

PART – I

CHAPTER – 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE AREA

1.1 Name, location, constitution and extent.

1.1.1. Name – Satkosia Gorge Sanctuary.

1.1.2. Location :

Satkosia Gorge Sanctuary is the second largest and the second oldest sanctuary of the State of Orissa, situated at its heart on either side of River Mahanadi, including the Gorge portion. The gorge is narrow but very deep having strong under currents of water. Its length, as the name speaks is ‘7 Kosa’, which is equivalent to 22.4 Kms (1 Kosa = 2 miles). The part of sanctuary north of river Mahanadi comes under Angul and Cuttack Revenue Districts and the part south of it comes under Boudh and Nayagarh Revenue Districts.

The district wise area is as detailed below (in sq km).

Total Area of Sanctuary	795.59
Area in Angul district	453.25
Area in Cuttack district	76.76
Area in Nayagarh district	147.67
Area in Boudh district	117.84

The constitution of area of this Sanctuary as acquired from previous Divisions along with other areas is as follows (all in Sq km):

Angul division	418.52
Athmallik division	14.21
Nayagarh division	112.53
Boudha division	68.61

Athgarh Division	13.75
Unclassed forests	0.178
Mahanadi river	40.1
Village area	137.622

The northern portion of the sanctuary is managed by Satkosia Wildlife Division with headquarters at Angul, comprising the sanctuary portions of Angul & Cuttack revenue districts covering 530.01 Sq. km. of area. Similarly the Southern portion of the sanctuary is managed by Mahanadi Wildlife Division with headquarters at Nayagarh ,comprising parts of Nayagarh & Boudh revenue districts covering 265.51 Sq. Kms of area. The forest area and list of different types of forests in **Appendix No.1**

The geographical co-ordinates within which Satkosia Gorge Sanctuary is located is given below:

Latitudes	Longitudes
20° 25' 12" N	84° 39' 00" E
20° 45' 36" N	85° 05' 24" E

Biogeographically the sanctuary comes under Gadjat hills subdivision of 6D Chhotnagpur Plateau Biotic Province, which is under 6- Deccan Peninsular zone as per the classification adopted by Rodger's and Panwar (1988).

1.1.3. Extent and constitution of Satkosia Gorge Sanctuary

Total geographical area of the sanctuary is 795.52 Sq. kms., including 30.1 Sq.Km. of river Mahanadi. There are 15 Reserved Forests, 3 blocks notified

under section 4 of Orissa Forest Act, 1972 and 4 blocks demarcated but not notified, inside the sanctuary. (Details of the same along with notification is given in **APPENDIX- 2**)

Satkosia Gorge sanctuary was notified u/s 18(1) of the Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972 vide Government of Orissa, Forest, Fisheries and Animal Husbandry Department Notification No.12727/FFAH Dt.19.05.1976 ,which is enclosed in (**Appendix-3**).

The whole sanctuary was earlier managed by Divisional Forest Officer, Wildlife, Angul vide Notification No.8F(W)3/84-185951/FFAH. Dt. 01.4.1984. Subsequently as per Government of Orissa, Forest & Environment Department Resolution No.13060/F&E Dt.12.7.1999 (**Appendix-4**), the Northern part of the sanctuary measuring 530.01 Sq. kms including river Mahanadi was kept under the territorial jurisdiction of Satkosia Wildlife Division and the Southern part of the sanctuary measuring 265.51 Sq.Km. was brought under the territorial jurisdiction of newly created Mahanadi Wildlife Division, whose headquarters earlier was at Phulbani, but now at Nayagarh.

Genesis of Satkosia Gorge Sanctuary :

Mahanadi Gorge is the natural home of 2 endangered fresh water crocodilian species, namely Gharial (*Gavialis gangeticus*) and Mugger (*Crocodylus palustris*). To protect the depleted crocodile population, the Government of Orissa, Forest Department decided to start a breeding programme

of crocodiles during March 1974. Dr. H.R.Bustard, an FAO Consultant on crocodiles visited this place during June 1974 and was surprised to see the natural habitat. He recommended for protection of the gorge ecosystem and its catchment as a sanctuary. Basing on his recommendation Government of Orissa declared the area as Satkosia Gorge Sanctuary during 1976.

