International Journal of Applied Mathematics

Volume 38 No. 11s, 2025

ISSN: 1311-1728 (printed version); ISSN: 1314-8060 (on-line version)

EXAMINING THE MANIFESTATIONS OF HUMAN-WILDLIFE CONFLICT DURING THE COLONIAL PERIOD - THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF HUNTING AND BOUNTY SYSTEMS

Dr. Souvik Chatterji, Anustoop Majumder

(Head of the Department, Juridical Sciences, JIS University),

(Research Scholar, JIS University, Calcutta) and Samrat Samaddar(BBA LL.B(H) Student at JIS University, Calcutta)

Abstract

The history of human-animal conflict is rooted in the earliest stages of civilization itself. From the moment human beings began to establish societies, expand their settlements, agriculture, and industry, they inevitably encroached upon wildlife habitat, which resulted in disturbed relation between humans and animals. Consequently, they have contended with animals, leading to clashes over resources, territory, and survival.

Human-wildlife conflict describes the negative interactions that occur between human population and wild animals. The increasing human-wildlife conflict frequently leads to detrimental impacts such as damage to crops, livestock predation, injuries, or even fatalities. This escalation is largely driven by factors like population growth, deforestation, and urban expansion. Historically, human responses to this conflict have included hunting, habitat destruction, and protective measures like fencing and wildlife management strategies.

During British rule in India, hunting was more than just a pastime for British officials; it was a well-organized activity. They often took long breaks specifically to go on hunting trips. This became a popular leisure activity for the wealthy British, which not only stopped local people from hunting but also showed off British masculinity and their power over India. The British government intentionally used “trophy photos” of dead tigers. These photos were a strong visual way to show their power and to make the local people feel the strength of the British government.

Hunting also turned into a competition to see who could kill the most animals. For example, the Maharaja of Sarguja reportedly shot an incredible 1,157 tigers and 2,000 leopards. A British official named George Yule was said to have killed 400 tigers. At first, some forest areas were set aside only for the British elite to hunt in, which clearly showed how exclusive this activity was. The Forest Act of 1878 made hunting rules official by requiring licenses to hunt in state forests. This system made existing inequalities worse because Indians rarely, if ever, received licenses, and even not all Europeans got them.

Under the British, sport hunting was much more than just fun; it was a deliberate and symbolic way to show dominance. The British government created a huge power imbalance by making it illegal for local communities to hunt for food while at the same time making elite sport hunting an official and encouraged activity. This double standard not only took

Received: August 09, 2025

Volume 38 No. 11s, 2025

ISSN: 1311-1728 (printed version); ISSN: 1314-8060 (on-line version)

away traditional food sources and ways of earning a living from local people, potentially forcing them into illegal activities, but also caused deep anger against conservation efforts that seemed to care more about British leisure than about the survival of the local population. The "trophy shot" further strengthened this visual display of power over both nature and the people they ruled. This shows a deeper conflict: not just people versus animals, but colonizer versus colonized, with animals being used as a way to show imperial control and dominance. This history of conservation that excluded people, where who could access and use resources was decided by colonial power, still affects indigenous rights and conservation efforts in India today, after the British left.[1]

Systematic Extermination of "Vermin" (Tigers, Leopards, Wolves)

Starting in the late 1700s, the British in India began offering special rewards to kill various predator animals. Both the British government (the Raj) and the East India Company encouraged killing tigers and other carnivores by paying hunters, both European and Indian. In the early 1800s, payments for a tiger hide were about 5 to 10 rupees, and by the 1860s, they went up to 20 to 50 rupees for an adult tiger. They paid even more for tigers that attacked people.

This widespread killing was enormous and destructive. Between 1875 and 1925, an estimated 80,000 tigers, 150,000 leopards, and 200,000 wolves were killed for these rewards. As early as 1822, the East India Company in Bengal paid 38,483 rupees just for killing 5,573 tigers. The British justified this aggressive policy by saying large animals represented a "wild" society and threatened farmers and economic growth. This payment system, along with the idea that predators were "pests" or "hindrances to progress," caused a huge and unnatural drop in their numbers. The sheer number of reported killings shows this was a deliberate disruption of nature, not balanced wildlife management. Removing these top predators would have had a major ripple effect on the ecosystem, possibly leading to too many plant-eating animals. This, in turn, could have led to more crop damage by deer and similar animals, creating new conflicts between humans and wildlife.

