



NEWSLETTER

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Inside the Himalayas

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WWF Nepal newsletter



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2

**Corporates, faith leaders,
musicians and youth team up for
Earth Hour in Nepal**



4

**Inside the world of a brave
conservationist**



7

Beauty with a Purpose

Message from the Country Representative

With each passing year, our hope to engage new sectors and audiences, specially youths, in conservation has been turning into a reality.

In this edition of 'Inside the Himalayas' you will read about how Nepal joined the global movement against climate change through Earth Hour bringing on board the corporate partners, religious groups and youths making it the biggest event ever for Nepal since 2010. We take pride in having a sustainable partnership with the corporate sector and the youth of Nepal both of whom are key actors in our mission to build a living planet.

Also read about some of the interesting conservation successes we have achieved in the past months.

We invite you to take this journey with us and happy reading.

Anil Manandhar
Country Representative

Corporates, faith leaders, musicians and youth team up for Earth Hour in Nepal



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Five corporate partners, seven musicians, six monasteries and over 5,000 youth—Earth Hour 2012 was supposedly the biggest ever for Nepal since 2010.

On 31 March, WWF-Nepal organized two simultaneous events in Basantapur Durbar Square in Kathmandu and the Sacred Garden in Lumbini to mark Earth Hour 2012. The highlight this year was the Million Tree Project in Lumbini which was initiated on Earth Hour in 2011 in partnership with Lumbini Development Trust. With an ambitious plan to plant one million trees in Lumbini by 2020, that is 100,000 trees each year, five leading financial institutions of the country – Laxmi Bank, Siddhartha Bank, Bank of Kathmandu, Nepal Investment Bank and Nabil Bank – partnered with WWF-Nepal on the occasion of Earth Hour to contribute to this year's target.

"No one organization or individual can address the mammoth environmental challenges we face. With climate change posing both environmental and serious human problems, we need innovative solutions now more so than ever with Nepal ranked as one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change," stated Mr. Suman Joshi, CEO of Laxmi Bank Ltd. "The partnership between Laxmi Bank and WWF is a fine example of how the private sector and an INGO can come together in a noble act," he added.

WWF-Nepal also brought together Buddhist monks from 20 different monasteries in Lumbini who led a special prayer session, 'A Prayer for the Earth', on the occasion of Earth Hour. The prayer session, which lasted for one hour, had each monastery lead individual prayers that merged into a single one as a finale to the event.

"Worldwide, Nepal is recognized because of Lumbini, the birthplace of Lord Buddha. It is therefore our duty to protect and preserve this sacred site which, apart from being an important pilgrimage site, supports a rich and diverse natural ecosystem," remarked Venerable Maitri Mahastavir,

Spiritual Advisor of Lumbini Development Trust. "Through Earth Hour, we want to promote the message of conservation – starting with Lumbini and travelling beyond its borders – as the way of life for human beings not just in Nepal but across the world," he added.

In Kathmandu, the Earth Hour event which featured a live performance by Nepal's finest in fusion, Resa Fusion, attracted about 5,000 youth. The guests of honor for the event, Mr. Krishna Gyawali, Secretary of the Ministry of Environment, and Honorable Gagan Thapa, Constituent Assembly Member, appealed to the youth to take the lead in shaping the future of Nepal's conservation endeavors through individual as well as collective actions, both big and small.

At the event, WWF-Nepal also took the opportunity to announce a new youth campaign titled The Generation Green scheduled to be launched in late 2012. The five-year Generation Green campaign aims to build a supporter base of 500,000 youth in Nepal—the future ambassadors of WWF—who will be actively engaged in conservation and environment protection programs.

"On Earth Hour this year, thousands of Nepalese joined the global movement to help protect the planet," stated Mr. Anil Manandhar, Country Representative of WWF-Nepal. "With each passing year, we hope to engage new sectors and audiences. On Earth Hour this year, we take pride in having planted the first seedlings of a sustainable partnership with the corporate sector and the youth of Nepal both of whom are key actors in our mission to build a living planet," he added.



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Leading banks of the country invested in Lumbini

WWF welcomed the partnership between Lumbini Development Trust (LDT) and five leading banks of the country to work together for the sustainable development of the Lumbini region.

