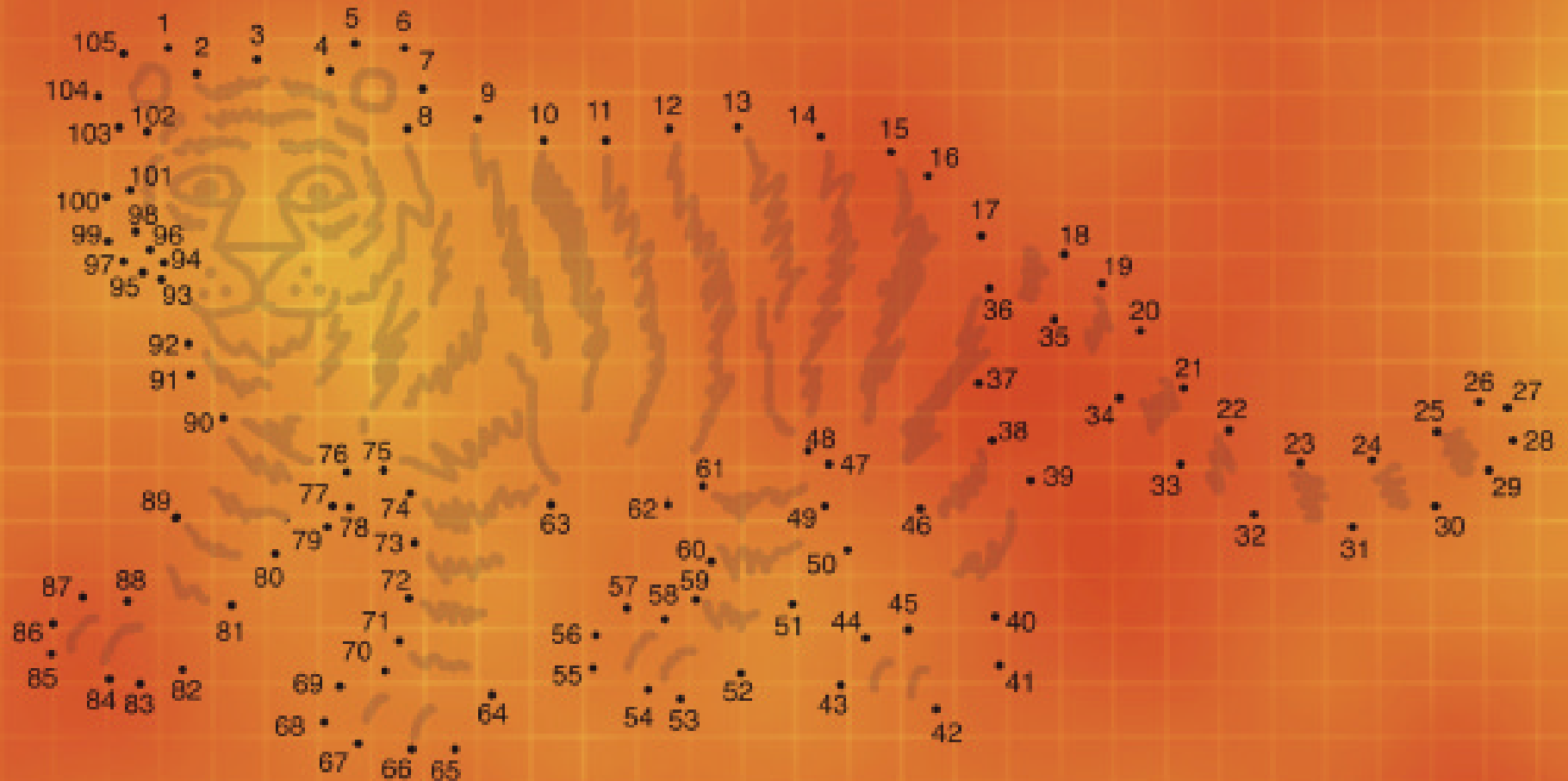


# The report of the Tiger Task Force

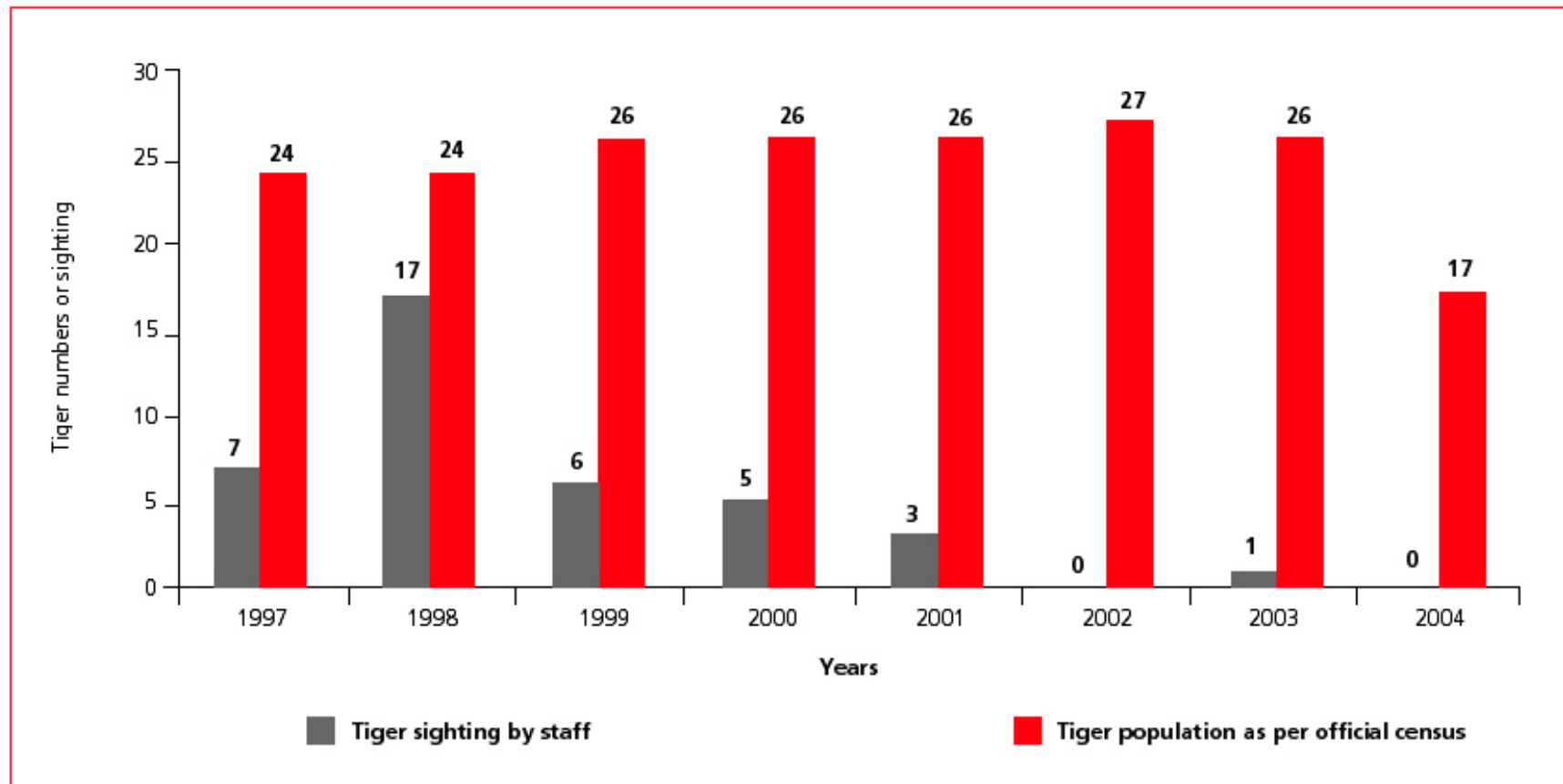


# Assessment: What went wrong in Sariska

- Breakdown in internal management;
- Increased 'commercial poaching' with links with organised network
- Faulty and negligent tiger census – tigers in books, not on ground;