1.2. Approaches and Access :

The headquarters of the Satkosia Wildlife Division is at Angul situated on N.H. 42, at a distance of 105 Kms to the West from Manguli chhak, the place where N.H. 42 meets N.H. 5. It is 161 Kms from the State capital, Bhubaneswar. The headquarters of the Mahanadi Wildlife Division is Nayagarh , which is 80 Kms. from Bhubaneswar.

Pampasar, the entry point of Sanctuary from Northerb side is 188 Kms from the State capital and 30 Kms from the Sanctuary headquarters Angul. The Division headquarters of Mahanadi Wildlife Division is at Nayagarh, which is also the district headquarters, and is 80 Kms from the State Capital. From Nayagarh, the Sanctuary can be approached through the entry point at Chhamundia, which is 60 Kms from Nayagarh via Gania. The sanctuary can also be approached from Boudha, district headquarters via Kusanga.

The nearest Rail head on North side is Angul and on South is Khurda Road, on Howrah – Chennai Railway line of East Coast Railways. The nearest Airport is Bhubaneswar.

1.3. Statement of Significance :

Satkosia Gorge Sanctuary has of tremendous genetic and ecological importance as it is the wet portion of Deccan Zone. It has a significant elephant population in deciduous forests. The Sanctuary is also important for the natural habitat of two endangered species of fresh water crocodilians viz. Gharial and Mugger, and a sizeable population of Tiger, Leopard, gaur, Sambar, Chousingha and Barking deer. Large population of Giant squirrel is sighted on the canopy cover of the forest. Rare and endangered birds and butterflies are very common. 22.4 Km long stretch of Satkosia Gorge of Mahanadi river harbours a large population of varied fishes and aquatic fauna.

Temple of Goddess Binikei, Kankei, Baigani Parbata, Bhimdhara fall and proposed Crocodile Rescue & Rehabilitation Centre at Tikarpada with the magnificent view of the Gorge attract tourists in to the sanctuary through out the year. Satkosia is famous for its unique gorge eco-system and it serves also as a major watershed for the entire region. The magnificent Hinjala, Dhauranja, Kochila and Phasi forests on the bank of river Mahanadi are typical of riverain forests. Bamboo brakes consisting of two species of bamboo, namely Bambusa arundinaceae and Dendrocalamus strictus are common to this Sanctuary.

Satkosia also represents the endemic life forms of both the biotic provinces in its transitional zone. Geologically speaking, the ghats formed the land bridge for faunal migration between Holarctic, Indo-Chinese and Indo Malayan regions on one hand and the Western Ghats on the other. It forms an important catchment

of lower Mahanadi basin. The positive role these catchment forests in the prevention of the gorge siltation and maintenance of a specific desirable depth of water can hardly be over emphasized, particularly for the endangered gharial and for spawning sites of commercially important carps and prawns.

The avifauna of Satkosia is rich and varied with resident birds viz. Emerald dove, Malabar pied hornbill, Shaheen Falcon, Yellow legged buttom quail, Malabar trogom, Hill myna, Great stone Plover and Stork billed kingfisher. The migratory birds include Brahminy ducks, Bar-headed geese, Pintails etc.

VALUES IN SCALE OF PRIORITIES OF SATKOSIA GORGE SANCTUARY

No.	Value Category	Constituents
1	Global	Most <i>endangered</i> Gharials, endangered Tiger, sizeable Central Elephant and Chousingha population.
2	National	Southern most <i>natural home</i> of Gharials in fast flowing river Mahanadi contributing to a <i>distinct gene pool</i> . Gorge supporting four species of <i>endangered</i> Turtles- the conservation of which is of National priority. .
3	Regional	Biogeographically, meeting point of two <i>biotic provinces</i> contributing to assemblage of flora & faunal extravaganza <i>Biodiversity</i> is one of the maximum.
4	State	Second largest population of Elephant, Gaur & Tiger. Critical <i>catchment's role of the sanctuary in preventing siltation down stream</i> .
5	Local	Mahanadi River is spawning sites for commercially

		important carps and prawns. A scenic spot for tourists and local people and a fishing paradise. Satkosia sanctuary has tremendous forest resource potential for sustenance of local population on it.
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