



WWF

NEWSLETTER

AUGUST
2011

Inside the Himalayas

Vol 5 | No. 1 | August 2011

WWF Nepal newsletter



© Rabi Sharma/WWF



3

Government of Nepal boosts its support
for Tiger Conservation



4

Combating illegal wildlife crime
in Nepal



6

Bringing Out the Best
in Each Other



7

Unlocking the Mystery
of Tsum Valley

Inside

Message from the Country Representative



Dear Reader,

WWF Nepal turned 18 this fiscal year and with this first edition of 'Inside the Himalayas' of the new fiscal, I take pride in sharing with you some of the key conservation wins for Nepal over the past year. These achievements reflect the potential of collaborative working, both nationally and on a trans-boundary level, and I would like to thank the Government of Nepal, partner conservation agencies, community-based organisations and the local communities that we work with for joining hands in building on the successes of conservation interventions in Nepal.

- A conducive policy environment is key to the success of any conservation endeavour. At the national level, prime institutional mechanisms such as the National Tiger Conservation Committee, Wildlife Crime Control Coordination Committee and Wildlife Crime Control Bureau are now in place to strengthen tiger protection measures and curb poaching and illegal wildlife trade. This has been complemented by partnerships with the governments of China and India to address biodiversity conservation and illegal wildlife trade at the trans-boundary level, and the establishment of the Secretariat of the South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN) in Nepal as a coordinated regional response to combat illegal poaching and trafficking.
- The historic International Tiger Conservation Forum organized in St. Petersburg, Russia, in late 2010 spurred a series of actions for tiger conservation. The National Tiger Recovery Plan, based on the Global Tiger Recovery Plan, for Nepal has been prepared with the Government of Nepal committing NRs. 600 million to help double the number of tigers in the wild by 2022, the next Year of the Tiger. Likewise, the World Bank is investing \$3 million under the Regional IDA project to conserve tigers and trans-boundary conservation for Nepal while Hollywood celebrity, Leonardo DiCaprio, provided \$1 million to fund anti-poaching efforts and habitat protection in the priority tiger landscapes, with Nepal being the priority country starting 2010.
- Forests are at the heart of WWF Nepal's conservation priorities where the effort is to build ecological integrity and provide a host of ecological services and benefits to local communities in a sustainable manner. Restoration of over 1,600ha of barren land and degraded forests and the handover of over 4,000ha of forests to Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs) in the Terai Arc Landscape (TAL) and Sacred Himalayan Landscape (SHL) were clear big wins in this regard. Likewise, about 80,000ha of forests in the corridor areas were declared as Protection Forests together with the gazettelement of Banke National Park.
- Given that one of the biggest impacts of climate change is on water resources, water-based adaptation was continued in Dudhkoshi sub-basin under the National Water Plan, benefiting more than 2,000 users. Through the promotion of water-smart communities, more than 300 households were able to earn NRs. 1 million by selling off-season vegetables.
- Considering the link between biodiversity conservation and livelihoods of rural communities dependent on natural resource, WWF Nepal's sustainable livelihoods programme helped further improve the well-being of communities in TAL and SHL. Income generation activities (IGAs) benefited about 17,000 people in SHL and TAL through the promotion of agriculture and off-farm based activities. In TAL alone, the cooperatives and Community Forest Coordination Committees were able to mobilise funds of over USD 250,000 for IGAs.
- Carbon financing and the sale of carbon credits were introduced as innovative sustainable financing mechanisms for Nepal. Through the use of biogas, 7,500 households in TAL received funds from the sale of the first vintage of carbon credits under the Gold Standard Biogas VER Project upon successful completion of the construction of the first phase of the project. The use of biogas and improved cooking stoves also helped save nearly 8,000 metric tons of fuelwood.
- Improved rhino protection measures and management of habitat helped lead to a surge in rhino populations, with the National Rhino Census conducted in April 2011 revealing a count of 534 rhinos in Nepal, marking an increase of 99 rhinos (22.7%) from the 435 recorded in 2008.
- Cutting edge science was introduced to aid tiger monitoring efforts through the country's first collaring of a wild tiger with a GPS-enabled (GPS PLUS GLOBALSTAR-3) satellite collar. Similarly, Management Information System Technology (MIST) was introduced in Shuklaphanta Wildlife Reserve and Chitwan National park to help in patrolling efforts. Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) was also piloted successfully to establish Tier III level data on the forest carbon stock for TAL through the partnership with Forest Resource Assessment-Government of Nepal and Arbonaut, Finland.

