

Welcome

Mr. Khadga Bahadur Pariyar

Contracts and Administration Officer

Ms. Niki Maskey

Sacred Himalayan Landscape Officer

Mr. Jagadish Parajuli

Conservation Education and Advocacy Officer



create, share, change the world

And the winner is.....

...Prajwal Bhattarai from Nepal

Prajwal Bhattarai, a 12th grader from Sagarmatha Multiple College, Nepal wins the best text award in the Connect2earth competition. He will receive a Nokia N95 device as a token of appreciation.

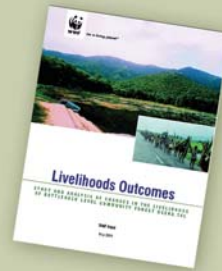
I don't need wheels;

Just don't break nature's feet

If I have to write on the hearts of trees;
Sorry, I will just stop writing.
If my pencil is made of their pain;
Sorry, I will just stop drawing.
If my shoes are killing the wild;
I swear I will walk bare-footed.
Let the thorns pierce my foot;
I can't see the nature being looted.
If the clothes I'm wearing are ripping skins;
I'm just ready to live without a wear.
If my own feeding is trashing the nature;
I can live hungry.
I swear if my rides are blackening the nature;
I'm ready to walk a million mile.
I swear I can drown in tears;
If I could help the nature smile.

www.connect2earth.org

HOT OFF THE PRESS



Livelihoods Outcomes: Study and Analysis of Changes in the Livelihoods of Bottleneck Level Community Forest Users, Terai Arc Landscape Nepal PP 36

The latest addition to the sustainable livelihoods series, "Livelihoods Outcomes: Study and Analysis of Changes of Bottleneck Level Community Forest Users, TAL", features the changes in livelihoods of community forest users living in the Lamahi Bottleneck Area of the Terai Arc Landscape Program.



Non Timber Forest Products of Nepal Himalayas pp 246

A manual of non-timber forest products of Nepal Himalaya.



Gair Kastha Van Paidavar Digdarshan pp 208

A manual of non-timber forest products of Nepal Himalaya.



Conservation Heroes: Their Legacy Lives on pp 170

Coffee Table Book on the life and achievements of Conservation Heroes.

EcoCircular

Communications & Marketing, WWF Nepal
PO Box 7660, Baluwatar, Kathmandu, Nepal
Email: info@wwfnepal.org
Web: www.wwfnepal.org, www.panda.org/nepal



for a living planet

© Bikas RAUNJAR

Shadow play performed on the occasion of National Conservation Day

EcoCircular

Vol 45 No. 9 September - 2008

Newsletter

Message from the Country Representative

Bring out the conservationist in you

We are elated by the decision of Government of Nepal to observe 23 September as National Conservation Day. We are thankful to the GoN for recognizing the efforts of our Conservation Heroes.

Remembering the contribution of Conservation Heroes, I believe the theme of this year's National Conservation Day, "Bring out the conservationist in you" will inspire the conservationist in you and all of us.

At the back cover, you will find a motivating poem by Prajwal Bhattarai, a 12th grader from Nepal who won the best text prize among thousands of entries from more than 200 countries in the competition jointly organized by WWF, IUCN and Nokia. Kudos to Prajwal and I believe his feat will attract more views on environment and climate change issues from Nepal.

Anil Manandhar

Country Representative

23 September declared National Conservation Day

"An angel descends from heaven, upon earthlings ravaged by a self induced apocalypse caused by illegal logging and rampant poaching. Water scarcity, scorching heat and scary storms turn to a beautiful day. Birds start chirping, waterfalls start flowing and people live happily thereafter in harmony with mother nature."

The shadow play staged on the occasion of the first National Conservation day of Nepal brought back the memories of Conservation Heroes who lost their lives in the tragic helicopter accident on 23 September 2006 at Ghunsa, Kangchenjunga.

The Government of Nepal has declared 23 September as National Conservation Day which will be observed every year. This year's theme was "Bring out the conservationist in you".

Fence of Harmony 4



Tiger and gharial numbers plummeting 5



I-Educate project launched 10





Inaugurating the programme jointly organized by conservation consortium members comprising of WWF Nepal, Bird Conservation Nepal, Environmental Camps for Conservation Awareness, The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, IUCN - The World Conservation Union, Nepal Forum of Environmental Journalists, National Trust for Nature Conservation, Wildlife Conservation Nepal, The Mountain Institute and Wildlife Watch Group, honorable Minister for Forests and Soil Conservation, Mr. Kiran Gurung declared the day as "National Conservation Day" thereby launching "Conservation Heroes: Their Legacy Lives On" and four other books on conservation.

The Abraham Conservation Awards were awarded to four individuals and two organizations in recognition of their contribution to grassroots level conservation. The award recipients are Tashi Gyalchhan Lama from upper Dolpa, Lav Bahadur Bisht from Kanchanpur, Man Bahadur Khadka from Kailali, Krishna Prasad Bhurtel from Chitwan, Snow Leopard Conservation Sub-Committee from Yamphudin, and Eco club, Saraswoti Secondary School, Gochhada from Nawalparasi.