On 16 March 2012, a memorandum of understanding was signed between LDT and the four banks – Laxmi Bank, Siddhartha Bank, Bank of Kathmandu and Nabil Bank – to support the Million Tree Project in Lumbini, the holy birthplace of Lord Buddha, through The Green Lumbini Initiative. The Green Lumbini Initiative is a partnership between WWF Nepal and LDT for the conservation and sustainable development of Lumbini.

The Million Tree Project was launched on 26 March 2011 with the goal of planting one million trees in Lumbini by 2020. The first batch of 108,000 trees was planted in 2011.

Thanking all the four corporate houses Acharya Karma Sangpo Sherpa, Vice Chairperson of Lumbini Development Trust, opined "I am very happy to see the willingness of the corporate sector to participate this ambitious conservation movement and I look forward to a growing partnership to help implement innovative and integrated conservation initiatives in Lumbini."

Under the MoU, Laxmi Bank will support the plantation of 15,000 saplings, Siddhartha Bank and Bank of Kathmandu supporting 5,000 each, while Nabil Bank will provide support for 1,000

saplings as their contribution to meet this year's target of planting 100,000 trees. The saplings will be planted inside Lumbini Master Plan area.

Speaking at the event, Mr. Anil Manandhar, Country Representative of WWF Nepal, said, "Biodiversity conservation in Nepal is not possible

with the involvement of a handful of organizations. WWF Nepal is interested in building new partnerships, big and small, to help protect Nepal's natural riches. The Green Lumbini Initiative, which seeks to connect Buddhist philosophy with conservation, is one such platform for engaging a wider network of people and organizations."



The challenge we met...

Yashaswi Shrestha

Program Associate, Lumbini Project

On March 1, the WWF-Nepal Earth Hour page reached a 1000 likes. After nearly two months of intensive campaigning for Earth Hour's "I will if you will" challenge, we were finally able to accomplish our goal. On this occasion, the Epic Bike team, a group of adventurous cross-country cyclists, rose to the challenge and agreed to cycle for 60km across some of the most difficult and treacherous terrains around Kathmandu valley.

On the morning of March 10, the official day of the challenge, 25 cyclists of various age groups, nationalities and walks of life gathered at the Epic bike shop at Jhamsikhel. The 60kms challenge kick started at exactly 7:30am that day.

Many of the participants from the Epic team are experienced cross-country and downhill cyclists and pursue their interest in cycling during their leisure time. However, besides the sheer distance that needed to be covered in one day, the rough and perilous route magnified the difficulty level of the challenge to such an extent that no rider dared to underestimate it.

The team took very few rests during their journey and chose to push through injuries, fatigue and their own physical limits of exercise. Our camera



Check the video: <http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?v=10150614220039163>

crew comprising of three interns from WWF-Nepal, Ayush Manandhar, Ankit Bhandari and Gaurab Manadhar and I followed and filmed the team as they rode through the dust and dirt. After nearly eight hours of cycling, the Epic Team finally completed the challenge at 3pm.

"Although the challenge was difficult, personally, I felt very good and encouraged to be cycling for a cause that intends to save the planet," said Prajwal Prakash Shrestha, one of the cyclists from the Epic Team.

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CBAPU Day marked in Bardia

Community Based Anti-Poaching Unit (CBAPU) Day was successfully celebrated as Youths and representatives from the government, diplomatic missions, conservation partners and civil society came together and expressed their commitments towards sustainable actions to curb wildlife crimes in Nepal.

On March 12, 2012 more than 3000 people including 1000 CBAPU members came together at the Khata-Corridor, Dalla village of Bardia National Park to celebrate CBAPU success and to show their unity against wildlife crimes in the Terai Arc Landscape. The CBAPU members represented five protected areas/Buffer Zones and six corridors (from Parsa to Kanchanpur).

Addressing the program, Mr. Bishnu Prasad Tharu, State Minister of Commerce and Supplies who also represent Bardia in the Constituent Assembly expressed his happiness to see the meaningful participation of the local youths in the anti-poaching operations irrespective of the risks involved in combating wildlife crimes.

