



for a living planet®

WWF Nepal Program

Annual Report 2004-05



WWF is the largest and most experienced independent global conservation organization with almost five million supporters and a network active in more than 90 countries and the International Secretariat at Gland, Switzerland. Since 1961, WWF has worked to conserve nature and ecological processes through a combination of actions on the ground, national and international advocacy work to establish appropriate policies, and international campaigns to highlight and demonstrate solutions to crucial environmental problems.

WWF's Mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature by:

- Conserving the world's biological diversity;
- Ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable; and
- Reducing pollution and wasteful consumption

To guide the organization in achieving this mission, WWF has identified six globally important issues to which it can apply effort and support. These are:

- the conservation of **forest, freshwater, and marine** ecosystems
- the preservation of flagship **species** of special concern
- combating the spread of **toxic chemicals**
- protecting nature from **climate change**.

Country Representative's Message

If there is one constant that WWF Nepal Program has held on to for the past year, it has been hope - hope and a spirit that will not allow us to give up on what we started. We believe that conservation efforts can and must continue even in a deteriorating national security situation.

Project sites in both lowlands and in mountain protected areas were affected by the insurgency but despite the constant closures and restrictions in the movement of staff, WWF Nepal Program continued to work on the ground with the support of grassroots organizations, partner NGOs, government line agencies and the determination of our dedicated staff.

Challenging field circumstances in Kangchenjunga Conservation Area and the vandalization of our sector offices by Maoist cadre in December 2004 disrupted field level activities for almost the entire second half of the fiscal year so work for the Kangchenjunga Conservation Area Project was supplemented by lobbying and capacity building in Kathmandu. Uncertainty and threats of violence in the Terai did not deter WWF Nepal Program field staff from mobilizing local communities for the implementation of conservation work in some of the most conflict-affected areas in western and far-western Nepal.

With more than 30 years of experience in conservation in Nepal, WWF Nepal Program is pleased to have played a more active and effective role in policy and advocacy issues. In the past year, we successfully advocated for Cairn Energy PLC to maintain transparency in all exploration related work in the Terai Arc Landscape, supported the drafting of Kangchenjunga Conservation Area Community Management Regulations and organized internal workshops for staff to build their understanding on key issues. The intensive Organizational Assessment that we underwent helped us to identify critical areas that need to be strengthened.

This year saw the endorsement of the Terai Arc Landscape - Nepal Strategic Plan (2004 - 2014), the preparation of management plan for the buffer zone of Sagarmatha National Park, the endorsement of the Snow Leopard Conservation Plan by His Majesty's Government of Nepal and the vision for the Sacred Himalayan Landscape take shape under

the leadership of HMG/N with other partner organizations. We continued to lobby for the Kangchenjunga Conservation Area Management Council to take on the management responsibility of the Kangchenjunga Conservation Area, which is currently pending approval from the Cabinet.

In October 2004, we also initiated the Freshwater Program, which has already begun to contribute significantly to freshwater issues in Nepal.

Together with the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation and the King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation, we were successful in conducting the Rhino Count 2005. The numbers of Greater One-horned rhinos have fallen due to poaching, exacerbated by the conflict. Although anti-poaching operations and informants' networks supported by WWF Nepal Program aided in the arrest of notorious poachers, we need to be ever more vigilant and redouble our efforts so that Nepal's rich biodiversity is safeguarded for future generations.

The worth of an organization will always be measured by the people who work towards its goals so I thank the staff of WWF Nepal Program for their bravery, perseverance and passion for conservation. My sincere gratitude also to all our partner organizations especially His Majesty's Government of Nepal, donors, supporters, the WWF Network, and last but not the least, the local communities for their continued support and cooperation during these difficult times.

We continue our conservation efforts in the belief that we can ensure a living planet.



