, **zoning was largely a decision based on the existing land management of the Forest Department.**

These officials differentiated zones based on the works they were to carry out.

The Forest Department developed the first wildlife management plan of Corbett Tiger Reserve as per the guidelines of the Project Tiger Directorate for the period 1974-1979 (V. B. Singh 1974). The first management plan prescribed two zones within Corbett National Park, and divided the reserve accordingly, into core area and buffer areas. But they also created two additional zones –overlapping in the core area was a tourism zone and settlement zone. Interestingly, revenue generation was used to justify this differentiation. Forestry operations
in compartments within a radius of 3-5 km of Dhikala had been already discontinued in 1971-72 in the interest of wildlife. In reality, forestry operations came to an abrupt end in 1975 and thus the difference between the core and the buffer area as then demarcated diminished.

Zoning in Corbett NP, now Corbett Tiger Reserve, was revisited in the second management plan developed to cover the next ten year period from 1986-1996. In this management plan, the mutually exclusive core, buffer, and tourism and settlement zones were all created within the Corbett Tiger Reserve boundary. The demarcation and use of the zones differed strongly from what was intended by wildlife biologists and tiger conservationists, and in the prescriptions laid out in Project Tiger Guidelines. In addition to the priority given to forestry activities, there were other activities that could not be legally allowed inside a national park—but more importantly since 1973 a tiger reserve.

The second management plan for 1986-1996 also contained a proposal for the development of a buffer area outside Corbett National Park including the proposal to establish a Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary. This proposal highlighted the need for satellite core areas, a development which did not happen. Afterwards, in 1987, part of the adjoining area of Kalagarh Forest Division was declared Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary spread over 301.18 km², to protect the rainy season habitat of Corbett’s wild elephants. Both Corbett National Park and Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary (WLS) continued to exist administratively independent of each other from 1987-1990. Figure 4 shows zoning within Corbett National Park as it existed in 1986.
Figure 4 Map of Zoning within Corbett National Park

(Source: Singh and Pandey 1986)
Buffer Zone in Phase 1

At the time of the inception of Corbett as a tiger reserve, there were ongoing challenges to managing grazing by villagers from outside the reserve, forestry operations and poaching by forest laborers involved in forestry operations—issues that were inherited from when Corbett was a national park (V. B. Singh 1974). The promise of zoning was to better manage them by restricting them to particular zones. However, the demarcation and management of the buffer zone in the early stages of Corbett Tiger Reserve was simplistic. It was basically an area within the national park where forestry operations were permitted, and conducted under the auspices of the forest department. In this first phase of zoning Corbett Tiger Reserve, the buffer zone activities were directed more at the forest department rather than to resolving mutually exclusive resource uses, including management for the best interest of tigers. In 1982, a Task Force appointed by the Indian Board for Wildlife lobbied hard for the adoption of a core-buffer-multiple use zone strategy for the management of protected areas including tiger reserves. The goal in doing so was to separate incompatible land uses and reduce conflict between protected areas and local people (IBWL 1983). Despite the concern that some espoused, multiple use zones outside buffer area could never be adopted in practice (Berkmuller and Mukherjee 1989).

Village Rights in Corbett Tiger Reserve

As noted above, there were no villages within the boundaries of Corbett Tiger Reserve. The need to incorporate local rights into zoning efforts were limited to the rights of eight villages that are situated outside its boundary: Dhara, Jhirna, Birna, Kothirau, Laldhang and Dhela villages on the southern side and Teria and Kanda villages on the northern side. As mentioned in the previous chapter, these rights were defined in 1925 by the British colonial government. Under the former jurisdiction, the villagers had rights to remove timber
for constructing dwelling houses, cattle sheds and agricultural implements as well as to graze livestock. In addition they had rights for the collection of fallen wood for firewood, grasses for thatching and as fodder, stones etc. The rights were expressed as grazing with limits on maximum heads; fire wood head loads each village per annum; wood for agricultural implements per cubic feet per annum; fodder grass for sale, grass for thatching, for building dwelling houses cattle shed; green leaves/dry leaves; bamboos on scores per annum; stones for building, slate, lime stones; charcoal; bark of creepers, fruits and roots; fishing; irrigation channels, water for mills; burning ghats.

Local village rights continued to be acknowledged even after the formation of Corbett Tiger Reserve. The rights were permitted by the Field Director through the Range Officers. During a period of five years 1981-86 a total of 525.26 cubic meters of timber was permitted to be cut and used by local villagers. The Table 7 shows year-wise distribution of timber to local villagers.

Table 7: Year-wise Distribution of Timber to Villagers in Corbett Tiger Reserve

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Amount (Cubic Meter)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1981-82</td>
<td>97.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982-83</td>
<td>0.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983-84</td>
<td>177.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984-85</td>
<td>nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985-86</td>
<td>250.22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (Singh and Pandey 1986)

Tourism Development in Corbett Tiger Reserve

The designation of tiger reserves as a type of protected area, including the strategy of zoning, set the stage for allocating space for tourism. From 1936 to 1973, the whole Corbett National Park was open to tourism in an unrestricted manner, and visitors could stay in any of the forest rest houses, the principal form of accommodation. From 1973 onward, after the declaration of Corbett National Park as Corbett Tiger Reserve (CTR), tourism management was guided by policies of Project Tiger. These policies though advisory in nature required the
creation of a core area or sanctum sanctorum. Implementation of the Project Tiger guidelines led to the ban on entry of visitors in the core zone including Paterpani, the forest rest house where elephant rides used to be previously conducted, as well as the Jamunagwar and the Gaujpani forest rest houses. As a result, tourist activities became confined to the Dhikala area. Even though tourism activities in tiger reserves were permissible, zoning of core area restricted tourism in this area and redirecting tourism to other places.

From the very beginning, Dhikala was well positioned to become the center of tourist attraction. The iconic Dhikala forest rest house and forest lodge was located in the heart of Corbett Tiger Reserve. Dhikala witnessed continued development. In 1973, the forest department established four cabins, an annex, a canteen, and a new Forest Rest House. A dormitory was later established, and the cabins were converted into bedrooms. Over the next decade following establishment, a bar, private canteens, a camping site and a library were founded. Wildlife films were shown in the evening. Elephant rides provided tiger viewing, and angling continued to be popular. The entire Dhikala range was known as the tourism range. But tourism activities were also scattered in other ranges of the reserve without clear direction or official zoning.

The year 1985 saw the organization of the 25th Working Session of the IUCN Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas (CNPPA), held in Corbett National Park in recognition of its 50th anniversary as the first national park to be established in Asia. Eighty-five senior park agency officials and representatives from NGOs, UNEP, and FAO, from 17 countries, gathered for the five-days session to review the current conservation status of protected areas in the countries of Indomalaya realm and discuss protected areas issues. The session was also held at Dhikala because it was the only location in and around a tiger reserve where accommodation was available for a such a large gathering. The field excursions undertaken by participants by foot, boat, vehicle, and elephant in the reserve bore
a testimony to the freedom exercised by the tourists (Thorsell 1985). The gathering led to the development of 'Corbett Action Plan for Protected Areas of the Indomalaya Realm', indicating the eminence of Corbett National Park at that time.

There was high tourist visitation to the reserve since its inception. Data on visitors to Corbett Tiger Reserve during its first decade can be seen in Table 8. In particular, the data reveal that the number of visitors making overnight stays in the park was significant. During 1985-86 the proportion of visitors who stayed for one night within the reserve was more than two-thirds (71.45 %) to that of visitors making day visits to Corbett National Park and revenue from tourism had reached Rs 7.89 Lakhs. More than ninety percent foreign visitors preferred to stay inside national park during this period.

Table 8 Visitor Arrival and Revenue receipts in Corbett National Park (1975-76 to 1985-86)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Night stay at park</th>
<th>Day visitor</th>
<th>Total number of Tourists</th>
<th>Revenue realized from tourists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>Foreigner</td>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>Foreigner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975-76</td>
<td>5522</td>
<td>918</td>
<td>2548</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976-77</td>
<td>9732</td>
<td>811</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977-78</td>
<td>7823</td>
<td>1354</td>
<td>2806</td>
<td>95</td>
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<tr>
<td>1978-79</td>
<td>8061</td>
<td>1304</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>1979-80</td>
<td>4678</td>
<td>1044</td>
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<td>1980-81</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>1346</td>
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<td>1334</td>
<td>6665</td>
<td>155</td>
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<td>9710</td>
<td>1638</td>
<td>8164</td>
<td>109</td>
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<tr>
<td>1984-85</td>
<td>6710</td>
<td>1361</td>
<td>6748</td>
<td>196</td>
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<tr>
<td>1985-86</td>
<td>14055</td>
<td>2088</td>
<td>6633</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (Singh and Pandey 1986)

Private Resorts
The first two private resorts that were developed in the Corbett landscape appeared in the mid 1980s, located away from the Corbett Tiger Reserve boundary at Kaladhungi and Kumeria. Tourism accommodation in Corbett Tiger Reserve was limited to government-owned lodges at Dhikala, Gairal and Bijrani, and two-roomed Forest Rest Houses (pucca bungalows) established by the British colonialists in the Kalagarh and Ramnagar Forest Divisions scattered throughout the national park. Tourists had to make do with either these government-run accommodation or the small private hotels that were constructed at Ramnagar township, the gateway community. As tourism development progressed in later years, which I will discuss in the following chapters, the proportion of visitors staying within the reserve would decrease and ultimately become less than one-fifth of former times, relegating the eminent position the park accommodation enjoyed during this early phase.

Many factors contributed to the stagnation in number of visitors staying within the reserve. One primary factor was the limited accommodation available within Corbett Tiger Reserve, there being no new additions. Other factor that may have been was changes in tourist attractions. Angling was a popular activity in the national park and later reserve. However, in 1986 angling in the Ramganga River within the reserve’s boundary was stopped as it was against the legal provisions of the WLPA 1972. More restrictions and enforcement of ban on hunting were later enacted. In a famous incident, a group of senior officials were caught red handed poaching a deer near Dhikala and faced punitive action. Another previously attractive activity in the reserve which attracted criticism and was later halted involved offering live buffalo calves as bait to tigers to increase the chances of sighting tigers. It also resulted in the tigers coming too close to humans taking away their instinctive shyness. This increased the risk of such tigers became man-eaters killing humans necessitating their elimination.
The activities noted above in the context of the very small size of the national park meant that human wildlife conflicts, particularly with the villagers situated on the southern boundary, were intense. An incident that rocked the Reserve management, was the storming of the residence of the Field Director following the killing of a girl child by a tigress in Laldhang village. Outraged by the tiger killing, the villagers attack the Field Director’s home causing much damage. This incident marked the impetus for changes, including the expansion of the Corbett Tiger Reserve and the relocation of the five villages located on the southern boundary.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I first introduced the Wildlife Protection Act 1973 and the differences in the approach of Project Tiger. I then described how Corbett National Park was developed into a Tiger Reserve. The chapter went on to describe how the IBWL first brought the idea of zoning in sanctuaries and national parks in the early 1950s, and later into wildlife reserves. These ideas were challenged with the idea of inviolate national parks proposed in the IUCN General Assembly, places where human extraction would be severely restricted, but later found a strong holding in the Project Tiger. Separation of resource uses was theorized to resolve conflicts, as well as continue or expand extraction and profit – and without negative impact on tigers of which the reserve was intended to benefit.

I subsequently described how zoning was established in Corbett Tiger Reserve. In this first phase the initial core buffer and tourism zones were situated inside the boundary of Corbett Tiger Reserve, and were largely demarcated by and oriented to forestry operations. As such, the principal difference between core and buffer in the reserve during this early phase was the presence or absence of forestry operations. I interpreted this to mean that zoning was largely approached as a land management decision by the forest department. The
ensuing conflicts revealed the insufficiency of the buffer zone as established and managed. The foundation was laid for a critique of the buffer zones and changes that needed to be made, including designating areas as buffer zones outside the reserve boundary. Tourism at this time was significant and growing; Dhikala was a central tourism range but other areas too were becoming tourism pockets.

In the following chapter I describe Phase II of the Corbett Tiger Reserve when zoning entered a new dimension. It explores expansion of the Corbett Tiger Reserve (CTR) when a buffer area was added outside the Corbett National Park including the Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary. It will highlight the challenges faced because of the buffer area not backed by law and as in this first phase, operating largely as a management category.
CHAPTER SIX

Introduction

The early 1990s were a time of great change in India, especially in the region that was later to become Uttarakhand. First, the period saw a greater liberalization of the Indian economy. This meant shift in attitude by Indian government officials and economic advisers away from state supported development and towards more aggressive development through private investment. Second, this shift had major implications for the tourism sector which began to be looked upon by government planners as a tool for regional development. Third, the liberalization of the Indian economy also led to changes in attitudes towards conservation in India, more broadly. These can be summed up as accepting global environmental conservation agenda and models, including market-based conservation; one of the tenets of market-based conservation is that conservation should generate funds to pay for itself. And fourthly, the region in which Corbett Tiger Reserve is located was greatly transformed. The state of Uttar Pradesh, in which CTR was located was bifurcated into two provincial states and CTR came to be located in Uttarakhand (initially named Uttaranchal) which was declared a new province in 2000. This small mountain province had few industries. Tourism along with hydropower development became the arenas planners targeted for private investment. Corbett Tiger Reserve emerged during this time as one of the important tourism destinations of the new province of Uttarakhand and Ramnagar town, where the reserve’s tourism was concentrated, became a center of economic growth.

As mentioned previously, the idea of some form of buffer around protected areas originated along with the first global definition of national park in 1933 at the London Conference. Differentiating protected areas into core and buffer zones were promoted since
the early seventies as a tool to simultaneously address the dual functions of conservation of biodiversity rich areas and rural development; separating agriculture, small scale cottage industries and marketing would in this model offer environment protection while also permitting human use (Ebregt and de Greve 2000). As noted above, the concept of buffer zone was envisioned to take pressure off a key conservation area/core zone; alleviate human wildlife conflict; and sustain development over time. It is important to remember that against the theoretical promise of the model, there is no agreement on the definition and implementation guidelines for buffer zones, and in the absence of clear objectives, their success is difficult to evaluate (Martin 2000).

Unlike the protected area in the core, where all land is generally government owned and no human activities other than those specifically permitted by park officials are allowed, the buffer area in many places have multiple objectives, multi-jurisdictional ownership and use rules, multiple uses, and multiple (non-aligned) management strategies.

The concept of buffer zones initially was not well understood in India, though such zones were being drawn in the early 1990s, including in tiger reserves; they were not the same as which stands today. Legally different types of areas could be designated a buffer zone: the buffer zone could refer to an area entirely within a national park; a sanctuary adjoining a national park; and reserved forests adjoining a sanctuary or park (Berkmuller and Mukherjee 1989). In a review of buffer zones in 17 national parks, the buffer zone of Corbett National Park was found to be lying within the national park (Berkmuller and Mukherjee 1989). The buffer zones were at times provided within protected areas both because of this lack of understanding and practical necessity as the protected area managers often had no other territory under their administrative jurisdiction. Even if the buffer zone was designated outside protected areas, such areas were not under the direct administrative control of the tiger reserve management, nor notified with a legal basis.
In light of findings of their review, Berkmuller and Mukherjee (1989) suggested guidelines for buffer zones that would require a large change from what they observed. For example, they argued that a buffer area should not have a national park status (which would \textit{per force} not permit the conditions they advocate). They advised that the buffer areas should not be drawn as a belt of uniform depth and without regard to needs and demands of the local context. For example, the depth of the buffer zone should vary with population density and degree of dependency on its resources. Furthermore, access to forests and plantations within a national park should be provided until degraded and non-productive forests have been rehabilitated; and moreover, that the buffer should include water sources essential for village use and other major activity areas along public rights of way (Berkmuller and Mukherjee 1989).

The above background on the ambiguity of buffer zones in the 1990s serves as an important context for tracing the development of zoning during Phase II in Corbett Tiger Reserve. In this phase, the Reserve expanded to include a buffer area as well as multiple tourism zones. A large buffer zone was developed \textbf{outside} the Corbett National Park boundary while the entire national park became the core area with a \textit{sanctum sanctorum} or “\textit{no go}” mandate. During Phase II tourism zones were created in both core area and buffer area. Private enclavics spaces in the form of resorts began to emerge outside Corbett Tiger Reserve. Lastly, community-based tourism activities were set up and subsequently stopped in nearby villages. This chapter follows these developments and offers an analysis of why they occurred.

My argument is that in the pursuit of tourism (actually as we will see the policy was to pursue ecotourism), there is an inherent conflict between the objectives of the buffer area and tourism zoning, while such a conflict was not inherent with community-based tourism yet the latter did not materialize. The reasons for this lie with the politics of how tourism zoning
proceeded in Corbett Tiger Reserve, especially with key actors and policies enabling the flourishing of resorts outside Corbett Tiger Reserve and neglect of community based tourism inside buffer areas as well as outside the reserve.

**Corbett Tiger Reserve Expansion and the Core Zone**

As described in the background chapter, Corbett National Park (CNP) spread over 520.84 km² was declared a tiger reserve under Project Tiger in 1973. There was no formal notification and the designation was of an administrative nature, more as a management unit. Thus the boundaries of Corbett National Park were coterminous with Corbett Tiger Reserve (CTR) and the two remained synonymous until 1990. In the second Corbett Tiger Reserve management plan (1980-1990), exclusive core, buffer zone, tourism zones, were created within the Corbett National Park boundary owing to the then prevailing understanding of the words “core/buffer area” in the management sense (Berkmuller and Mukherjee 1989). This arrangement became untenable under the Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972; with this Act buffer zone activities such as continuation of resource extraction, as well as recognition of the rights of villagers and human settlements, could not be legally allowed inside a national park. While there were no villages inside the Corbett National Park, rights of eight adjoining villages were.

Following the Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972 over a decade later, the Government of Uttar Pradesh vide notification number 5434/14-3-139-82 dated 9th January 1987 (Sinha 2015) declared an area of 301.18 km² as Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary within the Kalagarh forest division adjoining Corbett National Park to protect rainy season habitat of wild elephants. From 1987-1990, Corbett National Park and Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary, both protected areas, even though situated adjacent to each other, continued to exist under separate administrative and management units.
In 1991 these two protected areas were brought under the administrative umbrella of Corbett Tiger Reserve ushering in an important new wave of territorial expansion of the tiger reserve. An area of 797.72 km\(^2\), consisting of the entire Kalagarh forest division including the Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary and parts of the Ramnagar forest division and Terai West forest division, were added to the Corbett Tiger Reserve —they were added as the buffer zone. Simultaneously, the new areas were also brought under the direct administrative control of the Director of Corbett Tiger Reserve. This territorial change led to a two-and-a-half times increase in the size of the area of Corbett Tiger Reserve from 520.84 km\(^2\) to 1318.54 km\(^2\). Figure 5 shows the map of expanded Corbett Tiger Reserve with the (previously named) Corbett National Park as the core area.

With the above expansion, the entire Corbett National Park became the core area surrounded on all sides by a buffer zone consisting of the Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary and reserved forests (except for a stretch of over 11 km on the southern boundary of where the earlier national park came in direct contact with private agricultural land and villages). During this spatial and administrative change, the historical boundaries of the Corbett National Park enacted in 1966 and those of Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary conducted in 1987 remained unaltered. Thus there was no change in the legal status of respective territories during this expansion. As noted above, there were no villages or permanent human settlements within the core area consisting of earlier Corbett National Park. Below I turn to the question of what happened to villages and resource uses in these newly acquired reserve territories now that they became official buffer zone of Corbett Tiger Reserve.
The Buffer Zone

The newly acquired areas of Corbett Tiger Reserve were 797.72 km² and were designated buffer zone. They consisted legally of two types of areas: 301.18 km² of Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary and remaining reserved forest. The purpose of adding the buffer area to Corbett Tiger Reserve was to enhance the ecological value of core area of earlier named Corbett National Park by increasing the habitat for the elephants and tigers, and separating what was viewed as incompatible land uses and thereby reduce conflict with the villages located within the newly acquired lands. This section describes how the buffer area of Corbett Tiger Reserve was gradually transformed through increased restrictions on resource extraction, relocation of villages, reduction in forestry operations, curtailment of the rights of the villagers, habitat development and the implementation of ecodevelopment program for people’s participation.

Corbett Tiger Reserve was one of the first tiger reserves in India where in 1991 a buffer area consisting of reserved forests and wildlife sanctuary was provided outside the earlier Corbett National Park; the buffer area was also placed under the direct administrative control of the tiger reserve management. This model was soon followed by other tiger reserves. The addition of the buffer area to Corbett National Park brought new opportunities but also challenges. Along with the increase in area, the expansion led to augmentation of personnel and staff, additional resources and infrastructure that was transferred along with territory to Corbett Tiger Reserve, as well as an increased budget. The management of the Corbett Tiger Reserve moved from the confines of a village free national park area with the challenges of managing areas with villages and forests who had legal use rights in these forests now officially designated as a buffer area of a tiger reserve. Some of the expanded challenges included poaching, forest fires, widespread weed infestation and human-wildlife
conflicts entailing livestock kills and crop damage from wild animals (under protection under the auspices of the tiger reserve)

**Figure 5. Visitor Map of Corbett Tiger Reserve showing the Corbett National Park Core* the Sonanadi WLS and Reserved Forests Buffer.**

![Visitor Map of Corbett Tiger Reserve](image)

*Source: (Corbett Tiger Reserve) [*what is labeled here Corbett National Park became the core zone of Corbett Tiger Reserve when it was designated a tiger reserve in 1974]*

Unlike the core area which was still referred to as Corbett National Park, the buffer area of Corbett Tiger Reserve had both permanent and temporary human settlements. The settlements in the buffer area were of two types: *revenue villages* and *forest villages*. The residents of revenue villages, which are more numerous in Uttarakhand, are administered by the district administration and the revenue department. They have local self-government institutions called *panchayats* (different from *van panchayats*), have formal property rights and are dominated by upper castes (Simlai 2021). In contrast, *khattas, gots* or *taungyas* in forest villages were initially formed by the forest department on reserved forests on a
temporary basis to meet the management needs of labor; they provided free labor to the forest department in return for the permission to temporarily reside on the land while (in the case of taungya villages) to plant annual crops under plantation trees they are to tend, until the trees grow too tall and shade out the understory (Gee 1952). The arrangement stopped several decades ago but the occupants have continued to stay inside the forests. Given this arrangement, they are now regarded as unauthorized settlements on reserved forest land administered by the forest department. The residents of taungya and khattas are small in numbers and belong to lower castes and scheduled tribes; and while they may have developed over the years their own customary rules and institutions for using local resources, they do not have legally recognized formal property rights and/or governance institutions (Simlai 2021). Construction of permanent structures is not permitted in these forest villages despite which there are several houses, and these villages have long standing demands for civic amenities such as electricity, water supply and toilets. The buffer area is also challenged with what to do with forest leases that entail small patches of reserved forests that were leased to private individuals and have to be periodically renewed.

The boundary of Corbett Tiger Reserve had thus become interwoven with numerous longstanding human settlements. While most villages have a buffer between the core area of Corbett National Park and the village boundary, the villages on the southern boundary were left just near the fringes of the core area with no buffer in between them and the core area. Approximately 90 revenue villages lie within the 3 km of the Corbett Tiger Reserve boundary of the two divisions of the Corbett Tiger Reserve, 42 in Ramnagar Tiger Reserve Division and 50 in Kalagarh Tiger Reserve Division (Rastogi 2010).

Within the villages located in the newly expanded buffer zone and the surrounding landscape of Corbett Tiger Reserve reside Garhwali and the Kumaoni communities who dominate the human population in the landscape. They have property rights to their private
land, communal land as well as rights within the reserved forests. These villagers are mostly Hindus belonging to different castes. Hindi is the main language, while dialects spoken are Kumaoni and Garhwali. The main occupation of the communities living in and around Corbett Tiger Reserve is subsistence agriculture, livestock rearing and forest resource use. Most people in the villages in and around the Corbett Tiger Reserve still depend heavily on forests in buffer area for collection of fuelwood, fodder and other NTFPs, and grazing livestock. The contribution of forests to villagers' total income ranged from 31% to 50% of their total revenue; with women more involved in collection of firewood and fodder from forests, and in agriculture (Rastogi 2010). Forest use in the form of fuelwood and fodder collection is varied in different households and has diminished over time owing to restrictions in access, reduction in livestock rearing as also increased access to the markets and availability of alternatives such as cooking gas which are less demanding.

Recent research suggests that 84% of the total landholding which they own, by the local Garhwali and the Kumaoni villages is used for permanent field agriculture (Rastogi 2010). There are two major cropping seasons - Kharif (June-September) and Rabi (October-March). Paddy is the main kharif crop and wheat is the main rabi crop. Maize and finger millets are occasionally grown. Besides traditional crops, cash crops are also grown in some villages. Soya bean and ginger are the main cash crops. A few farmers have orchards, mainly of mango, banana, jackfruit and litchi. It is these villages that suffer from human wildlife conflict and would become beneficiaries under the ecodevelopment program, including potential candidates for community-based tourism.

Productivity is directly tied to access to water. While agricultural fields are purely rain-fed in some villages and have low productivity, those situated near rivers such as Kosi have access to diverting water from the river to the cultivated fields through small canals, locally known as guls and are more productive. Villages situated near the river banks lose land to the
river when it changes course and during floods. Not all villagers own land. The landless people are mostly engaged as laborers. A small fraction of the population is employed in government services. Most men migrate to cities and towns in search of work and in their absence, women play a major role in farming and forest-based activities.

The designation of Corbett Tiger Reserve and especially the addition of Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary as part of it, have significantly impacted the different villages residing in and using these lands. The impacts vary across these villages. They stem from their historical differences, and how they were added and treated as part of the reserve’s buffer area. A critically important factor was their treatment as the reserve was integrated into the practices of Project Tiger, especially its focus on monitoring of wild animal populations and wildlife protection and legal recognition – or lack thereof – of earlier resource and property rights.

**Relocation of Five Revenue Villages**

One of the principal strategies of Project Tiger for creating habitat for tigers was to make it free from human disturbance. A key action to achieve this in conservation has been relocation or displacement of villages who may have used or resided there in the past. Relocation, often involuntary eviction, has been a common strategy in the history of fortress conservation, as discussed in the literature review. But unlike other tiger reserves in India such as Kanha, where several villages were relocated from the core area, relocation was not necessary from the core Corbett National Park as the human settlements inside the national park boundary had already been evicted during the British colonial rule at the time of the park formation in 1936 (Lasgorceix and Kothari 2009). But while relocation of villages from the buffer area of tiger reserves is not required as per the Project Tiger’s co-existence agenda, this practice has occurred. Apparently the Uttar Pradesh (later Uttarakhand) forest department relocated five revenue villages from the newly added buffer area of Corbett Tiger Reserve. In
response to requests from the villagers, four villages of Dhara, Jhirna, Birna and Kothirau (411 families), located in the buffer area on the Southern boundary of the Corbett National Park in Pauri Garhwal district, were relocated in 1994 through funding from Project Tiger scheme. Relocation of the fifth village Laldhang, located along the same boundary but in Nainital district was completed in 2004. The factors that led to this voluntary relocation included a high degree of human wildlife conflict due to increased protection of wildlife (i.e., not permitted to kill attacking animals) and lack of access to developmental projects (Lasgorceix and Kothari 2009). The increase in wild animal population, conflicts between wildlife and people, and the inability of villagers to protect their life and property from the attacks left villagers with very limited resource access and subsistence capacity that they had no other option to avoid prospects of hunger (Botteron 2001).

The relocation was regarded as successful by all parties with success being attributed to good communication between villagers and the forest department and especially a comprehensive financial package (Lasgorceix and Kothari 2009; Ramesh et al. 2019). The displaced families were resettled by clearing 221.63 hectare of forest land in adjoining Terai West Forest Division. This new settlement was declared a revenue village, recognized with rights to sell land only recently in 2020. This relocation resulted in addition of 273 hectare of land to the buffer area of Corbett Tiger Reserve (Lasgorceix and Kothari 2009). The abandoned agricultural land of Dhara, Jhirna, Birna, Kothirau and Laldhang villages, which were acquired under land for land policy, located on the southern boundary of Corbett NP, have been notified under Section 4 of IFA as reserved forests. However, the areas are yet to be formally added to the Corbett Tiger Reserve buffer vide a revised notification wherein this area is formally added to the buffer area.

But relocation by itself does not translate to conservation. Studies in restoration ecology have demonstrated that the land vacated through village relocation does not
automatically become available as wildlife habitat. Much long-term effort and investment may be required to ensure that the land is not overtaken by invasive plants and other human users, and to make the land productive for wild animals (Babu, Love, and Babu 2009; Kabra 2019). After relocation, the fields in this case were soon taken over by ber trees (*Zizyphus mauritiana*), Lantana (*Lantana camara*) and other invasive species. While the ber could be regarded as a beneficial species for wild animals, the spread of Lantana posed a threat to biodiversity. Following the relocation of these five villages funded under Project Tiger scheme, the park officials developed grasslands for herbivores on the abandoned agricultural fields through ecological restoration. Originally initiated as a research project supported by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Government of India, this led to the development of a new “cut-root stock method” for removal of the invasive weed Lantana (*Lantana camara*). Subsequently, this work was taken up on a large scale by park management for development of grasslands and entailed removal of Lantana (*Lantana camara*), planting of native palatable grasses and legumes, development of water bodies, setting up of grass nurseries and skill development of staff (Babu, Love and Babu 2009).

Relocation of two more villages Terai and Pand located in the buffer zone on the Northern side was also initiated decades ago (Lasgorceix and Kothari 2009), but got mired in legal disputes and apathy and has yet to make headway. Both the villages have become almost deserted due to the lack of viable agricultural activities, difficulties in resource access, depleted population, increase in human wildlife conflict, invasion by weeds and lack of benefits from developmental schemes. Amdanda *khatta* and Sunderkhal (an encroachment) situated on the forest land have also been identified for relocation. Attempts to resettle residents of Sunderkhal during the last decade undertaken by conservation NGOs in collaboration with the forest department have been unsuccessful owing to the villagers’ demands not being met (Simlai 2021).
(2000-2010) prescribed acquiring of land in Kanda and other villages enclosed in the buffer area and relocation of Badgath, Jamund, Kalakhand, Gajmalla, Banasi, and Ghiroli villages as per the government policy on voluntary relocation (Sinha 2000). However, these recommendations were not taken up. Importantly, the question remains regarding what are the impacts of eliminating not just human settlements but a particular type of human disturbance, (i.e., presumably low to intermediate level subsistence agriculture) on wildlife habitat and wildlife itself, especially tigers. I return to that question later in the dissertation.

**Rights of Villagers**

As noted earlier, revenue and other long-standing villagers had rights and concessions settled by the British in 1925. Though there were no recorded villagers’ rights within the Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary and rights in Corbett National Park had become redundant after the relocation of the villages on the Southern boundary, villagers’ rights still existed within the reserved forest buffer zone. Rights to free grazing, free timber for house construction, agricultural implements and for cattle shades, and bamboo for miscellaneous use were still in existence partially or in complete forest blocks. However, the Supreme Court of India had placed restrictions on the total quantum of rights in the State of Uttarakhand, and these have to be now proportionally distributed. During ecodevelopment workshops organized in 1996 as part of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations of Corbett National Park, non-disbursement of timber under prevailing rights and concessions in a timely manner emerged as one of the villagers' principal grievances (Corbett Newsletter Vo 1 No 4 1997). Timber and bamboo continued to be distributed until 1999. The management plan cited procedural reasons as one of the causes for non-distribution of benefits (Sinha 2000). The rights disbursed in the Ramnagar Tiger Reserve Division are shown in Table 9 below.
### Table 9 Distribution of Timber/Bamboo as Rights in Ramnagar Tiger Reserve Division

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Timber in round (Cubic Feet)</th>
<th>Bamboo (Scores)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rights</td>
<td>Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991-92</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992-93</td>
<td>6680.50</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993-94</td>
<td>3550.50</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994-95</td>
<td>10063.50</td>
<td>5285.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995-96</td>
<td>15594.00</td>
<td>5614.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996-97</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997-98</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998-99</td>
<td>426.00</td>
<td>3938.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>36,314.5</td>
<td>14,383.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source:Bhartari 2000)

There were also Gujjar herdsmen living in deras (temporary settlements) and using forests and grasslands in the reserve buffer area. The Gujjar practiced a limited type of transhumant pastoralism bordering on a sedentary lifestyle owing to restrictions on their traditional migratory routes and pasturals. The Gujjars continued to be permitted to graze their livestock inside the sanctuary on a seasonal basis, though goats and sheep were not allowed. Seasonal migration of Gujjars was not allowed to move along Haldupadaw-Vatanwasa and Haldupadaw-Chokhamb forest roads in the Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary (Sinha 2000), as these were part of the Sonanadi tourism zone. Only those Gujjars were allowed to move in the buffer area who had permits previously issued by the forest department in their name. As most Gujjars have no permits and do not pay fees, there was no real check on the number of the families and their cattle. The area left available for grazing was utilized on rotational basis and rules for lopping were enforced.

**Human-Wildlife Conflict**

Crop raiding is a major issue for villages farming in the buffer zone, especially along the reserve boundary. Economic losses from wild animals and declining returns from
agriculture are an important factor motivating villagers to sell their land to investors for tourism development rather than practice agriculture (Simlai 2021). In recent years, a few pieces of agricultural land have been sold to outsiders, used for the construction of buildings within the Corbett Tiger Reserve buffer zone.

