

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE MAHARASHTRA
FOREST DEPARTMENT AND THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION TRUST,
MUMBAI**

This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is made on the 15th day of April 2025 between

THE Maharashtra Forest Department through the Chief Conservator of Forests (Territorial),
Kolhapur having office in Kolhapur
and

The Conservator of Forests and Field Director Sahyadri Tiger Reserve having office in
Kolhapur (hereinafter together
referred to as MFD), which expression, unless repugnant to the context and meaning thereof,
shall deem to include its heirs, executors, administrators and assigns of the FIRST PART,

AND

THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION TRUST, Mumbai, a trust registered under the Bombay
Public Trusts Act, 1950, through its President, having office at 11th Floor, Mafatlal Centre,
Nariman Point, Mumbai 400 021 (hereinafter referred to as WCT), which expression, unless
repugnant to the context and meaning thereof, shall deem to include its heirs, executors,
administrators and assigns of the SECOND PART.

WHEREAS the MFD desires to encourage generation of scientific knowledge related to tigers
and its habitats including its co-predators, prey base and key associated wildlife corridor areas
for improved management and conservation of wildlife as well as related capacity building of
stakeholders in Territorial and Wildlife Divisions of Kolhapur Forest Circle

AND WHEREAS WCT desires to assist the MFD for generating scientific knowledge and carry
out related capacity building of the stakeholders for the purpose of improved management and
conservation of wildlife in the Kolhapur Forest Circle using its own resources including but not
limited to their team of trained wildlife biologists and experts.

MFD and WCT held a meeting on March 13, 2025 to discuss the proposed plan of action and
outcomes foreseen through this collaboration. Based on the outcomes expected at this meeting,
this MoU is being signed with additional activities designed to help improve co-ordination
between both parties to achieve the larger goal of effective science-based management and
conservation of wildlife.

THEREFORE, both parties will collectively engage themselves as contained herein:

Objectives of the Project

1.1 Assess the minimum population of the tiger with a special focus on areas with breeding
activity identified south of the Radhanagari Wildlife Sanctuary. WCT researchers to assist and
provide field-based training to the frontline forest staff in deployment of cameras and regular
monitoring of tigers in the notified and approved Conservation Reserves (CRs), including
neighbouring forest areas which are part of the Tiger Corridor identified as per the latest Tiger
Conservation Plan of the Sahyadri Tiger Reserve.

1.2 WCT will provide technical support (including analysis of data and report preparation) to the Kolhapur Wildlife Division to assess the large felid and their wild prey population in the Radhanagari and Sagarshwar Wildlife Sanctuaries from data collected during 2024-25, including collection of any further data if necessary, so as to help improve wildlife management in both the sanctuaries. At the same time, provide scientific inputs whenever required for translocation of tigers and their prey species to these sanctuaries or other Protected Areas in this region.

1.3 WCT to coordinate with the Tiger Cell at the Sahyadri Tiger Reserve to create and maintain a database of tigers photographed in the Tiger Corridor which will assist in the long-term management of tigers and other wildlife in the Tiger Reserve and the Tiger Corridor of the STR.

1.4 WCT to prepare a report of findings in collaboration with the Forest Department with details of the tigers captured in 2025-26 along with GPS locations, including an album of photos with unique identities given to each tiger.

2. Duration of the MoU

2.1 This memorandum of understanding shall remain effective for a period of one year from the date of signing (2025-2026).

2.2 After review of projects taken up consequent to this MoU, both parties may extend its operation for another term with prior approval of the Chief Conservator of Forests (Territorial), Kolhapur and Conservator of Forests and Field Director, STR.

2.3 The Chief Conservator of Forests (Territorial) Kolhapur or Conservator of Forests and Field Director, STR may terminate this MoU prior to the end date with understanding of the WCT.

3. Geographical location & Area of Study

3.1 Corridor forest area between STR and nearest source population of tigers (i.e. Tillari CR). This includes Conservation Reserve areas in the Forest Circle of Kolhapur and areas adjoining the Conservation Reserves under the Territorial Divisions of Kolhapur Forest Circle.

4. Responsibilities of the MFD

4.1 The MFD through the CCF (Territorial), Kolhapur will arrange for field support and access to the study areas in the forest and in terms of accommodation facilities as per availability at the field sites within the said area.