Gautam Sapkota from Makwanpur and Anjana Shrestha from Bhaktapur received the Matthew Preece and Yeshi Lama Young Conservation Leader Award awarded in honour of Matthew Preece and Yeshi Lama for their life-long contribution to conservation.

Similarly, WWF Media in Conservation Award, founded to recognize the transformational role of media persons or organizations in highlighting conservation issues in Nepal, was awarded to Shyam Raj Bhatta - reporter with 'Samaya' weekly. .

The Nepal Conservation Memorial Scholarships and Mingma Sherpa Memorial Scholarships were awarded to three meritorious students on the occasion. The recipients of the scholarships were Subhash Bishwokarma, Mahesh Mainali and Pema Sherpa.

The renowned Nepali theatre group, Gurukul staged a moving drama with the theme "Bring out the conservationist in you" towards the end of the programme.

Abraham Conservation Awards

Tashi Gyalchhan Lama

Social Worker, Saldang VDC, Upper Dolpa.

Mr. Tashi Gyalchhan Lama, an active conservationist since the early age of 24 has spent his entire life working for the conservation of local biodiversity. He was awarded with the prestigious Gorkha Dakshin Bahu V in 2032 BS. He has played an important role in the conservation of key mountain species such as snow leopard, blue sheep and musk deer. Mr. Lama played key role as a mediator in Shey Phoksundo NP declaration and through his initiation and support 100 per cent solar electrification in upper Dolpa has been possible. He successfully introduced plantation of Salix trees in upper Dolpa. As a Tibetan language teacher, he has been imparting knowledge of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (MAPs) and Amchi tradition to small children.



Man Bahadur Khadka

District Forest Officer, Kailali.

Mr. Man Bahadur Khadka, District Forest Officer, Kailali, has shown exemplary success in restoring the forest areas. In one year period, his team with constant support of the local people, media and other stakeholders was successful in evicting 1,150 hectares forest encroachment from Basanta corridor and other sites of the district. The encroachers have also been motivated to plant trees at the encroachment sites.

Under his leadership, legal action has been taken against more than hundred forest culprits. Also, tiger skins and bones, wildlife derivatives, and traps have been confiscated. He has been able to abolish the prevailing illogical practices of registering forest land for freed bond laborers (mukta kamaiya). To address the problem, 440 hectares of public and degraded forest land has been identified and the process of rehabilitation will start once the Government of Nepal approves it.

Krishna Prasad Bhurtel

Conservation Volunteer, Meghauli, Chitwan.

Mr. Krishna Prasad Bhurtel has been working voluntarily in buffer zone institutions since the Government of Nepal declared the first buffer zone in the impact zone of Chitwan National Park (CNP) in 1996. He also served as the chairperson of Meghauli Buffer Zone User Committee and Buffer Zone Management Committee (BZMC), Chitwan National Park. During his tenure as the chairperson of BZMC, he played key role in addressing park people conflict and reducing wildlife poaching. Under his leadership Meghauli developed as second tourism destination in Chitwan. The construction of 11 anti poaching operation posts at strategic points within Chitwan National Park adds to his credit as a dedicated conservationist.

Lav Bahadur Bisht

Chairperson, BZMC, Shuklaphanta Wildlife Reserve, Kanchanpur.

Since 1995, Mr. Lav Bahadur Bisht has been actively taking part in the participatory biodiversity conservation and community development activities in the Shuklaphanta Wildlife Reserve and its buffer zone areas. He played key role to facilitate the declaration of the buffer zone of the Shuklaphanta Wildlife Reserve. He has been personally involved to curb illegal activities such as poaching, grazing, timber cutting, encroachment in the reserve and its buffer zone areas. He has been working for and playing vital role in social mobilization for sustainable biodiversity conservation and community development.

Eco Club, Saraswoti Secondary School

Gochhada, Nawalparasi.

Established on 27 June 2003, the Eco Club, Saraswoti Secondary School, Gochhada, has been raising awareness among local people about the importance of eco clubs in conservation, within the schools of buffer zones of Chitwan National Park, western sector by conducting various extra-curricular activities like quiz and oratory contests, art and folk song contests and celebrating different important days of conservation. The eco club has been running anti-plastic campaign, installing containers for sanitation in villages, collecting and managing waste materials. The eco club has launched Nawalparasi Eco Network comprising of eco clubs in 18 higher secondary schools of Nawalparasi to engage more students into conservation practices and awareness programs.

Snow Leopard Conservation Sub Committee

Yamphudin, Taplejung.

The Snow Leopard Conservation Sub-Committee (SLCC), Yamphudin was formed in the year 2006. Led by Chairman, Mr. Abir Man Rai the committee runs under joint efforts of local cattle owners and SLCC members. Since the establishment of the committee, not a single case of retaliatory killing of snow leopards has been reported in Yamphudin and the poaching of blue sheep has reduced significantly. Compensations have been provided to cattle owners for the cattle killed by snow leopards and wild dogs, through the Livestock Insurance Scheme (LIS). The Yamphudin SLCC has been effectively operating the LIS, initiated in the year 2006, after the successful implementation in Ghunsa sector.