Despite these successes, it is not yet time to rest on our laurels of the past as we have lots of new challenges as well as new opportunities awaiting us in the days to come. WWF Nepal now strides into yet another new year with the hope to face new challenges, learn more and share new successes with friends, such as you, *for a living planet*.

I hope you enjoy our first edition this year of 'Inside the Himalayas'.

Anil Manandhar
Country Representative

Government of Nepal boosts its support for Tiger Conservation

Kathmandu, Nepal – The Government of Nepal has decided to provide an additional ten million rupees for tiger conservation in Nepal. The decision was taken at a meeting called on 29 July 2011 by Rt. Honorable Jhala Nath Khanal, Prime Minister of Nepal, with the government agencies and conservation organizations, including WWF Nepal, working on tiger conservation to mark Global Tiger Day. At the meeting, the Prime Minister of Nepal was also briefed on the current status of tigers in the wild.

The National Tiger Conservation Committee (NTCC) meeting was called for the first time since the Prime Minister took up office; the NTCC

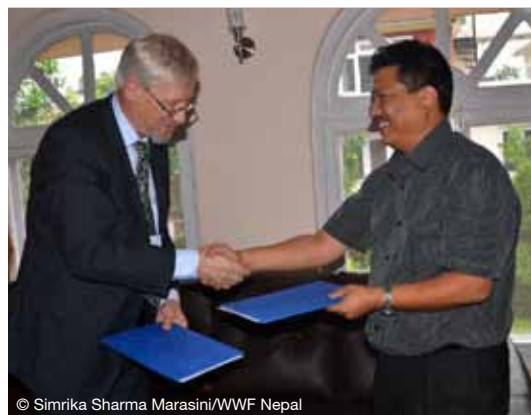
was originally established under the chairmanship of ex-Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal to combat tiger poaching and illegal trade at the national level.

Important decisions taken at the meeting included formulation of the new work plan of NTCC and strengthening strategies to curb illegal wildlife trade, use of scientific tools to aid tiger conservation, undertaking periodic review and update of the National Tiger Recovery Program, and establishment of a Tiger Conservation Cell within Nepal Police. The meeting also decided to expand the organizational structure of the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation.

In a separate event organized in Chitwan district in the Terai Arc Landscape-Nepal, representatives of political parties from the district, government line agencies, conservation partners, media, and community-based organizations discussed on tiger conservation measures to be taken in Chitwan National Park – the area that hosts the highest number of tigers in Nepal. At the event, political parties expressed their commitment for tiger conservation with key focus on habitat management, control over poaching and illegal trade, conservation of prey species, and establishment of a relief fund for victims of human-wildlife conflict.



© Vivek R. Sinha/WWF-Canon



© Simrika Sharma Marasini/WWF Nepal

MOU between Forest Resource Assessment and WWF

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between WWF Nepal and Forest Resource Assessment Nepal to promote forest and forest carbon inventory, biodiversity monitoring and assessment of forest and natural resources across Nepal on 30 June 2011.

Over a five year project period, WWF Nepal and

Forest Resource Assessment Nepal will establish an efficient working relationship to achieve the common goals and objectives; strive together for joint-use of data in Nepal; strive towards understanding important roles, capabilities and approaches of each partner for promotion of assessment of forest resources and achieve synergy in program support

by avoiding duplication in activities and allocating the resources in the most efficient and effective manner through collaboration.

Mr. Anil Manandhar, Country Representative of WWF Nepal, and Mr. Tuomo Kotimäki, Chief Technical Advisor of Forest Resource Assessment Nepal, were the signatories of the MoU.

Celebrations galore at Global Tiger Day

"I want to draw my baby tiger," beamed nine-year old Shaaravi as she gathered her drawing paper and crayons together.



© Akash Shrestha/WWF Nepal

Shaaravi was amongst the 32 children who participated in the 'Draw a Tiger' art competition organized by WWF Nepal on the occasion of Global Tiger Day.

Besides the art competition, WWF Nepal also partnered with a leading supermarket in Kathmandu to distribute tiger fliers to customers as they checked out of the store.