4.2 The MFD through the CCF (Territorial), Kolhapur and the CF and Field Director, Sahyadri TR shall make available camera-traps, memory cards, and consumables such as AA batteries. These would be used in the field by frontline forest staff, guided by WCT researchers and handed over to the respective offices wherefrom issued upon completion of the monitoring activity.

4.3 The MFD will nominate the DFO Vigilance as a nodal officer for the Kolhapur Territorial Circle and the Deputy Director, Koyna Wildlife Sanctuary, Sahyadri Tiger Reserve as a nodal officer for the Wildlife Wing to coordinate the project activities with WCT representatives.

4.4 The MFD will nominate its officers and staff as well as other stakeholders to participate in the capacity building programs taken up under this MoU. MFD will also arrange participation of concerned forest staff in all aspects of monitoring in the specified area. The responsibility of the safety of the camera-traps during the study, and any proceedings as a consequence of unforeseen circumstances such as theft, breakage etc. lie with the MFD.

4.5 Logistical arrangement of any field training workshops will be the responsibility of the concerned Range Officer and the MFD.

4.6 The MFD shall carry out review of activities envisaged under this MoU at least once in six months and facilitate effective coordination for the purpose of this MoU.

5. Responsibilities of the Wildlife Conservation Trust (WCT)

5.1. WCT will nominate one nodal contact person for the Forest Circle Kolhapur. This nodal contact person will closely liaise with the respective Deputy Conservators of Forests and nodal Divisional Forest Officer and Deputy Director, Sahyadri TR for the project activities.

5.2 WCT will also nominate one staff to co-ordinate data sharing and results dissemination in a timely manner to MFD.

5.3 WCT will disseminate results in a timely manner to the office of the Chief Conservator of Forests (Territorial) and the Conservator of Forests & Field Director and the concerned Deputy Conservators of Forests and Divisional Forest Officers.

5.4 WCT will liaise closely with concerned Deputy Conservator of Forest/Divisional Forest Officers and Range Forest Officers at the time of field work to update them about the commencement and conclusion of field activities conducted along with field staff.

5.5 WCT will carry out on-field capacity building of frontline staff and coordinate with the respective Range Forest Officers to make all necessary logistic arrangement for the same.

5.6 WCT will provide necessary financial support, trained human resources and required equipment (other than that mentioned in Section 4) including transportation for implementing the projects and associated field work approved under this MoU. The MFD shall not be responsible for meeting project-related expenses including those on travel and field support for the WCT project staff involved in field work.

5.7 WCT will carry out analysis of collected data and share results with the MFD at mutually agreed time intervals not exceeding six months from the end of the project.

5.8 WCT will also maintain copies of the data for backup purposes on their servers for access in future by MFD if required.

Resource	Required from C F (WL) & FD, STR	Required from CCF (T)	Available with WCT
Camera-traps		200 units	45 units
Batteries		1600 units	720 units
Memory cards		200 units	45 units
Field vehicle			available
Permission & Data access	as per MoU	as per MoU	
Field implementation and logistics	Support from DFO (WL) Kolhapur, DD, STR & Tiger Ce'll	Staff support, equipment safety and access to rest houses	Funding for WCT field team secured

6. Deliverables and Outputs

6.1. Deliverables and outputs under this MoU shall be as follows:

- A. Raw data shared with individual Ranges and with the respective DCF/DFO office
- B. Report with analysis of data collected by the Forest Department with support of WCT in assessment of the predator (2024 data) and prey population (2025 data) in the Radhanagari Wildlife Sanctuary
- C. Report with analysis and results of the line transect data and camera-trap distance sampling data (2024-25) collected by the Forest Department with support of WCT in the Sagareshwar Wildlife Sanctuary
- D. Report with capture locations of all tigers and a photo album of all captured individuals (2025-26)
- E. On-field training of field staff in camera-trap monitoring shall be accomplished in the duration of this MoU

6.2. The reports prepared by WCT under this MoU to be submitted to the Chief Conservator of Forests (Territorial) and the Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) & Field Director, STR with a copy to the concerned Deputy Conservator of Forests and Divisional Forest Officer.

7. Terms and Conditions

7.1. WCT shall be responsible for all of its financial expenditure incurred under this MoU. Support of the MFD will be limited to as specified in section 4 of this MoU.

7.2. WCT shall provide to the MFD all information, data, report, etc., generated out of activities under this MoU or any project there under.

7.3 WCT or any of its personnel will not start any other research project within this project.

7.4 WCT will share live data of camera-trap with local RFO day-to-day if required for immediate mitigation of man-animal conflict.

