

CONSERVATION PLAN FOR INDIAN PEAFOWL (*Pavo cristatus*)

1.0 Introduction

A detailed biological survey of the core zone (Project site) and buffer zone (10 km radius from periphery of the proposed CBMWTF project) was carried out giving details of flora and fauna. However, peacock which belongs to Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972 are the only species of fauna found in the study area.

CLASSIFICATION

Kingdom	:	Animalia
Phylum	:	Chordata
Class	:	Aves
Order	:	Galliformes
Family	:	Phasianidae
Genus	:	Pavo
Species	:	<i>Pavo cristatus</i>
Vernacular name	:	Indian Peafowl

2.0 General Description

Peacock or Indian peafowl (*Pavo cristatus*) is a familiar and universally known large pheasant. It is the National Bird of India. The term “Peacock” is commonly used to refer to birds of both sexes. Technically, only males are Peacock, females are peahens and together they are called peafowl.

The male has a spectacular glossy green long tail feathers that may be more than 60 percent of the bird's total body length. These feathers have blue, golden green and copper colored ocelli (eyes). The long tail feathers are used for mating rituals like courtship displays. The feathers are arched into a magnificent fan shaped form across the back of the bird and almost touching the found on both sides. Females do not have these graceful tail feathers. They have the fan like crest with whitish face and throat, chestnut brown crown and hind neck, metallic green upper breast and mantle, white belly and brown back rump and tail. Their primaries are dark brown.

3.0 Habitat

Body length : 180-230
Weight : 2750-6000 gm
Habitat : In the undergrowth in deciduous forests near streams

Tall trees for roosting

Size of the male tail feathers, its coloration and numbers of eyes presents determine the dominance of the male in peacock hierarchy. The females are believed to be attracted towards the male with longest and most colorful tail feathers.

4.0 Peafowl Behavior

Peacocks are gregarious by nature. In the breeding season they are usually seen in small parties of one male with three to five females whereas in the non breeding season they remain in separate parties of adult males and females with juveniles. Peacocks roost in tall trees and emerge from the dense thickets to feed in fields and openings in forests and fields.

5.0 Life Cycle

Kee-ow, Kee-ow, Kee-ow, Ka-an, Ka-an, Kok-kok, Kok-kok, cain-kok
Breeding : April-September (Project area)
Nest site : On ground in undergrowth (wild)
On buildings by semi-feral birds in villages

6.0 Food Habit

Peacocks are ground feeders. Indian peafowl's do most of their foraging early in the morning and shortly before sunset. They retreat to the shade and security of the trees for the hottest portion of the day. They make a meal of grains, berries drupes wild figs and some cultivated crops. They can also eat insect's small reptiles and small mammals.

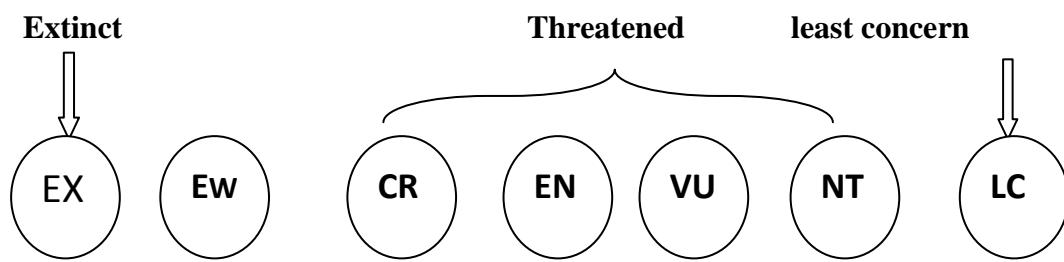
7.0 Conservation and Relationship with man

The great beauty and popularity of the Indian Peafowl has ensured its protection throughout most of its native ranges. **It is a National bird of India.** The peafowl is prominent in the mythology

and folklore of the Indian people. The Hindus consider the bird to be sacred because of its association with Lord Krishna who used to wear its feather as crown (Mor Mokut). It is also associated with the God Kartikeya, son of the Lord Shiva and Parvati and brother of Lord Ganesh. It is “Vaahan” (transport) of Lord Kartikeya.

This long and close association with humans has proven the peafowl’s adaptability to human-altered landscapes. In villages where it is protected it becomes quite tame, but is very shy and secretive where hunted. In the buffer area of **CBMWTF project** peacock is generally protected by the local people.

CONSERVATION STATUS



IUCN : Least Concern

IWPA : Schedule I

CITES : Not listed

8.0 Threats

Threats to the peacocks in the area are:

- 1) Habitat loss, specially the shortage of tall trees in and around the villages for roosting and for providing shade during hot summer months.
- 2) Shortage of drinking water for the birds during the hot summer days.
- 3) Casualties caused by eating chemically treated agricultural crop seeds.
- 4) Illegal hunting by some communities.

Peacock conservation plan has to address these threats.

9.0 Conservation Measures

Direct and indirect approach is required to provide effective conservation, which is recommended as under:

1. Increasing the tree cover in the buffer area for shelter and roosting of peacocks. This will be achieved by planting of tree groves (a group of trees that grow close together, generally without many bushes or other plants) in buffer area. Some local species such as Neem, Siris, Amaltash, Ardu, Shesham, Dhak, Peepal tree etc. will be planted. Planting of tree groves in school compounds in the villages of buffers area will be planted as per the plantation programme.
2. By conducting awareness programmes (community and school level) for conservation of peacocks in the area and also through organizing competitions during “Wildlife Week” and “Van Mahotsave” celebrations.
3. Some provision of rewards to informers for the control of poaching and illegal trade in wildlife.
4. Carrying out census and research projects to know the potential threats and population status of the species.
5. Provision of veterinary care and cages for injured or sick deformed birds.
6. Suggest strategies to minimize negative impacts of changing environment in nearby area of peacock populations and to promote conservation of peacock habitats.
7. Another way to help preserve the endangered species is to create society dedicated to ecological ethics. All the conservation measures will be implemented with the help of and in the consultation of the district forest department, Sohna (Haryana.).
8. With the objective of effectively protecting the wild life and to control poaching, smuggling and illegal trade in wildlife and its derivatives, the Government of India enacted Wild Life (Protection) Act 1972. The Act was amended in January 2003 and punishment and penalty for offences under the Act have been made more stringent.

The proponent has proposed a sum of Rs. 202500/- for the “Peacock” conservation plan under the following heads:

S. No	Work or Activity	Rs.
1	Plantation- 350 tree plants (5 feet height as per the plant species- Cost of sapling will be changed per year)	52500/- (@ 150/- per plant)
2	Small water tank or tanka – 20 in number @ 5000/- per tank	100000/-
3	One awareness programme for “Peacock” conservation	20000/-
4	3 cash prizes @ 10000 in a year will be awarded to the informer of poachers.	30000/-
	Total	202500
