

ACTION HISTORY OF RTI REQUEST No.WLIOI/R/E/21/00048**Applicant Name**

Ishan

Text of Application

Kindly provide the following information under Right To Information Act, 2005 The Forest Advisory Committee in its meeting on December 24, 2015, directed a report to be prepared on the issue of forest land diversion in a tiger corridor for diamond mining in Buxawaha forest, Madhya Pradesh by Rio Tinto. Wildlife Institute of India was part of the committee which studied the issue and created a report on it. Please provide a copy of that report.

Reply of Application

Information sent via e-mail attachment

SN.	Action Taken	Date of Action	Action Taken By	Remarks
1	RTI REQUEST RECEIVED	09/07/2021	Nodal Officer	
2	REQUEST FORWARDED TO CPIO	12/07/2021	Nodal Officer	Forwarded to CPIO(s) : (1) Monali Sen
3	REQUEST DISPOSED OF	26/07/2021	Monali Sen-(CPIO)	

[Print](#)

No. WII/RTI/CPIO/2021-22 (Qtr-II)/26

Date: 22nd July, 2021

To,

Shri Ishan
370, Top Floor, Sant Nagar,
Delhi, Pin:110065
Email: ikukreti@gmail.com

Sub.: Information under RTI Act, 2005—reg.

Ref.: Your Online RTI No. WLIOI/R/E/21/00048 dated 09/07/2021

Dear Shri Ishan,

With reference to your RTI application cited above under RTI Act, 2005 and the requested information sought by you is attached herewith as **Annexure-I**.

Due to large size of the information/ document to be provide under RTI Act, 2005 is being sent to you in your registered email.

In case, you are not satisfied with the information provided above, you may file an appeal to the First Appellate Authority indicated below within thirty days from the date of receipt of this letter.

Director, WII
FAA & Director
Address: Wildlife Institute of India, Chandrabani, Dehradun
Phone No.: 01352640910

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,


NO & CPIO (RTI)

Encl.: Annexure-I: Report on the site inspection on the Bunder Diamond Mining Project of Rio Tinto Exploration Pvt. Ltd. (12 pages' report)

Report on the site inspection on the Bunder Diamond Mining Project of Rio Tinto Exploration Pvt. Ltd.

Background:

National Tiger Conservation Authority vide letter No.F.N. 7-1/2016-NTCA, dated 08.03.2016, constituted a three members committee to undertake the site appraisal of the proposed Diamond Mining Project at Bunder in Chhatrapur district of Madhya Pradesh which involves 971.6 ha forest land. The TOR for the committee was:

To examine the diversion proposal vis-a-vis tiger dispersal from the Panna Tiger Reserve and suggest alternative keeping in mind importance of the landscape for tigers.

Line of Action:

Project details were obtained from the Conservator of Forest (CF), Chhatrapur & the user agency i.e. 'Rio Tinto Exploration Pvt. Ltd. EIA report, EMP, Mining Plan, Working Plan, Tiger Monitoring Register, Tiger Tracking Data, and Maps of the areas and other related documents were referred. To understand the possible corridor/connectivity with the other PA & wildlife rich areas, the report on 'Connecting Tiger Population for Long-term Conservation 2014' was also referred.

The team undertook the site inspection along with the CF, Chhatrapur & the representatives of the user agency on 30/04/2016. GPS coordinates were recorded at the various locations to confirm the site *vis-a-vis* coordinates given in the proposal. Distances were measured using GoogleEarth and ARC-GIS software after collecting geo-reference points from the field, mapped shape file of the project site and mapped shape file of Panna Tiger Reserve (core and buffer) boundary.