Proudly wearing her t-shirt that read 'TX2: Save Tigers Now', 32-year old Sunita employed at the supermarket remarked that this was the first time that she had been part of a social campaign and felt honored to help in her own way for tigers.

WWF Nepal also partnered with three television channels under live telecasts wherein the Director General of Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation discussed about the state of tigers in Nepal while Dr. Narendra Man Babu Pradhan, Conservation Biologist at

WWF Nepal, spoke about Nepal's possibilities of doubling its number of wild tigers by 2022. Similarly, Dr. Ghana S. Gurung, Conservation Program Director at WWF Nepal, was invited as a guest in a popular live call-in program to discuss about Global Tiger Day and the steps WWF was taking for protecting tigers in Nepal.

Poaching and illegal wildlife trade poses immediate threats to tigers in Nepal. With the successful restoration of habitat and the presence of a good prey base for tigers, the only significant hurdle against tiger conservation in Nepal is poaching. Global Tiger Day was, in effect, celebrated with the theme, 'Zero Poaching', in order to draw the attention of policy makers, conservation agencies, civil society and the public at large towards the steps each constituency could take in helping protect tigers in Nepal.

Green Hiker Launch

The Green Hiker campaign was formally launched by Honorable Khadga Bahadur Biswakarma, Minister of Tourism and Civil Aviation, Government of Nepal at an event organized to commemorate the 4th International Sagarmatha (Mt. Everest) Day at Nepal Tourism Board on 29 May 2011. The Green Hiker campaign is a WWF initiative to conserve the Himalayan high altitude wetlands, founded under its 'Saving Wetlands Sky-High!' programme. It is already running successfully in India in five Himalayan states. In Nepal, Nepal Tourism Board, Government of Nepal, is a partner to this campaign.

Targeted primarily at tourists and tour operators, the campaign is an awareness drive to promote responsible tourism in the high altitude areas. Tourism is a strong revenue generator for Nepal and its communities, with Nepal's natural riches being the major attraction for tourists. To sustain tourism and tourist flows, protection of the natural habitat is an imperative, hence this campaign to encourage tourists to undertake environment-friendly actions and contribute to local economies while travelling through this fragile eco-region.



© Rabi Sharma/WWF Nepal

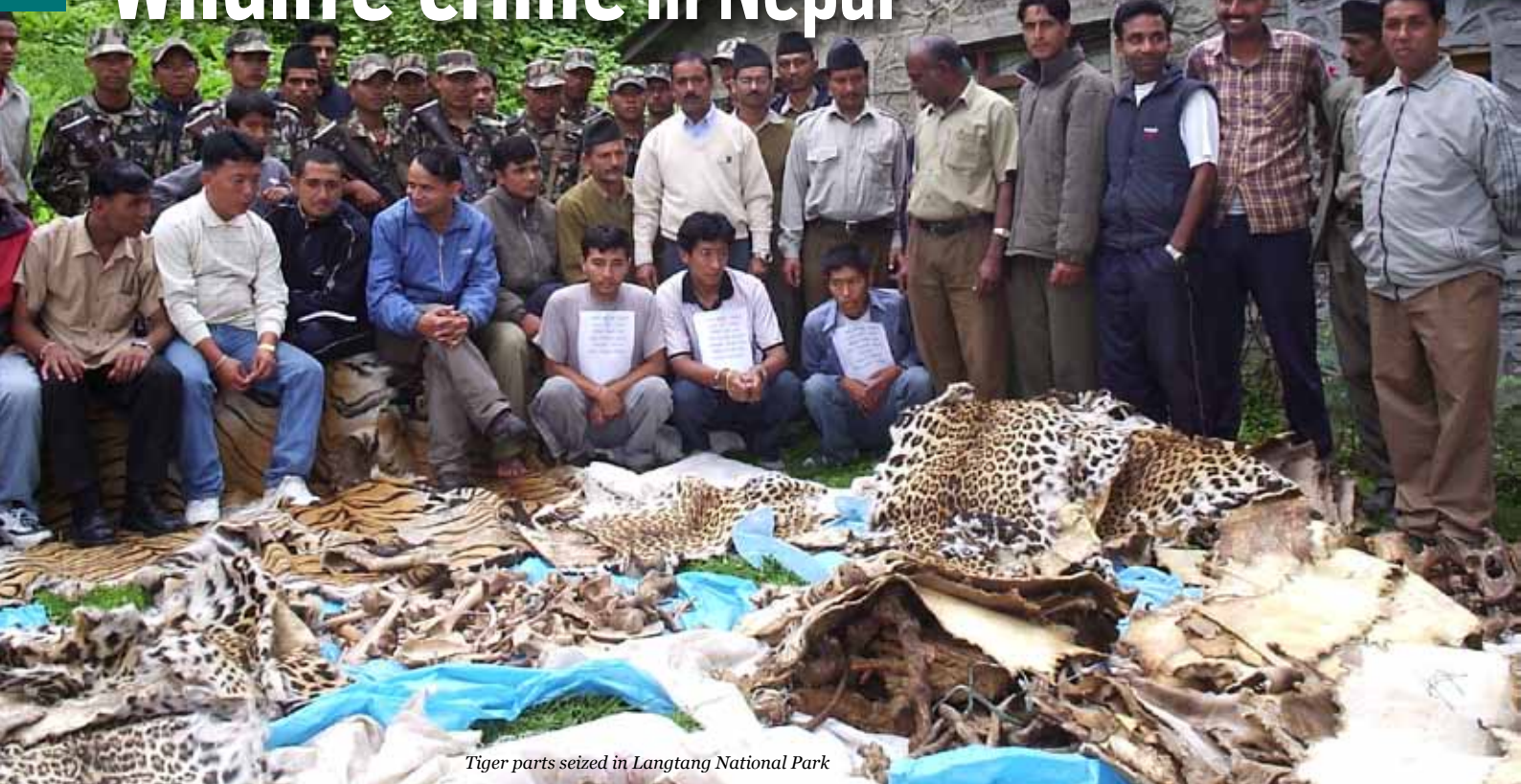
Merchandising, interpersonal communications and events will be the major tools used in this campaign.