7.5 The camera-trap photos should have date and time stamping on it.

7.6 Raw data collected by WCT during the project should be submitted to the MFD at the end of the study.

7.7 All reports under the project shall carry the logo of both the MFD and WCT. Persons authorised by the Chief Conservator of Forests (Territorial) and Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) to participate in the research projects may be included as co-authors as per accepted norms with their respective affiliations for the purpose of publications and other outputs as consequent of this MoU or its project.

7.8 WCT undertakes to carry out the assignment in accordance with the highest standard of professional and ethical competence and integrity, having due regard to nature and purpose of the assignment. WCT shall also ensure that its project staff perform their services and conduct themselves accordingly. WCT and its employees or any person engaged in any activity under this MoU or any project there under shall observe and be responsible for ensuring compliance of provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, Indian Forest Act, 1927, the Biological Diversity Act, 2002 and any laws applicable and in force in the study area.

7.9 WCT unconditionally and irrevocably agrees that neither WCT nor any person engaged by it shall have any claim against the MFD in respect of any wages, salary, damages or any other purpose on account, compensation and any statutory benefits due/payable on any account of being engaged by the WCT for the purpose. WCT shall indemnify, defend and hold the MFD not liable against any and all proceedings, actions and third-party claims for any cost, compensation in this regard.

8. Institutional Representatives

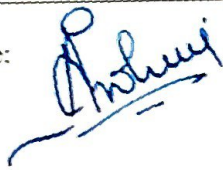
8.1 The Conservator of Forests & Field Director, STR and Chief Conservator of Forests (Territorial), Kolhapur and the President, WCT, Mumbai, will be institutional representatives of respective parties for making amendments, deletions and additions to this MoU with mutual consent.

8.2 Any amendments, deletions or additions to this MoU with or without creation of any liability on the MFD shall not be enforced or considered valid without prior written approval of the Conservator of Forests (Wildlife), Kolhapur and Chief Conservator of Forests (Territorial), Kolhapur.

9. Dispute Resolution

9.1 All the disputes arising out of this MoU shall be resolved by the Chief Wildlife Warden (CWLW), Maharashtra, whose decisions shall be final and binding on all parties concerned.

The parties have signed this MoU as a token of acceptance of terms and conditions given above, and have thus put their hands upon it with the signatures as below:

For Maharashtra Forest Department		For Wildlife Conservation Trust
Signature:  Shri. Ramanujam R.M. Chief Conservator of Forests (Territorial), Kolhapur	Signature:  Shri. Ramanujam R.M. Addl Charge Conservator of Forests and Field Director, Sahyadri Tiger Reserve	Signature:  Dr. Anish P. Andheria President, WCT
Date	Date	Date
Seal Chief Conservator of Forest (Territorial) Kolhapur.	Seal Conservator of Forests & Field Director Sahyadri Tiger Reserve, Kolhapur.	Seal 
In presence of Signature:  Name: Shital Nangare Address: Office of Conservator of Forest, Kolhapur	In presence of Signature:  Name: Shital Nangare Address: Office of Conservator of Forest, Kolhapur	Signature:  Name: GIRISH PUNJABI Address: WCT

Tentative schedule of the objectives and activities over one-year of the MoU

Objective	Duration
1.1 Assess the minimum population of the tiger with a special focus on areas with breeding activity identified south of the Radhanagari Wildlife Sanctuary. WCT researchers to assist and provide field-based training to the frontline forest staff in deployment of cameras and regular monitoring of tigers in the notified and approved Conservation Reserves (CRs), including neighbouring forest areas which are part of the Tiger Corridor identified as per the latest Tiger Conservation Plan of the Sahyadri Tiger Reserve.	April 2025 to March 2026
1.2 WCT will provide technical support (including analysis of data and report preparation) to the Kolhapur Wildlife Division to assess the large felid and their wild prey population in the Radhanagari and Sagarshwar Wildlife Sanctuaries from data collected during 2024-25, including collection of any further data if necessary, so as to help improve wildlife management in both the sanctuaries. At the same time, provide scientific inputs whenever required for translocation of tigers and their prey species to these sanctuaries or other Protected Areas in this region.	April 2024 to March 2026
1.3 WCT to coordinate with the Tiger Cell at the Sahyadri Tiger Reserve to create and maintain a database of tigers photographed in the Tiger Corridor which will assist in the long-term management of tigers and other wildlife in the Tiger Reserve and the Tiger Corridor of the STR.	April 2025 to March 2026
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