This reward system clearly shows a practical but damaging way of managing wildlife. It was driven by quick money and the colonial idea of "civilizing" India. This policy had serious long-term negative effects on the environment, pushing many species toward disappearing from certain areas and completely changing the natural balance of India's ecosystems.[2]

Selective Conservation: The Utilitarian Protection of Elephants

During their rule, the British had a policy called selective conservation. This wasn't about protecting nature for its own sake, but rather about what was useful to them. They focused on killing tigers because they saw tigers as a threat to elephants. They were more focused on protecting elephants because elephants were incredibly valuable to the British.

Why Elephants Were Protected

[1] *Supra* Note 23 at 21
[2] *Supra* Note 23 at 21

Received: August 09, 2025

Volume 38 No. 11s, 2025

ISSN: 1311-1728 (printed version); ISSN: 1314-8060 (on-line version)

Elephants were like living machines for the British. They were used for:

Military purposes: As powerful animals in battles and for carrying heavy equipment.

Transport and labour: Moving goods and doing tough work.

Timber extraction: Helping to cut and move wood for building things like railways and ships.

Because elephants were so important to their economy and administration, the British started protecting them legally as early as the 1870s.

This “selective conservation” shows a strange contradiction. The British weren't protecting elephants because they cared about the environment or animal diversity. Instead, it was a practical decision that served their own imperial needs. They decided which animals to protect and which to kill based on how useful they were to the colonial economy or how much of a problem they caused. This meant they helped elephants thrive (for human use) while actively contributing to the decline of tigers. Ultimately, this policy highlights how colonial environmental efforts were self-serving. Even when they ‘conserved’ something, it was for their own benefit, often harming the natural balance and ignoring traditional ways of valuing nature.

Increased Crop Raiding and Livestock Depredation

Causes: Habitat Loss, Prey Depletion, and Agricultural Expansion

During British colonial rule, there was a big rise in wild animals raiding crops and killing livestock. This happened because the British drastically changed the environment.

Loss of Animal Homes: The British cut down vast areas of forests for wood and to create large farms for crops like tea and coffee. They also built railways and roads. All of this destroyed and broke up the natural homes of wild animals, leaving them with less space to live. This forced animals to move closer to where people lived.

Less Natural Food for Carnivores: The British loved hunting for sport, which significantly reduced the number of animals that large meat-eating predators like tigers and leopards usually ate (like deer). At the same time, they made it illegal for local communities, who were often displaced, to hunt for their own food, which they had traditionally done. With their natural prey scarce, these predators had no choice but to hunt domestic animals like cows and goats for food.

Farms in Animal Territory: People started farming and building settlements in areas that were once wildlife habitats. Animals like elephants, whose traditional paths and feeding grounds were now farms, found tasty crops like bananas and corn growing there. This acted like a magnet, drawing them into fields and leading to more crop raiding.

The destruction of animal habitats and the reduction of their natural food sources pushed wildlife closer to human areas. At the same time, the easy availability of food in farms and the presence of livestock pulled them in. When humans expanded into areas animals used to roam, it made conflicts unavoidable.

Received: August 09, 2025

Volume 38 No. 11s, 2025

ISSN: 1311-1728 (printed version); ISSN: 1314-8060 (on-line version)

So, the increase in crop raiding and livestock being killed wasn't just a random problem. It was a direct and expected result of the massive environmental changes and reallocation of resources driven by British colonial policies, which were mainly focused on making money and managing their territories.

Economic and Social Impact on Rural Communities

When wild animals like elephants, tigers, and leopards damage crops and kill livestock, it causes big problems for people in rural Indian villages.

Crop Damage:

Elephants and other plant-eating animals often destroy farmers' fields. This means farmers lose their entire harvest, which is a huge financial blow. For families who rely completely on their crops to live, this can lead to hunger and poverty.

Livestock Losses:

Meat-eating animals like tigers and leopards kill cattle and other farm animals. This is a major hardship for communities that depend on their livestock for income. For example, in areas like Kaziranga, families lost an average of more than one animal per year. Since these animals are often a family's main source of money, losing them makes people angry and resentful towards wildlife, sometimes leading them to kill the animals in revenge.

Deeper Poverty and Conflict:

On top of this, rural communities were already struggling because they were stopped from using forest resources they traditionally relied on. When crops or livestock were lost, especially during famines, and they couldn't get food from the forests, it pushed them into extreme poverty and starvation.