Findings and Inferences:

1. The proposed Bunder project is under various levels of considerations/approval and the most recent development being the revised proposal submitted by the user agency on 18 April 2016 wherein the diversion is sought for 76.43 hectare (with 71.46 for mining and associated activities, and 4.95 ha for approach road). However, there is a mention in the communication to Additional Principal Conservator of Forest (Land Management) dated 18 April 2016 with respect to the revised proposal that the main application of forest clearance for 971.595 ha is still under consideration and will be pursued in future. The revised proposal of reduced area for diversion is only an interim measure, as a strategy to take the project in phased manner. Therefore, from the perspective of the terms of reference to the committee, the total area of 971.595 ha was considered as

INFORMATION PROVIDED
UNDER RTI

ATTESTED


CPJO, Wild Life Institute of India, Dehradun

an impact on tiger occupancy and movement for all practical purpose (because if granted permission by concerned authorities, the total area will be fenced), although the specific area of revised proposal was taken cognizance of and field investigation was also carried out accordingly.

2. The forest area under the proposed ML is located in PF compartment no. 279, 280, 281, 283, 284, 285, 286, 288, 301 & 302 of Buxwaha range of the Chhatarpur forest division, district Chhatarpur, Madhya Pradesh. During the field visit, it was found that the area represents moderate to dense vegetation canopy and major species noted were *Madhuca indica*, *Diospyros melanoxylon*, *Lagerstroemia parviflora*, *Anogeissus latifolia*, *Tectona grandis*, *Acacia catechu*, etc., and the terrain was complex, indicating habitat diversity.
3. It was noted that a committee constituted by MoEFCC Vide Office Memorandum No. 8-22/2015-FC dated 28th January 2016 clearly states that the proposed area is of high biological value and comes under the category of 'in-violate' based on forest cover, forest type, biological richness and landscape integrity. Also, the Working Plan of Chhatarpur Forest Circle outlines presence of wide variety of wildlife species including high density of trees in the ML.
4. The aerial distance between the nearest point of ML and the buffer & core area boundaries of Panna Tiger Reserve (PTR) has been confirmed to be 19 Km & 41 Km respectively (Figure 1). Other nearest Protected Area is Nauradehi WLS, which is located at 80 km southwest of ML.
5. The field staff of Chhatarpur Division reported tiger presence from this specific ML based on regular monitoring of the area (Source: Tiger Monitoring Register, maintained by the Buxwaha Range Office) and also have obtained pugmark evidence (pugmark cast by plaster of Paris and tracing sheets). There is forest contiguity from Panna Tiger Reserve towards northwest to Madhav NP, while connectivity with Nauradehi WLS is tenuous (Figure 2). However, it is to be noted that Panna Tiger Reserve has been brought to life after successful tiger reintroduction program in 2009. Of the 07 adult animals translocated to PTR during 2009-2015, one male (named as T3) traversed 250 km from PTR towards south west and managed to traverse through agriculture matrix and reached Nauradehi WLS in 2009. In 2012, one sub-adult male (named as 211) dispersed about 150 km all the way to Sagar Forest Division on the west. Both these tigers passed through the proposed ML on the south (Figure 3). Including the tiger presence recorded by the field staff, it appears that at least three tigers have used this forest area since 2009.

6. Keeping in view that Ken-Betwa river link project which is likely to submerge 90 km² including large proportion of PTR, the NTCA committee constituted in 2013 recommended certain trade-off option which included (a) bringing the entire area under one conservation landscape (Figure 4) and (b) securing satellite habitats and dispersal routes. Given the habitat quality including availability of cover, prey species and water source, the proposed ML area may also be one such satellite habitats for tiger, specifically in the event of increasing dispersal of tiger taking place from PTR. Therefore, it should be seen in the context of cumulative impacts on the tiger populations in the entire landscape.
7. In terms of '*suggesting alternative keeping in mind importance of the landscape for tigers*' as per ToR, it would not be prudent to suggest any alternative option for dispersal route at this stage with limited information, as it would involve specific structural and functional measures, and may have to be taken up as separate detailed exercise. It would be important to identify all satellite habitats and specific dispersal routes and conservation strategies have to be proposed accordingly. In the long-term perspective and to maintain viable tiger population in the landscape, it would be critical to establish functional connectivity with other source populations such as Bandhavgarh TR and other potential sites such as Nauradehi WLS, and this would require substantial investment and administrative interventions.

