

Proposed land use change working plan for a private property located in the buffer zone of the Kalagadh Tiger Reserve, Uttaranchal.

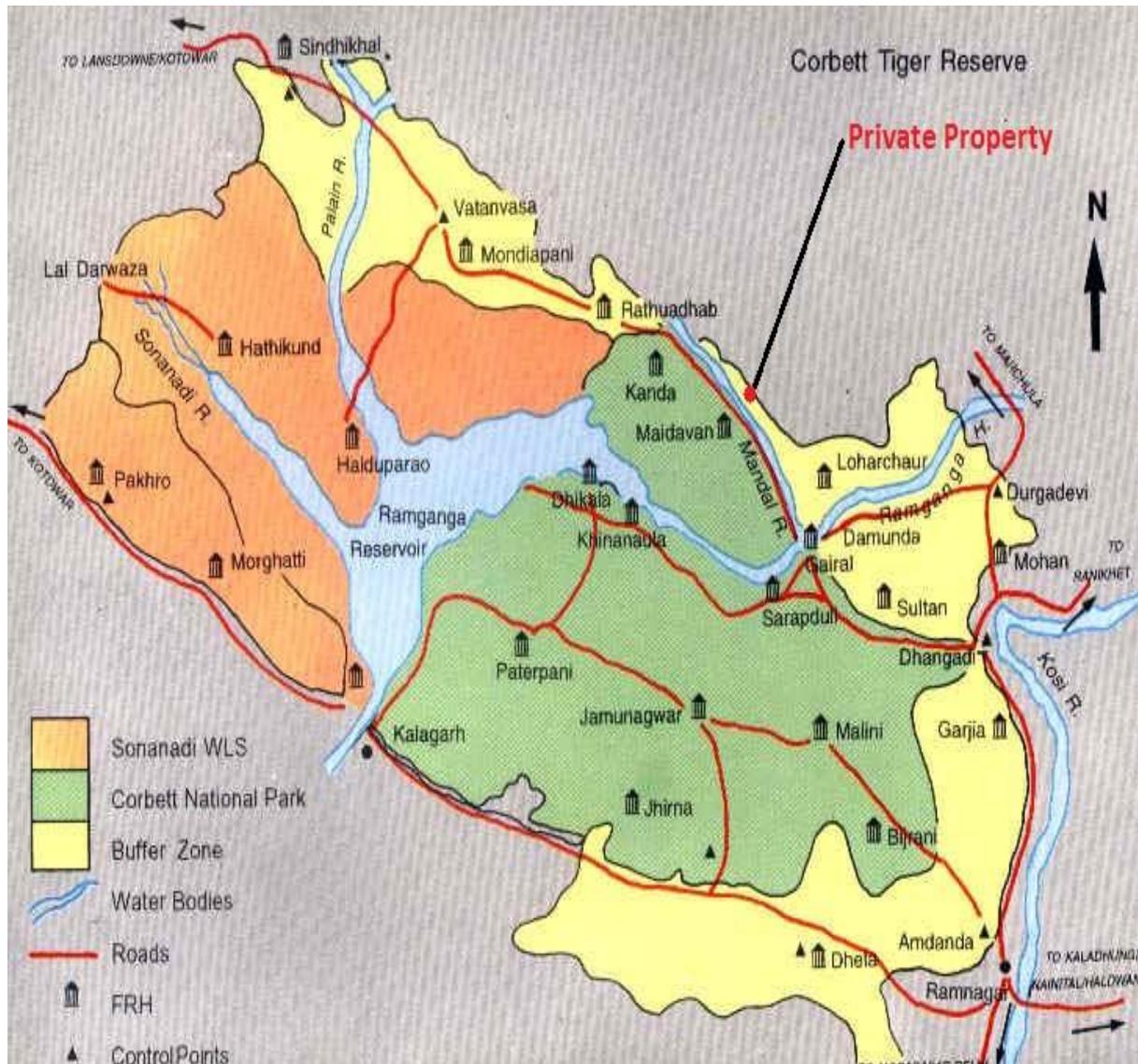


Illustration: Corbett Tiger Reserve and the location of the private property.

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Summary

As landowners of a patch of land located within the buffer zone of the Kalagadh Tiger Reserve we are fully aware of the sensitiveness and importance of the area to wildlife. Our land was once a village and keeping in mind the needs of local wildlife we discontinued all cultivation that was once practiced by villagers living on the land. Today there are very few people living on the land. We see this as a big shift in land use and we also notice that wildlife is slowly recovering in the area.