**Forestry Operations**

The area that came to be known as the buffer zone of Corbett Tiger Reserve had been until then managed through three separate working plans (Working Plan for Kalagarh Forest Division, Ramnagar Forest Division and Terai West Forest Division), whose prescriptions continued to be followed. Forestry operations continued in the buffer areas as per the approved working plans of the parent forest divisions. A total of 24558.74 cubic feet of dry and fallen trees and 1387.41 cubic feet of drifwood was extracted by the Forest Development Corporation from the Corbett Tiger Reserve during the eight year period from 1991 to 1999. Most of the wood was of *Sal* (*Shorea robusta*) Sain (*Terminalia tomentosa*) Sandan (*Anogissus latifolia*) with some of *Chir* pine (*Pinus roxburghi*) and *Jamun* (*Syzigium ciumini*) (Bhartari 1999). Once the period of the working plans elapsed, fellings were done on the basis of annual silvicultural plans. Over time, even these ceased to be made and the buffer area was managed as per the prescriptions of the wildlife management plans.

**Restrictions on the Movement on Forest Roads**

Unmetalled forest roads in the Corbett landscape were in operation since colonial pre-independence days for transport of felled trees as well as for public movement. Typically, forest roads in reserved forests had make-shift or temporary barriers where commuters had to pay nominal fees prescribed by the forest department for use of roads on the basis of category of vehicles. Two such unmetalled forest roads that were important for public transport
became part of the buffer zone of Corbett Tiger Reserve when reserved forests were added as buffer area in 1991. The Kotdwar-Pakhro-Kalagarh-Dhela-Ramnagar Kandi Road, maintained by Corbett Tiger Reserve and Kalagarh Forest Division, connected the two major towns situated along the southern boundary of Corbett Tiger Reserve, namely Kotdwar and Ramnagar. The Durgadevi-Lohachaur-Maidavan road connected the Ramnagar-Ranikhet state highway to the villages on the Northern side of Corbett Tiger Reserve and was maintained by Kalagarh Forest Division. Both these roads had regular bus services at the time of inclusion of the area in Corbett Tiger Reserve buffer, with the bus service on Kotdwar Ramnagar road since early 1970s.

Public transport on Kalagarh-Dhela-Ramnagar Kandi road gradually diminished once it became part of the buffer area even though there was no change in the legal status. The relocation of the four villages situated on the southern boundary in 1994 reduced the justification for movement of traffic on the Ramnagar-Dhela-Kalagarh section of the road as there were no residents left in the villages. The relocation of the fifth village, Laldhang in 2004 obliviated whatever little need was left. Nevertheless, there was limited movement of both light and heavy vehicles on this road included in the Jhirna Tourism Zone until 1998 as shown in the Table 12 below. Bus service on this road was ultimately halted by courts as the section of the road in Kalagarh formed part of the core zone.

The movement on the Durgadevi-Lohachaur-Maidavan road was reduced due to deterioration in the condition of road and poor maintenance. Nevertheless, here too there was heavy movement of large vehicles including trucks and buses. Improvement in the condition of alternate highways to this road and expansion of road network and availability of alternate roads reduced its usage. A major factor for cessation of the regular bus services on these roads was the non-viability of the business operations. The issue was sealed by judicial intervention that stayed travel operations by commercial entities on these roads on account of
it being part of the tiger reserve. Importantly, the cessation of public transport on these two roads has greatly helped in the strengthening of tourism zones in buffer area as described later.

Ecodevelopment Begun But Withered

The Project Tiger Directorate introduced an ecodevelopment program in the nineteen nineties under the centrally sponsored scheme of Project Tiger. Corbett Tiger Reserve received funds under the scheme as part of its annual plan of operations, though not much. Activities funded under the scheme in Corbett Tiger Reserve included purchase and distribution of energy saving devices and solar lantern/lights to the villagers, installation of India mark pumps to increase water supply and reduce dependence on streams, beekeeping boxes, afforestation and soil conservation measures and workshops with villagers for awareness and dialogue.

The scale of interventions under the ecodevelopment initiative changed once the World Bank funded Uttar Pradesh Forestry Project (later Uttarakhand Forestry Project) began to be implemented during 1999-2003. The project had a separate component and dedicated funds for ecodevelopment in protected areas. The aim of the ecodevelopment program was to reduce negative effects of the interaction of people and wild animals, and enhance positive benefits for each other (Sinha 2000). As part of the program, village Ecodevelopment Committees (EDCs) were set up for program implementation. The objectives of the program were to intervene in the livelihood of people living in around protected areas to protect its resources by reducing dependence and pressure by providing alternatives, peoples’ participation, reduction in damage by wildlife, mitigation of protected area people conflicts, capacity building of villagers, and promotion of compatible land use practices. Participatory
microplans were prepared for villages selected for ecodevelopment as per the government notification.

A decade later, a new wildlife management plan was developed for Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary (2000-2010). The management plan for Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary aimed to promote stakeholder participation in biodiversity conservation and implement site specific ecodevelopment micro plans in selected villages. The Government Order on ecodevelopment was issued in 1999. Dhikolia situated on the northern boundary of Corbett Tiger Reserve became the first village for which a microplan was prepared under the guidance of the Wildlife Institute of India. Ecodevelopment committees were established in the villages of Sankar, Kartiya, Biltiya, Bahedi, Dabru, Siddpur, Semalsera, Kandanala, Sendhi, Gunetha Manjhola, Tediya, Palu, Miruda, Barai, Gajarkhal Kalinko and on Southern side Ramjiwala, Bhogpur, Bheerbanwala (Boxa). Spearhead teams were formed to develop microplans in a systematic way (Sinha 2000). However, once the project ended funding to the ecodevelopment committees became meager and lack of timely elections and activities ultimately made the EDCs dysfunctional.

The expansion of Corbett Tiger Reserve and the creation of a buffer zone outside the Corbett National Park was accompanied by two other policy decisions, namely a ban on day-visits by visitors to Dhikala and creation of a new tourism zone in Brijani.

**Production of Tourism Zones: Towards Enclavic Tourism Spaces**

The reserved forest area added as buffer zone was managed according to the prescriptions of the respective Divisional working plans. However, the needs of visitors are quite different than those of a government forestry department using scientific forestry and required changes in how space was used. The tourism zones in Corbett Tiger Reserve constitute a new territorial entity, entirely different from the historical blocks and
compartments that define the reserved forest areas or the tiger reserve core/buffer area.

Unlike the core/buffer areas that were created to promote tiger conservation and co-existence with economic development of local residents respectively, the tourism zones have a different purpose—namely commercial tourism operations and generation of revenues. Creation of tourism zones involves demarcation of new boundaries, control of access though gates, and rules and regulations. In practice, access to tourism zones is carefully regulated by park and state forest authorities though rules for visitors, and for vehicles/drivers and nature guides.

Concentration and dispersion are two alternate strategies for managing negative tourism impacts, the former confining visitor impacts considered harmful to a restricted area to preserve values in other areas, and the latter spreading impacts over a wider area to distribute visitor pressure evenly. The spread of Dhikala and Brijrani centered tourism to multiple tourism zones marked a major shift in tourism management strategy in the reserve from concentration to dispersion. It opened the floodgates for tourism development. I describe below this process, some of the challenges encountered, and the ways in which they were attempted to be overcome.

**Dhikala and Brijrani Tourism Zones in Corbett National Park (Core Area)**

While both Dhikala and Brijrani in Corbett National Park had traditionally enjoyed tourists, they were not developed as tourism zones as understood today. The boundaries were not sharply drawn and access was not rationed. Dhikala tourism zone was fortified in 1991 with the imposition of a temporary ban on day-visits to Dhikala, a forest lodge situated in the heart of Corbett Tiger Reserve with over thirty rooms. The ban on day visits to Dhikala while curtailing mass arrivals transformed the area into a unique and exclusive tourism space with tightly regulated access providing ecotourism experience for visitors making overnight stays. This ban was an interim measure until the carrying capacity of visitation for Dhikala tourism
zone could be established; however, it was formalized in the Government of Uttar Pradesh order dated 28th October, 1996 and has persisted ever since. There was regular bus service to Dhikala too, located in the heart of Corbett National Park which continued after the ban.

When day visits by visitors to Dhikala were banned in 1991, another alternative to accommodate the visitor demand was needed. Bijrani was already a popular spot for tourists from Nainital and nearby areas, particularly as it was a mere nine km from Ramnagar township, where the Corbett Tiger Reserve headquarters were located. And so, a new Bijrani tourism zone was crafted by adding parts of the newly acquired buffer area to the area of the Corbett National Park.

Unlike Dhikala, the development of a tourism zone at Bijrani posed numerous challenges as Bijrani was situated at the periphery of the Corbett National Park close to the villages. Bijrani had a drier mixed forest with mostly Sal trees, and lacked the spectacular views of the Ramganga River. The road-barrier for entry was located at Semalchaur away from the state highway making it difficult to regulate visitors. The zone had limited roads where visitors could go driving. There were no captive elephants for joy rides and a dearth of watchtowers for wildlife viewing, water holes for attracting wild animals or interpretation activities for visitors. The women from Ramnagar township and adjoining Amdanda village and Ringora khatta forest village and other nearby villages would regularly go to the forests for grass cutting and fuelwood collection. Ringora khatta, an unauthorized hamlet, was situated at the entry to the zone.

Armed with territorial control of the reserved forest area as part of the buffer that had been vested with Director, Corbett Tiger Reserve in 1991, a new entry gate was constructed at Amdanda on the state highway by shifting the preexisting makeshift barrier at Semalchaur. The Amdanda gate was also close to the Dhikuli and Garjia revenue villages where the first resorts started to appear (Rastogi 2015). The infrastructure that was developed consisted of
improvements and expansion of the road network, development of an interpretation center and a nature trail, construction of a canteen leased out as concession and organization of wildlife film shows. The sights of villagers entering the forests and cutting grass or wood cutting would draw complaints from visitors and resort guests. Over time, villagers were prevented from entering the zone for collecting grass and fuelwood so that the visitors could enjoy undisturbed wildlife. Speaking of Bijrani, a resort owner said

“When resorts started coming out, the guests needed to be given experiences and they allowed entry into Bijrani - that was the only zone where safaris were allowed, day visits were allowed. Bijrani started developing because resorts started coming, the demand kept increasing. Bijrani got developed because the demand got created and it was a resource.” He justified the creation of the tourism zone by adding that it has led to an increase in tiger numbers, “Tiger numbers have also improved because of tourism. It’s only improved because of tourism! Bijrani area used to be poached to death.”

There were other areas of cooperation between private resorts and Corbett Tiger Reserve. Initially, a captive elephant of a private resort for its guests was placed at Bijrani on a revenue sharing basis. The guests of the resort would have the right for the morning ride while the park was free to use the stationed elephant for the visitors in the evening. The revenue was shared on a fifty-fifty basis between the park and the resort. This practice was followed by other resorts too, and at one point of time, there were three private elephants stationed in Bijrani. Later on, the permission to maintain private elephants at Bijrani was discontinued and the resorts were given alternative permission to take elephants in reserved forest areas situated adjacent to their property on payment of a hefty safari fee.

The emergence of private resorts also led to demand for vehicles for safari and a spurt in locally owned safari vehicles. Large buses with over 50 passengers entered both Dhikala
and Brijrani tourism zones. In Brijrani tourism zone there were conflicts between such groups and the small number of staff for visitor management. The Government of Uttar Pradesh vide its order dated 28th Oct. 1996 banned the entry of large buses in Brijrani and Dhikala tourism zones while granting permission to conduct group transport to Dhikala and Brijrani in mini buses and set the limits of mini buses respectively at four and two per day. The order also limited the number of smaller vehicles that could enter Brijrani tourism zone in a day to forty. This was interpreted as twenty in the morning and twenty in the evening. Yet, in spite of this ban that restricted entry of large groups, the Brijrani tourism zone started receiving twice as many visitors as the older Dhikala tourism zone within five years of the establishment, as shown in Table 10 below. The number of vehicles entering Brijrani tourism zone was also twice as those entering the Dhikala tourism zone (Table 11).

**Table 10. Visitor Arrival in Corbett Tiger Reserve by Zones 1997-98**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Indian</th>
<th>Foreigner</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brijrani Tourism Zone</td>
<td>29262</td>
<td>2898</td>
<td>32160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhikala Tourism Zone</td>
<td>14573</td>
<td>1817</td>
<td>16390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jhirna Tourism Zone</td>
<td>2788</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>2940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lohachaur Tourism Zone</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonanadi Tourism Zone</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>46999</strong></td>
<td><strong>4937</strong></td>
<td><strong>51936</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Corbett Tiger Reserve)

Tourism in Corbett National Park had undergone a major change. Hitherto, tourism which was based mainly on night halts inside the park, changed by 1997-98 so that around two-thirds of visitors were now day visitors.

**Table 11. Day Visit and Night Halt in Corbett Tiger Reserve 1997-98**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tourism Zone</th>
<th>Day Visitor</th>
<th>Night Halt</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brijrani Tourism Zone</td>
<td>30229</td>
<td>1931</td>
<td>32160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhikala Tourism Zone</td>
<td>1594</td>
<td>14796</td>
<td>16390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>31823</strong></td>
<td><strong>15727</strong></td>
<td><strong>48550</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Corbett Tiger Reserve)
During this phase, the nature guides and gypsy drivers came to represent the interface between the visitors and the local community. And this interaction was not always smooth and easy. Often the gates of the tourism zone at Amdanda and Dhangari became a site of resistance and negotiation by both villagers and the tourism industry to press for their demands (Rastogi 2000). When the reservation of accommodation being done by the forest department from Ramnagar had to be shifted to Lucknow to be done by the tourism department, the park gates were locked by the tourism professionals and villagers supported by forest department staff forcing tourist entry to a halt and the officials were forced to negotiate with them and consider their demands. Later on, this blockades at the gates became a routine practice.

The ban on large buses accompanied by a shortage of domestic elephants led to a spurt in the demand for safari vehicles. As the number of resorts increased and demand for safaris grew, pressure from nature guides and drivers forced an increase in the permissible number of safari vehicles to Bijnani tourism zone in 2004 to thirty in the morning and thirty in the evening. This limit on number of vehicles in one pari (shift) has been maintained until this date.

**The Birth of Nature Guides and Wildlife Safaris by Vehicles**

Not only were there no exclusive tourism zones or private resorts until the early nineteen nineties, Corbett Tiger Reserve also lacked professional nature guides. As tourism developed and private resorts started functioning, there was a growing demand for trained nature guides. The Forest Department organized a ten-week training of nature guides in 1993 as part of the ecodevelopment program to provide guiding services to the visitors and income linked to wildlife conservation for the local youth, as well as to overcome staff shortages. However, the benefits of the program were highly localized with most beneficiaries of the
training program coming from Ramnagar township and nearby revenue villages. The trained nature guides were registered by park administration. Taking guides during safari rides was made compulsory for visitors so that the nature-guides could get regular employment. Owing to insufficiency, a second course of one month for training guides was held in 1995. A third course with 50 participants was conducted in 2000. These courses led to the development of a cadre of nearly one hundred trained nature guides.

The nature guides were resented at first by the forest staff as their presence deprived the staff from additional income through guiding. The guides chose to work mostly from the Bijrani gate as it was closer to their homes. These nature guides initially worked for the state forest department or with the private hotels. Their job permitted them to learn not only about wildlife and the art of interpretation, but also avail opportunities offered by the tourism industry. The nature guides began to participate in tourism by investing their savings in setting up travel agencies, purchasing vehicles and putting on rent for safaris, establishing homestays and some even benefited by constructing small hotels.

Soon, however, park officials began creating tourism zones wholly in the buffer area and the clash between the objectives of the two kinds of zones began to surface; as did who could benefit.

**Zoning Buffer Area for Tourism**

Just as the buffer zone of Corbett Tiger Reserve was being reshaped with enhanced focus on wildlife management, the very same areas were simultaneously being reorganized for production of an entirely different kind of space – tourism zones. The kind of tourism experience being sought through wildlife safaris by the resorts for their guests, most of whom are elites and influential, required complete absence of an earlier human presence and signs of their production from nature activities such as lopping, wood or grass cutting or other forms of resource use, management and/or extraction. It is not an easy task particularly in the
buffer area that must also recognize and honor the preexisting rights of local communities, not only in reserved forests but also to private land and community/communal land. As we shall see later on, tourism zone formation has been accompanied by decline in public transport on forest roads, reduction in village based livelihood activities and curtailment of village rights to collect fuelwood, fodder and other material from the reserved forests. The tourism zone formation in the buffer area thus became a clash with the actual objectives of a buffer zone.

Within five years of the addition of the buffer area, the forest department created the first tourism zone in the buffer area on the southern boundary of the Corbett National Park. The Jhirna tourism zone was created in 1996 followed the voluntary relocation of four villages – Dhara, Jhirna, Birna and Kothirau – in 1994, on demand of the villagers. The Jhirna tourism zone was carved out of a mosaic of legally different types of areas: the southern boundary of Corbett National Park, reserved forest buffer area of Corbett Tiger Reserve, and abandoned agricultural fields of relocated villages. The Corbett Tiger Reserve authorities initially created Jhirna tourism zone, named after the Jhirna Forest Rest House located in its middle, by converting the pre-existing forest check posts/barriers at Khara and Kalagarh on the Kandi road into gates. The unpaved Laldhang- Kalagarh- forest Kandi road traverses through the length of the tourism zone. As discussed earlier, public transport on this road gradually diminished. By 1997-98 the number of buses and trucks that went on this road had trickled down to 26 and 19 in the entire season respectively (Table 12). Loop roads were constructed around the national park boundary, one in each relocated village site, for patrolling, protection and wildlife viewing. Watchtowers, hides and machans were constructed adjacent to these loop roads along the forest streams for wildlife viewing by visitors. Unlike the other tourism zones of Corbett National Park which remain closed during the Monsoon period (July-August), the Jhirna tourism zone was kept open year round in
order to popularize it and also to check unauthorized entry by neighboring villagers and outsiders. The latter would sneak in to hunt wild animals including tigers, from entering the Corbett Tiger Reserve during the vulnerable monsoon season when vehicular movement becomes difficult. As a result, the entire visitor pressure of guests of private resorts moved to this tourism zone during the months of July to October, when Dhikala and Bijrani tourism zones remained closed.

Likewise, Durgadevi tourism zone was another tourism zone developed wholly in the buffer area on the eastern side of Corbett Tiger Reserve in Kalagarh forest divisions’ Mandal and Maidavan Ranges with official oversight in different stages. The Durgadevi tourism zone has also been woven out of a mosaic of legally different types of areas, but the zone lies exclusively in the buffer area and does not involve any portion of a protected area/core area. Rather, in addition to the reserved forests, it also encloses abandoned private agricultural fields and several panchayat van or community forests (discussed in detail later). In Durgadevi tourism zone, reserve officials fortified the forest check posts/barriers located at the Durgadevi and Maidavan as gates. Over time public transport on the Durgadevi - Maidavan forest road has all but ceased because of the poor condition of the road and the non-viability of the business operations. But in 1997-98 there was still heavy movement of buses and trucks (See Table 12). The access to landlocked village, Pand, via footpaths and agricultural fields of the residents of Jhudungu village are enclosed in this tourism zone. River Ramganga enters the Corbett Tiger Reserve at Marchula and then flows for another 16 km in the buffer area before entering the core area. At one time river rafting was permitted in the Ramganga River, but has now been discontinued.
Table 12. Vehicles in CTR Buffer Area 1997-98

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tourism Zone</th>
<th>Car</th>
<th>Jeep</th>
<th>Bus</th>
<th>Truck</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jhirna</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>498</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lohachaur</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>737</td>
<td>1121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonanadi</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2482</strong></td>
<td><strong>7454</strong></td>
<td><strong>348</strong></td>
<td><strong>771</strong></td>
<td><strong>11055</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tourism in the Sonanadi tourism zone in Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary (WLS) picked up only gradually compared to the Dhikala, Bijrani and Jhirna tourism zones in the Corbett National Park, as the physical infrastructure and road network were limited.

Table 13. Visitor Arrival in Corbett Tiger Reserve 1990-1998

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Indians</th>
<th>Foreigners</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Revenue (in Rs.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990-91</td>
<td>36,161</td>
<td>2,917</td>
<td>39,078</td>
<td>13,89,865.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991-92</td>
<td>30,277</td>
<td>2,770</td>
<td>33,047</td>
<td>13,20,369.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992-93</td>
<td>28,480</td>
<td>3,483</td>
<td>31,936</td>
<td>12,69,585.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*<em>1993-94</em></td>
<td><strong>37,265</strong></td>
<td><strong>6,199</strong></td>
<td><strong>43,464</strong></td>
<td><strong>39,67,984.25</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994-95</td>
<td>38,436</td>
<td>4,859</td>
<td>43,295</td>
<td>37,51,444.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995-96</td>
<td>42,647</td>
<td>5,751</td>
<td>48,398</td>
<td>40,54,790.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*<em>1996-97</em></td>
<td><strong>46,454</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,363</strong></td>
<td><strong>50,817</strong></td>
<td><strong>80,12,000.00</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997-98</td>
<td>46,999</td>
<td>4,937</td>
<td>51,936</td>
<td>87,49,537.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Corbett Tiger Reserve) *Years when rates for visitors facilities were revised by the Government of Uttar Pradesh

Growth of Enclavic Private Resorts Around Corbett Tiger Reserve

For nearly two decades, from 1973 (when Project Tiger was launched and Corbett National Park became Corbett Tiger Reserve) until 1991 (when the Bijrani day visit zone was formed with part of buffer area), there were no privately-owned tourism resorts around Corbett Tiger Reserve. The private sector tourism industry around Corbett Tiger Reserve emerged during this Phase II alongside federal government investment in tourism promotion and infrastructure development. This delayed entry of the private tourism sector into the
Corbett Tiger Reserve is intriguing. It is quite unlike Kanha, Ranthambore, and other prominent tiger reserves in India, where the declaration of tiger reserves and the development of private tourism proceeded simultaneously. Why didn’t resort development take place in the first two decades of the Corbett Tiger Reserve? How is resort development related to the tourism zone formation in buffer area? What factors stimulated rapid growth of private resorts such that they came to dominate the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape? These are key questions that this research seeks to answer. On this point, Lewis (2015, 231) while describing traditional tourism in Dhikala articulated the following:

“In Corbett national park and tiger reserve, for example, tourists were not allowed to walk in the park (let alone camp in tents!); they were strictly kept out of the core area. There were a limited number of jeep trips and elephant rides each day, most leaving from the small and basic lodge. Although Corbett is an extreme example, tiger tourism in India was a disappointment to those government officials anticipating an Indian safari industry.”

Several factors have contributed to the situation described by Lewis (2015). Unlike Kanha tiger reserve, where the night halt in Forest Rest Houses inside the tiger reserve was discontinued and commercial tiger shows were promoted for day visitors, Corbett Tiger Reserve continued to provide a holistic experience and opportunity for overnight stay through the Dhikala forest lodge and other forest rest houses. The lodge itself had over 30 rooms and a 24 bed dormitory, located in the heart of the Corbett National Park. Both the then park officials and private operators running the canteen in the Dhikala lodge enjoyed considerable political clout. One of the oldest park officials said that, “the contractual owners of Dhikala canteen influenced Ministers not to grant permissions for development outside Corbett Tiger Reserve as it would have increased competition for their business.” Park authorities prevailed on the civil administration to not permit land-use change from subsistence-based agricultural
to commercial activities in the villages adjoining Corbett Tiger Reserve, required for resort
development, on the pretext of safeguarding the interests of tigers.

Resort development outside the Corbett Tiger Reserve from 1991 onward is closely
linked to the expansion of the Corbett Tiger Reserve and the formation of the Bijrani day visit
zone in 1991. The park administration reportedly issued a no-objection certificate for
developing a private resort in Dhikuli village. This set the precedent for permissions for other
resorts and opening the floodgates of private resort development. In the early period of this
growth, safety and accessibility to the Bijrani gate led to a proliferation of numerous resorts
in the adjoining Dhikuli and Garjia villages (Rastogi 2015).

Most of the resorts have been built in adjoining villages through the conversion of
agricultural land. These lands were owned by villagers but gradually they sold them to
private owners. Diversion of agriculture land to tourism can be understood as a type of
reterritorialization by resorts, especially when you think of the resort owners using their
influence to convert agricultural land and reserve authorities prioritizing wildlife protection
when human wildlife conflicts ensued. Furthermore, there are no building laws or protections
for the conversion and development of agricultural land. With no limits to building hotels or
availability of land to be bought from villagers, land deals proliferated and hotels
mushroomed. What happened in Dhikuli and Garjia villages was repeated in village after
village across the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape, whether Dhela and Sawaldeh on the
southern boundary or Marchula and Bhakrakot villages on the eastern boundary; or for that
matter, the Kyari village farther beyond the Corbett Tiger Reserve boundary. The resorts are
unevenly distributed in Nainital, Pauri, and Almora districts. Gradually outside tourist
entrepreneurs bought private land previously owned and farmed by villagers, and converted
them to tourist resorts.
By 2005, Ramnagar township had become a bustling market and the narrow strip of land in between the south-eastern boundary of Corbett Tiger Reserve and the Kosi River where the Ringora khatta, revenue villages of Dhikuli, Garjia and Mohan are situated, a tourist destination in its own right. The landscape became dotted not just with the enclavice tourism zones inside the tiger reserve, but also numerous private resorts and a few locally initiated community-based tourism projects outside. This set the stage for a major policy initiative by Government of India with what results will be discussed in the next chapter. But first, it is important to explain how the formation of the new state of Uttarakhand provided a boost for the growth of the tourism industry.

**Uttarakhand Formation, Tourism Development, and Elephant Poaching**

The demand for smaller states with greater autonomy has been a critical part of political development in modern India. India has witnessed creation of several new states based on linguistic features at multiple junctures. Similarly, demand for a new hill state based on geographical, linguistic and socio-cultural differences had been simmering in the hill districts of Uttar Pradesh since the sixties. In 1994, it took form of *jan andolan* or a public movement as a response to the reservation in government jobs for other backward castes. The movement brought into focus the issues of development, ecology and regional autonomy (Rangan 2002). The new provincial state of Uttarakhand was created by the bifurcation of Uttar Pradesh and came into existence in November 2000 as the 27th state of India.

As a result of the bifurcation of Uttar Pradesh into Uttarakhand, a large part of the southern boundary of Corbett Tiger Reserve became an interstate boundary. Much of the Kotdwar-Kalagarh -Jhirna Kandi road runs along this interstate boundary. Part of the Jhirna Range of Corbett Tiger Reserve and the entire Amangarh Range spread over an area of 30.23 km² was retained as part of Uttar Pradesh. This reduced the total area of Corbett Tiger Reserve...
Reserve in Uttarakhand to 1288.31 km². This bifurcation had major implications for the villagers residing in the plains on the southern boundary of Corbett Tiger Reserve, the Corbett Tiger Reserve management and the newly formed State of Uttarakhand. The villages on the southern side such as Bhikkawal, Maloni, stopped receiving benefits from Corbett Tiger Reserve through the ecodevelopment program and compensation for crop damage by wild animals because they are situated in the state of Uttar Pradesh. This is despite the fact that elephants and other wild animals from Corbett Tiger Reserve continue to cross over to the other side and damage their crops.

The southern border of Corbett Tiger Reserve had been always vulnerable to poachers, particularly gangs of bawarias (a tribe in Haryana) who came to poison and trap tigers for illicit trade. The creation of the inter-state boundary increased this vulnerability. However, in 2001, an incident that shocked the nation occurred. Several cases of organized poaching of elephants by poachers from the north-east for ivory were detected in the southern parts of CTR. Protection in Corbett was strengthened by creation of additional manpower, infrastructure and funds. These additional resources enabled the launching of “Operation Lord” in which Corbett Tiger Reserve management employed 200 local youth to increase surveillance and protection (Sinha 2015).

Also, the demand from provincial level political parties escalated for converting the nearly 90 km long motorable but unmetalled “Kandi” road that runs from Kotdwar via Kalagarh to Ramnagar, and where transportation had been gradually diminished to secure Corbett Tiger Reserve, into a highway (Awasthi 2005). The only two alternatives to using this road were either coming via the adjoining state of Uttar Pradesh bringing tax issues into fore or taking lengthy detours along the hill areas.

Tourism also benefited from the decline in forestry activity. More than two thirds of the state of Uttarakhand is covered with forests. But there is a complete ban in the state on
felling of green trees above 1000 m. Tourism, particularly nature-based tourism, not surprisingly emerged as a new frontier for development in the fledgling state. In 2003, Government of India provided income tax and excise concessions to attract investments for ecotourism hotels, resorts, spa, entertainment, amusement parks and ropeways. The benefits included 100% exemption from payment of income tax for an initial period of five years and thereafter at reduced rates for another five years and one hundred percent excise duty exemption for a period of ten years from the date of the commencement of the project (UTDB 2006). This policy initiative spurred the growth of the hospitality industry. These policies have contributed to a ten-fold increase in the numbers of resorts around Corbett within a decade of Uttarakhand’s formation.

Coinciding with the formation of Uttarakhand was a Leadership for Environment and Development (LEAD) Fellows Project “Corbett Binsar Nainital Ecotourism Initiative” that aimed to spread ecotourism and community-based tourism planning for three villages that are part of the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape: Kyari, Bhakrakot and Chhoti Haldwani (WTO 2004). This was followed by another experiment in community-based tourism in the villages in the buffer area along the Ramganga River. These community-based tourism projects were set up in the same villages where private resorts flourish today. I now describe the community-based tourism projects first from the buffer area and then the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape that experienced the promise but the cessation of community based conservation. In this discussion I bring out the conflict that occurred in the landscape between the power of enclavic resort development over community based tourism, and the need of heterogenous tourism spaces crucial for the survival of community-based tourism.
Rise and Fall of Community-based Tourism in the Corbett Tiger Reserve Landscape

Community-based tourism (CBT) is an alternative form to commercial, mass tourism in that its advocates claim it has potential benefits both for biodiversity conservation and community livelihoods. In practice, community-based tourism represents a range of enterprises in rural areas. As noted in the literature review, however, despite great hopes for community based tourism, in practice it has been fraught with difficulties. Reasons for the uneven experience of CBT are multiple, and differ from site to site. A key factor in the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape has to do not only with outside political pressure as noted above, but the degree to which communities have been able to pursue CBT with self-reliance and autonomy (i.e., with control over tourism assets, management and benefits) or with undue dependency (i.e., not advantageous partnerships but exploitation of local natural and cultural assets with no community-wide benefits). I show below that in two cases in Corbett the latter has been more pronounced, despite the CBT being pursued in villages that had community forest lands, known in Uttarakhand as *panchayat vans* or *van panchayat*, the local council that governed the community forests.

(a) The Ramganga Mahaseer Conservation Project (2004-2013)

In 2003, the Government of Uttarakhand announced a policy for public–private partnership for ecotourism. In the following year, the Uttarakhand forest department applied the policy on a pilot basis in the “Ramganga Mahaseer Conservation Project” with much fanfare as part of the government’s efforts to promote community-based tourism. Eight villages located along the Ramganga River in the Mandal and Maidavan Ranges of the Kalagarh Tiger Reserve Division of Corbett Tiger Reserve were selected to be part of this initiative and to benefit from fishing-based tourism development. Each of these villages had its own *panchayat van* or community forest. The villagers also enjoyed fishing rights in the
Ramganga River that were regulated by the forest department, although as mentioned earlier, only for their domestic consumption. The villagers practiced fishing for food and for sale in Ramnagar, though after the inclusion of the area in Corbett Tiger Reserve as buffer zone, these practices became regulated.

The goal of the Ramganga Mahaseer Conservation Project was to incentivize conservation among the resident communities in the buffer zone by enhancing livelihoods through angling-based tourism. The project's innovativeness lay in transferring government authority to angling associations, or private bodies, to issue fishing permits on behalf of Corbett Tiger Reserve and to protect fish in the Ramganga River. This was accomplished by the Government enabling fishing permits to be issued by angling associations for distribution to the visitors and authorizing the angling associations to patrol the river for the protection of Mahaseer fish. In return, the forest department was required to provide access to staff of the angling associations and their visitors to their designated angling areas and permit creation of lodges owned by angling associations on private land located within the villages. The project ran for eight years, from 2004 to 2013.

At the heart of the project lay executing partnership agreements with four angling associations for a 16-km river stretch of Ramganga River in the buffer area of Corbett Tiger Reserve. The angling associations were membership-based organizations of professionals from Ramnagar, Dehradun and New Delhi: retired army officials, educationists, rich industrialists, and tour operators. The members in turn invited guests and conducted them in the sport. One of the angling associations was already practicing fishing-based tourism but was having difficulties in obtaining permits and in protecting fishes from poachers. Another angling association was led by a retired Chief Wildlife Warden who was also a former Director of Corbett Tiger Reserve, and who ran a non-governmental organization (NGO) after retirement from government service. There was, however, no relation between the
angling associations and the *van panchayat*, the council that managed community forests, though some angling associations engaged with communities as part of their NGO activities.

In December 2004, the Director of Corbett Tiger Reserve signed tripartite agreements with four angling associations connected with angling and fish conservation and Uttarakhand Forest Development Corporation, a public sector undertaking established by the government for forestry operations. The signing of the agreements was followed by creating an “angling zone” and demarcation of the “angling beats” (a stretch of river for regulating fishing activity and issuing permits) along the length of Ramganga River. The forest department zoned the 16-km stretch of the Ramganga River on a mechanical subdivision of the river's length in four equal angling beats of 2-km each. Out of the total length, only 8 km was allocated to four angling associations in staggered stretches of two km each. Members of the angling associations were involved in this exercise. The angling associations demanded that the entire length be given to any one angling association as otherwise the beat size would be too small, and resented some of the other conditions of the agreement insisted by the forest department, notably compulsion to construct lodges on private land and to deploy private elephants for patrolling requiring huge investments. But ultimately the agreements were mutually agreed upon.

