



CATS

Conservation | Tiger
Assured | Standards

CA|TS Manual

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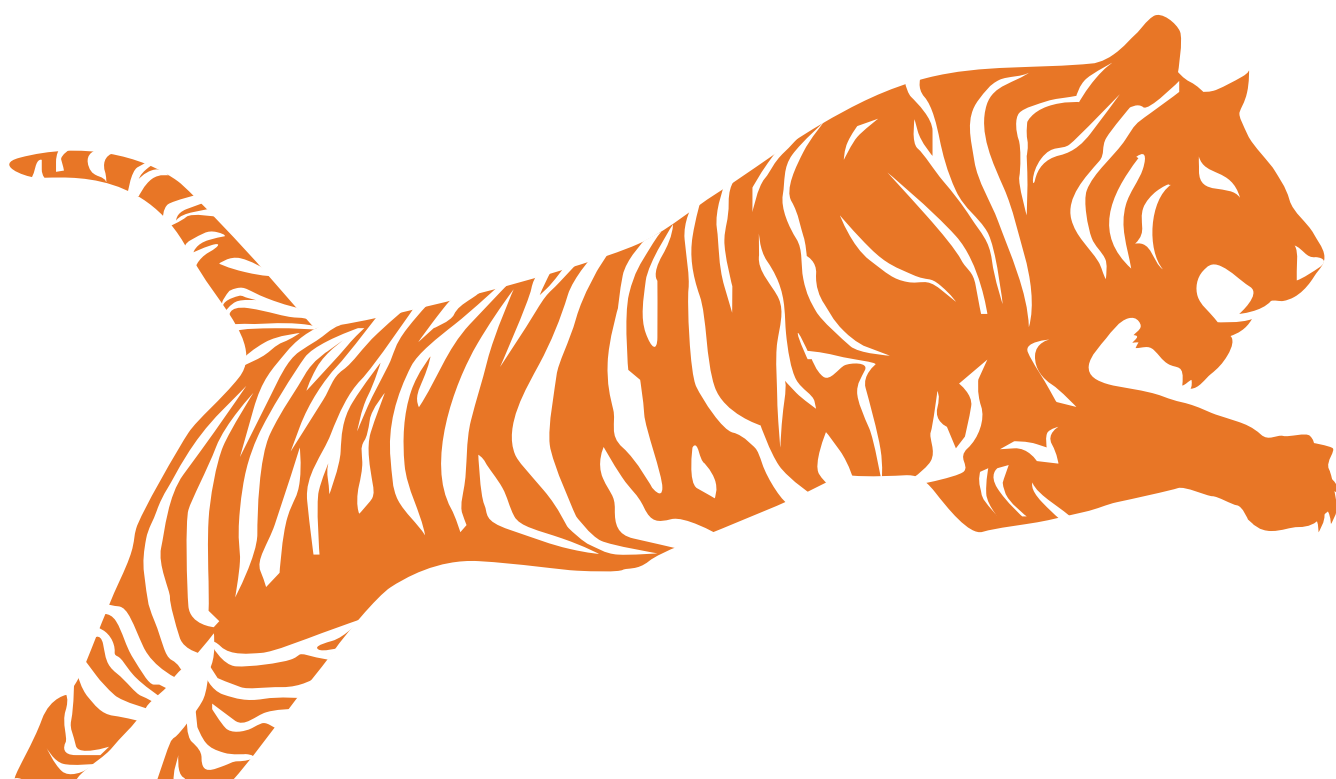
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Section 1 Summary

The Conservation Assured | Tiger Standards (CA|TS) scheme provides an incentive to those responsible for conservation areas in tiger range countries to improve the effectiveness of management.

Conservation Assured (CA) is a conservation tool to set best practice standards for effective management of landscapes for target species. CA helps countries to fulfil the requirement for protected area management effectiveness in international agreements such as the Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) Global Biodiversity Framework and will help national governments, and their partners in conservation, to meet the CBD's Strategic Plan for Biodiversity. CA also partnered in the development of IUCN's Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas, an initiative to encourage, measure and share the success of conservation management.

The first species-specific CA standards developed were for the tiger (*Panthera tigris*) in 2010, followed by jaguars (*P. onca*) and river dolphin species. Few tiger conservation areas were truly effective refuges for tigers and this contributed to a catastrophic decline in their numbers. Tigers had already disappeared from several protected areas where they were once regarded as secure. Since then, the globally accepted goal of doubling the number of wild tigers by 2022 has been nearly achieved without a significant increase in the effectiveness of the tiger conservation areas across the remaining tiger range countries.

The Conservation Assured | Tiger Standards (CA|TS) scheme provides an incentive to those responsible for tiger conservation areas in tiger range countries to improve the effectiveness of management. The approach is based on long-term experience of both environmental certification schemes (e.g. the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)) and protected area management effectiveness assessments (e.g. the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) Management Effectiveness Framework and associated systems) as well as a many conservation management tools and expert knowledge.

CA|TS provides an opportunity for individual tiger conservation areas or networks of areas to demonstrate their commitment to, and success in, protecting tigers. It is a voluntary, independent scheme for any area involved in tiger conservation.

CA|TS has a set of 17 minimum elements; organised around seven pillars associated standards and criteria for effective management of tiger conservation areas. It is not a new management effectiveness system or a ranking of tiger conservation areas; but rather provides the means to tell if a particular area attains the best practice standards needed to conserve tigers. Tiger conservation areas taking part in the system are recorded as either Registered (but standard not yet attained) or Approved (achieving the standards as verified through an auditing and independent review process); with excellence expressed in terms of highlighting specific best practices. Whether tiger conservation areas meet the criteria is based on a process which starts with self assessment by the tiger conservation area, progresses through a system of national audit, endorsement of the sites and recommendation by the National Committee (NC) and is finally approved by an International Executive Committee (IEC), which ensures equivalence across tiger range.

CA|TS was extensively field-tested and subjected to expert peer review before launch. The second version of the manual was developed in 2018 after a public consultation and reflects the CA|TS Business Plan published in 2018 (CA|TS, 2018), and minor updates were made in 2020 (version 2.1) This third version of the manual marks the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) taking over as host and secretariat of CA|TS with effect from 1st April 2025. This follows on from the recommendation of the CA|TS 10-year Review in 2023, for CA|TS to have a new host and subsequent deliberations within the CA|TS International Executive Committee (IEC). Updated versions of the manual will continue to be produced as our knowledge and systems progress.

Section 2 Why do we need standards to secure tiger numbers?

Box 1: Management effectiveness evaluation

Management effectiveness evaluation is defined by IUCN WCPA as the assessment of how well the protected area is being managed – primarily the extent to which it is protecting values and achieving goals and objectives. The term management effectiveness reflects three main themes:

- Design issues relating to both individual areas and protected area systems;
- Adequacy and appropriateness of management systems and processes;
- Delivery of protected area objectives including conservation of values (Hockings et al, 2006).

Ensuring effective conservation management

Over the last 30 years several methodologies have been developed and applied for assessing management effectiveness, to enable better understanding of how well conservation areas are being managed and how successfully they ensure conservation objectives are achieved. Many of these assessment systems have been developed to be consistent with the IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework (Hockings et al, 2006, see Box 1), which has developed guidance on best practice for assessments and has allowed the compilation of results across assessment systems. Around 50 methodologies exist ranging from very simple to more thorough approaches. The assessment process provides an opportunity for managers and partners to take stock of the effectiveness of conservation area management. When evaluation is accompanied by the development and implementation of an action plan based on the findings, more effective management should result. Indeed, the time-series data (i.e. recurrent assessment results from the same area) collected by a global study of management effectiveness found that in most cases protected areas show improvements in management with each assessment (Leverington et al, 2010). In part this is because repeat assessments allow us to monitor impact of management changes and also are indicative of long-term commitment to both improve and track area management effectiveness.

Outside protected areas effort has been put into agreeing standards for good management and investigating ways in which standards can be encouraged through certification systems, such as the Forest Stewardship Council. There are now initiatives under way to bring these two conservation strategies together.

Setting standards for good conservation area management

Assessment and certification systems differ in the extent to which they provide information on success or failure; some give a “score”, others a simple pass/fail, while others rely on a more general description of management strengths and weaknesses. The usefulness of assessments, and implementation of results, can often be improved if there is a clear understanding of what managers should be aiming for, by agreeing some basic standards against which to judge an assessment. Standards are thus agreed-upon rules, guidelines, or specifications that ensure consistency, quality, safety, or compatibility across processes, products, or services. The importance of this standard setting has been reinforced by the CBD, which requested the development of standards for protected areas back in 2004 in its Programme of Work on Protected Areas.

	Design		Appropriateness / Adequacy		Delivery	
Element	Context	Planning	Inputs	Process	Outputs	Outcomes
Evaluation focus	Importance, threats and policy/cultural environment	Design and planning	Adequacy of resources needed to manage	How management is conducted	Implementation of management programmes and actions	Extent to which objectives have been achieved
Criteria that are assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Values - Threats - Vulnerability - Stakeholders - National context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Protected area legislation and policy - Protected area or system design - Management planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resources available for management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Suitability of management processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Results of management actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effects of management in relation to objectives

Table 1: Summary of the IUCN-WCPA Framework for assessing management effectiveness of protected areas and protected area systems based on the six stages (elements) of a good management process

As a result of the emphasis on standards, voluntary assessment and certification schemes based on compliance with management standards have been developed for protected areas, such as CA|TS and the IUCN Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas (see Box 2).

Target 3 of the GBF provides a further impetus for management standards. The target aims to conserve 30% of earth's land and sea by 2030 (and thus is also known as 30x30), recognizing protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) as vital tools to achieve this. The GBF emphasizes equity, indigenous rights, and measurable outcomes (CBD, 2022). Effective implementation hinges on inclusive governance and clear, science-based monitoring. Conservation Assured can help establish the rigour, comparability, governance, and oversight needed to ensure areas meet global standards and deliver long-term biodiversity outcomes

Box 2: The Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas

The IUCN Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas programme aims to improve the contribution of equitably governed and effectively managed protected areas to nature conservation and sustainable development, through the provision of associated social, economic, cultural, and spiritual values. The overarching objective of the programme is to increase and recognise the number of effectively managed and equitably governed protected and conserved areas, to deliver conservation outcomes.

The Global Standard of the IUCN Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas provides a global benchmark for how to meet the environmental challenges of the 21st century. It is also a capacity development tool for protected areas and helps to identify which aspects of protected and conserved areas need to be strengthened. By focusing efforts on these aspects, it is more likely that success will be achieved.

A protected or conserved area that reaches the IUCN Green List Standard is certified and recognised as achieving ongoing results for people and nature in a fair and effective way. Any site can join, and work its way towards achieving verified success, and then maintain the Standard or further improve.

CA|TS Approved sites may serve as candidate sites for IUCN Green List certification. For more information see: iucngreenlist.org/

Section 3 CA|TS vision, goals and objectives

CA|TS Goals Adoption and implementation of CA|TS Standards ensures tiger habitats are effectively conserved, well-managed and ecologically connected to maintain, secure and recover viable populations. CA|TS demonstrates and promotes best practice across Tiger Conservation Areas.

CA|TS provides a diagnostic tool for those responsible for tiger conservation areas to improve the effectiveness of management.

The mission of CA|TS is to secure safe havens for wild tigers. To do this CA|TS has a:

Vision

Wild tigers have spaces to live and breed safe from threat resulting in increased populations and recovery of range

Goals

- CA|TS Approved status provides international recognition of effective tiger management and conservation.
- Adoption and implementation of CA|TS Standards ensures tiger habitats are effectively conserved, well-managed and ecologically connected to maintain, secure and recover viable populations.
- CA|TS demonstrates and promotes best practice in and across Tiger Conservation Areas.
- CA|TS is used as a diagnostic tool to improve ongoing management

Objectives

- Register the world's most important wild tiger bearing areas and develop programmes which mobilise support and capacity for management in order to help these areas meet the CA|TS criteria.
- CA|TS provides a roadmap for accreditation of tiger conservation areas meeting the CA|TS criteria.
- Reassess existing CA|TS Approved sites demonstrate ongoing management best practise
- Establish and coordination with global conservation agencies, government or inter-government agencies and other institutions including Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to build capacity, mobilise resources and promote good practices.
- Demonstrate links between CA|TS and other global conservation frameworks, targets and indicators.
- The CA|TS standards inform and reflect evolving conservation science and management.

Targets by 2030

- All tiger range countries are actively involved in CA|TS.
- At least 30% of the current global wild tiger area is CA|TS Registered.
- More than 50% of Registered areas are CA|TS Approved.
- Mechanisms, including funding, to support implementation of CA|TS criteria in all Registered areas are in place and monitoring of progress provides evidence of the effectiveness of CA|TS in improving conservation management.

CA|TS aims to provide both an incentive and guidance for improving the effectiveness of conservation areas as a tool for tiger conservation and to provide a mechanism for identifying gaps, monitoring, demonstrating and guaranteeing the effectiveness of the system of tiger conservation areas. CA|TS can provide a range of benefits





- ➔ **For national and conserved protected areas systems:** to help set a baseline and facilitate adaptive management and continual improvement of performance.
- ➔ **For a protected/conserved area manager or a national protected area department:** to demonstrate the importance and role of protected areas in the global effort to double the number of tigers and for CA|TS Approved sites and overall governing structure at local, regional and federal (national level) to take in pride in and value of international recognition of effective management.
- ➔ **For a protected/conserved area manager or a national protected area department:** Help identify capacity building needs and develop training programmes to fill gaps in capacity.
- ➔ **For a tiger conservation area manager:** to provide best practices on management and help mobilize the support needed to provide the necessary resources and capacity to be effective in tiger conservation. CA|TS can also work as diagnostic framework for operationalization of existing management plans or developing new ones.
- ➔ **For protected/conserved area rangers:** to identify capacity needs and provide a clear indication of high professional standards, improve career prospects and boost morale.
- ➔ **For the government of a tiger range state:** to demonstrate commitment to global tiger conservation efforts and to provide verified information for reporting obligations under the CBD and other similar regional and global agreements.
- ➔ **For the global conservation community:** to measure impacts of tiger conservation and identify and monitor the level of management and support for conservation.
- ➔ **For the donor community:** to identify resource and capacity gaps, to assess the seriousness and professionalism of the management within a protected / conserved area or protected area system; to help improve dissemination of funds and target those conservation strategies most likely to succeed. CA|TS can build the performance evidence base needed for innovative financing such as “Tiger Bonds” or other green investment vehicles.
- ➔ **For supporters of tiger conservation:** to understand the level of quality to which the network and the individual conservation / protected areas are being managed and contributing to tiger conservation.
- ➔ **For tiger conservation:** to set a minimum standard for tiger conservation within protected/conserved areas and provide an objective measurement of effectiveness.
- ➔ **For other flagship species:** For Government, Inter-government and Non-government stakeholders for conservation and in-situ management of other flagship species including big cats, develop standards following the “Conservation Assured” model and implementation structure including governance following CA|TS, currently the most established specific species based “Conservation Assured” standards.

Section 4 How does CA|TS work?

The aim of CA|TS is to implement standards needed to conserve tigers through a credible and independent assessment and review process.

The aim of CA|TS is not to develop a new management effectiveness system or a ranking of tiger conservation areas; rather, it is to tell if an area attains, or what is required to attain, the standards needed to conserve tigers through a credible and independent assessment and review process. CA|TS comprises 17 elements (including one voluntary element for tiger conservation areas with major tourism objectives) divided into seven “pillars” covering different management issues (Table 2). Five of these are applicable to conservation area management in general (although with a species-specific focus) and represent the Conservation Assured (CA) aspect of the scheme; the two final pillars focus specifically on management issues related specifically to tiger conservation – the Tiger Standards (TS). The scheme is structured this way as it is planned to develop standards which focus on other endangered species in the future. Areas containing several species for which standards exist could thus aim for compliance with a range of species-specific standards; the CA standards, which include general good management practices, would only need to be met once. Each element assessed comprises a number of more specific standards and criteria which are given in Section 6.