The Corbett buffer zone area is a multi-use forest, where the local communities have traditional rights to extract NISTAR from the forest. This means some level of extraction of NTFP, fuel wood and grazing by local communities continues in the buffer forests. As private landowners and direct stakeholders of the buffer zone we are keen to support the forest department and work towards friendly ways to coexist in the conservation area. We designed structures on our private land such as mosaics of vegetation, planted local varieties of trees and undertook other interventions with an aim to reduce our resource dependence on the adjoining forests. This way we hope to make our land self-sustaining, which is to make it meet all our resource needs. As per our design we do not intend to erect any major structures in our land and our land use plan will not impact the aesthetic quality of the place nor contribute to any pollution. In fact we wish to contribute to the local communities by allowing them access to extract some resources from our land instead of extracting directly from the wild. These could be grasses suitable for livestock, fuel wood for cooking or bamboo. We hope that such interventions will decrease local villagers direct extraction of resources from the wild even if it's for a short period of the year.

We wish to discontinue large scale agriculture that was one practiced on our land. Also we would like to promote activities that have low scope for man-animal conflict scenarios. We wish to put in place ecologically friendly ***edible woodland-grassland landscape for people and wildlife***, that can be periodically harvested, can contribute to the local communities and wildlife. As land owners we wish to work hand in hand with the forest department to ensure the security and safety of the conservation area.