With Nepal Tourism Board as partner, the Green Hiker campaign will continue through Nepal Tourism Year 2011 and beyond. While Nepal Tourism Board will work through its network of tourism partners, WWF Nepal will work through its field offices, community-based organizations and local communities under the Sacred Himalayan Landscape program to help promote the campaign.

Speaking at the event, Dr. Ghana Gurung, Conservation Program Director of WWF Nepal, opined that tourism gains cannot be at the cost of the environment. "We need to ensure that Nepal's natural heritage is passed on from generation to generation; collective effort of the government, development agencies and the private sector under the Green Hiker campaign is expected to contribute to this end," he added.

Combatting illegal wildlife crime in Nepal

© WWF Nepal



Tiger parts seized in Langtang National Park

Diwakar Chapagain

Program Coordinator, Wildlife Trade Control

International trade in wildlife, while being a serious threat to a number of endangered and vulnerable species especially the Asian Big Cats and One-horned Rhinoceros is a proscribed business and a worldwide phenomenon which is unfortunately increasing at a rapid scale.

Broadly defined as an environmental crime, illegal trade of wildlife parts is the second largest and the most profitable business after narcotics trade in the world which is valued at about USD 20 billion. The body parts of endangered and flagship species are in high demand in national and international markets which find use as trophies, fashionable accessories, cultural artifacts, ingredients for traditional medicines and for human consumption.

Despite stringent laws against illegal wildlife trade, curbing such trade has been a difficult task. Due to the involvement of high profile racketeers the wildlife population around the world has seen a massive decline lately. Most of the traders are found to be well organized with links internationally that has made Nepal an active transit point. Due to the nexus between the local traders and the international black market, such trade is well-coordinated and well-financed. In addition, inaccessible cross-border trails along the northern side of Nepal and open and easy border access in the south have made it highly difficult for security forces to control the illegal trade.

WWF ventured into species conservation in Nepal from the 1960s. However, its direct involvement in addressing poaching of rhinos and tigers started from the 1990s when poaching of flagship species was rampant in Nepal especially in and around the Chitwan National Park.

In 1991, WWF Nepal partnered with the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) to address deterrents to tiger and rhino poaching in the national parks. WWF Nepal since then has been supporting the government and collaborating with other non-government and non-conventional partners.

