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# EcoCircular

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WWF Nepal Program Newsletter

## MOU to Research on Climate Change Impact on Himalayas



Director General of DHM Dr Madan Lall Shrestha (left) and CR of WWF NP Dr Chandra P Gurung signing the MOU

On 15 February 2005, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between WWF Nepal Program and Department of Hydrology and Meteorology for the period of five years to conduct research on climate change impact in Nepal.

WWF Nepal Program and Department of Hydrology and Meteorology (DHM) share the common objective to conduct research on subjects of mutual interest such as: hydrology, meteorology, glaciology and climate change in Nepal in achieving HMG/N targets. It also includes stress on natural resources and livelihoods through identifying climate change impacts and vulnerabilities and applying the adaptation and mitigation option to achieve synergy in program.

"At the initial stage, the research will be carried out in Ngozumpa and Khumbu glaciers to develop a model that predicts the behavior of these glaciers under future climate scenarios," said Dr Chandra Gurung, Country Representative, WWF Nepal Program. "This will not only further climate change research in Nepal but also help build a freshwater vulnerability assessment and appropriate adaptation measures."

"With the MOU signed, definitely another chapter has started. The department is happy to share its expertise, knowledge and resources in developing the climate model," said Dr Madan Lall Shrestha, Director General, Department of Hydrology and Meteorology. "Let's not only work on the impact level but also start thinking in the adaptive measures."

Climate change is an important concern for Nepal's fragile mountain ecosystem. The increased frequency of extreme weather events, weather-

# news briefs



## FOREST AND SPECIES

### PEC Meeting

A Project Executive Committee Meeting (PEC) was held on 31 January 2005 at Department of Forests. Conservation Program Director Anil Manandhar gave overview of the outputs and targets of TAL and KCAP. Project Managers and Coordinators made presentations on progresses of FY 05 of TAL, KCAP, NMCP and SCAFP. Country Representative Dr Chandra P Gurung said, "The strong partnership between the government and WWF Nepal Program is the key factor for the success in conservation. The partnership is regarded as a model". Dr Mohan Prasad Wagle, Chief of Planning & HRD of MFSC and Director Generals of DNPWC and DOF were contented to see the progress of the programs even during this time. DG of DNPWC Dr Tirtha Man Maskey said, "It is very appreciative to see commitment of field staff and their effort in mobilizing locals. Without the local support, success of the program is not possible." DG of DOF said, "we need to have more focused programs to raise awareness at the local level".

### Forest Cover Change in Terai

Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation (MFSC) formed a committee to finalize the technical report on forest cover change of Terai. MFSC has earlier formed a separate technical committee to study the change on forest cover between 1991 - 2001 in Terai. The technical committee has already submitted the finding of the study to the ministry. This new committee coordinated by Director General, Department of Forest consists of members from different organizations including WWF NP. Mr Santosh Nepal, Coordinator TAL is member of the committee. Other members are Mr Pem Narayan Kandel, MFSC, Mr Sahas Man Shrestha, DFRS, Mr R.N. Shah, BISEP ST and Mr Bal Ram Kandel, DOF. Mr Kandel will act as a Member Secretary.

### Sacred Himalayan Landscape

On 23 February 2005, WWF Nepal Program, ICIMOD and TMI representatives briefed the Secretary of the MFSC on the concept and vision of the Sacred Himalayan Landscape at the MFSC. The date for the national stakeholders' consultation has been set for 5 April 2005.

### Target Setting - Business Plan Workshop

The core team for the formulation of Strategic Plan for Terai Arc Landscape organized a one day workshop to set the 10 year Biological and Social targets and to verify unit cost and activities for the development of Business Plan for TAL - Nepal. The workshop was participated by the representatives of various key partners currently active in the TAL area. Formulation of a Business plan for TAL- Nepal is a mandatory step



*Inaugural ceremony: Target setting workshop for TAL Business plan*

as identified by the broad strategy document endorsed by HMG of Nepal in 2004. The workshop was inaugurated by Secretary of MFSC Ananta Raj Pandey. The inaugural session was attended by the Division Heads and Director Generals of the different Departments of the Ministry including representatives from all the agencies working in TAL. Secretary Pandey appreciated the coordinated effort for the development of the Business and partnership plan which would be the model for other areas. Chief of Foreign Aid Coordination Division Dr D. P. Parajuli, Team Leader of the Core Group, and Chief Planning & HRD Division Dr M.P. Wagle, CR Dr Chandra Prasad Gurung and Core team member of DFID Mr James Bampton expressed their views during the inauguration session.