An operator of the fishing lodge, who was an outsider but had now become settled in the area, describing the designated angling zone. He said, “Some of it was inside, almost in the buffer area of the tiger reserve; however, some bits of the river where we did angling was outside it. Outside the buffer area.” He further described the angling zone by saying, “it was a bit of the reserved forest, the village, revenue land, it’s that kind of a landscape.” He elaborated further, “in such landscapes there is great potential, that the communities are inside the space which has you know which also has good tiger density.” He thought that,
“it’s a very good wild life zone” and explained, “we talk about community participation and things like that, these are ideal spaces where it can happen.”

The angling-based, community-conservation efforts were initiated because of the general perception that fish in these areas were under threat. Describing the threats to fish at the start of the project, the fishing lodge operator said, “the problem was things like unsustainable persecution of Mahaseer, along with that of other species” and added, “such areas were heavily bombed. There was electrocution that was happening. There was also poisoning.” He said the aim of the project was, “to get the community by the side of the fish.” Elaborating further he said, “Fish has never been considered as wildlife (referring to the fact that freshwater fish are not included in the definition of wild animals in the WLPA 1972 and are thus regarded as forest produce under IFA 1927).” He added, “it was always a food for the communities. And the idea was to tell them about the sustainable use of the fish.”

Explaining the rationale of the project he said that there was ambiguity regarding “what were the rights of the people,” and added, “somebody said they could catch by a rod, somebody said they could catch by a small net.” The fishing rules prescribed angling on a catch and release basis, without causing injury to the fish.

But despite the partnership and transfer of angling permits to the angling association, the Corbett Tiger Reserve authorities continued issuing fishing permits to the visitors until 2012 along with providing bulk permits to the angling associations for distribution to their clients. Problems came to the fore when it was realized that one of the leading resort owners of Corbett Tiger Reserve had managed to become part of the agreement in the guise of an angling association and usurped the right given to the angling association, demanding access through the tourism zone gate at Durgadevi rather than through the regular path for the village from the other side of the Ramganga river where one was forced to walk on foot. He claimed further that as part of the agreement, the forest department should develop an
abandoned forest road leading through this tourism zone to his private lodge across the river. Such thoroughfare would have jeopardized the regulated tourism zone and provided unrestricted freedom to the clients of this lodge. On top of not permitting the “private” angling associations to assume this task, and in the backdrop of commercial interests into what was originally conceived as a community-based project, the National Tiger Conservation Authority raised objections that the public-private partnership agreements represented a violation of the Forest Conservation Act 1980. This Act prohibits use of forest land for non-forestry purposes, and that the Union Ministry of Environment and Forests was not consulted before granting such permissions. In 2013, the Government of Uttarakhand annulled the agreements executed as part of the project and instituted a ban on angling. This ban on angling was revoked by the Government of Uttarakhand and angling is now permitted, though outside protected areas and tiger reserves.

The villagers lamented the ban on angling. One villager said “No activity can be done in the River…only birding and wildlife (viewing).” According to a villager involved with the angling association, “When fishing was there in beat number 3 and 2, it was very good at that time. Client used to stay for a week, ten days, sometimes even a month.” Another villager said, “That type of tourist is no longer there who used to go to the village, who did fishing, who would sit along the river, who wanted to eat mandua (a coarse grain) and roti (Indian bread) in the village, movement of such people is less.” Talking about the benefits of angling, a guide stated:

“When I used to go for guiding as a gillie (a fishing guide), we used to get 500 Rupees (Indian currency) per permit. Some used to go to ecodevelopment committee, some to the village, some to the Corbett Tiger Reserve. Villagers were also connected. Even our river was protected at that time.”
When asked why the project was closed, one of the villagers who had made his livelihood from the project said, “Some people entered Jamund (the village) side without permission. They closed all the beats. They did not see that there was a problem in which beat.” On being asked about the situation of the ecodevelopment committee, the same villager said “When angling stopped, the ecodevelopment committee was finished. Ecodevelopment committee was based on angling.” Speaking about the project's benefits, the lodge operator said, “we saw a dramatic comeback in riverine ecology, not just fish, today we have gharial (Gavialius gangeticus), otter (Lutra lutra) as well.” One of the most prosperous angling lodge owners remarked, “I have been following the Ramganga and when we had started doing these properties and developing there, the fishing and poaching in the river had all stopped. Now it is all back.” He further added, “I know it as a fact, the amount of fish coming out, Mahaseer being sold in Ramnagar.” One of the pioneers in angling tourism in the area highlighted the importance of working for community-based tourism, and stated the following:

“Our area had one very good potential that we used to go to the village on foot to Bakhroti (one of the villages). The entire trail is almost within the village. It is there on our map too. But there is sometimes objection to that too from the forest department.”

Furthermore, this operator felt that there was discrimination, saying, “Big operators are not touched because they are beyond their reach. It is these small, small operators that are targeted.” The practice of discrimination by permitting one type of activity and curtailing another type of activity was lamented.

When asked about the risk from wild animals, the lodge operator said, “We have been doing that for many years. We are a living example. We are not dependent on the park
(national park) at all.” He added, “Till today there has been no mishap. If people are well-trained and the path is broad enough, there is no risk.”

Angling activity practiced entirely in the buffer zone of Corbett Tiger Reserve was stopped, including in all the so-called community-based projects, even though it was permissible under the Indian Forest Act 1927. Villagers interviewed for this study report said that there has been an adverse impact on local livelihoods. Owing to the ban on angling, gillies (skilled fishing guides) trained under the project have been thrown out of work. The villagers complained that their homestays that had been set up in villages are floundering given reduced visitation by fishers. Small operators are facing difficulty in attracting visitors. So much so that one of the most prosperous lodges at one point in Vandaran village has closed down.

As a result of the prohibition on fishing and the project's closure, and subsequent litigation and inquiries, there was a general setback to non-tiger-centric ecotourism development and community-based tourism initiatives in Uttarakhand. Officials were hesitant in taking initiatives for community-based ecotourism as it could be considered a violation of the Forest Conservation Act 1980. During the focus group discussion, it emerged that following the closure of the project, at present, activities have shrunk to three homestays of two rooms each in Bakhroti, Baluli, and Chimpani villages. On the other hand, Marchula situated at the road head nearby boasts of seven to eight private resorts and many more are in pipeline, with construction still going on at the time of the study.

By way of understanding what happened in the Ramganga Mahaseer Conservation Project, and especially how zoning played a key role, a few issues are key. The creation of the angling zone under the Ramganga Mahaseer Conservation Project by Government of Uttarakhand in 2004 preceded the Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act 2006 described in the next chapter. The process of reshaping the buffer zone's territory in Corbett Tiger Reserve
for angling, or what can be seen theoretically as reterritorialization (rebranded for a new commercial purpose), was entirely different from that of the other tourism zones created by the forest department for wildlife viewing in several important aspects. Unlike other tourism zones created under the guidance of the Project Tiger, it was a State Government-led initiative. The angling zone had been created primarily for (fish) conservation, through the protection of Mahaseer fish, and only secondarily for tourism by trying to meet the anglers' requirement. Being niche tourism, so much footfall or visitor turnout was not expected. There was a partnership with civil society through formal agreements between the government and the angling associations. The tourism activity being promoted was different from tiger viewing, the predominant tourism activity in Corbett Tiger Reserve, and focused on angling sport on a “catch and release basis”. Unlike other tourism zones, which largely benefited resorts, the angling zone was tied to providing benefits to eight villages in the form of developing fishing lodges, homestays, and gillies. The buffer zone within which the angling zone was constituted enclosed three kinds of areas where villagers had private or community rights: private agricultural land in revenue villages, panchayat van, and other village commons land. The existence of private property in the angling zone presented both opportunities and challenges.

In the Ramganga Mahaseer Conservation Project, reterritorialization for tourism development proceeded through a path different from that of tourism zones such as Jhirna. The reserved forest area under Kalagarh Tiger Reserve Division was reorganized in the form of angling zone and territory was reinforced in the formation of angling beats. Traditional forestry operations in the area of tree felling and woodcraft by the villagers were replaced with angling activity for income generation; and a new territorial identity based on angling rather than forests was created to attract both investment in private lodges and tourists for angling. The territorial assets created in the form of angling beats were also different from
those of tourism zones. Anglers were required to walk on foot, while vehicles were used to ferry them to vantage points or angling lodges. Also the villages were attached to the beats through the ecodevelopment committees consisting of elected villagers to ensure that communities derived benefits from tourism. Angling associations developed fishing lodges along with the beats, while villagers developed homestays in the villages.

This analysis of the creation and subsequent closure of the angling zone, as part of the Ramganga Mahaseer Conservation Project, brings out how despite being permissible in law and policy, the implementation of the project rather than leading to the promotion of community-based tourism in the buffer zone of Corbett Tiger Reserve, has led to the usurpation of the property rights of the villagers. Additionally, the Ramganga Mahaseer Conservation Project failed to recognize the panchayat van, leading to the treatment of the buffer area on par with the Government's practice with reserved forests. All this happened because of the power of commercial interests to dominate the project, whereby non-commercial activity was converted into a commercial one.

Two other community-based tourism projects were established outside Corbett Tiger Reserve in the landscape; villages of Kyari and Chhoti Haldwani, in the adjoining Ramnagar Forest Division. These are still running today. Corbett Tiger Reserve officials developed a “Jim Corbett Heritage Trail” in Chhoti Haldwani village, trained nature guides and leased within the Jim Corbett Museum a small souvenir shop to the Corbett Gram Vikas Samiti, a body formed by the villagers. The project has several homestays ranging from rustic to commercial.

Next I describe the community-based tourism project in Kyari which was based on adventure and birdwatching, and initiated by a private tour operator company. It too succumbed/receded to the pressures and power politics of resort development.
(b) Challenges to Community-Based Ecotourism in Camp Kyari (2000-present)

Kyari village is situated on the boundary of Ramnagar Forest Division and Terai West Forest Division in Nainital District at a distance of 10 km from the nearest Amdanda gate of the Bijrani tourism zone of Corbett Tiger Reserve. The village has a population of about one hundred families. The village is enclosed on the northern side by hilly terrain covered with rich Sal (Shorea robusta) forests teeming with wild animals, including tigers. Kyari is crisscrossed by three streams: Dabka River, Khichdi Sot (a stream), and Chehal Sot. A resident of the village proudly described Kyari village as “Prakriti ki Phulwari” or “nature’s bouquet.”

Kyari village shot into limelight through one of the first community-based tourism projects established in Uttarakhand. Wildrift, (https://www.wildrift.com/) a small Nainital-based tour operator company focused on “soft adventure” (i.e., rappelling, biking, paragliding and water-based sports) established Camp Kyari on village common land around the time Uttarakhand was formed in 2000. It did so by taking land on lease from the Gram Panchayat, a village council established for local self-government that has the authority to conduct at the village level developmental works under government schemes. The company initially set up a camp with the involvement of the villagers by establishing a few temporary tents, basic toilets, and a thatched kitchen. They set up a volleyball court in the camp that attracted village youth in the evenings, and the camp soon emerged as a meeting ground for villagers. The Wildlife Institute of India developed a community-based tourism plan for Kyari as part of the “Corbett-Binsar-Nainital Ecotourism Initiative (WTO 2004).” Subsequently, tents were replaced with modest but comfortable huts built by women with locally available resources to promote round the year tourism activity and increase local benefits. The village women were skilled in the art, and had interest in getting involved in the project to earn supplementary income.
Visitors to the camp were encouraged to go for guided walks in the neighboring forests, conducted through so-called soft adventure activities in river beds and canals, or go in the village for cultural tours. A group of village youth ran the camp providing hospitality services to their clients as well as organizing nature-based activities for them. One such activity was the trek from Kyari to Sitabani along the Khichdi Sot (stream). It was a highlight for clients as it passed through caves and was excellent for birdwatching. The villagers took the decisions regarding the running of the camp themselves after consultations with Wildrift. Their role was limited to conducting capacity building and marketing. The charges collected from the visitors were used for meeting the running costs of the camp and payment of salaries. Part of the earnings from the camp went to the village community development fund.

While describing the difference the camp Kyari had made in the life of villagers, a former village headman said that before the camp's establishment, whenever people asked where they lived, they would hang their head in shame and say “Kyari.” They were embarrassed by their village as it had no road access and was surrounded by dense forests. According to this former village headman, outsiders did not even wish to marry their daughters to men from Kyari village. He said that after the camp's establishment, the resources the village had earned, and the fame the tourism project had brought them, they could hold their head high and say with pride that they are from Kyari. The Government of India’s Ministry of Tourism awarded Uttarakhand State a national prize for Rural Tourism in 2004 based on a presentation about the community-based tourism in Kyari, as well as on other neighboring villages.

However, the freedom and autonomy of villagers to conduct tourism activities in Kyari and its nearby forests was short-lived, over-run by the interests of the large largely non-local resort owners and the interference of forest officials. One after another, three non-villager operator resorts emerged in Kyari on private land, which was legally permissible.
They were met with protests from local villagers. The villagers demanded from the forest department that resort development by outsiders within the village should be prohibited, though such development was controlled by the revenue department. A land survey conducted by the forest department revealed that part of the land on which the Kyari camp was situated belonged to the forest department. The village had not sought any prior formal approvals for running the camp from the forest department, so the villagers were instructed by the forest officials to vacate the camp as it represented an encroachment on state forest land. The Gram Pradhan (village headman), who supported Camp Kyari lost in local elections and was replaced by a new village headman who demanded that he would not let the camp run until Uttarakhand forest department gave necessary permissions to run the camp. With the latter permission not forthcoming as it was legally not possible there being restrictions on leasing out of reserved forest land for commercial tourism, the camp had to be dismantled.

Pressures from large resort development coupled with disputes within the village led to the closure of Camp Kyari. The group from Kyari village that ran the camp had internal differences and split into two groups. So both internal community dynamics as well as outside politics led to the conflict. One breakaway group of five youth, established a new “Camp Hornbill” in Kyari itself on agricultural land belonging to one of the villagers (https://thecamphornbill.com/). Camp Hornbill is connected to local homestays in the village. The machan (tree hide) homestays are being marketed through the international organization, AirBnB. This marked a new adventure, larger scale enterprise for village-based tourism. The path taken by the other group is described in a later chapter.

Support for tourism in the village was uneven. There were those that supported it especially because of its employment benefits. The operator from Kyari noted, “If we look at Kyari, then we will find that eighty percent of the youth from Kyari rely on tourism in one
form or another, as not much remains to be got from agricultural work.” He added that as a result of tourism, “There was awareness in the field of self-employment, awareness in the living” and later he emphasized that “Everything changed after the arrival of internet. It was like a revolution!” But on the other hand, others questioned the direction that tourism is taking. While lamenting the growth of resorts, a villager said, “Nothing is in control. Everything is uncontrolled. Resorts dictate as it pleases them.”

Governmental attempts to legislate towards more predictable and conservation-minded land use has not seemed to improve the situation in Kyari. The ban on land-use change issued by the Government of Uttarakhand in 2012 to be discussed later has not affected development in Kyari as the ban is confined to a distance of 2 km from the boundary of Corbett Tiger Reserve. Similarly, the notification of the silent zone has also not checked loud music in the resorts in Kyari as the silent zone is limited to 500 m from the boundary of Corbett Tiger Reserve. According to the villagers, as revealed in the focus group discussion, the number of resorts in Kyari has increased to eight, and another eight resorts are under construction. The villagers said that the sale of agricultural land has occurred to establish another seven to eight resorts. Villagers in Kyari expect that in a few years, there will be 25 resorts operating in Kyari village.

It must be noted that the growth of resorts in Kyari is leading to more local employment, but not to more nature-based tourism activities to satisfy visitors. One villager commenting on tourism activities in their community lamented,

“We can’t conduct trekking for them. Can’t conduct cycling. There used to be elephant rides here. The court has given a stay on them too. Activities are getting reduced. What will a fellow do after coming here?”

Another villager, repeating complaints he said he heard from visitors to Kyari, said that “Those who want to do birdwatching, those who want to go in nature, are not getting
anything. They say why should we come to Kyari? Why should we come to Corbett (Corbett Tiger Reserve) when we have already done safaris?” A villager while commenting on the direction tourism in Kyari has taken said that, “It was planned that there will be walks and trails over here. Tourism that is different from that in Corbett will be developed here. But what happened here? Unfortunately, the same tourism developed that exists in Corbett” alluding to the rush of vehicles for wildlife viewing in the adjoining Pawalgarh Conservation Reserve similar to that in Corbett Tiger Reserve, and the growth of private resorts.

Events led to further limiting of diversity of nature-based tourism. After the establishment of the Pawalgarh Conservation Reserve (PCR), a protected area, in 2012 within Ramnagar Forest Division, Kyari came to be located at the Pawalgarh Conservation Reserve boundary. Also, the Sitabani safari route in Ramnagar forest division passes through Kyari before exiting at the Belgarh gate. The Ecotourism Wing of the Forest Department organized a six-day Pawalgarh Spring Bird Festival in February 2015 to promote bird watching and community-based tourism (Shahbuddin 2014). Visitors were guided on temporary trails at Kyari, Pawalgarh and Sitabani. Following the festival, ONGC, a leading public sector undertaking, funded a project by Titli Trust, an NGO, for capacity building and marketing for community-based tourism. Pawalgarh Prakriti Prahari (PPP Pawalgarh Nature Guards), a local NGO, was established as part of the project that included installing signages, preparing bird, butterfly, and moth checklist, publications and training of nature guides. However, the trails were discontinued after the festival, and the trainees have been only recently recognized by the forest department and registered as guides. When asked about their demands, a Pawalgarh Prakriti Prahari member said the following:

“What we want is that when Pawalgarh Conservation Reserve takes shape, it should also have some such options. Two trails should be opened in Kyari, two trails should be at Pawalgarh, two trails should be near Gebua, so that those tourists who are
coming there should be involved there only. Small, small village should be given small rights for 1-2 km in such a way that conservation is not affected and people can also get involved.”

The example of Kyari brings out some of the needs and challenges in community-based tourism. The villagers tried to reterritorialize private and public space for tourism development by developing ecotourism products that included nearby forests and rivers based on their customary rights. But as these spaces are under state ownership, the declaration of a protected area and regulations soon forced them to withdraw. Within the village, on the other hand, lack of regulation on sale of agricultural land and construction led to the emergence of private resorts that now dominate the landscape. The ideal of community-led conservation was overwhelmed in favor of integration in the larger tourism market, entrepreneurship and individual benefits.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter, I presented the findings about widespread changes in the zoning in Corbett Tiger Reserve during the fifteen year period (1991-2005) leading to changes in the relationship of the park with the communities and the transformation in the scale and character of tourism. The entire Corbett National Park was made a core area. While tourism was still permissible in the Corbett National Park as before, with a ban on day visits to Dhikala and its conversion to a tourism zone, the accessibility to the interior areas and the prized views of the landscape with the Ramganga River in Dhikala tourism zone was reduced to a very small number of visitors. Both these changes in zoning of core area created conditions in Corbett National Park (core area of the Corbett Tiger Reserve) akin to an enclave where bordering and regulation of access limits benefits to a limited few.

As a result of its second major expansion, Corbett National Park acquired land which became its buffer zone outside its reserve boundaries. The transfer of reserved forests and
Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary from forest divisions to Corbett Tiger Reserve as buffer area, with no legal changes whatsoever, nevertheless resulted in the emergence of the buffer area as a territory in its own right with a strong identity connected with the practices of Project Tiger. The emphasis on wildlife protection and habitat development in the buffer area led to an increase in human wildlife conflict, restrictions on villagers from using historic resources and curtailment of their rights, decline in public transport on major forest roads, and relocation of five villages to areas outside the tiger reserve. All these changes signify increased control of the forest department and priority of initially forestry but later wildlife protection over recognizing the rights and caring about the welfare of local residents. I refer to the development of the buffer area as a third wave of territorialization as both purpose-namely tiger conservation — as well as the strategies are similar to those utilized to regulate the earlier national park or reserved forests.

The tourism zones too, just like the buffer areas, emerged as a territory in their own right with their strong distinctive identity as tourist destinations, clearly defined extent, rules and regulations for visitors and most importantly a new set of users and benefits. I regard the formation of the Jhirna and Durgadevi tourism zones in the buffer area as reterritorialization as the purpose of creating these tourism zones, unlike the buffer area earlier, is clearly economic profit and profit for outside tourist resort owners. In the way they organized their tourism enterprises, they did not emphasize simple nature-based activities or work to restore or promote the local ecosystems. Instead these emerging tourism zones and resorts helped in the commoditization of nature and bringing new economic values to the buffer area in the form of tiger safaris. The beneficiaries are a totally new set of actors namely the nature guides, gypsy drivers and the larger tourism industry. The analysis also brings out the clash between the objectives of the buffer area and the Jhirna and Durgadevi tourism zones in the
buffer area. The tourism zones in buffer area defy the original purpose of the zoning for coexistence and promote restrictions on other human uses to meet ecotourism needs.

The tourism zones can be interpreted as an assemblage of territory, infrastructure, rules and regulations, and subjects that together function like a machine for economic profit. I summarize some of the elements common to all tourism zones to develop an understanding of the role of tourism zones in the reterritorialization process. New tourism zones are established by park officials as per the provision in the management plan and after approval by the Chief Wildlife Warden, later the National Tiger Conservation Authority. The creation of new tourism zones does not require any major policy changes, meagre infrastructure development or financial investment as the bounded territory in the form of core and buffer area is already in place. In theory, the search for a new tourism zone by park officials begins with preparation of a plan and laying down of new boundaries that are mapped by rangers but not necessarily demarcated on the ground. The availability of the roads dictates the shape and extent of the proposed tourism zones, but far more important is the establishment of the imposing gates on the roads leading into the tourism zone for regulation of visitor access. Visitor movement within the tourism zones is highly regulated and strictly in vehicles, with movement on foot being completely prohibited for safety. Expansion and upgradation of the road network and laying down of routes and signage by park officials in the proposed tourism zone is accompanied with development of waterholes for wild animals, construction of machans (treetop viewpoints) and watchtowers for wildlife viewing and deployment of skilled staff for visitor management. Development of new accommodation for overnight stay for visitors is avoided and remains confined to preexisting forest rest houses located within the tourism zone. Rules and regulations for visitor behavior and activities applicable elsewhere in Corbett Tiger Reserve are extended to the new tourism zones, as are the fees for entry of visitors, entry of vehicles and preexisting accommodation. The period for which the
tourism zone will remain open for visitors is defined and numerical limits for number of vehicles to be permitted in a day are stipulated. Granting of concessions for canteens and nature shops follows. Finally, following the registration of vehicles for conducting vehicle-based safaris, and registration of nature guides, a new tourism zone is ready for operations.

As part of the reterritorialization process, the tourism zones create new economic value from the territory and generate benefits for a new set of actors replacing villagers. The government collects rent in the form of entry fees and through granting concessions. The new set of actors are firstly the visitors themselves who benefit from the opportunities for wildlife viewing and tiger sighting, secondly the gypsy drivers, nature guides and others who provide services during the safari rides, as souvenir shops and canteens, and lastly the larger tourism industry including the private resorts and hotels in the nearby villages, the travel industry and the regional economy. The tourism zones also lead to the creation of new private rights for the gypsy drivers and nature guides who are registered with park administration and though them the safari tourism industry as they establish their claim to receiving continued benefits from the tourism zones in the future. There is not much scope for engagement by the broader village communities with visitors during safaris and within private resorts, and thus both the tourism zones and the resorts are enclavistic in form and function. Direct local benefits from tourism zones become restricted to the few who are registered as nature guides and the gypsy drivers, who emerged as a new constituency comparable in numerical strength to the staff of Corbett Tiger Reserve. These are individuals and not community benefits. Benefits from tourism development also flow to others who join the tourism industry outside Corbett Tiger Reserve for wage labor, or exhibit private entrepreneurship and enter the accommodating sector through activities such as homestays, small hotels, restaurants and souvenir shops.

Efforts for reterritorialization for tourism are not confined to protected areas alone, but attempts were made by communities as well as resorts. In contrast to the enclavistic private
resorts dependent on the tourism zones, community-based tourism projects required access to forests and rivers close to the villages, foot based activities, less investment and small scale infrastructure, and unique spatial requirements discussed in the literature review as heterogenous space. The two forms of tourism thus came in conflict because of their divergent spatial requirement and norms. Community-based tourism as an ideal aimed at potential benefits both for conservation and community livelihoods has evolved and changed. In practice around the world, community-based tourism represents a range of enterprises in rural areas. At one end of the continuum are projects run by villagers, including but not limited to indigenous communities, promising alternative development, self-reliance and empowerment with shared benefits. In the middle are those projects that involve partnerships with the private sector with some social benefits for the entire community. At the other extreme are ventures based on community resources that provide nothing more than jobs and can be seen as exploitative (Giampiccoli and Mtapuri 2012). The latter two categories of tourism diverge a lot from the basic intent of community-based tourism and it has been argued that they should be addressed by separate terms rather than being clubbed together (Giampiccoli and Mtapuri 2012). Both the cases discussed above in the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape fall in the category where formal and informal partnerships were executed between outsiders (the private sector and angling associations) and the communities; and nearer to the end of the continuum where dependency rather than autonomy and shared benefits thrive.

Even though the proportion of the reserve’s area in Garhwal region increased with the expansion of Corbett Tiger Reserve, as a result of the concentration of the tourism zones to the Southern and the South Eastern boundary of Corbett Tiger Reserve, the tourism development continued to be mostly confined to the Kumaon region largely producing
uneven development. Uneven development has been attributed to be a characteristic feature of the enclavic model of development.

In Chapter Seven, I begin with a close and detailed analysis of changes in the legal regime that occurred in the time period (2006-2012), and then how these changes further affected zoning and its impacts in Corbett Tiger Reserve.
CHAPTER SEVEN
CORBETT TIGER RESERVE: PHASE III (2006–2023)

Introduction

In Chapters Five and Six, I presented the history of Corbett Tiger Reserve (CTR), with a focus on zoning, in two phases: Phase I after the launch of Project Tiger in 1973 (1973 – 1990) and Phase II (1991 – 2005) marked by the addition of reserved forest lands demarcated as buffer zone around the original Corbett National Park. This chapter covers Phase III of my examination of zoning and its impacts in the (extended) Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape. The “rupture point” which begins this phase is the Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act 2006 that legally defines tiger reserves for the first time in India. The Act is especially significant and relevant to this research because it provided the legal notification of what constitutes and differentiates core and buffer areas in tiger reserves in India, and guided the evolution of zoning from then on in Indian tiger reserves.

Chapter Seven is presented in two parts. In part A of this chapter, I closely examine the Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act 2006 and the national level framework it provided for zoning within India's tiger reserves as developed by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (herein NTCA) under the authority of Project Tiger. I provide a comparison of the provisions for zoning in tiger reserves prior to and after the Amendment Act 2006 and investigate the changes brought about in zoning of tiger reserves as a result of this new amendment. After outlining the contours of the legal framework, provisions for the core/buffer zoning in tiger reserves, powers of the NTCA and instruments of control, I discuss the provisions for the tourism spaces in tiger reserves namely for tourism zoning and activities, private resort development, community-based tourism (CBT) and tiger (zoo) safaris. I then turn to the conditions set in these laws and policies for shaping governance
institutions, planning processes, management and financing of tiger reserves. An understanding of these conditions is a prerequisite to comprehend the current allocation of space in tiger reserves, including for tourism. The authority, regulations, techniques, and calculations I analyze enable me to make sense of how space was first allocated to core and buffer areas, and reallocated afterward in buffer zone for tourism.

In part B of Chapter Seven, I turn to how these national level tiger reserve policy prescriptions for core/buffer area and tourism zoning operate in one particular place, Corbett Tiger Reserve (CTR). Part B is about how those policies played out in the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape (i.e., includes the buffer zone that lies outside the core area). The analysis highlights a few key findings: 1) how zoning into core/buffer areas led to further territorialization and reterritorialization; 2) how the core area came to be embedded in law by the concept of “inviolate” and later on how the buffer area too became dominated by this concept and resembles the core area, and 3) the impact on remaining villages in the buffer area with increasingly curtailed resource access and development of community-based (eco) tourism – despite the NCTA advocating for the latter. In response to the politics and practices foreclosing viable, sustainable paths for villages located in the buffer area (including even those with community forests (panchayat vans), the planners have sought assistance through zoning to legitimize some territories and ‘forget’ others, and as last resort, relocation. I argue that the way tourism zones have developed over time in the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape led to reterritorialization of the buffer area for tourism, and in the process enhanced enclavistic resort tourism development or enclavization.

I conclude the chapter with a discussion of the critical issues with zoning inside tiger reserves that center on territorialization through zoning of the core/buffer area and reterritorialization through tourism zone formation; and its implications of both on uneven tourism development especially the dominance of private resorts. The latter emphases
confining of tourism activities to tourism zones, prescription of standards for only one type of tourism activity, vehicle-based safaris, and lack of explicit allocation of space outside Corbett Tiger Reserve for resort development and community-based tourism. I also discuss the inherent conflict between buffer zone objectives and tourism zoning in the buffer area of Corbett Tiger Reserve. My argument is that legally notified zoning of buffer area and subsequent tourism zoning in the buffer area both have social and political impacts determining how the area is used and who benefits. My analysis brings out the contradictions, discrepancies and gaps between the provision in law, its interpretation by the NTCA through its guidelines and the practices on ground in Corbett Tiger Reserve.


**Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act 2006**

A major revision in wildlife policies occurred in the aftermath of the complete disappearance of tigers from Sariska Tiger Reserve reported in 2004. The Government of India set up a Tiger Task Force to look into the causes and suggest remedial measures (Narain et al. 2005). Based on the recommendations of the Tiger Task Force, the Wildlife (Protection) Act (WLPA) 1972, the primary legislation for protecting wildlife and creating protected areas in India, was amended in November 2006. The Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act, 2006 led to the inclusion of “Chapter IV B National Tiger Conservation Authority” and “Chapter IV C Tiger and Other Endangered Species Crime Control Bureau” in the parent Act. The creation of the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau at the national level provided support to the National Tiger Conservation Authority/Project Tiger in the arduous task of law enforcement and controlling tiger poaching. The Wildlife (Protection)
Amendment Act, 2006, herein after referred to as ‘Amendment Act 2006’, brought about remarkable changes in the tiger conservation legal framework in India and identity of tiger reserves, marking a “rupture point” and setting in motion an evolution of zoning in Corbett Tiger Reserve, described in part B of this chapter.

The Amendment Act, 2006 led to three major changes. Firstly, the Amendment Act 2006 legally defined tiger reserves for the first time. The WLPA 1972 as originally legislated in 1972 did not mention tiger reserves. Importantly, the reserves have been defined in terms of only two types of zones: core areas and buffer areas. The word ‘zone’ is not mentioned in the WLPA 1972 anywhere in relation to land; it is mentioned only in relation to territorial waters in the definition. ‘Zone’ is not mentioned in the Amendment Act 2006 as well. The two words ‘area’ and ‘zone’ are used with large differences in meaning, and their implications are discussed below. Higher punishments were inserted in WLPA 1972 vide Section 51 (c) for offences committed in core area of tiger reserves, or hunting and altering the boundaries of a tiger reserve, and punishments vide Section 51 (d) for abetment in such offences. Secondly, it established a number of institutional bodies, authorities, and procedures to administer the tiger reserves. The Amendment Act 2006 provides new institutions for the governance of the tiger reserves at three scales: the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), a new institution, for regulation of tiger reserves at Government of India level, a steering committee to be set up under the chairmanship of the Chief Minister at the state level, and lastly, Tiger Conservation Foundations (TCF) to support management in tiger reserves at the state or tiger reserve level. One of the important functions of the National Tiger Conservation Authority is to approve the Tiger Conservation Plans (TCP) for tiger reserves according to which the tiger reserves are to be managed. Lastly, equally crucial is the definition given to the core area that explicitly stipulates that the core area which constitutes the critical tiger habitat needs to be made “inviolate” though as I will
discuss below, no precise definition of the word was provided at that time. The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) soon after its establishment issued various guidelines for operationalizing inviolate core areas that now guide planning and management in tiger reserves. Furthermore, the NTCA also lay down the procedures how tourism is to be managed in the tiger reserves in a document known as “Guidelines for Tourism in and Around Tiger Reserves 2012”. The Tourism Guidelines 2012 also prescribe an additional institution for tourism management, the Local Advisory Committee (LAC) to be set up at the tiger reserve level.

Section 38 V (4) of the Amendment Act 2006 defines core areas or critical tiger habitats within tiger reserves as follows:

“(i). core or critical tiger habitat areas of National Parks and Sanctuaries, where it has been established, on the basis of scientific and objective criteria, that such areas are required to be kept as inviolate for the purposes of tiger conservation, without affecting the rights of the Scheduled Tribes or such other forest dwellers, and notified as such by the State government in consultation with an Expert Committee constituted for the purpose.”