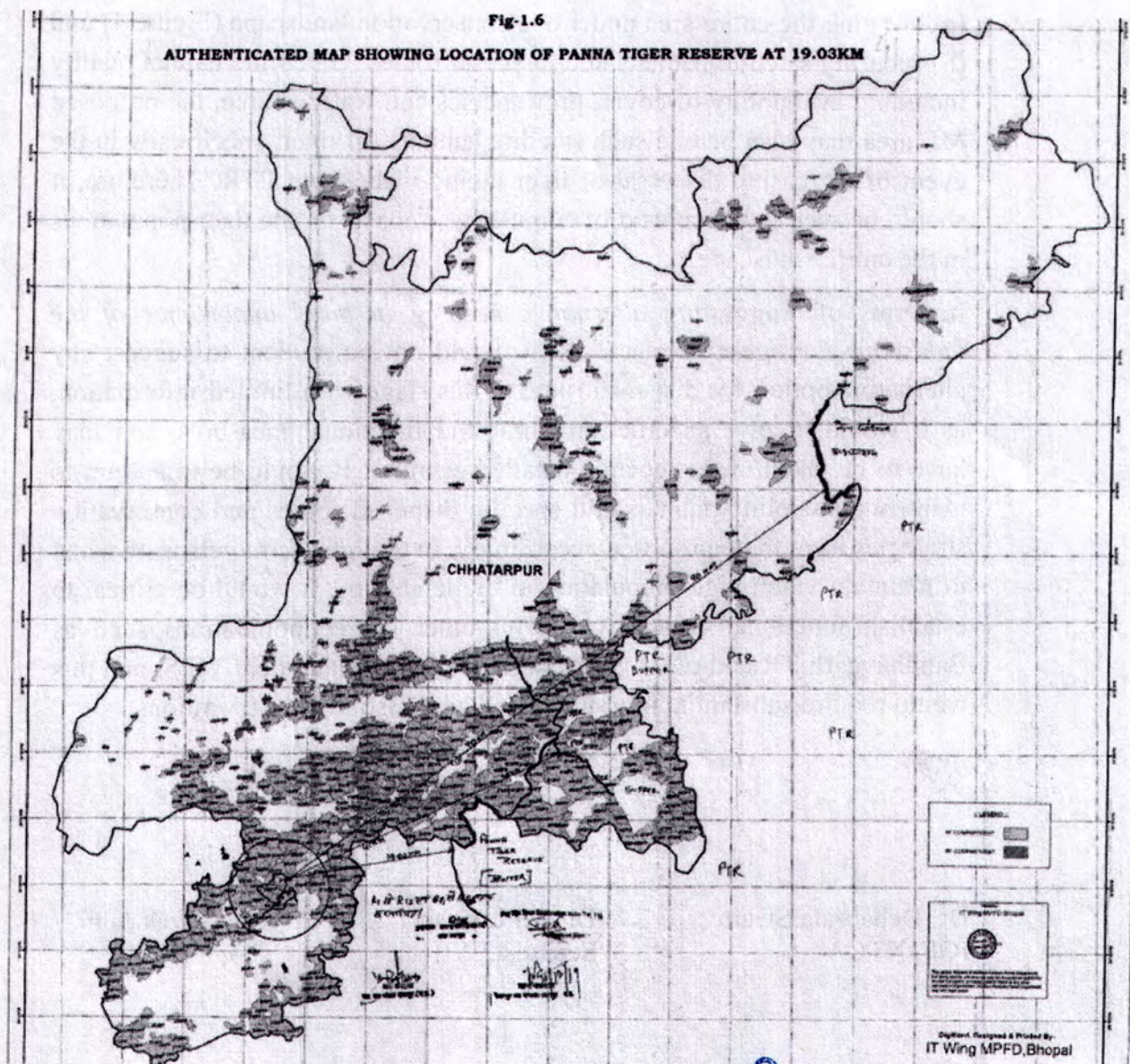
Dr. Debabrata Swain
IGF, NTCA

Dr. K. Ramesh
Scientist, WII

Mr. Vivek Jain
FD, PTR

Harali Sin
INFORMATION PROVIDED
UNDER RTI