### WTLBP Until December 2005

A coordination meeting was held between Netherlands Development Organization (SNV Nepal) and WWF Nepal Program on Western Terai Arc Landscape Building Program (WTLBP) on 24 February 2005 at WTLBP Central Support Unit (CSU). The meeting decided for a 'no cost extension' of the program until the end of December 2005. Previously WTLBP was designed for May 2004 to 15 July 2005. Following the decision made in the meeting, logical framework, work plan and budget of WTLBP will be amended accordingly.

### Project Management Committee meeting of BDS-MaPS

Meeting of Project Management Committee (PMC) of Business Development Services - Marketing Production and Services (BDS-MaPS) was held on 24 February 2005. The meeting endorsed progress of 2nd quarter of FY 05 and targets and budget for next quarters. The meeting, attended by Country Representative Dr. Chandra Gurung and Program Officer Rajendra Gurung, also discussed on several issues such as marketing, value addition and production services.



## SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS

### Income Generation Training in New Padampur

TAL-Protected Areas and Buffer Zone program organized training on goat keeping in New Padampur, Chitwan from 9-10 February 2005. Local resource persons were mobilized to conduct the training. In the training 26 women member of Padampur Mahila Income Generation Groups participated and 90 women members will be provided similar type of trainings.



## Festival Celebrated

WWF Nepal Program joined hands with the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation, Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve, local, national and international NGOs/INGOs, and other local bodies and celebrated the Fifth National Koshi Tappu Birds Festival from 2-6 February 2005 at Koshi Tappu.

The festival was celebrated with awareness activities such as coordination meeting of local bodies, recognition of individuals committed to bird conservation, art competition, cultural exhibitions, promotional rallies, publication of an inventory of wetland birds, and distribution of promotional

materials. The activities were aimed at raising awareness on the importance of wetland biodiversity and enhance coordination among community-based organizations and the local people for bird conservation.

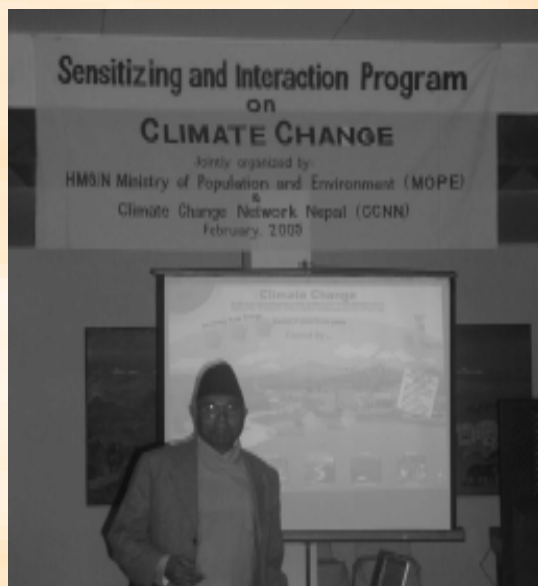
Situated in the floodplains to the Sapta Koshi River in Southeast Nepal, the wildlife reserve is a Ramsar site and supports 479 species of birds, 31 mammals, and 117 species of fish. During the last fiscal year (July 2003-June 2004), 1,205 national and international bird enthusiasts visited the Ramsar site. The wetland of international importance was declared a Ramsar site in 1987.



## CLIMATE CHANGE

### Sensitization and Interaction Program on Climate Change in Nepal

HMG/N Ministry of Population and Environment (MOPE) and Climate Change Network Nepal jointly organized a sensitization and interaction program on "Climate Change in Nepal" on 11 February 2005. The program aimed at addressing concerns on climate change, Nepal's vulnerability, WWF Nepal Program's climate change campaign and HMG/N's initiatives to address climate change issues. The interaction program discussed climate change issues for Nepal and urged awareness on a broader national level.