Table 2: CAITS Seven Pillars

PILLAR	ELEMENT
CONSERVATION ASSURED	
 A. IMPORTANCE AND STATUS	1. Social, cultural and biological significance 2. Area design, connectivity to neighbouring sites 3. Legal status, regulation and compliance
 B. MANAGEMENT	4. Management planning 5. Management plan/system implementation 6. Management processes 7. Staffing (full-time and part-time) 8. Infrastructure, equipment and facilities 9. Sustainability of financial resources 10. Adaptive management (feedback loop)
 C. COMMUNITY	11. Human–wildlife conflict (HWC) 12. Community relations, governance 13. Stakeholder relationships
 D. TOURISM	14. Tourism and interpretation <i>Note: this standard is only applicable for areas with major tourism objectives</i>
 E. PROTECTION	15. Protection
TIGER STANDARDS	
 F. HABITAT MANAGEMENT	16. Habitat and prey management
 G. TIGER POPULATIONS	17. Tiger populations

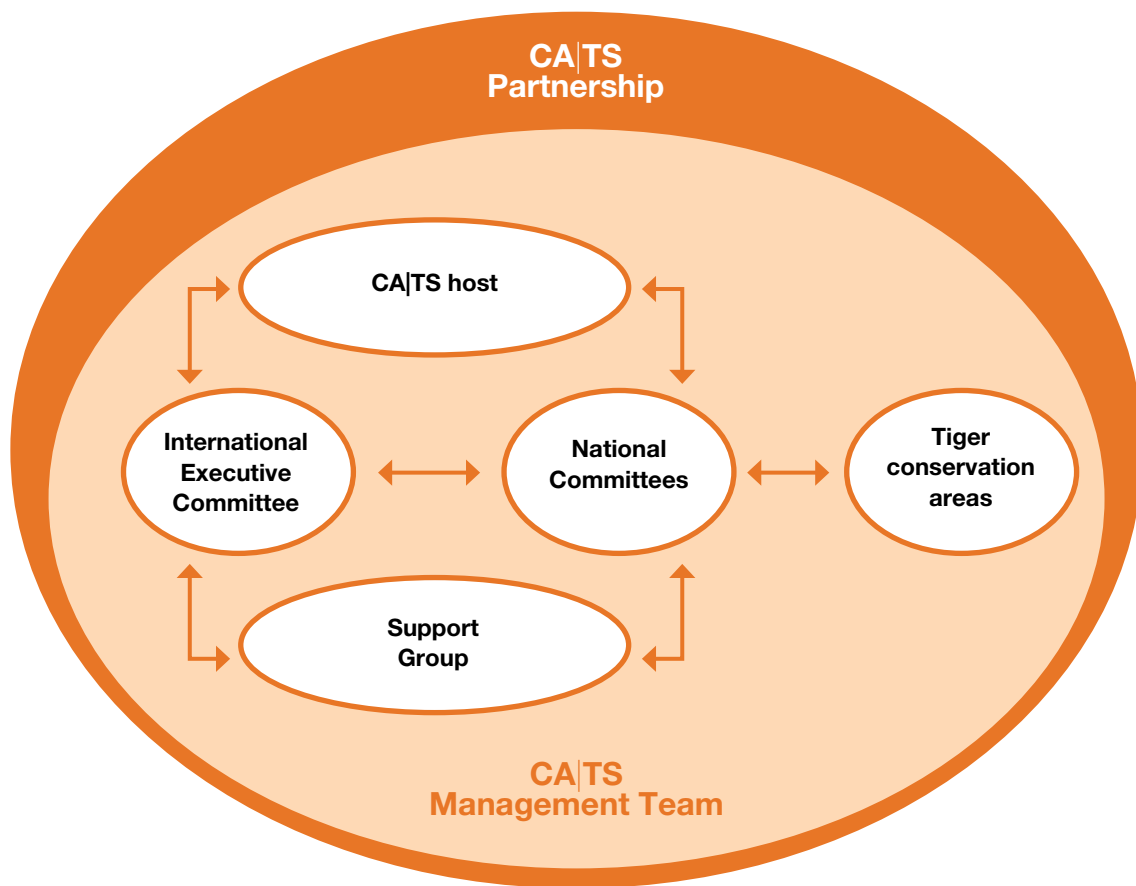


Figure 1: Summary of the CA|TS governance structure

CA|TS governance

CA|TS is lead by a broad partnership of organisations sitting in five distinct groups plus the tiger conservation areas (TCAs):

1. The **CA|TS International Executive Committee** (IEC) ensures the quality and equivalence of the CA|TS process; both of the CA|TS Standards as a means of measuring the performance of a TCA as a secure haven for wild tigers and the quality of the submissions made by TCAs seeking to be CA|TS Approved (see section 11 for TOR).
2. The **CA|TS Support Group** is made up of international NGOs, institutions, intergovernmental organisations, non-tiger range governments and donor organisations (members can be found on conservationassured.com). Its role is to support, promote and implement CA|TS and to work closely with government agencies responsible for tiger conservation (see section 11 for Support Group Agreement).
3. **National Committees** (NCs) are established in each TRC and are responsible for ensuring the quality and effective execution of CA|TS. They are responsible for promoting CA|TS in their jurisdiction and overseeing TCA participation including reviewing TCA Registrations and Approval Dossier submissions before recommending them to the International Executive Committee for approval. They are also responsible for managing the programmes of improvement within the TCAs. The membership of the NCs comprises three constituencies:
 - Local independent experts in tiger management and TCAs whose focus is on ensuring the quality of TCA submissions.
 - Local Support Partner representatives whose focus is providing technical expertise and coordinating the effective execution of Improvement Programmes across the TCAs in the jurisdiction.
 - Government representation (see section 11 for TOR).

4. The **CA|TS Host** is the organisation with hosts the management team and provides support for the implementation of CA|TS. The International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) is the current CA|TS Host.
5. The **CA|TS Management Team** supports the work of the whole CA|TS Partnership and acts as the Secretariat for the International Executive Committee. It is responsible for the day-to-day management of CA|TS as outlined in the CA|TS Business Plan (CA|TS, 2018).

CA|TS Approved

CA|TS Approved status is conferred by the international executive committee on recommendation from the national committee by the process outlined in Section 5.

CA|TS Approved status lasts for an indefinite period but with review periods. After three years of CA|TS Approved status a review process takes place (see section 9) and if there are no “red flags” then the site continues as CA|TS Approved. However, if there have been significant negative changes in area management or circumstance the area may need to update its dossier and undergo a full re-assessment by the National Committee, may the recommend to the IEC the continuity/discontinuity/temporary suspension of “CA|TS Approved status” of the site.

Monitoring CA|TS Sites

CA|TS is developing a continuous monitoring process for both CA|TS Registered and CA|TS Approved areas (see figure 2) through the systems put in place through the development of the business plan (CA|TS, 2018). This monitoring is an important contribution to the CA|TS review process (see section 9). CA|TS also welcomes comments from the CA|TS Partnership, tiger experts and wider public on the status of tiger reserves taking part in CA|TS. A form for providing information can be downloaded from the resources section of the CA|TS website (www.conservationassured.org/files/resources/f8-cats-comment-form.docx)

Changes to CA|TS Approved status

Conservation areas are not static entities and management challenges come from many directions (e.g. poaching increase, natural disasters, funding withdrawal, political instability, sudden changes in tourist numbers, etc.). In some cases these challenges may impact an areas ability to comply with CA|TS even after it has been CA|TS Approved. As the ultimate objective of CA|TS is tiger conservation, the IEC, working with the national committee, will undertake an emergency review (as distinct from the mandated end of three years basic review) of any CA|TS Approved area which has a change of circumstances that could impact CA|TS Approved status. The aim of the emergency review will be to support the area to retain the CA|TS Approved status; removal of the CA|TS Approved status would only be considered in the most extreme of cases and would entail a fully documented review process (see section 9) approved by the IEC in liaison with the management team, national committee, support group and area management. If it is deemed necessary to change the CA|TS Approved status the area will be listed as CA|TS Approved (suspended), which will indicate an area that has been approved under CA|TS but where major problems have emerged and full listing is temporarily withdrawn while these problems are addressed.

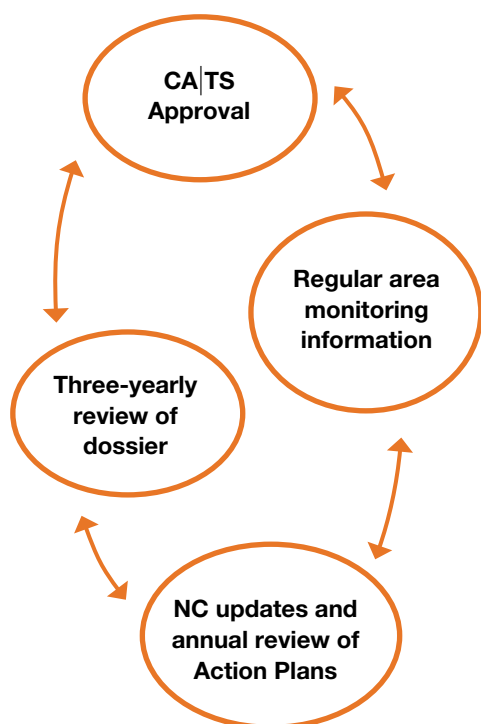


Figure 2: Monitoring process for both CA|TS Registered and CA|TS Approved areas



What are the expected costs to become approved?

CA|TS is based on an audit of the normal monitoring and assessment processes applied in a tiger conservation area and therefore adds little to the workload. The self-assessment should not take long if good systems of record keeping are in place. Being recognized as achieving CA|TS should not be confused with the effort that may be required at some areas to develop best practice management systems; for many areas this may entail significant capacity development over several years. In areas which need to draw up action plans to develop the management process and systems to comply with the CA|TS criteria, additional funding may be required. The development of a clear action plan to assist compliance with CA|TS may help generate funding for enhancing management.

Training

A two-day training course has been developed to introduce the contents of the CA|TS manual (i.e. the processes, standards and criteria) and to any persons involved in CA|TS implementation. It is expected that representative from sites registering for CA|TS, national committee members and expert reviewers will participate in the course.

Use of the CA|TS logo by TCAs

A version of the CA|TS logo with registered and approved status is available for use by areas once they have been registered, and once they have been approved. Please note that:

- The logo should not be used for commercial purposes.
- The logo should only be used by the area and not by third parties linked to the areas.
- Only the full logo (including the words registered or approved) should be used.
- Only the logo relevant to the area’s current status in the CA|TS process can be used.

Box 3: Recognising achievement: The CA|TS Merits system

Areas taking part in CA|TS will be at different levels of management effectiveness and achievement due to issues such as period since establishment, resources available, level of management challenges etc. It will thus take some areas longer than others to reach CA|TS Approved status. Progress made during this period should however be recognised and encouragement provided to continue working towards CA|TS Approved status. Similarly, in CA|TS

Approved areas management will not remain static and improvements in effectiveness will be encouraged.

It is proposed therefore to develop a system of CA|TS Certificates of Merit which are presented to areas which are deemed to be making progress in reaching the CA|TS criteria. Details of the Merit system will be available on ibca.world/Conservation_assured_tiger_standards.

Section 5 The CA|TS Registration and Approval process

The registration and approval process has 9 steps outlined in this section and summarized in Figure 3.

Areas taking part in CA|TS will be either **CA|TS Registered** (but standard not yet attained) or **CA|TS Approved** (i.e. areas which have been assessed as achieving the standards). The registration and approval process has 10 steps outlined below and summarized in Figure 2.

Registering for CA|TS

1. CA|TS is a voluntary process; any area that wishes to be assessed against CA|TS should first download the CA|TS Log software and manual from the CA|TS website (ibca.world/Conservation_assured_tiger_standards) and fill in the engagement form. The CA|TS Partnership will work with government agencies and area managers to introduce the CA|TS process and help with registration.
2. Once the registration process has been checked by the national committee and a request for Registration sent to the CA|TS Manager the area will receive a certificate from the management team to confirm the area is CA|TS Registered. The area will be listed on the CA|TS website as CA|TS Registered and can use the CA|TS Registered logo (see Section 4).
3. If the national committee does not think the area is ready to be registered it will send a full explanation to the area as to its reasoning. If required, it will work with the area to help fulfil the registration requirements so the area can revise and resubmit the registration document.

Moving towards CA|TS approval

4. After becoming CA|TS Registered the area will undertake a self-assessment of whether tiger conservation and management meets the criteria set out in CA|TS. The assessment is completed using the CA|TS Log software. Full details on accessing and using the software are given in Box 4. The standards and associated criteria are given in Section 6 of this manual and are fully replicated in the CA|TS Log. An evidence checklist of the type of information that can be referred to (see Section 7 for a summary of the evidence required) and guidance notes which elaborate some of the more specific criteria are also included in Section 6.

Box 4: CA|TS Log is an integrated site based tool.

At present the CA|TS Log includes three modules:

1. The Conservation Assured standards covering the seven main pillars of tiger site management- Management, Community, Protection, Habitat and Population (which replaces the CA|TS dossier F2 word document)
2. Budgets
3. Site Overview.

In the future additional modules will be added on management effectiveness.

All of the CA|TS standards and criteria are included in the CA|TS Log. Sites taking part in CA|TS will need to provide a short written description of how they have reached the CA|TS Criteria (see Section 6) and the evidence which proves this (see Section 7). This evidence base will then be assessed by the reviewers and national committee in the process describes in Section 5.

Information on how to download the CA|TS Log and CA|TS Log manual can be found on ibca.world/Conservation_assured_tiger_standards.

5. When areas have provided suitable evidence for each CA|TS criteria and reported this using the CA|TS Log, they submit the file (i.e. the CA|TS dossier) to the national committee and forward a copy to the CA|TS management team for review.
6. When the national committee is satisfied that the area has provided the evidence base in the CA|TS Log/forms to demonstrate compliance with CA|TS it will oversee two auditing processes: i) of the areas self-assessment and ii) of the processes in reaching the compliance decision. The national committee will engage an independent reviewer/team of reviewers (see TOR in Section 11) to undertake these audits. The reviewers will be provided with access to the dossier on the CA|TS Log software/forms via email and will receive full instructions on how to upload the dossier and use the CA|TS Log software to record the results of their review. The reviewers will need to visit the site to complete the review -including field level verification of dossier submitted to his/her. The reviewers will be expected to look into/review all the evidence (e.g. narrative, documents loaded, pictures etc) provided in the CA|TS log for each criterion and assess:
 - i. The quality of the evidence, and whether it is poor or strong (see Section 7 for suggested indicators of evidence quality).
 - ii. Whether the evidence provided is sufficient to show compliance with the criteria (see box 5 for reporting compliance).
7. In some cases this process of dossier submission and review may happen multiple times, particularly in areas where considerable interventions are needed to build management capacity to the level of good practice outlined in CA|TS. In these cases the national committee may wish to employ the CA|TS Merit System (see box 3) to award sites who are progressing towards the CA|TS standards.
8. When the independent reviewer/s is/are satisfied that the area has reached a good level of compliance with the standards and criteria, the national committee will undertake a review of the dossier on the CA|TS Log. If the national committee is satisfied that compliance with CA|TS has been reached it will record its opinions on the CA|TS -Log and forward the compliance dossier to the CA|TS management team along with a summary presentation. The management team will convene a meeting of the IEC which, to ensure equivalence of CA|TS implementation across the tiger range, will make the final decision on being awarded CA|TS Approved status.

Box 5: Complying with the CA|TS standards

For each standard four options are suggested for reporting on whether the area complies with CA|TS. A scoring structure is being trialled and maybe applied in the future relating to the decision on a site being Approved or Not Approved.

- ✓ **Standard exceeded:** The achievement of the standard is an illustration of innovation or best practices. Innovations should be developed into best practice stories and passed onto other tiger conservation areas.
- ✓ **Standard achieved:** It is clear that the standard has been achieved.

- ✓ **Standard mainly achieved:** The standard is nearly achieved but small remedial actions may be needed. Assuming there are only a few cases where the standard is assessed as “mainly achieved” then the area can still become CA|TS Approved but the remedial actions (which should be detailed in the dossier) should be clearly communicated with the area with an agreed action plan outlining the actions needed, who will be responsible for implementing these actions and a timeline for completing the action. If many standards are assessed as not having been fully achieved then it is likely that the decision to award CA|TS Approved status will be deferred until more standards are met.

- ✓ **Standard not achieved:** Areas aiming to be CA|TS Registered are encouraged to develop and finalize their self-assessment compliance dossier only when they consider they are likely to have achieved all the standards. However, the assessment process may find that in a few places the standards have not yet been achieved. In these cases action plans should be developed to outline the actions needed to reach CA|TS (see Figure 2). Once these action plans have been successfully implemented the standards should be reassessed and the compliance dossier submitted again to the national committee.

A representative of the national committee and/or the independent reviewer/s will usually present the dossier to the IEC. It is expected that the IEC will normally endorse the national committee’s recommendation. If the IEC has questions, additional requirements or concerns regarding the compliance of the area to CA|TS, it will send (via the management team) a full explanation to the national committee as to its reasoning and actions needed to resolve these.

9. Once the IEC awards CA|TS Approved status, the area will receive a certificate from the management team to confirm CA|TS Approved status. The area will then be listed on the CA|TS website as CA|TS Approved and can use the CA|TS Approved logo (see Section 4). The Approved status will remain in place (subject to a regular review process outlined in Section 9 or if major problems arise seriously impacting tiger populations as outlined on page 8) for the life of the CA|TS scheme.

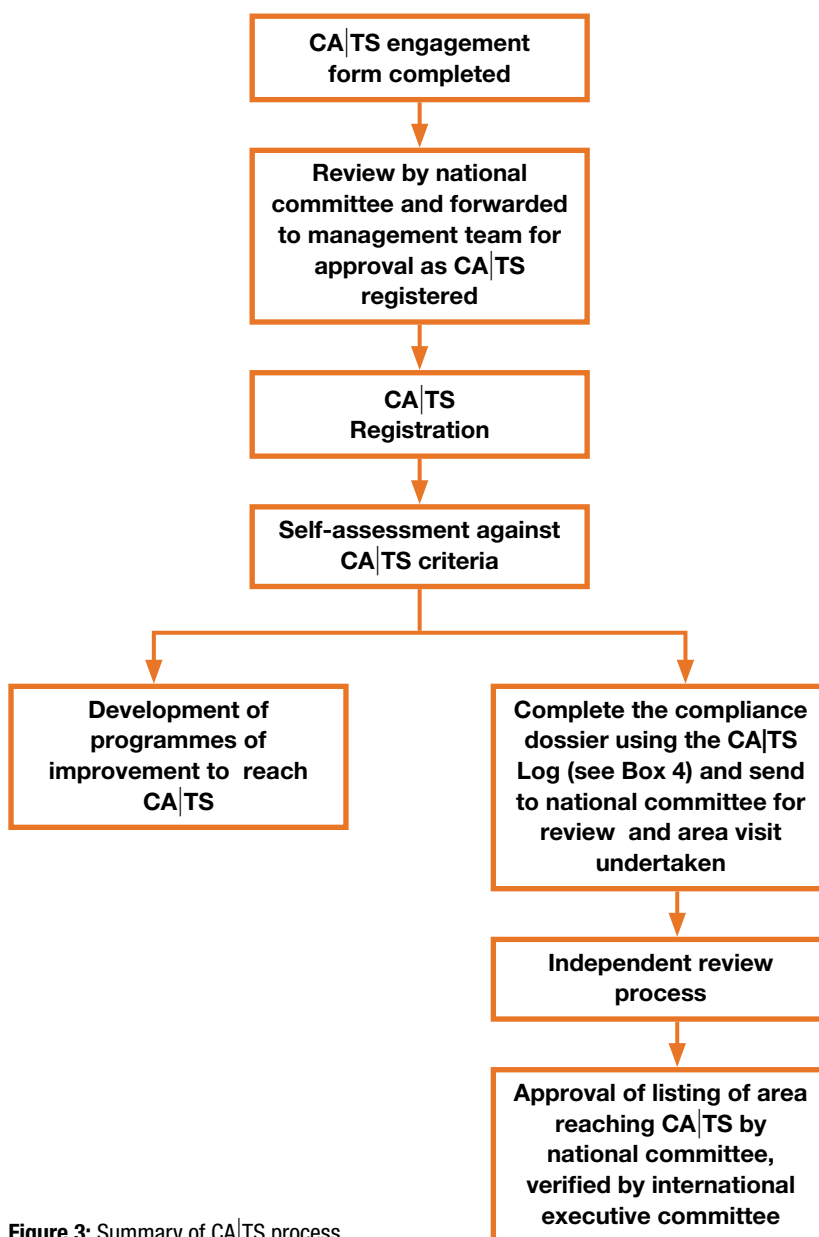


Figure 3: Summary of CA|TS process

Box 6: Who will be involved in the self-assessment?

A wide range of stakeholders and partners are involved in the self-assessment, which forms the primary activity towards CA|TS approval. The self-assessment is likely to include local managers and staff, agency managers, government agencies in different sectors, different tiers of government, local communities, indigenous peoples, NGOs, donors, international convention staff, local experts (e.g. naturalists, volunteer workers), scientists, private sector bodies involved in management of protected areas, and representatives of other sectors and interests such as tourism.

