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EcoCircular

Vol 36 No. 6 July 2005

WWF Nepal Program Newsletter

Abraham Conservation Award 2005



Dr Tirtha Bahadur Shrestha after being honored with the Abraham Conservation Lifetime Achievement Award 2005



Abraham Conservation Awardees

Abraham Conservation Awards were presented by WWF Nepal Program to five institutions and three individuals for their outstanding contribution to biodiversity conservation, conservation education and sustainable development at a ceremony in Kathmandu on 10 June 2005.

Community-based organizations, including women's groups and coordination and management committees were among the recipients of the Abraham Conservation Award this year. Individual awards were given to an Assistant Conservation Officer for his work in nabbing poachers in Chitwan, a young conservationist and a dedicated forester from Solukhumbu.

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FOREST AND SPECIES

Tackling Human-Elephant Conflict: Regional Conference in Kathmandu

Sharing knowledge, experiences and key lessons of human-elephant conflict and mitigation strategies was the main agenda of the "Human-Elephant Conflict: Lessons and Experiences from South Asia" held in Kathmandu from 12-14 June 2005. Conservation practitioners from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Thailand attended the conference, which was organized jointly by HMG/N, Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation, Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) in collaboration with WWF Nepal Program.

The focus issues were:

1. Dynamics of human-elephant conflict in relation to elephant ecology, behavior and current threats.
2. Experiences of compensation schemes as a strategy for HEC mitigation.
3. Experiences of crop insurance schemes as a strategy for HEC mitigation.
4. Experience of game proof fencing.
5. Innovations and creativity in addressing HEC mitigation in the region



Participants at the "Human Elephant Conflicts: Lesson and Experiences from South Asia" workshop

The conference was also very useful for countries like Nepal, where human-elephant conflict issues are emerging, and government and NGOs are developing strategies to address human-elephant conflict.

Policing the waters: Rafts on the Rapti

Anti-poaching operations in River Rapti in Royal Chitwan National Park will be improved thanks to two inflatable motorboats supplied jointly by WWF Nepal Program and WWF UK. Dr Chandra Gurung, Country Representative of WWF Nepal Program, formally handed them over to Park staff on 15 June 2005 in a small ceremony also attended by Dr Tirtha Man Maskey, Director General of DNPWC. "The motorboats will be highly instrumental in strengthening anti-poaching operations," said Dr Maskey.



The recently handed over motorboat at Rapti river

GPS/GIS and Vegetation Monitoring Training

Forest Rangers and participants from NGOs involved in community forestry received an intensive GPS/GIS and Vegetation Monitoring Training in Dhangadi. GPS was extensively used in the training and applied on graph paper using the GPS coordinate points for calculating areas. Training also focused on how to generate the sampling plot (random) in a given area. All the GPS software was provided by WWF Nepal Program.



SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS

Managing grasslands in Chitwan

Grasslands in Chitwan National Park are important for wildlife habitat of species like the greater one-horned rhino. TAL program recently supported grassland management at Sukhibhar (20 Ha), Dumaria (10 Ha), Lamital (20 Ha) and Kachhuwani (10 Ha) in the Park. The methods used are cutting, burning, felling trees and uprooting. The latter has been proved to be the most effective as the height of grass has reduced by 50 percent. There is no difference in height of grass in areas where cutting was prevalent. The use of grassland by wildlife before and after management is continuously monitored by Royal Chitwan National Park.

Secure from flash floods

Effective community participation in planning and implementation has been the key to the success of the embankment project in New Padampur VDC, Chitwan.

TAL Program contributed Rs 150,000 to the Development Concern Society for the construction of a 189 m-long embankment for flash flood damage control. More than 100 Ha of agricultural land and 300 households are safe from flooding during monsoons.

Beneficial Mentha

More than 100 farmers participated in a training session for the preservation and processing of the Mentha plant in Jhalari of Sundevi Buffer Zone User Committee of Royal Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve (RSWR) from June 14 -15 2005. The cultivation of

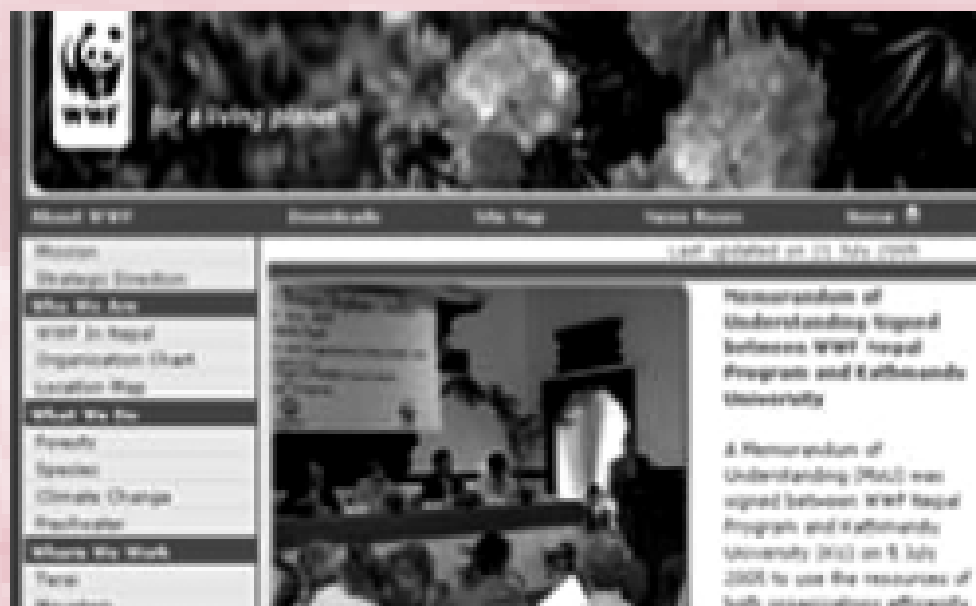
Mentha not only supplements the livelihoods of farmers but also reduces human-wildlife conflict because of crop depredation. A Mentha distillation plant has already been installed in Simalphanta village of Sundevi BZUC.

Stoves and smiles

The Improved Cooking Stoves (ICS) distributed to 1003 households in New Padampur VDC, Chitwan, have made locals healthier and happier. Local women are especially pleased that ICS not only saves time and energy but also improves their health. ICS play an important role in reducing fuel wood consumption and in Padampur, will reduce the pressure on the nearby Barandabhar forests. The effective installation of 795 ICS was monitored jointly by the Women Income Generation Group and Development Concern Society, Padampur. Of the 1003 households, 47.3, 51 and 1.7 were Terai, hill migrants and Dalits respectively. The installation was supported by WWF NP's Terai Arc Landscape (TAL) program.



Member of Kalpana Women's group, Bardia, using biogas in her kitchen



**WWF - Nepal Program
launched the restructured
web site on the occasion
of the World Environment
Day.**

Please visit
www.wwfnepal.org
for more information and
send us your comments.



EDUCATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Celebrating World Environment Day

WWF Nepal Program together with Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology (MOEST) and Climate Change Network Nepal (CCNN) organized a workshop in Kathmandu on the prospect and challenges for Nepal after ratifying the Kyoto Protocol to raise awareness on climate change issues. A half-day program on "Orientation and Awareness on Climate Change and its Impact" was also organized at Budhanilkantha School on 5 June 2005.

Local communities in Khata corridor organized a bicycle rally. A cultural program, quiz contest and interaction programs were held in Royal Bardia National Park headquarters where Rara Gramin Sarokar Manch

performed a cultural program with a conservation message in Shivapur VDC. World Environment Day was also celebrated in Namche, Solukhumbu, with a plantation and a speech competition jointly organized by SCAFP, TRPAP, BZ and SNP.

New Eco Club

Shree Vomodaya Higher Secondary School in Chitwan recently formed an Eco Club facilitated by the TAL Program. A total of 1,233 students, 574 of them girls, will participate in grass roots awareness raising on conservation and benefit from Eco Club activities that complement extracurricular activities in the school. Fifteen students represent the entire school as the Executive Committee and a patron and two teachers support the management of the Eco Club.

Meanwhile, a training program was organized in Bardia on conservation education and group management, which was attended by Eco Club members from 17 schools and the Eco Club network. Educational materials and bags/dresses were provided to 21 herders who had enrolled in the school after completing Gothala education, NFE for herders.

Study Tour

Twenty-five farmers from Royal Bardia National Park Buffer Zone, Khata and Royal Shuklaphanta Wildlife Reserve Buffer Zone participated in a week-long study tour from 16 June 2005 to the eastern Nepal. The main focus of the program was exchange knowledge and experience sharing on cultivation, processing and marketing of non-timber forest products, high value crops and herbs.

Community Forest Coordination Committee members performing cultural dance on the World Environment Day



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Abraham Conservation
Award 2005.....

For the first time, WWF Nepal Program also honored noted Botanist Dr Tirtha Bahadur Shrestha with an Abraham Conservation Lifetime Achievement Award, with a cash prize of Rs 75,000, in recognition of his exceptional dedication and outstanding contribution to biodiversity conservation in Nepal.

The recipients of Abraham Conservation Awards 2005 are:

Organizations

- Babiro Dalit Didi-Bahini Samuha, Tripurakot VDC, Dolpa
- Community Forest User Group Coordination Committee, Khata, Bardia
- Balkumari Women's Community

- Forest Users Group, Gundu VDC, Bhaktapur
- Buffer Zone Management Committee, Royal Shuklaphanta Wildlife Reserve, Kanchanpur
- Kalpana Women's User Group, Mohanpur, Bardia

Individuals

- Mr Kamal Jung Kunwar, Assistant Conservation Officer, Royal Chitwan National Park, Chitwan
- Ms Krishna Kumari Khadga, Dodhara VDC, Kanchanpur
- Mr Ranajit Gurung, Forestry Field Supervisor, Himalayan Trust, Khunde, Sagarmatha National Park, Solukhumbu.



Chairperson of Community Forest User Group Coordination Committee, Khata, Bardia being felicitated by Member of the NPC Hon. Dr Hari Krishna Upadhyaya at the Award Ceremony

WWF Nepal Program, PO Box 7660
Baluwatar, Kathmandu, Nepal.

Tel: 4434820/4434970/4410942, Fax: 977-1-4438458
Email: info@wwfnepal.org Website: www.wwfnepal.org