

Progress Report

Background: It has been noted that even though the northern parts of the Konkani region of Maharashtra have colonies of *Gyps bengalensis* and *Gyps indicus*, no colonies have been sighted in Southern in past 2 years. The food availability for vultures might be one of the reasons behind this decline as the state wide ban on disposing dead cattle in open is not being uniformly followed. Furthermore urbanization, lowered numbers of cattle, selling of weak cattle to slaughter houses may also affect food availability. Therefore an extensive study is required to draw a clear picture about the availability of food for the existing vulture population.

OBJECTIVES

- To analyze effect of socio-economic, geographical conditions, carcass disposal state policies and their implementations on vulture food base and existence of vulture colonies.
- Create action areas to establish vulture safe Konkani

CURRENT UPDATE

- Mapping the project area – Circular zones with either existing or past colony as centers have been drawn around existing and past vulture colonies using Google Earth in such manner that there is minimum zone overlapping and all zones cover entire Konkani region. Please refer Annexure 1.
- Preparation of survey questionnaire - Survey questionnaires have been prepared for every specified target group. Please refer Annexure 2 to 4. (All translated in Marathi-a local language for survey)

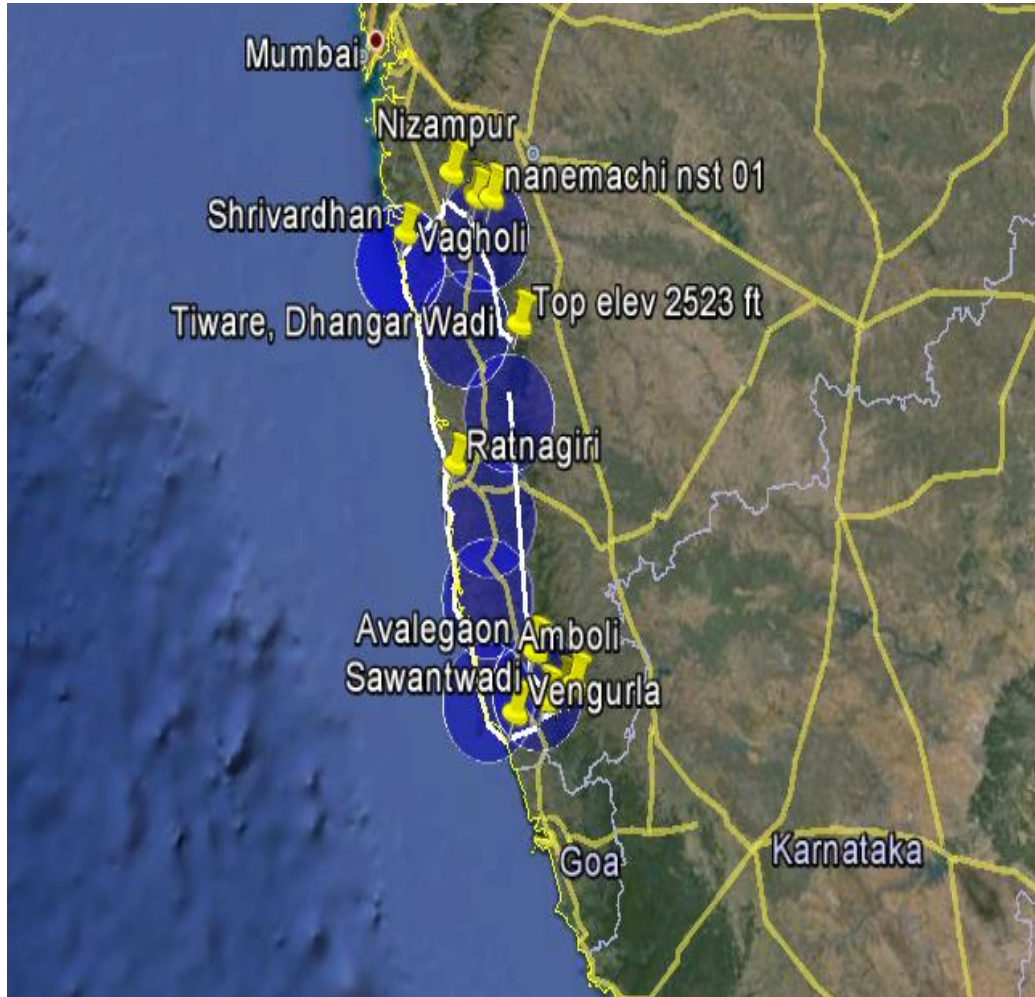
- Survey methodology – In every zone, survey shall cover survey shall cover 100 cattle owners, 100 representatives of general public, students, members of local governing bodies, 50% of forest department
- Assessment Visits – Some of the villages in each zone has been visited by the monitoring team to
 - Assess possibility of appointing local people to monitor the zone.
 - Conduct surveys in certain locations to test and assess survey time.
 - Collect data related to veterinary use of diclofenac, carcass disposal and possibility of vulture feeding through informal discussions with villagers, *Sarpanch* (head of the elected village governing body), *Gram Sevak* (Administrative assistant of the elected body)
 - Visit certain open carcass disposal sites and record GPS locations

NEXT QUARTER (OCT – DEC 2014)

- Appoint a local person to monitor the respective zone for carcass dumping and vulture feeding
- Meeting with veterinarians and forest officials of zones having vulture nesting to survey using questionnaire.
- Send letters to get data about vulture nesting, sightings, carcass disposal method and information about chemist shop to all the Gram Panchayats (Village level governing body of elected members)

ANNEXURE

Annexure 1: Project area map



Annexure 2: Questionnaire for cattle owners / farm owners

Date: _____ Time: _____

Name of village: _____

Taluka: _____ District: _____

Name of Cattle Owner: _____

Contact Details: _____

Are Vultures found in the region: Yes/No

Cattle Details

Number of Cattle owned: _____

Frequently observed Diseases / Common Health Problems

Frequency of Disease Occurrence

- Repeated number of times in a month
- Once in 6 months
- Once in a year
- Once in 2 years

When animals become sick or old, they are:

- Sold to slaughter house?
- Keeping them till they die

1. Other (please specify): _____

How are sick cattle treated?