Section 6 Pillars, Elements, Standards and Criteria

CA|TS hierarchy



Pillar: The headline conservation management priorities covered in CA|TS



Element: Under each pillar a set of elements identifies the main topics of protection and management evaluated and accredited in CA|TS



Standard: A statement which summarizes the protection and management standards which should be in place if an area is to reach CA|TS Approved; each standard is then explained in more details in a set of criteria and guidance notes

Criteria: A set of rules developed for conceptualizing, implementing and evaluating field and management practices required to reach each standard



Evidence checklist: A quantitative or qualitative parameter that is evaluated in relation to each criteria



Guidance Note: Additional sources of information and/or reference value for some criteria

Best practice: Case studies and lessons learned from tiger range countries which show best practices in relation to specific standards. Examples of best practice will be collected during the CA|TS process

The CA|TS pillars, standards and criteria are laid out below. The seven pillars are followed by 17 **elements** which are then broken down into more detailed **standards**. Each standard has associated **criteria**. At the end of each standard a box provides suggestions of the sort of information (evidence) that may be required to show compliance with the criteria. A summary of this evidence is given in the checklist in Section 7.

Compliance with CA|TS will differ between biomes, physical conditions, etc.: for example, forest/wildlife protection staff numbers will vary with terrain and vegetation type. Rather than define a single, obligatory figure or practice, the standards and criteria are elaborated with guidance notes and best practices which provide examples of successful practices under different conditions. These exemplary practices highlight, and aim to foster, innovation in tiger conservation area management. Managers of tiger conservation areas who vary widely from the indicative guidance would have to justify this during the assessment process.

CA|TS covers all elements of the IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework (see Table 1) and the elements which each standard focuses on are given after each standard.

Best practice example: Standards and criteria for project management

CA|TS has been developed with reference to the range of social and environmental standards already in place (e.g. organic agriculture, marine and forestry standards) as well as organisations such as ISEAL which aim to strengthen sustainability standards systems globally. CA|TS is working particularly closely with IUCN in regards to the development of the GLPCA (see box 2) and is noting with interest the development of IUCN's Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS). This later system, although specifically developed for IUCN, sets principles and standards for managing the environmental and social performance of projects. As such it provides best practices for all conservation projects and should be reviewed by tiger conservation areas when developing in situ projects.

For more information: www.iucn.org/resources/project-management-tools/environmental-and-social-management-system.

Pillar A

IMPORTANCE AND STATUS



Evidence Check List

1.1.1: Management plan and/or associated tiger conservation plans

1.1.2: Details of the tiger conservation area noting adjoining areas and/or zones which are also habitat for tigers and current information of tiger population and recruitment; shared landscape level plans/data; statement outlining the importance of the location for tiger conservation; recovery or reintroduction plan and implementation reports



Guidance note A

Viable tiger populations

A viable tiger population has:

- 80+ tigers
- A minimum of 20 breeding females (i.e. females with cubs)



Guidance note B

Significant tiger populations

A significant tiger population has:

- 20+ tigers
- A minimum of five breeding females (i.e. females with cubs) and a maximum of 19 (a population of 20 or more is recorded as a viable population – see guidance note A).

The area which contains this population should:

- Have connectivity to a protected area/s with a viable tiger population; or
- Be part of a conservation landscape (e.g. of protected areas and other lands with suitable tiger habitat) which in total contains a viable or significant population (see guidance note A).

Element 1: Social, cultural and biological significance



Standard 1.1: Tiger conservation is an important target and value for the area.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: context and planning)

Criteria 1.1.1: The tiger conservation area management plan includes tiger conservation as a major target (see also Standards 4.1, 4.3 and 16.2).

Criteria 1.1.2: Tiger conservation areas (e.g. protected areas, buffer zones, conservation corridors, forest area, etc.) which are considered important in terms of value for tigers are defined by one or more of the following:

- The tiger conservation area is large enough to sustain a viable population of tigers (see guidance note A).
- There is a significant tiger population (see guidance note B) of a size to support recruitment.
- Natural recovery through range expansion or reintroduction is feasible and planned/in progress where current tiger populations are not viable, not significant or not present (see guidance note C).
- In some areas (e.g. Russia) tiger density in conservation areas will be naturally very low, but as part of a large landscape these populations will add up to a significant or viable population (see guidance note D).



Standard 1.2: The ecological, biological, social, cultural and economic values and benefits of the area have been identified and aligned with tigers as a major conservation target.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: context, planning, outputs and outcomes)

Ecosystem values and/or benefits:

Criteria 1.2.1: Possible values and benefits of ecosystem services (including REDD+ and areas of high conservation value) have been identified.

Criteria 1.2.2: If potential ecosystem values and/or benefits are identified, plans are in place to realize the most feasible of these values and/or benefits within the timeframe of the current management plan (see also Standard 4.1) and are aligned with tigers as a conservation target (see also Standard 1.1).

Criteria 1.2.3: Ecosystem service values and/or benefits are interpreted and shared with communities and other stakeholders.

Biodiversity values and/or benefits:

Criteria 1.2.4: Biodiversity values of the tiger conservation area have been identified.

Criteria 1.2.5: Potential values and/or benefits of biodiversity have been evaluated and assessed against, and aligned with, tiger conservation (see also Standards 1.1, 4.3 and 16.2).

Criteria 1.2.6: Biodiversity values and/or benefits and their relationship with tiger conservation are interpreted and shared with communities and stakeholders.

 **Guidance note C**
Recovering tiger populations

A recovering tiger population has:

- Fewer than five breeding females (i.e. females with cubs); or
- Evidence of historical tiger presence.

It should have the potential to recover significant or viable populations because natural recovery (i.e. absorbing tiger overflow from connected protected areas) or reintroduction is feasible and planned or in progress.

 **Guidance note D**
Low density populations

A low density population has:

- Evidence of a sustainable tiger population (typically between two and five breeding females).

The area which contains this population should:

- Have connectivity to a protected area/s with a viable tiger population; or
- Be part of a conservation landscape (e.g. of protected areas and other lands with suitable tiger habitat) which in total contains a viable or significant population (see guidance note A)

 **Guidance note E**
Core areas

Critical tiger habitats, e.g. core areas, or similar conservation areas etc, are present at the site. Such areas are defined as having:

- Optimum conditions for tiger and prey habitat
- Minimal human disturbance (e.g. only patrols, research activities take place) and no human settlement
- Evidence of tiger breeding (e.g. females with cubs)
- High prey density

 **Guidance note F**
Buffer zones

Buffer zones are areas where:

- Human use including tourism is managed to mitigate impact on tigers (see also Standard 14);
- Suitable mechanisms are in place to mitigate human–wildlife conflict (see also Standard 11).

Social, cultural and spiritual values and/or benefits:

Criteria 1.2.7: Social, cultural and spiritual values and/or benefits of the tiger conservation area have been identified.

Criteria 1.2.8: The impacts (e.g. requirements for access to sacred sites within core areas) and implications (e.g. where tigers are identified as national icons) of social, cultural and spiritual values and/or benefits are considered in management planning (see also Standard 4.1), in particular where they contribute to tiger conservation.


Criteria 1.2.9: Social, cultural and spiritual values and/or benefits and their relationship with tiger conservation are interpreted and shared with communities and stakeholders.

Economic values and/or benefits

Criteria 1.2.10: Direct and indirect economic values and/or benefits (e.g. non-timber forest products, ecotourism) generated by the tiger conservation area have been identified where possible.

Criteria 1.2.11: If potential economic values and/or benefits are identified, plans are in place to realize the most feasible of these values and/or benefits within the timeframe of the current management plan (see also Standard 4.1) and are aligned with tigers as a conservation target (see also Standard 1.1).

Criteria 1.2.12: Economic values and/or benefits and their relationship with tiger conservation are interpreted and shared with communities and stakeholders.

 **Element 2: Area design**
 **Standard 2.1: Critical tiger habitats, e.g. core areas, or similar conservation areas, are recognized, acknowledged, managed and maintained.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning, process and outcomes)

Criteria 2.1.1: Critical tiger habitats are defined, mapped and gazetted (where appropriate) (see also Standard 3.1 and guidance note E).

Criteria 2.1.2: Integrity of critical tiger habitats should be managed and maintained both in the planning process and operationally (see also Standard 4.1).

 **Standard 2.2: Buffer zones with tiger presence are recognized, acknowledged, managed and maintained.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning, process and outcomes)

Criteria 2.2.1: Buffer zones are defined, mapped and gazetted (where appropriate) (see also Standard 3.1 and guidance note F).

Criteria 2.2.2: The buffer zone is managed and maintained to prevent the existence of hard edges (e.g. boundaries where a forested protected area meets agricultural fields immediately outside the boundary) in core areas (see also Standard 4.1).

 Evidence Check List
1.2.1-12: Management plan

1.2.1-3: Reports on ecosystem services or project proposals for evaluations and if available public meeting reports; publicly available information (in local languages and appropriate in terms of cultural norms, gender, age group, etc.), e.g. printed materials, multimedia, local outreach programmes, etc. (see also Standard 12.7)

1.2.4 -9: Reports of evaluations (e.g. ethnobotanical studies, documentation of customary laws, traditional ecological knowledge) – in particular noting tiger-specific cultural/spiritual values; interpretation of the area (e.g. published guides, websites, visitor centres, information provided by local guides, etc.) includes information (where culturally applicable) on cultural and spiritual values (in particular regarding tigers), celebrations, special events, etc. that are important locally, nationally or internationally (e.g. Global Tiger Day)

1.2.10-12: Economic valuations or plans to undertake evaluations

 Evidence Check List

2.1.1-2: Management/zoning plan and supporting maps and monitoring data e.g. census reports

 Evidence Check List

2.2.1-2: Management plan (or buffer zone specific plan) and supporting maps and monitoring data; evidence of fund agreements for things such as compensation/relief schemes (see also Standard 11.1)

 Evidence Check List

2.3.1-2: Zoning plan (ideally within management plan)

Best practice example: Sundarbans management zones, Bangladesh

The Sundarbans National Park in Bangladesh has four zones:

- i) Strict protection zone: an area of rich biodiversity. The strict protection zone allows for scientific studies and research and controlled outdoor recreation activities.
- ii) Rehabilitation zone: a degraded area being restored to natural habitat. Natural regeneration is aided with controlled fire, plantations with indigenous species, and sometimes exotic species to assist the restoration process.
- iii) Recreational zone: recreation, tourism, education or environmental awareness values are allowed with priority on sustainable conservation and ecotourism.
- iv) Special use zone: contains existing infrastructures and fenced compounds and installations of natural importance such as Bangladesh Naval Base and Bangladesh Port Authority at Nilkamal inside the south sanctuary.


Source: Halder, N.K. 2011. Scientific approach for Tiger Conservation in the Sundarbans. Tiger Paper, 38:4.

 **Standard 2.3: Other management zones are recognized, acknowledged, managed and maintained.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning, process and outcomes)

Criteria 2.3.1: Other management zones (e.g. multiple use zones, community use zones, tourism zones, etc.) are defined, mapped and gazetted where necessary.

Criteria 2.3.2: Management objectives designed and maintained for these zones are aligned and compatible with tiger conservation, and ensure the integrity of the core areas and buffer zones (see also Standards 1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 4 and 16.2).

 **Standard 2.4: Areas critical to tigers outside the area are identified and opportunities to engage in tiger conservation are maximized.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning, process and outcomes)

Criteria 2.4.1: Relevant agencies and stakeholders are identified and engaged in landscape-scale planning (e.g. develop suitable and/or potential corridors or other areas conducive to tiger conservation) (see also Standards 2.2, 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5).

Criteria 2.4.2: Where important and applicable unprotected tiger habitats and corridors adjacent to the tiger conservation area have been identified, efforts are under way to include them in the conservation / protected area.

Criteria 2.4.3: Infrastructure development that could impact the tiger conservation area has been assessed and all possible mitigation actions planned (see guidance note G).

 **Guidance note G**
Smart green infrastructure

A guide to Smart Green Infrastructure in Tiger Range Countries: A Multi-Level Approach is available from: www.globaltigerinitiative.org

 **Evidence Check List**

2.4.1-3: Regional development policies/plans and processes, supporting maps; evidence of participation in planning of infrastructure development

 **Evidence Check List**

2.5.1-3: Policies, plans, transboundary agreements and supporting maps and monitoring reports; evidence of communications with neighbouring protected areas

 **Evidence Check List**

3.1.1. Legal gazettelement, documentation, governance agreement (e.g. act, binding agreement)

3.1.2 Legal gazettelement, documentation, maps

3.1.3 Evidence of conflict resolution processes over any boundary/access/governance disputes

 **Evidence Check List**

3.2.1-2 Legal instruments; data relating to judicial processes (e.g. register of infringements and follow-up actions and outcomes; numbers of arrests, prosecution, repeat convictions, etc.)

 **Evidence Check List**

3.3.1 -2 Training plans, policies, reports/proceedings or workshops on law enforcement; legal documentation easily accessible to conservation / protected area staff

3.3.3 Examples of agreements with communities not to visit an area based on good relationships

3.3.4 Policies on consulting legal expertise

 **Standard 2.5: Transboundary connectivity opportunities are maximized for tiger conservation.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning, process and outcomes)

Criteria 2.5.1: Relevant agencies and stakeholders are identified and engaged to develop transboundary (i.e. political boundaries with neighbouring states or countries) agreements conducive to tiger conservation (see also Standard 4.5).

Criteria 2.5.2: Opportunities to develop local agreements on joint management actions have been explored (see also Standard 4.5).

Criteria 2.5.3: Local agreements on joint management, where identified, are implemented, monitored, assessed and adapted (see also Standard 4.5).

 **Element 3: Legal status, regulation and compliance**
 **Standard 3.1: The area has legal status and is gazetted.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: context and planning)

Criteria 3.1.1: The area has legal status that enables effective tiger conservation.

Criteria 3.1.2: The physical boundaries of the area are defined, mapped and gazetted (see also Standards 2.1 and 2.2).

Criteria 3.1.3: Tenure and legal boundary disputes related to the area have been resolved or mitigated to a level where there is no impediment to effective management.


 **Standard 3.2: Legal frameworks and regulations meet the requirements of management.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework element: context)

Criteria 3.2.1: Legal frameworks supporting the area are effective in dealing with current levels of illegal activity.

Criteria 3.2.2: Tigers and their prey are specifically protected by law (note: this does not discount activities such as hunting where these are managed sustainably and fall within the legal framework).

Criteria 3.2.3: Legal protection frameworks are robust and the area is not threatened by pressures such as road, rail, mining or other infrastructure projects.

 **Standard 3.3: The area has a system of law enforcement which ensures legal compliance.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework element: context and process)

Criteria 3.3.1: Staff have a sound knowledge of relevant national and international legal instruments (see also Standard 3.2).

Criteria 3.3.2: Legal instruments empower staff to take legal action, e.g. make arrests (see also Standard 3.2).

Criteria 3.3.3: Where necessary, staff take action to mitigate lack of effective legal instruments (e.g. where community actions need to be modified to protect tigers and ensure minimal HWC, but no legal instrument is suitable).

Criteria 3.3.4: The area has access to legal expertise.

Pillar B

MANAGEMENT

Evidence Check List

4.1.1 Management system (e.g. a management plan, series of specific plans or clearly documented management systems)

Guidance note H

Management plan/system

A management plan (or series of plans that make up the overall system of management) should:

- Set realistic priorities, strategies and actions (e.g. goals and objectives) that provides an adequate decision -making framework and policy environment for the tiger conservation area (i.e. clearly specifies desired outcomes of management) (see also Standard 5.1);
- Include tiger conservation as a major target (see also Standards 1.1 and 4.3);
- Identify the values (ecological, biological, social, cultural and economic) of the area (see also Standard 1.2);
- Include specific plans for the core, buffer and other management

Element 4: Management planning

Standard 4.1: Up-to-date management plans/systems are in place.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework element: planning)

Criteria 4.1.1: The tiger conservation area has an up-to-date management plan/system (i.e. a 5-10 year strategic plan for managing the area) (see also Standard 1.1 and guidance note H).

Criteria 4.1.2: Management plan is aligned to national action plans and with business plan, where business plan exists (see also Standards 9.4).

zones where appropriate (see also Standards 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3);

- Identify (where appropriate) transboundary connectivity and opportunities for joint management (see also Standards 2.4, 2.5 and 4.5);
- Include boundary management (see also Standard 5.2);
- Address key threats and issues impacting on the area's values (specifically tiger values) and achievement of objectives, e.g. HWC (see also Standard 11.1); conflicts and tensions (see also Standard 12.1); benefit sharing (see also Standard 12.5); cultural identity (see also Standard 12.6); outreach activities (see also Standard 12.7); visitor management (see also Standard 14.4); protection strategies (see

also Standard 15.1);

- Clearly describe the types and levels of permitted activities which are compatible with the conservation of the major values of the area (see standard 13.2);
- Be known and accessible to all staff (see also Standard 7.1);
- Be linked to annual operational plans (see also Standard 6.1) and budgets (see guidance note J and Standards 9.2 and 9.3);
- Include a processes for assessment, review and adjustment during the life of the plan based on monitoring and assessment results (adaptive management – see also Standards 4.4 and 10);
- Include a process to renew the plan on a timely basis.

Evidence Check List

4.2.1 Stakeholder analysis, including a list of stakeholders; mechanisms for engagement for different genders, ages, etc. in management processes

4.2.2 Documentation showing that the planning process has included public consultation with stakeholders; stakeholder committees or working groups formed to assist with related plans/assessments

Standard 4.2: Management planning is developed with community and stakeholder involvement.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning)

Criteria 4.2.1: Communities and other stakeholders including all relevant staff have been identified (see also Standards 12.4 and 13).

Criteria 4.2.2: Community and stakeholder involvement in management planning, and management effectiveness assessment, is planned, implemented, monitored, assessed and adapted (see also Standards 4.2, 6.3 and 12.4).

Standard 4.3: A tiger conservation plan exists.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework element: planning)

Criteria 4.3.1: Specific requirements and management needs of tigers have been considered in the management planning process (see also Standards 1.1 and 16.2), e.g. increased security (see also Standard 15); specialized monitoring (see also Standard 17); safety of people in and around the area (see also Standard 11).

 Evidence Check List

4.4.1-2 Management plan/system and management effectiveness evaluation; evidence of adaptive management as evaluation results are utilized

 Evidence Check List

4.5.1 Management plans, regular meetings/correspondence, policies/MOUs, and other evidence such as media reports, newsletters, other documents of cooperation

 Evidence Check List


4.6.1 Plans and content; regional/district development plans

 Evidence Check List

5.1.1 Management plan
5.1.2 Links between management plan and annual operational plan; management plan implementation monitoring

 Evidence Check List

5.2.1 Means of demarcation documented; operational plans and patrol report; minutes/agreements from meetings with communities on seasonal/time restrictions and arrangements
5.2.2 Law enforcement monitoring reports on specific boundary patrolling and actions

 **Standard 4.4: Systems for assessing management effectiveness are in place.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning, outputs and outcomes)


Criteria 4.4.1: Management plan/system includes details of planned assessments, e.g. timing, frequency (e.g. 1-3 years), methodology and implementation of findings (see also Standards 4.1 and 10).