In 2006, WWF Nepal established a separate program unit within its office to address the issue of wildlife poaching and illegal trade. Through this unit, WWF Nepal has been working closely with government agencies on anti-poaching operations and illegal wildlife trade control. This



Trans-border biodiversity conservation resolution between Nepal and India

was complemented by similar partnerships with local communities, community-based organizations, non-governmental organizations as well as other non-conventional partners.

Over the years, WWF Nepal has helped deliver some outstanding results on the issue of poaching and illegal wildlife trade.

Working in partnership with the Government of Nepal, appropriate policies were formulated and institutional mechanisms strengthened through the formation of the National Tiger Conservation Committee/Nepal under the leadership of the Prime Minister of Nepal, Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) under the leadership of the Minister for Forests and Soil Conservation, and Wildlife Crime Control Coordination Committee (WCCCC) under the leadership of the Director General of DNPWC.



MoU between Nepal and China on trans-boundary biodiversity conservation

In addition to working at a national level, WWF Nepal also actively engaged with governments at a trans-boundary level for bilateral and regional cooperation and strengthening ecological security in the trans-boundary region. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed with China while a trans-border biodiversity conservation resolution was signed with India; likewise local level trans-boundary meetings with India and Tibetan Autonomous Region of China were organized. These initiatives helped establish a joint monitoring mechanism for interaction and information sharing, with a special focus on the trans-boundary protected areas of Nepal.

WWF Nepal played a vital role in establishing the South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN), an inter-governmental body to counter the threats of poaching and illegal trade of wildlife and their parts. SAWEN is a common platform to share the common issue and design strategies for the region. The intergovernmental agency has its Secretariat in Nepal. WWF is supporting the functioning of the SAWEN secretariat in Nepal.

Nepal saw a surge in rhino populations with the National Rhino Census conducted in 2011 showing an increase in rhino numbers by 99 (22.7%) since the last census in 2008; 2011 also recorded the lowest level of poaching of rhinos in Chitwan National Park since 2001.

Enforcement agencies were able to break into the illegal wildlife trade network and the scale of arrests of poachers and traders also increased. This was made possible by strong actions on the ground by the leadership taken by enforcement agencies mobilizing local communities and partners and providing technical and financial support to the enforcement agencies to control poaching and illegal trade.

Poverty and lack of awareness on biodiversity conservation are the key drivers of poaching in Nepal. WWF Nepal, in this regard, has been supporting various grassroots-level organizations to implement community awareness and livelihoods programs; the gun handover ceremony in Lekhpurajul VDC in Surkhet district stands as a pertinent example. The local people of Lekhpurajul VDC in Surkhet district had been killing wild animals such as tigers and rhinos in Bardia National park and selling their body parts. On 9 May 2011, in a remarkable show of respect for nature and wildlife, the residents of Lekhpurajul VDC handed over their guns to the authorities of Bardia National Park and decided to put a stop to the killing. This was made possible by the arduous efforts of the Lekhpurajul Community Forest User Groups who conducted various programs to raise awareness on the significance of biodiversity conservation. The local people were also provided with a revolving fund from the Government of Nepal and its conservation partners like WWF Nepal, which was channelized through cooperatives, to help them explore alternate income generation activities for their livelihood.

WWF Nepal also successfully introduced cutting-edge science for tiger conservation in Nepal through the country's first collaring of a tiger with a GPS plus



Rhino postmortem being conducted

The day I decided to change my life...

Durga Maya Kumal, 55 years old, is a resident of Meghauri VDC in Chitwan. Five years ago, Durga Maya took a life-changing decision – to hand over her husband to the National Park authorities; her husband had long been involved in rhino poaching. Hers is a story of change and a striking example of the power of the human spirit to take charge of one's destiny.

This is her story, in her own words.

"I was married at the age of 18. My husband, Buddhi Bahadur Kumal, used to work as a guide at Tiger Tops. We were gifted with two wonderful daughters and a son and life was full of happiness. Though my husband's earnings were limited, we had enough for our means. I had no complaints about my life until the time my husband took up drinking. With time his drinking

habits grew and his addiction eventually made him give up his work, which was when he started getting engaged in criminal activities. I never knew what he was involved in; he neither shared anything with me nor provided any money for the family. It came as a shock to me when I later came to know that he was involved in poaching. I understood right then that his would be a bitter end if he continued on this path; for how long could he run from the authorities and save himself and us from the looming pain and disgrace?