Colonial Policies Worsened the Problem:

The economic hardship caused by human-wildlife conflict wasn't just an inconvenience; it was a direct threat to survival. This was made much worse by old colonial policies (rules from the time India was ruled by a foreign power). These policies had already made communities vulnerable by:

Making them pay high land taxes.

Forcing them to sell their crops instead of growing food for themselves.

Taking away their traditional rights to use forest resources.

When these communities lost their usual ways of coping (like growing diverse foods or gathering from forests), human-wildlife conflict hit them even harder. It drove them deeper into poverty and created anger, which sometimes led to them harming wildlife or even broader anti-colonial protests.

Human-wildlife conflict during the colonial period wasn't just about animals and people clashing. It was a deep social, economic, and political issue tied to how the colonial rulers

Received: August 09, 2025

Volume 38 No. 11s, 2025

ISSN: 1311-1728 (printed version); ISSN: 1314-8060 (on-line version)

exploited and governed the land. It created a bad cycle: environmental problems led to conflict, which then made people's lives harder and increased social unrest.[3]

Man-Eating Incidents: Causes, Colonial Narratives, and Human Cost

Factors Contributing to Man-Eater Emergence (Injury, Prey Scarcity, Habitat Loss)

Tigers and leopards began attacking and eating people more frequently during colonial times. This alarming change was mainly due to how colonial policies altered the environment.

There were three main reasons for this dangerous shift:

Loss of Home: Huge areas of forests were cut down for wood and farms. Also, railways and roads split up the remaining forests. This meant tigers and leopards had much less space to live and hunt.

Lack of Food: The animals they normally hunted became scarce. This was because the British overhunted these animals and disrupted their natural habitats. With their usual food gone, big cats were forced to look for other sources, often near human villages. Jim Corbett, a famous hunter and nature expert from that time, said that the biggest reason big cats became man-eaters was habitat loss, which led to a shortage of their natural prey, making humans an easier target.

Injuries and Old Age: Some tigers were shot and injured by hunters but not killed. These injuries made it hard for them to hunt their usual, faster prey. Old age could also make it difficult for them to hunt effectively. In these cases, humans became an easier target.

Sometimes, tigers and leopards got used to being near people and their animals because their homes were shrinking. They might have accidentally started seeing humans or their farm animals as potential food.

Man-eating wasn’t something tigers and leopards normally did. It was a sad result of major damage to the environment directly caused by colonial actions. The main reasons—like losing their homes, not having enough prey, and getting injured—all came from large-scale cutting down of forests, endless sport hunting, organized killing campaigns, and expanding farms.

So, man-eating was a terrible cycle: human actions upset nature, and then the animals reacted in a dangerous way. But the colonial stories often called these animals ‘rogue’ or ‘savage,’ which hid the fact that humans were the real cause. This shows that man-eating wasn't just about animal behaviour; it was a clear sign of severe harm to the environment and humans moving into animal territories. It highlights the unexpected and often deadly results of colonial resource use, where the very idea of ‘civilizing’ ironically led to more dangerous encounters between humans and wildlife.[4]

[3] *Supra* Note 23 at 21
[4] *Supra* Note 23 at 21

Received: August 09, 2025

Volume 38 No. 11s, 2025

ISSN: 1311-1728 (printed version); ISSN: 1314-8060 (on-line version)

Notable Cases and their Broader Implications

During the time of British rule, there were many terrible incidents where wild animals, especially tigers, attacked and killed people. These events deeply affected local villages and changed how the British viewed wildlife.

The Champawat Tiger is a famous and scary example. This tigress killed around 436 people in the late 1800s and early 1900s, mostly in a region of India now called Uttarakhand, and also in Nepal. Jim Corbett eventually hunted and killed her in 1907. She became a symbol of how much fear these man-eating animals caused in rural areas. Other cases, like Mohan, a man-eating tiger in Uttar Pradesh in the mid-1960s, also showed the terrible loss of human lives.

These were not just a few separate events. They greatly impacted how people and wild animals interacted, and how the British government made rules. These incidents made the British believe that large predators were "pests" that needed to be killed off to keep people safe and protect farms. The British government even offered rewards (bounties) for killing these animals.