Section 38 V (4) of the Amendment Act 2006 defines buffer areas within tiger reserves, but unlike in the definition of core area, the definition of buffer area does not contain any mention of national park and sanctuary. The buffer area is defined as:

“(ii). Buffer or peripheral areas consisting of the area peripheral to the critical tiger habitat or core area, identified and established in accordance with the provisions contained in Explanation (i) of section 38 V (4), where a lesser degree of habitat protection is required to ensure the integrity of the critical tiger habitat with adequate dispersal for tiger species, and which aim at promoting coexistence between wildlife and human activity with due recognition of the livelihood, developmental, social and
cultural rights of the local people, wherein the limits of such areas are determined on
the basis of scientific and objective criteria in consultation with the concerned Gram
Sabha and an Expert Committee constituted for the purposes."

At this time, the Government of India still did not place tiger reserves under the
category of protected areas. The legal definition of protected areas introduced in the 2002
Amendment to the WLPA 1972 includes only four categories: national parks, sanctuaries,
conservation reserves and community reserves. As such, there are major differences in the
legal provisions between tiger reserves and the other legal types of protected areas, as well as
between the latter. For example, there are differences between national parks and sanctuaries
that together constitute the core area or the critical tiger habitat of tiger reserves. A national
park can be declared after all rights in respect of lands have become vested in the
provincial state government as provided in Section 35 (4) b of the WLPA 1972. Within
sanctuaries, however, Chief Wildlife Warden (CWLW) is authorized to regulate grazing as
provided in Section 33 (d). Furthermore, the District Collector in consultation with the
CWLW may allow continuation of any right of any person in, or over land within the limits
of the sanctuary as provided in Section 24 (2) (c).

As noted above, it is extremely noteworthy that the Amendment Act 2006 introduces
the word “inviolate” explicitly in India’s forestry and wildlife legislation for the first time.
Section 38 V (1) of the Amendment Act 2006 while providing a definition of core area states
that “such areas are required to be kept as inviolate for the purposes of tiger conservation.”
However, the lack of precise definition of “inviolate”, as well as agreements on conditions
necessary to cultivate it, produced many challenges. The dictionary meaning of the word
inviolate is “not violated or profaned, especially pure (Merriam-Webster,
https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/inviolate, downloaded 1/4/2022).” While the
explicit mention of the word “inviolate” was new to Indian wildlife legislation, the idea of
“inviolate” nature is not new around the world and actually was launched in the definition of national park agreed upon in the IUCN General Assembly held in New Delhi in 1969 and adopted as a model for Project Tiger (Botteron 2001). The quest for inviolate nature has also had severe impacts for residents, as noted by Rai et al. 2019, 125: “This idea of inviolateness has a long history in the conservation literature and conservationists continue to argue for the relocation of forest dwellers from reserves.”

The core area or critical tiger habitat of tiger reserves may consist of two types of protected areas (e.g., national parks and sanctuaries). The requirement of keeping the core area “inviolate” is being implemented to varying degrees in different tiger reserves. What is significant is that this provision overwrites the separate identity and dissolves the legal differences between national parks and wildlife sanctuaries where they together constitute the core area as in Corbett Tiger Reserve. This is important as, as discussed above, Section 33 (d) of the WLPA 1972 permits grazing and Section 24 (2) (c) provides for continuation of other rights in sanctuaries, that can now be potentially prohibited where sanctuaries form a part of core area of tiger reserves on grounds of making it inviolate, thus justifying – even necessitating – relocation of resident/nomadic communities from such areas. This brings into prominence the overarching role of zoning in tiger reserves over and above that of protected areas, and highlights the socio-political impacts of zoning.

Section 38 V of the Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act 2006 lays down the procedure for the determination of boundaries. The Section 38 V (1) of the Amendment Act 2006, specifically mentions that the boundaries of tiger reserves need to be notified by the state governments. The boundaries both in the core and buffer areas, as stipulated in the Act, need to be defined in consultation with the expert committee specifically and on the basis of “scientific and objective criteria.” However, unlike in core areas, in the case of buffer areas consent of Gram Sabhas — the local village governmental bodies — is required. The
notification of buffer areas raises major challenges as the boundary of the buffer area often include diverse land ownerships and multiple uses of land.

The Amendment Act 2006 is very specific about what is permitted and restricted and where in a tiger reserve. The Section 38 V (2) of the Amendment Act 2006 applies certain sections of the WLPA 1972 to tiger reserves that are also applicable to sanctuaries. However, not all sections of WLPA 1972 that apply to sanctuaries and national parks apply to the tiger reserves. The non-applicability of the sections that apply to sanctuaries and national parks to a tiger reserve implies that these sections do not apply only to the buffer area of a tiger reserve either (consisting of reserved forests and other types of land). These sections are already applicable to protected areas (sanctuary and national parks) that make up core area, thereby making a huge difference between core and buffer areas of tiger reserves. The differences between wildlife sanctuaries and buffer areas of tiger reserves are described below to better understand the potential benefits as well as the limitations of the notification of buffer areas in tiger reserves, especially for development of tourism zones.

The Section 38 V (2) of the Amendment Act 2006 prescribes the application of only those sections of the WLPA 1972 to tiger reserves that specifically relate to demarcation of boundaries and wildlife protection. As the provisions shown in Table 14 relating to demarcation and protection are already applicable in sanctuaries and national parks that comprise the core area or the critical tiger habitat of tiger reserves, their being applicable to tiger reserves means that in addition to the core area, they apply in the buffer area of a tiger reserve as well.
Table 14. Sections of Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act 2006 that Apply to both Sanctuaries and Buffer Areas of Tiger Reserves

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Provision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Section 18 (2)</td>
<td>Situation and limits of tiger reserves be specified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 27 (2)</td>
<td>Duties for people residing within the tiger reserve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 27 (3)</td>
<td>Prohibits damaging boundary pillars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 27 (4)</td>
<td>Prohibits molesting or teasing animals or littering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 30</td>
<td>Prohibits causing fire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 32</td>
<td>Bans the use of injurious substances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 33 (b)</td>
<td>Provides control to CWLW to take steps for the security and preservation of the wild animals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 33 (c)</td>
<td>Provides control to CWLW to take measures in the interest of wildlife and for improvement of the habitat.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nevertheless, Section 38 V (2) of the Amendment Act 2006 does not prescribe those sections of the WLPA 1972 to tiger reserves that relate to regulation of access and use. Of these, except for Sections 24 (2) (c), 29 and 33 (d), the rest apply to national parks as well (Section 35 (6) is similar to Section 29 and applies to national parks). As the provisions shown in Table 15 relating to regulating access and use are already applicable in sanctuaries and national parks that comprise the core area or the critical tiger habitat of tiger reserves, their not being applicable to tiger reserves means that they do not apply to the buffer area of a tiger reserve.

Table 15. Sections of Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act 2006 that apply to Sanctuaries BUT NOT to Buffer Areas of Tiger Reserves

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Provision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Section 19-26</td>
<td>Procedure for the settlements of rights.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 27 (1)</td>
<td>Restrictions on entry into sanctuary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 28</td>
<td>Authorizes CWLW to issue permits to any person to enter or reside in a sanctuary for tourism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 29</td>
<td>Prohibits destruction, exploitation or removal of wildlife from a sanctuary except as provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 31</td>
<td>Prohibition for entry with weapons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 33 (a)</td>
<td>Control of construction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 33 (d)</td>
<td>Control of grazing/movement of livestock.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This non-applicability of provisions relating to regulation of access and use in buffer areas poses challenges for generating the necessary conditions for creation of tourism zones in buffer areas similar to tourism zones in the core area. I will discuss below how these challenges were sought to be met in Corbett Tiger Reserve, and with what implications.

The term ‘tourism zone’ is not mentioned in the WLPA 1972 or in the Amendment Act 2006, and thus there is no allocation of space for tourism in the Act nor specification of the types of areas where tourism will be conducted. In addition, while the Amendment Act 2006 mentions ecotourism, the Act does not specify which tourism activities are admissible within the tiger reserves. The Amendment Act 2006 mentions the word tourism only once and ecotourism twice in the text discussed below.

**National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) and Project Tiger**

As a follow-up to the Amendment Act 2006, the Government of India established the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) for policy making and regulation of tiger reserves. Within a decade of its formation, the NTCA developed into a robust legal institutional authority with branches in other parts of the country. The establishment of the NTCA under the Amendment Act 2006 provided statutory powers to the Project Tiger Directorate which had a limited mandate. The Project Tiger Scheme of Government of India is now implemented by the NTCA. Under the WLPA 1972, the control of sanctuaries and national parks was vested exclusively in the Chief Wildlife Warden (CWLW). Now, under the Amendment Act 2006, the NTCA also has powers over the tiger reserves described below. As the national parks and sanctuaries comprise core areas of tiger reserves, such areas now come under dual control of both the NTCA and the CWLW, the NTCA powers being in addition to those of CWLW. NTCA’s 11 powers and functions under Section 38 (O) 1 of the Amendment Act 2006 are categorized in Table 16.
Table 16. National Tiger Conservation Authority Powers and Functions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Power and Functions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Tiger Conservation Plan | (a) to approve the tiger conservation plan prepared by the State Govt.  
(i) ensure critical support including scientific, information technology and legal support for better implementation of the tiger conservation plan. |
| Land use/diversion of land for other purposes | (b) evaluate and assess various aspects of sustainable ecology and disallow any ecologically unsustainable land use such as mining, industry and other projects within the tiger reserves;  
(g) ensure that the tiger reserves and areas linking one protected area or tiger reserve with another protected area or tiger reserve are not diverted for ecologically unsustainable uses except in public interest and with the approval of the NBWL and on the advice of the NTCA. |
| Tourism/Project Tiger | (c) lay down normative standards for tourism activities and guidelines for project tiger from time to time for tiger conservation in the buffer and the core area of tiger reserves and ensure their due compliance. |
| Wildlife Management (protection, research and monitoring, capacity building) | (e) provide information on protection measures including future conservation plan, estimation of population of tiger and its natural prey species, status of habitats, disease surveillance, mortality survey, patrolling, report on untoward happenings and such other management aspects as it may deem fit including future plan conservation;  
(f) approve, coordinate research and monitoring on tigers, co-predators, prey, habitat, related ecological and socio-economic parameters and their evaluation.  
(j) facilitate ongoing capacity building program for skill development of officers and staff of tiger reserves; |
| Conflict Resolution | (d) provide for management focus and measures for addressing conflicts of men and wild animals and to emphasize on coexistence in forest areas outside the National Parks, sanctuaries or tiger reserves, in the working plan code.  
(h) facilitate and support the tiger reserve management in the State for biodiversity conservation initiatives through ecodevelopment and people’s participation as per approved management plans and to support similar initiatives in adjoining areas consistent with Central and State Laws; |
| Residual Function /Conservation of tigers and habitat | (k) perform such other function as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this Act with regard to conservation of tigers and their habitat. |

Of particular relevance is the mandate provided to the NTCA through the Amendment Act 2006 for regulation of tourism. Section 38O (1) (c) empowers the NTCA to “lay down normative standards for tourism activities and guidelines for Project Tiger from time to time for tiger conservation in the buffer and the core area of tiger reserves and ensure their due compliance.” This provision imparts the NTCA specific role of regulating and ensuring compliance of tourism in tiger reserves, including for buffer areas. In the Amendment Act 2006, Section 38 (O) 2 of the Act gives the overriding power to NTCA to “issue directions in writing to any person, officer or authority for the protection of the tiger or tiger
reserves and such person, officer or authority is bound to comply with the directions.”

This Section, however, contains an important rider that “no such direction shall interfere with or affect the rights of local people particularly the Scheduled Tribes.” As we will see later on in this study, the latter rider is a crucial legal mandate that nonetheless largely remains ignored, with substantial implications for the rights of the local communities in the buffer area.

The Amendment Act, 2006 highlights ecological concerns. For example, it mentions ecotourism - a specific type of tourism - twice in the objectives of The Tiger Conservation Foundation. Section 38X (2) (b) states, “to promote ecotourism with the involvement of the local stakeholder communities and provide support to safeguard the natural environment in the tiger reserves.” Section 38 X (2) (e) states that “to augment and mobilize financial resources including recycling of entry and such other fees received in a tiger reserve, to foster stakeholder development and eco-tourism.” Furthermore, Section 38 O (1) (b) of the Amendment Act 2006 requires that the NTCA evaluate and assess various aspects of sustainable ecology and disallow any ecologically unsustainable land use, such as mining, industry, and other projects within the tiger reserve. Of key importance, is that tourism is presumed to be a sustainable activity within tiger reserves – it is not included in the list of unsustainable activities mentioned in the Amendment Act 2006. Soon after its establishment in 2006, the NTCA issued several guidelines for the planning and management of tiger reserves.

National Tiger Conservation Authority Guidelines for Tiger Reserves

The NTCA has issued several guidelines at multiple junctures on various issues related to tiger reserve management: for tiger conservation plans (2007 and 2014), tiger conservation foundations (2007), voluntary village relocation (2011), tourism in tiger
reserves (2012) and tiger (zoo) safaris (2016 and 2019). These guidelines have been issued through varied channels: circulated by NTCA as a technical document (tiger conservation plans); notified by the Government of India under Section 38 (X) of the Amendment Act 2006 (tiger conservation foundations); notified by the Government of India under Section 38 (O) (Tourism Guidelines 2012); unspecified (guidelines for relocation, tiger (zoo) safaris). The multiplicity of timings and avenues by which NTCA has issued various guidelines for tiger reserves opens up a vast field of interpretation and misinterpretation, application and non-application. It is not easy to make a sense of all the provisions contained in these guidelines and at times consistency is lacking in provisions there being inherent contradictions. For example, while the NTCA TCP Guidelines 2007 require an area of 800-1000 km² be set aside as core area, the same has been included in NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 to 800-1200 km². The results of the analysis of the two guidelines most relevant for tourism are presented below.


The NTCA came out with ‘Guidelines for Preparation of Tiger Conservation Plan’ (NTCA TCP Guidelines) in 2007 which was followed by another supplement ‘Guidance Document for Preparation of Tiger Conservation Plan’ in 2014 (NTCA TCP Guidelines 2014). The NTCA’s TCP Guidelines 2007 prescribe that the tiger conservation plan be written in three separate sections: core zone, buffer zone and corridors and connecting areas. NTCA TCP Guidelines 2007 encourage the designation of buffer areas as conservation reserves, a protected area under the WLPA 1972. The Guidelines provide legitimacy to the existence of a range of land uses and activities in the buffer zone. The buffer zone is envisaged as the multiple use zone. The NTCA TCP Guidelines 2007 and 2014 elaborated
the differences between Tiger Reserves' core and buffer zones of Tiger Reserves as follows (Table 17):

Table 17. Differences between Core and Buffer zones in a Tiger Reserve (TCP Guidelines)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Zone, Critical Tiger Habitat</th>
<th>Buffer Zone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose / Management Objectives</strong></td>
<td>(i) To foster young adults and older tigers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Exclusive tiger agenda. Protection of the tigers.</td>
<td>(ii) safeguard the integrity of the core.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) reproductive surplus area.</td>
<td>(iii) foster coexistence with local people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) low human disturbance through village relocation.</td>
<td>(iv) address threats to wildlife conservation from regional developmental activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iv) no go area for development of any sort.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outputs</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preservation of tigers' wildlife population.</td>
<td>added habitat supplements;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>habitat for spillover population of tiger and its prey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>reduced human-wildlife conflicts;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>incentives for local people through payment of ecosystem services, ecotourism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>coexistence; livelihoods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Size</strong></td>
<td>Size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>800 to 1000 km² (to accommodate 80-100 adult breeding tigers)</td>
<td>Extent of area to be included in the buffer zone is not specified.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legal status</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National park or wildlife sanctuary (mandatory)</td>
<td>Reserved forests/ protected forests, conservation reserve, community reserve, revenue land, private holdings, villages, towns etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ownership of land</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Government, private, community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Land use</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Existing land uses may continue; modification of practices is required to make them conservation-friendly; mainstreaming of conservation and wildlife concerns; mining, thermal plants, irrigation, communication projects, and industry can exist with mitigation measures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rights</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need to make core area inviolate (overrides the rights in sanctuaries where grazing is permitted, and the government may permit continuation of other rights).</td>
<td>Existing rights/concessions are continued.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Settlement of Rights</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedure for the declaration of national parks and wildlife</td>
<td>Procedure for the settlement of rights not provided for in government-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
sanctuaries includes procedure for the settlement of rights. owned forest areas. It is assumed that the rights have been settled.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other zones</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>Whether core zones can contain other zones has not been articulated. Ecodevelopment, forestry, production zones are mentioned, but <strong>tourism zone</strong> is not explicitly mentioned.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Management Activities</td>
<td>- habitat protection, - wildlife protection, - monitoring, - research, - regulated tourism in tourism zones, up to a maximum of one-fifth of the total area</td>
<td>- lesser degree of habitat protection; - forestry (after mainstreaming of wildlife concerns); - joint forest management (JFM) - ecodevelopment (for reducing resource dependency); - agriculture; - interpretation programs; - livelihoods - Surveillance and protection of tiger and wildlife.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>State-administered</td>
<td>- community to be involved through micro plans; - village level and participatory programs need to be implemented through ecodevelopment committees (EDCs); - community should have access to natural resources in area or provided benefits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plans</td>
<td>Tiger Conservation Plan (TCP) for core area. Zone plans for unique habitat, voluntary relocation and for <strong>tourism</strong>.</td>
<td>Tiger Conservation Plan for buffer area and corridors; Zone plans for forestry, wildlife management, eliciting local public support, retrofitting measures, watershed and soil conservation measures and for <strong>ecotourism</strong>; micro plans for ecodevelopment committees (EDCs).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unlike the three-tiered system in the Biosphere Reserves-discussed previously in the Literature Review, there is no transition zone outside tiger reserves. However, a range of other territorial units are mentioned in NTCA TCP Guidelines 2007; of these, the landscape and corridors are worthy of mention.

The territorial provisions of the WLPA 1972 are confined to protected areas and tiger reserves and do not extend to the landscapes. There is only one mention of the word “landscape” anywhere in the WLPA 1972. Section 36 A of the WLPA, 1972 — dealing with
the declaration and management of a conservation reserve — empowers the state government to declare any area owned by the Government, particularly the areas adjacent to national parks and sanctuaries and those areas which link one protected area with another, as a conservation reserve for protecting landscapes, seascapes, flora, and fauna, and their habitat. For example, a part of the Ramnagar forest division adjacent to Corbett Tiger Reserve has been declared as Pawalgarh Conservation Reserve. Nevertheless, even though the word “landscape” is not mentioned in the WLPA 1972 in relation to tiger reserves, the NTCA has made several essential prescriptions in the guidelines for following the landscape approach that extend to the broader areas of tiger reserves.

The NTCA TCP Guidelines 2007 grapple with challenges associated with securing corridors within the tiger-bearing landscapes for tiger movement in areas outside tiger reserves by prescribing a separate plan for such areas as part of tiger conservation plan. However, ‘corridor’ itself is not defined anywhere and thus lacks legal sanctity. The NTCA TCP Guidelines 2007 prescribe that the tiger-bearing forests in the adjoining area need to be addressed in the forest divisions' Working Plans (WP) to foster corridor conservation through a restorative strategy; the guidelines assumed that such areas must be under traditional forestry practices and land uses. Upgrading and maintaining the ecological status necessitate that existing management practices be modified. The NTCA TCP Guidelines 2007 refer to isolated patches in areas of connectivity and corridors as critical that need to be identified between two source populations of tigers. As per these prescriptions, the corridors need to be defined.

b) NTCA Comprehensive Guidelines for Tiger Conservation and Tourism, 2012

Of particular relevance for tourism are the “Comprehensive Guidelines for Tiger Conservation and Tourism” issued by NTCA in 2012. These Guidelines were issued as a
result of the intervention by the Supreme Court of India. Corbett Tiger Reserve was one of the tiger reserves where large scale resort development had attracted attention (Bindra and Karanth 2013). The Guidelines are compiled in two parts: The lengthier Part A contains ‘Guidelines for Project Tiger’ and Part B contains ‘Guidelines for Tourism in and Around Tiger Reserves’, herein both referred to as the NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012. The NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 provide a framework for creating tourism spaces and regulation of tourism activities including selecting, planning, developing, implementing, and monitoring tourism within tiger reserves in India. Though tourism activities are not specified in the Amendment Act 2006, the NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 provide legitimacy to some tourist activities by mentioning them. Of utmost importance for tourism development is the lack of distinction between tourism and ecotourism, tension between the prescribed enclavic tourism zones and needed heterogenous space for developing community-based tourism, and clash between the techniques of carrying capacity and Limits of Acceptable Change as methods for managing visitor impacts.

The allocation of space in the Amendment Act 2006 regarding core and buffer areas has been further redrawn in the NTCA Guidelines in the form of zones, including tourism zones, thus bringing these spaces into the realm of a formal, legal entity that has to be managed. Even though both an area and a zone are spatial categories, there is a difference between the two terms. An “area” is simply a flat piece of space that can be measured. On the other hand, a “zone” is literally understood as an “area” which has a defined purpose, is different from other similar areas, involves decision making in defining the boundaries and has some restrictions or rules and regulations. The zone become enclavic when in addition to specifications about development, there are rules to control access through rationing as in tourism zones in tiger reserves and determination of who benefits. The use of the word zone for core and buffer areas mentioned in the Amendment Act 2006 and tourism zones in the
NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 gives an impression that there is a single comprehensive framework for zoning, which it is not, bringing together the allocation of space made in legislation and NTCA guidelines together at the same level.

NTCA issued Guidelines for Tiger (Zoo) Safari to be developed in tiger reserves for reducing visitor pressure in core areas first in 2016 and later revised in 2019. In contrast to tiger safaris, NTCA has not issued any separate guidelines for community-based tourism. However, the NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 prescribe that the tourism plan should have a participatory Community-based Tourism Strategy.

Tourism Spaces in Tiger Reserves

As noted earlier, under the WLPA 1972 tourism in sanctuaries and national parks is permitted as a legitimate activity, and the Project Tiger Task Force report specifically justified the creation of tiger reserves on the basis of tourism for generation of funds. The Amendment Act 2006 provides further legitimacy to tourism and ecotourism activities within tiger reserves by including it in the mandate of both the NTCA at the national level and the tiger conservation foundations at the scale of tiger reserves. The designation of protected areas as tiger reserves and the subsequent zoning of tiger reserves as core/buffer areas sets the stage for allocating space for tourism.

a) Tourism Zones in Tiger Reserves

According to the NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012, a tiger reserve’s tourism plan should be a part of the Tiger Conservation Plan. The tourism plan should contain, among other things “tourism zones and demarcation of the area open to tourism on the basis of objective and scientific criteria (NTCA 2012).” While establishing the components of the tourism plan, the NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 introduce the notion of an “eco-tourism zone” and
emphasize the need to “indicate area open to tourism in the reserves to be designated as eco-
tourism zone (NTCA 2012).” According to the NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012, “All
tourism activities shall take place only in delineated tourism zones indicated in the tourism plan (NTCA 2012).” The NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 prescription for both tourism zones and ecotourism zones creates some ambiguity as the difference between tourism zone and ecotourism zone is not specified nor are definitions provided regarding what defines and differentiates tourism from ecotourism. Similarly, the TCP Guidelines 2014 prescribe preparation of tourism zone plans for core zone and ecotourism plans for buffer zone.

For the first time, the NTCA Guidelines for Tourism 2012 placed a restriction on the extent of area for tourism zones restricting the total area under tourism zones in the core area to a maximum of one-fifth of the core area or the critical tiger habitat area. The guidelines provide the tiger’s biological needs as the rationale for limiting tourism to one-fifth of the core or the critical tiger habitat area by stating that “permitting up to 20% of the core/critical tiger habitat as a tourism zone should not have any adverse effect on the tiger biology needs (NTCA 2012).” The guidelines also provide a redress mechanism to bring the tourism in core areas to this spatial level, should the prevailing level of tourism be higher; “In case the current usage exceeds 20%, the Local Advisory Committee (LAC) may decide on a time frame for bringing down the usage to 20% (NTCA 2012).”

The NCTA does not specify a method for calculating the area under tourism zones. This lack of specificity has led to debates between the NTCA and tiger reserve’s management. NTCA has demanded that entire forest compartments (fundamental territorial unit of reserved forest blocks) where visitor activities occur should be added when calculating the total area. However, in my interview with the managers, they insist that merely the area along the road length where visitors are permitted to move should be added. In addition, the total number of tourism zones that may be created inside core areas has not
been specified either. The NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 also do not specifically mention anything about the procedure for forming tourism zones or for forming tourism zones inside the buffer area. The Guidelines also do not say anything about tourism zones that span both core and buffer areas. There is an assumption by NTCA in the Tourism Guidelines 2012 that tourism activities are confined to only core and buffer areas and the Guidelines do not have any prescription for the formation of tourism zones in the adjoining landscape even though the guidelines have been titled as “Tourism in and around tiger reserves”. Tourism is not mentioned in the whole section on adjoining areas; neither ecotourism prescribed for local communities, nor ecodevelopment committees (NTCA 2012).

The NTCA was given the mandate in India for setting up standards for tourism activities within both core and buffer areas of tiger reserves. In exercise of these powers, the NTCA has been advising state governments for deflecting tourism pressure from core areas to buffer areas. The Chief Wildlife Warden (CWLW), under the WLPA 1972, has much more liberty and discretion in management of buffer zone. However, under the Amendment Act 2006, in comparison to protected areas (national parks and wildlife sanctuaries), CWLW has limited powers inside buffer areas of tiger reserves to regulate tourism. In the buffer areas of tiger reserves —reserved forests, conservation reserves, or other areas — as previously explained only those provisions of sanctuaries apply that explicitly apply to tiger reserves; this presents several major legal hurdles for creating tourism zones within buffer areas. First, the CWLW is authorized to issue permits for tourism only in sanctuaries and national parks that form part of core areas. As shown in Table 14, the Sections that empower CWLW to place restrictions on entry of visitors (Section 27), prohibit carrying of weapons (Section 31), grant the CWLW power to establish gates and barriers for regulation of access (Section 33 a), or issue permits to tourists to enter or reside inside protected areas (Section 28), do not apply to buffer areas of tiger reserves. The power to construct fences or barrier and gates within a
tiger reserve is a fundamental requirement for creating zones. Lack of restrictions on entry into buffer areas poses another challenge in regulating access for tourism. Additionally, there is no prohibition on entry with weapons into the buffer area. Without these provisions it is not feasible to restrict movement of the visitors and regulate access to tourism zones in buffer areas. Secondly, in the legal definition of tiger reserves' buffer given in the Amendment Act 2006, a lesser degree of habitat protection has been prescribed, whereas wildlife tourism demands the highest quality of habitat for ensuring quality experience during wildlife viewing. The subsequent analysis will reveal how, even with the absence of legal provisions, tourism zones have been formed in buffer areas, and at times buffer and core areas are equated for tourism purposes, thereby diluting the difference between core and buffer area that is prescribed in the Amendment Act 2006. This dilution leads to application of regulations for restricting movement and resource use in buffer area similar to the core area that adversely affects the resident villagers in the buffer area.

The NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 prescribe calculating site specific carrying capacity as a technique to regulate visitor numbers and maintaining limit: “there should be strict adherence to site-specific carrying capacity (NTCA 2012).” As per the guidelines, the carrying capacity must be determined for visitors, vehicles, residential, and facilities. Carrying capacity has to be determined both within and around tiger reserves. The NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 also advises adopting “Limits of Acceptable Change,” a planning framework to monitor impacts (McCool 2012). However, these two methods belong to entirely two different eras and paradigms with the former focused on numbers and the later on resource conditions and are regarded as incompatible in literature (McCool and Lime 2001, McCool 2012).

The NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 introduce provision for the establishment of a new institution at the level of tiger reserves, namely the Local Advisory Committee (LAC) to
be headed by a local Divisional Commissioner for “reviewing the tourism strategy, computation of carrying capacity, specify norms for buildings, providing advice to the government to monitor tourist facilities and activities of the tour operators (NTCA, 2012).” It will be shown that the multiplicity of institutions prescribed in the Amendment Act 2006 and the NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 without proper demarcation of responsibilities leads to ambiguity in jurisdictions and difficulties in implementation.

Tourism Activities

The tourist activities mentioned in the NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 include wildlife safaris, nature trails, elephant rides, boating, walking, and community-based ecotourism. Other foot-based activities such as birdwatching and community-based tourism are not mentioned.

NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 specify that all tourism activities within tiger reserve must necessarily take place within a tourism zone. Therefore, the creation of tourism zones is a prerequisite for legitimizing tourism activities. Furthermore, the guidelines insist that tiger reserve officials must “ensure visitor entry into tiger reserves through vehicles registered with the tiger reserve management, accompanied by authorized guide (NTCA 2012).” These prescriptions make tourism zones an exclusive type of tourism space. The prescriptions further restricts the type of interaction for example between visitors and resident peoples to the latter serving as drivers of vehicles and as guides during wildlife viewing. This is because the sole tourism activity within tiger reserves for which standards are provided in the NCTA Tourism Guidelines 2012 is vehicular day visit safaris accompanied by drivers and guides. There are no standards for tourist activities such as nature walks, birdwatching, photography, filming, etc. Standards for interpretation — a fundamental activity in standard definitions of
ecotourism for education and awareness– have also not been included. Training of nature
guides is the sole interpretation activity that is mentioned.

NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 state that tourism infrastructure cannot be developed
within any core area (NTCA 2012). The Guidelines specifies that the area from villages
relocated from a core or critical tiger habitat cannot be developed for tourism infrastructure.
This effectively means that after relocation, abandoned agricultural fields in the core area can
be used for conducting vehicle based safaris, but not for tourism infrastructure development.
Construction of metaled roads is included in tourism infrastructure, but temporary unmetalled
roads can be constructed for tiger reserve management. It is noteworthy that the Forest
Conservation Act, 1980 already prohibits the construction of tourism infrastructure in the
reserved forest buffer areas so this prescription does not add much.

The NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 advise several other measures. Tourism is
regarded as a land use, and host communities can have wildlife ecotourism inside (private-
owned land) in the buffer areas, presumably accommodation for visitors to stay overnight or
to observe wildlife. Wildlife tourism can also happen on private land. As per the NTCA
Tourism Guidelines 2012, the tourism industry expected to contribute money for local
community welfare in the form of conservation fee. Ecotourism can take place in the
impounded area as many tiger reserves including Corbett Tiger Reserve have large reservoirs
of multi-purpose dams. Ecotourism activities are to be conducted as a part of
ecodevelopment. Identification of corridor connectivity, critical wildlife habitats, and the
mechanisms to secure these areas must be made part of a tourism plan. The results from
analysis of the application of the Amendment Act and subsequent frameworks in Corbett
Tiger Reserve will reveal how the allocation of space in the form of tourism zones and
domination of vehicle based safaris as the sole tourism activity lead to an enclavish model of tourism development.

b) **Tiger (Zoo) Safaris**

Tiger (Zoo) Safaris represent another type of tourism space where tiger sighting by visitors is guaranteed by holding tigers in captivity in large cages and visitors can view animals while moving in closed vehicles. Beginning from November 2011, funding for tiger safaris was included in the Government of India “Project Tiger” scheme under the “coexistence agenda in buffer/fringe areas (NTCA 2011).” Tiger safaris were coupled with interpretation/awareness centers, to be managed by *Panchayati Raj* institutions (local government bodies such as the *Gram Sabha*). Subsequently, in August of 2016, the NTCA using its powers under section 38 O (2) of the Act, issued detailed “Guidelines to establish Tiger Safaris in buffer and fringe areas of Tiger Reserves (NTCA 2016).” The purpose of the guidelines was “to reduce pressure of tourism from core/critical tiger habitats” and “to foster awareness for eliciting public support (NTCA 2016).” The guidelines instituted the basic criteria and procedure for establishing, managing, and administering tiger safaris. However, instead of the *Panchayati Raj* institutions, inputs from the Local Advisory Committee (LAC) were prescribed. While the guidelines stipulated that “tiger dispersal routes” should be avoided, there was no bar for using tiger habitat to create tiger safaris. The guidelines also prescribe a minimum area for tiger safari as 40 hectares, but they could be “as large as possible” (NTCA 2016). The tiger safari earnings are to be recycled through the tiger conservation foundation, with 70% being reploughed in the tiger reserve and 30% to be utilized in the management of the tiger (zoo) safari. The management is required to employ villagers through ecodevelopment committees (EDCs). An ecodevelopment committee refers to village bodies set up for participatory management in villages situated in and around protected area by the tiger reserve management with authority to maintain accounts and
receive funds. In November 2019, the NTCA reissued Guidelines for Tiger Safaris with two main changes related to the procedure for the selection of animals for the safari and the need to include the details in the TCP, including feeding of the prey (NTCA 2019). Many dispute the provisioning of tiger (zoo) safaris in buffer area as it would lead to mass tourism development.

c) Private Resorts

Private resorts much like gated communities have been long studied as a form of enclavic private space for their political and social impacts through enclavization (Britton 2000, Edensor 2001). The National Tiger Conservation Authority identified large scale development of private resorts as a problem in its Tourism Guidelines 2012. However, while making prescriptions for accommodation sector in the Tourism Guidelines 2012, NTCA avoids using the more general tourism terms such as “resort”, “hotel”, and “accommodation”. Instead, these terms are merged together by replacing them with “tourism facilities/ tourist facilities”, and “visitor facility”. Tourist facilities are personified as if they have the agency; and the term ‘tourist facilities’ is used both for public sector facilities located within the tiger reserve, as well as private hotels and resorts outside tiger reserves merging their differences. Even in the prescriptions for calculating the conservation fee to be charged from private resorts described below, the term used is ‘residential facility’. Use of these terms and the merging of government and privately owned accommodation makes the prescriptions ambiguous and hard to implement.