Mr. Krishna P Acharya, Director General, Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) assured to include youth led anti-poaching and other innovative initiatives in the regular government program.

Key conservation messaging Mr. Devi Prasad Devkota, Chairperson of the Bardia National Park and Buffer Zone Management Committee and Ms. Malina Joshi, Miss Nepal 2011 and WWF's Young Conservation Ambassador called upon individuals and organizations alike to take proactive steps to curb wildlife crimes.

Dr. Ghana S Gurung, Conservation Program Director, WWF Nepal, said "we are delighted to see the magnificent effort of youths in curbing wildlife crimes and also happy to be a part of this grand celebration. We would like to express our commitment for the continuation of this initiative".

Traditional Tharu dances and elephant race were also a part of the ceremony that attracted other local community members and tourists.



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China to go for the extensive implementation of the historic biodiversity agreement.

The first ministerial meeting held between the Government of Nepal and People's Republic of China on 23 February 2012, dwelt on ways to boost the bilateral cooperation and coordination in the field of biodiversity conservation and curbing illegal wildlife trade.

At the Invitation of Hon. Minister for Forests and Soil Conservation, MuhhamadWakilMusalman, His Excellency Mr. JIA Zhibang, Administrator, State Forests Administration of People's Republic of China paid an official visit to Nepal on February 22-25, 2012.

The joint working group meeting, included of the government delegates from Nepal and China and conservation partners like WWF, shared the experiences of forestry sector and further discussed on thirteen different proposals of future cooperation in the areas of biodiversity conservation, regional cooperation in wildlife conservation and law enforcement, poverty reduction through forest development, capacity building etc.

The meeting was also successful in reiterating commitment to play the role of an observer at South Asian Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN). This is for the first time that the Chinese delegates committed, at the political level, that they would secure political consent for entering the South Asian Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN) as an observer.

Addressing the meeting, Hon. Minister for Forests and Soil Conservation, MuhhamadWakilMusalman said that "Nepal expects support from its northern neighbor to preserve biodiversity of the country".

"We are very pleased to have a high level meeting between the ministers of Nepal and China to discuss on Forestry and Biodiversity Conservation issues under the purview of MoU done in 2010" said Mr. Anil Manandhar, Country Representative, WWF Nepal." The outcome of the high level meeting as well as Forestry Expert Group meeting between the two countries will certainly enhance mutual cooperation in the field of conservation" added Mr. Manandhar.

KRBM Strategic Plan launched

Koshi River Basin Management (KRBM) Strategic Plan was launched during the opening ceremony of Nepal National Water Week on 17 March 2012.

Honorable Minister of Energy, Mr. Posta Bahadur Bogati launched the document amidst a ceremony held in Kathmandu. The strategic plan was prepared in order to implement the National Water Plan of 2005 which was prepared with the concept of 3 E pillars of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) with a vision for 10 years (2011-2021) for Koshi River Basin.

This plan serves as a main document for providing strategic direction to the relevant stakeholders working in the Koshi basin.

WWF Nepal in partnership with Water and Energy Commission Secretariat (WECS) has been implementing IRBM approach as guided by National Water Plan 2005 in Dudhkoshi and Indrawati sub basins of Koshi basin for the management of water and related resources in an integrated way. WWF Nepal had supported Government prepare and publish this plan.



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Inside the world of a brave conservationist

Mreedu Gyawali

Communications and Marketing Associate



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As rare as the tigers she helps monitor and conserve, Sabita Malla, WWF's young female conservationist is a sight to see whether she's working diligently in the jungles of Bardia, Chitwan, and Parsa or while she's engaged in a conversation with the locals.

In just a short span of time, Sabita has already managed a life full of achievements. Needless to say that the life of a 27 year old female who lives weeks on end in jungles is anything less than exciting.

During the tiger monitoring season, which is happening this year from March to August, Sabita will spend days camping in the jungles of Bardia. The total area the jungle covers is 968 km², therefore, to make her life easier, Sabita has decided to divide the jungle into 4 blocks. This way, one block is handled at a time, which makes things more precise and lessens the chances of missing out parts of the forest while monitoring tigers. "I cannot afford to miss even an inch of the jungle. Each and every corner of the forest is very crucial in tiger monitoring," says Sabita.