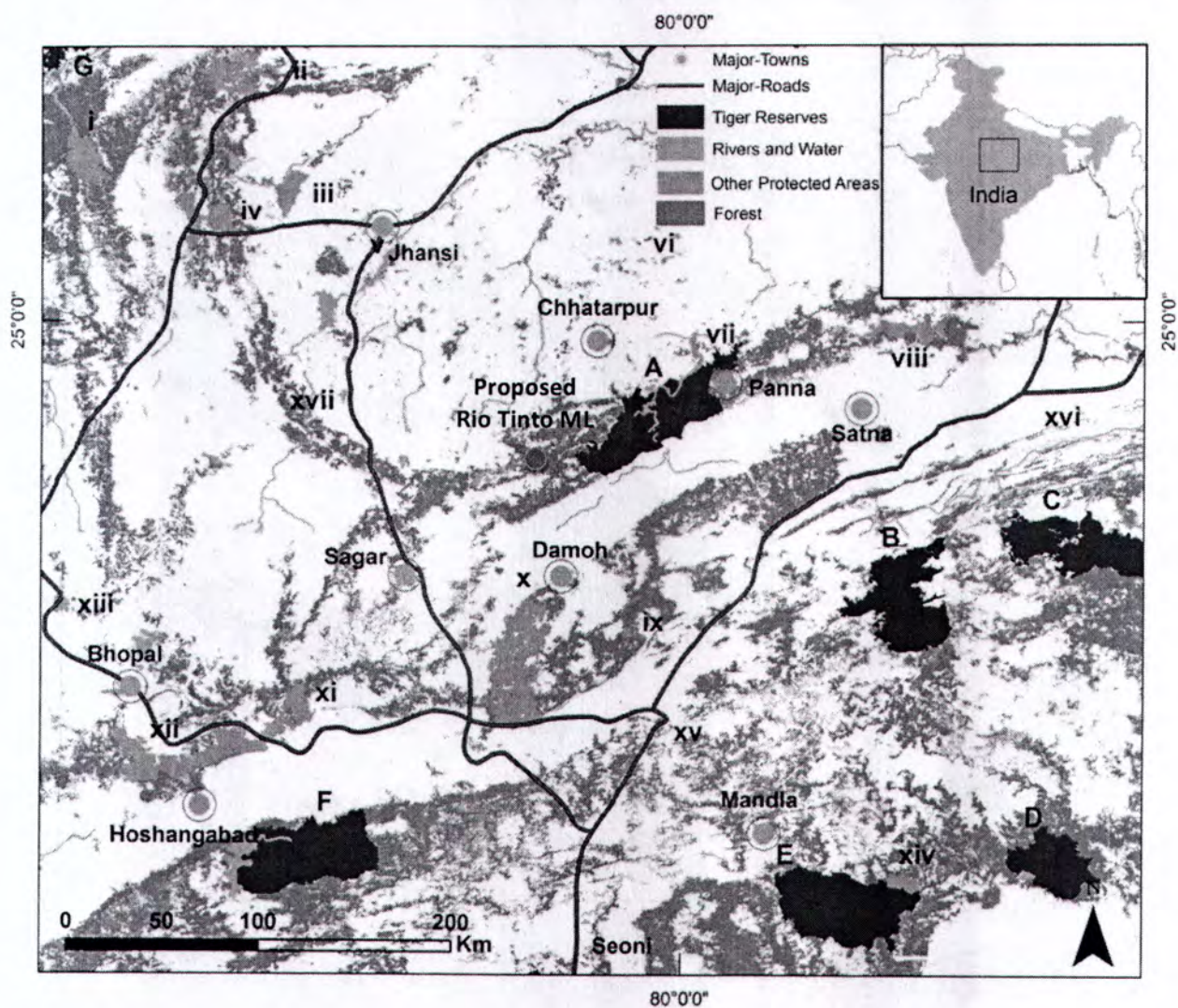
Figure 1: Location map of the proposed site, in relation to Panna Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh (Source: Approved Project Plan)