- Traditional methods
- Vet hospital in village
- Vet comes on call
- Not treated

According to National and International research veterinary drug Diclofenac has been held responsible for the decline in Vulture population, do you have idea about this?(Yes/No)
If any alternate drugs like Ketoprofen, Meloxicam are being used (Yes/No)

Cattle Disposal Methods

Are there any guidelines given for disposing dead cattle?

When cattle die, they are: (tick the correct option)

- If buried underground any problem faced during burial?
 - Difficult to find a proper area for burial
 - Difficulty in dislodging the dead
 - Other (Please specify)
- If dumped in the open
 - Place where are they dumped –

- Other Method (please specify): _____

If owns a farm

Type of Farm _____

Vulture Status survey

The type of Vultures seen in your village/farm:



OR



Incidence of nesting in farm/village (Yes/No)

If yes,

- When: _____years/months/days ago
- Number of nests _____
- Where _____
- Any disturbance _____

When vultures were last sighted in the village/farm: _____years/months/days ago

Are vultures sighted frequently in the village/Farm? (Yes/No)

- Every day
- Once or twice in a week
- Once or twice in month
- Once or twice yearly

Where are/were vultures usually seen in the village/farm? _____

Activity of Vultures during the sighting

- Flying
- Feeding
- Roosting
- Nesting

According to your observation is there any tree in specific they prefer for nesting?

Is there any active nest in your village/farm?

Observed period of Nesting (Mention the month/Months) _____

Is there any fixed timing for Vultures to leave as well as to return in their nests?

Have dead vultures been sighted in your village/farm? (Yes/No)

If yes,

- When_____ years/months/days ago
- Where_____

According to your observation, has the population of Vultures fallen down in your region? (Yes/No)

If yes, then is it a

- Sudden decline?
- Gradual decline

Does change in Vulture population has any financial effect? (Yes/No)

If yes then, is it...

- Minute
- Major

Does decline in Vulture population has any noted effects? Like,

- Increase in Dogs and rat population
(Increased death due to rabies)
- Other (Please specify)

According to your observation what are the reasons for the decrease in population of the Vultures?

- Scarcity of food
- Reproductively less potential
- Habitat loss
- Diclofenac poisoning

Is their any harm from vultures to humans?(Yes/No)

If yes, then how

- Decrease in farm yield
- Attacking livestock
- Spreading Disease

If population of Vultures stabilizes, then would that be helpful for human beings?(Yes/No)

If yes, then,

- Financially
- Environmentally
- Others

If photographed (Yes/No)

Annexure 3: Questionnaire for Veterinary doctors/Animal Husbandry Department

Date: _____ Time: _____

Name of village: _____

Taluka: _____ District: _____

Name of Veterinarian/Owner of Animal Husbandry: _____

Contact Details: _____

Number of animals under your jurisdiction: _____

How sick cattle are treated?

- Traditional methods
- Vet comes on call
- Vet hospital in village
- Not treated

Please fill up the below mentioned table related to the common Diseases prevalent in cattle in your region:

<i>At Animal Husbandry or Vet Clinic (tick one)</i>		
Name of the Disease	Frequency of Disease Occurrence*	Frequency of cattle deaths*1

* Repeated number of times in a month – A
 Once in 6 months - B
 Once in a year - C
 Once in 2 years – D

*1 More than 5 in a month - 1
 Less than 5 and more than 1 in a month - 2
 Less than 5 in 6months - 3
 mLess than 5 in a year - 4

According to National and International research, veterinary drug Diclofenac has been held responsible for the decline in the Vulture population do you have any idea about this? (Yes/No)

As Diclofenac is banned which alternative drug/drugs is/are being prescribed? (Please specify the names) _____

If drugs like Ketoprofen, Meloxicam are being used (Yes/No)

Any rapid method that may be used to detect Diclofenac traces in carcass sample?

When animals become sick or old, they are (**Only for animal husbandry Dpt.**)

- Sold to slaughter house? (Yes/No)
- Keeping them till they die
- Other (please specify):

Cattle Disposal Methods

Are there any guidelines given for disposing dead cattle?

When cattle die, they are: (tick the correct option)

- If buried underground any problem faced during burial?
 - Difficult to find a proper area for burial
 - Difficulty in dislodging the dead
 - Other (Please specify)
- If dumped in the open
 - Place where are they dumped –

- Other Method (please specify): _____

Annexure 4: Questionnaire for Forest Guards, general public, Students, members of local governance body

Date: _____ Time: _____

Name of village: _____

Taluka: _____ District: _____

Name of Veterinarian/Owner of Animal Husbandry: _____

Contact Details: _____

Are Vultures found in the region: Yes/No

Vulture Status survey

The type of Vultures seen in your village/farm:



OR



Incidence of nesting in farm/village (Yes/No)

If yes,

- When: _____ years/months/days ago
- Number of nests _____
- Where _____
- Any disturbance _____

When vultures were last sighted in the village/farm: _____ years/months/days ago

Are vultures sighted frequently in the village/Farm? (Yes/No)

- Every day
- Once or twice in a week
- Once or twice in month
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If yes,

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 - Place where are they dumped –

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