© WWF Nepal/Yashaswi Shrestha



© WWF Nepal/Yashaswi Shrestha

During the monitoring season, Sabita's daily routine is very systematic and without much variation. A typical day includes waking up at 5 a.m. and going for a line transect survey, which is a method for prey base monitoring/estimation. While most of the time transect surveys aren't risky, there was one particular incident which almost cost Sabita her life.

"Most mornings I get up at 5 and get ready to roam the jungles for the line transect survey. I usually try to avoid areas in which danger may be possible. However, the morning of March 12 was somewhat different. While returning from the line transect survey, I was chased by a rhino! The distance between the rhino and I was only 5 meters. When it came charging towards me I climbed a

tree since that was the only way I could save myself. That was the first time I felt afraid," recalls Sabita.

If it was anyone other than Sabita, they would have been shocked for at least a few days at what had happened. However, her love towards conservation had no chance of slowing down. "The minute the rhino left, I thanked God that I had been saved. But, in a sense I felt more proud of the work that my team at WWF and I were doing. I was happy to see one more rhino alive instead of it falling prey to poachers," she exclaims.

Sabita further clarifies her passion for her work by saying, "After getting up at 5, I don't really have the time to rest. The line transect survey alone takes me up to 6 hours a day. After that, I eat lunch and rest for about an hour, then, it is back to checking camera traps. After checking the camera traps, I have to go through each and every photo that the camera has captured. If in case there's a tiger that has been captured, I will then have to sit down for hours and analyze the tiger stripes in order to determine whether or not we have already spotted the tiger."

Sabita then gushes and says, "While analyzing the tiger patterns, I always find myself wishing that the patterns are different than the ones that have already been analyzed, and when I do realize that it is different, I am very very happy. That is the only time that I can actually feel proud of the work that I do. I like to think that through what I have been doing, maybe, I have helped conserve tigers and lent a hand towards doubling their numbers in the wild."

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The start of a New Year brings in new ideas, new hopes...new goals!

Prajana Waiba Pradhan

Human Resources Officer

The year started with the annual team building program for the Sacred Himalayan Landscape (SHL) at Sauraha, Chitwan from 2-4 January. Besides sharing and learning from experiences from the different projects of SHL, the team members also took a tour of the community forest with some lucky staff also spotting rhinos in the wild.

Unlike last year's annual retreat that was full of fun events, WWF's annual retreat this year focused on the future plans for WWF together with the challenges and opportunities and a personal discussion between the staff and the senior management. The retreat was organized on 11-13 January at Gokarna Forest Resort and was facilitated by ODC. Having about 35% new participants in the annual retreat, it was a good forum for the staff to revisit our goals, trends and our conservation work so far.

International Women's Day was celebrated in the most unique way this year with the women staff organizing an event for all their male colleagues to thank them for their unrelenting support.

Keeping the staff health and safety policy in mind, a first aid training for all our new staff was conducted by Nepal Red Cross on 13 March.

On a personal front, my field visits to TAL CBRP, PABZ and ISBP in Chautaramade me realize

how our projects had advanced from the time of their inception. The dedication of our field staff was exemplary.

The opportunity to participate in the HR Meet and the 2nd National HR Conference provided a good insight for me on the new HR trends while getting acquainted with HR professionals from all over the globe. The People Management Program, which was hosted by WWF International in Rajasthan, India from 21-23 March, gave me a different insight on managing and leading teams.

All of these experiences have given me the energy and drive to help build a promising year for WWF.

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Beauty with a Purpose



Malina Joshi

Miss Nepal 2011/Young Conservation Ambassador

When I came to WWF for the first time, I knew little about conservation and was completely unaware about what to expect. However, working as a Young Conservation Ambassador for WWF was something I was really looking forward to.

After receiving a warm welcome amidst a ceremony at WWF, my journey formally began. In order to pay tribute to the conservation heroes the nation lost in the tragic helicopter crash in 2006, I attended the National Conservation Day celebration on 23 September where I also got to handover the Young Conservation Leader Award to one of the aspiring youths working tirelessly to promote biodiversity conservation in Nepal.