The Amendment Act 2006 does not specifically empower NTCA to levy any fees on the private resorts. However, the NTCA Guidelines denote a series of prescriptions regarding regulation of tourist facilities outside the tiger reserves and charging of conservation fees from the tourism industry's accommodation sector. Moreover, conservation fees to be levied
on resorts are justified because the tourist industry is the prime beneficiary of profit from tourism. As per the NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012, the conservation fee is to be calculated based on bed capacity, utilizing a method suggested in the guidelines. On the basis of the industry paying the fee, the tourism industry has been given a say in how and where the Tiger Conservation Foundation spends the funds through the provision for having a representative in the foundation. The conservation fee is to be used for ecodevelopment, community improvement efforts, local livelihood development, human-wildlife conflict management, and conservation through ecodevelopment. The say to private resort representatives in the way tiger conservation funds are used indicates new private rights.

d) Community-based Tourism

The NTCA, through its Tourism Guidelines 2012, provided a rationale and mechanism for the formation of tourism zones within the core areas, to circumvent the requirement for the core area to be inviolate, with a limit that a maximum of one-fifth of the core area can be covered under tourism zones. The NTCA is, however, totally silent about participation by communities and community-based tourism in core areas. As a result, community-based tourism is not being practiced within the core area of tiger reserves except as engagement in the form of nature guides and gypsy drivers. Nevertheless, the following provisions in policy and law could serve as a foundation for real community-based tourism in the tiger reserves in buffer areas and the adjoining landscapes.

The Amendment Act 2006 puts local communities center-stage by mandating NTCA to facilitate community participation in biodiversity conservation. In section 38 O (1) (h), it gives NTCA the responsibility to

“facilitate and support the tiger reserve management in the State for biodiversity conservation initiatives through ecodevelopment and people’s
participation as per the approved management plans and to support similar initiatives in adjoining areas consistent with the Central and State laws.”

The Amendment Act 2006 also contains provisions both for an institution and sustained finance for community-based tourism initiatives. The Amendment Act 2006 provides an institutional mechanism for ecotourism in the form of tiger conservation foundations. While laying down the mandate of the Tiger Conservation Foundation, Section 38X (1) provides that

“The state government shall establish a Tiger Conservation Foundation for tiger reserves within the State in order to facilitate and support their management for conservation for tiger and biodiversity and to take initiatives in ecodevelopment by involvement of people in such development process.”

In Section 38 X (2), a mechanism for funding has been provided. The objectives of the Tiger Conservation Foundation are laid down as

“(a) to facilitate ecological, economic, social and cultural development in the tiger reserves; (b) to promote ecotourism with the involvement of the local stakeholder communities and provide support to safeguard the natural environment in the tiger reserves”…“(e) to augment and mobilize financial resources including recycling of entry and such other fees received in a tiger reserve, to foster stakeholder development and eco-tourism.”

These provisions in the Amendment Act 2006 are further reinforced in the NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012, where it suggests that: (a) Community-based tourism is recognized as a desirable activity in the planning process for the tiger reserves; (b) community-based tourism be made the goal of tourism development in tiger reserves; (c) tourism within tiger reserves should not be enclavic without communities. As per the NTCA TCP Guidelines, the
Tiger Conservation Foundation is supposed to manage community-based ecotourism programs (NTCA 2007). These Guidelines list rural tourism in agriculture and in tea/coffee plantations in buffer areas as desirable activities.

These provisions in law and guidelines, may have been sufficient to establish community-based tourism. However, the lack of definition of community-based tourism (CBT) or community-based ecotourism (CBET) and mechanical provisions such as a proportion of tourism revenues to be recycled through Tiger Conservation Foundation to be distributed to the Ecodevelopment Committees (EDCs) make these provisions highly contentious subject to push and pull, and challenging to implement. We shall see later that they have yet to be implemented in practice in Corbett Tiger Reserve.

**Conclusion**

In this Part A of Chapter Seven, I presented the findings from the analysis of the Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act 2006, including powers and functions of the National Tiger Conservation Authority, and the various guidelines issued by NTCA in its aftermath to develop an understanding of the changes in the legal framework for allocation of space in tiger reserves for tourism. The Amendment Act 2006 brought the allocation of space for core and buffer areas in the legal arena, while the NTCA Guidelines for Tourism 2012 paved the way for formation of the enclavie tourism zones, the former contributing to the territorialization while the latter for reterritorialization.

The analysis reveals that the approach towards zoning in tiger reserves represents a continuity from the past, initiated at the time of launch of Project Tiger. The Amendment Act 2006 reinforces the initial vision of Project Tiger to create areas large enough to sustain viable population of tigers free from human disturbance and to resolve conflicts between humans and tigers by establishing core/buffer zoning. Paul Leyhausen, adviser to IUCN, had
projected the requirement for a viable population of tigers to be a contiguous population of 300 tigers in protected areas of approximately 2000 km², something the Task Force set up by the IBWL could not locate in the nineteen seventies (IBWL 1972). The same has been now recommended though NTCA Guidelines, albeit instead of protected areas, in the form of zones. The NTCA Guidelines recommend 75 - 100 individual tigers in a contiguous area of 1200 km². In the process, the core zone overshadows the legal provisions of sanctuary and national park in making them inviolate.

The pursuit of disturbance free inviolate areas during the five decade history of Project Tiger has involved large scale removal of settlements from the core area. Relocation of villagers and nomadic communities from core area involves huge displacement to new sites outside tiger reserves and has been criticized for being unfair, disrupting social and cultural life (Shahabuddin 2007, Lasigocrix and Kothari 2009). Removal of villages from core area was adopted as a strategy to create the inviolate space for the tigers (Botteron 2001). A recent study that analyzed pattern of expenditure during the 7 year period from 2004 to 2012 in 28 tiger reserves that had been established till 2000 revealed that maximum funds were spent on relocation while the least funds were spent on human wildlife conflict mitigation and ecodevelopment (Nayak and Jena 2020). These results demonstrate the priority given to the creation of inviolate space.

The other part of the vision was to entertain a particular type of safari based tourism. This has been accomplished through legitimizing the creation of tourism zones in core and buffer areas.

I now turn to the Part B of Chapter Seven, where I present the findings on the actual practice of zoning within the Corbett Tiger Reserve as part of these policy prescriptions to show how the policies have been implemented and to what ends.
Part B: Zoning in Corbett Tiger Reserve (CTR) Following the Amendment Act 2006

After having laid out the changes in the law and constitutive policy, I now discuss how they were interpreted and implemented in zoning of the core and buffer areas of Corbett Tiger Reserve (CTR) following the Amendment Act 2006. I later discuss how I interpret the resultant actions as a form of reterritorialization through tourism zoning, and its relationship with promoting resort development while limiting community-based tourism. I end with conclusion on zoning in Corbett Tiger Reserve, where zones dwarfed and became more dominant than protected areas and its implications – especially for tigers and residents in buffer area.

Core Zone

As discussed previously, the NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 require that ideally an area of 800-1200 km² should be set aside and notified as the core area or the critical tiger habitat for the breeding of potentially 80-100 adult tigers. Government of Uttarakhand vide notification no. 6774/x-2-2007-19(27)/2002 dated 24th December, 2007 notified both Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary and Corbett National Park as the core area or the critical tiger habitat of Corbett Tiger Reserve. As a result of this reorganization, the core area of Corbett Tiger Reserve, which hitherto consisted of only one protected area (Corbett National Park) began to comprise of two protected areas (Corbett National Park and Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary), and its geographical area increased from 520.84 km² to 822.42 km² – almost 58% increase! The status of Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary, incorporated as a buffer zone in 1991, changed and it formally became a part of the core area or the critical tiger habitat.

The Amendment Act 2006 further required that the core area or the critical tiger habitat be made “inviolate”. The requirement to make core area inviolate did not pose a problem for the Corbett National Park as communities living within its boundaries and
human activities were removed earlier, and now pertain only to those staying temporarily at the Dhikala forest lodge as visitors. Similarly, the Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary had no permanent human settlements. However, once the Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary was made part of the critical tiger habitat or the core area, the presence of nomadic Gujjars who historically enjoyed concessions for seasonal grazing in this area that predated the formation of the Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary, posed a challenge to the new formations. Under Section 33 (d) of WLPA 1972, grazing is permissible inside sanctuary, and accordingly, grazing by nomadic Gujjars continued to be practiced within the Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary. In order to make Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary inviolate and meet the ‘inviolate’ requirement of the core area, grazing and continuation of other rights/concessions in the sanctuary, through legally permissible under the WLPA 1972 as per the definition of sanctuary, were no longer permissible on account of the “inviolate” nature of the core area or the critical tiger habitat.

The National Tiger Conservation Authority has a policy of providing funds for the relocation from core area only. The change in the status of the Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary from buffer area to core area paved the way for receiving a budgetary grant from the NTCA for the relocation of the nomadic Gujjars from the Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary. The Uttarakhand Forest Department relocated 181 families of Gujjars from Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary in 2014 to Gaindikhatta in Haridwar Forest Division (Sinha 2015). As a result of this relocation, the Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary is today devoid of grazing and human settlements, just like the Corbett National Park, though the area had a huge historical legacy of grazing in this area. As laid down in the Amendment Act 2006, no special expert committee was formed, and no objective and scientific criteria were adopted for the realignment of the boundaries when the legal notification for the core area or the critical tiger habitat was issued in 2007, as it was assumed that the tiger reserves had been formed after
lengthy processes. The core area's notification was issued in order to meet the deadline set up by the National Tiger Conservation Authority.

The core area of the Corbett Tiger Reserve now spread over 821.99 km² still falls short of National Tiger Conservation Authority prescribed ideal of 1000–1200 sq km and is not wholly “inviolate”. By the latter, I mean there are two areas at Dhikala and at Kalagarh that continue to have human-use discordant with this requirement, namely the forest lodge and human habitation of reserve workers and those remaining from an earlier hydro-electrical dam project, which I discuss below. The NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 required that all residential tourism accommodation located within core area or critical tiger habitat be shifted to areas outside the core area in a given time frame. It has been nearly a decade since the guidelines were issued. Yet, the Dhikala forest lodge located in the heart of the Corbett Tiger Reserve, owned by the government and operated by park management in the notified core area, continues to be in operation until present.

Likewise, during the construction of the multipurpose hydroelectric dam project at Kalagarh in the early 1960s, a part of the then Corbett National Park was leased out to the irrigation department to establish a temporary colony. This settlement predated the legislation of both the WLPA 1972 and the Forest Conservation Act 1980. However, the Irrigation Department never fully returned the unused area of Corbett National Park after the expiration of the lease period. On court orders, various structures in the area unrelated to the hydro-electric project such as the Irrigation Department Academy have been demolished, and the area for maintenance functions of the dam can legally persist. However, encroachment primarily by employees who have overstayed on the remaining leased area represent a thriving habitation and continue under litigation. The area where structures have been destroyed has yet to be cleaned of debris and converted into habitat to be used by wild animals, including tigers.
The above analysis brings out how the legal designation of the core area as a territory obstructs, obfuscates, and obliterates the separate identity of Corbett National Park and Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary leading to the ironing of legal differences between sanctuary and a national park to facilitate creation of a larger homogenous “inviolate” space free of human presence - in a tiger reserve. In the process, zoning of the core area contributes to the enclavization of the protected areas which I turn to now.

Buffer Zone

The buffer zone in Corbett Tiger Reserve with its multijurisdictional land owning pattern presents a more challenging situation then where all land is owned by the national government. In Corbett the buffer area has multiple objectives, land under diverse ownership and a range of human activities and land uses. Reserve management impacts not only wildlife but (nearby) resident communities as well. But the guidelines could not predict the many contradictions and tensions that persist on a checkerboard of people, property and even pre-existing legal rights that characterized the Corbett Tiger Reserve buffer zone.

The official objectives of a buffer zone around a tiger reserve have been defined as follows (NTCA 2012):

(i) Providing ecologically viable livelihood options to local stakeholders for reducing their dependency on forests.

(ii) Conserving the forest area through restorative inputs involving local people for providing habitat supplement to wild animals moving out of core areas.

These two management objectives clearly place priority on the forests and the wildlife habitat over the interests of local communities and imply that restrictions on behavior be placed in the buffer area. The buffer area of Corbett Tiger Reserve has these and other odd features contrary to the co-existence agenda in policy. These cases illustrate the political nature and
socioeconomic impacts of how zoning was conceived and management implemented within the Corbett Tiger Reserve boundary. In particular my analysis reveals much hardship for local (ethnic) communities, including curtailment of private property rights, unequal provisioning of and disputes regarding requests for relocation, and lack of recognition and protection of village rights to community forests (panchayat van), but not to owners with the means to build resorts.

**Notification of Buffer Area in Corbett Tiger Reserve**

As per the NTCA directives, the Government of Uttarakhand issued a second notification no V.G.05/X-2-2010-19(34)/2006 dated 26.02.2010 for Corbett Tiger Reserve specifying the extent of the core area (previously notified in 2007) and a buffer area spread over 466.32 km². Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary spread over 301.18 km² had been already added to the core area or the critical tiger habitat in the 2007 notification, and thus the buffer area of Corbett Tiger Reserve which had been marginally reduced at the time of the formation of the new state of Uttarakhand, suffered a substantial reduction a second time when Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary was shifted from buffer area to core area. The manner in which the legal notification of buffer area has been issued raises a new set of problems. The notification is restricted to mentioning the blocks and compartments of the reserved forests areas included in the buffer area. On paper, the buffer area is represented as a vast tract of homogenous land consisting of reserved forests only. The notification does not speak to the real life situation. This excludes several revenue villages situated within the reserved forests as enclaves with private landholdings within the boundary of Corbett Tiger Reserve and ongoing use by Gujjar nomadic grazers. It also did not provide special consideration or guidance for community forests (panchayat van) managed by local village councils (van panchayat) in the Corbett Tiger Reserve buffer zone.
The Tiger Conservation Plan of Corbett Tiger Reserve provides a list of 46 chaks of private land entirely enclosed by buffer areas (Annexure I). This list, however, includes ten revenue villages (Amlesa, Vintala, Ramisera, Teria, Pand, Dabru, Kanda, Khadrasi, Jhudungu, Jameriya) that form the majority of settlements in the buffer area and are administered by the district administration and the revenue department. Residents of revenue villages have formal property rights on private land and along with the programs of the forest department benefit from other government schemes. In addition, the list also includes enclosures or chaks of private revenue land belonging to the villagers that are scattered amid the reserved forests. Most of the chaks have not been cultivated for years and have been overtaken by trees and offer habitat to wild animals, including tigers. Gujjars, as mentioned in the previous chapter, have been relocated from Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary that now forms a part of the core area and grazing ceased most likely at that time - 2014. However, the remaining 57 Gujjar families are still settled on forest land in Dhela and Jhirna ranges in the buffer area in separate villages or seasonally shifting residences as nomadic herders in the reserved forest buffer areas of the Corbett Tiger Reserve. The Corbett Tiger Reserve TCP mentions only 31 families in the buffer area mostly in Dhela and some in Jhirna ranges (Sinha 2015). The High Court of Uttarakhand had directed the removal of their houses on the grounds of unauthorized occupation and they were severed with eviction notices. However, the Gujjars have obtained to get a stay order from the Supreme Court of India for maintaining status quo. The Government of Uttarakhand has come out with a policy for Gujjar relocation. However, this policy is not acceptable to Gujjars as it is less beneficial compared to the relocation package provided by NTCA to villagers in the core area. These Gujjars are demanding relocation similar to their counterparts shifted earlier from the sanctuary.
Public Transportation on Forest Roads in Buffer Area of Corbett Tiger Reserve

As mentioned in Chapter Six, the Kotdwar-Pakhro-Kalagarh-Dhela-Ramnagar Kandi Road and the Durgadevi-Lohachaur-Mohan roads pass through the buffer area and had offered regular public transportation. The alternative highways to these roads that lie outside Corbett Tiger Reserve have a longer stretch and require more time to travel. Nevertheless, the public transport on Kalagarh-Dhela-Ramnagar section of the Kandi Road the Durgadevi-Lohachaur-Mohan road has ceased because of judicial intervention that stayed travel operations by commercial entities on these roads on account of their being in a tiger reserve. Importantly, the cessation of public transport on these two roads has greatly helped in the smooth functioning of tourism zones in buffer area as described later.

Ban on Development in Revenue Villages and on Private Land

Since 2012, a ban on sale and purchase of land was placed in the buffer zone arresting development, including in tourism. Despite intended as temporary, it caused great hardships to the affected villages which were revenue villages. These revenue villages are noted below based on Census records in Table 18.
Table 18: List of Villages in Corbett Tiger Reserve Buffer Area (Enclaves) Where Sale/Purchase of Land has been Prohibited

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Village</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Block</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Number of Families</th>
<th>Agri. Land (Ha)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Amlesa</td>
<td>Pauri</td>
<td>Jaiharikhal</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>114.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Vintalla</td>
<td>Pauri</td>
<td>Jaiharikhal</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>64.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ramisera</td>
<td>Pauri</td>
<td>Jaiharikhal</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>11.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Teria</td>
<td>Pauri</td>
<td>Rikhnikhal</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>48.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Pand</td>
<td>Pauri</td>
<td>Nainidanda</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>91.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Dabru</td>
<td>Pauri</td>
<td>Bironkhal</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Kanda</td>
<td>Pauri</td>
<td>Rikhnikhal</td>
<td>396</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>119.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Khadrasi</td>
<td>Pauri</td>
<td>Nainidanda</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Jhudungu</td>
<td>Pauri</td>
<td>Nainidanda</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>61.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Jameriya</td>
<td>Almora</td>
<td>Chaukhutiya</td>
<td>970</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>213.65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Sinha 2015)

While several changes were afoot on the ground, the ban was triggered by a story in the media. An article “Corbett. Now, on Sale” was published in the Tehalka magazine in May 2012 claiming irregularities in the buffer area (Mazoomdar 2012). The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEF & CC), through the NTCA, set up a two-member committee within 12 days of the publication of the article in Tehalka to ascertain the factual status relating to the Corbett Tiger Reserve. The Committee consisted of Member Secretary NTCA and a member of the National Board of Wildlife, who was also an Honorary Wildlife Warden of Corbett Tiger Reserve at that time. The Committee was asked to submit a report within a fortnight after making a field visit.

The committee formed by the MoEF & CC made a field visit to the Corbett Tiger Reserve on May 27 and 28, 2012. The committee submitted its broad findings in the form of
a report that stated that it found evidence of rampant tourism development leading to mining (referring to extraction and removal of sand, gravel and stones for construction from river beds) within Corbett Tiger Reserve, blocking of access to water sources and connectivity to adjoining forest divisions. The report has reference to 69 privately-owned tourism infrastructures, residential accommodation, and lodges. However, the report did not contain any mention of the villages, their rights nor included their viewpoints as they were neither involved in tourism nor mining. The only evidence presented by the committee members to support their argument for the restriction of activities in the buffer area were claims that tigers were present. The report quotes Wildlife Institute of India as stating that the area has a substantial tiger presence (WII 2014). The relationship between tigers and agriculture by the villagers was never considered.

On the basis of the Committee report, the Government of Uttarakhand annulled the tripartite agreements within the buffer zone vide government order dated 28th November 2012. The Government of Uttarakhand further prohibited sale and purchase of land (chaks) vide government order dated 21st November, 2012. “The Government had issued letters to District Magistrates to stop buying and selling of revenue lands in the abandoned villages as well in the adjoining villages that fall within two km from the boundary of the tiger reserve. This will discourage further unplanned mushrooming of commercial tourism facilities along the boundary of the Tiger Reserve (Sinha 2000, 53).” But the ban has persisted for nearly a decade. Additional decisions with significant impacts to resident communities ensured as a follow up to these recommendations, but none for the tourism zones.

**Relocation of Villages Situated in the Buffer Areas**

The NTCA guidelines neither require nor fund relocation of villages or nomadic grazers from the tiger reserves' buffer areas on the ground that the co-existence agenda needs
to be practiced. However, Corbett Tiger Reserve presents a peculiar situation where relocation is in demand by villagers and nomadic Gujjars, even in the buffer areas as revealed by their numerous petition to the government and ongoing court cases. Owing to the long history of conservation measures which greatly restrict local control of private land, high tiger density and a high level of crop depredation, villagers find it difficult to survive in the buffer area. Even though the Tiger Conservation Plan for Corbett Tiger Reserve mentions the State Government's acquisition of the chaks, none of the 46 chaks have been acquired (Annexure I). Even after a decade, no decision seems to have been taken by the Government on this issue. Of these ten villages, relocation of only two villages Teria and Pand is in the pipeline. The villages of Teria and Pand have yet to be relocated owing to judicial stalemate.

**Restrictions in Buffer Area**

The Corbett Tiger Reserve Tiger Conservation Plan approved in 2015 has three separate parts devoted to the management of core area, buffer area and the surrounding landscape. The management of the buffer area included fortification of infrastructure, anti-poaching operations, water conservation and habitat development, fire protection, measures for mitigation of human wildlife conflict and awareness programs. The principal occupation in the villages situated in the buffer area is agriculture and livestock rearing resulting in dependency on forests for wood and fodder. The entry and movement of the villagers inside the forests is objected to both as a measure of protection and for safety of human life and livestock. A villager interviewed for this study, questioned the arbitrary and draconian restrictions in the following manner:

“don’t go here, don’t do this, don’t go on this path. There is ambiguity. It is not as if this is the law so don’t do this. It is just, don’t do!”
Oclusion of Van Panchayat and Panchayat Van in Corbett Tiger Reserve

Uttarakhand is unique among Indian states because it has *panchayat van* or community forests where the control of the forests rests with the local community. The *panchayat van* refers to the forest areas or the territory owned by the government but under the authority of the communities, while the *van panchayat* refers to the management institution – a village body or council- empowered by the Uttarakhand government to manage the forest parcel. The villagers control these forest territories through the elected body or council, and the sarpanch or the head of the *van panchayat* of the elected body has the powers of an forest officer as defined under the Indian Forest Act 1927 and the WLPA 1972.

When knowledge of local community forests and management institutions became known to the author, I organized a survey as described in the methods chapter. The survey revealed that six *panchayat vans* were located within the Corbett Tiger Reserve boundary (Jhudungu, Kanda Nala, Sankar, Jamreia, Baluli, and Badghat) as shown in Table 19 below (CTR 2022). The *panchayat van* are administered by the Additional Soil Conservation Forest Division, Ramnagar.

**Table 19: List of Panchayat Van within Corbett Tiger Reserve Buffer Area**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Panchayat Van</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Year Formed</th>
<th>Statutory Status</th>
<th>Area ha</th>
<th>Height (msl)</th>
<th>Zone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Judungu</td>
<td>Pauri</td>
<td>1952</td>
<td>category 9 (3)d</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>1176</td>
<td>Buffer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Benap</em>, barren, civil land</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Kandanala</td>
<td>Pauri</td>
<td>1961</td>
<td>Reserve Forest</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>666</td>
<td>Buffer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Sankar</td>
<td>Almora</td>
<td>1974</td>
<td>category 9 (3)d</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>569</td>
<td>Buffer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Benap</em>, barren land</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Jamariya</td>
<td>Almora</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>Reserve Forest</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>706</td>
<td>Buffer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Baluli</td>
<td>Almora</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>category 9 (3)d</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>570</td>
<td>Buffer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>civil land</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Badghat</td>
<td>Almora</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>503</td>
<td>Buffer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Benap is a category of land which literally means unmeasured.
There were no special arrangements for the six panchayat van in the notification issued for the buffer area of Corbett Tiger Reserve in 2010. Similarly, the tiger conservation plan for Corbett Tiger Reserve (2015) fails to provide the names or demographic details of the van panchayat, nor other details such as the area of the panchayat van, the boundaries, rights, or the maps. The description in the tiger conservation plan is limited to acknowledging the meaningfulness of van panchayat stating that the van panchayats’ support is necessary for the successful implementation of tiger conservation plan and proposing that the funds to the communities will be routed through the van panchayat, which never happened. While the existence of panchayat van in the buffer area of Corbett Tiger Reserve may not have been appreciated by tiger reserve officials, the villagers had always been aware of these forests and had in fact benefited from them in the past. Speaking about this a female resident, who also holds a position as a village representative, from Jhudungu village situated on the north eastern side of Corbett Tiger Reserve said:

“We have panchayat van in Kalakhand, Kumbhisen, Badnasi and Bhakua. They are all situated close to the Kalakhand chak (private land of Jhudungu village). But nothing happens there! The van panchayat has been reconstituted recently. When the van panchayat was formed (in 1952), we lost a lot of land.”

She further added they have big problems reaching their private land situated close to the - panchayat van, explaining,

“The forest department people are not giving us right of way. We are charged Rs 250 at the Durgadevi gate as entry fee. We cannot understand on what basis our access has been stopped. How can we be stopped from entering? We are the original inhabitants of the area.”

Her husband and she shared that they owned private land situated close to the panchayat van in the buffer area. They were able to get the status of the land changed from agricultural to
commercial prior to the ban on land use change, and to procure a loan from a bank to set up a tented tourist accommodation with four tents, staff and two horses. They are yet not able to run the operation as they do not have permission from the forest department to enter from Durgadevi gate of the Durgadevi tourism zone, and are asked to pay entry fees stipulated for visitors.

In a subsequent event, the High Court of Uttarakhand in WP PIL 99 of 2013, which is still being heard and is not finally disposed of, passed an interim judgement on June 8th 2022 in which it directed (a) “the limited use of the kucha road, to the villagers of Jamun, falling within the buffer zone of the Corbett Tiger Reserve, which is about 4.5 kilometers in length” and further directed (b) that a committee be formed “which shall survey the area, take help of experts, identify the human settlements in buffer zone and suggest ways and means for compliance of provisions” of sub-section (4) of Section 38 (V) of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 which contains the definition of buffer area of tiger reserve (HC of Uttarakhand 2022). The legal case highlights the issue of access to private and communal land in the buffer area surrounded on all sides by reserved forests. It brings out how once an area is notified as the buffer area of a tiger reserve, prior designations seem to be relegated or even dismissed, despite their impact on local livelihoods and institutions.

The survey further revealed a total of 118 panchayat vans spread over 49.03 km² within the Ramnagar Forest Division, Lansdowne Forest Division and Additional Soil Conservation Forest Division, Ramnagar that form a part of the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape. There are no panchayat van in the third territorial forest division, the Terai West Forest Division Ramnagar. The panchayat van encompass nearly 4% of the total Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape. These patches of forests have valuable ecological functions including for tiger conservation and potentially for ecotourism. Occlusion of these forest territories in management planning and development represents a lost opportunity and a
myopic stereotyped view of conservation. The existence of van panchayats by division in the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape is shown in Table 20.

Table 20. Van Panchayat and Area of Panchayat Van by Forest Division

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forest Division</th>
<th>No. of Van Panchayat</th>
<th>Area of Panchayat Van (in km²)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ramnagar Forest Division</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>17.43</td>
<td>35.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lansdowne Forest Division</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>05.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Soil Conservation Division Ramnagar</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>28.80</td>
<td>58.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>118</strong></td>
<td><strong>49.03</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tiger Distribution in the Buffer Area and Landscape

The results of the All India Tiger Monitoring exercise, conducted once in four years, revealed that Corbett Tiger Reserve has one of the four largest tiger populations in the world. According to the latest All-India Tiger Estimation in 2018, Corbett Tiger Reserve has 231 adult tigers (Jhala et al., 2020). An additional 35 tigers were found to be using both the Corbett Tiger Reserve and adjoining areas, representing a notable increase in tiger numbers since 2006 when the first All-India Tiger Estimation revealed the presence of 108 adult tigers. The results also showed that Corbett Tiger Reserve along with Ramnagar Forest Division and the Pawalgarh Conservation Reserve has one of the highest tiger densities in the world (Bisht et al. 2019)). It seems likely that Corbett National Park and some other tiger reserves in India have reached the limits of their carrying capacity for tiger density; hence such reserves do not show an increase in tiger density between subsequent population estimations, but rather show an in increase in tiger occupancy across the landscape caused by dispersing tigers from such source populations (Bisht et al. 2019, Jhala et al. 2020). Table 21 summarizes the findings of the All India Tiger Estimation carried out in successive years.
The All-India Tiger Estimation does not provide zone wise estimates for tiger numbers in tiger reserves. However, the data for Corbett Tiger Reserve for 2014 and 2018 is amenable for comparison. The results summarized in Table 2 do not reveal a significant change in tiger numbers in core and buffer area during this period. The number of tigers in the adjoining Terai West Forest Division and Lansdowne Forest Division shows a significant increase. What is remarkable is that, even though the Corbett Tiger Reserve buffer area is much smaller than the core area, there is an almost equal distribution of tiger numbers in the core area (129) and buffer area (102). The number of tigers in the surrounding landscape are also broadly similar (118).

Table 21: Estimated Number of Tigers in Corbett Tiger Reserve

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2006*</th>
<th>2010*</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tigers in CTR (±SE))</td>
<td>108 (99-117)</td>
<td>109 (98-120)</td>
<td>215 (169-261)</td>
<td>231 (230-232)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tigers using CTR</td>
<td>Not estimated</td>
<td>Not estimated</td>
<td>Not estimated</td>
<td>266 (254-278)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area Surveyed (km²)</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>611</td>
<td>1271</td>
<td>2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of camera traps</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>529</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Jhala et al. 2020))* Only National Park was surveyed (Wildlife Institute of India, 2008, 20012, 2012, 2018)

Table 22. Changes in Tiger Numbers within Corbett Tiger Reserve

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protected Area/Forest Division</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CTR-Core Area</td>
<td>109 (87-131)</td>
<td>129 (120-139)</td>
<td>Increase 18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTR-Buffer Area</td>
<td>106 (89-120)</td>
<td>102 (90-112)</td>
<td>Decrease 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramnagar FD</td>
<td>47 (37-56)</td>
<td>41 (35-47)</td>
<td>Decrease 13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terai West FD</td>
<td>26 (19-32)</td>
<td>39 (39-42)</td>
<td>Increase 50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lansdowne FD</td>
<td>25 (19-30)</td>
<td>38 (34-43)</td>
<td>Increase 52%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Jhala et al. 2020)) *confidence intervals shown in brackets
Figure 6. Distribution of Tigers in Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape

(Source: Jhala et al. 2020)

The results of the distribution of tigers in Corbett Tiger Reserve shown in Figure 6 as part of the All-India Tiger Estimation 2018 revealed that the tiger densities vary throughout the core area and the buffer area, with some of the highest tiger density found in the southwest corner in buffer area. “You can’t ask tigers to use or breed in an area just because it is declared core area; many other factors are at play” said a senior manager associated with Corbett Tiger Reserve. The high density of tigers in buffer area as compared to the core area is a cause of concern as it is contrary to the planned scheme. Scholars have warned against the adoption of blue print approach and standard formula in zoning as it does not work (Ebregt and de Greve 2000). Concerns have also been raised regarding the reliability of continent wide estimations of large carnivore populations and their political impacts (Gopalswamy et al. 2022).
The situation described above raises the possibility that land use in the buffer zones, both historically and contemporarily, is connected to tiger presence. In particular, it raises the possibilities that agricultural land uses (e.g., intermediate levels of cropping, grazing, forest product collection), contrary to the assumptions of the NTCA directives and the Government of Uttarakhand ban, may actually be supportive of tigers. This is a relationship that may be counter-intuitive to conservationists but increasingly supported in the biodiversity literature as cited in Chapter Two (Carter et al. 2012; Rai 2012; Siebert and Belsky 2014). However, the presence of tigers in buffer zones is full of challenges related to forging some kind of ideal co-existence agenda, especially managing human-wildlife conflicts. The time period examined here also did not reveal significant “stakeholder consultation” or local participation more broadly in how the NCTA guidelines were actually implemented in Corbett. This is particularly alarming given the opportunities available through working with van panchayats.

I now present the analysis of zoning for tourism.

**Tourism Zones**

The Amendment Act 2006 and the subsequent NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012, require that the core area of tiger reserves needs to be made “inviolate.” In practice, this means that all tourism activities in core area of tiger reserves have to be restricted to a maximum of only one-fifth of the core area and permanent residential facilities have to be discontinued in a phased manner. Furthermore, prior approval from NTCA is now required for the establishment of new tourism zones and for tiger (zoo) safaris (zoos, different from vehicle based safaris). These regulations have begun to be applied to Corbett Tiger Reserve, but the implementation of NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 and the requirement to make the core area “inviolate” have been challenged by a number of issues. Likewise enabling tourism
zones in buffer zones comes with its own set of challenges and will be discussed below as well.