# Assessment: What went wrong in Sariska

TIGER POPULATION AND SIGHTINGS IN SARISKA FROM JANUARY 1997 TO JULY 2004



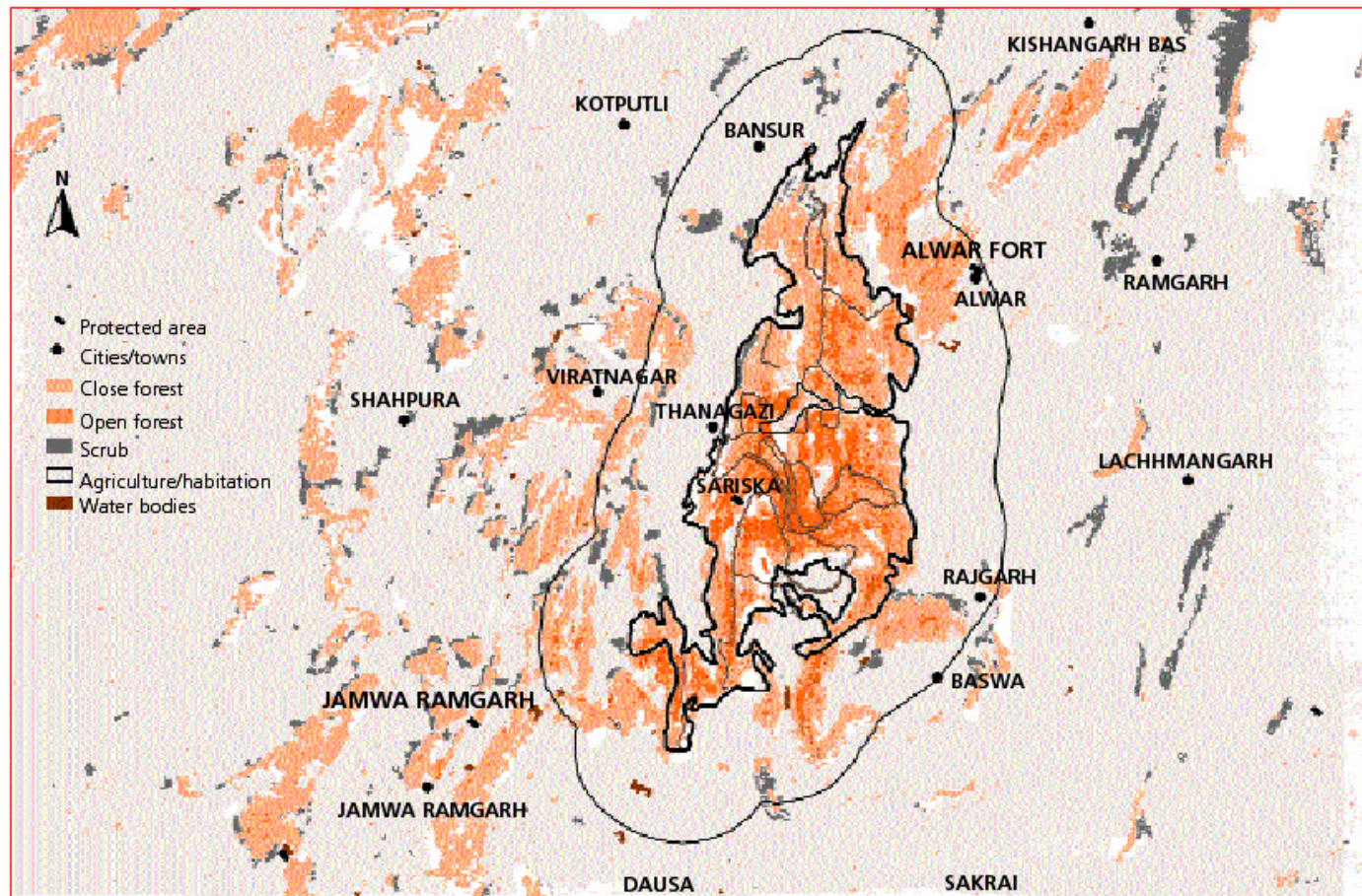
Source: WII 2005, Assessment of status of tiger in Sariska tiger reserve, Rajasthan, Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun

# Sariska: A breakdown

- Breakdown in relationships with people.  
11 villages in core. 12 more in reserve.  
One relocated. Came back.
- Huge number of people living in fringe –  
dependent on park for grazing and firewood.
- Double jeopardy for tiger: cannot move out  
beyond park because habitat has shrunk,  
people move in because their habitat has  
shrunk.

# Double jeopardy for tiger

## BROAD VEGETATION TYPES OF SARISKA TIGER RESERVE AND ITS CONNECTIVITY WITH NEIGHBOURING FORESTS



Source: WII 2005, Assessment of status of tiger in Sariska tiger reserve, Rajasthan, Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun

# Islands of conservation under threat

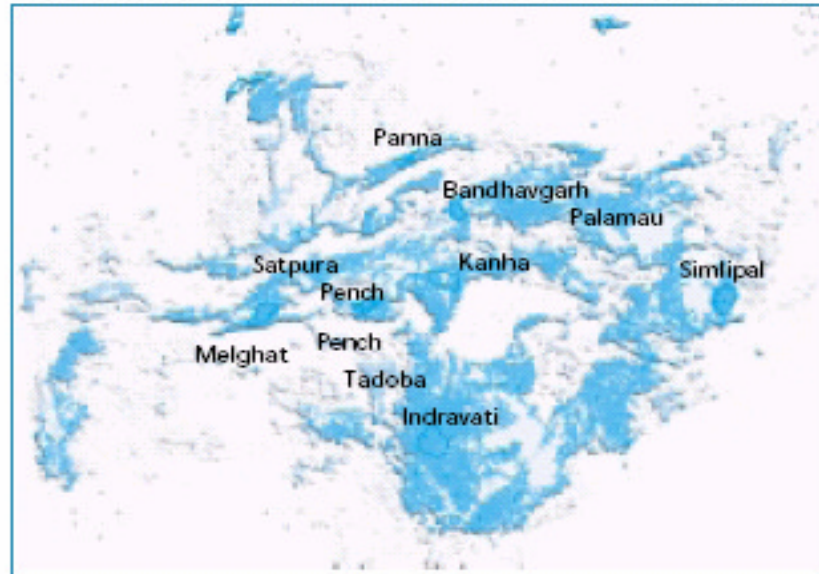
- Not every reserve is in Sariska-type crisis.
- But protection of tigers happening **against all odds.**
- Under threat from outside pressures – mining, hydroelectric power, roads, etc
- Under siege from within – people who have been denied the benefits of conservation.
- A war within. A war on conservation. We are losing bit by bit.