Apart from attending formal functions in Kathmandu, I visited three project sites where WWF is working extensively in various themes. The first project that I visited was the Indrawati sub-basin project.

The trip to Indrawati provided me with an insight about how WWF, in collaboration with the Government through the Water and Energy Commission Secretariat (WECS) has been running one of its most ambitious projects, the Koshi River Basin Management project, which is a model integrated water resources management in Nepal.

Inaugurating the bio-pesticide program in Hokse VDC and interacting with the active community people is something I will forever cherish.

My second visit was to Bardia National Park which was a little more adventurous. Travelling to Bardia during the time when WWF along with its conservation partners were conducting a tiger monitoring operation was quite an experience. I learnt the entire procedure required for the tiger monitoring including installation of a camera trap.

I visited Jagadamba School, the pioneer in establishing eco-clubs in TAL, where I planted a tree right next to that of Miss Nepal 2010, Sadichha Shrestha.

I was also a part of the Community Based Anti-Poaching Unit (CBAPU) Day celebrations in Khata Corridor. Being with the 3,000 youths, who are voluntarily leading community-based anti-poaching operations in the Terai Arc Landscape, made me realize that biodiversity conservation in Nepal is in safe hands.

With each passing day I was learning something new and fruitful about conservation.

And finally came my dream trip – a trek to Gosaikunda. Amid all the doubts that I wouldn't be able to make it through the steep hills, I successfully managed to complete the five-day expedition.

Reaching a height of 4386 meters above sea level for a first-timer like me was definitely not a cake walk but every time I was tired I used to recollect all my strength remembering a line “miles to go before I sleep” from the Robert Frost poem.

Travelling around all the project sites of WWF gave me a picture of the natural riches of Nepal as well as the hardships faced by the communities. But then I also saw hope, that provided for the betterment of their livelihood through these projects.

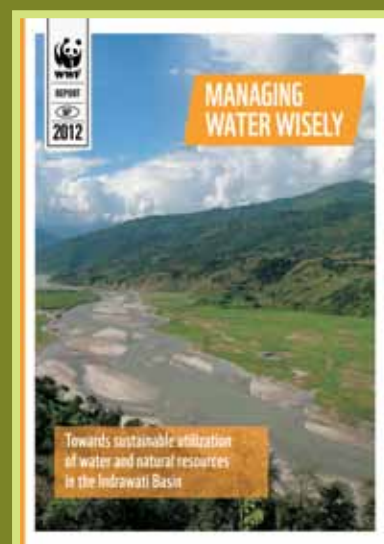
As I walked out of WWF completing my ambassadorship, I can today say with pride that I am much aware about the efforts of biodiversity conservation in Nepal. I thank WWF for giving me such an honor while providing me with ample opportunities to get to know the path of conservation.



Hot off the Press

WWF ON YOUR RADIO

Kalika FM	Thu	7:25 PM to 7:55 PM
Phoolbari FM	Wed	8:30 PM to 9:00 PM
Shuklaphanta FM	Sun	7:15 PM to 7:45 PM
Bageshwori FM	Thu	6:30 PM to 7:00 PM
Madhyapashchim FM	Fri	7:30 PM to 8:00 PM
Samudayik Radio Solu FM	Fri	6:35 PM to 6:50 PM



Managing Water Wisely



The Green Lumbini Initiative

STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

In the past months we welcomed new staff...

- **Shikha Shrestha**
Gender and Social Inclusion Coordinator
Hariyo Ban
- **Ramesh Adhikari**
Program Officer – Water Based Climate Adaptation
- **Monika Bajimaya Shrestha**
GIS Associate.
- **Arati Gurung Malla**
Associate, SHL

and we bid farewell to...

- **Roshan Sherchan**
Program Manager, SHL
- **Moon Shrestha**
Senior Climate Change Adaptation Officer

Inside the Himalayas

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Simrika Sharma
Marasini

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Akash Shrestha
Eliza Sthapit
Prajana Waiba Pradhan
Mreedu Gyawali

On the Cover:
Dudh Pokhari, Ghunsa,
Kanchenjunga Conservation
Area.



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.

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Why we are here

To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.