Chandra Gurung, PhD
Country Representative



Acronyms

AIN	Association of International Non-government Organizations	KCAMC	Kangchenjunga Conservation Area Management Council
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation	KMTNC	King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation
BDS-MaPs	Business Development Services-Marketing, Production and Service	MAPs	Medicinal and Aromatic Plants
BZCFUGs	Buffer Zone Community Forest User Groups	MFSC	Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation
BZMCs	Buffer Zone Management Committees	MOEST	Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology
BZUC	Buffer Zone User Committee	MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
CBAPO	Community Based Anti-poaching Operation	NEFEJ	Nepal Forum for Environmental Journalists
CBO	Community Based Organization	NFE	Non-formal Education
CCNN	Climate Change Network Nepal	NGO	Non Government Organization
COP	Conference of Parties	NMCP	Northern Mountains Conservation Project
CFUGs	Community Forest User Groups	NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Products
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora	PPI	People and Plants Initiative
DFO	District Forest Office	RBNP	Royal Bardia National Park
DNPWC	Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation	RCNP	Royal Chitwan National Park
DOF	Department of Forest	RSWR	Royal Shuklaphanta Wildlife Reserve
DRM	Development Research and Monitoring	SAGUN	Strengthened Actions for Governance and Utilization of Natural Resources
GIS	Geographic Information System	SCAFP	Sagarmatha Community Agro-forestry Project
GLOF	Glacier Lake Outburst Flood	SEA	Strategic Environment Assessment
HAW	High Altitude Wetland	SEJ	Society of Environmental Journalists
HMG/N	His Majesty's Government of Nepal	SHL	Sacred Himalayan Landscape
ICDP	Integrated Conservation and Development Program	SLA	Sustainable Livelihoods Approach
ICIMOD	International Center for Integrated Mountain Development	SNP	Sagarmatha National Park
ICS	Improved Cooking Stoves	SNV	Netherlands Development Organization
IEE	Initial Environment Examination	TAL	Terai Arc Landscape
IUCN	The World Conservation Union	UNDP	United Nations Development Program
KAAA	Kaadoorie Agriculture Aid Association	USAID	United States Agency for International Development
KCA	Kangchenjunga Conservation Area	VDC	Village Development Committee
KCAP	Kangchenjunga Conservation Area Project	WWF NP	WWF Nepal Program
		WTLBP	Western Terai Landscape Building Program

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Nepal has always been a pivotal country for WWF ever since it first provided support for rhino and tiger conservation projects in the late 1960s and early 1970s. From the early emphasis on research and training, WWF Nepal Program's support has evolved with the shift in the conservation policy of His Majesty's Government of Nepal. In recent years, our focus has evolved to a landscape-level approach to conservation that also takes into account the sustainable livelihoods of people. Our programs in Nepal work for **species, forests, freshwater** and **climate change** with a strong emphasis on sustainable livelihoods.

WWF Nepal Program periodically initiates strategic planning to help redefine its role in the country and develop a program-based framework for various projects and activities. Its purpose is to set goals and establish operational guidelines. We consider monitoring and evaluation to be of great importance in all our programs to assess the impacts we make, and in learning and adaptation.

In 1993, WWF signed a General Agreement with HMG/N, which led to the opening of an office in Kathmandu to coordinate and monitor program activities.

WWF in
Nepal



Where We Work

IN THE TERAI

The Terai Arc Landscape covers approximately 49,500 km² from Nepal's Bagmati River in the east to India's Yamuna River in the west, linking a network of 11 transborder protected areas, national forests, agricultural lands, settlement areas and water bodies in both countries. The Terai Arc Landscape (TAL) Program in Nepal is a joint initiative of WWF and His Majesty's Government of Nepal that involves a large number of partner organizations, donor agencies, stakeholders, community based organizations and local people.