# Islands of conservation under threat

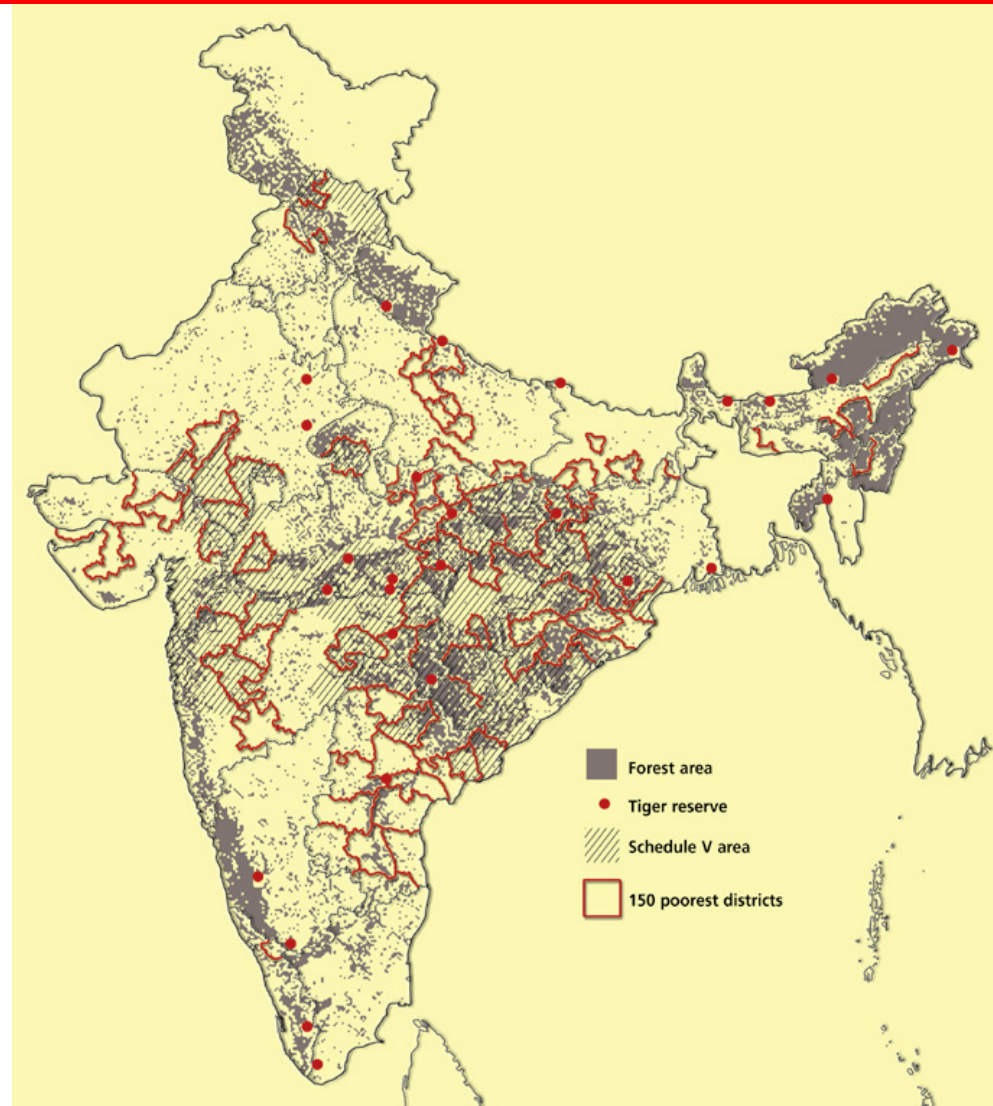
- Half our tigers roam outside the reserves.
- If forests are gone, tigers habitat is gone..
- The agenda is forests

