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नेपाल कार्यक्रम

Inside

- Forests and Species 2
- Sustainable Livelihoods 2
- Climate Change 3
- Education and Capacity Building 3



EcoCircular

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WWF Nepal Program Newsletter

**There's wealth in
wetland diversity
don't lose it!**

Every year, World Wetlands Day is celebrated on 2 February to mark the adoption of the Convention on Wetlands at Ramsar, Iran in 1971.

The cultural heritage in our wetlands is the result of the millennia-long association between people and wetlands, an association that has enriched past generations and will continue to do - if we can sustain wetland diversity.

Since 1997, government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and groups of citizens at all levels of the community celebrate World Wetlands Day to take action aimed at raising public awareness of the Ramsar Convention and wetland values and benefits.

Nepal signed the Convention on Wetlands on 1987. At present we have four Wetlands of International Importance with a total surface area of 23,488 hectares: Beeshazar and

Contd. on page 4 »

news briefs



FOREST AND SPECIES

Anti-poaching

Poaching is the main reason behind the dwindling population of Musk Deer (*Moschus moschiferus*) at Sagarmatha National Park (SNP) so, with support from SCAFP, park field staff led by senior game scouts patrolled the park for a two-week duration. They found 29 musk deer (17 males and 12 females) at seven different sites and dismantled five traps set by poachers. Three poachers were apprehended and five musk deer carcasses were seized.

Rhino Conservation

The rhino carrying capacity of Chitwan valley as well as the Babai valley was among the different issues discussed at "Conservation of the Greater One-horned Rhinoceros in Nepal-Achievement and Future Options", a forum attended by Dr Chandra P Gurung, Country Representative of WWF NP, Anil Manadhar, Conservation Program Director, Dr Sarala Khaling, Director – DRM and Santosh Mani Nepal, Coordinator of TAL on 28 December 2004. It was also discussed to strategize conservation activities in

conflict situation. Dr Tirtha Man Maskey, DG of DNPWC, made a presentation which showed decline in Rhino poaching in 2004.

Maintaining the Fire line

The mobility inside the park for regular patrolling and anti-poaching operations was boosted with the maintenance of a 101 km-long fire line at Royal Chitwan National Park. The fire line also plays an important role in wildlife monitoring, with more sightings of footprints and excreta of herbivores, rhino and spotted deer along this line.

Financial model for TAL Business Plan

The Large Project Management (LPM) team led by Eric Swanson, Director of LPM, WWF US with technical assistance of Ed Miller and Chris Casturo from IBM assisted WWF Nepal Program in preparation of financial modeling of Business Plan of Terai Arc Landscape Strategic Plan. Together with the team, WWF Nepal Program organized a week long extensive workshop from 13 to 20 December 2004. The LPM team developed dimensions for financial modeling and then extensively worked on unit costs of the activities including cost drivers and global variables. LPM team made presentations to Terai Arc Landscape Core Team on financial modeling during the workshop.



PHOTO © DINAKHAR BHANDARI

Musk deer at Tengboche



SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS

Income Generation Activities

The women Income Generation Activities (IGA) Coordination Committee of Padampur, met on 13 December 2004 and decided to support goat farming for 90 households in nine wards in this area where TAL Program will be providing micro-credit funds for such activities. The group also developed criteria for support, operational modality and lines of coordination with district level line agencies. Training for goat farming will also be organized.

Everest Conference of Amchis

The Everest Conference of Amchis 2004 was held on November 28-December 1, 2004 in Namche, Sagarmatha National Park. It was organized by the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation, Sagarmatha National Park, Buffer Zone Management Committee, Tengboche Monastery, WWF and People and Plants. More than 40 amchis, community and protected area representatives from various mountain protected areas, non-government



Amchi Gyatso Bista, Chairman of Himalayan Amchi Association, speaking at the Technical session

organizations, and representatives from the Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation, Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation, Department of Plant Resources and Ministry of Local Development attended the conference which focused on achieving government recognition of the amchi tradition of medicine, promoting conservation and sustainable use

CLIMATE CHANGE

Press Trip to Himalayas

A team of Dutch journalists visited the Sagarmatha region for a press trip on climate change impact in the mountains, focusing especially on Glacier Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs). The journalists visited Imja Glacier Lake and Dig Tsho Glacier Lake, and interacted with locals who had survived GLOF events. Sandeep Chamling Rai, Climate Change Officer and Anne-Marie Kloet, Communication Officer of WWF Netherlands, accompanied the team.



Dutch Journalist Marloes De Koning (right) interviewing local people

Launch of Climate Witness:

To bring the climate change closer to the decision makers, the Climate Witness Program was launched at the COP 10 of United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) at Buenos Aires, Argentina on 10 December 2004. Witnesses from Fiji, Nepal, India and Argentina had the opportunity of sharing their stories. This event was successful in putting faces of people to the issue of climate change



Climate witness side event at COP10, Buenos Aires, Argentina Dec 2004

of medicinal and aromatic plants, ensuring correct identification as well as monitoring of priority species of medicinal and aromatic plants and developing and refining guidelines for sustainable use of 28 priority medicinal plants. An Everest Declaration of Amchis 2004 was prepared by the participants.