Matthew Preece and Yeshi Choden Lama Young Conservation Leader Awards

Anjana Shrestha

Conservation Programme Maker, Madhyapur 15, Bhaktapur

Ms. Anjana Shrestha has been involved in making radio programmes on environment and biodiversity conservation since 2004. Her weekly environmental programme "Hamro Sajha Sansar" drew huge response and was able to raise funds for a bird conservation programme in 2005. The programme was not only limited to raising awareness but also helped extending members of Bird Conservation Nepal in Pokhara and interested listeners participated in a bird watching programme organized by BCN, Pokhara branch.

Based on the success of the programme, further funds were received to give continuation to the programme. The programme was renamed "Samrakshan" covering issues of biodiversity apart from the bird conservation issues. For her conservation efforts she has been awarded with Global Grassroots Award 2008 from Bat Conservation International.

Gautam Sapkota

Educator, Mankamana, Gadi VDC 9, Makwanpur

Mr. Gautam Sapkota possesses a unique quality of imitating bird and animal sounds. With his continuous desire of learning from nature, he is able to imitate voices of as many as 151 bird species and other mammal species as well. He has dedicated his talent towards raising awareness about birds. So far he has covered more than 6,500 schools in more than 45 districts in the country, teaching about birds, their habitats and their sounds. He has also conducted various street programmes raising awareness amongst the local community. He has also talked on electronic media about birds and their sounds, raising awareness towards their conservation. His outstanding feat has been recorded in various record books.

WWF Media in Conservation Award

Shyam Raj Bhatta

Journalist, Mahendranagar, Kanchanpur

Mr. Shyam Raj Bhatta has been reporting on the biodiversity conservation issues for the last six years through Samaya weekly magazine published from Kathmandu and a local newspaper published from Mahendranagar. He has published more than 100 articles on the issues of biodiversity conservation, wildlife trade, encroachment, cross border conservation issues and related topics, educating people raising awareness on these issues. He has extensively covered the cases of encroachment in Basanta forest, poaching and wildlife trade in the western Nepal. For his contribution towards highlighting wildlife crime issues, he has been awarded with the Environment Journalism Award 2007 by Nepal Forum of Environmental Journalists (NEFEJ).

Fence of harmony : Electric fence reducing the human wildlife conflict

Living in the adjoining areas of Bardia National Park in the vicinity of people and users of Geruwa Karnali Community Forest, in reducing wild animals, the electric fencing has been a blessing for the local the human wildlife conflict.

Haven for wild animals

The Geruwa Karnali Community Forest, handed over in 2005 to the local community forest user groups (CFUG), occupies an area of 24 ha and has 32 user households. Members of this CFUG live in an island of the Karnali flood plains formed by branches of Karnali River, on the periphery of Bardia National Park.

The island has served as a haven for wild animals looking for an easy nibble. "We hardly get to harvest half our crops," claims Kar B. Shahi, Secretary of the CFUG. It's not just the loss of crops that has the

residents of this island worried. There are enormous chances of human wildlife conflict taking place when the animals roam about in search of food.

"Rhino and wild elephants frequent our island several times a week," says Dhan Maya BK, President of the CFUG. "They arrive daily during certain seasons like elephants frequenting the maize season. Last year during the month of Shrawan wild elephants destroyed four houses in our community and we were intimidated of the next probable attack." Four years ago, Sahul Rokaya heard strange noise near

his home and when he went outside to check on the source of the sound with a small torch light in hand, the light agitated the herd of elephants feeding on his crop. An irate elephant attacked him, severely injuring and breaking his leg.

"They are the biggest animals in Bardia and might be dangerous as they regularly frequent this area," says Maya Yogi, a motivator with Terai Arc Landscape (TAL) Program. "I never travel alone while visiting this part and try to avoid the probable encounter with the big animals."

Electric fence to the rescue



To reduce the damage to lives and property from wildlife, TAL supported the installation of solar powered electric fence around the major human wildlife conflict intense sites. By the end of last fiscal year almost 14 km long fencing was completed benefiting 279 households of 8 CFUGs (more than 1,500 households are benefited indirectly). Along with a number of other CFUGs of the Khata area in Bardia, Geruwa Karnali CFUG was also provided support for a set of solar panels, battery and 3 km of fencing. While TAL provided the financial and technical support, the locals contributed with human resource and poles for the fencing. The locals are happy with the fence. Dhan Maya BK says, "We have been able to sleep peacefully after the arrival of the fence."

Already several incidences of rhino and elephant repulsions have been recorded since the release of current through the electric fence on 7 January 2008. At one site a rhino hammered at a post and made numerous attempts to get inside, finally giving up. In another place footprints of rhino could be seen along the fence. At another site a rhino managed to enter inside the fenced area after following the fence for around 100 meters and finding a wide hollow space below a wire to enter through. Fortunately, no serious damage was done and the hollow space has been filled up.