CENTRAL INDIA: FORESTS AND TIGER RESERVES



Source: Project Tiger directorate

# Poorest people in richest land



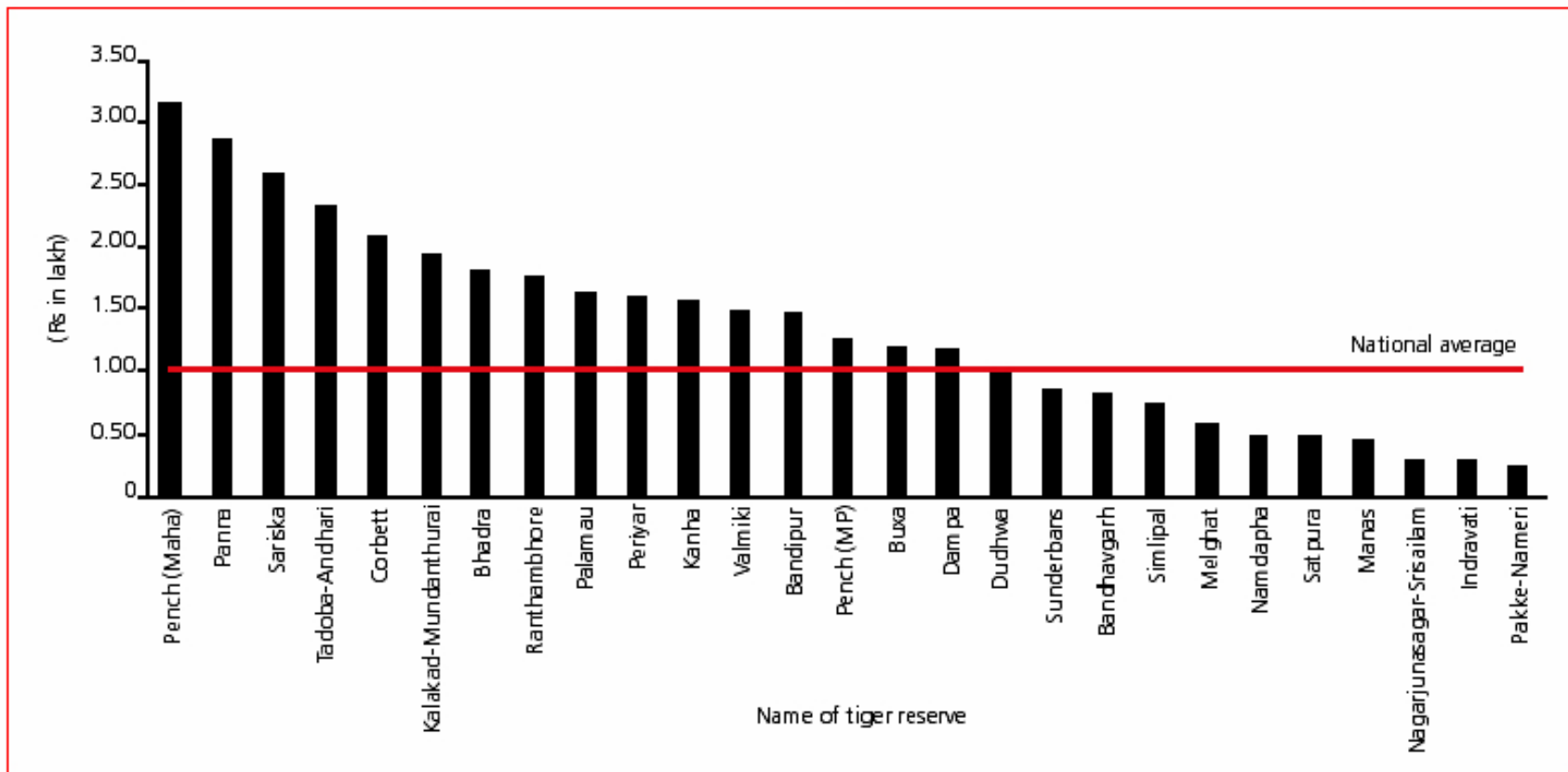


# No quick-fix solution possible

- The current approach of guns-guards-fences does not simply work.