IN THE MOUNTAINS

Recognizing the ecological significance of the Nepal Himalayas and in response to varying threats to

these ecosystems, WWF Nepal Program projects in the mountains are Kangchenjunga Conservation Area Project (KCAP), Northern Mountains Conservation Project (NMCP), and Sagarmatha Community Agro-forestry Project (SCAFP). The landscape level approach has been carried through into the Sacred Himalayan Landscape, which extends 30,021 km² from Langtang National Park in central Nepal through the Kangchenjunga region in Darjeeling in India to Toorsa Strict Nature Reserve in western Bhutan.

TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE

In developing countries like Nepal, climate change is not just an environmental phenomenon but also an economic, social and political

issue. In 2003, WWF Nepal Program initiated the Climate Change Program. Since then, it has initiated a network of I/NGOs called the Climate Change Network Nepal (CCNN), launched the Himalayan Glacier and River Project, and initiated the Climate Witness Project.

ON FRESHWATER ISSUES

WWF is working globally with partners through a shared approach to managing rivers and wetlands, redirecting harmful infrastructure, curbing water waste in agriculture by seeking better management practices and promoting poverty reduction compatible with environmentally strong water policies. WWF Nepal Program initiated the Freshwater Program in October 2004.

We work in close partnerships with

various ministries and departments in HMG/N, locally elected bodies, conservation organizations and development agencies, diplomatic missions, and national and international NGOs. We also work with community groups, local people and grassroots level stakeholders, individual donors and others committed to biodiversity conservation and environmental protection.

Our work is funded by

foundations, governments, aid agencies and individual donors. All financial transactions are internally audited and are also open to public auditing.

Conservation in Times of Conflict: 1996 to the Present



ECOREGIONS

Biodiversity is not spread evenly across the Earth but follows complex patterns determined by climate, geology and the evolutionary history of the planet. These patterns are called “ecoregions”. The boundaries encompass an area within which important ecological and evolutionary processes most strongly interact.

The Global 200 is a science-based global ranking of the Earth’s most biologically outstanding terrestrial, freshwater and marine habitats. It provides a critical blueprint for biodiversity conservation at a global scale.

The aim of the Global 200 analysis is to ensure that the full range of ecosystems is represented within regional conservation and development strategies so that conservation efforts around the world contribute to a global biodiversity strategy.

WWF Nepal Program currently focuses on four Global 200 Ecoregions:

- Eastern Himalayan Alpine Meadows
- Eastern Himalayan Broadleaf and Conifer Forests
- Terai - Duar Savannas and Grasslands and
- Western Himalayan Temperate Forests.

Nepal's efforts at biodiversity conservation have not remained unaffected in an almost decade-long armed Maoist insurgency. The nation could be dragged into a widening circle of violence, environmental degradation and poverty. **Delivering on conservation goals during in this difficult time means we must be even more committed to our goals and for that, we need all the support we can get.**

Various factors have weakened the state's control over natural resources - a weakened structure of governance that is unable to reconcile diverse interests and ensure equitable distribution of benefits, a partial breakdown of services and communications, the diminished role of state agencies and authorities in remote areas, a volatile law and order situation, and an economy in decline.

Weakened enforcement has led to more pressure on natural resources and illegal trade in medicinal and aromatic plants, and timber has seen an increase in some areas. In the face of the armed insurgency, the focus has shifted to national security, putting other international conventions, policy and legal issues pertaining to conservation on the backburner.

The conflict has impacted three specific conservation areas:

1. Protected area management
2. Forest conservation
3. Illegal trade of wildlife parts and medicinal and aromatic plants

1. Protected Area Management

National parks and wildlife reserves have faced personnel cuts in the past year. A study in 2002 found that the insurgency has negatively impacted management of protected areas—only 34 of 112 guard posts in protected areas were operational. The restriction of movement inside protected areas has also meant a reduction in patrolling and irregular monitoring of endangered wildlife. Infrastructure such as buildings, vehicles and communication equipment have either been damaged or destroyed. There has been loss of lives. The insurgency has taken a toll on Nepal's tourism, affecting the revenue of

protected areas, which are among the biggest tourist attractions in the country. This, in turn, has affected the funds ploughed back into local communities surrounding national parks and wildlife reserves.