Scary moment recalled

Just few weeks after releasing current in the fence, evidences were found at one location which confirmed that elephants had returned after coming across the fence. At another location a clear evidence of a small herd of elephants coming across the fence was found. The herd traveled along the fence for around 200 meters and then swam back across the Karnali River. Arjun Tharu, who witnessed the event recalls, "I was woken up in the early hours of the morning by sounds of elephants screaming." Getting out of the machan (an elevated make-shift staying arrangement in jungles and fields), he saw three elephants walking along walking along the fence, making loud noise. "The fence continued to repulse the elephants for a while,

but then it was 5 AM," says Arjun. Every morning the electricity along the fence is turned off at 5 AM to avoid human injuries. "It was a very scary moment for me," says Arjun. "One of the elephants then crossed over into my fields but the other two kept away from the fence, and after walking along the fence for a while, the elephant crossed back and the three left.

At a point along the electrical fence, a large pug mark belonging to the cat family, possibly a tiger or a leopard was also discovered. This underlines the important role the fence is playing in securing the lives and livelihoods of the people there.



Prevention is better than cure

However, the electric fencing has a serious downside. "I tested if the electricity worked by trying to touch the fence with a sapling and got a big jolt," confesses Arjun. "My elbow hurt for hours."

The electric fence runs along the fields and homes, often along paths regularly used by locals. Although the electric current is released only at night, it can still be a source of potential injury. "We have gathered each household and educated them about the fence and precautions needed," claims Kar B Shah. "We are also planning to support the CFUGs with warning signs," adds Maya Yogi. With the right precautions the electric fencing will prove to be a fence of harmony between the wild animals and the local people.

Facts about electric fencing

(source: Wikipedia)



The concept of the electric fence was first described in Mark Twain's A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court, in 1889, as a defensive weapon. Electric fences were used to control livestock in the United States in the early 1930s, and electric fencing technology developed in both the United States and New Zealand.

An early application of the electric fence was developed in 1936-1937 by New Zealand inventor William "Bill" Gallagher Sr. built from a car's ignition coil and a meccano set, Gallagher used the device to keep his horse from scratching itself against his car.

Gallagher later started a company to improve and market the design. In 1962, another New Zealand inventor, Doug Phillips, invented the non-shortable electric fence based on capacitor discharge. This significantly increased the range an electric fence could be used from a few hundred yards to 35 miles, and reduced the cost of fencing by more than 80 per cent.

(With inputs from Anand Chaudhary)

Tiger and gharial numbers plummeting

The Shuklaphanta Wildlife Reserve that boasted the highest density of tigers in the world is just half a decade later struggling to hold a few remaining tigers.

Conservationists were highly gratified when the first systematic sampling of the Shuklaphanta Wildlife Reserve in border areas of western Nepal in 2004/05 revealed a tiger density of 17 per 100 km², an estimated 27 tigers for the 305 km² reserve. But the joy was shortlived as the 2006/07 sampling showed tiger density declining almost two thirds to six per 100km².

On WWF estimates, the park tiger population now stands at just seven, a density of just under three tigers per 100 km². On government estimates, the total park tiger population stands between six and 14 tigers.

The scientific monitoring program using camera traps in 93 locations carried out between December 2007 and March 2008 was able to identify only five tigers - two male and three female - in the Shuklaphanta core area.

The monitoring program is run by WWF in conjunction with the National Trust for Nature Conservation and the Nepalese government Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation.

According to WWF two recent seizures of tiger bones inside the reserve as well as skin and bones from adjoining Dhangadhi town and photographs of people with guns taken through camera traps are all indicative of organized poaching in Shuklaphanta.

Other human incursions into the park (encroachment, illegal hunting, illegal fodder and fuelwood collection, illegal rampant timber collection, high grazing pressure) are considered to have played a smaller role in the decline in tiger numbers.

WWF has decided to scale up its community-based anti-poaching operation outside Shuklaphanta, noting that a similar program outside Nepal's Chitwan National Park has so far been a big success with not one rhino poached outside Chitwan in the past year.

Similarly, only 81 gharials were found in the different rivers of Nepal during a monitoring carried out this year by Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation and WWF Nepal.



Climate change workshop



On the occasion of the 8th International Youth Day, a workshop entitled "Climate Change and Youth" was organized at Dhangadhi on 12 August 2008. The workshop was organized jointly by TAL-CBRP, Youth Initiative Dhangadhi and IUCN Nepal. A joint presentation on climate change was conducted by representatives of TAL-CBRP and IUCN Nepal. Around 50 young people participated in the workshop. Documentaries "Climate Change Our Concern" and "An Inconvenient Truth" were screened and an interaction session on impact of climate change and the role of youth was conducted during the workshop.

Support to Department of Forest



Mr. Matrika Prasad Yadav, Minister for Forest and Soil Conservation thanked WWF for the support provided by it till date to the Government of Nepal (GoN) in the field of conservation. He said that WWF was like one of his own offices while receiving the keys of a jeep and three motorbikes from Mr. Anil Manandhar, Country Representative, WWF Nepal.

WWF Nepal handed over these vehicles to Department of Forest (DoF) on 11 July 2008 to strengthen its capacity in effective law enforcement in the fields. The vehicle and bikes will be used in the Terai districts to control poaching and illegal trade activities.

Grant agreement signing

WWF signed grant agreements with Department of Forests (DoF) and Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) on 4 August 2008. Dr. Keshav Raj Kanel, Director General - DoF, Dr. Annapurna Nanda Das, Director General - DNPWC, and Mr. Anil Manandhar, CR - WWF Nepal signed on the agreements. The total grant amount was of NRs. 41,046,894.