- Sariska: spent Rs 1 crore per tiger in 25 years. Rest of country spent Rs 24 lakh per tiger.
- Ranthambhore: most heavily guarded. Still tigers gone. Also one of highest investment in reserves.

# Spending per sq km

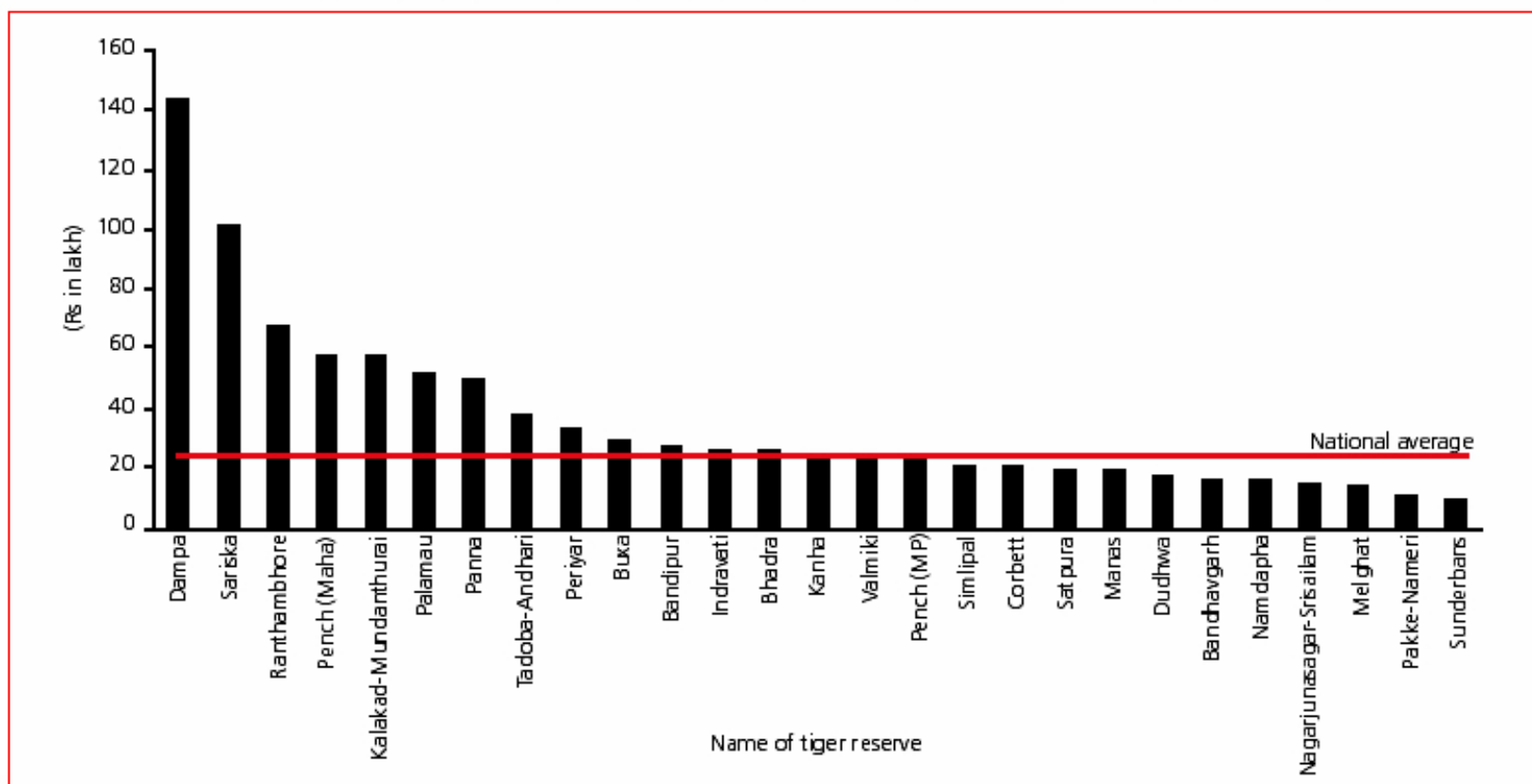
ALLOCATION OF FUNDS TO TIGER RESERVES PER SQUARE KILOMETRE FROM INCEPTION TO 2004-2005



