

The boar has it!

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KOLKATA, 14 AUG: Killing two birds with the one stone may sound cliched but that's exactly what officials of the Sundarbans Biosphere Reserve intend doing. They have thought up a unique way of easing the boar-human conflict in south Bengal ~ capture and release wild boars as prey for the Royal Bengal Tiger to mitigate the tiger-man conflict!

The proposal which has come to the state forest department was mooted by the director of SBR, Mr Pradeep Vyas. He has proposed augmentation of prey base of the tigers to reduce instances of tigers encroaching



upon human habitation in search of food.

Since wild boars are another prey species, he has said that an initiative should be taken for captive breeding of the wild boars. However, captive breeding of wild boars would be a first in the country. Hence, the director has proposed that the wild boars, which often cause extensive crop damage in Bankura and Burdwan can be captured and brought to the Sunderbans for captive breeding. This move will also resolve the issue of wild boar-man conflict. A breeding programme can be taken up following which the boars can then be released into the Sundarbans for the tigers.

Earlier this year, the state forest department has taken similar initiative by releasing 90 spotted deer in the core area which were brought from Bethuadahari forest. After the required clearance from the state wildlife board it was ensured that the deer are acclimatised and disease free before these were released in the forests.

There has been instances of tigers straying into human settlement in the western fringe areas of tiger reserve and attacking men or cattle. The big cats are usually tranquillised and released once again in to the forests. Wildlife experts have blamed the depletion of prey base for the straying of tigers.