Plantation at TAL-CBRP sites



Plantation, one of the regular activities of TAL-CBRP, has been carried through different partners. Community Forest Coordination Committee (CFCC) Khata has planted 6,175 seedlings in 3.84 ha area of 10 Community Forest User Groups (CFUG). Bhajani CFCC has distributed 25,844 seedlings among different CFUGs. Similarly, Soil Conservation Office Kailali, youth club, Village Development Committees (VDC), and individuals have all together planted saplings in 16.12 ha area. CFCC Narti has planted 80,380 seedlings in 28.1 ha area. In all, 119,550 seedlings (62,082 NTFPs, 24,021 fodders and 33,447 other trees) have been planted in 52.55 ha area.

Eco teachers' orientation workshop

A two days eco teachers' orientation workshop concluded on 27 August 2008 at Dhangadhi Kailali. The workshop was organized by TAL-CBRP, Dhangadhi. Thirty one eco teachers from five sites (Masuriya, Pahalmanpur, GACAF, Hasuliya and Bhajani) of Kailali district participated in the workshop. They got to know about WWF, TAL and its working area, eco club objectives, activities and process of eco club formation, eco activities and roles and responsibilities of eco teachers and students in biodiversity conservation, and institutional modality of Eco Network.

At the end of workshop, a nine member Kailali district level "Basanta Eco Club Network" was formed. The newly formed Eco Club Network members attended first meeting for their institutional development and further planning.

Institutional Strengthening Support to Metropolitan Police Crime Division

To strengthen the institutional capacity of Metropolitan Police Crime Division (MPCD) a set of equipments and motorbikes were handed over to Superintendent of Police, Mr. Devendra Subedi by Mr. Anil Manandhar, Country Representative, WWF Nepal on 7 July 2008. The handover batch consisted of two motorbikes, two computers, one LCD, mobile sets and voice recorder that will help the division in carrying out their operations more efficiently. The MPCD has done commendable job in the past by confiscating wildlife parts and arresting poachers and traders.

Reunion with local institutions of TAL

WWF Nepal organized a one day 'Interaction Workshop' with the local level institutions working in TAL region. The workshop was organized at Nepalgunj on 31 July 2008. The objective of the interaction meeting was to discuss how conservation efforts can be institutionalized, sustained and broadened in the changing context of Nepal. Participants representing 18 different institutions-including Buffer Zone Management Committee, Community Forest Coordination Committee and local NGOs from 10 districts of TAL region participated in the workshop. It was agreed to form a 'loose forum' to work on the conservation issues in future.

WWF support to flood victims

More than 50,000 villagers in a dozen Village Development Committees (VDC) of Sunsari district in eastern Nepal including Paschim Pipara, Haripur, Madhuvan, Kuswaha and Shripur have been displaced due to inundation caused by Koshi River. The flood has also badly affected the Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve, the only habitat of wild buffalo (Arna). WWF Nepal staff donated a sum of NRs. 1,11, 111.00 to support the flood victims.

Interaction with Eco Club Network

A one day regional level 'Eco Club Network Interaction Workshop' was held in Nepalgunj on 2 August 2008. There was an active participation of 35 school eco club teachers working as Green Volunteers in school eco clubs and eco club networks from ten districts of Terai region falling under TAL programme.

The major objectives of the workshop was to broaden the limitation of joint advocacy, initiate

the process of dialogue among participating institutions, introduce a sustainable network of eco club, and to mobilize the Green Youth (eco club members) for a greater cause.

All participants agreed on to develop eco club as a volunteer organization and eco club networks as a loose forum. A 'Task Force' having nine members representing eco clubs from Parsa to Kanchanpur has been constituted.

Mechanical means of grassland management tested

Considering the issues of loss of grassland in Chitwan National Park, mechanical devices have been tested for grass cutting. With the coordination of Mahindra Tractors, new blade has been designed to cut grasses. The test was performed at the Sukhibhar grassland of Chitwan on 12 June 2008. It is expected that at least three times more grasslands can be managed by the same resources mobilizing local people in grassland management.

World Environment Day Celebrations

Friends of Zoo - National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC), WWF Nepal, IUCN Nepal and Lalitpur Sub-Metropolitan City organized a rally to aware the general people about this year's World Environment Day slogan 'Kick the habit - towards a low carbon economy' on 5 June 2008. Around 2,500 students and representatives from different organizations and organizers toured around the historic city Patan displaying banners and placards to raise awareness.

Minister for Forests and Soil Conservation, Mr. Matrika Prasad Yadav gave away the prizes to the students winning the art and essay competitions organized to celebrate the day.



Similarly, World Environment Day was celebrated at all the sectors of Kangchenjunga Conservation Area viz. Lelep, Ghunsa, Walangchung Gola and Yamphudin by organizing mass rallies in all sectors, plantation programs in Dobate and Guranse CFUG of Lelep VDC, inter CFUG conservation folk cultural competition (dances, songs) in Lelep KCAMC Head Office, and sanitation / clean up campaigns in all sectors. Sunakhari Eco Club Network (from KCA) held several extra curricular activities and clean up campaigns in respective schools within the KCA.