**Tourism Zones in the Core Area**

Following the Amendment Act 2006, as noted above, the Forest Department relocated the nomadic Gujjars’ homes and livestock from Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary in 2014 to make the Corbett Tiger Reserve core area “inviolate”. This move brought conditions in the Sonanadi tourism zone on par with other tourism zones in the core zone (Corbett National Park) in terms of absence of human activities connected with resource utilization. Moreover, the NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 permit only up to twenty percent of core area or critical tiger habitat to be used for tourism, including safari rides which is problematic as the method for the area calculation is not defined. There is a dispute between the National Tiger Conservation Authority and the Corbett Tiger Reserve management regarding how an area for tourism zone should be calculated. According to the NTCA, the entire area of the forest compartment should be used in the estimation whichever the tourism road crosses and thus NTCA claims that the area of tourism zones in the critical tiger habitat of Corbett Tiger Reserve exceeds twenty percent. The area calculation in the tiger conservation plan of Corbett Tiger Reserve, on the other hand, is based on the estimation of twenty-meter width on either side of the roads on which movement of visitors is permitted. The tiger conservation plan (TCP) of Corbett Tiger Reserve specifies that only 13.1% of the core area is used for regulated, low-impact tourism (Sinha 2015). Nonetheless, status quo has been maintained in the area under tourism zones within the core area, as the area under tourism cannot be increased even if it is below the limit of twenty-percent, and there has been no further increase in the area under tourism zones in the core area or the critical tiger habitat. The NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 require phasing out of tourism infrastructure from core areas in phased manner. However, Dhikala forest lodge not only continues to operate, but in
recent years there have been some additional constructions as well ostensibly for tourism. Limits on tourism zoning in core area has resulted in new tourism zone development being pushed to the buffer area.

**Tourism Zones in Buffer Area**

While the NTCA approved the tiger conservation plan of Corbett Tiger Reserve in 2015 with five tourism zones, subsequently the Uttarakhand Forest Department created in quick succession three more tourism zones in the buffer area. The sixth Dhela tourism zone was formed in 2016 and is part of the TCP. The seventh Pakhro Tourism Zone was formed in February 2019 after obtaining permission from NTCA. The eighth tourism zone in Garjia was created in December 2020 initially without permission from NTCA and had to be closed down. However, the NTCA subsequently granted the necessary permission. As a result, Corbett Tiger Reserve now has more tourism zones in the buffer area (five) compared to the core area (three). The Figure 7 shows the chronology of tourism zone formation in Corbett, a process I refer to as reterritorialization as territories seized and gazetted for conservation are now remade into a new function-tourism.
Figure 7: Chronology of Reterritorialization of Corbett Tiger Reserve (Source: CTR)

Reterritorialization Phase I
(Prior to NTCA guidelines)

1991 Dhikala/Bijrani Tourism Zone

1996 Jhima Tourism Zone added

2004 Durgadevi Tourism Zone added

Reterritorialization Phase II
(After NTCA guidelines came into force)

2006 Sonanadi Tourism Zone added

2014 Dhela Tourism Zone added

2018 Pakhro Tourism Zone added
Challenges Presented by Tourism Zones

The tourism zone network has expanded rapidly in Corbett, particularly over the last few years. It did so especially because of the popularity of safaris, but the creation of each new tourism zone presented its own set of new challenges to the tiger reserve officials and conflicts in adapting the legal provisions to the situation on the ground. It also presented a suite of practical issues to make feasible and viable implementation of the provisions, often leading to dispute between the NTCA and tiger reserve officials. Many interviewed for this study expressed concerns over how tourism zones were created and how the zones were changed over time.

One of the most prominent resort owners who has been part of the industry since its inception expressed his disappointment with the unimaginative way in which the tourism zones have been rolled out in Corbett Tiger Reserve, and the lack of quality. When asked what had changed in the tourism zones as a result of the implementation of the NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012, he said that nothing had changed. The resort owner lamented the poor quality of guiding, and not providing visitors with richer and more varied experiences. He explained,

“We are creating the same thing. We are not creating any different experience. We are just opening a zone and allowing X number of jeeps to go and drive around and come back. But is that our vision for the Corbett landscape.”

He added, pointing out that the only thing that has changed was insignificant. He said,

“Except the color of jeeps has become one (all safari vehicles are now required to be of similar color and are numbered), and there are some unqualified guides who are sitting on the vehicles, who are not giving any experience to the tourists. The experience is only going down.”
When asked why tourism zones continued to be formed, the resort owner commanding one of the most prized resorts questioned its relationship with conservation, stating: “I think it is the pressure, people wanting to go to the places, public pressure. But it is not, I don’t know if it is because of conservation.”

Implementation of the new regulations created another major problem, that is, that visitor activities in the Corbett Tiger Reserve tourism zones have become largely confined to four-hour-long vehicle-based safaris. The NTCA rules banned entry by private vehicles. Visitors can now enter only in the vehicles registered with Corbett Tiger Reserve or as part of conducted tours organized by the government in 20-seater trucks called ‘canters’. As a result, tourists now have to struggle to hire vehicles registered with the forest department. Norms set by park officials for vehicles, attire, and training of nature guides have actually been enforced. Elephant rides in Dhikala with the forest department-owned elephants, which was a major attraction in the past, were discontinued. This is because the elephants are aging, declining in number, and elephant rides was opposed by People for Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA). Though new elephants have been procured by the management, their use is for patrolling and carrying out rescue operations not jungle rides for visitors. Following an accident wherein a tourist fell from a watch tower, and based on the interpretation of NTCA directives, visitors are now prohibited from going to the various watchtowers in the Dhikala tourism zone for wildlife viewing. These were in existence even before the Project Tiger was first launched. Visitor activity in the tourism zones has largely shrunk to day safaris for which the NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 provide well specified normative standards.

In one of the focus group discussions I held at Dhela, while discussing the time spent on safaris, a gypsy driver registered with Corbett Tiger Reserve said that the Dhela tourism zone was small and sometimes groups were forced to return earlier than planned. But all participants agreed that in terms of tiger sightings the three tourism zones of Bijrani, Jhirna
and Dhela situated on the south eastern boundary of Corbett Tiger Reserve, all in the buffer area, offered ample opportunities. Some claimed that Bijrani tourism zone was more sought after by the visitors and others saying that in a particular season Dhela tourism zone offered the most sightings. Clearly, the chances of tiger sighting weighed high in the minds of tourists when choosing which tourism zone to visit.

**Distribution of Benefits from Tourism in Corbett Tiger Reserve**

The Government of India and National Tiger Conservation Authority provide funds for operation of Corbett Tiger Reserve through the centrally sponsored “Project Tiger” scheme. Additional funds are provided by the Government of Uttarakhand through state sector schemes for paying salaries, allowances and other administrative, developmental and management activities. Funds are provided also through CAMPA (Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority). Some are one-time and others recurring. In both instances the expenditure bring in benefits besides conservation. At the top of the list of benefits are financial ones. The total visitor arrival in the five tourism zones during 2016-17 was 291,038 (the Dhela, Pakhro and Garjia tourism zones was added later). During this period, tourism generated INR 9.7 crores (10 million) as revenue. Table 23 describes the visitor arrival in Corbett Tiger Reserve and revenue receipts during 2011-2017 from tourism.

**Table 23 Visitor Arrival and Revenue Receipts in Corbett Tiger Reserve (2011-2017).**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Year</th>
<th>Indians</th>
<th>Foreigners</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Revenue (INR)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>183296</td>
<td>7734</td>
<td>19232</td>
<td>210262</td>
<td>70230695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>159001</td>
<td>6654</td>
<td>41655</td>
<td>207310</td>
<td>60903017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>200890</td>
<td>5262</td>
<td>5523</td>
<td>211675</td>
<td>74825679</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>197791</td>
<td>4189</td>
<td>6192</td>
<td>245873</td>
<td>83038521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td>227580</td>
<td>6952</td>
<td>48776</td>
<td>283308</td>
<td>91987796</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-17</td>
<td>238139</td>
<td>6643</td>
<td>46256</td>
<td>291038</td>
<td>96863894</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Corbett Tiger Reserve)
These data show that in a short period of five years, there has been over 30% increase in both tourist arrivals and revenue receipts. The data reveals that the number of domestic visitors has been increasing steadily, and so have earnings from tourism. But the number of foreign visitors is stable. The proportion of those who stay outside in hotels and resorts compared to those who make overnights stay in Corbett Tiger Reserve has also increased more than ninety percent owing to restricted accommodation available inside CTR. Table 24 shows the year-wise proportion of day and overnight visitors to Corbett Tiger Reserve.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Year</th>
<th>Indians</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Day Visit</td>
<td>Night Halt</td>
<td>Day Visit</td>
<td>Night Halt</td>
<td>Day Visit</td>
<td>Night Halt</td>
<td>Day Visit</td>
<td>Night Halt</td>
<td>Day Visit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>176,437</td>
<td>26,091</td>
<td>6,543</td>
<td>1,191</td>
<td>21,026</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>17,7097</td>
<td>23,559</td>
<td>5,347</td>
<td>1,307</td>
<td>207,310</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>17,1854</td>
<td>34,559</td>
<td>3,861</td>
<td>1,401</td>
<td>211,675</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>219,983</td>
<td>19,698</td>
<td>5,351</td>
<td>841</td>
<td>245,873</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td>257,758</td>
<td>18,598</td>
<td>6,011</td>
<td>941</td>
<td>283308</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-17</td>
<td>266,104</td>
<td>18,291</td>
<td>5,945</td>
<td>698</td>
<td>291,038</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Corbett Tiger Reserve)

As mentioned above, Corbett Tiger Reserve is operated through funds provided by Government. Money received as visitor fees and other tourism charges goes to the Government of Uttarakhand as state revenue. An equivalent amount is subsequently provided by the government for “Tiger Conservation Foundation for Corbett Tiger Reserve” through budgetary sources for use by the Corbett Tiger Reserve management. The Tiger Conservation Foundation for CTR has started receiving funds through recycling of revenue receipts from tourism from 2012 onward. The annual amount transferred has ranged from INR 1.21 crores to 10 crores (100 million). Previously, the amount has been limited, as only 20% of the money was being recycled. Government of Uttarakhand took a decision as per NTCA directives to recycle 100 % of the amount; this has led to increase in the funds being

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transferred to INR 10 crores (100 million) in 2019-2020. The recycling of 100% of receipts from tourism into Tiger Conservation Foundation has created an added incentive for Corbett Tiger Reserve management as greater the earnings from tourism, the more funds will be transferred to Corbett Tiger Reserve for management. Table 25 describes the money transferred to the Tiger Conservation Foundation through recycling of tourism receipts in the last eight years.

**Table 25. Receipts from Tourism Funds in Corbett Tiger Reserve transferred to Tiger Conservation Foundation (2012-2020).**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Year</th>
<th>Amount Transferred (INR)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012-2013</td>
<td>1,21,43,864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>1,66,89,459</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2015</td>
<td>1,73,07,562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-2016</td>
<td>1,62,01,544</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-2017</td>
<td>1,78,88,545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017-2018</td>
<td>1,28,76,235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018-2019</td>
<td>Not available?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019-2020</td>
<td>10,00,00,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020-2021</td>
<td>10,00,00,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021-2022</td>
<td>10,00,00,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Corbett Tiger Reserve)

Much of the funds are retained by Corbett Tiger Reserve management for routine expenditures and development of infrastructure. Funds transferred to Tiger Conservation Foundation for CTR have been used for reducing human-animal conflict, improvement in tourism-related infrastructure, capacity building of field staff, and support to ecodevelopment committees. However, my review of receipts revealed no funds have been used towards community-based tourism.

A resort owner when asked who benefits from the formation of the tourism zones, said, “Obviously, all stakeholders benefit. The government makes some more money
(additional revenue with the formation of a new tourism zone). The guides and taxi operators make money, the hotel makes some money. Mainly I think …but the maximum money the government is making now.” This is a statement with which the government officials might not agree.

There is a regional imbalance in tourism development in the park. When asked about this, a Corbett Tiger Reserve official said the following:

“Since the Ramnagar guys [the people who run the vehicles and guide the tourists] were the early players in the tourism of Corbett the major concentration of guides and gypsy owners and gypsy drivers is from Ramnagar itself. So, there is definitely a feeling of being left out among the villagers which are part of EDCs [ecodevelopment committees] and there is a strong complaint from them that we are not getting enough benefits out of it.”

There are numerous benefits from tourism in terms of jobs but these do not necessarily get distributed to the villagers, or for that matter to all the villages. However, this tiger reserve official also noted that due to procedures for revenue sharing by the Tiger Conservation Foundation for CTR, local communities in villages will receive some benefit:

“As far as benefit sharing is concerned with the villagers nearby, the Foundation document issued at the Government of India level is very clear in transferring 40% of the gate money to those people. So while we may not have a direct involvement of the community into tourism, but they definitely would get benefited by the tourism activity happening there in terms of revenue sharing.”

There is then the larger issue of what is done with revenue generated from Corbett? The entry and accommodation fees in Corbett Tiger Reserve have remained static for one decade and were last revised in 2009, but the charges for guide services and vehicles for safaris have been enhanced multiple times during this duration. This situation likely contributes to a
perception shared during interviews that Corbett is regarded as an expensive destination and visitors complain about the ever rising fees. The manner in which tourism funds are used in Corbett Tiger Reserve has tremendous implications for how tourism in Corbett Tiger Reserve is managed and who benefits. Perceptions on tourism development and benefit sharing of stakeholders are at variance often leading to major disputes. Commenting on the financial aspects of tourism in Corbett Tiger Reserve, a forest official said:

“The benefit sharing goes to the guides and gypsies (a type of vehicle used for wildlife viewing) and there is a third angle to it also the gypsy owners and the travel agents. I think the gypsy owners are not the ones who are really benefiting much from it because the packages actually sell for much more than what the gate rates are.”

Referring to the economic leakages he said,

“A majority of the money which is being poured into Corbett landscape by people for tourism is not reaching the place (Corbett Tiger Reserve) at all.” Further speaking of guides, he added “Especially guides, actually if you look at it they earn quite a bit. They get INR 600 for one trip and so it’s like 1200 INR per day, and 30 days it’s like INR 36,000 per month. A person who is regularly going to the gate (tourism zone) will earn double the salary compared to a forest guard.”

This brings out the challenges in enclavish tourism development. The majority of funds are siphoned off to private resorts with only a paltry amount of tourism spending going to local communities. As discussed above, local community members are unlikely to afford safari vehicles and serve more likely as drivers and guides; their previous more autonomously run tourism activities especially angling and trekking were curtailed.

Visitors' demand far exceeds the supply or the number of available permits for day visit safaris (as contrasted with overnight stays but still restricted in duration and not for the whole day). The situation is worse during long weekends and winter holidays. This raises the
question of access as to how/who determines which visitors will be given entry in the tourism zones and to the limited number of day safaris. Initially, the bookings of day safaris were made online under the principle of first-come-first-served; now accommodation booking follows the same procedure.

There are also disputes regarding which vehicle will be given entry into the tourism zones. Information provided by the Corbett Tiger Reserve administration revealed that 250 private vehicles have been registered on a one-person one-vehicle principle during 2018-2019. Again, visitors are permitted to enter the tourism zones only in these vehicles. A proposal by Corbett Tiger Reserve officials to increase this number by an additional 50 vehicles was approved in the Tiger Conservation Foundation meeting. A park manager while talking of the challenges in tourism management during one of my focus group discussion said:

“It’s a very political situation here! Every time any decision has to be taken, whether it is shifting the number of years a gypsy (open vehicle) should run, I mean the age of the gypsy should run; for that matter, there are so many minor issues maybe the rotation process, the allotment of the gypsies to different gates, allotment of guides to different gates, all these things are very political.”

In addition, disputes regarding the registration of vehicles are similar to disputes over registration of nature guides. In both cases there is a strong impetus to keep supply limited. The existing nature guides fiercely resist recruiting additional guides. The Corbett Tiger Reserve in 2020 had 97 registered nature guides. As it is mandatory for nature guides to accompany visitors when going inside tourism zones, the number of registered vehicles and guides should be the same. In reality, the number of registered nature guides is far less (250 versus 97). The existing nature guides have been successful in pressuring the Corbett Tiger Reserve administration not to train and deploy additional nature guides. This is despite the fact that the Corbett administration would like to bring in more and younger nature guides.
The nature guides have tried to maintain a monopoly and are a strong pressure group. Efforts by park officials to grade them based on their competencies was initiated, but thwarted. One opportunity that has met with some success is that the forest department has trained and recruited women as nature guides (Roy 2020) and safari jeep drivers for the first time in recent years (Azad 2021). Allocation of nature guides to different tourism zones is also a matter of dispute as some tourism zones have greater numbers of tourists than others and represent higher earnings.

**Governance of Tourism**

The Amendment Act 2006 and the NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 have led to the establishment of three new institutions for management of Corbett Tiger Reserve summarized in Table 26.

### Table 26. Institutions/Committees for Governance of Corbett Tiger Reserve

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Authorized by</th>
<th>Headed by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Steering Committee of Project Tiger</td>
<td>Amendment Act 2006</td>
<td>Chief Minister of Uttarakhand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiger Conservation Foundation</td>
<td>Amendment Act 2006</td>
<td>Forest Minister of Uttarakhand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Advisory Committee</td>
<td>NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012</td>
<td>Commissioner Kumaon Mandal (region)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 impart important functions to the Local Advisory Committee. These are in the tourism management of tiger reserves, notably that there should be no tourism infrastructure for overnight stay by tourists inside core areas and that existing infrastructure should be phased out in a time-bound manner according to a time-frame.
decided by the Local Advisory Committee (i.e., the tiger reserve committee to oversee tourism policy). Since Dhikala forest lodge is located in the critical tiger habitat of Corbett Tiger Reserve, the forest department has been asked by NCTA to plan for a phased closure of this tourist facility. The Local Advisory Committee constituted under the chairmanship of Commissioner Kumaon. However, it has yet to meet even once since its formation. Hence, the time-frame for the closure is yet to be decided and the fate of Dhikala forest lodge is uncertain, and continues to hang in the balance.

**Resort Development around Corbett Tiger Reserve**

The Amendment Act 2006 gave powers to the NTCA to lay down normative standards for tourism activities. The NTCA subsequently identified rampant resort development and mass tourism as a threat to tiger conservation and submitted detailed NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 to the Supreme Court of India to overcome this threat. However, the creation of new tourism zones proposed in these guidelines and unregulated mass resort tourism development are closely linked.

Problems associated with the development of tourist resorts around Corbett Tiger Reserve did not go unnoticed by the Indian Ministry of Tourism. A survey conducted in 2010 of 94 existing and under-construction hotels, resorts, camps, and guesthouses by the Government of India’s Ministry of Tourism revealed many concerns (MOT 2010). These included conversion of agricultural and forest land, blocking of wildlife corridors, heavy vehicular traffic, lack of proper waste disposal and water supply, lighting at night, construction of boundary walls that act as barriers for wild animals, and a lack of proper licensing (MOT 2010). Resorts are also criticized for blocking the movement of wild animals including tigers, particularly to sources of water such as the adjoining Kosi River. Congestion
of resorts also leads to excessive vehicular movement, particularly at night, and accidental road kills, including that of tigers.

The Uttarakhand State Government has taken two policy initiatives for regulating resort development around the Corbett Tiger Reserve periphery. Firstly, the State Government declared 'Silence Zone' in a width of 500 meters adjoining the boundary of the Corbett Tiger Reserve, vide G.O. letter No.301/x-3-2012-08(23)/2010 dated 20th April 2012 (Sinha 2015). The zone is spread around the boundary of the Corbett Tiger Reserve. It led to regulation of the sound levels of music at parties at night. Secondly, Government of Uttarakhand also instituted a ban on land-use changes from agricultural to commercial uses within 2 km of the boundary of Corbett Tiger Reserve in 2012. “The Government had issued letters to District Magistrates to stop buying and selling of revenue lands in the abandoned villages as well in the adjoining villages falls within two kilometers from the boundary of the tiger reserve (Sinha 2015, 53).” However, the ban has not stopped the construction of new resorts in the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape as major land purchases by outsiders had been carried out prior to this policy initiative. In addition, the fear that the imminent declaration of the ecosensitive zone under the Environment Protection Act 1986 could lead to restrictions on development propelled private interests to accelerate resort construction activity.

A variety of factors have led to villagers choosing to enter the tourism industry either as wage labor employment or setting up their own enterprises. Meanwhile, pollution of the Kosi River by the resorts and encroachment of forest and panchayat van (community forests) land has snowballed into several cases currently pending in the courts. But the implementation of the guidelines in Corbett Tiger Reserve puts a question mark on NTCA hopes. Commenting on the impact of the NTCA Guidelines 2012, which could potentially serve as a barrier to resort development, a resort owner stated, “It is too little too late. The world has moved far ahead, and we are moving back.” He complained that, “Rules are not
made to facilitate things. Rules are made to block things.” The resort owner questioned anything that the government may have improved. A forest official when asked about this said that “this a blame game at play here. It’s not about me. It’s about the government not doing things well.”

One of the prescriptions in the NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 to regulate private infrastructure is the provision of ‘conservation fees’ to be collected from private resorts. The Corbett Tiger Reserve TCP included the issue of eco fee application on resorts. However, the conservation fees are not yet imposed on resorts around the Corbett Tiger Reserve, as this requires a decision from the state government which has not as yet been given. The reasons for the new policies to go unheeded are varied, but largely entail economic profit and the power of private sector resorts to have their way. When asked why the resorts still continue to grow despite new policies, the resort owner quoted above replied:

“The resorts are coming all because of the park. Resorts are growing because perception is that hotels are making money. Land cost is low, entry level is easier.

There are thirty people from Ramnagar who have opened a hotel in Corbett.”

Resorts are advertising and hosting weddings and parties in addition to activities based on wildlife viewing and/or conservation. This is leading to Corbett Tiger Reserve becoming a prominent event destination. When queried as to why resorts have changed their focus from wildlife to mass tourism, he said, “Eighty percent of resorts are not making money. The business is so cutthroat that they are forced to do unethical business. Now whether you call wedding unethical, or party unethical.” When asked about a solution, he said, “The only savior can be the vision of the government. There is no vision. There is even no thinking about it. Someone should start thinking (develop policies and plans) about Corbett.” While the relationship between increase in tiger numbers and growth of tourism activity within tourism zones in Corbett Tiger Reserve is not clear, the establishment of tourism zones is
closely linked with resort growth. The increase in tourism activity through officially recognized tourism zones, entry and access issues as they became, and profits from infrastructure development creates another cycle of demand and supply of new tourism resorts in spite of regulations.

Most of the settlements/built-up area have increased within the southern and eastern periphery of the Corbett Tiger Reserve. This is mainly because of population in-migration, development of tourism infrastructures, and development of road network. Lamenting on the situation, a conservationist commented, “They just ring barked Corbett! As I always say, the Corbett is being ring barked like the porcupine would do to a tree and finally it will be sort of [left]… to die.” In certain sections of the Corbett Tiger Reserve periphery where almost entire villages have been replaced with resort development, this could be regarded as true.

In addition to the tourism zones developed within Corbett Tiger Reserve and private resorts outside Corbett Tiger Reserve, as specified in the NCTA Tourism Guidelines 2012 discussed earlier, several initiatives were taken both by the government and villagers to develop community-based tourism. But as we will see below, these efforts have not been successful.

**Community-based Tourism**

The tiger conservation plan of Corbett Tiger Reserve recognizes that tourism plays a role in gaining community support. But this occurs only when tourism provides benefits to local communities. A synergy between tourism and local communities must occur for the success of the tourism plan. The terms tourism and ecotourism are used mostly interchangeably in both the NTCA Guidelines for Tourism 2012 and the CTR tiger conservation plan. However when ecotourism is described, it puts greater emphasis on education, benefits for local communities and participation (especially by the latter). The plan
advocates community-based tourism as shown below, and specifically as part of not just conventional tourism but ecotourism:

“Ecotourism includes tourism that is community-based and community driven. The aim will be to move towards a system of tourism around Corbett Tiger Reserve which is primarily community-based tourism. Such tourism will be low-impact, educational, and conserve the ecology and environment, while directly benefiting the economic well-being of local communities. It has to be ensured that ecotourism does not get relegated to purely high-end, exclusive tourism, leaving out local communities (Sinha (TCP Core) 2015, 202).”

These provisions in law and guidelines were discussed earlier; they included plans to establish community-based tourism. But for reasons noted above, they have yet to be implemented in practice. To seek answers to why community-based tourism has been limited in extent in Corbett Tiger Reserve, I have already examined two community-based tourism projects in Chapter Six: one within the Corbett Tiger Reserve buffer area led by the government and another one within the landscape adjoining Corbett Tiger Reserve led by a (local) tour operator. Here, I describe a third one run by community members themselves in the fringes of the Corbett landscape. This case was selected as it was situated in a remote village and had its own panchayat van where tourism was being attempted. I was particularly interested in how these particular communities attempted to gain significant broad community-wide participation in ecotourism development, how they exercised control over land and other resources, and how they specifically approached tourism. Additionally, I was interested in what prevented the use of panchayat van under the control of the communities to not be used for community-based tourism. The community-based tourism project was started in Sayat village situated outside the buffer area of Corbett Tiger Reserve in the
adjoining Ramnagar Forest Division by the breakaway group from Kyari, and the group even planned activities in the *panchayat van* under the control of the village.
Advancing Community-based Tourism in Sayat village (2009–2019)

Sayat village is situated at a distance of nearly 30 km from Amdanda, the nearest Corbett Tiger Reserve gate, while Kyari village was a mere 10 km away. Both are situated outside the buffer area of Corbett Tiger Reserve. Sayat village has a population of approximately 550 and has a van panchayat that was first constituted in 1958 by including Civil Soyam (a category of forests) and other village forests that forms its own panchayat van. The second breakaway group from Kyari moved their operations and established a new tourist camp at Sayat village in 2009. They did this by obtaining a lease of ten bighas (two hectares) of agricultural land that belongs to a family that did not live in the village, and where agriculture was not being practiced owing to a high degree of crop damage by wild animals. The lease is renewable every nine years. The group of village youth also set up a new company called “Camp Kyari Ltd.”

Understanding of, and expectations for, local community involvement in tourism in Sayat has been fueled by the village’s experience in operating a community forest, or panchayat van. Owing to the presence of community forests, and demonstrated ability for a local community to collectively manage a forest, the village has many ecotourism possibilities. This also depends on whether the group can transfer their collective management skills to conducting tourism, and to effectively using their community forest as a base to do so. The camp is situated at the farthest end of the village adjacent to the reserved forest and panchayat van. The Sayat panchayat van is spread over 95 hectares of forests and has dense forests of Sal (Shorea robusta), Sain (Terminalia alata), and Sheesham (Dalbergia sissoo). The forest harbors wild animals such as kakar (barking deer), sambar deer, and wild pig. River Baur marks the boundary of the panchayat van land. The panchayat van has a waterfall and occasional presence of tigers also. Importantly, the forest was initially managed by the local community (i.e., through the local council, van panchayat), where villagers were
able to meet their fuelwood, fodder and timber demand. The rules regarding use of reserved forests are based on the Indian Forest Act 1927 and contained in the working plan of the Ramnagar forest division, while those in the panchayat van are managed according to the Van Panchayat Niyamavali. Permission is required from the local range officer for conducting activities in the reserved forests while activities permitted in the microplan can be carried out by the villagers in the panchayat van.

The camp was very basic, consisting of just tents, mud huts, pergola, toilets, kitchens and a machan (tree top watchout). The camp was established with the involvement of villagers, specifically the design and construction. The camp is run by a group of ten youth, out of which five are from Sayat village and the remaining from Kyari village. A sub group of three partners provides the leadership. The camp prides itself in using locally available resources, workforce, and supplies. The camp receives around 400–500 visitors annually, which are mostly schoolchildren.

A camp operator who is a resident of Kyari provided two reasons that ran parallel for shifting their tourism operations from the Kyari village to the new camp site. According to him, “We felt that it will be very difficult to make ecotourism, which was basically our original idea, survive over there. Plus, there were some political pressures.” When asked to elaborate he said, “There was a dispute between forest and village relating to land for which permission was sought from the forest department. The new gram panchayat said that until we have permission from the forest department, we will not allow you to run.” Since the requested permission never came, the group decided to shift the camp to Sayat village. When asked why they chose Sayat as their new site, he said, Sayat was exactly like Kyari when they first started operations. “The village is only a village. Wherever is happening is in control of the village.” He added, “Everything was decided by the village. No land belongs to an outsider.” Purchase of agricultural land for commercial purposes by outsiders disrupted the
fabric of community life. Explaining their approach he said, “Whenever we begin a new site, our focus is that community should benefit directly and we should also be able to survive.” When asked what is required to do community-based tourism, he added, “There should be a village and a forest...Which has control and involvement of community. Village and forest. It is a sum of these two things.” For him the ability for the whole village community to gather together, discuss, and take decisions collectively appeared to be paramount.

The issue of self-autonomy and control over resource use was highlighted by villagers, especially the right of controlling land use on land in which the Government has controlled management authority rights. On this point, one villager involved in developing the new camp site noted that, “When farmers are looking after the forests then they must get some rights too.” When the forest was being administered by the civil administration, the local Sub Divisional Magistrate would come and disburse who could cut and use which trees. This government function was transferred in 2005 to the forest department after the formation of Uttarakhand State. After this happened, another villager said that, “ever since the rights have gone to the forest department, no one has received a single tree.” Elections were held in the van panchayat in 2015 and there is a microplan to guide the activities in panchayat van, but it is mostly limited to listing potential funding requirements. The villagers’ requirement of wood remained unaddressed.

The capacity to manage the van panchayat has been transferred to the Sayat village for managing the new camp. The Sarpanch (headman) of the Sayat van panchayat said that he really liked the work of the camp. “The camp is very good and in the interest of the village as the educated unemployed in the village are getting employment and secondly, the villagers are getting good education. There is no bad effect.” Explaining the objectives of the camp he said that, “whatever holding will be there, will be of the villagers.” He felt that, “if the
villagers learn the tasks properly, so the camp operators are exploring the possibility of leaving the camp to the villagers.”

A key accomplishment of the Sayat camp has been that it offers a diversity of tourism activities, some but not all of it seems consistent with objectives of ecotourism. For example, the activities include mountain biking, socially useful productive work such as removal of Lantana (invasive alien shrub), creation of concrete walking path and planting tree plantations. However, while wildlife and bird viewing can be done with little impact, problems are arising with the extensive use of land, especially for mountain biking and trekking that impact a much larger space extending beyond the van panchayat boundary. This has become an issue in Sayat. In 2017, a forest officer placed a fine of Rupees 50,000 (approximately $800 US) on the camp as he found that visitors’ activities were being conducted in a reserved forest patch that was a sample plot of assisted natural regeneration (ANR) created by forest range officer; and impacting it negatively. When asked about the details, the local forest range officer said that the camp was fined because they were “conducting non-forestry activity in the reserved forests without any permission.” Explaining the incident, the camp operator said that they were conducting games with students in an open patch in the Sal forest adjacent to the village. The activity was rope walking whereby only ropes were tied to tree trunks and there were no nails. The operator said that, “It is only one forest. Even we do not know whether we are allowed to go or not” implying that there was ambiguity between panchayat van boundary and the reserved forest. Community forestry boundaries must be clarified to get authorized. However, the boundaries of panchayat van, unlike those of reserved forests, are ill maintained with considerable ambiguities.

Camp operators are confused about the rules, unequal enforcement of them, and especially restrictions on community-based tourism as this camp is situated outside CTR buffer area in the Corbett landscape. As a community-run camp, it is different than what has
been attempted, or may be permitted, in other tourism zones. A Sayat camp operator noted that there is a large number of tourist vehicles permitted in the Pawalgarh Conservation Reserve without in their perception any restriction on numbers. Pointing to the forest adjacent to the camp, the operator said that,

“according to the rules, we do not have permission to go behind our wall. We can’t go there to see birds. On the other hand, we see that Sitabani zone (tourism zone created by Ramnagar forest division in Pawalgarh Conservation Reserve) has been made, where we have seen two hundred, two hundred and fifty vehicles go in one day without any control. Three hundred in the morning and four hundred in the evening have gone there. As far as disturbance is concerned, it is much more over there… There is no declared area where we would have rights. There is no procedure also.”

The operator was comparing tourism activity in a designated Sitatabni tourism zone with their own operations which were being conducted outside designated zone.

Towards enabling a more lawful basis to tourism activities, the Camp Kyari Ltd. requested the van panchayat for permission to conduct activities in the Sayat panchayat van. A member of the Camp Kyari Ltd. said that they have requested for “permission for conducting birdwatching on trails and for conducting games and in return we will have the students do activities under Socially Useful Productive Work according to the needs of the forests whether it is plantation, Lantana removal, fire line maintenance or construction of check dams.” The Sarpanch (headman) said that they have moved a resolution to grant the permission as, “It is in the interest of the village and also leads to protection of panchayat van.” According to the villagers, the students who came to the camp constructed a concrete pathway, cleaned the school and white washed the local school. However, the resolution by the local van panchayat to permit birdwatching and games in the panchayat van was not approved by the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) of the Ramnagar forest division. When
asked what the objection to permitting activities in *panchayat van* were, the local Range Officer said that ecotourism is a non-forestry activity and commercial activities cannot be permitted in a forest area (The Government of India has subsequently issued “Guidelines on Sustainable Eco-Tourism in Forest and Wildlife Areas 2021” on October 29th 2021 in which ecotourism activities can be carried out in forest and wildlife areas subject to the provisions of the Forest Conservation Act 1980). The letter had been pending with DFO Ramnagar forest division at the time of the field visit. Efforts of Camp Kyari to start operations in Sayat *panchayat van* were still in stalemate and pending for the last seven months at the time of the study in August 2018.