Source: Project Tiger directorate

# Spending per tiger

ALLOCATION OF FUNDS TO TIGER RESERVES PER TIGER FROM INCEPTION TO 2004-2005



Source: Project Tiger directorate

# The reform agenda: Institutions

- Need high level political involvement to direct and guide project and build interest of all.
1. Revitalise National Board for Wildlife/Request the Prime Minister to chair the steering committee of Project Tiger;
  2. Involve Parliament through annual report of independent audit of parks;
  3. Set up steering committee of Project Tiger in tiger-range states, with CM as chair.

# Institutions: administrative

Need autonomous institutions to manage the programme and work with states.

- Convert Project Tiger directorate into statutory authority;
- Give director, Project Tiger, delegated powers under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 to work with states more effectively;
- Ensure field directors, chief wildlife wardens have track record in conservation. Approval from Project Tiger a must.

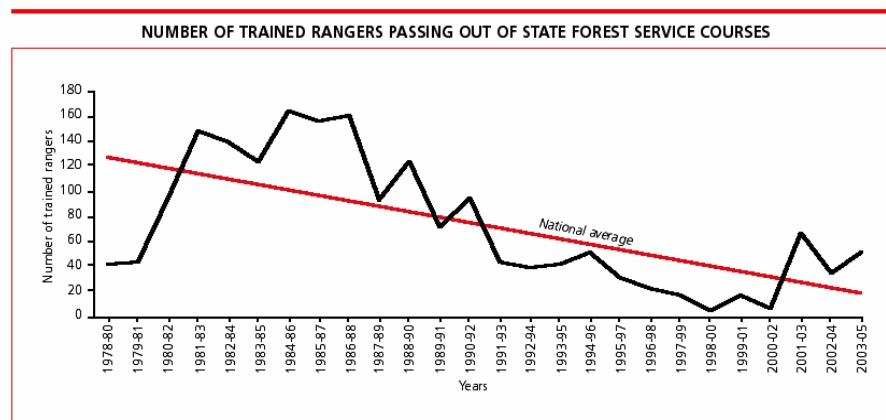
# Institutions: Independent audit for public scrutiny

- Rating of reserves must be used:
  - a. To build reputational advantage of state leaders in tiger conservation;
  - b. To make financial allocation to reserves so that there is incentive and disincentive for performance;
  - c. To benchmark the change needed. To identify the work done.