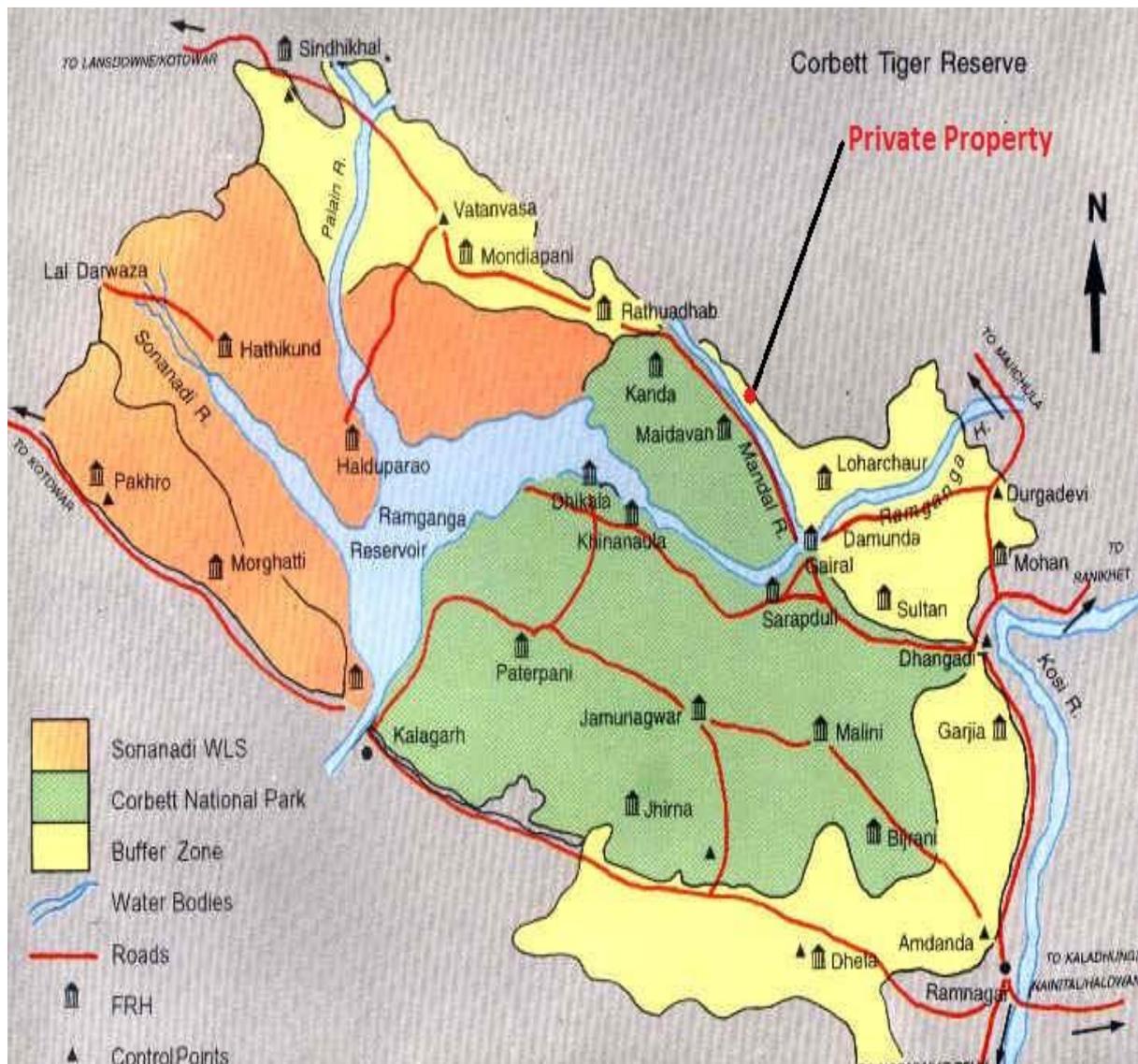
Introduction

This concept note describes our vision as a result of the new land use and the intended land use of the private land located in the buffer zone of the Kalagadh Tiger Reserve, Uttaranchal.

As owners of the land we are very well aware that our private property is situated in a sensitive forest area. We are sensitive to the fact that any major development in the private land may have an impact on the adjoining forest and its wildlife.

As owners of the land that is located in a sensitive area we developed a vision and a plan that will allow our land and us to contribute in a positive way to the landscape. By doing so we hope to collaborate and work along with the forest department to achieve the common goal of wildlife conservation in Kalagadh Tiger Reserve buffer zone.

Location of the property within the buffer zone



How we think we can contribute to wildlife conservation

Traditional crops were once grown on our land. Since 2008 we stopped farming and now we plan to reforest our land with local grass and tree species that can also be extracted periodically for use. This means we are proposing a land use shift from traditional agriculture to *edible woodland-grassland landscape for people and wildlife*.

Local villagers extract many types of non-timber forest products from the buffer zone forests. We plan to grow within our property different varieties of native grasses and other native wild floral species that local villagers use. We wish to support the local communities by allowing them to use some of the grasses and other plants that we grow. By doing this we hope that at least in some season's pressure exerted by the local communities on the natural forest reduces and the vegetation in the forests will have time to recover.

As a responsible land owner we wish to keep a watchful eye on the forests adjoining our land. This will ensure that no illegal activities occur in the multi-use forests. By doing this we will actually help the local forest department and contribute to the overall security of the area.

We wish to initiate a CSR initiative (Corporate Social Responsibility) through our land. This means that we will not use the land for any major developmental activities. We will not grow crops that could potentially lead to man-animal conflict situations. Our land use plan is to grow a mosaic of natural vegetation structures that can sustain some level of use. Such planned use will allow land to be productively used to contribute to the local communities as well as for the upkeep of the private property itself.

Proposed Land Use Plan

We have developed a land use plan with a shift in focus from growing crops to growing natural forest vegetation . We hope that such a shift will contribute to reduced conflict with animals, encourage local wildlife and also provide for us and local communities living in the buffer zone.

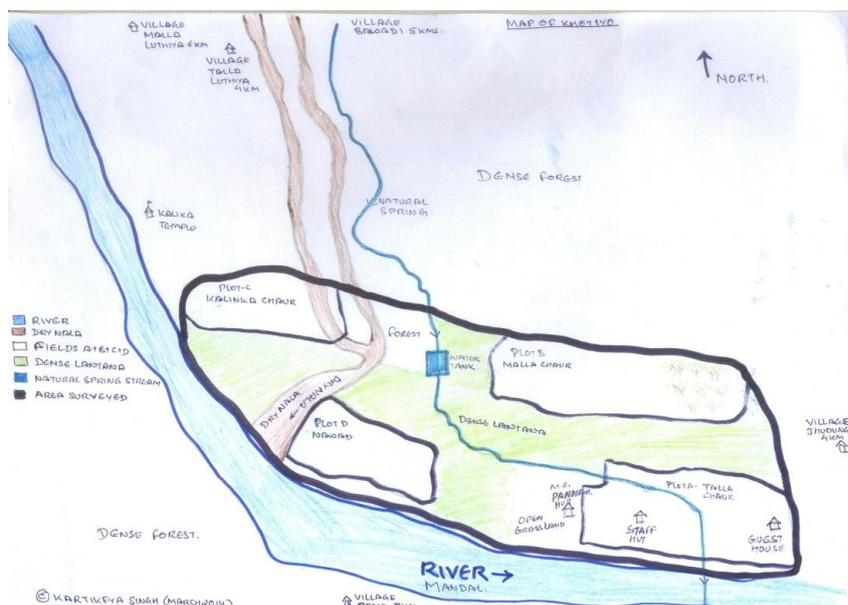


Illustration: Map of the private property. Green areas shows lantana, which we will eventually change to natural grassland meadows.

The new land use plan is designed with an intention to shift from cultivating crops to *edible woodland-grassland landscape for people and wildlife*. The new land use will involve growing working trees and grasses. The diversification of land use will be from traditional agriculture to low impact harvesting of renewable forest resources.

