

URBAN TIGER PROJECT UPDATE JANUARY 2021

A Bio-Social Research to Understand Human-Tiger Interactions in Bhopal, India

During the 2019 and 2020 field survey sessions in and around Bhopal city, tiger presence is established in the southern part of Bhopal city (Refer Fig 1, Yellow ★), the south-western part and north-eastern parts which are outside the city limits (Fig 1).

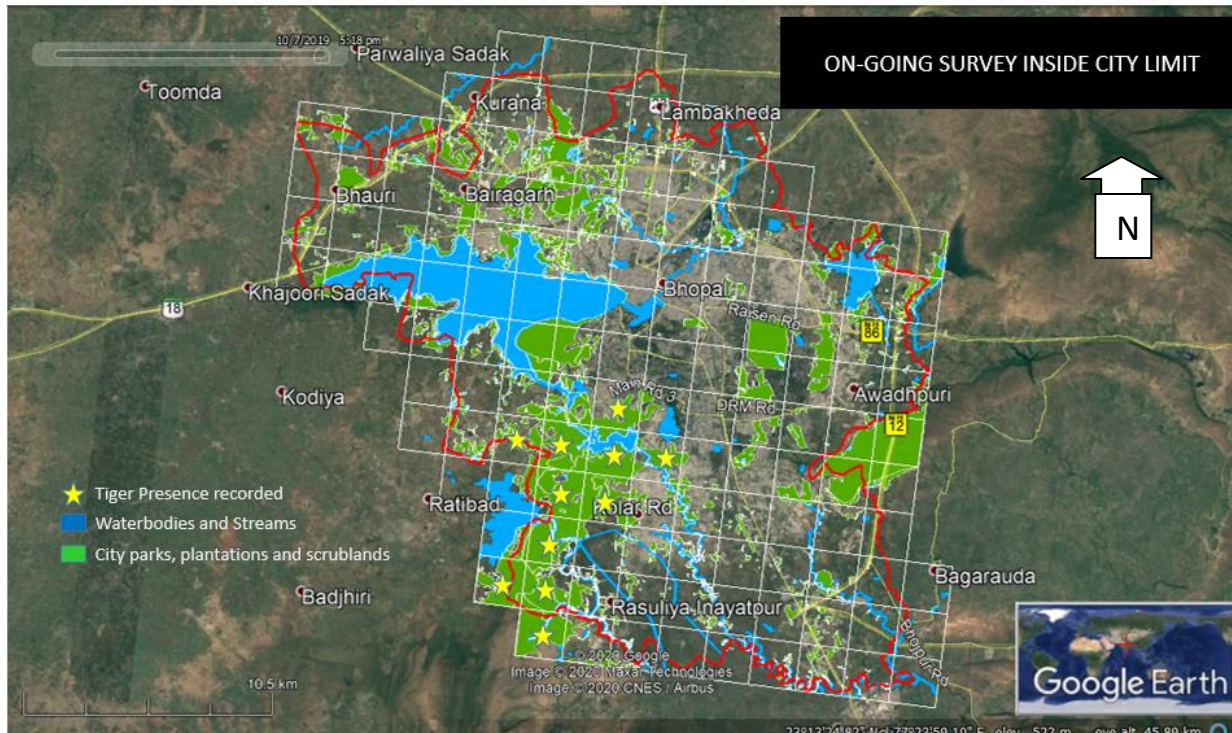


Figure 1: Municipality limits of Bhopal City divided into 2 x 2 km grids will be surveyed for carnivores, prey, and to understand people's perceptions in 2021.

Due to COVID-19, fieldwork in the year 2020 was effected. On the positive side, we had time to look in detail over the study and finalize aspects that need to be undertaken in 2021. This also includes finalizing stakeholder interviews, the social aspect of the research.

Tiger and Prey Survey

In 2021, the urban green spaces including gardens, parks, recreational areas, fallow land, agriculture land, garbage dumps, slums, creeks and nalas and lakes, all potential areas for wildlife and prey to thrive (areas in green and blue) will be surveyed. The grids are 2 X 2 km, and a combination of spoor surveys and camera traps will be used in each of the grids to ensure a detailed and systematic survey of the Bhopal inner municipal areas.

Social Surveys

Between March and June 2021, I will assess people perceptions of living with wildlife large carnivores and factors supporting people's perception. And the willingness to co-exist with tigers in the landscape. These surveys will be done in each of the grids and along the city gradient, i.e. built-up city, semi-urban and rural areas (all exist within the city). Additionally, I will also interview local conservation groups and govt managers to understand their experiences and the challenges of conserving tigers in urban landscapes. All the information will be summarized to make meaning of human will to live with and manage large carnivores in Bhopal.



Figure 2: The urban landscape of Bhopal



Figure 3: Another drone shot of urban Bhopal.



Figure 4: A tiger sniffing a scent lure placed on a tree in a stream flowing through the urban area (refer photo 2 too)



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Figure 5: The same tiger photographed again.