# Institutions: need competence

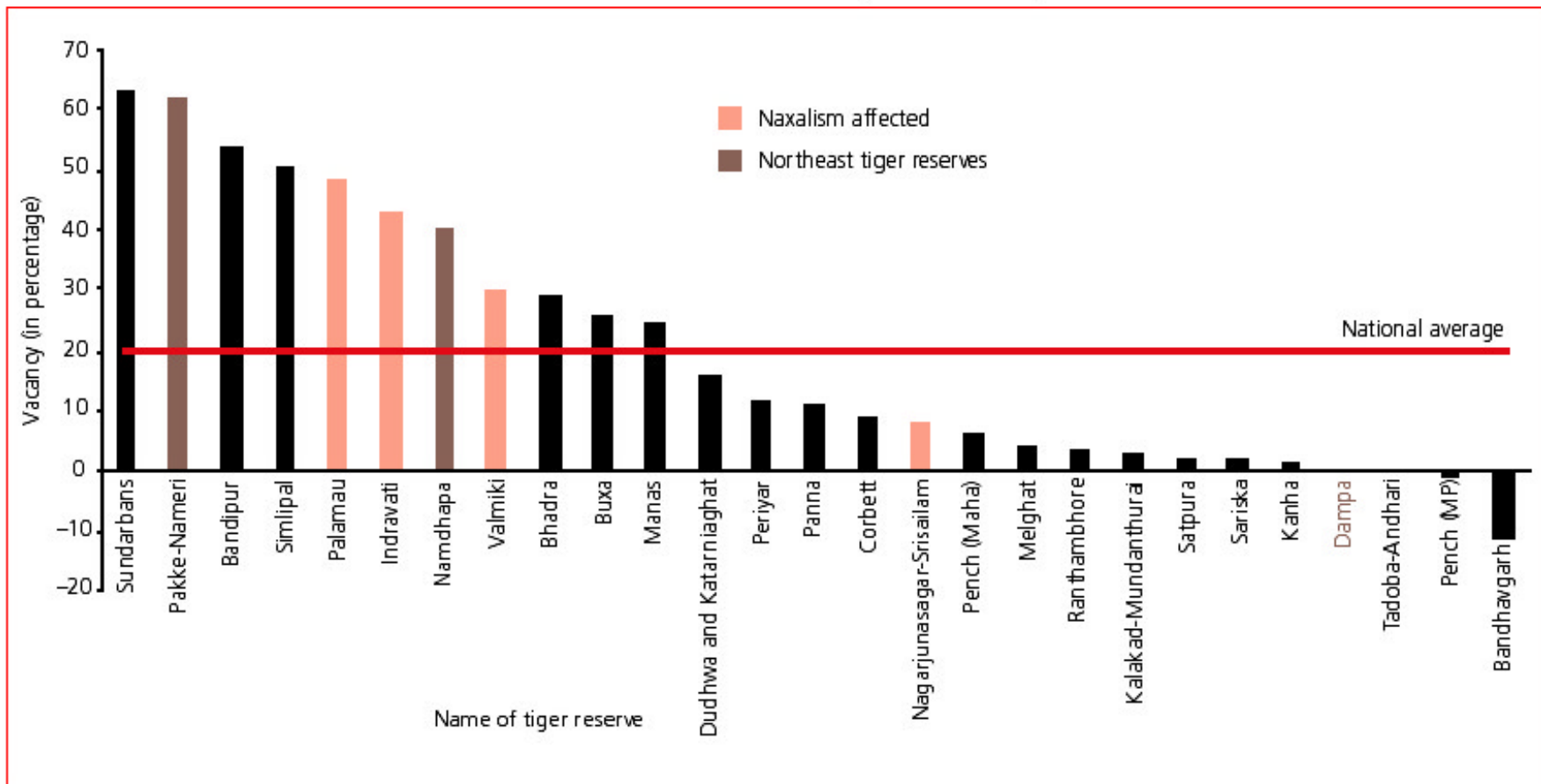
- Need investment in training;
- Create sub-cadre of wildlife specialists within forestry service;
- Review training, personnel development and staff reviews in forest service.



Source: Project Tiger directorate

# Vacancies: Hire locals

FOREST GUARD VACANCY (PERCENTAGE)



Source: Project Tiger directorate

# Trade: illegal and underground

- Trade in tiger parts banned under CITES.
- But trade continues. Products with tiger parts found in the US in 2004.  
But driven underground. Difficult to detect.
- International community is failing to combat trade.
- India needs to take proactive action:  
Work with China bilaterally to check trade.

# Domestic crime: needs enforcement

Poaching is an organised and skilled business.

- a. Amend the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 to strengthen the criminal provisions. Without this, we will catch but cannot convict.
- b. Set up the Wildlife Crime Bureau – smaller more effective unit suggested by task force. Empower the states.  
Give special cases to CBI.

# Poaching uses poverty

- The business is run by big players.
- But their work is done by poor, highly skilled hunting tribes.
- Have to find innovative ways of involving the poor in protection for, not against, tiger

Periyar: where poachers became tiger trekkers or Cambodia, where hunters are hired as guards...Need to work with them.

# Science agenda: counting numbers

- Sariska teaches us the value of counting correctly.
- Over time, pug mark method has become faulty and inaccurate.
- Project Tiger directorate and Wildlife Institute of India (WII) have modified method of counting – move towards assessment of habitat and estimation (not counting) of tigers.



# Evaluated method

Member, Dr Madhav Gadgil, renowned field statistician, given responsibility to assess proposed method:

- Consultations organised – in Delhi and in Bangalore – with leading scientists in this field;
- Comments received and discussed with Project Tiger and WII.
- Based on this, suggested methodology endorsed.
- Suggest expert group to be formed to guide process and help in analysis.

# The people-tiger agenda

- Tiger needs 'inviolable' space.  
Tiger reserves roughly 1 per cent of land area – 6 per cent of forest area.  
Can this be protected only for the tiger?
- More space allocated...what will it take?
- The fact is that nobody knew what it will take...no data..no information. Till now...

# Relocation data

- In last 30 years – only 80 villages relocated from tiger reserves;
- Out of 80 villages some have returned because relocation poorly done;
- Others live on fringe – hostile to park. Use resources from outside

# How many live in tiger reserves?

Collected data shows:

- In core area of reserves –  
**273 villages, 19,000 families;**
- In all reserves –  
**1500 villages, 66,000 families.**
- Only 10 per cent relocated till date.
- Need to look at cost and feasibility...