INFORMATION PROVIDED
 UNDER RTI

Figure 2: Map of the landscape, showing forest cover and Protected Areas

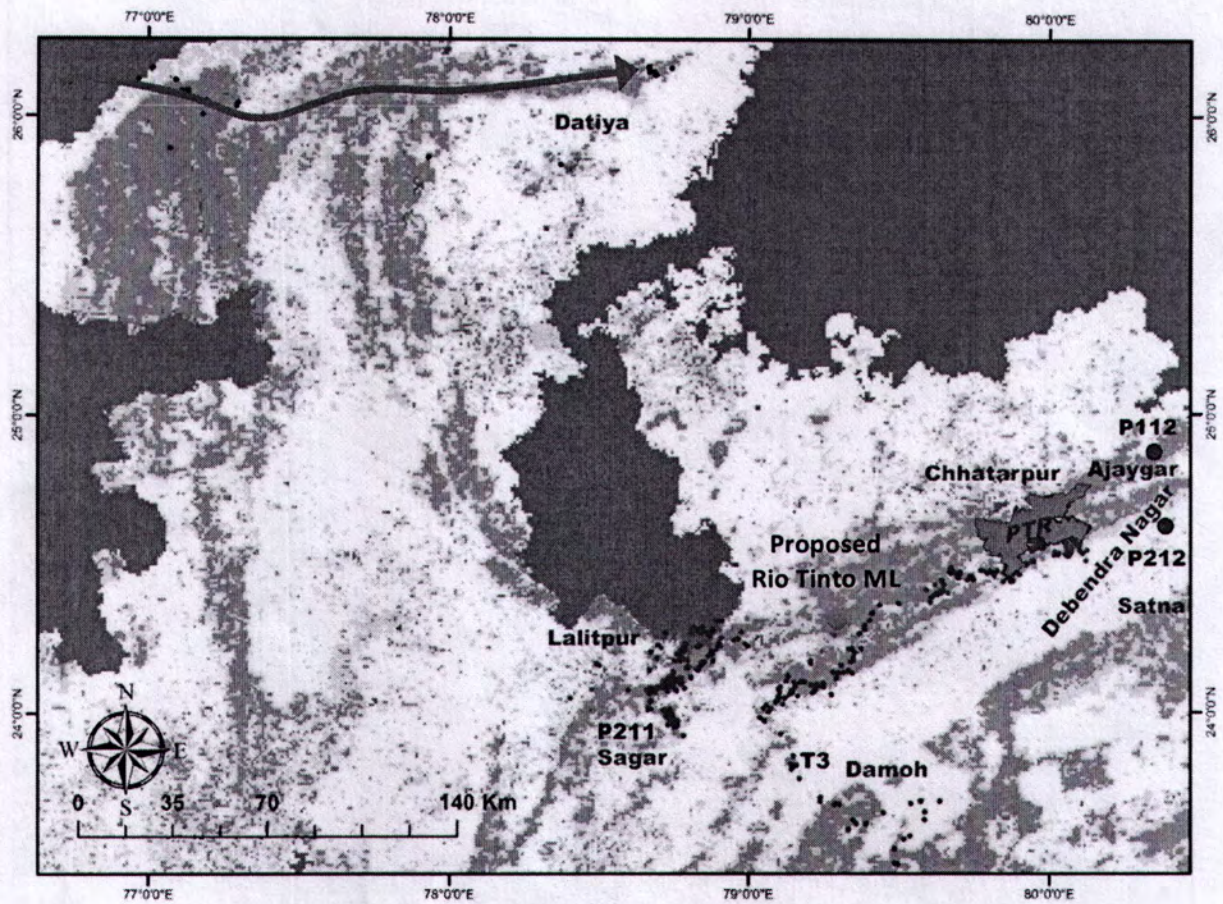
(Source: FSI and WII)