Criteria 4.4.2: Management effectiveness assessment results are fed back into management planning (see also Standard 4.1 and 10).

 **Standard 4.5: Management plan/systems are integrated with neighbouring conservation areas.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: context and planning)

Criteria 4.5.1: Tiger conservation areas which include significant administrative boundaries (national or international) have integrated their plans where possible, e.g. to ensure sharing of appropriate intelligence and cooperating on enforcement actions, synchronized monitoring, landscape planning including ecological connectivity, etc. (see also Standard 2.5).

 **Standard 4.6: Management plan/systems are integrated with other relevant plans.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: context, planning, outputs and outcomes)

Criteria 4.6.1: Other relevant plans (e.g. specific plans for NGO-funded projects, regional/district development plans, national tourism plans, etc.) are known and integrated with, or where this is not possible do not impede, management (see also Standard 2.4).

 **Element 5: Management plan/system implementation**

 **Standard 5.1: The management plan/system forms the basis for implementation of conservation activities.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: output and outcome)

Criteria 5.1.1: The management plan/system sets realistic priorities, strategies and actions that facilitate management, annual operational planning (see also Standard 6.1) and allocation of resources (see also Standard 6.2).

Criteria 5.1.2: All plans concerned with management are integrated (e.g. HWC plan, management plan, annual operational plan, tourism plan, monitoring plan, tiger conservation plan, species action plan, etc.).

 **Standard 5.2: The physical boundaries of the area are managed.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning, processes and outcome)

Criteria 5.2.1: The physical boundaries (see also Standard 2) of the tiger conservation area are managed (see guidance note I).

Criteria 5.2.2: Boundary encroachment is monitored (using a law enforcement monitoring system such as SMART, MIST, etc.) and managed (see also Standards 15.1 and 15.2).

 Guidance note I
Boundary management

Boundaries should be: mapped; agreed with all relevant stakeholders; defined; publicly available; clearly and effectively demarcated on the ground and actively promoted (or demarcation plans should identify steps to be taken to manage or complete demarcation).

Boundary management should include: policies, plans and/or regulations which support effective boundary management, e.g. community resource use plans, tour operators' right to traverse, rights of way, etc.; access arrangements that are clearly defined, agreed upon and monitored (see also Standard 3);

maintenance plans that include boundary demarcation and upkeep; reviews of effectiveness of management (and be adaptable if necessary).

see internationalrangers.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Ranger-Code-of-Conduct-Version-1.0_English1.pdf

 Guidance note J
Operational plans


Operational plans should:

- Operationalize strategic directions set out in the management plan/system;
- Link to and inform annual budgeting;
- Be monitored on a monthly/quarterly basis

 **Element 6: Management processes**
 **Standard 6.1: Annual operational plans are in place.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning, process and outcome)

Criteria 6.1.1: Annual operational plans linked to the management plan/system (see also Standard 4) are planned, implemented, monitored, assessed and adapted (see guidance note J).

 **Standard 6.2: Budget and financial disbursement systems are in place.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning, process, inputs and outputs)

Criteria 6.2.1: Accurate, effective, planned budgeting systems are linked to the management plan and annual operational plan (see also Standards 4.1 and 6.1).

Criteria 6.2.2: Efficient systems for receiving and utilizing funds are in place and monitored (e.g. funding from governments, donors, etc.).

 **Standard 6.3: Management is transparent and accountable.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning, process and outcomes)

Criteria 6.3.1: Systems are in place to ensure accessible and timely dissemination of information on management decisions and actions to local communities and other stakeholders (see also Standard 4.2).

Criteria 6.3.2: Governance structures responsible for management planning and implementation are accepted and publicly available (i.e. who is responsible for the different elements of management).

Criteria 6.3.3: Managers demonstrate leadership qualities which support a best practice approach to management, are held accountable for deliverables within the management plan, and inspire and encourage staff (see Standard 10.2).

Criteria 6.3.4: Gender equity in management is recognized and encouraged.

Criteria 6.3.5: A human rights approach to management is recognized and encouraged.

Criteria 6.3.6: A code of conduct for rangers, or equivalent, is in place and follows, or is equivalent to, the "Ranger Code of conduct" developed by the International Ranger Federation

 Evidence Check List

6.1.1 Annual operational plan and reports on previous implementation; systems in place to monitor and report implementation of the outputs from the work programme; monthly work plan

 Evidence Check List

6.2.1-2 Budget and budgeting systems (e.g. software used)

 Evidence Check List

6.3.1 Systems of information dissemination

6.3.2 Meetings, workshops, public charters, websites

6.3.3 Best practices recorded

6.3.5 Policy documents, management plan, community and stakeholder evidence

6.3.6 Code of conduct and evidence of code implementation



Evidence Check List

6.4.1 Administration systems in place



Evidence Check List

6.5.1 Complaints management system



Evidence Check List

7.1.1 Proportion of staff positions filled as recommended in assessment report

7.1.2 Proportion of staff working on conservation (e.g. research, enforcement)

7.1.3-5 Job descriptions, etc.



Standard 6.4: Administrative systems are in place.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning, process and outputs)

Criteria 6.4.1: Administration systems include all of the following:

- Human resources management
- Health and safety systems
- Operational controls
- Financial management
- Stock control and asset management
- Green management policies and pollution control (see also Standard 8.1).



Standard 6.5: Complaint procedures are in place.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework element: process)

Criteria 6.5.1: Transparent and equitable systems are in place for handling complaints and comments about management from all stakeholders.



Element 7: Staffing (full-time and part-time)



Standard 7.1: Staff are employed to operationalize the annual operational plan/management plan.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: inputs and process)

Criteria 7.1.1: Staffing needs are assessed according to the strategies and actions laid out in the management plan (see also Standard 4.1).

Criteria 7.1.2: Staff are in place to meet the needs assessed for effective management.

Criteria 7.1.3: Staffing structure is clearly defined (e.g. reporting hierarchies, decision-making responsibilities).

Criteria 7.1.4: Terms of reference (TORs)/job descriptions are in place for all full-time and part-time positions.

Criteria 7.1.5: Processes are in place to ensure staff are familiar with the management plan (see also Standard 5.1).

Best practice example: Competences for protected area practitioners

IUCN WCPA has developed a *Global Register of Competences for Protected Area Practitioners* as the cornerstone of a global initiative for professionalising protected area management. The Register is a near-comprehensive list of 300 skills and associated knowledge requirements (competences) regularly required in protected areas and in associated work around the world. The competences are organised according to fifteen functions of modern protected area work and four levels of staff, from senior officials to field workers. Along with the register, the publication includes an overview of competence based approaches to capacity development and a detailed user guide. The Register provides a starting point for managers and human resource professionals to plan and manage staffing of protected areas. The Competence Register is designed as a 'tool not a rule', flexible and adaptable to local needs and priorities. It is useful to anyone involved in managing protected areas and biodiversity; senior officials, site staff, local communities, NGOs, trainers and educators and project staff.

For more information: www.iucn.org/theme/protected-areas/publications/technical-reports



Evidence Check List

7.2.1 Staff hired with capacity to fulfil TORs

7.2.2-3 Training programmes, training opportunities, etc.



Evidence Check List

7.3.1-2 Staff contracts, staffing policies

7.3.3 Awards systems, etc. in place



Evidence Check List

8.1.1-2 Inventory, development plans, placement and condition of infrastructure



Guidance note K

Environmentally friendly infrastructure

- A guide to Smart Green Infrastructure in Tiger Range Countries: A Multi-Level Approach is available from: www.globaltigerinitiative.org
- For more information on ecological footprints see: www.footprintnetwork.org/en/index.php/GFN/page/footprint_basics_overview



Evidence Check List

8.2.1 Management plan, codes, contracts, and infrastructure development plans



Standard 7.2: Trained staff are in place to facilitate management.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: inputs and process)

Criteria 7.2.1: Management positions are filled with staff with appropriate capacity.

Criteria 7.2.2: Annual capacity development programmes are a regular feature of staff development (e.g. training opportunities) (see Standard 15.5).

Criteria 7.2.3: Staff are aware of new and progressive techniques/technology and encouraged to use these in work activities.



Standard 7.3: Staff insurance/ex-gratia and remuneration systems are in place.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: inputs and process)

Criteria 7.3.1: All staff (including part-time staff and staff not on contract) are adequately covered by insurances (e.g. health insurance, life insurance, or ex-gratia scheme from within/outside agencies).

Criteria 7.3.2: Staff pay recognizes qualifications, expertise, working hours and conditions.

Criteria 7.3.3: Systems are in place to recognize staff excellence (e.g. certificates, awards, study leave).



Element 8: Infrastructure, equipment and facilities



Standard 8.1: Management infrastructure is in place and operational.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning and inputs)

Criteria 8.1.1: Infrastructure (e.g. roads for management and tourism, trails, boat landings, bridges, energy sources, staff headquarters, guard frontline staff posts, check gates etc.) is adequate (in terms of quantity and quality) and strategically located, or plans are in place to develop infrastructure, to ensure effective implementation of the management plan.

Criteria 8.1.2: Investment in infrastructure is prioritised according to management/operational plan implementation.



Standard 8.2: Infrastructure is constructed and maintained to avoid and/or mitigate conservation impact.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning and outcomes)

Criteria 8.2.1: Infrastructure for management and other purposes (e.g. tourism) should:

- Avoid ecologically sensitive habitats;
- Limit visual impacts;
- Ensure building policies are in line with other CA|TS standards (e.g. re invasive species, etc.) (Standard 16.4);
- Include environmentally friendly concepts such as ecological footprint, waste and pollution management, green infrastructure (see guidance note K).

**Evidence Check List**

8.3.1. Inventory, placement and condition of facilities

**Evidence Check List**

8.4.1 Inventory, placement and condition of equipment

**Evidence Check List**

8.5.1. Maintenance plans, manuals, log books, etc

**Evidence Check List**

9.1.1 Budget and reporting (e.g. UNDP's Financial Sustainability Scorecard for National Systems of Protected Areas)

9.1.2 Donor guarantees, funding agreements

**Standard 8.3: Staff facilities are in place and operational.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework element: inputs)

Criteria 8.3.1: Facilities for staff (head quarters and field staff) should include:

- Medical facilities
- Mental health assessments and redressal mechanisms (if relevant)
- Hostels/quarters/Anti-poaching camps-including separate facilities for women
- Easy access to rations
- Kitchens with appropriate facilities (e.g. alternative energy)
- Safe drinking water
- Toilet facilities-if relevant, gender sensitive and with proper sanitation support
- Bedding facilities
- Storage facilities
- Solar/grid electricity connections
- Proper ventilation
- Room heating/cooling facilities
- Mobile power/chargers.
- Safety systems for guarding against wildlife/wildlife criminals e.g. elephant proof trenches, electric fence etc.
- Knowledge and Entertainment facilities
- Staff family support mechanism e.g. as in police lines
- Utility tools

**Standard 8.4: Equipment and services are in place.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework element: inputs)

Criteria 8.4.1: Equipment investment is prioritised according to the management/operational plan; basic equipment and services include:

- Equipment: vehicles (cars, motorcycles, bicycles, boats, etc.); computers; medical equipment; field gear (e.g. compass, backpack, boots, map, GPS, cameras, firearms); wildlife forensics/sample collection kits and surveillance equipment;
- Services: power; internet access, communications (radios, walkie talkies, mobile phones, etc.).

Criteria 8.4.2: An evacuation plan exists for injured field staff, visitors, etc.

**Standard 8.5: Infrastructure, facilities and equipment are maintained.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework element: process)

Criteria 8.5.1: Infrastructure, facilities and equipment are regularly and well maintained, and replaced when necessary.

**Element 9: Sustainability of financial resources****Standard 9.1: Finances are sustainable.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: inputs and process)

Criteria 9.1.1: Government funding is adequate and sustainable to allow basic implementation of the annual operational plan.

Criteria 9.1.2: If additional funding (e.g. NGO, donor funding, etc.) cash/kind is required for full implementation of the annual operational plan, adequacy and sustainability of funding capacity is secured.



Evidence Check List

9.2.1 Budget linked to management plan

Standard 9.2: Budget is linked to management priorities.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: inputs and process)

Criteria 9.2.1: Budgets are linked to management plan/annual operational plan priorities and include contingency planning for emergency situations (Standard 6.1).



Evidence Check List

9.3.1 Budgets and funding proposals

Standard 9.3: Additional revenue streams are maximized.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: inputs and process)

Criteria 9.3.1: Ability to leverage income from, and collaborate closely with, other sources (e.g. NGOs, other donors, payment for ecosystem services, additional activities (e.g. tourism), other government departments, species conservation programmes, etc.) is well developed.



Evidence Check List

9.4.1 Business plan

Standard 9.4: Business plans are developed and implemented where necessary.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning, processes, outputs and outcomes)

Criteria 9.4.1: A business plan is developed, implemented, monitored, assessed and adapted where necessary (e.g. where large ecotourism developments are in place or planned) (see also Standard 4.1).

Element 10: Adaptive management (feedback loop)



Evidence Check List

10.1.1-2 Documentary evidence

Standard 10.1: Management is adaptive.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning, process and outcomes)

Criteria 10.1.1: Management plans/systems are flexible enough to implement the findings of management effectiveness assessments (see also Standards 4.1 and 4.5), local and indigenous knowledge, monitoring and research results, including impacts of climate change, and consideration of climate-change vulnerability assessments including considered historical changes and future projections in social, ecological and climate conditions (see also Standards 16 and 17), and any changes in decision making processes (e.g. changes in legislation).

Standard 10.2: Best practices are recorded.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: process, outputs and outcomes)

Criteria 10.2.1: Best practices are documented and disseminated (e.g. video interviews, news stories, the IUCN Panorama website etc.).

Pillar C

COMMUNITY



Evidence Check List

11.1.1-2 Management plan; stakeholder evidence; conflict incident records; plans for minimizing HWC; research into prevention, mitigation and reporting strategies, etc.; existence of prevention activities such as fencing, etc.; land use planning/forest management/alternative energy/livelihood strategies which minimize contact, and reduce the need to enter the forest, or buffer households from the impacts of HWC, etc.

11.1.2 HWC Management reports (NGO and/or government), community corroboration, endowment fund for HWC

11.1.3 Plans, records of community meetings and agreements



Evidence Check List

12.1.1 Quantitative measurement, interviews with managers and stakeholders including civil society groups, resolving tenure conflicts

12.1.2-3 Conflict resolution policies/strategies, evidence of compensation programmes /payments

Element 11: Human–wildlife conflict (HWC)



Standard 11.1: Effective mechanisms for dealing with human-wildlife conflict (HWC) are in place.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning and process)

Criteria 11.1.1: Appropriate management strategies (including policy, prevention, mitigation, responses and understanding the conflict) are planned and implemented including with external partners (if relevant) (see guidance note L).

Criteria 11.1.2: Monitoring and assessment of HWC management strategies is ongoing and strategies are adapted according to monitoring results.

Criteria 11.1.3: Adequate, consistent, timely, transparent and sustainable compensation/interim relief schemes (e.g. compensation measures, insurances, etc.) are in place and communicated with targeted local residents (e.g. those experiencing the worst HWC) (see also Standard 2.2).

Criteria 11.1.4: Community involvement occurs at all stages in the development and implementation of HWC strategies and compensation schemes, and is monitored to assess community satisfaction (ideally with gender-disaggregated results) of strategies and compensation schemes.

Element 12: Community relations



Standard 12.1: Conflicts or tensions related to the area are acknowledged and addressed.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: context, planning, process and outputs)

Criteria 12.1.1: If relevant conflict (e.g. number of complaints, anti-social behaviour linked to discontent related to the tiger conservation area, physical clashes per year between local people and area staff, civil society demonstrations or incidents of unrest targeted at the area, tension related to tenure and resource use, relocation – see also Standard 12.3) is recognized and understood (e.g. root causes, who is involved, what are the key issues, etc.) and recorded.

Criteria 12.1.2: Processes for managing conflict are in place (e.g. visits, meetings, dialogue, compensation mechanisms, protocol for dealing with complaints).

Criteria 12.1.3: Monitoring of conflict resolution measures is in place, and measures are adapted if necessary as the result of monitoring and assessment.

Guidance note L

HWC strategies

The baseline context for assessing the effectiveness of human-wildlife conflict (HWC) strategies should be established using tools such as the [IUCN SSC Guidelines on Human-Wildlife Conflict and Coexistence](#) to understand conflict profiles, drivers and stakeholder perspectives. Strategies should consider approaches both inside and outside protected areas and should specifically consider:

- **Collaboration:** Where different agencies are involved in management, effective collaboration between agencies should be in place and harmonization of strategies should be an objective. This includes government wildlife agencies, local government, NGOs, researchers and community leadership.
- **Local knowledge:** HWC strategies should include surveys and participatory processes with local people to assess views on existing conflicts, perceptions and preferences for mitigation. Local

knowledge should inform both assessment and design of responses.

- **Land-use:** Land-use policies should prevent and mitigate HWC, including ensuring wildlife habitats, corridors or buffer zones are maintained; anticipating expansion of agriculture, infrastructure etc; and integrating spatial planning to avoid new conflicts.
- **Outreach:** Community outreach programmes should be in place to ensure/increase understanding of HWC, the nature of wildlife behaviour, risk, trade-offs, rights and responsibilities. Such programmes help build trust, [raise awareness of compensation / insurance schemes](#), prevention measures, and collaborative initiatives.

Strategies should include co-designed mitigation measures:

- **Rapid Response Teams (or similar):** to respond quickly to conflict incidents: verifying damages, assisting local people, investigating,

preventing escalation. These teams should have trained members, clear protocols, accepted by communities.

- **Financial instruments:** such as [compensation schemes or insurance schemes](#) so that people suffering loss (livestock, crops, property, injury) are not left entirely exposed. These should be equitable, timely, with clear eligibility and transparent administration.
- **Monitoring and evaluation:** should be built in measuring not only the incidence of conflict and damages, but also community perceptions / tolerance, speed of response, effectiveness of mitigation, cost, etc. [Adaptation](#) should be possible as more data emerges.
- **Harmonised policy frameworks:** Legislation, regulations and national/local HWC strategies should embed these collaborative, participatory and financial mitigation elements; policies should define roles, responsibilities, standards for response, compensation etc.