2. Forest Conservation

The rapid spread of the insurgency has affected the government's hold on forest resources. A hundred and thirty eight of 698 range posts, and 41 of 92 area forest offices across the country have been destroyed. People fleeing from conflict hotspots have also put enormous pressure on forests. There are an estimated 300,000 internally

displaced persons in ecologically marginal areas and this has led to increasing forest encroachments. Over-exploitation of forest resources for subsistence as well as illegal harvesting have to be addressed immediately since survival is the primary concern for displaced Nepalis. The high pressure on forests has also disrupted traditional management systems, especially in the fertile lowlands of the Terai.

3. Poaching and Illegal Trade

The insurgency has taken a huge toll on the economy, which has sustained losses of 2.2 per cent annually from 2001 onward or NRs 92.8 billion (2001-2005). This

has also pushed conservation low on the political agenda. The political instability within the country has led to frequent changes in policy priorities, affecting decisions important for biodiversity conservation. National security is the biggest priority with the government. The illegal trade of wildlife and medicinal and aromatic plants has grown. Nepal's status as a transit route for this trade has been long established and with weakened law enforcement, this problem is bound to see an alarming increase.



The Way Forward

The news is not all bad. There is a higher awareness of political issues and the elite domination of natural resources access and use is changing. Traditional hunting practices have decreased. Transparency in fund-use, especially among development projects as well as CBOs, is encouraged and practiced. The armed conflict has meant that social inclusion of marginalized and indigenous nationalities is being widely accepted and integrated into the mainstream.

Although there is a considerable gap in understanding the impact of conflict on biodiversity conservation at present, WWF believes the way forward must:

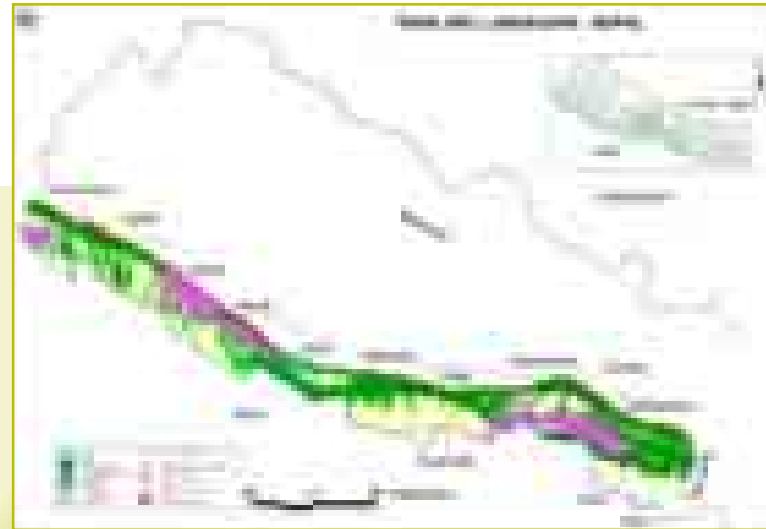
- 1. Be Flexible:** Adapt to new circumstances, adjust and intensify planning procedures, strengthen capacity of local staff and field offices
- 2. Focus on linking conservation with local livelihoods:** Recognize economic strategies are determined by survival needs, identify community needs, demonstrate commitment to the welfare of community
- 3. Strengthen or at the minimum, maintain local presence:** Increase autonomy and self-reliance of NGOs, maintain neutrality and impartiality, use reliable information to assess the situation
- 4. Collaborate within and between sectors:** Develop goodwill and build trust, identify common goals, make environment information readily available, improve horizontal and vertical communication
- 5. Try to ensure continued funding during and after conflict:** Ensure ongoing and flexible support, keep donors informed about the situation on the ground
- 6. Reconcile long-term sustainable practice with immediate demands on natural resources:** Approach conservation with a development and economic perspective (revenue generation), work with private sector for socially and environmentally responsible practices
- 7. Transparency and good governance in planning, budgeting and financial transaction** has become a key operational strategy. Adoption of good governance practices like public hearings at the program level as well as community levels
- 8. Strengthen communications:** Share information on implementation modality, activities and financial transactions to stakeholders and wider audiences