[A – G: Tiger reserves (TR)] A. Panna TR, B. Bandhavgarh TR, C. Sanjay-Dubri TR, D. Achanakmar TR, E. Kanha TR, F. Satpura TR, G. Ranthambore TR. [i – xvi: Wildlife Sanctuaries (WS) and National Parks (NP)] i. Kuno-Palpur WS, ii. Ghatigaon WS, iii. Karera WS, iv. Madhav NP, v. Orcha WS, vi. Vijai Sagar WS, vii. Ken Gharial WS, viii. Ranipur WS, ix. Rani Veerangna Durgavati WS, x. Noradahi WS, xi. Singhori WS, xii. Ratapani WS, xiii. Narsingarh WS, xiv. Phen WS, xv. Sailana WS, xvi. Son Gharial WS.

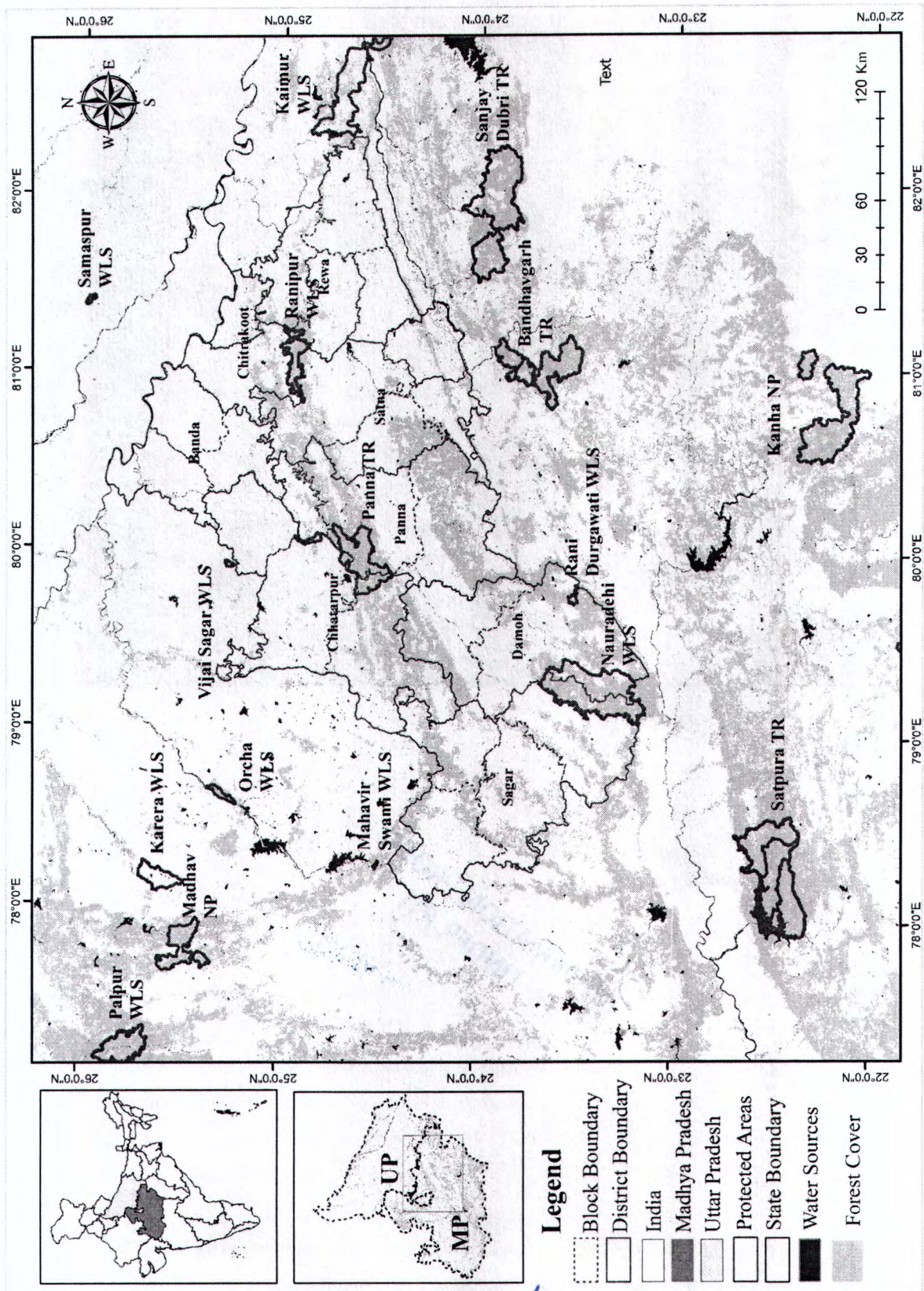
Harati Des
INFORMATION PROVIDED
5 UNDER RTI