**Evidence Check List**

12.2.1 Relocation plans

12.2.2 Support package implementation and monitoring reports

**Evidence Check List**

12.3.1 Maps, surveys, monitoring data

12.3.2 Restoration plans and quantitative monitoring data showing status and trends; census data of wildlife

**Standard 12.2: Relocation processes are voluntary, equitable and monitored.***

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: process and outcomes)

Criteria 12.2.1: Any relocation should be undertaken only with:

- Free (i.e. voluntary), prior, informed consent;
- Full representation at community level to ensure equity in decision making;
- Fair compensation packages (e.g. in kind or financial);
- The rationale for relocation being clearly stated and communicated to local communities (see also Standard 12.3).

Criteria 12.2.2: Ongoing monitoring (e.g. up to five years after relocation) of commitments to relocated communities is in place.

**Standard 12.3: Conservation impacts on the evacuated area are identified, managed and monitored.***

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning, process and outcomes)

Criteria 12.3.1: Biological rationale for relocation needs to be clearly stated and communicated to local communities.

Criteria 12.3.2: Restoration plans for the evacuated area are developed, implemented and monitored (e.g. re-growth, re-use by tigers and prey).

**Evidence Check List**

12.4 Governance arrangements (e.g. co-management); stakeholder involvement in management planning (see also Standard 4.2) and management effectiveness assessment, etc.; involvement of local people in users' committees; evidence of democratic local community institutions in the tiger conservation area

**Evidence Check List**

12.5.1 Government policy on benefit sharing in place and evidence of implementation in monitoring reports
12.5.2 Social/outreach programmes and monitoring data on livelihoods, income, resource use, functioning of the community

**Standard 12.4: Involvement and engagement of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in governance.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning, process and outcomes)

Criteria 12.4.1: The site's local governance structures and mechanisms recognise the legitimate rights of Indigenous Peoples

Criteria 12.4.2: The site's local governance structures and mechanisms recognise the legitimate rights of local communities.

Criteria 12.4.3: Community consultation and involvement in the management of the tiger conservation area/buffer zone is appropriate, clearly planned, implemented, monitored, assessed and documented (see also Standard 4.2).

Criteria 12.4.4: Comprehensive safeguarding systems are in place

**Standard 12.5: Benefit-sharing/alternative livelihood mechanisms are in place and monitored.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning, process, outputs and outcomes)

Criteria 12.5.1: If in place, government policy on benefit sharing / alternative livelihoods is implemented, monitored and assessed by the tiger conservation area.

Criteria 12.5.2: Approaches undertaken by the tiger conservation area for sharing benefits/alternative livelihoods with communities (e.g. tourism revenue generated and shared) are clearly planned, implemented, monitored, assessed, adapted and documented (see also Standard 4.2).

 Guidance note M

Understanding cultural identity

Every effort should be made to understand cultural issues relating to the tiger conservation area:

- The written and oral history of land/water use and cultural associations should be gathered and recorded, and should inform

area management where appropriate.

- Local knowledge (also variously referred to as traditional, indigenous, community, customary or practical knowledge) should be incorporated into management plans and monitoring.

The IUCN WCPA Specialist Group on Cultural and Spiritual Values of Protected Areas (www.fsd.nl/csvpa) seeks to identify, define, and provide guidelines for managing the cultural and spiritual dimensions of protected areas and provides many resources on its website, including a set of management principles.

Best practice example: Social assessment for protected areas

Protected areas can have positive and negative, both real and perceived, social impacts on local people. Social impact assessment is the process of analysing and managing the intended and unintended social consequences of planned interventions such as protected area management. The Social Assessment for Protected Areas (SAPA) methodology has been developed to provide a relatively simple and low cost methodology for assessing impacts of protected area management and related conservation and development activities on the wellbeing of communities living within and around the area. It is a multi-stakeholder assessment that aims to help increase and more equitably share positive social impacts, and reduce negative social impacts. It can be used with protected areas of any kind, including those managed and governed by government agencies, communities and the private sector.

For more information: pubs.iied.org/14659IIED/?k=equity

 Evidence Check List

12.6.1 Policies and practice in relation to cultural identity including studies and assessments on cultural values; assessments/mapping of sacred sites; ethnobotanical studies

12.6.2 Management plans, monitoring and zoning

 **Standard 12.6: Cultural identity is not compromised.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: process and outcomes)

Criteria 12.6.1: Cultural values (e.g. local traditions, traditional rights and laws, cultural and religious uses of sites, etc.) are respected in protected area management wherever possible (e.g. when not in contradiction with national laws) (see guidance note M).

Criteria 12.6.2: Management activities restrict threats and enable protection of cultural values (e.g. access to sacred sites, trees, temples, springs, etc.) (see also Standard 1.2) where possible.

 **Standard 12.7: Outreach and awareness programmes are in place and monitored.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning, process, outputs and outcomes)

Criteria 12.7.1: Outreach activities (e.g. community visits to protected area, environmental clubs, local events, school visits, leaflets, videos) are planned and include a focus on tiger conservation (see also Standard 4.1).

Criteria 12.7.2: Conservation outcomes for community projects are defined and monitored.

 Evidence Check List

12.7.1 Number of activities and materials produced, media coverage, specialist staff



Evidence Check List

13.1.1 Research agreements, guidance on filming, bioprospecting agreements

13.1.2 Meeting reports, shared work programmes, activity reports

13.2 Documented description of permitted uses in management plan or equivalent, monitoring records of resource use, permits systems or zoning re resource use, records of studies or meetings with local stakeholders re resource use management

Element 13: Stakeholder relationships



Standard 13.1: Processes are in place to coordinate and cooperate with communities and other stakeholders who may impact area management.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework element: process)

Criteria 13.1.1: Agreements are in place to protect the ecological, biological, social, cultural and economic values from impacts of research activity in the tiger conservation area (e.g. to protect from biopiracy, maintain dignity of communities in developmental research and activities, etc.) (see also Standard 2).

Criteria 13.1.2: Coordination and cooperation with communities and other stakeholders (e.g. researchers, NGOs, service providers, etc.) includes consultation meetings; shared work programmes; cooperation in management planning; cooperative working relationships (e.g. sharing activities, work programming, resource allocation) (see also Standards 4.2 and 12.4).



Standard 13.2: Resource use in the area is managed to balance conservation objectives and local users needs.

Criteria 13.2.1: The needs of resource users are known and management respects this need insofar as this is compatible with the achievement of areas objectives.

Criteria 13.2.2: The types and levels of permitted activities are clearly described and uses and access are managed to minimise harm to the major site values, for example through permits, zoning etc.

Best practice example: Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC)

Engagement with Indigenous Peoples and local communities should follow the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the IUCN Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) Standard on Indigenous Peoples

The principle of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) must guide all decision-making processes that affect land, resources, and livelihoods.

FPIC is a specific right that pertains to Indigenous Peoples and is recognised in UNDRIP and in the 16 framework principles. It ensures Indigenous Peoples the right to give or withhold

consent to a project that may affect them or their territories. Once they have given their consent, they can withdraw it at any stage. Furthermore, FPIC enables Indigenous Peoples to negotiate the conditions under which the project will be designed, implemented, monitored and evaluated. This is also embedded within the universal right to self-determination.

*Relocation

CAITS does not endorse relocation as best practice management, but accepts that there may be exceptional cases where relocation with free prior informed consent may take place and thus should be well-managed and monitored.

Pillar D

TOURISM

Optional – this pillar is only applicable for tiger conservation areas with major tourism objectives.

Element 14: Tourism and interpretation

Evidence Check List

14.1.1 Tourism plans and programmes

Standard 14.1: Tourism facilities are in place where appropriate.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning, processes, outputs and outcomes)

Criteria 14.1.1: Tourism facilities (e.g. number of guides and organized activities, safaris, canoe trips, etc.; and physical facilities such as parking, toilets, accommodation/hotels, walking trails, etc.) are designed to have minimal impact on habitat and wildlife.

Evidence Check List

14.2.1 Interpretation and presentation programmes identify and assess interpretation audiences (demographically, geographically and culturally)

14.2.2 Physical interpretation centre/information, websites, published guides, etc.

14.2.3 Website

14.2.4-5 Qualified interpretation professionals in place and/or training programmes for guides working in the protected area, codes of conduct, etc.

Standard 14.2: Interpretation facilities are in place where appropriate.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning, processes and outputs)

Criteria 14.2.1: Interpretation needs are understood (e.g. the needs of difference audiences, age groups, etc.) (see guidance note N).

Criteria 14.2.2: Relevant, up-to-date and well-maintained interpretation facilities are at a scale appropriate to the number and type of visitors.

Criteria 14.2.3: Good quality information and interpretation of the area should be available via a number of mediums as appropriate, e.g. dedicated website, visitor guide books, interpretation boards, etc.

Criteria 14.2.4: Interpretation includes explanation of the wider cultural and spiritual values associated with the tiger.

Criteria 14.2.5: Interpretation includes an explanation of the need for responsible tourism.

Guidance note N

Interpretation

- Local people should be involved in the development of interpretation and presentation programmes to ensure they are locally relevant.
- Intellectual property and traditional cultural rights (e.g. legal ownership and right to use images, texts and other interpretive materials) should be discussed and clarified when developing interpretation and presentation programmes.
- Qualified interpretation professionals should be included within area staff.
- Interpretation programmes should identify and assess their audiences demographically, geographically and culturally.
- Interpretation programmes and their physical impact on an area should be monitored and evaluated.
- Interpretation programmes and infrastructure should be designed and constructed in a way that ensures periodic content revision and/or expansion.



Evidence Check List

14.3.1-3 Employment statistics, interviews, surveys



Guidance note O

Tourism plan

The plan should:

- Identify areas where tourism has/will have a high impact;
- Assess wildlife viewing congestion and suggest management responses;
- Manage sensitive areas to avoid impacts;
- Ensure water provision and solid waste management;
- Include systems for visitor satisfaction survey/monitoring;
- Identify and manage for different tourism flows and seasons;
- Control and manage tourist access;
- Provide guidelines for tour operators and nature guides;
- Assess capacity (training needs) of nature guides and develop/help coordinate training;
- Ensure green infrastructure policies are implemented (see also Standard 8.2);
- Identify tourism zones were appropriate;
- Be linked to an effective interpretation programme (see also Standard 14.2).



Evidence Check List

14.4.1-2 Tourism management plan developed, implemented and monitored (can be part of management plan)

14.4.3 Evidence of alignment of national tourism strategies/plans with tiger conservation area tourism plans



Standard 14.3: Communities are involved in tourism operations where appropriate.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning, processes and outputs)

Criteria 14.3.1: Employment opportunities for local communities in tiger conservation area tourism exist.

Criteria 14.3.2: Training for skills upgrading (e.g. developing skills to enable involvement in managing tourism facilities) to facilitate community involvement in tourism is in place.

Criteria 14.3.3: Employment opportunities are monitored and assessed.



Standard 14.4: Visitor management systems are in place where appropriate.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning, processes, outputs and outcomes)

Criteria 14.4.1: An up-to-date tourism management system/plan is in place which mitigates negative impacts on the area (see also Standard 4.1).

Criteria 14.4.2: The tourism plan is implemented, monitored, assessed and adapted (see guidance note O).

Criteria 14.4.3: Attempts are made to align national tourism strategies/plans with tiger conservation area tourism plans.

Best practice example: Tourism standards and monitoring

Tiger sites which are, or are planning to be, major tourism destinations need particularly careful management. Various tourism standards exist, but there is only one specifically established for nature tourism within tiger habitats. Developed as part of the Travel Operator for Tigers (TOFTigers) Campaign, the PUG Mark accreditation scheme provides specific minimum operating standards and key criteria for accommodation providers and best practice guidelines and commitments for tour operators and service providers. The 'PUG Eco-rating' represents a system of green labelling good practices to encourage long term sustainability. The PUG audit process, which is recognised by the UN-backed Global Sustainable Tourism Council, is designed to assist both visitors and tourism providers with their travel and accommodation choices, by measuring a range of environmental, economic, and social-cultural indicators with the aim of enhancing positive impacts and mitigating negative impacts of tourism in wilderness destinations.

For more information visit: www.toftigers.org/pugmark/

Pillar E

PROTECTION

Element 15: Protection

Evidence Check List

15.1.1-3 Protection strategy/ management plan and evidence of implementation in annual operational plans; annual review of law enforcement monitoring results; patrol reports; standard operating procedure; training reports, etc.

Standard 15.1: A protection strategy is included in the management plan/system and is implemented according to the annual operation plan.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning, processes, outputs and outcomes)

Criteria 15.1.1: A suitable protection strategy is planned (see also guidance note P and Standard 4.1) and considers all of the following:

- Analysis of threats (see also Standard 15.2);
- Communications needs of the patrol (see also Standard 8.4);
- Infrastructure needs for protection (Standard 8.1);
- Transport needs for protection (see also Standard 8.1);
- Training needs and annual training calendars (see also Standard 7.2 and 15.2);
- Law enforcement monitoring system e.g. SMART, MIST, MSTRIPES, etc. (see guidance note P);
- Equipment needs (see also Standard 8.4);
- Community involvement in protection (see also Standard 12.4);
- Legal background (see also Standard 3.2 and 3.3);
- Engagement with other enforcement agencies e.g. wildlife crime bureau, judiciary etc;
- Coordinated crime database(s) capable of identifying repeat offenders;
- Tactical approaches and protocols;
- Intelligence gathering and use protocols.
- Mechanism or staff safeguards are in place

Criteria 15.1.2: Management staff are effectively trained and able to implement the protection strategy (see also Standard 7.2).

Criteria 15.1.3: The protection strategy is implemented in line with the annual operation plan (Standard 6.1) and is assessed and if necessary adapted.

Guidance note P

Monitoring and reporting tools

Protection Audit

To ensure protection strategies are effective sites can use the Protection Audit for Conservation Sites (PACS) tool. The Protection Audit highlights strengths and weaknesses which aid decision-making, tactical planning and resource allocation. The tool consists of three exercises: 1) Threat Assessment, 2) Enforcement Assessment, and 3) Conservation Oriented Patrol standards (COPS). For more information see: www.zeropoaching.org/pdfs/Protection_Audit_Booklet.pdf

Monitoring Tools

CA|TS along with many conservation organizations advocates the use of SMART (Spatial Monitoring And Reporting Tool) to help monitor, evaluate and adaptively manage patrolling activities in conservation areas. Based on free-to-access software, the SMART application is straightforward and designed to be used on the ground, by area-based staff. Rangers use the tool to capture data collected while on patrol (e.g. patrols, dealing with poaching and other illegal activities,

etc.). SMART helps managers plan enforcement operations by integrating patrol data with intelligence gathered from a variety of sources, providing a more complete picture of poaching and the people involved. It also keeps track of legal and administrative cases resulting from enforcement action. SMART is designed to be compatible with MIST and CyberTracker databases, which makes updating to this system a relatively easy step. For more information see: www.smartconservationsoftware.org

Evidence Check List

15.2.1-2 Protection strategy and quantitative monitoring data showing status and trends coming from law enforcement monitoring system (e.g. SMART, MIST, MSTRIPES).

Guidance note Q

Threats assessment

Assessment should review for example:

- Number of poachers' camps
- Traps and snares
- Illegal NTFP collection
- Encroachment
- Trespassing
- Tourism infractions
- Arrests and apprehensions
- Carcasses found
- Cartridge shells.

Guidance note R

Protection staff numbers

Protection staff are defined as those staff primarily engaged in implementing the protection strategy. Assessing the required number of protection staff should consider:

- Infrastructure (road/path conditions, vehicles, outposts, bases, etc.);
- Transport availability, e.g. boats, elephants (greater mobility means potentially fewer staff);
- Terrain (e.g. rivers, mountains, lakes, etc.);
- Vegetation density;
- Habitat type;
- Ease with which the area can be secured;
- Size of area and length of area boundary;
- Actual level of current and potential threats (see also Standard 15.2).

Evidence Check List

15.3.1-2 Protection strategy and staff TORs

Evidence Check List

15.4.1-4 Protection strategy; needs assessments; inventory of infrastructure/equipment and audit; patrol reports

Standard 15.2: Infractions (threats) are known, understood and monitored.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: processes and outputs)

Criteria 15.2.1: Threats (level, volume and nature of infractions) are assessed monthly based on intelligence and patrol data (see guidance note Q)

Criteria 15.2.2: Threats are monitored using a law enforcement monitoring system (e.g. MIST, SMART, MSTRIPES) (see standard 15.1 and 15.10).

Standard 15.3: Protection staff are sufficient in number for tiger protection.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework element: inputs)

Criteria 15.3.1: Requirements for the number of protection staff have been assessed (see also Standard 7.1).

Criteria 15.3.2: Staff recruited meet the required number of protection staff identified with appropriate consideration for gender equity and representation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities wherever relevant (see also Standard 7.2 and guidance note R).

Standard 15.4: Infrastructure and equipment needs for tiger protection are in place.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning inputs and process)

Criteria 15.4.1: Infrastructure (e.g. roads, ranger stations/outposts, water availability) needs are known and assessed (see also Standard 8.1).

Criteria 15.4.2: Infrastructure is in place, used and adequately maintained (see also Standard 8.5).

Criteria 15.4.3: Equipment (e.g. vehicles, boots, GPS, handsets, weapons, backpacks, medical kits, etc.) needs are known and assessed (see also Standard 8.4).

Criteria 15.4.4: Equipment is in place, used and adequately maintained (see also Standard 8.5).

Best practice example: Simpang Pulai-Kuala Berang road wildlife viaducts, Malaysia

Roads can act as significant barriers to wildlife movement as they fragment habitat and increase road kill. In 2007, the Malaysian government completed the Simpang Pulai-Kuala Berang road, and along with it, the first wildlife underpass viaducts in Southeast Asia. The viaducts provide connectivity for large mammals including tiger and prey species. The initial environmental impact assessment before the road was built suggested fences to mitigate impacts to wildlife. However, the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (Perhilitan) advocated that the viaducts were necessary for connectivity, along with a realignment of the road further away from the Taman Negara National Park boundaries to restrict access for poachers.