I was in a complete dilemma. As a wife, I wanted to protect my husband but as a dutiful citizen I knew I had to rise above my personal interests. But I had to take a decision and postponing it would only mean more danger for us all. I finally handed over my husband to the park officials in 1996 – it was a

painful decision but one which I knew was for the betterment of us all...for a future where we could live without guilt or fear.

And looking back, I have absolutely no regrets.

My two daughters are happily married now. My son-in-law is with the armed police force and my son works in India. I live with one of my daughters and am managing to earn some money by working as a manual laborer. My husband is presently imprisoned in Bharatpur jail. I feel sad whenever I go and meet him but I am happy that I don't have to worry anymore about his whereabouts and his safety. I am patiently waiting for the day he will be released so that we can reunite as a family again."

as told to Madhav Khadka, Wildlife Trade Monitoring Officer
madhav.khadka@wwfnepal.org



GLOBALSTAR-3 satellite collar to aid tiger ecology and monitoring studies, and the introduction of Management Information System Technology (MIST) in Shuklaphanta Wildlife Reserve and Chitwan National Park to help in patrolling efforts.

This year, the Tigers Alive Initiative of WWF launched the 'Zero Poaching of Tigers' campaign in the 13 tiger range countries, including Nepal, to halt poaching as the long prescribed remedy to tiger conservation. The rationale of the campaign is to lift the scale, intensity and professionalism of the effort against poaching and ensure that it never drops again. The campaign aims to raise and build awareness amongst civil society, policy makers and local communities in tiger range countries, leading to the creation of political pressure for enhanced action for tiger conservation and better standards for parks, protected areas, and rangers and protected area officials.

In the backdrop of these achievements, the road to success is still a long and winding one. It is hoped, however, that through collaborative and concerted efforts on the ground and at the policy level, Nepal will be able to combat this largest threat to wildlife, slowly but surely, in the years to come.

diwakar.chapagain@wwfnepal.org





© WWF Nepal



© WWF Nepal



© WWF Nepal



© WWF Nepal



© WWF Nepal



© WWF Nepal



© WWF Nepal



© WWF Nepal

Prajana Waiba Pradhan

Human Resources Officer

The last quarter of 2011 was the onset of a new fiscal year for WWF Nepal and another exciting journey in conservation. In celebration of 18 glorious years of the establishment of WWF in Nepal, an event was organized for WWF staff on May 19 based on the theme, 'Bringing out the Best in Each Other'. While serving as an occasion to reflect on our learnings and achievements over the past 18 years, the event was organized to also strengthen the team spirit at WWF Nepal. And as WWF Nepal matured over these years in both program delivery and the drive for results, the event served as an opportunity to consider the tremendous amount of work that we still needed to do in the years to come to bring out the best in each other for the benefit of nature and the empowerment of the communities that we work with. From an HR perspective, it was also about reflecting on all the contributions of our dedicated work force.

And speaking about team spirit, what better way of instilling this passion than by engaging staff in a whole day of team-building fun and games. Breaking away from tradition, this year we decided to reshuffle the teams. While this decision meant that staff would have to leave their treasured team identity of the past that they had held on to for many years, the reshuffling was in fact a great way to foster increased interaction and communication among the staff members. It was even more interesting when the teams came up with their

own brand identities – 'The Jaguars' and 'Flying Falcons', both masters in their own right of the sky and the earth, were determined to establish their dominance over each other. Over stiff competition spread across different games such as football, bowling, cricket, table tennis and badminton, the day's end finally decided its heroes; the sky ruled over the earth with the Flying Falcons walking away victorious with the WWF Shield.

The theme, 'Bringing out the Best in Each Other', ran high among all staff that day, which was further complemented by the Staff Awards ceremony organized at the end of the day. Peer voting was used for the purpose as an ideal way of promoting democracy while letting staff know in a pleasant and fun way what colleagues felt about them. For the Staff Awards, three categories – Employee of the Year, Best Team Player and The Field Star – remained the same each year which were complemented by six additional fun categories. This year saw a record of three staff members tied for the Employee of the Year Award while two staff members received the Long Service Award for 10 years of meritorious service to WWF Nepal.

Another important HR initiative this year was the First Aid training conducted for all staff by the Nepal

Red Cross Society as part of our Health and Safety activity. The training was conducted on two separate days for separate staff and covered topics such as day-to-day risks of injuries and different first aid tips to handle each. All staff members enthusiastically took part in the training.