However, it’s ironic because the British's own actions, like destroying animal habitats and reducing the number of animals these predators usually hunted, often caused the tigers to start attacking people in the first place. Local communities, who were not allowed to have weapons by colonial laws, couldn't defend themselves from these dangers. This made them even more helpless and dependent on the British government for protection.[5]

Socio-Economic Consequences for Indian Communities

Disruption of Traditional Livelihoods and Customary Rights

British forest laws during their rule in India severely harmed the traditional ways of life and rights of Indian communities, especially those living in or near forests.

Stopping Traditional Farming and Limiting Animal Grazing

European foresters, focused on making money, saw shifting cultivation (a type of farming where people move plots regularly) as bad. They said it stopped valuable timber trees from growing (which were needed for railways) and could cause forest fires. It also made it hard for the government to collect taxes. So, this farming method was banned.

Because of this ban, many communities were forced to leave their ancestral forest homes. They either had to find new jobs or fight back. For example, the Baigas, a forest group in Central India, complained to the government in 1892 when their traditional farming was stopped.

At the same time, strict rules were placed on grazing animals, which was essential for many communities who raised livestock. The government took control of land that locals used to

[5] *Supra* Note 23 at 21

Received: August 09, 2025

Volume 38 No. 11s, 2025

ISSN: 1311-1728 (printed version); ISSN: 1314-8060 (on-line version)

share for seasonal grazing, limiting or stopping access to these important areas. This greatly affected daily village life and broke hundreds of years of traditional land management.

Making Hunting and Collecting Forest Goods Illegal

Colonial forest laws made it illegal to hunt for food, which had been a crucial way for forest communities to survive for generations. Hunting deer, partridges, and small animals for food was banned. Anyone caught doing this was called a "poacher" and punished.

In contrast, the British elite started hunting large animals for sport, killing so many that some species almost disappeared.

Besides hunting, rules were also put on collecting other forest products that many communities relied on for survival. The British government took complete control of the forest trade, giving special rights to big European companies in certain areas.

This further limited local people's access to resources. Many communities who were herders or nomads, like the Korava, Karacha, and Yerukula in the Madras area, lost their traditional livelihoods. Some of these groups were even labeled “criminal tribes” and forced to work in factories, mines, and plantations under government control, often in terrible conditions.

British forest policies deeply hurt the traditional rights of tribal people to natural resources, which were vital for their economy and culture. The British government's focus on making money and controlling natural resources took away the age-old rights of tribal people, leading to many rebellions against British rule across India. The law created an ‘unnatural separation between farming and forests,’ destroying the old way of life where communities managed both together. This change, from forests being community resources to state-controlled goods, ruined livelihoods, pushed Indigenous communities aside, and created problems for the environment that still exist today.[6]

Displacement, Marginalization, and Increased Vulnerability

Colonial forest policies and more human-wildlife conflict caused many Indian communities to be uprooted and pushed to the side, making them much more vulnerable.

Forced Evictions and "Forest Villages":

The British wanted to control forests for money, so many communities who had lived there for a long time were made to feel unsafe, harassed, and even kicked out. When “reserved” and “protected” forests were created under the Indian Forest Act of 1878, native people were often forcefully removed from their ancestral lands. The British claimed this was necessary for “wildlife conservation” or to get resources.

Sometimes, to get workers for logging, some villages were allowed to stay in reserved forests, but under strict rules. These “forest villages” had to provide free labour to the forest department. This included tasks like cutting and moving trees, and protecting forests from fires. This system turned traditional forest dwellers into forced labourers, making them even

[6] *Supra* Note 23 at 21

Received: August 09, 2025

Volume 38 No. 11s, 2025

ISSN: 1311-1728 (printed version); ISSN: 1314-8060 (on-line version)

more marginalized. Other villages, however, were simply displaced without warning or payment, leaving thousands of people uncertain and very poor. Communities were often moved to temporary camps that lacked basic necessities like healthcare, water, and education.[7]

Impact on Food Security and Worsening Famines:

Colonial policies directly harmed the food supply of rural Indian communities. Farmers used to grow various food crops mainly for themselves and store extra for difficult years. But when they were forced to grow cash crops for sale, communities became very likely to suffer during famines. Land previously used for food was converted to cash crops like cotton, silk, and tea. These crops helped Britain's Industrial Revolution but gave little profit to Indian farmers. This, along with high land taxes from the British, made farmers very vulnerable to exploitation and starvation when crops failed.