Source: Quintero, J., Roca, R., Morgan, A.J., Mathur, A. and X. Schi. 2010. Smart Green Infrastructure in Tiger Range Countries: A Multi-Level Approach, World Bank, Washington DC, USA

**Evidence Check List**

15.5.1–2 Training needs assessment and training manual linked to the protection strategy

**Standard 15.5: Protection field staff are trained.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: process)

Criteria 15.5.1: Patrolling skills should include all of the following (see also Standard 7.2 and guidance note S):

- Medical skills
- GPS use
- Awareness of area
- Local community/Indigenous Peoples engagement skills
- Gathering local knowledge
- Species identification and knowledge of species behaviour
- Knowledge of relevant law, their interpretation and use (see also Standard 3.1)
- Tracking skills
- Firearm training including SOPs of maintenance and lawful and ethical/humane use (where applicable)
- Communication skills
- Knowledge of patrol tactics (see also Standard 15.1)
- Knowledge on data recording monitoring (e.g. law enforcement, species) (see also Standard 15.1)
- Crime scene analysis
- Collection of evidence, packaging and transport-chain of custody
- Map reading
- Guidance on use of force, Human Rights and gender sensitivity and equity, IP & LC rights and responsibilities

Criteria 15.5.2: Patrolling staff should be physically fit enough to carry out effective work.

**Guidance note S**

Basic and advanced ranger trainings

Subjects	Phase 1 – Basic	Phase 2 – Advanced
Field craft	No trace camping Camp site selection Dos and don'ts in the forest Moving safely across terrain	Fitness and endurance, ability to swim (where relevant) Showing consideration of safety and welfare of self and others in the field Maintenance of camping gear Basic maintenance of patrol vehicles Drawing sketch maps from data/observations Crossing terrain safely
Biodiversity value	Understanding importance (nationally, regionally, internationally) of protection values Key wildlife species in the area	Advanced animal tracking techniques Use of camera traps
First aid	Why first aid is important Vital signs Primary survey and secondary survey Accident management Breathing, bleeding, burns and breaks	Advance inspection of patient Gun-shot wounds Bites: animals, snakes, scorpions, spiders Head injuries How to make stretchers Advanced wound dressing
Patrolling	Patrol types Patrol protocols Patrol planning Basic GPS functions Basic navigation	Firearms handling Silent communication techniques Advanced use of GPS, PDAs, range finders Advanced use of communication equipment Use of metal detectors Use of sniffer dogs Use of camera traps for regular surveillance Quality LEM data recording Adaptive Tactical Protection (ATP) Patrol briefings Patrol reports Intelligent patrolling

Subjects	Phase 1 – Basic	Phase 2 – Advanced
Intelligence gathering & informants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The difference between information and intelligence Who are informants How to build and manage informant networks Informant incentives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Covert surveillance operations Disguise techniques Use of hidden cameras and other investigation technology (e.g. tracking equipment, voice recorders) Understanding wider crime network and trade nexus Mapping trader family trees Knowledge on hunting tribes Code information, informants and learning the existing trade codes
Anti-poaching operation planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anti-poaching operation planning model Threat analysis Anti-poaching operation planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Search techniques (personnel, conveyances, premises and area search operations) Arms combating Spot checks Anti-poaching operation planning Evacuation and recovery Organization of raiding teams Counter-intelligence Raid sequence Command chain High-risk raid/low-risk raid/unknown-risk raid Surprise factor in raids
Crime scene investigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic crime scene investigation techniques Evidence collection Evidence recording Crime scene mapping Documentation of evidence Tactical thinking while investigating the crime scene Crime scene evidence photography 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic forensic (finger prints, biological sample collections) Basic necropsy Footwear, tyre track and other impressions Human remains Contamination control Evidence collection kit Reconstruction of the crime
Legal procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basics of wildlife legislation Basic knowledge on search, arrest, seizure memo, POR/FIR filling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advance knowledge of wildlife legislation, criminal procedure code, evidence act, penal code Court case filing Witness statement recording Giving testimony in the court Powers and limitation of enforcement officers Mock court exercise Tracking of court cases Court testimony tactics
Interrogation techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding purposes of interrogation Basic but vital interrogation questions Precautions during interrogation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced interrogation techniques Approach phase, questioning phase and termination phase of interrogation METT-T (Mission, Enemy, Troops, Terrain and Time Availability) factors during interrogation
Wildlife rescue & release	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rescue and release 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tranquilization techniques Release consideration Animal care in quarantine Basic treatment of animals
HWC management	NA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crowd management Tranquilization techniques
Coordination with communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to improve relationship with local communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducting awareness programmes Presentation skills Community engagement techniques Awareness tools See Stolton et al (2024)
Coordination with other enforcement agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Importance of working with other enforcement agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to local, provincial, national, regional enforcement agencies INTERPOL, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), Special Task Force (STF), Special Operations Group (SOG), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Wildlife Enforcement Network (ASEAN-WEN), South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN) Role of different agencies in law enforcement and how they can help in prevention of forest and wildlife crimes

Guidance note T

Ranger stations

Ranger stations should have:

- Potable water
- Power supply
- Radio communication
- Medical supplies.

Evidence Check List

15.6.1 Maps, quantitative data and protection strategy

15.6.2 Needs assessment, condition of structures, equipment lists, maintenance schedules, inventory, patrol reports

Guidance note U

Patrol frequency

The frequency of patrols will depend on:

- Size of the conservation / protected area
- Terrain
- Level of threat.

All areas should be patrolled at least once annually and more frequently if possible.

Evidence Check List

15.7.1 Protection strategy, operational plans, patrolling reports, law enforcement monitoring report

Guidance note V

Patrol days

Patrol days are defined as the actual number of days a ranger is in the field involved in protection work related to conservation activities. So a day spent, for example, doing road clearing, fixing infrastructure or fixing vehicles is not considered a patrol day. At least 15 days per month should be spent on patrol.

The primary method of patrolling for protection should be on foot except in places where this is impossible e.g. where terrain or climate do not permit. Patrols using other means of transport are sometimes necessary but should not be the norm; they should be recorded highlighting mode of transport and a justification for patrolling in this way.

Standard 15.6: Stations and outposts for protection field staff are in place and managed.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: inputs and process)

Criteria 15.6.1: Level of permanent field staff presence in stations and outposts is appropriate (e.g. considering patrol needs, habitat, provision of a “visible” presence in the conservation area, etc.) (see also Standard 8.1 and 15.1).

Criteria 15.6.2: Stations and outposts are well equipped and maintained (see also Standard 8.2 and guidance note T).

Standard 15.7: Patrols effectively cover the area.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning and process)

Criteria 15.7.1: Patrol planning is designed to achieve total coverage of the area (see also Standard 15.1 and guidance note U).

Standard 15.8: Number of patrol days per ranger per month is planned and implemented.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning, inputs and process)

Criteria 15.8.1: Patrol targets in terms of coverage and specific objectives for tiger protection should be intelligence driven. Patrols should be planned and implemented on a monthly basis. Foot patrols should be prioritised but other types (e.g. boat, elephant, vehicle, etc.) also included as required (see also Standard 15.3).

Criteria 15.8.2: Minimum number of patrol days to be defined. Patrol days for protection field staff to be considered “working days” (see guidance note V).

Best practice example: Patrol days

The suggestion of a minimum of 15 days per month on patrol was developed in a workshop on enforcement in Vietnam by Southeast Asian enforcement practitioners, governments, protected area managers and NGOs. The discussion went along these lines:

- **A working month:** Generally a month is considered as 28 days. Four weekends off a month equals eight days off, which then gives you 20 working days total. As most patrols are based in remote places most patrol staff have their days off at one time (e.g. one day travel home and back and six days’ rest).
- **Average patrol lengths:** On average a month’s patrolling would have two short patrols and two long patrols in it. Patrol staff can usually carry what they need for five days. So two long patrols of five days each, plus two short patrols of two to three days (averaged at five days overall), equals 15 days in total on patrol.
- **Patrol preparation:** Rangers should not come in from patrol and go out the same day or even the next day unless in exceptional circumstances. So four patrols a month need at least one preparation day after each patrol and long patrols need two to three. As rangers would likely be taking leave after their second long patrol these preparation days came to four /five days a month.
- **Patrol time:** 15 days on patrol, eight days off and five days preparation and maintenance gives you 28 days in total.

This system has been applied in several protected areas in the region, such as Mondulhiri Protected Forest in Cambodia.



Evidence Check List

15.8.1-2 Protection strategy and law enforcement monitoring reports



Evidence Check List

15.9.1 Success rate between arrest and prosecutions



Evidence Check List

15.10.1 Training reports and monitoring conviction trends
15.10.2 Protection strategy; compliance with protected area legislation (e.g. records of arrests and convictions); local reporting of illegal activities
15.10.3 Evidence of briefings



Evidence Check List

15.11.1 Systems in place and implemented
15.11.2-4 Reports analysis from law enforcement planning (see also Standard 17)
15.11.5 System in place and implemented, case record book maintained, cases analysed and gaps identified (e.g. rate of conviction)



Evidence Check List

15.12.1 Protection strategy and implementation reports
15.12.2 Patrol plans and protection strategy
15.12.3 Intelligence reports, law enforcement monitoring reports
15.12.4-5 Verification system for intelligence to ensure effective protection efforts



Standard 15.9: Tiger conservation area staff are aware of, and able to implement, legal instruments.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework element: process)

Criteria 15.9.1: Knowledge and ability of to apply legal instruments is current and effective (see also Standard 3.3).



Standard 15.10: Local people and legal professionals are aware of the relevant wildlife laws.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework element: process)

Criteria 15.10.1: Relevant legal professionals are assisted with training and development in legislation pertaining to species conservation and protection (see also Standard 3.3).

Criteria 15.10.2: Processes are in place to create awareness and involve local people, where appropriate, in protection strategies (e.g. intelligence-gathering networks) (see also Standard 3.3).

Criteria 15.10.3: Prosecutors and staff have regular briefings on ongoing cases (see also Standard 3.3).



Standard 15.11: Law enforcement monitoring systems are in place.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning, process and outputs)

Criteria 15.11.1: Software-based law enforcement monitoring systems such as SMART, MIST, MSTRiPES, etc. are understood and implemented (see also Standard 15.2 and guidance note P).

Criteria 15.11.2: Protection field staff are trained in data collection for monitoring system including use of equipment such as GPS or PDA (personal digital assistant) (see also Standard 7.2).

Criteria 15.11.3: Specific staff are trained for data input and analysis (see also Standard 7.2).

Criteria 15.11.4: Regular (e.g. fortnightly or monthly) feedback from law enforcement monitoring results ensures adaptive tactical protection (see also Standard 15.12).

Criteria 15.11.5: Records of registered crime offences are maintained and tracked, and follow-up mechanisms are in place.



Standard 15.12: Protection efforts are intelligence driven.

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning and process)

Criteria 15.12.1: Tactical approaches such as strike forces, sweeps, covert operations, reconnaissance patrols and intelligence-gathering patrols are in place (see also Standard 15.1).

Criteria 15.12.2: Areas of operational responsibility are defined (see also Standard 7.1).

Criteria 15.12.3: Intelligence networks such as informant networks (information purchase, crime hotlines, interrogations, etc.) are in place.

Criteria 15.12.4: Protection strategies and tactics are regularly adapted according to intelligence gathered (see also Standards 10.1 and 15.11).

Criteria 15.12.5: An intelligence verification system is in place to ensure accuracy of intelligence.

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TIGER MANAGEMENT

Guidance note W

Carrying capacity

Carrying capacity is as much about a desired state as a biological target. Based on the area of available habitats (16.2.2) and the current density of prey (16.6) the potential current tiger density can be estimated using densities from other areas as surrogates. However, the actual carrying capacity of an area depends on management actions to manage habitats, improve

water availability, remove invasive species and ultimately increase the prey base, all while also reducing poaching and retaliatory killing. The actual carrying capacity therefore is a desired state that area managers deem both suitable and realistic to achieve and will be a balance between tiger numbers and human tolerance for tiger density. It is suggested that current and future tiger carrying capacity are

identified. The standard can be met if current tiger densities are reached, but this should not prevent striving for higher tiger densities in the future with a better managed area for tiger conservation. However, carrying capacity should not be artificially elevated through the over provision of water holes, which leads to dispersal and conflicts outside of tiger conservation areas.

Evidence Check List

16.1.1 Research and monitoring

16.1.2 Threat assessments, including policy and research into land-use planning (see also Standard 5)

Element 16: Habitat and prey management

 **Standard 16.1: All habitats capable, now or in the future (e.g. in the case of a recovering population), of supporting a viable or significant population are known.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: context and planning)

Criteria 16.1.1: Carrying capacity of tiger and prey is researched and clearly understood (see also Standard 17 and guidance note W).

Criteria 16.1.2: Threats to habitat, such as development, invasive species, natural disturbance and human encroachment, are clearly analysed and understood and mitigation planning/actions are undertaken as necessary (see also Standards 4.1, 8.2, 16.1, 16.2 and 16.3).

 Evidence Check List

- 16.2.1** Tiger conservation and/or management plans (see also Standard 4); research and monitoring results
- 16.2.2** Maps and monitoring results
- 16.2.3** Tiger conservation and/or management plans (see also Standard 4); census data; habitat management reports

 Guidance note X

Habitat management

- Tiger distribution should be mapped and monitored (see Standard 17).
- Tiger prey species should be identified and their distribution mapped and monitored over time (see Standard 16.6).
- The ecological needs of tiger prey species should be identified and management recommendations clearly articulated to maintain or enhance access to these needs.

 **Standard 16.2: Tiger and prey habitat management systems are in place.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning, process and outcomes)

Criteria 16.2.1: Tiger and prey habitat management requirements are identified, including seasonal movements, prey utilization, connectivity and species composition (see also Standard 4.3).

Criteria 16.2.2: Habitats are mapped and monitored and trend and status data is known for these habitats (see also Standard 2 and guidance note X).

Criteria 16.2.3: Habitat is managed to ensure suitability for tiger conservation (see also Standard 4.3).

- Management and recovery plans should be developed for key tiger prey species that need active management to recover their populations to support the tiger carrying capacity being reached.
- Significant habitats should be mapped and their coverage and integrity monitored over time (see Standards 16.3, 16.4 and 16.5).
- Management plans should be developed for each significant habitat to maintain its integrity and/or increase the area it covers to support tiger carrying capacity being reached (see Standard 2.1).
- Strategies and actions to maintain ecological attributes and processes, including natural disturbances, to maintain or enhance the area's major values should be developed.

 Evidence Check List

- 16.3.1-4** Management plan and/or specific mitigation plans for disturbance regimes and disasters (e.g. for flood, fire, drought, disease); reports on success of intervention

 **Standard 16.3: Possible impacts of disturbance regimes, disasters and disease are monitored and managed.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning, process and outcomes)

Criteria 16.3.1: An analysis of potential disturbance regimes and disasters (e.g. fire, flood, drought, storm events or disease) has been conducted and mitigation plans developed (see guidance note Y).

Criteria 16.3.2: Impacts of disturbance regimes and disasters (e.g. fire, flood, drought, storm events or disease) are mapped, monitored and managed.

Criteria 16.3.3: Protocols are in place for mitigation of wildlife diseases and impacts are mapped, monitored and managed (see guidance note Y).

Criteria 16.3.4: In general, resilience/adaptation measures against impacts of climate change on wildlife and local communities and/or Indigenous Peoples (if relevant) are in place/being put in place/being planned.

Guidance note Y

Disturbance regimes and disasters

Plans should be in place to mitigate, as far as possible, and where necessary manage serious disturbance and disasters. This includes both natural disasters (e.g. floods, avalanche, tsunami, earthquake, etc.) and anthropogenic disturbance (e.g. arson and fire, drought due to interruption of river flow, pollution events, disease

outbreak, etc.) based on the likelihood of the event (e.g. geology re earthquakes; flood history; impacts of dam construction; climate change projections, etc.).


Actions include, for example:

- Fire squads and watch towers implemented;
- Supplementary feeding plans developed if disaster impacts habitat or prey species;
- Flood refuge high grounds identified;

- Pollution monitoring (see also Standard 16.5);
- Disease threat to tigers or their prey from local livestock and feral animals assessed and monitoring implemented where necessary (e.g. canine distemper virus (CDV), rabies, etc.) (see also Standard 16.3.3 and 16.6);
- Inoculation against disease;
- Climate change impacts assessed (e.g. scientific literature and projections reviewed).

 Evidence Check List
16.4.1 Maps and plans

16.4.2–4 Report on actions taken and success of interventions

 **Standard 16.4: Invasive species are monitored and managed.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning, process and outcomes)

Criteria 16.4.1: Invasive species are mapped.

Criteria 16.4.2: Distribution and impact on habitats are assessed.

Criteria 16.4.3: Control strategies are planned and implemented where necessary/possible.

Criteria 16.4.4: Wherever relevant, extracted invasives are provided to local communities.

 Evidence Check List
16.5.1 Maps, plans and monitoring reports
 **Standard 16.5: Water sources are monitored and managed.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: planning, process and outcomes)

Criteria 16.5.1: Water sources (e.g. waterholes, rivers, streams, etc.) are mapped, maintained, monitored and protected (see guidance note Z).

 Guidance note Z
Water source management

This could include where appropriate:

- Impacts of major irrigation, hydropower, logging and mining on water quality understood and managed;
- Monitoring of availability of water sources in different seasons;
- Mitigation plans in place for supplying water in times of drought;
- Monitoring of quality of water sources (e.g. levels of pollution);
- Artificial water sources planned, managed and monitored where necessary.
- Monitoring of river flow regulation (e.g. where dams change river flow);

 Evidence Check List
16.6.1 Monitoring data showing status and trends; veterinary inspections and reports; field condition reports
 **Standard 16.6: Prey populations are adequate (now and/or in the future) to support viable or significant tiger populations.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework elements: process and outcomes)

Criteria 16.6.1: Monitoring and management focuses on the availability/sustainability of tiger prey species (see also Standards 4.3 and 17 and guidance note AA).

 Guidance note AA
Prey populations

Prey monitoring systems should include:

- Regular monitoring of prey base (e.g. line transects, total counts, sign survey, occupancy in sample grids covering all floristic zones, abundance using camera traps, Amur ungulate grids)
- Condition measurement by observation – condition score
- Recruitment (female to fawn ratio from observations or camera traps)
- Disease monitored by tests and/or examination (see also Standard 16.3)
- Total counts.

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TIGER POPULATIONS

 **Element 17: Tiger populations**
**Guidance note BB****Monitoring protocol**

Monitoring protocols should include:

- Objectives: why monitoring is being carried out;
- Bibliography: a list of relevant material (e.g. methodologies, journal articles and reports) and information on previous activities (including constraints to monitoring activities).

Protocol design should consider:

- Method or methods used;
- Standardized procedures for collecting data, including area of monitoring, staffing requirements (e.g. numbers, required training, time allocated), equipment requirements (e.g. vehicles, binoculars, GIS, traps, cameras), budget and safety procedures;
- Frequency of data collection (monthly, quarterly, annually);
- Data collection: indicators to be measured (e.g. species, numbers of sightings, frequency);
- Data analysis: advice regarding analysis and comparison (e.g. analysis software);
- Data management: records should include the monitoring results (data sets).