Figure 3: Map of the landscape, showing core area of Panna Tiger Reserve and tiger movement locations, with respect to proposed Rio Tinto ML (Source: WII) (further information on dispersal, as provided by FD, Panna are appended as Annexure 1A-E)

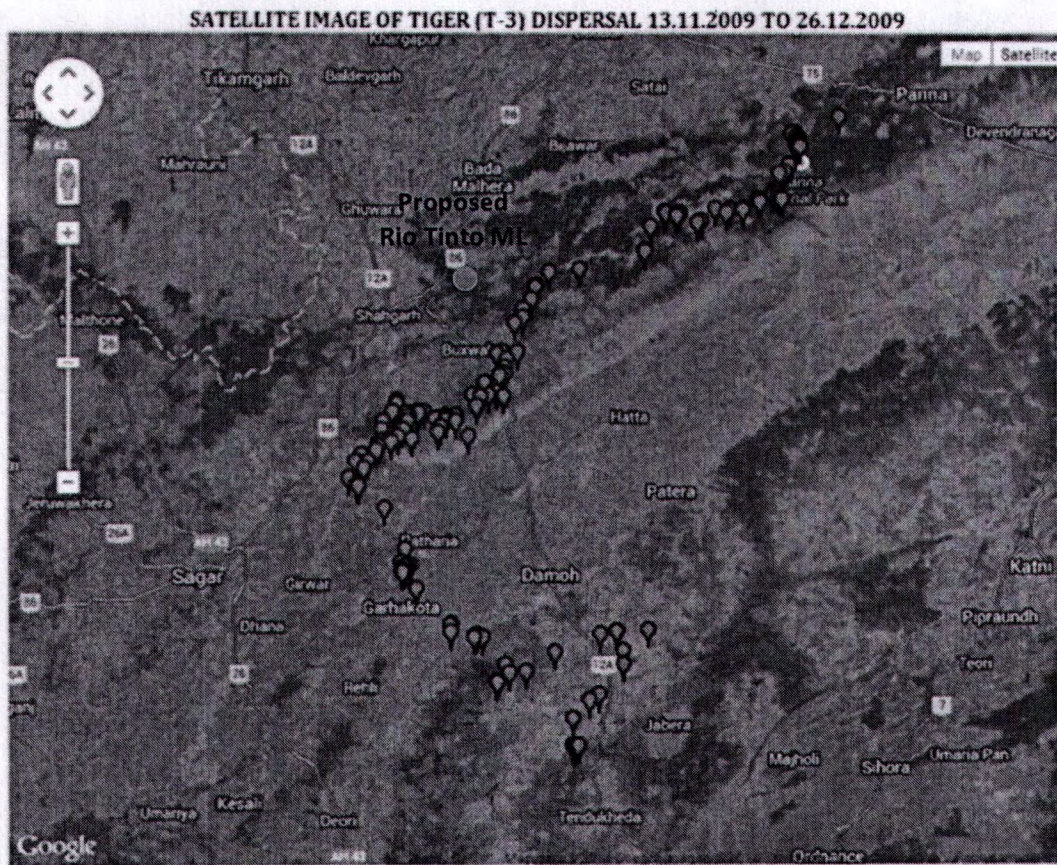


INFORMATION PROVIDED
UNDER RTI

Figure 4: Map of the landscape with existing Protected Areas/Tiger Reserves and proposed area as Tiger Conservation Landscape Management (Source: NTCA Committee Report)



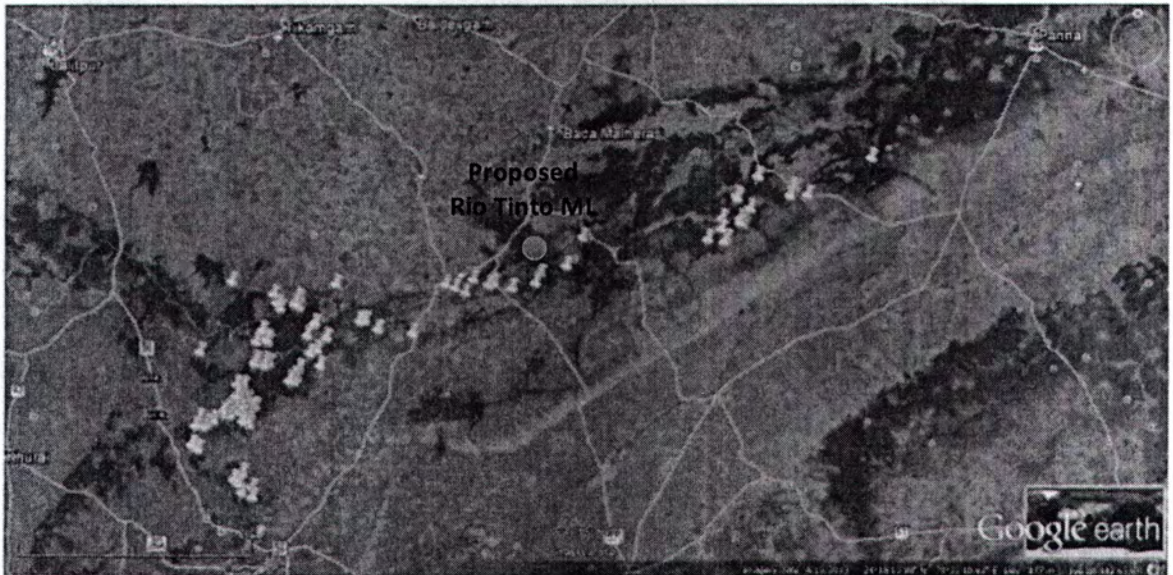
Annexure 1 A



INFORMATION PROVIDED
UNDER RTI

Annexure 1 B

**SATELLITE IMAGE OF TIGER (P-211) DISPERSAL
AUG 12 TO DEC 12 (PANNA TO SAGAR)**



Prasadi Des
INFORMATION PROVIDED
UNDER RTI

Annexure 1 C

**SATELLITE IMAGE OF TIGER (P-212) DISPERSAL
27 JAN 12 TO 05 AUG 12 (PANNA TO PANGARA)**



INFORMATION PROVIDED
UNDER RTI

Annexure 1 D

**SATELLITE IMAGE OF TIGER (P-212) DISPERSAL
24 FEB 14 TO 30 MARCH 14 (PANNA TO SIDHI)**



Herali Sen
INFORMATION PROVIDED
UNDER RTI

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO