



for a living planet™



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Inside the Himalayas

Bi-monthly newsletter of WWF Nepal

Message from the Country Rep

This May, WWF completes 17 years of its Programme Office operations in Nepal. Facing challenges, big and small, we have been a part of the changing face of conservation in the country.

This has been possible only with the support of the local communities, Government of Nepal and partner organizations, donors and individual supporters and of course, the wider WWF network in over 100 countries. So to bring ourselves closer to you, we have launched "Inside the Himalayas". This newsletter will give you glimpses of the wide array of issues for which we work in this diverse and beautiful Himalayan country.

Together let us strive for a living planet.

Anil Manandhar
Country Representative

Double or Nothing!



Tiger, the magnificent majestic king of jungle is in grave danger. Within the last decade tigers have lost 40 per cent of their habitat and they occupy merely seven per cent of their historic home range today. Their numbers have declined to as low as 3200 from 100,000 at the start of 20th century.

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Revered, but still persecuted

From the national animal of India to the Chinese zodiac and Buddhist beliefs, tigers are enshrined and venerated in our cultures and faiths.



But in spite of being the most powerful animal, they are on the verge of extinction. While habitat destruction has taken a heavy toll on tigers, they face a deadly threat – rampant poaching to meet demand for tiger parts for use in health tonics and some traditional Asian medicine, meat for restaurants, and skins for fashion. The lucrative black market trade in tiger parts has thrived, even occurring in some big cities in Europe and the US.

A ray of hope

Amidst the gloomy picture of possible extinction, there is hope. Tigers are big cats – given strong protection, enough space and sufficient prey, their numbers in the wild can readily increase, and quickly. World leaders too are making the right moves.

In September a Heads of State Tiger Summit will be held in Vladivostok, Russia. At the Summit, co-hosted by Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin and World Bank President Robert Zoellick, tiger range countries and the wider tiger conservation community will lay out an ambitious agenda for the recovery of tiger populations throughout Asia.

A year of action

WWF is running the campaign “Tx2” during the Year of the Tiger, which began on 14 February 2010. The campaign aims at supporting the goal of doubling wild tiger population by 2022, the next Year of the Tiger. All 13 tiger range countries and the wider tiger conservation community have now adopted this goal.

Big wins for Nepal

WWF Nepal launched the Tx2 campaign in Kathmandu by organizing a press meet on 14 February 2010. Eco Club Students from Parsa, Chitwan, Bardia and Kanchanpur districts shared their real life experiences with the tiger and voiced out their commitment to save wild tigers on behalf of hundreds of thousands of Eco Club Students from Terai districts. WWF Young Conservation Ambassador and Miss Nepal Zenisha Moktan also spoke on the occasion and reiterated her commitment to raise awareness to save tigers.

Rallies and drawing and painting competitions on tiger conservation were also organized by Eco Club Students in Terai districts of Nepal.

There are 121 adult tigers in Nepal and the tiger numbers have plummeted in Western Nepal.

In the coming years, WWF in collaboration with Ministry of Forest and other like-minded partners will contribute to achieve some Big Wins towards safeguarding the future of tigers in Nepal. They would include working towards achieving zero poaching within 5 years; redoubling its efforts to get Terai Arc Landscape managed as a conservation landscape; supporting the Government of Nepal and China to sign an MoU on fighting illegal wildlife trade; and helping develop a sustainable tiger conservation financing mechanism.



Conservation champion Yolanda Kakabadse starts term as WWF President

WWF's new President, Yolanda Kakabadse, says humans and nature have a shared interest in protecting the environment, arguing that politicians should give conservation issues as much attention as an economic crisis.

A prominent campaigner and former environment minister from Ecuador, Ms Kakabadse began her new role in January. Ms Kakabadse brings with her not only rich experience in diplomacy, coordination and mediation, she also brings passion, hope and a common vision for the whole WWF network, consisting of hundreds of offices around the world.

Taking on her new responsibilities as International WWF President, responsible for presiding over the highest governance body of the organisation, Kakabadse said she would work to integrate and bring common vision and strength to the WWF family.



WECS and WWF launch Indrawati Sub-basin Project



Water and Energy Commission Secretariat (WECS) and WWF Nepal launched the Indrawati Sub Basin Project on 29 March 2010. The project aims at reducing significantly the vulnerability of people, biodiversity and economic investments in the face of climate change and growing unsustainable anthropogenic activities. The three year project is being funded by Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and WWF-Finland.

Honorable Minister of Energy Dr. Prakash Sharan Mahat launched the project.

Climate Change modeling on Snow Leopard habitats in Eastern Himalayas

WWF-Nepal, with funding support from MacArthur Foundation and technical support from WWF-US, has undertaken computer-based predictive modeling of snow leopard habitats across its range in Nepal, Bhutan, India and China, given the importance of snow leopard as an umbrella species for the alpine ecosystem as well as an indicator species for climate change impacts.

To complement the modeling efforts, WWF-Nepal held a week-long technical workshop in February 2010. The goal of the workshop was to model the impacts of climate change on snow leopard habitats to assess the extent of change and to see how the results could affect snow leopard conservation in the Himalayas. The workshop produced the spatial maps needed to illustrate the impact of climate change on the snow leopard habitats in the Himalayan region of Bhutan, China, India and Nepal.

WWF appoints Miss Nepal as Young Conservation Ambassador

WWF Nepal appointed Zenisha Moktan, Miss Nepal – World 2009, as the Young Conservation Ambassador at a ceremony in Kathmandu on 19 March 2010.

Following in the footsteps of Payal Shakya, Sugarika KC and Sitashma Chand, former Miss Nepal and the global conservation organization's Young Conservation Ambassadors in Nepal, she will be actively involved in helping promote conservation especially among the youth. Zenisha will help raise awareness on tiger conservation as a part of WWF's Year of the Tiger Campaign Tx2.



Climate Adaptation Pilot Project launched

WWF Nepal launched its first pilot project on climate adaptation in Langtang National Park and Buffer Zone. The community-based Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) project being implemented by WWF Nepal is designed to ensure that:

"Ecosystem services and livelihood strategies in target communities of Langtang National Park Buffer Zone, Nepal, are better managed to reduce risks and increase resilience to climate change and other related drivers."

To achieve this purpose the project is working to deliver a set of six outputs relating to ensuring community access to climate data; mobilizing communities for disaster risk reduction; building community resilience to climate risks; improving policy and planning for climate change adaptation at the local and national levels; and communications and up scaling. The project has integrated biodiversity and people component.

Bio-gas model village inaugurated

Seukaliya Village in Basanta of Kailali District was inaugurated as a Bio-gas Model Village in March this year. The village boasts bio-gas usage in 100 % households. The initiative is supported by the District Forest Office, Kailali and the Pahalmanpur Community Forest Coordination Committee, Kailali under the Terai Arc Landscape Programme.

Managing Director for Eastern Himalayas, WWF US, Mr. Jon Miceler inaugurated the Model Bio-gas Village



Apa and Dawa continue their crusade against climate change

Climate Ambassador and 19-time Everest Summiteer Apa Sherpa is continuing his crusade against climate change in the Himalayas – by taking a climate change message on top of Everest during his record 20th ascent.

The banner being carried by Apa Sherpa reads “YOU HEARD OUR VOICE, NOW RAISE YOURS – WE CAN STOP CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE HIMALAYAS”. Apa is carrying the banner during the Eco Everest Expedition, which is led by two-time Everest Summiteer and fellow Climate Ambassador Dawa Steven Sherpa. The event is a part of WWF’s Climate for Life Campaign. www.climate4life.org



High-Level Steering Committee Meeting organized

The meeting of the Project Steering Committee, a high-level governing body jointly formed by Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation (MoFSC), Government of Nepal and WWF Nepal, was organized in Thakurdwara of Bardiya National Park in February of this year.

The meeting, held under the Chairmanship of Secretary of MoFSC, Mr. Yuvraj Bhushal, discussed the progress made in the past three years and future strategies of the programmes jointly implemented by the MoFSC and WWF Nepal. Representatives from MoFSC, Department of Forest, Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation, Social Welfare Council, Finnish Embassy in Nepal and WWF Nepal participated in the meeting.

Candlelight vigil at Bouddhanath Stupa to mark Earth Hour

WWF Nepal together with LEED Group Nepal organized a candlelight vigil in Bouddhanath Stupa, one of the largest Stupas in the world as well as a UNESCO World Heritage Site to mark Earth Hour. Students, environmentalists, members of civil society and individuals lit candles to express their solidarity towards the fight against Climate Change.



Famous spiritual singer Ani Choying Drolma sang a song of peace and started the lighting of butter lamps forming a giant Earth Hour symbol. Among the distinguished guests present at the function was Carina Raiha, the first Finnish woman aiming to climb Mount Everest this season. School students performed live music during the lighting of lamps and more than 400 people participated in the event.

10 Years with WWF: Life Changing Experience

"This is What I Take from Here"

Drive for results

*Inspiring colleagues, interactive sessions
Bubbling energies; strong sense of direction
Setting goals, blazing trails
Through dedicated teamwork and motivation
Striving for excellence, all for Conservation!*

Live life with integrity

*Values of Life I take with me
Hard Work, Courage, Fortitude and Honesty
Optimism, Selflessness, Commitment and Loyalty
Not to utter words but to live by them
All these I learnt from you, my friends*

(Ms. Bandana Yonzon Lepcha, Senior HR Officer has been with WWF Nepal for the past ten years. WWF Family wishes her all the best in her future endeavours.)

Respect and be respected

*Respect for self, respect for all
Appreciating life and living more
Soaring high, sweeping success
Yet staying low and humble to the core*

*Life's lessons from our very
own lost heroes, my friends
This is what I take from here...
This is what I take from here...*



FRAMED



© Sunil Sharma

A candlelight vigil organized by WWF Nepal to mark Earth Hour at the Boudhhanath Stupa, a World Heritage Site as well as one of the largest stupas in the world. The video depicts volunteers and students lighting the traditional butter lamps to form a giant Earth Hour logo.

A memoir from Kangchenjunga

– Bijan Gurung

Field visits are exhilarating but full of uncertainties given the political fluidity in the country. We were returning from Lelep to Funling, the district headquarters of Taplejung. It was not that an arduous walk. But it was dry season of 2009 and forest fires were rampant all across the country. As we were approaching Funling, the sky was covered with dust-laden smoke.

At our hotel, we heard the news about the delays in flights all across the country. We however kept our fingers crossed while our contact point struggled with the station manager and finally secured two seats for the flight to Biratnagar. One was contingent.

After spending two days in Funling, we set out to stay at a lodge near to the airport, Suketar. It was a half-completed lodge without ample warming system. We went to the airport early in the morning and managed to list both the names. But, the sky was too foggy and visibility was extremely poor as a result of forest fires for days. After waiting for hours, we heard the engine roaring in the sea of clouds. The twin otter of Nepal Airlines suddenly popped up from the dense cloud and landed in the airport.

Everyone was relieved. However, the wind was getting stronger and all had to wait for few hours. Finally, the wind subsided and everyone boarded the carrier. But when we reached Biratnagar, we were dumb-founded when we saw the storm of people in the airport, queuing for their delayed flights. How could we butt in and ask for seats? So, we headed to the hotel, dropping the idea of traveling by road affected by on and off blockades.

Biratnagar was sweltering hot in the day and we were busy going around airline counters one after another but to no avail. With faint hope, we went to the airport early next morning. The weather gradually cleared and the pending flights began to take off. Our contact person informed us that our seats were confirmed but we waited till dusk for our flight. It was already dark when we landed in Kathmandu airport. It was a great relief after the several weeks-long trip filled with uncertainties. I am definitely in no position to blame either the growing dryness attributable to increasing warming; or the fire sparked by some arsonists or slash-and-burn practice; or the tendency to resort to roadblocks for the smallest reason. Whatever the cause, the ordinary people lose out in the end.

However, I truly admire the rural people of Nepal who have endured years of civil strife and the aftermath, and they are pretty much hopeful for the ensuing time. Living on the lap of mighty Kangchenjunga, they retain little quibble against such oddities of life. They have devoted themselves for the noble cause of biodiversity conservation and community development. This is the silver lining and gives us encouragement to work even harder for such causes.



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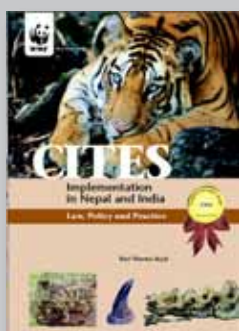
Double or Nothing:

Save the wild tigers and save so much more!



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Hot off the Press



CITES Implementation in
Nepal and India



जलवायु परिवर्तन र कृषिमा हाम्रो निर्भरता



Sacred Waters



Where Worlds Collide

WWF on your Radio!

Kalika FM	Thursday	7:25 PM to 7:55 PM
Phoolbari FM	Wednesday	8:30 PM to 9:00 PM
Shuklaphanta FM	Sunday	7:15 PM to 7:45 PM
Bageshwor FM	Thursday	6:30 PM to 7:00 PM
Madhyapaschim FM	Friday	7:30 PM to 8:00 PM

For Living Himalayas

WWF's work in Nepal is part of WWF's Living Himalayas Initiative which aims to bring the three governments of Nepal, Bhutan and India together to effectively manage and conserve the Eastern Himalayan region for the sake of their exceptional wildlife, breathtaking environment and unique people.



WWF, the Global Conservation Organization

Nepal Programme

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