For me, personally, my participation in the HR Fundamentals Training held in WWF US in April 2011 was one of the most productive undertakings. The training not only helped me understand more about the HR system but also gave me an opportunity to personally meet all the people that I had been working with, mostly on a virtual front, over the last six years.

And this is but the beginning of many more exciting events at WWF. I certainly look forward to a fruitful and an exciting year ahead.

prajana.pradhan@wwfnepal.org



© WWF Nepal



© WWF Nepal



© WWF Nepal

WWF Staff Awards 2011

WWF Long Service Award

- Bhagwan Lal Shrestha
- Tilak Dhakal

Employee of the Year

- Santosh Mani Nepal
- Khadga Bahadur Shrestha
- Ugan Manandhar

Best Team Player

- Prajana Waiba Pradhan

Field Star

- Tilak Dhakal

Shining Debut Star

- Akash Shrestha

Spark Plug

- Dr. Ghana Shyam Gurung
- Prajana Waiba Pradhan

Still Waters Run Deep

- Bhawani Shankar Dongol

Peekaboo

- Santosh Mani Nepal

Pit Bull

- Dr. Ghana Shyam Gurung

Happy Camper

- Prajana Waiba Pradhan

Unlocking the Mystery of Tsum Valley

© WWF Nepal

Jagadish Parajuli

Conservation Education and Advocacy Officer

A chance to leave my desk and go out and explore the wilderness is something that I have always looked forward to. I feel that there is so much to learn, see and discover in life, and nature is one of the best teachers in this regard.

And the month of March this year brought me one of those opportunities where I was to accompany Mr. Jon Miceler, Program Managing Director-WWF Eastern Himalayas, Mr. Forrest Carlson Berkley, WWF's well-wisher from the US, and Mr. Andrew William Dineen, a retired teacher from UK, on a trek to Tsum valley. I had heard little of Tsum valley and I jumped at the opportunity of unlocking this mystery.

The Tsum Valley Home Stay was our official trekking agency for the trip that made sure all logistics and travel arrangements were carefully managed for our positive trekking experience. Our trek finally began on the Nepali New Year's day – a very auspicious day in itself as it marked the beginning of another year of dreams, hopes and aspirations for all Nepalis; it was also a day of pride for me as I was heading to one of those many destinations that made Nepal a traveller's delight.

On the first day of our trip, we drove from Kathmandu to Arughat Bazar in Gorkha district, which was the starting point of our trek to Manaslu Conservation Area (MCA). We spent the first day at Arughat Bazar and headed to Lapubesi, a small village near the Budhi Gandaki River, the next day. The night at Lapubesi was the first tented camp of our trip. The camping site was a vast green meadow, and the gushing sound of the river made it look like a place straight out of a storybook. As dusk set in and the sound from the river enveloped the night's silence, I got engrossed in one of my all-time favorite books, "Maile Dekheko Nepal", a memoir and travelogue by late Dr. Harka Gurung. A famous geographer and an explorer, Dr. Harka Gurung himself had travelling up and down the terrains of this beautiful country, and sitting there in the lap of nature, I could virtually connect with his experiences. It suddenly made me realize that I was also doing my small bit as a Nepali...exploring its hidden riches and encouraging my innate self to do something for my country.

After four days of an arduous walk along the Budhi Gandaki River we stopped at Philim, Sirdibas VDC, located in the headquarter of MCA, where we interacted with the MCA authorities and communities on the conservation works there. Five days had already gone by...and so quickly.

On the sixth day of our trek, we finally reached Tsum valley and the beauty

was just mesmerizing.

The undulating landscape, stone-roofed houses, mani walls, fresh green fields and high mountains made the place a paradise on earth. While moving across the wheat fields, a herd of Himalayan Thar caught my sight. It was the first time that I had seen a Thar so close and I was amazed to see the animals so comfortable even in such close proximity with humans. Later, the locals informed us the Buddhist religious leaders had declared the valley as a hunting prohibited area. Conserving animals was a sacred way of life here as part of Buddhist philosophy and hence the harmony created between humans and wildlife.

The people of the valley were very shy but very cooperative. Since the valley was far from the district headquarters, the communities themselves had initiated local development work such as trail maintenance and construction of bridges.