**Evidence Check List**

17.1.1-3 Monitoring plans and protocols and quantitative monitoring data showing status and trends

17.1.4 Access to new monitoring protocols

**Evidence Check List**

17.2.1 Quantitative monitoring data showing status and trends

17.2.2 Locally reviewed reports; peer reviewed and published papers/ reports

**Standard 17.1: Tiger monitoring systems are in place.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework element: process)

Criteria 17.1.1: Monitoring protocols are in place to ensure monitoring is scientifically rigorous and replicable (see guidance note BB).

Criteria 17.1.2: Monitoring protocols, field work, research and analysis is peer-reviewed.

Criteria 17.1.3: Monitoring reviews population size and breeding females (i.e. females with cubs) ideally annually.

Criteria 17.1.4: Monitoring is adaptive to new internationally accepted monitoring protocols but retains trend information.

**Standard 17.2: Monitoring results are used to inform management.**

(IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework element: process and outcomes)

Criteria 17.2.1: Monitoring results are reflected in decision making and adaptive management and in annual operational plans and management plans/systems (see also Standards 4.1, 4.3, 6.1 and 10).

Criteria 17.2.2: Monitoring results are shared appropriately, especially within networks of tiger conservation areas and across transboundary areas to prevent double counting.

Section 7 Evidence checklist

For each of the criteria under the standards outlined above, an evidence checklist is given. The table below summarizes this evidence in the form of a basic checklist of the type of information which should be reviewed when assessing tiger conservation areas against the CA|TS standards and which should be provided in the compliance dossier.

Evidence	Details of evidence required to show compliance with the CA TS criteria (also see evidence checklist boxes after each standard)	CA TS Criteria
1. Management plans/systems	Management plan or system of plans in place; associated tiger conservation plan/recovery or reintroduction plan; implementation monitoring; plan dissemination	1.1.1; 1.1.2; 2.1.1-2; 2.3.1-2; 4.4.1; 4.3; 4.5.1; 4.6.1; 5.1.1-2; 6.3.1; 6.3.5; 6.3.6; 7.1.1; 7.1.5; 11.1.1; 12.4.2; 12.4.3; 12.6.2; 13.2; 16.2.1-3; 16.3.1-4; 16.4.2-4; 16.5.1
2. Operational plan	Operational plan; implementation monitoring	5.1.1-2; 5.2.1; 6.1.1; 13.2
3. Maps including zoning plans	Maps of: the tiger conservation area; management zones; adjoining protected areas; resources/resource use; cultural sites; law enforcement monitoring; water sources; threats (e.g. invasive species); etc.	1.1.2; 1.2.1-12; 2.1.1-2; 2.3.1-2; 2.5.2; 3.1.1; 5.2.1; 12.6.1; 13.2; 15.6.1; 16.2.1; 16.3.1-2; 16.4.1; 16.5.1
4. Budget and funding	Budgeting systems; links to management plan and operational plan; assessments of sustainability of budget; fundraising proposals/grants received	5.1.1-2; 6.2.1-2; 9.1.1-2; 9.2.1; 9.3.1
5. Business plan	Business plan	9.4.1
6. Management effectiveness evaluation	Management plan/system; management effectiveness evaluation; adaptive management	4.4.1-2; 10.1.1; 17.2.1
7. Administrative systems	Systems such as human resources management; health and safety systems; operational controls; financial management; stock control and asset management; green management policies and pollution control; complaints management system; staffing/employment systems (recruitment, TORs, contracts, policies; recognition of staff excellence; etc.); permits	6.4.1; 6.5.1; 7.2.1; 7.3.1-2; 13.2; 15.3.1-2
8. Infrastructure	Infrastructure records (inventory, maps, procurement, etc.); maintenance records; environmentally friendly infrastructure policies	8.1.1-2; 8.2.1; 15.4.1-2; 15.6.2
9. Facilities and equipment	Staff facilities and equipment (e.g. inventories, maintenance plans/log books, assessments, etc.)	8.3.1; 8.4.1; 8.5.1; 15.4.3-4; 15.6.2
10. Best practices recorded	Documentary evidence (e.g. web stories, local newspaper stories, etc.)	6.3.3; 10.2.1
11. Capacity building	Records of staff skills, requirements and training; policies and assessments of legal professionals training in conservation and protection legislation; local awareness of law enforcement strategies	7.2.2-3; 15.5.1-2; 15.10.1-2; 15.11.2-3
12. Economic evaluations	Reports, papers, studies	1.2.10-12
13. Protection strategy	Protection strategy/management plan; threat assessment; law enforcement monitoring system (e.g. patrol reports, standard operating procedure, training reports, use of SMART/MIST programs, arrest and prosecutions reports, etc.); employment records; staff training and capacity development; code of conduct	5.2.2; 6.3.6; 15.1.1 -3; 15.2.1-2; 15.3.1-2; 15.4.1-4; 15.5.1-2; 15.6.1-2; 15.7.1; 15.8.1-2; 15.9.1; 15.10.3; 15.11.1-5; 15.12.1-5
14. Research and monitoring	Threat assessments (including potential disturbance regimes and disasters); monitoring plan integration with other planning instruments; monitoring relevant to ecological, biological, cultural, etc. aspects of management	1.2.1-3; 2.1.1-2; 5.1.2; 12.6.2; 15.2.1; 16.1.2; 16.2.1; 16.3.1-3; 16.4.2; 16.5.1; 17.1.2-4;
15. Tiger and prey specific monitoring	Research and assessment reports; census data; etc.	2.1.1-2; 16.1.1; 16.2.1; 16.6.1; 16.6.3; 17.1.1-4; 17.2.1-2

A note regarding illustrations

Illustrations (e.g. maps, charts, figures and pictures) can be effectively used to show compliance with several criteria. For example, pictures of meetings, equipment, records and audits (particularly if these are not computerised) events, educational activities etc. Photos / videos etc need to be up to date, thus be clearly dated and the event / source clearly described.

Evidence	Details of evidence required to show compliance with the CA TS criteria (also see evidence checklist boxes after each standard)	CA TS Criteria
16. Regional plans (e.g. development plans, tourism plans)	Maps; documents; meeting reports with regional development planners; tourism strategies; etc.	2.4.1-3; 4.6.1; 14.4.3
17. Transboundary agreements	Policies; memorandums of understanding; plans; agreements; meetings; evidence of communications with neighbouring protected areas	2.5.1-3; 4.5.1;
18. Legal gazettelement	Documentation	3.1.1-2
19. Boundary management	Physical boundaries management plans/systems; encroachment monitoring; conflict resolution processes over any boundary/ access/ governance disputes; data sharing	3.1.3; 5.2.1-2
20. Legal instruments	Legal instruments including tiger-specific regulations; data on judicial processes (e.g. register of infringements and follow-up actions and outcomes; numbers of arrests, prosecutions, repeat convictions, etc.); evidence that documentation is accessible and known by staff	3.2.1-2; 3.3.1-2
21. Legal expertise	Evidence of access to legal expertise	3.3.4
22. Stakeholder analysis	Stakeholder analysis; lists of stakeholders; mechanisms for engagement with different genders, ages, etc.	4.2.1; 6.3.5; 12.4.2; 12.4.3
23. Stakeholder engagement	Evidence of engagement in management planning; implementing and monitoring; conflict resolution strategies and monitoring; shared work programmes	4.2.2; 6.3.1-6; 11.1.4; 12.1.1-3; 12.4; 13.1.2; 15.10.2
24. Benefit sharing	Social/outreach programmes; monitoring data on livelihoods, income, resource use, functioning of the community, etc.; involvement in tourism (employment statistics, interviews, surveys)	12.5.1-2; 14.3.1-3; 16.4.4
25. Outreach programmes	Outreach activities (e.g. community visits to protected area, environmental clubs, local events, school visits, leaflets, videos); staff allocated to outreach activities; involvement in tourism (training, etc.)	12.7.1; 14.3.1-3
26. Human-wildlife conflict (HWC)	HWC compensation/relief plans and schemes; rapid response teams; first aid provision; communication equipment	2.2.1-2; 5.1.2; 11.1.1-4
27. Local community agreements	Access agreements; relocation plans and agreements; research agreements; guidance on filming; bioprospecting; permits; agreements; etc.	3.3.3; 12.2.1-2; 12.3.1-2; 13.1.1-2; 13.2;
28. Ethnobotanical studies	Studies; papers; reports	1.2.4-6; 12.6.1
29. Documentation related to customary law, sacred sites, use, traditional ecological knowledge	Studies; reports; meeting reports; agreements	1.2.7-9; 12.6.1-2
30. Tourism plan (where relevant)	Tourism plan and assessment of implementation; facilities (e.g. maps and inventories); interpretation (e.g. documents, websites, visitor centres/ information, interpretation professionals, training, etc.)	1.2.3; 1.2.6; 1.2.9; 1.2.12; 5.1.2; 14.1.1-5; 14.4.1-3
31. Satellite monitoring	Data on disturbance regimes, e.g. fire management	16.3.1, 16.3.2

Section 8 CA|TS confidentiality statement

Keeping data confidential is very important to CA|TS; this section therefore outlines the safeguards CA|TS puts in place to ensure that any data collected as part of the CA|TS process is used and circulated appropriately.

CA|TS assessment starts at the tiger conservation area but also includes independent assessments by the national committee, independent reviewer and international executive committee all supported by the CA|TS management team. As such information on site management will be widely shared to conservation and tiger specialists involved in the CA|TS process.

Data is collected and presented in the CA|TS Log software (see Section 5) which will be made available to all those involved in the assessment process through password protected access. Some documentation may also be made available to other sites as an example of best practice.

CA|TS partnership data provision and confidentiality agreement

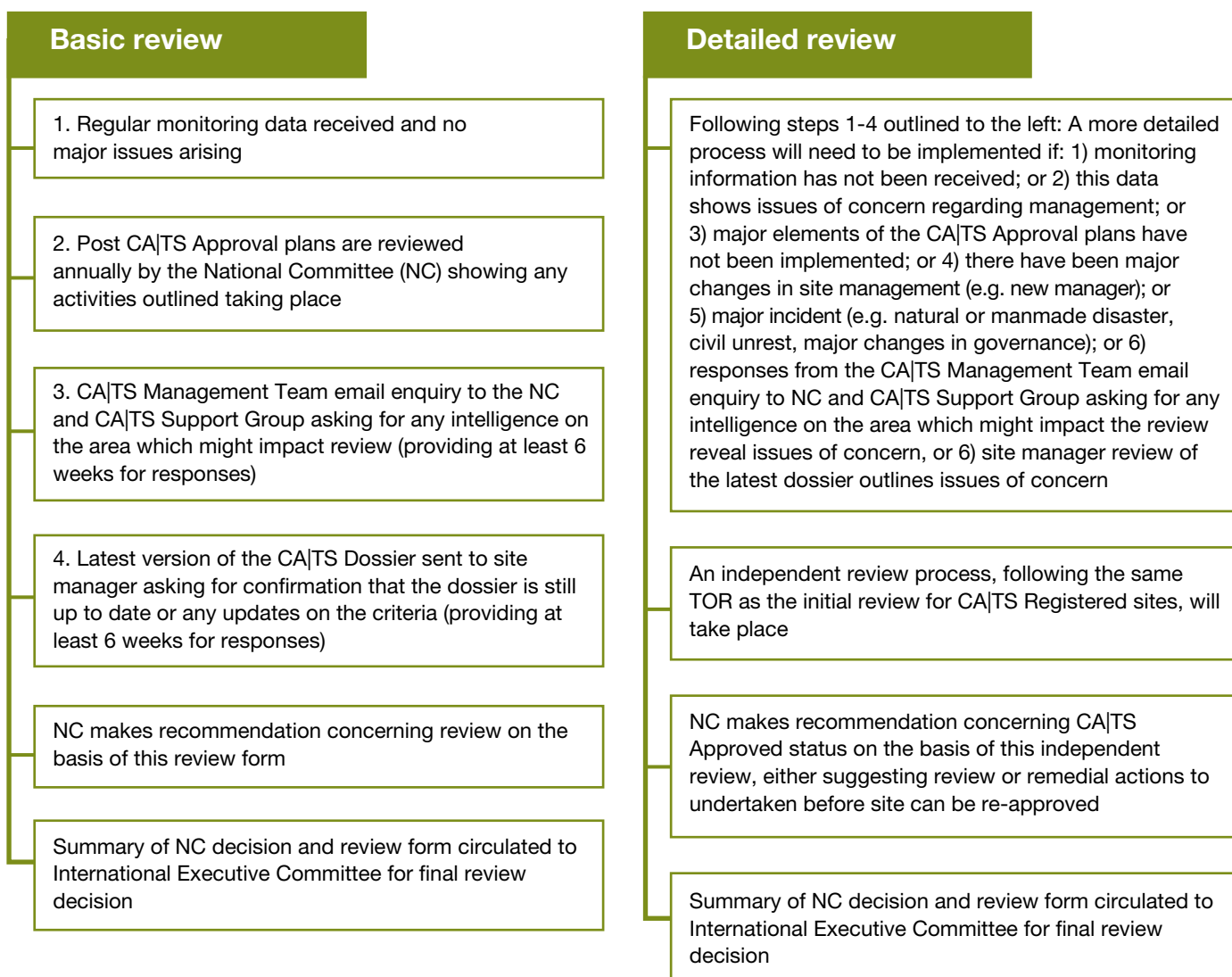
To ensure information is safeguarded all those involved in the CA|TS process should accept the following two agreements, as appropriate:

1. **CA|TS sites** agree to provide all relevant information for the assessment and that this information is shared to those with access to the password protected CA|TS Log. Sites also agree to sign off any summary report for public circulation (e.g. papers, news stories in publications, websites etc) and any best practices to be shared with other tiger sites.
2. All those involved in **collecting and reviewing information** from a site agree to treat this information as confidential; as such information or ideas obtained through the review must not be circulated beyond the CA|TS process or used for personal (intellectual and/or monetary) advantage.

Section 9 CAITS Review Process

CAITS Approved status is reviewed every three years. The International Executive Committee has final say over the review process and timing. A formal review process is outlined in figure 4. The process depends upon the quality of the data received from the area during the period of CAITS Approved status (see section 4). If information is provided then a streamlined review process is suggested. If information is not provided or indicates issues of concern then a more detailed process including an external review will be implemented. Areas will remain CAITS Approved until the outcome of the review process. After this areas will be informed whether they remain CAITS Approved or will be informed of the decision to list them as CAITS Approved (suspended) if major issues have been raised. The CAITS Partnership will prioritise work with any area that is assessed as CAITS Approved (suspended) to reinstate the CAITS Approved as soon as possible.

Figure 4: Two-tier review process



Section 10 Glossary and references

Glossary

Annual operational plans: annual work plan and budgeting processes which operationalize the management plan.

Buffer zone: a clearly defined area surrounding a tiger conservation area which has complementary legal and/or customary restrictions placed on its use and development to give an added layer of protection to the core tiger conservation area, and which are usually inhabited by local communities including/and/or Indigenous People.

Communities: local people with a historical and cultural connection with the area. Community conserved areas should be included in broader tiger conservation land use planning because they safeguard habitats, strengthen ecological connectivity, respect local rights, enhance coexistence strategies, mobilise community stewardship, and provide long-term sustainability through locally rooted governance and cultural values.

Tiger conservation area (for the purposes of CA|TS): a tract of land that has been recognized as tiger habitat and is managed in line with meeting the CA|TS criteria; it may or may not have protected status in order to ensure that natural features, cultural heritage or biota are safeguarded. It may be an area earmarked for, or with a current regime of, commercial or subsistence harvest of timber or other crops compatible with tiger habitat or an area where such crops are grown. A tiger conservation area may be a protected area (e.g. nature reserve, park, wildlife sanctuary, community conserved area), land reclamation project, forest unit, or other area recognized for its ability to support tiger populations or potential to do so.

Conservation landscape (for the purposes of CA|TS): a landscape where the interaction of people and tigers over time has produced an area of distinct character with significant ecological, biological, cultural and scenic value; and where safeguarding the integrity of this interaction is vital to protecting and sustaining the area and its associated conservation and other values. A conservation landscape may contain one or a number of tiger conservation areas, protected areas, community tiger conservation areas, farming zones and areas where other human activity takes place. A conservation landscape should include any areas where tigers interact with people or livestock and this interaction needs to be managed.

Gazetted: legally in force (i.e. through the publishing of information by which official documents come into force and enter the public domain).

Human-wildlife conflict (HWC): interactions between wild animals and people that result in a negative impact on people or their resources, or wild animals or their habitat.

Legal framework: a set of legal processes which can be equally applied to any situation.

Legal instruments: laws national and international which when applied form part of the legal framework.

Management plan: a document or series of documents which outlines the interventions undertaken to manage the tiger conservation area in accordance with the long-term achievement of the strategic plan. The plan should clearly elaborate the area's goal, objectives and activities. Management plans are usually implemented through annual operational plans.

Protected area: IUCN defines a protected area as a clearly defined geographical space, recognized, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values (Dudley, 2008).

Strategic plans: higher-level plans than the management plan, these documents outline the long-term vision for the tiger conservation area.

Stakeholders: e.g. other local people (see definition re communities), organizations (NGOs, researchers, etc.), service providers (e.g. hydroelectric power companies, water providers, etc.), general public. This definition includes all those that may own legal rights in the area.

Tiger areas: these are areas which tigers are likely to pass through but are not core habitat and thus are not major territories or breeding areas.

Core areas: Areas with optimum conditions for tiger and prey habitat including minimal human disturbance (e.g. only patrols, research activities take place) and no human settlement; evidence of tiger breeding (e.g. females with cubs) and high prey density.

Tiger habitats: major tiger territories and breeding areas.

Transboundary protected areas: where administrative boundaries overlap nationally or internationally within a protected area.

Indigenous Peoples: As defined by IUCN follows the definition or “statement of coverage” contained in the International Labour Organization Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries. Therefore, it includes: (1) peoples who identify themselves as “Indigenous”; (2) tribal peoples whose social, cultural and economic conditions distinguish them from other sections of the national community, and whose status is regulated wholly or partially by their own customs or traditions or by special laws or regulations; (3) traditional peoples not necessarily called Indigenous or tribal but who share the same characteristics of social, cultural and economic conditions that distinguish them from other sections of the national community, whose status is regulated wholly or partially by their own customs or traditions, and whose livelihoods are closely connected to ecosystems and their goods and services.¹⁵ The right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), as recognised by the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), has been developed to specifically protect the rights of Indigenous peoples.

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Section 11 Terms of Reference and agreements

CA|TS International Executive Committee TOR

Background

The CA|TS International Executive Committee is the decision-making body for CA|TS. Its primary function is to ensure CA|TS is an effective tool for wild tiger conservation and that CA|TS processes and approvals are equivalent across the tiger range.