Likewise, Pathivara eco-club network from Taplejung district organized clean up campaigns / sanitation program in Tokme Danda of Funling VDC, inter secondary level conservation quiz context competition in Bhanu High School from the project's support. Rubbish pits have been dug in Tokme Danda and three hoarding boards with environmental and sanitation messages have been installed. An essay competition on the climate change and its impact across the world was organized in Janta High School of Hangdewa.



On the occasion of World Environment Day 2008, Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve handed over 177 ha of buffer zone forest as Buffer Zone Community Forest (BZCF) to local communities. Four BZCFs - Jharnasagar, Janaki Mahila, Janajyoti and Ajayapal are the handed over community forests benefiting 2,672 households and 15,433 people of Rambilasapur VDC-9 and Pipaladi VDC - 3 and 4, Kanchanpur. The constitution and the operational plans of these forests were prepared with the support of TAL- PABZ.

Eco Club Network, Suklaphanta organized environmental quiz contest for the students of Higher Secondary School level on 5 June, on the occasion of World Environment Day.

Storing water for agriculture in Siku khola catchment, Dudh Koshi



A water management demonstration site has been established in the Siku khola catchment. With the installation of the demonstration site local people are made aware on the water saving and water efficient irrigation technologies. The demonstration site at the Kangel Village Development Committee (VDC) of the Siku khola catchment includes a plastic pond, drip irrigation and micro sprinkler irrigation systems. Kangel VDC is relatively dryer than other VDCs of Siku khola catchment. In the mid hill areas people have relatively more rain-fed land compared to irrigated land. Also in general, spring sources are not wisely tapped. Water is collected in the plastic pond from the spring sources during the night time and it is used to irrigate the rain-fed land to grow crops using water saving irrigation technologies like drip and micro sprinkler systems. These systems use less water than the conventional irrigation methods and are appropriate for the mid hills.

The site was selected by assessing the suitability for the technology and discussion with the local people and user groups. The demonstration site is benefiting a user group of five households with only one spring source. The excess water is stored in the plastic pond (capacity of approximately 10,000 litres) and is used by drip and sprinkler irrigation system. The users have been trained to operate the system.



MOEST Minister at WWF's stall



Minister for Environment, Science and Technology, Mr. Farmullah Mansoor visited the WWF Nepal stall at Bhrikuti Mandap en-route his visit to the exhibition organized by the ministry to raise awareness on the importance of World Environment Day. The exhibition continued till 9 June 2008 and thousands of visitors visited the stalls.

Second National Tourism Fair



WWF participated in the second national tourism fair organized by Nepal Tourism Board at United World Trade Centre, Kathmandu. The fair was organized to promote internal tourism and different organizations working in the tourism sector participated in the fair, exhibiting what the beautiful places in Nepal have to offer.

Year end reflection session

To discuss the individual performance in the last year and come up with innovative ideas to be implemented in the coming year, a day long year end reflection session was organized on 27 June 2008. All staff from centre and field actively participated in the session.

IRBM orientation training in the field

An orientation workshop was conducted for the integrated groups and other local stakeholders from both Siku and Pankhu Khola catchments. The objective of this workshop was to orient the participants on Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM) and Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM). The workshop was held in Nele bazar (1-2 June) and Okhaldhunga bazaar (5-6 June) for Siku and Pankhu Khola catchments respectively.

KRBM gets a brand name

Freshwater unit hold a brainstorming meeting with the WWF colleagues on 1 July 2008 to pick up a name for the Koshi River Basin Management (KRBM) project. The team came up with the name "KOSELI" for KRBM. The acronym KOSELI stands for "Koshi for Safeguarding Environment and Livelihoods".

Encroachment removal at Bhajani Area

With active participants of members from Bhajani CFCC, Mohanyal CF, CBAPO Bhajani, Banheralu and Bhajani Range post, 94 huts have been removed from encroached area of Mohanyal CF.

Sharing workshop on community management of NTFPs in KCA

A workshop on sharing results and lessons learned from community management of NTFPs in Kangchenjunga Conservation Area (KCA) of Taplejung district in eastern Nepal was organized on 29 June 2008.

The overall objective of the sharing meeting was to share results, lessons learned and the future directions of the project titled, "Community Management of NTFPs in Kangchenjunga Conservation Area, Nepal" supported by DARWIN Initiative/WWF-UK. The workshop was also intended to acknowledge the cohesive efforts of local and government partners, local people of KCA and international donors in institutionalizing sustainable management and commercialization of NTFPs/ MAPs in KCA.

The documentary "Natural herbs: treasure of the Himalayas" and a manual of NTFPs of Nepal Himalaya were released on the occasion.

Successful testing of Ghunsa Micro Hydro

The Ghunsa Micro Hydro was successfully tested on 20 June 2008, generating electricity and lighting the powerhouse.

Although the estimated output electricity of the plant is 35 kW, an output of 42kW was generated. The extra 7kW electricity was generated due to the good discharge in the monsoons. The output has assured the production of 35kW in the dry seasons.