The people of the valley depend on Tibet for daily supplies of food and other needs including small businesses. Although agriculture comprised the main stay of life in Tsum, the gradual decrease in snow-fall over the years had resulted in poorer agricultural productivity. Chiring Lama, a local farmer, opined that snowfall had decreased over the last decade due to God's anger and that God was angry because of the conflict in Nepal. Chiring Lama had never heard about climate change or global warming which I thought was ironical since he lived in one of the most vulnerable places on earth. But then again I could see the harsh reality. For many people like Chiring, it was not about awareness; it was more about daily subsistence which came from either low-productivity farming or from collecting Yarshagumba in the tough Himalayan terrain.

On the eighth day of our trek through an isolated trail we reached a beautiful monastery, Mu Gompa. We experienced heavy snowfall on our way to Mu Gompa but we had no option but to continue with our journey. Resting in the monastery later and warming my frozen self with coffee and a duvet, I reflected on my amazing trek; I had been a witness to perhaps one of the world's most beautiful places and sights. On the final day of our trip, we trekked to the nearby Tibetan border (Bhajyo) where we got the opportunity to see many herds of blue sheep, musk deer, yak and Himalayan Pika. Bhajyo was a perfect place for meditation.

On the tenth day, while Jon and I got ready for our journey back to Kathmandu, Forrest and Andrew were all set to head for the famous Larke Pass. My feet were completely sore after 15 hours of a continuous trek for the next two days. We finally reached Kathmandu and I could hardly wait to share my experiences with my colleagues.

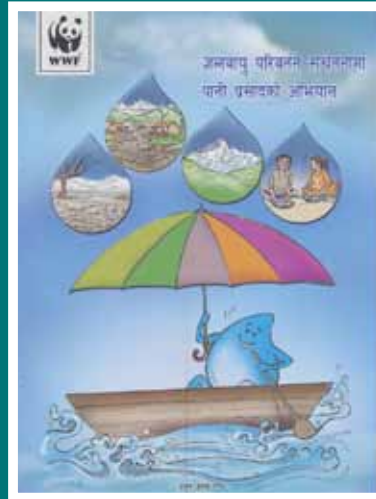
Tsum had left a life time impression not just in my memory but also in my heart. The trek to Tsum was one of life's great lessons for me. I saw the power of commitment and people's resolve to protect nature's resources. I saw poverty and seclusion but then I also saw hope and dreams. And deep within, I know that I shall return to Tsum one day, to build on those hopes and dreams through my work at WWF.

jagadish.parajuli@wfnepal.org

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
Bageshori FM	Thu	6:30 PM to 7:00 PM
Madhyapashchim FM	Fri	7:30 PM to 8:00 PM
Samudayik Radio	Fri	6:35 PM to 6:50 PM
Solu FM		



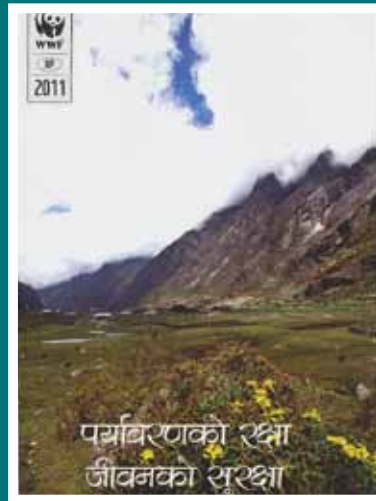
जलवायु परिवर्तन सञ्चयनामा पानी प्रसादको अभियान



Sustainable Livelihoods Mainstreaming Strategy



Terai Arc Reloaded



DVD पर्यावरणको रक्षा जीवनको सुरक्षा



A Retrospective: High Altitude Wetlands Project

STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

In the past months we bid farewell to.....

• **Ashok Baniya**

Project Manager, LNPBZSP

Inside the Himalayas

Editor:

Simrika Sharma
Marasini

Editorial Team:

Akash Shrestha
Eliza Sthapit
Prajana Waiba Pradhan

On the Cover:

Rani Taal, Shuklaphanta Wildlife
Reserve, Kailali District, Nepal.
- Rabi Sharma



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
Baluwatar, Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel: +977 1 4434820

info@wwfnepal.org

www.wwfnepal.org



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.