

STANDARD
OPERATING
PROCEDURE



TO DEAL WITH
STRAY / FERAL DOGS
IN TIGER RESERVES

NATIONAL TIGER CONSERVATION
AUTHORITY



Camera trap images of stray dogs chasing sambar inside tiger reserve



STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE
TO DEAL WITH STRAY / FERAL
DOGS (*Canis familiaris*)
in
TIGER RESERVES



NATIONAL TIGER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST & CLIMATE CHANGE
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

1. Title: Standard Operating Procedure to deal with emergency arising due to stray and feral dogs in Tiger Reserves.

2. Subject: Dealing with stray and feral dogs in Tiger Reserve.

3. Reference: Advisories of the National Tiger Conservation Authority /Project Tiger on the subject.

4. Purpose: To ensure that stray/feral dogs are handled in the most appropriate manner to avoid disease spread and physical injury to tigers and other wildlife, besides mortality to young and juvenile wildlife.

5. Short Summary: This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) provides the steps which are required to be taken at the field level for dealing with stray and feral dogs.

6. Scope: This SOP applies to all tiger reserves. For the purposes of classification of dogs, stray and feral dogs shall be treated as equivalent to Street dogs as classified in the Animal Birth Control (Dogs) Rules, 2001.

7. Responsibilities:

a. The Field Director would be responsible in the case of a tiger reserve and shall be the Local Authority vis-a-vis Animal Birth Control (Dogs) Rules, 2001, hereinafter referred to as the Local Authority.

b. The overall responsibility at the State level would rest with the Chief Wildlife Warden of the concerned State.

8. Suggested field actions to deal with stray/Feral dogs;

a. **Committee Constitution** for technical guidance and

implementation of interventions especially planning and management of dog control programme, as under:-

i. A veterinarian from the Veterinary and Animal Husbandry Department

ii. A co-opted veterinarian, if required, from non governmental agencies

iii. Local NGO representative

iv. Representative of Animal Welfare organization, if any, operating in the said area

v. A representative of the district Society for Prevention of Cruelty to animals (SPCA), if present.

vi. A representative of the local Panchayat

vii. Deputy Director.DFO/DCF of tiger reserve- Chairman.

b. Delineate areas of feral dog movement and areas susceptible to ingress of stray dogs and map them in a GIS domain.

c. Monitor these areas by visual assessment for dog population in coordination with the local Animal Husbandry Department, aforesaid committee and community stewards who should be incentivized from available schemes.

d. Identifying disease

i. Document prevalent canine diseases with special reference to zoonotic, notifiable and emerging diseases with the local Animal Husbandry Department

ii. Identify the wild animals in your area at risk which may acquire these diseases.

iii. Once these diseases have been identified, collate management strategies for these diseases and prepare a ready reckoner in coordination with the local Animal Husbandry Department.

iv. A budgetary requirement to manage these diseases should also be prepared for soliciting funding under different Government schemes.

e. Physical capture of feral and stray dogs:

Capture of stray and feral dogs should be strictly in accordance with the “Revised Module for Street Dog Population Management, Rabies Eradication and Reducing Man-Dog conflict” published by the Animal Welfare Board of India, Government of India (http://awbi.in/awbi-pdf/revised_abc_module.pdf).

The said document lists out the following methods;

- i. By Hand Technique
- ii. Sack and Loop Technique
- iii. Dog catching hoops with nets (Butterfly net)
- iv. Balinese Pole net technique.

f. Transportation of captured dogs:

The captured dogs should also be transported in a manner that they do not fight with one another.

The vehicle/cage design needs to be such that street dogs can be placed inside without allowing dogs already within, to escape. The vehicle/cage must be cleaned, watered and disinfected before and after use.

In case the stray/feral dog menace is severe/frequent, a dedicated transport vehicle may be fabricated

as suggested in the aforesaid module.

g. Animal Birth Control (ABC) programme:

The captured dogs should be dewormed on the day they are caught and subsequently subjected to animal birth control measures as per protocol and processes outlined by the Animal Welfare Board of India in their module referred above.

h. Vaccination against Canine Distemper and Rabies should be carried out on the day of release after sterilization. The release of dogs during early morning hours is recommended.

i. Feral/stray dogs captured from within tiger reserves should under no circumstance be released back and a suitable alternate site be selected for their

rehabilitation.