Description of work

The main tasks of the International Executive Committee are to:

- Ensure CA|TS is effectively and efficiently delivered across tiger range countries.
- Ensure the CA|TS Standards and accreditation processes are credible and scientifically relevant.
- Make the final decision on an area's CA|TS Approved status, based on relevant documentation and recommendation from the relevant National Committee.
- Ensure the CA|TS system is linked to other protected area standards and management effectiveness systems (e.g. the IUCN Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas).
- Ensure the CA|TS Standards and CA|TS Manual have scientific rigour and aid the effective implementation of CA|TS; and are periodically reviewed and updated according to clearly stated processes.
- Promote the adoption of CA|TS by protected area and other area-based managers and recognition of CA|TS as a critical tool for the recovery and conservation of wild tigers.
- Oversee the implementation of any plans or recommendations, e.g. the CA|TS Business Plan, developed to further the effective running of CA|TS.
- Create additional sub-committees to undertake specific CA|TS processes if required.

Requirements for the International Executive Committee

The majority of the committee will be made up of international experts in protected area management effectiveness and tiger conservation. The makeup of the committee will include persons from:

- Governance bodies of CA|TS: The Head of the CA|TS host/secretariat; two representatives from the Support Group and the CA|TS Management Team host.
- Official policy bodies related to tiger conservation and/or protected areas: Global Tiger Forum, IUCN WCPA and SSC.
- Thematic areas of expertise: Including protected areas, protected areas management effectiveness, capacity building, standards, GLPCA (Green List) and social scientist.
- Members will act in an individual capacity and not represent affiliations (e.g. employer, institution).

- Members are expected to exercise independent judgement and reasonable care, skill and diligence when taking decisions. Members should declare any conflict of interest (e.g. if they are working closely with an area to be reviewed for CA|TS Approved status).
- If disagreements arise between the members of the committee or they do not reach a clear conclusion the committee chair's decision will be final.
- The committee will be made up of a maximum of 15 people.
- Committee membership is by invitation (based on the agreement of the existing members through majority) and is based on a voluntary and honorary principle.
- Members will be expected to have a good working knowledge of CA|TS, be prepared to attend relevant training courses/workshops on CA|TS when requested and be familiar with this TOR and abide to the CA|TS Confidentiality Statement.
- Members will be expected to commit to sit on the committee for at least two years.
- The working language of the committee is English.

Working structure of the International Executive Committee

- The committee will nominate and approve a chair and secretary to oversee the working of the committee.
- The chair will chair all meetings and take final decisions (see above) when necessary. If the chair cannot be present for the meeting he/she will nominate a replacement in advance of the meeting.
- The secretary will liaise closely with the CA|TS Management Team to organise meetings, take minutes and disseminate all relevant materials to the International Executive Committee in a timely manner.
- The International Executive Committee is primarily a virtual entity holding meetings as required via zoom/MS-Teams or similar facilities.
- The committee will be considered a quorum if over 75% of the current membership is present at the meeting.
- Decisions should ideally be unanimous, but in the event of disagreement a two-thirds majority will suffice.
- The work of the committee is expected to take no more than 4-6 days per year. Representation by committee members can be delegated to nominated persons when necessary.
- All documentation relating to CA|TS and the committee's work will be available (and archived) on the password protected platform.
- Committee members will be expected to access and read relevant documentation before each meeting.
- Committee members are encouraged to send comments on documentation loaded onto the protected website and forward these to the CA|TS Management Team.
- Committee meeting times will be agreed via consensus through facilities such as Doodle polls. Agendas will be disseminated before the meeting, minutes taken and sent for comment after the meeting, and approved at the start of each subsequent meeting.
- It is envisaged that the committee may meet occasionally, making the most of opportunities arising from international conservation meetings, etc. In this case any additional expenses occurred in relation to this meeting will be reimbursed through the CA|TS management body.
- The committee will be provided with periodic updates on CA|TS by the CA|TS Manager (who is responsible for maintaining the CA|TS database and field follow-up) to keep track of the processes and progress.
- Every two years members will be invited to renew their commitment to the committee by the chair; members can resign from the committee at any time by contacting the committee chair.
- Members absent from two calls and generally unresponsive will be contacted by the chair regarding continued participation in the committee.

CA|TS Support Group Agreement

Overview of the Support Group

The CA|TS Support Group is made up of organisations and institutions committed to supporting, promoting and implementing CA|TS and to working closely with government agencies responsible for supporting tiger conservation.

- Membership of the Support Group is voluntary and open to any non-government organisations, institutions, intergovernmental organisations, non-tiger range governments and donor organisations committed to the aims of CA|TS.

Benefits of the Support Group

These include:

1. Being part of a group supporting effective management of tiger conservation areas through the implementation of CA|TS
2. Provision of a framework for cooperation and coordination in project designing, fund mobilisation, funding and monitoring of management activities
3. Provision of links to tiger conservation sites, e.g. for research, etc., beyond individual organisations' immediate operations

1. Purpose of the Support Group

The Support Group will work together towards ensuring safe havens for wild tigers by:

- 1.1. Enabling the effective management of critical tiger conservation areas
- 1.2. Supporting National Committees and tiger conservation areas to accelerate implementation of CA|TS
- 1.3. Mobilising resources for area-based conservation and coordination of CA|TS
- 1.4. Exchanging information on best practices on tiger conservation, including linkages with associated conservation standards (e.g. IUCN's Green List)
- 1.5. Undertaking advocacy and outreach on tiger conservation and CA|TS
- 1.6. Acting as ambassadors for CA|TS
- 1.7. Contributing to the further development of CA|TS

2. CA|TS Support Group responsibilities

- 2.1. Members of the Group commit to providing support towards the realisation of the CA|TS vision, goals and objectives and to assisting those areas seeking CA|TS Registration and Approval through some or all of the following means: technical support; capacity building; research; funding / resources; assessment; implementation; coordination and promotion.
- 2.2. Members of the Group commit to this Agreement and to the structures, standards and processes outlined in the most recent version of the CA|TS Manual available on the CA|TS website (https://ibca.world/Conservation_assured_tiger_standards)
- 2.3. Members of the group will contribute to the periodic revision of the CA|TS Manual
- 2.4. Members are encouraged to contribute to the expenses of running CA|TS and cover their costs to attend meetings

This document is intended to provide a framework for cooperation between those organisations that have volunteered to support the implementation of CA|TS and the effective management of sites for tiger conservation and recovery. It is intended to facilitate partnership and synergies between these organisations and is not intended to be legally binding or attempt to replace existing contracts, laws or related arrangements.

3. Becoming part of the Support Group

- 3.1. Signatories of this Agreement will provide the CA|TS Management Team with a brief statement outlining their current or suggested contribution to CA|TS
- 3.2. A countersigned Agreement and welcome letter will be sent from the CA|TS Partnership as confirmation of membership of the CA|TS Support Group
- 3.3. Any member of the group wishing to resign from the Support Group should inform the CA|TS Partnership of their decision via an email to the CA|TS Manager
- 3.4. Should membership be terminated for any reason by the Support Group, a letter from the CA|TS Partnership will confirm the ending of the arrangement and the circumstances around the decision

4. CA|TS Management Team and the Support Group

The CA|TS Management Team will:

- 4.1. Ensure coordination between the whole CA|TS community, including the CA|TS Support Group, on CA|TS implementation
- 4.2. Provide technical support, e.g. materials and training, when necessary to aid Group members in implementing CA|TS
- 4.3. Regularly update members of the Group regarding developments and progress in CA|TS implementation
- 4.4. Provide a forum through which the Group will be able to share information and insights into improving delivery of tiger conservation
- 4.4. Organise virtual meetings of the Group at least once a year
- 4.5. Develop and manage an online database of CA|TS sites to enable coordination between site-based CA|TS activities
- 4.6. Invite the Group to contribute to all major activities of CA|TS including joint funding applications, large-scale analyses and publications related to CA|TS
- 4.7. Organise a Global Meeting of the CA|TS Partnership at least every two years. The meeting will aim to:
 - Help set the agenda for wild tiger conservation through/involving CA|TS, as it pertains to the critical role of effective protected areas
 - Share experiences and challenges in implementing the CA|TS vision, goals and objectives, and develop solutions to address any challenges
 - Align and partner CA|TS with other protected area and species conservation initiatives

5. Information exchange and confidentiality

During the term of this Agreement, the Group will exchange information as is reasonably required for each to perform the obligations made in the letter of agreement and also agree to conform to the CA|TS confidentiality statement.

6. Fundraising

The Support Group will as far as possible coordinate fundraising efforts for CA|TS. Any fundraising activity by the Group specifically for CA|TS will be shared with the whole Support Group.

7. Disputes

Any disputes should be resolved amicably within the Support Group.

8. Copyright

CA|TS complies with the principles of the Conservation Commons in regards to copyright (https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/resrecfiles/WCC_2004_REC_85_EN.pdf).

9. Logo and Publicity

9.1. The CA|TS logo is the primary brand for CA|TS.

9.2. Any mention of CA|TS by the Support Group (e.g. in publications, funding proposals, press releases) should acknowledge the role of the whole CA|TS Partnership in the implementation of CA|TS.

9.3. Any publication specifically about CA|TS should be circulated to the Int Exe Comm and CA|TS Partnership before for comment and should be approved by the Int Exe Comm Chair and Secretary before publication.

10. Acknowledgements

Contributions to CA|TS from the Support Group will be acknowledged in each version of the CA|TS Manual and on the CA|TS website, by display of the name and logo of the supporting organisation upon receipt by CA|TS Management Team of the logo and permission for use.

11. Representative

Each member of the CA|TS Support Group will designate a focal point to serve as the main contact with the CA|TS Management Team to facilitate communication and co-ordination.

12. New Support Group members

Prospective new members of the Support Group will be subject to review and agreement by the existing members of the group.

13. Period of agreement

The agreement shall commence on the date the Agreement is signed and will be reviewed and revised, as necessary, every five years on a rolling basis.

CA|TS National Committee TOR

Background

The CA|TS National Committees (NCs) are responsible for the implementation of CA|TS within each individual tiger range country. Each country should only have one NC for implementing CA|TS and can be nationally or regionally based. NCs should ideally be linked to, or work closely with, other tiger specific processes within the country they are operating. TRCs can have province/state specific Jurisdictional committees which can function as National Committees in case wild tigers are confined to one state/province and the Government nodal agency formally informs the CA|TS Management team accordingly.

Description of work

NCs will work closely with members of the Support Group and the CA|TS Management Team in helping tiger conservation areas through the CA|TS process. The seven main tasks of an NC are to:

1. Register tiger conservation areas to become part of CA|TS.
2. Support CA|TS Registered sites to develop the dossiers which detail compliance against the CA|TS criteria.
3. Help sites, with the support group and CA|TS Management Team, to develop plans for improving site management where specific actions and/or improvements in site management are required.

4. Manage the compliance dossier independent review process.
5. Make recommendations regarding approval to the CA|TS International Executive Committee (see details below).
6. Provide the CA|TS Management Team with information and monitoring data regarding committee and site activities.

The major task of the NC is to review the compliance dossiers submitted by CA|TS Registered sites. Specifically after submission of the compliance dossier, the NC should:

- Review the contents and assess each criteria against the criteria outlined in the CA|TS Manual (achieved, not achieved, etc.).
- Refer the submission back to the Support Group and tiger conservation area with recommendations for action if the CA|TS criteria have not been met.
- Organise an independent review of the CA|TS process in liaison with the CA|TS Management Team.
- Award provisional approval (to be confirmed by the International Executive Committee) – this may be subject to specific requirements and deadlines for additional actions needed to completely fulfil CA|TS if some standards are assessed as ‘mainly achieved’. Submit the compliance dossier and CA|TS independent review findings (CA|TS Log) to the CA|TS Management Team (who will pass these on to the International Executive Committee for final approval to ensure continuity and uniformity across tiger range countries).
- Respond in a timely fashion to any queries from the International Executive Committee on decisions taken re CA|TS Approved status.
- Oversee implementation of any outstanding actions suggested in the CA|TS Approval decision process and report on these to the CA|TS Management Team and International Executive Committee when required.
- Remain vigilant of the CA|TS Approved areas and notify the CA|TS Management Team of any issues which could lead to changes of the CA|TS Approved status.
- Organise and oversee the renewal of CA|TS Approved status as required.

Requirements for a member of the National Committee

The committee should consist of members from a range of disciplines including knowledge of protected area networks, tiger conservation area management, tiger conservation and community development and relations. This expertise should come from a range of institutions, e.g. government, NGO, IGO academia and civil society, with no one group dominating the make-up of the committee. In addition, members should:

- Be persons of good standing with the national conservation community.
- Be able to exercise independent judgement and reasonable care, skill and diligence when taking decisions.
- Have the respect of and close links to national conservation bodies both public and private.
- Have a good working knowledge of English.
- Have a good working knowledge of CA|TS and be prepared to attend relevant training courses/workshops on CA|TS when requested.
- Be familiar with and abide to this TOR and the CA|TS Confidentiality Statement.

Working structure of the National Committee

- The NC shall consist of a minimum of seven people.
- The NC shall inform the CA|TS Management Team of all people sitting on the NC and their affiliations, their roles (e.g. the chair) and will inform the team of any changes in membership.
- It is expected that at least one of the members of the NC will have a good knowledge of the CA|TS areas recommended for Approval. If this is not the case the NC may request one of the members to make a site visit before it is submitted for Approval. NC members will be expected to meet at maximum on a quarterly basis, although frequency may depend on the status of areas in the CA|TS process.
- NCs will be considered quorate if at least 75% of members are present.
- Committee members will be expected to produce concise minutes for each meeting held recording attendance, key decisions, actions, etc., which will be required as part of the independent review carried out before compliance dossiers are finalised. Ideally pictures of the meeting should also be taken.
- NC membership is based on a voluntary and honorary principle but expenses and reasonable costs will be reimbursed.
- The NC can have meetings virtually but it is advised to meet physically at least once per year.

CA|TS host

Role

1. Provide a “home” for CA|TS through hosting/secretariat facilities for CA|TS.
2. Serve on the CA|TS IEC and provide technical inputs.
3. Make available services of a Regional Coordinator-CA|TS to the TRCs to facilitate CA|TS implementation in the TRCs.
4. Build/strengthen the profile and image of CA|TS internationally as the minimum standard for tiger conservation site management.
5. Ensure CA|TS implementation in the TRCs as per approved standards and protocols.
6. Help TRCs with external technical and financial support towards CA|TS assessments, and follow up actions wherever needed.
7. Build an international network of CA|TS Reviewers for use by national committees.
8. Institutionalize M&E of impact of CA|TS implementation over different sites collectively for tiger conservation over overall tiger range.
9. Develop/strengthen Conservation Assured (CA) standards for other big cats using the CA|TS model and implement in the range countries.

CA|TS National level independent reviewer

Role

The independent reviewer ensures that area level implementation of CA|TS is credible and scientifically relevant and that the decision to recommend CA|TS Approved status by the National Committee is credible, transparent and equivalent in relation to other recommendations made by the National Committee re CA|TS status. For a site assessment there could be one reviewer or several working as a team.

Qualifications and expectations

The reviewer:

- Should be familiar and experienced with protected area management effectiveness, assessment procedures and tiger conservation in the site's country.
- Is expected to exercise independent judgement and reasonable care, skill and diligence when undertaking the tasks prescribed in this TOR.
- Should be a person of good standing with the national conservation community.
- Should have a good knowledge of the local language at the area being assessed and of English, the working language of CA|TS.

Description of work

- The reviewers will be expected to make themselves aware of the information contained in this manual and the CA|TS Log software, and undertake training on the implementation of CA|TS provided by the CA|TS manager/team.
- The reviewer will complete all sections of CA|TS Log to the best of their ability and knowledge.
- All documentation will be made available to the reviewer including the CA|TS Compliance Dossier and all supporting documents by the NC.
- The reviewer is expected to access and review all relevant documentation and do field level verification before completing the assessment.
- The reviewer should read and agree to observe the conditions laid out in the most recent version of the Independent Reviewers TOR (i.e. this document) and the CA|TS Confidentiality Statement (see Section 8).
- The reviewer should be prepared to respond in a thorough and timely way to any questions and queries about the completion of the review from the National Committee, CA|TS support and management team and International Executive Committee.

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Section 13 Conservation Assured expanding to other species

Nature conservation strategies for rare and threatened species are commonly founded on effective protection, management and recovery. These strategies share common conservation objectives across a species range, but important sites for species survival are not all equally effective in achieving these objectives.

Bespoke conservation standards for individual species, particularly when combined with accreditation against these standards, are emerging as a new way to develop, share and implement best practice management for species survival. Conservation Assured aims to create a platform for achieving excellence in species and site management by developing independent, professional management standards and verifying site management against these standards. The approach draws on collective experience to develop:

- A process to establish an agreed set of standards to support a strategy for a specific conservation target, thereby helping to increase management effectiveness and enhance biodiversity outcomes
- A credible system for demonstrating, measuring and assuring conservation achievement
- A platform for site managers and their teams to contribute, and demonstrate these contributions, towards the achievement of specific shared conservation objectives through best practice management standards
- A facility to share, demonstrate and promote best management practices and identify interventions required to meet best practices
- A monitoring measure conservation progress for governments, NGOs, communities and companies in their environmental activities
- A vehicle to promote collaboration between organisations and institutions to improve the management of protected and conserved areas.

The first set of standards and verification system to be developed under the Conservation Assured approach was for tigers: Conservation Assured Tiger Standards (CA|TS). Following this, a second system for jaguars was developed starting in 2019. Standards and processes have also been developed for River dolphins and some preparatory work has also begun on assessing the interest in developing standards for lions, rhinos and other species.

From Tigers to Big Cats: Using CA|TS to Frame Standards for Other Species

CA|TS can serve as a model for developing “Big Cat Conservation Standards” for snow leopards, lions, leopards and cheetahs.

The framework remains universal, while **species-specific “Pillars”** can be added to capture the ecological and cultural uniqueness of each species, thus:

- **Shared standards** address themes common across all big cat landscapes: governance, human–wildlife coexistence, prey base management, habitat integrity, climate adaptation, infrastructure mitigation, community benefit-sharing and finance.
- **Species-specific standards** reflect unique needs, such as prey guild dynamics, disease risk, connectivity corridors, and the maintenance of landscape-scale genetic flows.

By harmonizing standards and reporting, this approach not only strengthens conservation across countries and ranges, but can help align with IUCN Green List processes, making global recognition and accountability more achievable for all big-cat landscapes.



CATS

Conservation | **Tiger**
Assured | **Standards**

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