Community Based Anti Poaching Operation Interaction

Aiming to minimize the illegal activities through the Community Based Anti Poaching Operation (CBAPO) including Anti Poaching Youth Awareness Campaign (APYAC), Youth Clubs, Women Group, an interaction workshop was organized at Sauraha, Chitwan on 14-15 July 2008. The main objectives of this interaction workshop were to review fiscal year '08 focusing on community based anti poaching operation interventions, to identify present conservation issues at local level, to prepare short term strategies to address site specific conservation issues and to familiarize and network CBAPO driving forces around Chitwan National Park and Parsa Wildlife Reserve. Thirty two representatives of 16 APYAC from Chitwan, Makawanpur, Parsa and Nawalparasi districts participated in the workshop.

Implementation of environment education in primary level curriculum

WWF Western Regional Office (WRO) has developed curriculum for primary level education incorporating environmental issues. After one year of regular meetings and workshops, now 150 primary schools have been implementing this curriculum as a model pilot project. The curriculum has included key conservation subjects in local contexts. The Curriculum Development Centre has allocated 100 marks for the local subject. The project is being implemented in technical and managerial support from District Education Office (DEO) Kailali and Federation of Community Forest Users of Nepal (FECOFUN) Kailali has been providing community level support through mobilization of community forestry user groups.

Initiatives for dolphin conservation

As reported by local and national newspapers, a Ganges Dolphin (6-feet 9-inch mammal of 83 Kg), critically endangered species was brutally stoned to death in Lohondra, Judi River, a tributary of Koshi River in Morang on Monday, 23 June 2008.

Taking this incident into consideration, and realizing the lack of awareness at local level, an urgent action on the ground was felt necessary. After series of discussion within and among Bird Conservation Nepal (BCN), WWF/CEPF, IUCN, DNPWC, a local Non Governmental Organization, Jeevan Bikas Samaj based at Biratnagar was identified as potential organization, which has been working in the area since 1995. The organization was awarded WWF/CEPF small grant to implement a project titled "Awareness raising and sensitization for conserving the Ganges River Dolphin (*Platanista gangetica*) in Eastern Nepal".

The project commenced from 1 August 2008 and will end on January 2009. The project will be implemented along the banks of river Judi which will include parts of Thalaha, Kataha, and Bhatigaj VDCs of Morang District in the eastern Nepal. The project site comprises of hunting and fishing communities (Satar, Malhar, Jhangar, Musahar ethnic groups) whose part of the livelihoods are based on hunting and fishing. The project site is about 6 km east from Biratnagar Municipality and comprises of small river channels like Lohondra, Kesaliya, Singiya etc. where there are possibilities of dolphin occurrence especially during the monsoons when the rivers in the south swell up. Through the project local communities (particularly Satar community, and those living along the river bank), local schools, school children, teachers, government line agencies (particularly police, District Agriculture office-Fisheries Research Centre), Village Development Committees, District Development Committees, local clubs, community groups, non-government organizations, political or social leaders, local media and the general public will be sensitized on the significance of dolphins. A community based information and monitoring system for the movement dolphins in the area will be developed and District Forest Office and Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve management will be coordinated to safeguard the dolphins in the area.



I-Educate project launched



The I-Educate Project was officially launched on 13 June 2008 at WWF. The Class IX eco-club students of Occidental School participated in the session together with their environmental science teacher. The main objectives of the I-Educate Project are to educate WWF staff and others as well; to teach the basics of conservation and biodiversity in an interactive and participatory fashion so that children are more informed; to share knowledge on WWF initiatives; to give ideas to students to design their own projects in their homes, schools and communities. This way, we can truly make an informed "green youth" in the long run.

The I-Educate programme's second session was organized at WWF on 11 July 2008. Twenty students of Suryodaya English Secondary School attended the session. WWF Nepal staff volunteer in educating the school children on the conservation issues. The students at the end of the session learn to design an eco project of their own in their schools, homes, community and national level.

Indo-Nepal meeting for wildlife conservation

A meeting on "Transborder collaboration for wildlife conservation in the Terai Arc Landscape (TAL)" was organized by WWF in Lucknow on 19 July 2008. Experts including senior officials from Nepal, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh attended the meeting. The meeting was aimed at analyzing the threats to wildlife in TAL region of India and Nepal. Issues related to status of corridors and connectivity between habitats, strengthening anti-poaching activities in and around Protected Areas (PA) and the cross-border movement of wildlife offenders were discussed and a strategy to protect the wildlife habitat was also developed in the meeting.

Pani Prasad - a favourite character in schools

The journey of "Pani Prasad" started with an orientation to the eco-club teachers on November 2007. Pani Prasad was busy throughout December 2007 - March 2008 visiting different schools and talking "All about water!!" The World Water Day 2008 was celebrated together with the eco-club students in Kathmandu who supported in spreading the message to their friends, parents and neighbours. A high demand came from different schools for Pani Prasad and it became a favourite character among the school students!



Satya Adhikari, Librarian, Shuvata School says, "First of all I would like to thank you for your publication on "Pani Prasad". These publications are very useful for our students and teachers as well, which is very much in demand among the students."