Third Coordination Meeting on NTFP Trade and Marketing

A Nepal Standard of NTFP products, certification and laboratory support for marketing of NTFP and MAPs of Nepal were brought to the table at the 'Third Coordination Meeting on NTFP Trade and Marketing' held on 7 December 2004, attended by Rajendra Gurung, Program Officer - Terai. Representatives from ANSAB, NARMSAP, CECI, BDS-MaPS were also present. The possibility of a regional conference on NTFP trade in March 2005 in Nepal was also discussed.



EDUCATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Environmental Education Training Package Launched

An Environmental Education Training Package developed by SchEMS for WWF Nepal Program was launched on 30 November 2004 at SCAFP in Sagarmatha National Park. The senior staff of SchEMS trained 50 Eco Club teachers and "Health, Population and Environment" subject teachers from SCAFP and KCAP to enhance their capacity to share information on environment conservation.

Resource Book Training

A training session was conducted for teachers in the KCAP and SCAFP to use the new environment activity book, 'Conservation Activities: Resource Book'. It contains environment-friendly activities for Eco Club members and school students and is complemented by two comics that illustrate Eco Club activities. In KCAP, the orientation was given by the consultant and in SCAFP by Assistant Education Officer Neelima Shrestha.

School Room Construction

Five classrooms are being added to Vimodaya Higher Secondary School, Padampur, to better the learning environment of students, with support from TAL Program. The foundation for the wing was laid on 11 December 2004.



Associated Lakes in Chitwan, Ghodaghodi Lake Area in Kailali, Jagadishpur Reservoir in Kapilvastu and Koshi Tappu in Koshi. The Nepal Biodiversity Strategy 2002 further emphasizes the wise use of wetland habitats and resources. His Majesty's Government of Nepal formally endorsed the National Wetland Policy on March 2003 to promote conservation and sustainable use of wetlands, and put people at the centre of conservation and natural resource management.

We inhabit in "water planet", where almost 70% of its surface is covered by water with less than 3% of this consists

of freshwater and the rest of 97.5% is salt water from oceans. According to the estimate of WMO/ UNESCO (1997), out of less than 3% of freshwater, 2.24% is inaccessible (polar icecaps, glaciers and deep ground water) and only 0.26% is accessible Freshwater (lakes, aquifers, rivers etc.). Although Nepal is considered to be rich in water resources, the State of Environment (2001) indicates that its people are not getting enough water to meet their needs nor is the available water potable. As the demand of water is increasing day by day, there is intense pressure on the water resources being used resulting to alarming level of groundwater extraction, drainage for irrigation and fishing to sustain livelihood, which directly affects the freshwater ecosystem including the health of our wetlands and river systems. Often perceived as swamps, mud flats and mosquito havens, the wetlands and rivers making up freshwater habitats are in fact natural sponges filtering harmful substances and purifying water for our use.

Wetland biodiversity is under threat from encroachment, unsustainable harvesting, industrial pollution, agricultural runoff, siltation and the introduction of exotic and invasive species into wetland ecosystems.

Recognising that the world is on the brink of a water crisis, WWF is working globally with partners through a shared approach to manage rivers and wetlands, redirecting harmful infrastructure, curbing water waste in agriculture by seeking better management practices and promoting poverty reduction compatible with environmentally strong water policies. To address the country's existing strategies and aligning it with WWF's global and Eastern Himalayan Ecoregion Complex targets, WWF Nepal Program started a new Freshwater initiative from October 2004. This program is working on emerging issues, minimize impacts and threats, and promote sustainable utilization and conservation of wetlands for future generations. The program will also focus on community management of river basins by habitat conservation of river dolphins, which is considered a freshwater flagship species.

WWF NP NEWS

- Roland Eve, Country Director of WWF Laos, visited WWF Nepal Program Office on 29 December 2004. There was an exchange of information on ongoing programs of the two offices.
- Dr Christopher Hoadley, School of IST, University Park and Sameer Honwad from Pennsylvania State University visited WWF NP to identify a potential collaboration of conservation education project. Assistant Education Officer Neelima Shrestha coordinated their meetings with BCN, ECCA, KMTNC, IUCN and WE Nepal.
- Neera Shrestha Pradhan, Freshwater Officer, attended the regional workshop, 'War over the Ganga?' organized by Panos Institute South Asia, 6-7 December at Kathmandu. The workshop drafted a future course of action to avoid conflicts over this powerful freshwater source.

OA Internal Analysis Workshop

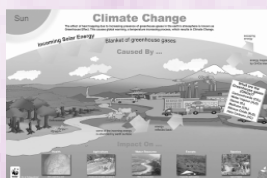
- Organizational Assessment Internal Analysis Workshop was held in Kathmandu from 22-24 December 2004. Various aspects of Conservation Program, Internal Management and External Relations were discussed. The workshop, facilitated by Organizational Development Center and OA team members of WWF Nepal Program, was participated by all field and center staff of WWF NP.



HOT OFF THE PRESS



◀ Climate Change Brochure



▲ Poster on Climate Change

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