3. Immunization buffers:

Immunization buffers should be created in buffer areas of tiger reserves keeping in mind the principles of herd immunity.

The latter states that in contagious diseases like Canine Distemper /Rabies, the chain of infection shall be disrupted when large numbers in a population are immune (vaccinated) or less susceptible to a disease due to vaccination (Fig 1).

The rationale behind this is that exposure of unvaccinated /susceptible animals (tigers and other wildlife) to infected animals (dogs) shall be substantially reduced.

Hence, greater the proportion of individuals (dogs in this case) which

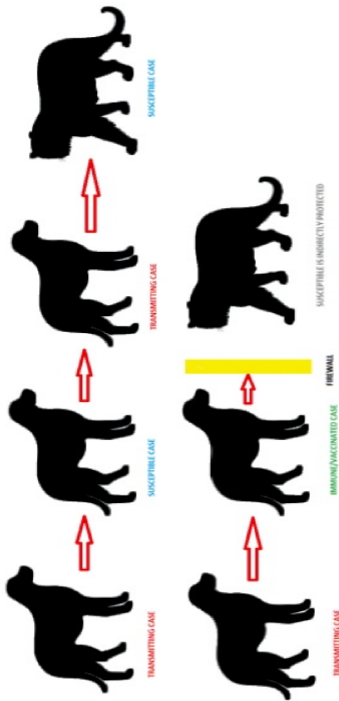


Fig 1. Illustrative representation of concept of herd immunity

are vaccinated /resistant /immune to the disease, lesser are the chances of transmission. In essence vaccinated animals act as a firewall between tigers and stray/feral dogs.

4. Using retrospective data available with the local Animal Husbandry Department, prevalent canine diseases with special reference to zoonotic, notifiable and emerging diseases should be documented and a suitable vaccination programme, concomitantly with ABC measures, be designed for the tiger reserve to effect herd immunity.

5. Dogs which have been sterilized and vaccinated need to be identified through means as described in AWBI's module referred earlier as repeat vaccinations shall be required every year for a sustained immune response and keep up herd immunity levels.

6. The local authority in consultation with the committee as described above may engage competent agencies recognized by the AWBI to carry out ABC and immunization programs, if sufficient capacity is not available.

7. Definitions:

a. Zoonotic disease: These are infectious diseases that are naturally transmitted from vertebrate animals to humans and vice versa.

b. Notifiable disease: A notifiable disease is any disease that is required by law to be reported to government authorities.

c. Emerging disease: A new occurrence in an animal of a disease, infection or infestation, causing a significant impact on animal or public health resulting from:

i. a change of a known pathogenic agent or its spread to a new geographic area or species; or

ii. a previously unrecognised pathogenic agent or disease diagnosed for the first time.

8. Limitation:

This Standard Operating Procedure is required to be implemented in tiger reserves which have documented records of stray/feral dog menace either in terms of physical impact or disease spread/prevalence in wildlife.

9. References:

- a. Revised Module for Street Dog Population Management, Rabies Eradication and Reducing Man-Dog conflict, Animal Welfare Board of India (http://awbi.in/awbi-pdf/revised_abc_module.pdf)
- b. Animal Birth Control (Dogs) Rules, 2001 ([http://awbi.in/awbi-pdf/ABC%20\(Dogs\)%20Rules,%202001%20English.pdf](http://awbi.in/awbi-pdf/ABC%20(Dogs)%20Rules,%202001%20English.pdf))
- c. Rev. Sci. Tech. Off. Int. Epiz., 2015, 34 (1), 41-44 (<http://boutique.oie.int/extrait/04moutou4144ang.pdf>)
- d. Rev. sci. tech. Off. int. Epiz., 2014, 33 (2), 569-581 (<https://www.oie.int/doc/ged/D14089.PDF>)
- e. F. No. 15-38/2010-NTCA dated June 14, 2013 (<https://ntca.gov.in/assets/uploads/guidelines/CVD.pdf>)
- f. F. No 1-5/93-PT dated January 13, 2014 (<https://ntca.gov.in/assets/uploads/guidelines/THREAT%20TO%20TIGERS.jpg>)
- g. F. No. 15-38/2010-NTCA dated October 20, 2015 (https://ntca.gov.in/assets/uploads/guidelines/Special_drive_CDV.pdf)

Notes:



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