Conserving the snow leopard in the Himalayas

WWF Nepal, Department of Forests, Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC), and National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC) jointly organized a one day seminar on 'Snow leopard conservation initiatives in Nepal's Himalayas' on 6 June 2008.

The current status and distribution of snow leopards in Nepal's

Himalayas and the progress updates of the snow leopard conservation action plan for Nepal's Himalayas were presented in the seminar. Also, the challenges and opportunities for snow leopard conservation in Nepal were assessed.

Inaugurating the seminar, Minister for Forests and Soil Conservation, Mr. Matrika Prasad Yadav said, "We must analyze how much we misused the rights and how much we fulfilled our duties in the past and step forward for conservation." Further he added, "Conservation is not possible if the feudal mentality within each of us is not wiped out."

Mr. Anil Manandhar, Country Representative, WWF Nepal said, "There is need to attract interest of policymakers for the conservation of this beautiful species." Citing the example of Snow Leopard Trek initiated by Bhutan he said, "If the biological aspect of the snow leopard is linked with the livelihood aspects of local community, they (communities) will themselves come forward to conserve the snow leopard."



Oil and gas exploration agreements done by Government of Nepal not in compliance with the existing laws

Experts voiced their concerns over the agreement done by Government of Nepal (GoN) with Texona Resources and Cairn Energy for the exploration, development and production of petroleum in Terai of Nepal in the national workshop on "Petroleum Exploration and Legal Compliance" jointly organized by Nepal Bar Association (NBA) and WWF Nepal on 25 July 2008.

The legal aspects of the agreement with the oil companies were discussed upon in the workshop. The NBA presented the results of its assessment. As per the analysis, the government has not followed the constitutional process while entering into agreement with the exploration companies Texona Resources

and Cairn Energy. The agreement between the GoN and Texona Resources Company and Cairn Energy has been kept confidential which should not be kept confidential according to the 1990 Constitution as well as the present Interim Constitution 2007.

Experts said that the petroleum agreement should meet the requirement of the environment protection with the compulsory legal provision for Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) before being granted the exploration rights.

Regulation 10 (1) of Petroleum Regulation, 1985 has stated that "Normally, a bidder shall not be granted more than two exploration blocks for the petroleum

exploration". But out of 10 blocks, 2 Blocks have been licensed to Texona Resources and 5 blocks have been awarded to Cairn Energy for petroleum exploration. NBA recommended that Schedule 2 of the Petroleum Regulation, 1985 should be amended for protecting the economic and environmental interest of the country, such as provisions with regard to voluntarily relinquishment, surface rent, profit sharing etc.

Constituent Assembly members, the representatives from Department of Forests, Department of National Parks and Wildlife conservation, Texona Resources, Cairn energy, NBA and WWF Nepal participated in the workshop.

Exploring the impact of climate change on aquatic biodiversity in Gokyo Lake

WWF Nepal started a partnership with Aquatic Ecology Centre (AEC), Kathmandu University in April 2008. Aquatic Ecology Centre was established with the objective of promoting biodiversity of lakes and rivers in the region through documentation of species inventory, development of assessment tools for bio-monitoring, and capacity building of junior staff to promote aquatic ecological researches. AEC is conducting a detail research in the high altitude wetland Gokyo (Ramsar site), Everest region regarding the climate change impact on freshwater with the support from WWF Nepal.

Living Himalayas Network Initiative Communications Strategy Workshop



The Living Himalayas Network Initiative Communications Strategy Workshop was held at WWF-India, New Delhi on 14-16 July 2008.

Communicators and programme staff from WWF-India, WWF Bhutan and WWF Nepal participated in the communications strategy drafting process.

The primary objective of the workshop was to draft an overarching communications strategy, identify a 12-18 months calendar/workplan, and prioritise communications work for specific objectives. The secondary objective was to facilitate knowledge sharing between LHNI stakeholders. The outputs of the meeting were to develop transformative communications strategies for the NI to develop internal communication processes, to strategize collaboration on major activities, and to identify big wins.

The workshop was facilitated by Joanna Benn, Trishna Gurung from WWF-US and David Cowdrey from WWF-UK.

Miss Nepal Contestants at WWF Nepal



On 6 August 2008, the Miss Nepal contestants visited WWF office and got to know about WWF and its activities. The winner will be appointed Conservation Ambassador by WWF Nepal. WWF Nepal started appointing Conservation Ambassador from 2004 and since then Payal Shakya, Sugarika KC and Sitashma Chand have served as ambassadors to aware, educate and influence youth on the conservation issues.

Meet Rajani



As a fresh SLC passout, Rajani joined Western Terai Tiger, Rhino, Elephant Complex Project (WETTREC) in January 2001, as a motivator. She was selected from 216 applicants, thanks to the vacancy notice posted

on the notice board of CDO Office. Currently she is pursuing her Bachelors in Business Studies and working as a motivator in TAL programme.

She recalls the difficulties she went through to educate the local people on the issues of conservation, when she joined WETTREC. People even didn't know what a community forest is. Now the awareness level has increased and people know the importance of conserving the forests.

A member of joint family of 24, she has been helping her family and helping her sisters for further studies. Having the hobby of reading newspapers and magazines, the filed motivator is dedicated towards working in the field of conservation in the days to come.