The increasing human-wildlife conflict made this vulnerability even worse. Elephants and other wild animals destroying crops meant less food. Wild animals killing livestock hurt the farming economy, as cattle were vital to farmers' lives. The loss of cattle during famines, which was a big problem in the late 1800s, not only upset the environment but also greatly affected farmers' livelihoods, farm production, and what crops were grown. The British also removed traditional ways people had to protect themselves, like access to various forest products and the ability to hunt for food. This meant that when famines happened (like in 1899-1900 and 1907-1908), communities had fewer ways to cope, leading to widespread starvation and more deaths.

The financial impact of human-wildlife conflict (lost crops, dead livestock) was not just an inconvenience; it was a direct threat to the survival of rural Indian communities. This impact was made much worse by existing colonial policies that had already made these communities vulnerable through high land taxes, forcing them to grow crops for sale, and taking away their traditional rights to forest resources. When their traditional safety nets (growing diverse foods, access to forest products) were systematically removed, human-wildlife conflict became a devastating blow, pushing people into deeper poverty and causing anger that often led to revenge against wildlife or a broader anti-colonial feeling. This shows how human-wildlife conflict during the colonial period was not just an environmental issue but a deep social, economic, and political problem. It was directly connected to how the British exploited and controlled India. This created a bad cycle where environmental damage led to conflict, which then made human suffering worse and increased social unrest.[8]

[7] *Ibid*

[8] *Supra* Note 23 at 21

Received: August 09, 2025

International Journal of Applied Mathematics

Volume 38 No. 11s, 2025

ISSN: 1311-1728 (printed version); ISSN: 1314-8060 (on-line version)

Community Resistance and Rebellions against Colonial Forest Laws

Colonial forest laws deeply impacted Indian communities, causing widespread anger and resistance. These laws, which were seen as an attack on their way of life, led to many rebellions.

Reasons for Communities Rebellions:

The British government brought in strict forest laws. This made it illegal for people to continue their traditional practices, like shifting cultivation, hunting, and collecting forest products. Many communities were also forced to leave their ancestral lands. This made them feel like their livelihoods and culture were under attack.

Resentment grew even stronger when, in 1905, the colonial government proposed to turn two-thirds of the forest into reserved land. This would have completely stopped traditional practices. On top of this, existing problems like higher land taxes and demands for free labor and goods from colonial officials pushed communities to their breaking point, especially after severe famines in 1899-1900 and 1907-1908.[9]

Beginning of Resistance:

People started talking about their problems in village meetings, markets, and festivals, which led to them organizing together. The Dhurwas of Kanger forest, where the reservation process started, took the lead. Figures like Gunda Dhur from Nethanar village became important, though informal, leaders.

In 1910, symbols like mango branches, a lump of earth, chilies, and arrows were passed around villages. These were invitations for people to join the rebellion against the British. Villages also contributed money to support the uprising. The rebellion involved:

Looting markets

Burning and robbing the homes of officials and traders

Destroying schools and police stations

Redistributing grain, specifically targeting those connected to the colonial government and its unfair laws.[10]

British Response and Rebel Successes:

The British military responded with force. They sent troops to crush the rebellions, surrounded camps, and shot at Adivasi (tribal) leaders. They marched through villages, whipping and punishing participants. It took them about three months to get the situation under control.

Despite the harsh response, these acts of resistance, like the Santhal Rebellion of 1855-1856 and the Bastar Rebellion of 1910, were major challenges to British rule. In a significant win

[9] *Supra* Note 23 at 21
[10] *Ibid*

Received: August 09, 2025

Volume 38 No. 11s, 2025

ISSN: 1311-1728 (printed version); ISSN: 1314-8060 (on-line version)

for the rebels in Bastar, the British temporarily stopped working on forest reservation. The reserved forest area was also cut down to about half of what they had originally planned before 1910.

These rebellions clearly show that Indian communities did not simply accept the negative effects of colonial forest policies, which also worsened conflicts between humans and wildlife. Losing their traditional ways of making a living, having their customs declared illegal, and being forced from their homes directly caused widespread anger and organized resistance.