By adopting the new land use we see a clear link to our increased contribution to local communities through resource sharing. Local villagers can meet some of their demands from our land instead of harvesting from the forest. Changing land use will also allow us to be self-sufficient on fuel wood for our use, improve land quality for wildlife, reduce flooding of nalas.

We wish to keep bees for honey production and part proceeds from the sale of all natural products extracted from the land will be shared with the local communities.

We devised a land plan that will reduce the need to construct large structures in the property. Instead the land will be used to promote very ecofriendly alternatives that will not require major construction. Only a small area of our land will be used as living space by our staff that stays on the site and the rest of the property will be converted into mosaics of vegetative patches that will also be perfect habitat for wildlife.

Description of the planning area.

(A brief overview of location, area, people, land resources, current land use and production.)

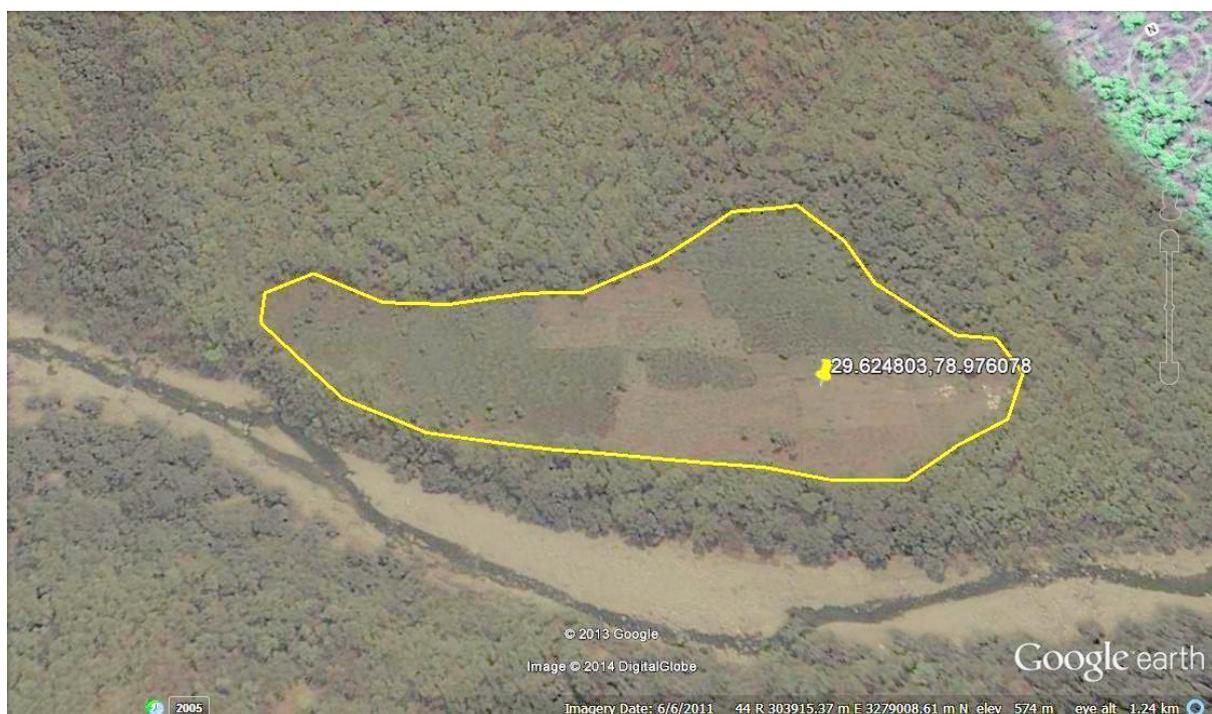


Illustration: The yellow line marks the borders of our private land in the buffer zone of the Kalagadh Tiger Reserve.

We wish to create a vegetative fencing of local thorns and bamboo around our property that will also be suitable for many varieties of birds and animals. This way we will avoid large structures like posts and pillars and barbed wires.

We will harvest rain water and water flowing through our property for personal use and thus reduce any dependency on the river for water. This will also reduce the disturbance on the river.

We plan to grow local varieties of grasses and plants and trees that can be extracted periodically in a systematic way. Since our intention is to generate some resources to sustain the upkeep of the place and also to support local communities, we do not see any negative repercussions of our acts. We also do not wish to clear cut the place but instead instill a rotational harvesting procedure so that there is always cover for wildlife in the property.

Management issues and opportunities

- Statement of land-use problems and opportunities.