Secretary of MOPE Mr Dev Raj Regmi speaking at the program

### Celebrating Kyoto Protocol Entry into Force

Climate Change Network Nepal (CCNN) organized a week long series of events jointly with Ministry of Population and Environment (MOPE) to celebrate the Kyoto Protocol entry into force. A reception was hosted jointly by Ministry of Population and Environment and Climate Change Network Nepal (CCNN) on 16 Feb 2005.



## EDUCATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING

### WWF Introductory Course and Training on Project Cycle Management

F&A Officer Mohan Dhakal and Assistant Education Officer Neelima Shrestha attended the WWF Introductory Course followed by a training on Project Cycle Management at WWF International, Gland, Switzerland from 14-18 February 2005.

### Exhibition

WWF Nepal Program participated in an Exhibition at Baba Boarding School on 17 and 18 February 2005. Posters and publications were distributed to the students at the exhibition, participated by more than 1000 students.



Students observing the Exhibition stall at Baba Boarding School



# WWF NEPAL PROGRAM *Celebrates* WORLD WETLANDS DAY

WWF Nepal Program joined hands with partner conservation organizations and celebrated the World Wetlands Day on 2 February 2005.

A sensitization workshop for Environmental Journalists was organized jointly by DoF, DNPWC, WWF Nepal Program and IUCN on the occasion of World Wetlands Day on 2 Feb 2005. The workshop was chaired by Secretary of Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation Ananta Raj Pandey. Speaking at the program, DG of DNPWC Dr Tirtha Man Maskey said, "Conservation of wetlands is important as it is rich in biodiversity. As wetlands and livelihoods are interlinked, it has more importance in daily lives of the locals". He further stressed on the need for the awareness in wetland conservation as wetlands used to be given less importance in the past thinking that it generates mosquito and pollutes the environment. "If conducted effectively, awareness programs could play vital role in communicating importance of wetlands to the general mass", he added. Country Representative Dr Chandra Gurung gave insight on the WWF's Freshwater program and WWF Nepal Program's initiation of the Freshwater unit recently. He said, "Three of the wetlands listed in the Ramsar site are located in Terai Arc Landscape area where we are already working. Conservation of wetlands is equally important to us." He also assured the journalists in giving support to the government in wetland conservation. WWF Nepal Program's first Conservation Ambassador Miss Nepal Payal Shakya made an appeal to the journalists to help raise awareness in wetland conservation.

Apart from launching of posters and releasing a book on wetland policy, flyers and stickers were distributed on the Day to promote wetlands

related disasters, rapid glacier retreat and potential glacier lake outburst floods (GLOFs) threaten livelihoods and biodiversity in the Himalayas. Deteriorating environmental conditions and factors limit resource access. Climate-induced changes to resource flow will affect the viability of livelihoods, for example, the reliability of water resources for agricultural purposes.

"As individual glaciers behave differently, the impacts of climate change on identified glaciers are not adequately understood. There is an urgent need for substantial field level research on deglaciation", said Climate Change Officer Sandeep Chamling Rai of WWF Nepal Program.



*Secretary of MFSC (right) releasing the Wetland Special poster*



*Participants of the workshop*

conservation. A documentary on Bees Hajar Tal (Lake) was also screened on the occasion.

Until 2004, Nepal had only one Ramsar Site - the Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve. The wildlife reserve lies in the floodplains of the Sapta Koshi River in East Nepal and serves as an important resting place for migrating birds. It also supports the last surviving population of wild water buffaloes in the country. Three more wetlands - Bees Hajar Tal, Ghoda Ghodi Tal and the Jagadishpur Reservoir - were designated as Ramsar Sites in 2004. All these three wetlands of international importance fall in the Terai Arc Landscape.

The National Wetlands Policy of His Majesty's Government of Nepal aims to conserve and manage wetland resources wisely and in a sustainable way with local people's participation. It also aims to put the conservation and management aspect of wetlands conservation within the broader framework of environmental protection.

The follow-up meeting of the Conference of Parties (COP-8) held in France from 1-7 November 2004, lauded Nepal's initiative for the formulation of wetlands policy. Nepal happened to be the first country in the Hindu Kush Region to have completed the preparation of a national policy for wetlands conservation.

## **For more information:**

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