This proves that human-wildlife conflict during the colonial period was closely tied to the larger fight against colonial rule. Communities fought to regain their rights, land, and traditional lifestyles against a system that exploited them and harmed the environment. The resistance highlights that Indian communities actively challenged colonial environmental management and reveals the deep social and political aspects of how humans and wildlife interacted during this time.[11]

Legacy and Long-Term Impact of Colonial Wildlife Management

Critical Evaluation of Colonial "Conservation" Efforts

Groundwork for Modern Conservation verses Utilitarian and Exploitative Motives:

It's often said that the British, during their rule in India, started the idea of modern conservation, especially in the late 1800s and early 1900s. They began to see how important it was to protect India's natural environment. The creation of the first protected areas, like the Sundarbans Reserve in 1878, is often pointed to as the beginning of wildlife protection and the concept of "protected areas" in India.

However, if we look closely, these early "conservation" efforts weren't really about truly protecting nature or respecting local traditions. Instead, they were mostly driven by what the British could get out of it or exploit.

For example, hunting reserves were often set up so that British officials could continue their sport of hunting animals, especially tigers, and sometimes for tourism. A policy called "selective conservation" clearly shows this self-serving approach: elephants were protected by law because they were vital for the British economy and administration (they were used for moving timber and in the military). On the other hand, tigers were seen as a threat to these interests and were hunted down without mercy. This way of thinking completely missed how different parts of an ecosystem work together.

The British acted as both hunters and protectors, changing and harming the environment at the same time. Their "conservation" was always selective and based on what was convenient for them, aiming to grow the colonial economy and build infrastructure. This conflict between imperial hunting/exploitation and early conservation efforts meant that protecting

[11] *Supra* Note 23 at 21

Received: August 09, 2025

Volume 38 No. 11s, 2025

ISSN: 1311-1728 (printed version); ISSN: 1314-8060 (on-line version)

wildlife was often a secondary concern, less important than business and administrative goals.

This shows that while British actions did, by accident, introduce some ideas that are now part of modern conservation, their main reasons were selfish and exploitative. The "groundwork" they laid was therefore deeply flawed, based on a view of nature that only cared about imperial gain, not the health of the environment or the well-being of the local people. Understanding this is important because many of the challenges in conservation after colonial rule are still linked to these historical roots[12]

Failure to Arrest Widespread Wildlife Depletion:

Even though the British started talking about "conservation" and set up a few protected areas later in their rule, they largely failed to stop the widespread destruction of India's wildlife. In fact, their policies made the problem much worse, causing many animal species to drastically decline.

One major reason was that hunting became a popular sport, and the British also offered rewards for killing certain animals. This led to an unprecedented number of animals being killed, especially large meat-eaters like tigers, leopards, and wolves. Between 1875 and 1925, an estimated 80,000 tigers, 150,000 leopards, and 200,000 wolves were killed just for rewards. The British saw these animals as "pests" that threatened farming, and this systematic killing pushed many species to disappear from certain areas. For example, tigers disappeared from the Sahyadri hills in the Bombay Presidency and were almost gone from Punjab. Scientific studies show that the unnatural drop in tiger numbers began about 200 years ago, around the time British rule started.

Habitat Loss and Human-Wildlife Conflict:

Besides direct killing, British policies also caused massive destruction of animal habitats. They cut down vast forests for logging, promoted single-species plantations, and rapidly built railways and other infrastructure. This loss of natural homes and the resulting scarcity of prey animals led to more conflicts between humans and wildlife, including incidents where animals attacked people. These attacks were often a sign of an unbalanced ecosystem, not just inherent aggression from the animals.

Colonial Mindset and Lasting Impact:

The British approach to wildlife management was contradictory. While sometimes claiming to conserve, their actions led to widespread depletion. Their obsession with killing top predators wasn't just about fear; it was also about showing their control over nature, local traditions, and the land itself. Lord Curzon, a British Viceroy, even believed that protecting wild animals was "wrong." This mindset led colonial administrators to intensify killing campaigns and change how people viewed India's animals, labelling many species as enemies of human interests and economic progress.

[12] *Supra* Note 23 at 21

Received: August 09, 2025

Volume 38 No. 11s, 2025

ISSN: 1311-1728 (printed version); ISSN: 1314-8060 (on-line version)

The severe decline in wildlife, especially big cats, through systematic killing, rewards, and poisoning, fundamentally changed how humans and animals coexisted. It replaced a complex relationship with a narrative of conflict and emphasized colonial power over nature and indigenous ways of life. Ultimately, colonial "conservation" efforts were largely ineffective in stopping wildlife destruction because their main goals were exploitation and control, leading to an ecological imbalance that continues to affect India today.[13]

[13] *Supra* Note 23 at 21

Received: August 09, 2025