Lack of approach to the property is the biggest obstacle as on date. We will work out a strategy along with the local forest department; in the process we will pay all the needed caution to ensure that the proposed plans do not have any major impact on the landscape.

Access to the land with conditions of controlled use may suit interests of all parties i.e forest department and us. This way we can also ensure that the areas between the property and road point are also monitored by our staffs and forest department personnel for illegal activities.

- Rationale for the selected option.

Living is a multi-use area of a tiger reserve entitles certain access rights to the landowners. However, as residents sensitive to the needs of wildlife we understand that growing crops on our land will only attract wildlife, they will raid crops and open up scope for man-animal conflict. We wish to avoid this. So a new land use plan is designed, *edible woodland-grassland landscape for people and wildlife*, that will allow friendly use of land as well as make a contribution for the wildlife and local communities.

- Summary of the changes the plan will bring about, by subject area or geographic area.

The major change will be to eradicate non –native species of vegetation like lantana and to stop resource demanding agriculture on the land.

Instead we will plant mosaics of natural vegetation that can be used by wildlife, for local communities and also for the daily use within the property without having to depend on the adjoining forest.

The changes proposed will encourage a health relationship between the local forest department, land owners and local communities. Thus fostering ways to work collaboratively.

The proposed change is to see for us an active role and as stakeholders of the buffer zone to participate in ensuring the safety and security of the area.

Through our proposed change we will directly reduce local community pressure on the forests. This we will do by growing some of the grasses and tree species that are used by the local community.

Direction

- Land-use types and standards that apply to the whole planning area and to individual planning units.

Standard Operations procedure for all plots for June 2014

Outcome	Increased visual wildlife experience within property	By end 2014/15
Output	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased presence of mammals (Predators and prey) in the property 2. Opportunity to see bird life from trails. 3. Removal of weeds and growth of low natural vegetation 4. Plantation of tree alongside trails 	
process	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 3 & 4 will influence 1. Keep a record of all animals sighted on the property and do an animal count if possible. Compare seasonal increase or decrease of animals/ 2. Keep trails very clear and well marked. Birds in trees , on canopy and in the grass will be visible from trails. 3. Starting in June Lantann and babbar ghas (weed with white flowers) have to be removed from all four plots. Grass seeds have to be sown in the plots and 3-4 people should ensure that birds do not eat away the seeds for a period of 1 week. Planting should be coordinated with rains. Plant mulberry trees in the middle of 1,3 plots to attract fruit and insect eating birds and butterflies (local name of tree: Shahtoosh) 4. Amaltash, tun, will be planted at a distance of 2 feet from the boundary wall. A spacing of 4 feet between the trees should be provided. Bamboo will be planted between two trees. Jamun trees have to be planted along all nalas that flow through the property. 	All work should be undertaken in the month of June.
Input	1.	April (partially

- Time scale for action.

Plantations to start before the monsoon 2014 and the area will be maintained.

2 years to slowly implement other project components and 5 years to fully change into the envisioned new land use.

Monitoring and Revision

- Reviewing progress and revising the plan.

The plan will be regularly assessed by Shekhar Kolipaka for certain key indicators.

Indicators will include

- Wildlife species presence
- Growth of native vegetation in the property
- Relationships with FD and local communities
- Increased ability of local staff to managed the needs of the property

Work plan for implementation in 2014

- Individual projects with, time, resources required and responsibility for implementation.

S.No	Project Components	time	resources required	responsibility for implementation	Remarks
1	Staff Training	April 2014	2 X 4 days visits	Shekhar Kolipaka	Done
		June/July 2014	2 X 3 days		Planned
		October 2014			Review
2	Re-vegetation				
	Planting grasses along dry nala banks and planting Jamun	Monsoon 2014	Plants, Seeds	Local staff	Seeds ordered
	Planting grass seeds in private property.	Monsoon 2014	Seeds, plants	Local staff	Saplings ordered
	Panting bamboos along the periphery of the property.	Monsoon 2014	Bamboo plants,	Local staff	Ordered
3	Trails and fencing				
	Making a 5 feet wide trail all along the property for movement of personnel.	Summer 2014	Temporary labor tools	Local staff	Done
	Enclosing habitation within the property (living areas) with thorn and bush fencing.	Summer 2014	Shrubs - Seeds	Local staff	Ongoing
	Making walking trails in the property	Summer 2014		Local staff	Done
4	Natural Resource Harvesting and Management				
	Water harvesting to make water sustainable for use within the property.	Winter 2014			Planned
5	Ethical and aesthetic policies				
	No plastic, minimum foot print policy.	Immediately from April 2014		Owners, Local staff, Visitors	On going