**The Two Cases Compared**

In comparing the experiences of community-based tourism efforts in Kyari and Sayat, the following issues become apparent. The first, and perhaps most important one, has to do with a lack of an overarching and legal framework for various community-based tourism activities in the Corbett Tiger Reserve and its adjoining broader landscape. This notion has been raised by those interviewed for this study. When asked why the community-based tourism has failed to take off in the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape, the camp operator from Sayat said that “The government does not have any framework which can conserve this...If someone comes tomorrow to buy land to establish a huge resort then we cannot run this. It is very difficult to run a property like this. It is difficult to run a business like this.” Elaborating on their past efforts, he said, “We have been repeatedly saying that there should be some policy. Take the example of Kyari. Kyari would have been the most successful model even today, at a much higher level, but it did not happen because there was no framework.” When asked what you will do if some outsider came and established a resort in Sayat village, he said that, “If that happens, then I feel that we will be forced to close this also because then
small, small units are formed (within the village community) and then hundred percent
ownership by community and the talk of ecotourism is no longer there.”

A key dimension to the need for a framework, especially to promote community-
based tourism, is differentiating between types of tourism enterprises. However this goal is
challenged by many factors. The same camp operator explained, that “...because of
mainstream tourism, forest department has to control many things. Then everything is
clubbed in the same category, everybody is seen in the same category.” When asked what
would happen if villages are designated as community-based tourism, “I feel that it would
have become much easier to expand and run this,” and added, “if we want to do this kind of
tourism, if there are such zones then it will become very easy,” as there would be permission.

Another issue is the lack of inclusion of van panchayat in tourism development even
though they are in control of a sizable area as panchayat van or community forests. This
point also raises the connected issue of what the Government as the overarching authority
permits or not to be done on community forests. Given the already legal and administrative
capacity basis of van panchayat to manage a local forest, it seems likely that the van
panchayat in or near the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape would be a very likely candidates
to conduct community-based tourism. As noted above, the landscape adjoining Corbett Tiger
Reserve (Ramnagar forest Divisions, Lansdowne forest division and Ramnagar soil
conservation division) has 112 panchayat vans in addition to the six situated within Corbett
Tiger Reserve buffer area. The survey of van panchayat conducted for this research revealed
that none of the panchayat van within the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape are included in
any kind of planned tourism development by the government. Camps and resorts created and
controlled by both local and outside investors are situated near panchayat van (16.94%).
There is tourism activity by these resorts and outside tour operators in panchayat van
(15.25%). Three of the largest resorts in Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape are located adjacent
to panchayat van: Ranger’s Reserve, near Bohrakot panchayat van (Ramnagar FD), Vanvasa, near Juhi Papdi panchayat van (Kalagarh FD), and one unnamed resort near Semalsera panchayat van (Kalagarh FD). Importantly, none of these involve the van panchayat in planning, management, design or operation aspects of tourism, a desired goal in ecolodge planning, benefits being limited to wage labor and employment.

Though seemingly attractive, there are many limitations to designate villages or particular forests, including panchayat vans for community-based tourism. One pertains to the probable fear of the Government or other authorities that private interest in the guise of “community” will take over the government-owned forest and become difficult to control. This fear is based on the experience of past projects and prevents forest officials from permitting more flexibility and creative new initiatives, including ones outside a narrow forestry purview. The sectoral home of the panchayat van in forestry continues to fester territoriality in itself.

Another barrier is capacity within van panchayats on the whole has been weak, particularly related to tourism type activities. Soft inroads through skill development such as for birdwatching and butterfly watching and capacity to conduct tours is taking roots in many places and shows signs of hope.

A third feature brought out in the comparison has to do with how the communities first set out to establish community-based tourism, and their own limitations. This entailed their efforts discovering assets, developing tourism products and promoting activities. These drew attention from both tourists as well as the government. In Kyari village, both internal factors (lack of benefit sharing, caste divisions, politics) and external factors (resort development, protected area declaration, Sitabani tourism zone formation) arrested the growth of community-based tourism especially in the old camp. Camp Kyari was dependent on forests in Ramnagar forest division for conducting soft tourism activities such as wildlife
viewing, birdwatching, adventure and village visits. It involved reterritorialization in so far as the territory was repurposed for tourism-based income generation. The reterritorialization by villagers for community-based tourism likely attracted resort development. As the villagers were powerless against outside developers, Kyari village was dominated by private resorts. Additionally, the establishment of Sitabani tourism zone in Pawalgarh Conservation Reserve further pushed the whole region to the grasp of mass resort tourism. Camp Hornbill is trying to survive with niche tourism, *machans* and homestays in Kyari (Eaton 2020, 59-60).

On the other hand, Camp Kyari Ltd. stuck to its values and moved to Sayat village to provide a truly authentic village experience. This breakaway group tried to establish a new community-based tourism project in nearby Sayat village in search of an area free from mass tourism. But the group has been unable to use *panchayat van* or community forests so far for community-based tourism, even though the *van panchayat* authorized territory though owned by government is legally under the control of the community.

The comparison and historical experience in these villages bring out the competition between commercial mass tourism typified by private resorts, and village based initiatives. The resorts have now become so widespread in the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape that community-based tourism as a type of tourism seems unlikely to compete with commercial tourism. It is vitally important to emphasize that the lack of success of community-based tourism stems from both internal and externally-imposed conditions and regulations (on the latter, those imposed on community forests as forestry operations first and foremost).

The three community-based tourism cases presented in Chapter Six and this chapter bring out the challenges villagers face in the broader process of reterritorialization of land involved in the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape for tourism development when their land is situated outside designated tourism zones. It provides a much needed light on the plight of local communities to gain a foothold in the tourism industry. The villagers are dependent on
forests and rivers adjoining Corbett that remain under the control of the state through the forest department. Permission needs to be obtained from the forest department even for conducting activities in the *panchayat van* that are under management authority and control of villages. This reterritorialization is counter to the reterritorialization by the state through tourism zones and the resorts by private operators. The fact that lands under their control remain in areas not targeted for tourism and the barrier this presents has been a major obstacle for their plight to develop community-based tourism. That the tourism products they pursue are much in line with those of ecotourism under the broader umbrella of ecodevelopment should also be emphasized. Their attempted enterprises were unique (as compared to larger resort enterprises) in their more limited investment, small scale of enterprises, foot-based activities and smaller ecological footprint, and more in line with the goals of ecotourism. However, their inability to flourish and profit owing to structural reasons limits the benefits of their efforts in tourism to mere survival, adding a small component to range of options for visitors but unable to influence the direction of tourism development in the Corbett landscape.

**Homestay Development**

Despite the above barriers, local villagers have become a part of the tourism industry in Corbett in a variety of ways. Consequently most people in villages bordering the park and reserve depend partly or fully for income on tourism. The socio-economic conditions of a large proportion of people living around Corbett Tiger Reserve have shifted from subsistence agriculture and forest product collecting towards wage labor or employment in tourism activities. Even in cases of serving as a wage laborer, there is an improvement. Earnings from tourism have encouraged many villagers to reduce their livestock which also reduces their need to go to the forests for collection of fodder (Simlai 2021).
One tourism product that communities have an advantage over resorts is in offering homestays – the opportunity for visitors to spend time with villagers in their homes. The Uttarakhand State Tourism Department is promoting homestays by providing attractive financial subsidies. The aim of the policy is to spread tourism to remote areas to increase employment and income to reduce out migration and desertification of villages (UTDB 2022). Unlike hotels and restaurants, homestays require less financial investment for establishment and are easier to run, helping increase household income and diversification in livelihoods. Women’s engagement with tourism increases as a result. Running homestays has the advantage of enabling women to combine domestic responsibilities such as cooking, and even child care, with providing a homestay. But this does lead to an increase in work and not all women are comfortable with close proximity with tourists, specially foreign tourists, or have the material capacity in their homes to offer tourists the experience they desire (e.g., bathroom facilities, quality food, even location to quintessential tourist attractions) – issues found with homestays around the world (Belsky 1999).

**Pakhro Tiger (Zoo) Safari**

Extending tourism development in Corbett Tiger Reserve to new areas has been the rationale for developing tiger (zoo) safari. As described earlier, the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) in 2016 and 2019 provided detailed guidelines for establishing tiger (zoo) safaris in tiger reserves. Following these guidelines, the NTCA and the Central Zoo Authority (CZA) granted in principle permission for the development of the tiger (zoo) safari in the buffer area of Corbett Tiger Reserve in Pakhro Range in Kalagarh Forest Division. Tiger (zoo) safaris have been provided for by the NTCA as a measure for reducing tourist pressure on core area and represents a new tourism product in Corbett Tiger Reserve. But many doubt its feasibility. The park officials proposed development of a tiger (zoo) safari at the entrance of the Pakhro tourism zone, spread over an area of 116 hectares.
The proposed tiger safari will have tigers in large enclosures on the landscape within which visitors will be able to enter and view tigers in the area while moving in closed vehicles. This tiger safari proposal requires construction of roads for vehicular movement, construction of buildings such as interpretation center, staff quarters, animal hospital and involves large scale felling of trees posing threat to the tiger habitat. When implemented, Corbett Tiger Reserve will become the first tiger reserve in India to have a tiger safari, which will be basically a zoo built within the buffer area. The tiger (zoo) safari is being funded by the State Government with promise of additional funds from the Tiger Conservation Foundation for CTR. Seventy percent of the receipts from the tiger safari are projected to go to the Tiger Conservation Foundation of CTR. As per the NTCA Guidelines an ecodevelopment committee needs to be formed to run the tiger safari and provide benefits to the community, but the tiger (zoo) safari is located on the inter-state border and does not have any villages adjacent to it on the Uttarakhand side. The project has been mired in a controversy involving illegal constructions and illegal felling of trees (Kumar 2021), continuing till today. Tiger safari is a tourism space that like tourism zones may be criticized as supporting the objectives of mass resort tourism owing to it providing an artificial experience contrary to the principles of ecotourism, and causing damage to tiger habitat rather than supporting conservation.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter, I presented a detailed examination of the Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act 2006 and the national level framework it provided for zoning within India's tiger reserves as developed by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (herein NTCA). I provide a comparison of the provisions for zoning in tiger reserves prior to and after the Amendment Act 2006 and investigated the changes brought about in zoning of tiger reserves as a result of this new law. I then turned to the impacts of these initiatives for zoning in
Corbett Tiger Reserve, notably their influence on the transformation of space through zoning and specific implications for tiger conservation, resident communities and tourism development.

Zones during this Phase III become the defining feature of the landscape both literally and figurately, larger than the territories that they are composed of, and that preceded them in shape of reserved forests since 1880’s and the protected areas from 1930’s onwards. Both the core and buffer areas after their legal statuses became the new territorial units; they also became while more visible, more monolithic and rigid. The large “inviolate” core area, created by removing the last vestiges of resource uses by nomadic Gujjars, overrides the status of Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary and makes both protected areas that comprise Corbett Tiger Reserve’s core area enclavish by reinforcing and further extending restrictions on entry and limitations on use. In this respect, by virtue of its being part of the core area, Sonanadi in spite of being a sanctuary has become more “inviolate” compared to other national parks in India which still have resident human communities and are imbued with rights. The core area designation serves to complete where the protected areas left unfulfilled – the agenda of making the national parks inviolate. This occurred however not without criticism. The continuation of Dhikala forest lodge and the Kalagarh colony within the core area or the critical tiger habitat, as well as the new constructions inside the core area, however, point out the contradictions. Conservationists critique the residential park related infrastructure remaining in the very heart of tiger reserve and vehicular movement for tiger safaris; this persists while all subsistence related activities by villages in the core zone is strictly prohibited (Simlai 2022).

Zoning in protected areas has been criticized for being static with bias towards historical boundaries (Thede, Haider and Rutherford 2014). The historical boundaries of the Corbett National Park established in 1966 and that of Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary...
established in 1987 remained intact during the process of zoning, and continue until today to remain in place. Similarly the boundaries of the buffer area once expanded in 1991 remain the same and have not changed during the legal designation, though as mentioned earlier a small area was transferred to the state of Uttar Pradesh. Zoning in Corbett Tiger Reserve affirms the historical bias that once decided, it is not easy to change the boundaries of zones even though the ecological and socio-economic circumstances may have considerably altered.

The issue of what happens to the area within the boundaries for ecological restoration toward improving habitat for tigers lingers. The forests in the Corbett Tiger Reserve buffer area have been largely left untouched with forestry operations reduced to removal of dry and fallen trees. Plantations of Eucalyptus and Teak exotics to the area and considered less beneficial for wild animals, continued expansion of areas under invasive alien species and encroachment of fire lines by trees in the lack of disturbance – what this will bring in future remains to be seen.

Meanwhile, the buffer area has been further reshaped with yet another round of restrictions and intrusions in property rights and uses – especially for remaining local communities – so much so that it too has begun to acquire the overtones of the core area and the gap between the two kinds of zones has decreased substantially. Not only has the use of conservation surveillance technologies been greater in the buffer area abetting these restrictions, but even developmental activities have been restricted in specific revenue villages and on private land enclosed within buffer area as enclaves. Increased restrictions on the use of the Kandi road and cessation of public movement on Durgadevi – Maidavan forest roads, exacerbation of human wildlife conflict, and lack of socioeconomic progress in the historical revenue villages such as Teria and Pand continue to depress their livelihoods. Their request for relocation remains unfulfilled. All these factors point towards primacy of
tigers in buffer area in a manner similar to the core area. Yet data was presented that attest to the presence of tigers in buffer zones, even more during some periods than reported in the core area. The much reduced buffer area of Corbett Tiger Reserve far from being a zone of peaceful coexistence and ecodevelopment as envisaged in legislation emerges as an arena of intense conflict between tiger and tourism interests, together pitted against the interests of remaining local communities.

The upper limit of twenty percent placed on tourism zones within the core area in the NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 has arrested tourism development inside the protected areas and pushed tourism development in the reserved forest buffer area further contributing to conflict. The tourism zones as the only legitimate tourism space have concretized through the NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012, including what can be considered appropriate touristic activities – mostly vehicle tiger safaris. Three new tourism zones have been added in buffer area in Corbett Tiger Reserve in Dhela, Pakhro and Garjia within a short period of five years. But these do not open opportunities for community-based tourism and the “soft” tourism activities they prefer. Rather, they have led to increase in the number of registered vehicles for use in safaris making buffer area an arena of a particular type of (mass) tourism. The development of tourism zones in Corbett Tiger Reserve is closely intertwined with the rise of private hotels, lodges and resorts. Their establishment and spread across Corbett plays a major role in how tourism has come to define a major land use, branding, and financial object of the Corbett landscape, what I and others refer to as a process of reterritorialization. The rate of sale and conversion of agricultural land for tourism may have reduced, but the expansion of built area continues. The impact on tiger movement and density is likely affected.

Cohen (2012) while discussing tourism in tiger reserves argues that the predominant attitude in conservation programs towards tigers is anthropocentric and that decisions
regarding how tourism is managed are driven more by human needs than benefits for the
tiger. Settings of tiger tourism have been classified in four sequential stages ranging from
wild and natural as in nature, totally unrestrained; semi-natural as in national parks where
highly regulated, semi contrived as in zoos and tiger (zoo) safaris; and contrived as domestic
pets as in temples in Thailand (Cohen 2012). According to this typology, the tiger safari
construction within the buffer area of Corbett Tiger Reserve marks a transition from the
second stage of regulated tourism in tourism zones of national parks to the “semi contrived”
situation of tigers conceived in zoos. According to this typology, NTCA by legitimizing tiger
safari construction within the buffer area of tiger reserves has itself paved the way for a
transition of tourism in tiger reserves towards mass tourism. This is significant as rather than
limiting tourist pressure in critical tiger habitat or core area as envisaged, the tiger (zoo) safari
proposed at Pahro is more likely to open a new site of tourism, stimulate infrastructural
development in adjoining areas to meet the needs of the tourists, attract a new category of
visitors, establish new markets and add to the visitor pressure. Others have argued that
tourism can lead to conservation benefits, but this requires both public and political support
and effective regulation (Macdonald et al. 2017).

Karanth and DeFries (2011) traced the development of tourism facilities around tiger
reserves and mapped resort distribution in and around ten tiger reserves, though Corbett Tiger
Reserve was not included in this study. Their study found that over 85 % resorts are located
within five km of tiger reserve boundary, 72 % have been constructed after 2000, and the
number of tourist facilities ranged from a mere eight in Sariska to 102 in Periyar Tiger
Reserve. Clearly, the number of resorts and other tourism establishments around Corbett
Tiger Reserve is comparable to the highest numbers in Periyar. More importantly, they found
that there is geographical clustering of tourism facilities in many tiger reserves (such as
Kanha, Periyar, Ranthambore and Pench). But they do not provide answer as to why it is
so, nor do they explain why the resorts are limited to only specific sections of boundaries of tiger reserves. My analysis provides two explanations for this clustering phenomenon. As discussed in the literature review, (a) clustering has been termed advantageous for tourism development in "reterritorialization" literature such as Hazbun (2004) for establishing efficient value chains and (b) zoning of enclavic tourism zones leads to aggregation of resorts near the tourism zone gate as the two share enclavic features. It is the clustering of resorts in wildlife corridors that poses the biggest threat to movement of tigers in the landscape and disruption of habitat connectivity.

The community-based tourism that was introduced in Phase II was a possible alternative form of tourism development. The Amendment Act 2006 even called for the promotion of ecotourism through the engagement of communities. But this did not happen on the ground for many reasons. The continued vagueness and interchangeability of ecotourism and tourism in the NTCA TCP Guidelines 2007 and Tourism Guidelines 2012 weakened their provisions and guidelines for real, material action. While the goals and provisions in the NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 changed, the manner of allocation of space for tourism remained the same, namely the form of enclavic tourism zones. The engagement of communities as a meaningful approach to community-based conservation whether through the ecodevelopment committees or otherwise was nowhere to be found in Corbett Tiger Reserve. This sadly, is despite the works of many local people, including youth groups – a segment of the population conservationists otherwise hope to involve and take on the reins in the future. The hope for community involvement in tourism has given way to entrepreneurship in varied private and individual-based tourism development; local people benefit mostly through wage labor. This points to a real and deep lacunae in policy and its implementation. It also points to the continued tilt of the scale towards mass resort tourism
development rather than alternative forms – forms perhaps more beneficial to both tigers and at least people who thrived on the landscape historically.

One obvious manifestation of this trend is the neglect of the panchayat van or the community forests that emerged as an unexpected finding of this research. The potentially crucial role of van panchayat or forest councils in the implementation of imagined tiger conservation plan (i.e., by the CTR) is nowhere to be seen on the ground. The non-recognition of panchayat van in the notification issued for the Corbett Tiger Reserve and the tiger conservation plan and subsequent management reveals that they were neglected, whether purposefully or not is not known. Peluso (2010) points out that the state does not have much interest in zoning of community-owned territories. The neglect of panchayat van, forming a vital part of the Corbett landscape, in zoning actions brings out the contradiction in espousing participatory programs and reality of how funds are allocated as per the NTCA’s directives. In Corbett this amounted to preexisting community authority and benefits gradually obliterated, something like rewriting the landscape rather than being strengthened. The same happened to individuals in revenue village communities. As revealed by the Sayat case, the villagers were unable to harness even those forests with local authority for meeting their needs nor use them as a resource for developing tourism. These small pockets of community forests have yet to be harnessed as territories for tourism development or tiger conservation, both representing lost opportunities.

There are growing concerns, however, related to the finding of high tiger density in the buffer area and the surrounding landscape. This finding raises important questions about the efficacy of the core-buffer area zoning, and in particular what conditions gave rise to tiger densities in buffer areas? The answer to this question is beyond the scope of this research project, but remains a lingering, significant question for those concerned about tiger conservation in the future; this most pointedly speaks to the future of zoning. What positive
role if any can it play in tiger conservation or protected areas more generally? Is the key problem with how zoning has been envisioned, and/or in the way it has been implemented? While the conclusion chapter cannot answer these questions, it can suggest the ways the case of Corbett Tiger Reserve has played a role in raising them, and what this single case offers in terms of contribution to the topic and literature.
CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION

Introduction

In the previous chapters (1-4) I introduced the questions that motivated this study, why I think they are important, the literature that influenced my thinking about them and methodology I chose as most relevant to pursue them, as well as background to the focal case study – Corbett Tiger Reserve. In the last three chapters (5-7) I presented results of the data analysis and major findings. In this final chapter, I briefly summarize the key research findings and then move to discussing their meaning and contribution to both theory in the fields of tourism geographies and protected area management and to practice, their implications for the design and implementation of tiger reserves in India. I end the chapter with some suggestions for future research.

Summary of Major Findings

The over-riding questions this study sought to understand are how private resort development came to dominate the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape, and why in spite of provisions in legislation and policy, other types of tourism notably community-based tourism and ecotourism (with their presumed greater benefits for conservation and local communities) were unable to gain a foothold. Because I was questioning the status quo, especially the dominance of one kind of tourism enterprise over others, I chose a critical political ecology methodology that has been developed and used to pursue such questions. Its approach demanded attention to multiple scales, so my research concentrated on answering my major questions by following actions that occurred both over time and across space. As such, I structured the results chapters in three historical phases to highlight the importance of
temporal changes, and within each phase, the key spatial transformations. The “red-line” I presented which links the three results chapters is the rise of laws and policy on the expansion, boundary making and regulations of space that came to be Corbett Tiger Reserve Landscape especially through zoning. These laws and policies led to the major designations of core/buffer zone and later tourism zones, the latter which came to be dominated by private resorts (to the exclusion of ecotourism and community-based tourism enterprises).

I suggest that the creation and impacts of zoning in Corbett Tiger Reserve Landscape – were significant aided by examining them through three key concepts from the critical political ecology and critical tourism literature: territorialization, reterritorialization and enclavization. I turn to a discussion of these concepts discussed in detail in the literature review section but summarized here, and how they apply and help to illuminate my findings. In this section and the section following it, I offer insights into how my approach and its findings speak to theory itself, as well as contribute to the academic literature from which they emerge.

**Territorialization**

Territoriality as discussed in the literature review is the act of claiming and maintaining physical space, and the humans and resources within it, through the deployment of territorial strategies (Sack 1986; Cox 2008). They represent actions by an individual or a group to affect, influence or control people, phenomenon and relationships by delimiting and asserting control over a geographical area. As such it is geographically and socially rooted, as opposed to an individual and adaptive behavior (Sack 1986). Territoriality is “the activity of defending, controlling, excluding, including” (Cox 2008, 1). While often used to explain how an outside entity takes over another, the concept of “internal territorialization” was first propounded by Vandergeest and Peluso (1995), and subsequently by others (Corson 2011;
Veron and Fehr 2011) and used to critically examine parks and protected areas. As opposed to nation-states' international boundaries, internal territorialization is the contested process by which a state institution establishes control over natural resources and the people who use them. As such it is a useful and realistic representation of territory within India being further claimed and regulated by Indian authorities, such as national legislators and special powerful interest groups and planners such as the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) and Project Tiger. The steps to territorialization in Corbett Tiger Reserve are summarized in Table 26 and discussed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Key Events/Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Core Area</td>
<td>– Notification of CTR core area or critical tiger habitat in 2008/2010.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Reorganization of CTR core area boundary as per notification.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Relocation of nomadic Gujjars from Sonanadi WLS in 2014.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buffer Area</td>
<td>– Notification of CTR buffer area in 2010.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Reorganization of CTR buffer area boundary as per notification.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Restrictions on public transport on arterial forest roads.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Ban on sale and land use changes in 46 chaks/villages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Restrictions on consumptive resource use in buffer areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Ban on angling in 2012; lifted but permits yet to be issued.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Lack of recognition of panchayat van.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscape</td>
<td>– Notification of Pawalgarh Conservation Reserve in 2010.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– New boundaries for Pawalgarh Conservation Reserve.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Pawalgarh Conservation Reserve Management Plan (yet to be approved).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Conservation Assured Tiger Standards (CATS) compliant certification for Lansdowne and Ramnagar Forest Divisions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In compliance with the Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972 (WLPA) 1972, the primary national legislation for protecting wildlife and creating protected areas in India, and the NTCA guidelines, Corbett Tiger Reserve (CTR) was zoned into core and buffer areas. The
CTR core is a large, exclusive tract of 821.84 km$^2$ created by the aggregation of two dissimilar protected areas: Corbett National Park (520.84 km$^2$) and Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary (301.18 km$^2$). One hundred and eighty one families of nomadic Gujars and their livestock were relocated from Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary in 2014 to make the core area “inviolate”.

The Corbett Tiger Reserve buffer area of 466.32 km$^2$ notified in 2010, consists of the reserved forests only. However, the boundary of the buffer area also includes land locked villages, major forest roads and notably panchayat van or community forests that are under the control of communities. The designation of buffer area in Corbett Tiger Reserve has mostly discontinued public transport on major forest roads that cross through the buffer area. Despite residents in reserve forests having historic resource rights (e.g. gathering fuel wood, fodder) these rights have not been acknowledged and respected. Restrictions have been placed on the ability of local communities to sell private land in 46 chaks (enclosures) including ten buffer area villages. A ban that was placed on angling in Ramganga River has been revoked but still no permits are being issued leading to loss of livelihood opportunities for the fishermen known as gillies and the homestay owners in villages adjoining the Ramganga River. Owing to the increasing restrictions on villagers, the buffer area of Corbett Tiger Reserve has gradually started to serve as an extension of the core area. This is contrary to the legal position of trying to promote a coexistence agenda (i.e., between tigers and humans).

A significant finding here is that Corbett Tiger Reserve managers have no special programs in the buffer zones to work with panchayat van or community forests located inside these zones. Panchayat van, the forests under legally recognized community-based management authority, are mentioned in the Corbett Tiger Reserve Tiger Conservation Plan (Sinha 2015). But they are neither well described, mapped nor acknowledged in any
significant detail. The survey of *van panchayat* (the institution for managing the community-controlled lands) I carried out as part of field research revealed the presence of 118 *panchayat van* or the community forests spread over nearly 49.3 km² representing about 4% of Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape area (Ramnagar, Terai West, Lansdowne and Ramnagar Soil Conservation forest divisions). Of these, six are totally enclosed within Corbett Tiger Reserve buffer area, the remaining situated on its boundary and the surrounding landscape. These forest areas are not bound by stringent wildlife laws as are the critical tiger habitat or the core areas. The *panchayat van* were left out of the four cycles of nationwide tiger assessment carried out in 2006, 2010, 2014 and 2018. Most *panchayat van* in Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape report presence of tigers. In December 2018 when camera traps were placed for the first time in Dhikolia, Dhamdhar, Juhi Papdi, and Kartiya *panchayat van* by the Wildlife Institute of India (WII), the presence of three tigers was confirmed in camera trap images (Badola and Jhala 2019). As a result the ecological contribution of *panchayat van* remains unacknowledged by Corbett authorities, and their well-being as well as potential for ecodevelopment, tourism or otherwise, left untapped.

The core and buffer area zoning designations of 2010 have remained unchanged over the past three decades. This is in spite of changes in legislation and policies for tiger conservation planning. The boundaries of core/buffer areas have been largely determined by outside experts. Zoning of the Corbett Tiger Reserve core area confirms the bias of the zoning frameworks towards maintaining historical boundaries (and the stakeholders they benefit). The historical boundaries of Corbett National Park laid out in 1966 and that of Sonanadi WLS in 1987 remained unchanged. No special committee of experts has been formed for such an exercise in Corbett Tiger Reserve as prescribed in law, missing out a valuable opportunity for revisiting zone boundaries.
**Reterritorialization**

The concept of reterritorialization has also been widely used in the field of parks, protected areas and conservation. Reterritorialization differs from territorialization in that in addition to claiming new spaces and making new boundaries, new economic values are created within the territory (Barry 2022). This has led to the displacement of one set of resource users and usage by another set as uses and benefits accrue to new users. As described in the literature review (Barry 2022; Corson 2011), reterritorialization speaks to the confluence of territorialization, property rights and commoditization of land resources and space making to foster more complex forms of enclosures.

While territorialization in the context of protected areas leads to seizing, claiming and regulating more land and resources from historical users and claimants, reterritorialization leads to new forms of economic production. Zoning can be viewed as a form of reterritorialization when it leads to the creation of boundaries that increase economic production, new set of uses and actors who benefit from all of these. Tourism has been noted as one of the most feasible means to achieve reterritorialization. This is because tourism helps in converting experience of place into commodities that are location based and cannot be shifted elsewhere (Hazbun 2004). State led policy changes often produce economic reterritorialization and tourism enclaves where spatially defined economic benefits flow in specific locations in form of rents and external economies (Hazbun 2004).

In the context of Corbett Tiger Reserve, zoning provided the means to reterritorialization by paving over differences and creating nested smaller tourism zones amenable for economic production. The different steps taken in the process of reterritorialization in CTR are summarized below in Table 27.
Table 28. Key Steps in Reterritorialization in Corbett Tiger Reserve Landscape

| Plans                                                                 | – CTR Tiger Conservation Plan (Chapter on Tourism and Interpretation) prescriptions for tourism zones in CTR core/buffer areas.  
|                                                                     | – Supplementary additional plans (site specific plans, maps & administrative orders) for development of Dhela, Pakhro & Garjia tourism zones prepared by CTR officials and approved by NTCA.  
| Key policy landmarks                                               | – Ban on Angling in buffer area of CTR in 2012.  
|                                                                     | – Ban on safaris in buffer areas by private elephants.  
|                                                                     | – Discontinuation of elephant rides within CTR.  
|                                                                     | – Ban on private vehicles in CTR.  
|                                                                     | – Registration by CTR of nature guides and vehicles for entry in the tourism zones.  
| Reorganization & reinforcement of territory.                       | – Habitat development to build animal populations.  
|                                                                     | – Installation of signage, establishment of gates and development of road network & visitor amenities.  
|                                                                     | – Regulations for visitor access through gates: limits on number of vehicles.  
|                                                                     | – Enforcement of visitor rules for season, timing, behavior & activities.  
| Rebranding of territorial identity to attract both investment & tourists. | – Rebranding of CTR as having multiple tourism zones with varied experiences.  
|                                                                     | – New name and distinctive identity of parts of core/ buffer area included in the tourism zones.  
|                                                                     | – Publicity of the tourism zones through CTR web site, promotional material and public events.  
|                                                                     | – Branding of the tourism zones by the Tourism Department and the tourism industry.  
| New Actors /Beneficiaries                                           | – Registration of 97 nature guides for access in tourism zones at prescribed rates for CTR.  
|                                                                     | – Registration of additional women nature guides.  
|                                                                     | – Registration of 250 vehicles with drivers for access in tourism zones at prescribed rates for CTR.  
|                                                                     | – Expansion of concessions for canteen & nature shops.  
|                                                                     | – Recycling of funds generated through Tiger Conservation Foundation.  
|                                                                     | – Spinoffs through wildlife tours & private resort development.  

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Zoning of tourism zones in the previously zoned core and buffer areas in Corbett Tiger Reserve and development of private resorts on Corbett Tiger Reserve periphery emerge as interrelated phenomenon of economic reterritorialization producing rents for governmental institutions and external economies for the tourism industry in a specific location that cannot be shifted elsewhere. Tourism zones formed in accordance with the NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 were envisioned to produce tourism as ecotourism, generating an experience of place for visitors and territorial based economic rewards for private resorts. However, in reality it didn’t work out that way. There are various reasons for the failure of ecotourism to take hold in Corbett Tiger Reserve, some had to do with practical considerations other with the underlying assumptions of the model itself. Bluwstein (2017) and Kent (2003) questions the assumption of ecotourism models that assume that land in form of pristine nature is available for tourism activities. This assumption nonetheless proliferates and justifies the movement of thousands of villagers to make way for tiger reserves (Linnell et al. 2005). The creation of inviolate core areas while creating people-free areas in the landscape ostensibly to meet the needs of tigers has led to loss of rights on resources and foreclosed options for cultural survival and livelihoods based on historic practices, all key in achieving any beneficial and authentic community-based tourism, as well as ecotourism if the definition includes attention to these factors. Therefore, the term “inviolate” helps create people- and community-free areas that may subsequently be used to serve the interest of tourism development (and a specific form of tourism – enclavic tourism development). As repeatedly stated in this dissertation, the NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 have legitimized only vehicle based safaris in such areas. The way tourism zones are conceptualized and implemented in India’s tiger reserves including how entry in vehicles is regulated, there is virtually no possibility of local communities coming in direct contact with the tourists inside the tiger reserves except in their service roles as drivers, guides and support staff or employees of the
This research confirms how the notion of “pristine nature” as well as the reality of nature without people have been created in Corbett Tiger Reserve through the processes of territorialization and reterritorialization, and the struggles villagers face in trying to create territories for community-based (ec)tourism.

The wheels were set in motion for tourism to follow a singular path. The strong restrictions placed in the core, i.e., to be inviolate, spread to the buffer zones. Increasingly tourism activities became limited to vehicular tiger safaris, which have become increasingly popular. By restricting what can be done in the buffer zones those without access to vehicles and permits to use them have fewer options for offering vehicular-based safaris and other more close to nature-based tourism—importantly those left out are local communities.

**Further Note on Territorialization and Reterritorialization**

This study uses the conceptual framework of territorialization and reterritorialization to examine zoning practices. In doing so it exposed the schism between the different zoning categories prevalent in tiger reserves: that instead of separating uses for aforementioned benefits, differentiating space into highly restricted core and more multi-functional use buffer areas, zoning mostly led to the latter becoming a tourism zone, and one for the benefit of the more advantaged and well off tourism operators. The resort owners with greater resources than for example community-based tourist providers were able to move their agenda forward despite NCTA tourism guidelines that lay down normative standards for tourism activities (whereas the tiger conservation authorities prepared the tiger conservation plans). While the literature suggests there are often one overarching authority that guides (and in the best of situations monitors) the zoning process, in reality in Corbett Tiger Reserve it was not a unified zoning framework that was followed. Designation and formation of core/buffer and later tourism zones were two highly different processes. The designation of core/buffer zones
in Corbett Tiger Reserve was through legal provisions, and ostensibly for the dual purposes of tiger conservation and human interest trade-offs (local communities as well as visitors to have varied tourism experiences). But in practice in the buffer zone especially, it was a process of territorialization - claiming, bounding and authorizing particular uses over others as legitimate. But I go further than this, by showing how government agencies under the banner of promoting tiger conservation enabled the demarcation of tourism zones through a separate exercise of management planning. I refer to this secondary process as reterritorialization and which I argue largely benefits large-scale resort tourism developers.