# How much to leave tiger reserves?

## COST OF RELOCATION

Number of villages	273	1,214	1,487
Number of families <sup>1</sup>	19,215	47,301	66,516
	Cost of relocation from core (Rs/crore)	Cost of relocating from buffer (Rs/crore)	Cost of relocation all
At current rate of Rs 1 lakh per family	192.00	473.00	665.16
At enhanced rate of Rs 2.5 lakh per family <sup>2</sup>	480.00	1,183.00	1,663.00
For payment for land <sup>3</sup>	2,786.00	6,859.00	9,645.00
Total cost, assuming enhanced rate	3,266.00	10,042.00	11,508.00

# Logistics of relocation

- Land – only forest land is available for relocation.
- Land is degraded, needs investment in irrigation facilities;
- People are forest-dependent – need access to grazing land, fuelwood, fodder, minor forest produce for sustenance.
- Will create more pressure on forests. If not done carefully.



# Plan for relocation

- Suggest that within one year, list of priority villages for relocation is mapped out.
- Then relocation is done – speedily and with full consideration of people’s needs.
- Needs financial support. Need administrative capacities to relocate families. Cannot go wrong. Bad for conservation. Bad for tigers.

# Plan for coexistence

- But we cannot relocate all.
- Note that there are possibly 3 million people in all protected areas – 600,000 families.
- Have to work with them and not against them if conservation has to succeed.
- No option but coexistence. Indian-way of conservation. Managing multiple needs.

# “Hostile” conservation today

Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 says sanctuary and national park cannot be notified unless:

- Rights of people are ‘settled’. People compensated and relocated.
- But not done in 30 years. People made trespassers in their own land.

# Making enemies of people

- Act says: Rights cannot be taken away, if alternative fuel, fodder and forest produce is not provided.
- But rights expunged by MoEF and Central Empowered Committee of Supreme Court.
- No alternatives provided.
- People's hostility increased. Conflict has grown. Illegal use has grown. Unsustainable use has grown.

# “Inclusive” conservation a must

- Cannot conserve without the cooperation of people.
- Have to develop ways of living together: tiger and people.
- Range of options – from employment, to tourism benefits, to rights over sustainable harvesting of produce, to collaborative management.
- We will have to try all. We will have to make it work.

# Fringe agenda: more people outside

- Must recognise that even more people live outside the reserve and use its resources than inside.
- Just relocation will not work.
- Need strategies for building livelihoods of people in the neighbourhood of the park.
- But needs careful work.



# Ecodevelopment: expensive failure

- Spent over Rs 200 crore on 7 reserves in India Ecodevelopment Project.
- Was experiment to see if alternative livelihoods could be provided.
- But mostly did not work...  
poor delivery and poor concepts.
- Investment not in land, water or forest resources.

# Tigers need forests...

....People need forests.

- We have to reinvest in forest resources.
- We have to reinvest in water resources.
- Build forest-livestock-agriculture economies of poor. Cannot do without involvement of people. Revamp Joint Forest Management.
- Need programme for cooperation – reciprocal contract. Investment in protection by people. Investment in their forest land by government.

# Tourism: beneficial or deadly?

Ranthambhore is example of how tourism can turn against park:

- a. Handed over to tourist department. Bad management within park, destroying habitats.
- b. Private investment has benefited rich hotels. Rs 22 crore annual turnover estimated for 21 hotels.
- c. People's anger has increased. They see benefits. But not to them. They only suffer because of the tiger reserve.

# Beneficial tourism

- In Annapurna in Nepal local people benefit – homestead allowed only on route.
- In Campfire project in Zimbabwe, people get exclusive tourism rights.
- In India, in Periyar tiger reserve, tribals have been involved in tourism – guides, trekkers, rafting... get revenues from park. Involved in its future.
- Needs to be expanded in India.

# Tourism for park and people

- Reserve 3 km from boundary of park for homestead tourism of local people. No resorts and hotels allowed.
- Hotels and resorts within 5 km pay 30 per cent of turnover to park (business is run on public resources).
- Gate receipts – ecocess returned to park (Ranthambhore collected Rs 6 crore – gone to state exchequer)

# Needed: Urgent decisions

- 1. Request the **Prime Minister to head the steering committee of Project Tiger** for a period of 2-3 years.
- 2. **The Project Tiger directorate to be converted into a statutory authority under the MoEF.** This will give it greater autonomy and ability to coordinate with state governments.
- 3. **The Wildlife Crime Bureau to be created immediately** under the MoEF.
- 4. **The next census (planned for November) of tigers and habitat to be done using the new methodology,** suggested by MoEF and endorsed by the Tiger Task Force. **Independent audit report also be to presented to Parliament in 6 months,** which will rate state performance on different criteria.
- 5. **The plan for relocation** of villages from key tiger habitats to be finalised within one year, with its financial and logistical implications and completed within 2-3 years.
- 6. **The plan for coexistence** to be prepared by each tiger reserve within one year so that benefits of conservation can be shared with local communities.
- 7. **The benefits of tourisms to be shared with local communities** using the recommendations of the Task Force.

We would also be grateful if the PMO can set up a follow up mechanism to ensure all other recommendations are implemented.