

## **ABSTRACT**

Despite substantial conservation investments by governments and international agencies, the existence of tigers in the wild is still threatened. The main threats to the survival of wild tigers are poaching, prey depletion and habitat degradation and fragmentation. All international trade in tiger parts has been prohibited since 1975, with China introducing a domestic ban in 1993. The domestic trade ban in China was followed by the establishment of captive tiger breeding farms in East Asia. China has considered partially lifting the trade ban to permit sales from tiger farms. This has been a matter of much debate with the proponents to the trade ban opposing it on the grounds that it result in an increase in the illegal killing of tigers and would also result in an increase in demand for tiger products, while the proponents to tiger farming favouring a supply side approach to conservation with products from tiger farms meeting all the demand. In this dissertation paper, using a mathematical bioeconomic model, it is seen that it is possible to protect wild tigers by permitting the sale of products from tiger farms, but it has to be complemented by increased enforcement and granting licenses to sellers.

India has mainly targeted tiger conservation with the establishment of tiger reserves all over the country, but this has resulted in the displacement of local communities from land that was traditionally theirs. Community based conservation seeks to conserve wildlife by giving local people a stake in its conservation and thus, providing an incentive to conserve it. In this dissertation paper, using a bioeconomic model, it is seen that giving local communities a stake in conservation of tigers like a share of tourism revenues aids conservation, as it would result in an increase in anti-poaching effort undertaken by the local communities, but this is contingent upon the additional revenue being higher than the cost of intrusion.