This research makes a contribution to tourism geographies and protected area management, especially tiger conservation reserves, by documenting how the political and economic nature of zoning operated over time and across space in one reserve. It opens up the possibilities of research to document the various trajectories that zoning has taken in other locales, how laws and policies are set but altered in the real life of these places, and especially which interests dominate in these decisions and for whose benefit. Detailed attention to the legal and procedural foundation for setting up tiger reserves in India in general, and Corbett Tiger Reserve in particular, was critical in this case to understanding the subsequent designation of tourism zones and their variable impacts and effectiveness.

The study has particular significance for tiger conservation. Cohen (2012) argues that the attitude of planners towards wild tigers is anthropocentric and that decisions regarding how tourism is managed are driven more by human needs than benefits for the tiger. This study confirms that the tourism zones both in core and buffer areas have been formed more to meet human needs, euphemistically called “visitor pressure”, rather than to support tigers. The tourism zone acts as a stage where the performance of tiger sighting is enacted. The proliferation of vehicular tiger safari, as in the case of Corbett, has greater implications than merely limiting visitor pressure in critical tiger habitat or core area as envisaged. The
popularity of tiger safari attracts a new type of visitor (Vasan 2018). These tourists, restricted to moving around in vehicles supervised closely by drivers and guides, become interested in a quick sighting of tigers. They are also restricted to staying in resorts, or lodgings, constructed within particular zones and districts. With the exclusion of other types of tourism that enables tourists to be closer to nature (e.g. angling, trekking), as well able to interact with local communities, this tourism market moves tiger tourism closer to mass tourism and further away from ecotourism (notably with any resemblance to community-based tourism).

**Enclavization**

The third important concept I used in this dissertation to illuminate the creation and impacts of zoning in Corbett Tiger Reserve is enclavization. Since the 1980s, observers have suggested that tourism especially in the global South develops as “enclaves” (Britton 1982; Edensor 2001; Goodwin 2002). The model of enclavice tourism development is based on the concentration of tourism within a confined area. The development and governance of these tourism enclaves are, by definition, externally-driven with high capital investment from large national and multinational corporations, or “powerful interests”. Since enclave tourist destinations are designed to maximize spending within the confines of the enclave, and to limit tourist access to areas outside the enclave, they often create a loss of local ownership and control over tourism spaces, creating a highly commodified “bubble” space for tourists. Enclavie tourism is often perceived as incompatible with sustainable or ecotourism, particularly regarding social and economic sustainability

The research in Corbett Tiger Reserve revealed the role of zoning in creation of enclavie spaces. Zoning has helped extend the enclosure boundaries and transformed Corbett Tiger Reserve for economic production, benefiting both the Indian government and private resorts. The inviolate core area tightened what was permitted in all the protected areas. The
buffer area in practice extended the enclosure. Corbett Tiger Reserve today consists of an archipelago of enclavic tourism zones or concentrated districts. The enclavic tourism zones within Corbett Tiger Reserve are intimately connected with private resorts.

By confining visitors to the enclavic private resort clusters, often owned and operated by outsiders, these enterprises contain and capture the external economies generated by tourists. Benefits to resorts increase by growing in clusters in the villages around Corbett Tiger Reserve. In doing so, this study brings out the close relationship between a particular type of tourism development within and outside the reserve (and hence why I refer often to the Corbett Tiger Reserve Landscape). The promise of a more broadly shared tourism is yet to be seen, i.e., including local communities across the landscape and inclusive of an array of nature conserving activities (i.e., that don’t depend on roads, vehicles and keeping distance from tourists to nature).

**Further Theoretical Significance**

**On Zoning**

Zoning, in spite of being a commonly used tool, has been insufficiently questioned. Thede, Haider and Rutherford (2014) have been especially noteworthy for providing conceptual understanding of zoning in protected areas and insights into this research, especially their discussion on how zoning practices were introduced by Parks Canada in Canada and Project Tiger in India around the same time in the early nineteen seventies. Following the core-buffer zone model, these zoning practices have remained unchanged both in Canada and in India. While they have decreased in importance in Canada, zoning in tiger reserves has found place in national legislation in India. Unlike Canada, India does not have a standardized zoning framework for protected areas, and even in the framework for Project Tiger, unlike the five category zoning adopted in Canadian parks, zoning in tiger reserves has
been limited to principally the core/buffer model. This remains a remnant of the classical rational planning paradigm (Thede, Haider and Rutherford 2014). Based on interviews with employees of Park Canada, Thede, Haider and Rutherford (2014) questioned the effectiveness of zoning practices in the current management planning scenario and raised some serious concerns. Their concerns, relevant to this study, emphasized the coexistence of the historical zoning framework with modern management policies. This raised major challenges “(r)igid definition of zones, fundamental differences between southern and northern parks, and the coexistence of the historical zoning framework with modern management policies” at the national level, and “status quo bias in zoning, purposeful delays in implementing zoning, and the absence of explicit evaluation of park zoning processes and outcomes” were some of the concerns raised at the operational level (Thede, Haider and Rutherford 2014, 626). They concluded the need to make the process more flexible, more inclusive and more site specific. They advised the need to adopt different processes for parks in different regions as a possible means to improve zoning. As most terrestrial parks already had zoning plans in place, they argue the use of formal, quantitative decision support tools for zoning decisions was not possible and the practices appeared rather outdated. Given the situation I described in Corbett, these observations seem appropriate there as well. In both places there is an outdated attachment to core/buffer zone designations which seem to clash with more flexible management philosophies and participatory decision making.

Zoning remains problematic, including buffer zoning. While envisioned as largely a corrective, pressure relief mechanism for core “inviolate” areas, buffer zones have come to take on many of the same restrictions and problems. While in theory they are to enable economic income generation that offsets restrictions from pursuing such activities in the core, the multifunctional activities and benefits to be accrued rarely occur. Again singular activities and a narrow range of beneficiaries seem to result. Regulations from above preclude
flexibility and adaptation to changing conditions. As such “local people will rarely welcome being included inside a zone (Linnel et al. 2005, 174).” Martino (2001) while discussing the problems with the concept of buffer zones points out that even though effective use of buffer zones has become a priority for conservation planners, there is lack of clarity about their goals and confusion about their objectives leading to difficulties in analyzing their success and failure. Buffer zone as contrasted with a core of protected area in that the buffer zone should have less restrictions and greater benefits for resident or resource user communities thereby reducing conflict with conservation. But the evolution of the creation and administration of buffer zone in Corbett Tiger Reserve indicates, over time the human habitation has decreased, restrictions on activities by villagers have increased and that benefits that have flown largely in terms of tourism development have evaded the communities.

Rendering Technical: Implications for Community-Based Tourism

The case study from Corbett Tiger Reserve brings out an illustration of how government schemes often fail to achieve their stated objectives owing to a particular type of approach that deploys knowledge and power. Li (2007) argues that in trying to find solutions to specific problems, governments require a rationale that operates through a path called “rendering technical.” This rationale and pathway frames problems and solutions so as to pull them into the domain of experts and make them amenable to technical fixes without addressing the root causes, or the political conflicts that they entail. My study brings out how in the various guidelines issued by the NTCA resorts are posed as problems amenable to be fixed by technical packages. Interventions are guided by the “technique” of zoning and the “calculations” of carrying capacity. Community-based tourism can be viewed as a technical package that could provide a solution to forging a co-existence problem. However when
viewed in this way, history is ignored as are the politics embedded in the three processes I argue are germane to Corbett: territorialization, reterritorialization and enclavization.

With regard to questions of why resort tourism came to dominate in the Corbett Tiger Reserve Landscape, the implications associated with it as well as what to do with problems this type of tourism development posed, “rendering technical” or taking the problem to the domain of experts has not helped. I suggest that the history of how enclavic tourism development came to be demands an historical understanding, and one which pays close attention to laws, policies, discourses and the politics of how they each have been interpreted and shape material conditions. Neither the problem of excessive resort construction is addressed by the NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 let alone solved nor the solution of community-based tourism visible in the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape. This conclusion is based on a temporally and spatially scalar approach, informed by concepts and lessons learned from tourism and protected area research informed by critical political ecology. The NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 identify resorts as a potential threat for both tiger conservation and communities. Community-based tourism is identified as a potential solution that can check this conflict. Experts roll out a set of instructions in the shape of NTCA Guidelines for developing tourism along these lines, generically and without consideration of the deeply site specific contexts and contestations.

The rendering of the technical is further exemplified in the Tiger Conservation Plan of Corbett Tiger Reserve with detailed prescriptions for zoning and estimation of the carrying capacity of different tourism zones. However, actual experience shows that rather than checking the growth of resorts, the implementation of guidelines in Corbett Tiger Reserve furthers the growth of resorts and mass tourism. This study did not delve into all the reasons for the failure of CBT but rather focused on allocation of space as well as restrictions placed on resource use. Why this happened in this case has to do with the politics of who controlled
how space for tourism is allocated in the form of zones; and furthermore, how that space should be used including by whom. Since the area allocation has continued to be the same both before and after the NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 were formulated and the same set of regulations that control access have strengthened over time, there has been no change in the direction of tourism development. Rather, the speed has accelerated and the scale increased as revealed by the quickening of the pace of development in the last 4-5 years. Zoning and carrying capacity were yet another technique and calculations reflecting particular use of knowledge and power.

That community-based tourism in Corbett Tiger Reserve has not been successful may seem confusing since NTCA has explicitly regarded community-based tourism (CBT) as a priority activity. However, no parallel guidelines have been provided for CBT as in the case of vehicle based safaris in tourism zones or for example, mandatory hiring of local residents or funds and planning assistance to implement CBT in officially approved areas or zones. Essentially, tiger reserve official control over natural resources historically controlled and used by local people is substituted with the promise of monetary benefits, or as “passive recipients of subsidies generated by taxing rich tourists (Karanth and Karanth 2012, 38).” These promised benefits have not been realized. Even if they had, mechanisms are needed to ensure that benefits are distributed in a fair and equitable manner.

Even the few small projects that had managed to obtain a foothold in the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape are threatened with being wiped out by mass tourism. Community-based tourism has failed to expand both within CTR and outside CTR. Within CTR, the buffer zone is gradually being treated as core zone on the grounds on that tiger presence necessitates restrictions on land use, public transport and other livelihood activities. The advantages in terms of rights and proximity to tourism resources such as rich forests and pristine rivers become disadvantages in terms of remoteness from the tourism zone gates.
Outside Corbett Tiger Reserve, the living space is gradually getting squeezed. Thus, activities such as walking village paths, birdwatching, and river-based activities, are all facing objections by authorities, and resort development is pushing them out. The State-led Ramganga Mahaseer Conservation Project in CTR buffer faced an untimely death owing to violations of environmental laws by private resorts who had gained a backdoor entry into this project and subsequent domination by NTCA through the tiger conservation assumptions and discourse. In villages such as Kyari, competition with resort development led to compromise as by Camp Hornbill or forced operators to move to other places such as Sayat by Camp Kyari. In this respect, the lack of clear operational guidelines by NTCA for community-based tourism is clearly a major policy lacunae. This has prevented in both these case communities from participating and gaining from tourism development. The community-based tourism project in Chhoti Haldwani survives through the government led opportunity given in the Jim Corbett museum for the sale of village produce through the souvenir shop.

Bluestein (2017) argues that community-based tourism requires creation of new territories and reshaping of property relations, and are particularly vulnerable to the reterritorialization processes, as communal lands may have weak legal status. The creation of panchayat vans and van panchayats in Uttarakhand are an exception because community controlled forests have a formal basis. But their reality in law does not matter if they are not recognized by local authorities, as is the case in Corbett Tiger Reserve. Analysis of the community-based tourism projects I provide above brought out numerous challenges that such projects faced both in terms of structural changes that would need to occur, as well as in implementation. At the national level these include a lack of definition for what is meant by community-based ecotourism, absence of formal guidelines for CBT as for example their involvement in tiger safaris, and allocation of space in the form of zones for walking-based activities. The failure to provide these guidelines as well as review strongly held notions
(such as the need to prohibit all historic nature-based livelihoods such as swidden, grazing and forest product collecting rather than review and offer management suggestions, and where they exist meaningfully involve van panchayat) have all served to limit CBT. At the center, remains the assumptions and reigning discourses regarding tigers presumed need for inviolate areas and privileging of scientific evidence for management. Emerging scientific studies on the compatibility of tigers with certain degrees of human disturbance needs to be more fully considered and used to inform future tiger conservation efforts.

Zoning emerges at best as a compromise between what is desirable in legal, management and scientific terms and what may be doable based on the past practices, practical realities and contingencies with decisions apparently favoring minimal changes. It must be noted, however, that the fifty odd Indian tiger reserves are in various stages of development and with markedly different sizes, geomorphology, ecological and social conditions. So the findings from Corbett Tiger Reserve may not be amenable to generalizations to other tiger reserves.

**Participation**

Community participation in planning and management has varied during the history of Corbett Tiger Reserve. Prior to 1991, there were no villages inside Corbett Tiger Reserve nor were there any agenda for their participation. Beginning in the 1990s during Phase II with the launch of ecodevelopment programs, stakeholder dialogues were initiated. This was due to influence of a World Bank aided Forestry Project with requirements for the ecodevelopment program and preparation of microplans. However, once the external funding dwindled, the program has fallen into apathy. During Phase III, the NTCA guidelines make provisions for ecodevelopment through the Tiger Conservation Foundation. However, the findings indicate that participatory activities initiated earlier have fallen into disuse.
Contribution to Academic Literature

This study used concepts from a range of disciplines (e.g. geography, tourism, political ecology) to analyze territorial approaches in protected areas, specifically through a historical analysis of zoning in Corbett Tiger Reserve over a five decade period. This analysis was aided considerably by the guiding concepts of territorialization and reterritorialization from political ecology and the concept of tourism enclaves from tourism studies. They alerted me to big trends, components of processes to examine, and intersections that improved my investigation into the history of creation and effects of zoning, notably their relationship with enclavistic resort development. My study contributes to critical literature on protected areas by bringing in the notion of enclaves and enclavistic tourism development, and the role zoning especially has played. It provides rich detail on how zoning laws and policies led to core/buffer zones and of tourism zones designation in Corbett Tiger Reserve. In particular it has opened the window to examine enclavization of tiger reserves and its relationship with enclavistic resort development. By doing so it extends this lens of enclavization to the literature on protected areas.

The protected area management literature – outside those taking a critical political ecology approach – continue to defend the cause of zoning as a valuable tool and technique to limit negative visitor impacts and reconcile conservation with visitor use (Eagles et al. 2002; Job et al. 2017; World Bank 2020). The instrumental and operational benefits of forming and using zones are applauded by these protected area management (and tourism) planners for ecological considerations through maximization of benefits for preservation and limiting of negative impacts. However, many such as Drumm et al. (2005) continue to decline to address the political and socio-economic consequences of forming tourism and ecotourism zones themselves and the differential economic benefits and costs associated with them. They fail to discuss the important complexities as well as choices involved in determining zone
boundaries and what are considered legitimate activities. This study adds to critiques of zoning in the literature (Drumm et al.; Kent 2003; Mason 2013; Read 2016; 2005; Shen et al. 2020). This study is one of the first studies to not only carry out an analysis of the evolution of the concept of zoning in a particular place but also its deployment with impacts. Instead of the fulfilment of promises of “efficiency and equity,” this research brings out that zoning is not just another protected area management technique but rather a highly political process that imposes costs for some and benefits for others. The results show how such unequal benefits are linked to the enclavistic manner in which tourism zones in Corbett Tiger Reserve and the private resorts developed, and their common design to minimize interactions between tourists and local communities. Most importantly, the study adds to the call by Thede, Haider and Rutherford (2014) and Xu (2016) for critically reviewing zoning practices, especially the conflict between top-down biological expert-driven zoning approaches and efforts to bring in other stakeholders with different knowledge systems and values in planning and more equitable distribution of benefits. These authors decry zoning approaches as outdated as they are based on historical planning frameworks, have a status quo bias, and fail to accommodate more adaptive collaborative, participatory approaches.

A summary of the specific contributions of this research to academic literatures are the following. Firstly, it contributes to critical political ecological studies on protected areas by bringing out the social and political impacts of core/buffer zoning as practiced in the context of large carnivore conservation. Protected Areas has been long regarded as enclosures (Neumann, 1999). The related concepts of “internal territorialization” in political ecological studies and “reterritorialization” in political economy studies at regional scale were used to investigate impact of zones specially buffer zones on tigers and local communities. In doing so, this study makes a contribution by bringing out the inherently political and economic natures of zoning—a foundational approach in protected area management. It opens up an
arena for future studies to go deeper into protected area management approaches to investigate the variable use of zoning inside protected areas; both their underlying assumptions and how they are implemented in practice. Hazbun (2004), Hipwell (2007) and Xie (2015) speak about territorialization, deterritorialization and reterritorialization as linear processes that may move both forward and backwards. This research brings out how territorialization and reterritorialization can occur simultaneously in the zoning of core/buffer areas and tourism zones respectively in conjunction aiding each other.

Secondly, it adds to the literature in tourism geographies. Protected Areas have been regarded as enclaves (Hannam 2004; Kroeker-Maus 2014). Authors have followed how the process of internal territorialization helps in reorganizing spatial production and the relationship between state led internal territorialization and private capital accumulation (Corson 2011; Adam, Hodge and Sandbrook 2013). In addition, there are several studies on how populated landscapes have been reconstructed and de/reterritorialized as natural and virgin for ecotourism production (Bluwstein 2017). Authors have held that the literature on territorialization and protected areas and theorization of protected areas as enclaves intersect with each other (Kroeker-Maus 2014). However, protected areas studies have yet to be sufficiently factored in the analysis of tourist enclaves nor have the connection of protected areas to other enclavistic tourist sites, particularly to spaces of financial and discursive power which construct and regulate enclavistic spaces, been studied (Kroeker-Maus 2014). My research covers this gap by and its relationship with enclavistic resort development in and around Corbett Tiger Reserve by looking at the relationship between tourism zones and growth of private resorts. My study on the Corbett Tiger Reserve extends this lens of enclavization in the protected areas by (a) examining the role of core zones and of tourism zones in enclavization of tiger reserves and (b) looking at the relationship between tourism zones and growth of private resorts. In doing so it demonstrates the tourism zones in CTR.
and the resorts outside aid in the growth of each other to produce uneven forms of development.

Lastly, my work contributes to a growing critical political ecology and environmental history. My literature review acknowledges (and relies heavily) on such renown ecological history of India scholars notably Gadgil and Guha (1992). It needs to be noted that much of the writing on environmental history of India prior to India’s independence in 1947 is focused on forests, hunting, water and the city. There is no equivalent work on any Indian national park focused on tourism that studies tourism during the colonial period in any depth. This study is a major contribution to fill that gap. Likewise, issues of tourism and livelihoods have not been treated seriously or in depth in literature on communities and conservation (Mawdsley, Mehra and Beazley 2009). This study brings out how livelihood issues entangle with tourism and thus fills this gap. It should also be noted that the application of critical political ecology to understanding tiger reserves in India is a relatively new and lively literature (e.g., Kabra 2019; Rai and Madegowda 2017; Menon and Rai 2019; Rai et. al., 2019), and to examining tourism in Corbett Tiger Reserve in particular (Pandya 2022; Simlai 2022). It is particularly exciting literature as it is increasingly written by Indian scholars ourselves.

**Further Research**

**Effectiveness of Core/Buffer Zoning**

There has yet to be a serious evaluation of the core/buffer zoning in tiger reserves. Government of India is planning a new process for preparation of wildlife management plans. Qualitative study of perceptions about core buffer zoning in different stakeholders will bring out the challenges in the concept and provide valuable inputs in the management planning design.
Zone-wise Monitoring of Tiger Distribution

One of the promised benefits of zoning is for monitoring programs. The data in the All-India Tiger Estimation exercise is confined to estimating tiger numbers for the tiger reserves and at regional scale. The data needs to be analyzed at zone level separately for core and buffer areas as both the territories differ in their legal basis, have divergent objectives and have a separate identity. Such an analysis will reveal the zone wise results of the management practices and trends in the tiger population. It is only then that the successes and failures of buffer area zoning can be assessed. This will aid in assessment and suitable modifications in zoning in Corbett Tiger Reserve as well as other tiger reserves.

Role of Panchayat Van in Tiger Conservation

Zoning within tiger reserves has been based on the assumption that exclusion from human presence and extractive activities in particular is required for critical tiger habitat for breeding of tigers. Yet there were some suggestion that tigers are present in areas where human activity has occurred, over time and even more recently. As a result, the true role of human activities that coexisted with tigers need to be further studied. In addition to what type of activities are consistent if not necessary to create if not maintain tiger habitat, greater attention to the positive role panchayat van play in maintaining tiger habitat and local range of tiger distribution and as stepping stones for dispersal demand research attention. Future research could compare the ecological conditions between tiger reserve core, buffer areas and panchayat van. Further ecological studies of panchayat van in CTR landscape will help in the identification and prioritization of those small forest patches critical for maintaining tiger distribution and movement and upgrading the management in these patches for long-term tiger conservation. It could lead to recommendations for revising zoning regulations, as well as increases in panchayat vans for ecological benefits (as well as socio-economic and
political reasons). Studies that compare tiger bearing forests in *panchayat van* and buffer area of CTR can indicate the ecological differences (or similarities) between these two kinds of territories. Such research on the ecological and sociological status of the *panchayat van* can lead to development of plans for their integration in landscape-level planning, tiger conservation and tourism development. The research has brought out the stark non-inclusion of *panchayat van* in the reterritorialization for tourism development. Whether more focused attention on the historic to present use and local management of these community territories could lead to their long-term protection from encroachment from resort tourism development, provision of an alternative more ecotouristic and community-wide model, aid in biodiversity conservation and help address some of the challenges in livelihoods, including tourism, are important topics for future research. Such research has the potential to benefit both tigers and people.

**Review of Tourism Guidelines**

This study has significant findings on the impact of the implementation of a policy – the “NTCA Guidelines for Tourism in and around protected areas” at a specific site, namely Corbett Tiger Reserve. This research brought out several ambiguities and discrepancies in the National Tiger Conservation Authorities’ Guidelines for Tourism in and Around Tiger Reserves issued in 2012, particularly in relation to allocation of space for tourism, setting of priorities of tourism activities and practices. Tourism in the buffer area needs to be conceptually and in practice differentiated from the core area. There is a need to clarify differentiation between tourism and ecotourism, define how different communities existing and using a landscape, review the mechanism of providing tourism benefits to the communities and reconsider prescriptions for tourism zoning in buffer area. Efforts to glean the impact of the tourism guidelines in other tiger reserves to understand patterns in zoning
and bring out variations are necessary. There is need for a policy evaluation study for the impact of the NTCA Tourism Guidelines 2012 on other tiger reserves in India.

**Collaboration at Regional Scale**

The role of protected area zoning in regional economic development can be probed further. The research has revealed that both declarations of protected areas as tiger reserves and the creation of new tourism zones within tiger reserves have profound economic implications. Changes in land ownership in the adjoining landscape of the tiger reserve both before and after the declaration of tiger reserve and/or after the creation of new tourism zones need to be investigated for deepening understanding of the linkages between zoning and real estate development.
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Annexure 1 Table: List of “Chaks” located in the Corbett Tiger Reserve Buffer Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Range</th>
<th>S.N.</th>
<th>Name of Chak</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Palain</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Gidwal</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Majhola</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Ghasiyon ka gaja</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Amlesa</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Dhaaniya</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Bintalla</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Kalet</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Sukoli</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Niganaa</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Siddhpur</td>
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<td></td>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Rai Sera</td>
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<td></td>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Ramisera</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Dabru</td>
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<td></td>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Kandlai</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Kanda</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Tairiya Talla</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Tairiya Malla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Chauragon Lagga Paand</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Kaniyaaru Lagga Paand</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Paand</td>
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<td></td>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Barkhet Tok</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Basusera</td>
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<td></td>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Khadrasi</td>
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<td></td>
<td>24.</td>
<td>Ghiroli</td>
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<td></td>
<td>25.</td>
<td>Barkot</td>
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<td></td>
<td>26.</td>
<td>Khatiya Tok</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27.</td>
<td>Bhakua Malla</td>
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<td></td>
<td>28.</td>
<td>Bhakua Talla</td>
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<td></td>
<td>29.</td>
<td>Jhudungoo</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30.</td>
<td>Reetha Paatal Tok</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31.</td>
<td>Baraa Thar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>32.</td>
<td>Kumbhiyasain- I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>33.</td>
<td>Kumbhiyasain- II</td>
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<td></td>
<td>34.</td>
<td>Kumbhiyasain- III</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35.</td>
<td>Kumbhiyasain- IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36.</td>
<td>Nagaroo Malla Lagga Paand</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>37.</td>
<td>Nagaroo Talla Lagga Paand</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mandal</td>
<td>38.</td>
<td>Basaani</td>
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<td></td>
<td>39.</td>
<td>Kalakhand</td>
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<td></td>
<td>40.</td>
<td>Jamoon</td>
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<td></td>
<td>41.</td>
<td>Banaasi</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>42.</td>
<td>Baloli</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>43.</td>
<td>Ghiroauli</td>
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<td></td>
<td>44.</td>
<td>Badghat</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>45.</td>
<td>Jameria-I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>46.</td>
<td>Jameria-II</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Opening:
1. Explain the purpose of the Case Study.
2. Explain anonymity-review and sign consent form.
3. Ask if I may record, remind them that I will be jotting brief notes.
4. Explain that I want to see Corbett Tiger Reserve from the perspective of someone who has had a long and deep relationship with Corbett Tiger Reserve.
5. Ask that they talk to me as if I were a researcher who did not know much about Corbett Tiger Reserve.
6. Explain how data will be used
   - for my dissertation.
   - as an academic paper.
   - for possible presentation/publication.
   - inform that they will have a chance to read and comment on what I’ve written about them.

Interview Guide
1. In your opinion, the Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape includes which places? (Tourism Spaces in Protected Areas)
2. How are Tourism Zones created in Corbett Tiger Reserve?
3. What changes have occurred in the tourism zones?
4. Who benefits from the tourism zones? (Mass Tourism):
5. Why the growth of resorts in Corbett landscape continues unabated?
6. How have the Guidelines on Tourism in and around Tiger Reserves issued by the National Tiger Conservation Authority in 2012 affected developments around Corbett?
7. Tell me something about the recently formed Corbett Tiger Reserve Foundation and its activities? (Villagers)
8. What is the relationship between villagers and tourism in Corbett landscape?
9. Tell me something about the panchayat vans (village forests) in Corbett Tiger Reserve landscape?
10. I would like to know about your thoughts on Community based tourism in and around Corbett Tiger Reserve?

Closing
1. Thank the interviewees for their time.
2. Explain again how it has been valuable.
3. Ask if I can contact them again for further information/clarification.
4. Ask one last question: What else do you think it’s important for me to know?
5. Ask what questions they have for me?
Annexure III  Consultation Methodology for Focus Group Discussion/ Mapping

A total of 11 consultations/ mapping exercises will be organized in tourism zones and van panchayat villages/CBT villages. Consultations/ mapping exercises will be organized for stakeholder focus groups of 6-8 key informants. Each consultation will be of 4 hours (including breaks).

The purpose of the consultations will be to obtain participants view on how space has been allocated for tourism in the conservation landscape, how space has been appropriated for tourism by different groups, how tourism spaces have been transformed with time, how tourism spaces are lined with each other and who benefits from tourism. The consultations will lead to the identification of the site-specific conflicts associated with both the allocation and appropriation of space.

All consultations will follow a predefined process that will lead to documentation of the production and transformation of tourism spaces, beneficiaries from tourism development and associated conflicts. The steps in the consultation would include (a) an introduction to the Corbett landscape, consultation outline, process, (b) Mapping of tourism spaces on landscape map (c) creation of local tourism space map (d) participatory exercises- brainstorming, time line, trends, mobility maps, institutional maps (e) identification of conflicts (f) Conclusion.

Each consultation will produce outputs (to be included in the consultation report): Corbett landscape map with demarcation of tourism space boundaries, access points, spatial distribution of tourism activities, ownership and conflicts in land use; trends in tourism activities; list of attractions, list of key groups of tourist activities, participant list, photographs, audio recording of the process.

The materials needed would include short one-page summary in English and Hindi of concept, poster version of one page summary, one large map of Corbett landscape (5 feet X 3 feet?) for each consultation, stationery for consultations and map making/displaying the map (pins, tape, market pens).
Sample Questions

1. What is the extent of the Corbett landscape for tourism development and tiger conservation?
2. What are the tourism spaces in the Corbett landscape?
3. How are the tourism spaces used by the visitors?
4. How are tourism spaces linked to one another?
5. Who benefits from tourism spaces and how?
6. How have tourism spaces in Corbett landscape transformed over time?
7. Where and What are the major conflicts between villagers and tourism spaces?
8. Where and what are major conflicts between wild tigers and the tourism spaces within Corbett landscape affect?
9. Are there places/spaces you used to go that now you don't or can't due to tourism?
10.
Annexure IV Survey form for Van Panchayat of Corbett Landscape

a. General Information about Van Panchayat/Panchayat Van

1- Name of van panchayat..................................Block.................................Tehsil..........................Distt. .......................

2- Name of van panchayat Sarpanch................................................................. Mob. No. .........................

3- Original constitution date of van panchayat..........................Date of recent election............................

4- Total population of van panchayat/village........................................................................

5- No. of members in management committe- Female ☐ Male ☐ Total ☐

6- Microplan of van panchayat is prepared- Yes ☐ No ☐

7- How van panchayat was constituted- brief information


8- Describe the major problems of van panchayat...................................................................

b. Panchayat van / wildlife

9- Area of panchayat van (in ha)


10- Legal Status of Panchayat van land on which it formed-

1- Reserve forest ☐ 2- civil soyam forest ☐ 3- village forest land ☐

11- Type of panchayat van- Sal ☐ Pine ☐ Mixed ☐ other ☐

12- Map of panchayat van is available- Yes ☐ No ☐

13- Panchayat van is contiguous with reserve forest- Yes ☐ No ☐

14- Wildlife in panchayat van- Tiger ☐ Elephant ☐ Deer ☐ other ☐
c- Income/expenditure

15- Van panchayat has bank account- Yes ☐ No ☐ available amount..................(inRs.) ☐ ☐

16- Has audit been done of the available amount to van panchayat? Yes ☐ No ☐

17- If yes, then by whom ...........................................if no, then since when .........................................................

d- Schemes

18- In van panchayat, under which scheme of forest department work is going on and how much amount has been received.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Scheme</th>
<th>Implementing Status</th>
<th>Amount Received</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAMPA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JICA</td>
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<tr>
<td>SFDA</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>State Sector</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

19- Whether any development work is being done by any NGO in Panchayat van? Yes ☐ No ☐

20- If yes, then from which scheme and department.................................................................

21- Is there any water conservation work being done in panchayat van? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, then name of the scheme........................................................................................................

22- Whether any afforestation work is being done in panchayat van? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, then name of the scheme........................................................................................................
e. Livelihood

23- Source of revenue is available in the Van panchayat - Yes ☐  No ☐
24- Collection of resin- Yes ☐  No ☐
If yes, then details of revenue received from collection of resin..........................................................
25- Collection of medicinal plants- Yes ☐  No ☐
If yes, then details of revenue received from medicinal plants..........................................................
26- Use of timber wood- Yes ☐  No ☐
If yes, then details of revenue received from medicinal plants
...................................................................................................................

f. Panchayat Van Management

27- Any guard is appointed for the security of panchayat van- Yes ☐  No ☐
28- If not, then Since

....................................................................................................................
29- Fire watcher is available for the security of Panchayat van - Yes ☐  ☐  No ☐
30- Number of meeting of general assembly of van panchayat (Jan. 2017 to May 2018)..............
31- Number of meeting of van panchayat management committe (Jan. 2017 to May 2018).............
32- Attendance level in the meeting of van panchayat.................................................................
33- Van panchayat secretary/forest guard is participating in the meeting of the van panchayat-
    Yes ☐  No ☐
34- Number of forest crime recorded in panchayat Van during jan. 2017 to may 2018...............
35- Number of fine imposed for the recorded forest crimes.................................
36- Details of the main forest crime in panchayat van...........................................
37- Is there any case of encroachment on Panhayat Van Lands? Yes □ No. □
38- Details of land transfer for non forestry work.............................................
39- Details of the work done for wildlife management.....................................

**g- Tourism**

40- Is there any camp or resort near your panchayat van on the land of your van Panchayat?
   Yes □ No □
41- Do the tourists Visit on panchayat van? Yes □ No □
   If yes, then describe the activities........................................................................
42- Is there any encroachment on panchayat van lands? Yes □ No □
43- Benefits from tourism........................................................................................................
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44- Is there a conflict between panchayat van and tourism? Yes □ No □
45- Number of villagers associated with tourism.....................................................
46- Proposals or Suggestions for nature education/eco tourism on van panchayat land........
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Date:-