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Amit Verma [00:00:10] I think the national perspective is little different than what we have in our state and in India.

Amit Verma [00:00:16] Of course national parks play a very important role in conserving the genetic diversity and many places they are the only islands. If you would look (unintelligible) and other places. They are planned out on all sides... The Uttarakhand is a state where we have 70 percent of land under forest cover so national parks do provide sanctuaries for animals to breed. But there's little if there is no forest for which is serving as a habitat for the animals to live in. So we have presence of tiger all across the Uttarakhand area. Even if the area is under national park or not it does not matter as much. In our state there are reservation and corridor areas which are serving equally important service and probably needs to be conserved same as the national parks. I think it's still. Different paradigms in the way we look at wildlife. Which is more worship here in India It is used as a commodity in the US. The way the hunters perceive the wildlife in US is very different than we look at wildlife in India. The consumptive use of wildlife is not typical in India. To say that hunting was not permitted is not right. Most of the areas that are now national parks in prior centuries were once hunting lodges. For Kings or whatever. Even in British times they are segregated as hunting Lodges. So hunting used to happen here also. But right now we've moved towards a paradigm of conservation. Probably the number fell too low and we didn't want to take any risk. So we wanted to really not kill any animal at all. The genetic diversity is really at stake. And. Angling is something of a catch and release thing is which was started in Corbett sometime back. They ran into some legal problems it was stopped because of that. I do not think in India it will go very well the hunting and angling thing using hunting and angling as a basis for conserving nature I do not think it will go very well.

Amit Verma [00:02:38] Yes of course yeah. When we talk about Environmental Protection Act anything inside the National Park is a protected area we consider everything and everything is protected inside so wildlife includes our fish and butterflies everything is protected. Any type of flora or fauna found there.

Amit Verma [00:03:07] In the state where the Ganges river flows through Work is being done in the catchment area so that pollution stops in the beginning and doesn't really propagate. The pollution going into the river downstream where we have in dams...a lot of effort But there is always effort. They do have sewage treatment plants and other cleansing plants installed at the factories but they may not be effective. And even in their discharge there is always some pollution. And when you have that adding up over a few hundred kilometers then it adds up to something substantial. As far the rivers coming into our park is concerned The Ramnagar is the most important river which comes in we do have additional rivers we do not have any industrial interference upstream most of the interference is downstream or because of the road construction and other things are debris associated to them. So either of them doesn't affect the wildlife to much significantly. I mean the those things are self cleaning. Once the water comes to the Kalagarh Dam and there is alot of fish stock there and that gets consumed. So it's not a very big challenge for us. There are certain areas where in here like Uttarakhand Bird Sanctuary the river starts in the park itself. So the most of the pollution happens downstream.

Amit Verma [00:04:36] Yeah I mean if in effect (unintelligible) then population doesn't play a significant role. Now because we have Very very established methods of ensuring that the park is left alone. There's not many. Not many people going say that park even for their

daily needs. So populations not a big threat. But of course the effects of climate change. I mean we're just starting to see those effects now in 2010 devastating floods in Uttarakhand which have never been seen before. We have been seeing that even this year. We have not had rains till it is only last week after first rainfall which is also early. So we expect very strong forest fires in those summers this season because there is absolutely no moisture in there. So we are starting to see those effects but it's always difficult to pinpoint and say weather it is climate change or not. But of course the temperatures are rising and everything is a problem. Tourism also is a problem in the sense that we have increased number tourist from a one point five lacs in 2005 to 2.5 lacs in 2015. So last ten years we had an increase of one lac tourist which is quite a bit for this park and they are probably considering the same zone we have had new zones open, Normally be used to open 15 November to July 15 or 15 June sorry. But now they are open all year even the rains when we expect the tigers to breed and have mating time. Those times are getting disturbed. There are recent incidents of man and animal conflicts which is happening in the Southern reaches of the park. Probably related to extensive tourism happening in those areas. So we need to have a proper study on that. We need to take a look at this and take appropriate management decisions based on the study.

Amit Verma [00:06:41] Yeah there is a carrying capacity but the carrying capacity is hard. It is applied only in the core areas of the park. It is actually mandated by the supreme court the carrying capacity. And that applies only in the National Park areas. The tiger reserve is a subset of national park and sanctuary which is on the otherside of the lake. And beyond that are buffer areas of the park. So we have had deliberate increase in the buffer areas but not in the core area. We definitely had exceeding that. I mean we. Need to not really exceeding that but we need to manage it well in this sense we need to distribute well everybody wants to to the famous place and everybody wants (unintelligible) but other areas are equally good. on the other side of the park but probably it's also the stake of tourism industry. They have invested in their hotels here. They like to bring the tourist here because they have already invested money in that. So alot of things come into play. And local employment issues. And some people buy invest in vehicles in anticipation of summer employment now they are invested and they have to pay a loan so they like to bring in tourist and that creates pressure to open certain zones and increase the numbers although we have a tiger management plan which has been approved by NDC and all the numbers are limited by that so we have a limited number of gypseys (unintelligible) and that has been approved by all authorities which are there to approve it. So we don't exceed that number at any time. So we have a really sacrosanct number of 250 Gypsy but we don't exceed that at any cost. Which is not a high number it is just about redistributing it well.

Amit Verma [00:08:44] Yeah I mean just this thing need needs to be done. I think we are not really there to get in there. doesn't really concern wildlife too much I would like to have more emphasis on this approach. But we will see. Of course the people who are into the business of forestry make (unintelligible). We do emphasize this point a lot so people who are managing the area never even aware of the fact What we're seeing even the people in well in the tourism industry like the gypsy operators. and the light operators and the hotel. They are also aware of it. But for them it is also a way of earning money and they also need to find a living the whole thing so they have their own compulsions. I would say that they do it knowingly or unknowingly but they have different compulations and within those compulsions, I think they are all for conservation. I don't see anti-conservation people who at least those in at least some of those people who have more information the perspective of the villagers might be a little different. Who are At the receiving end of management

conflicts and things They would not like to see tigers or leopards hurting their animals or themselves. So they have a different perspective. (unintelligible) They try to do that.

Amit Verma [00:10:11] Certain parts they do. We also take in from them with certain things which we are lacking. We like to coordinate. But it's the dependency is not very high. If you compare it with Nepal (unintelligible) where almost everything is done by NGO's in comparison with India I think we are significantly simpler.

Amit Verma [00:10:24] Yes same time the population increase in the cities and the areas near to the place. I would say there has been an increase which has probably adversely affected. If you see the dynamics of the population animals and supporting animals it has also increased. So as conservation principles and objectivity of Managing the park is concerned. I think that this is good because a number of tigers have in this area already good. So we are mostly 70 tigers which is the highest density anywhere in the world. So we are successful and doing the job very well no doubt. But there are things out of our control like climate change and pollution and population all those things outside the park.

Amit Verma [00:11:23] Yes I think it is important to feel the nature. A person gets involved in conservation only when they want to save it. And that can happen when you are one to one with nature. I think in US you have parks and can go in nature I think we need to do that type of thing to be one with nature and then try to conserve it.