WWF Nepal Program is affiliated with the Association of International NGOs (AIN). We present our positions in alignment with the AIN in the context of the conflict. Our security updates and advice is sourced from the field and channeled primarily through the Risk Management Office (RMO), DFID, while USAID provides regular security updates. Four WWF staff received RMO's field-based risk management training in the past fiscal year. We send a weekly security update, collated from the field, to the WWF Network and key donors.

Our internal risk management team assesses project-based risks on four levels with A being withdrawal and D for normal. This fiscal year, it hovered around B and C, which means restrictions in movement and increasing insurgency. Several contingency plans are already in place and all staff are oriented on WWF security guidelines.



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Terai Arc Landscape - Nepal

BACKGROUND

The Terai, which has several globally significant protected areas and national forests, is also the most densely populated area in Nepal. The foothills of the Churia were once pristine forests called the 'Char Kose Jhad' but in the decades after the successful malaria eradication program of the 1950s and the subsequent in-migration of people, there has been tremendous pressure on its natural resources.

A wealth of wildlife has always lived in the lowland forests of Nepal. Today, it supports a high density of Bengal tigers (*Panthera tigris*), the second largest population of the Greater One-horned rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) and the largest herd of swamp deer (*Cervus duvauceli*). It is also home to Asian elephants (*Elephas maximus*), Gangetic dolphins (*Platanista gangetica*), Gharial crocodiles (*Gavialis gangeticus*), Hispid hare (*Caprolagus hispidus*) and Bengal florican (*Houbaropsis bengalensis*).

LOOKING AT A TERAI LANDSCAPE

WWF has worked in the Nepali Terai since 1967, beginning with rhino conservation. As the forests slowly shrunk to small islands for wildlife in a human dominated landscape, a new approach to conservation was envisaged. In Nepal, the Terai Arc Landscape covers over 23,199 km², more than 75 per cent of the remaining forests of the Terai and foothills of the Churia and includes two World Heritage Sites and three Ramsar sites. TAL was identified by His Majesty's Government of Nepal as a priority program in the 10th Plan. The Terai Arc Landscape-Nepal Strategic Plan (2004-2014) was prepared by a core team led by the Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation.

The major focus of the Terai Arc Landscape (TAL) Program, which is jointly implemented by WWF, DNPWC and DoF is sustainable forest management, sustainable

development, and species and ecosystem conservation. In addition, the program also works on Churia watershed conservation, policy advocacy and conservation education. Our work centres around biological corridors in the Khata and Basanta forests, bottlenecks in Mahadevpuri, Lamahi and Dovan, and recently, in the Laljhadi forests. They act as vital connections to protected areas and national forests for megafauna like rhinos and elephants. The TAL Program in Nepal also works in Parsa Wildlife Reserve, Royal Chitwan National Park, Royal Bardia National Park, Royal Shuklaphanta Wildlife Reserve and their buffer zones.

Support from all partners: government, non-government, community and grassroots, help us achieve our annual targets. This fiscal year, we strengthened partnerships with other development agencies and projects. The Western Terai Landscape Building Program (WTLBP)

VISION

A globally unique landscape where biodiversity is conserved, ecological integrity is safeguarded and sustainable livelihoods of its people are secured.

GOAL

To conserve biodiversity, forests, soils and watersheds of the Terai and Churia Hills in order to ensure the ecological, economic, and socio-cultural integrity of the region.

was implemented in collaboration with Netherlands Development Organization (SNV) as a forerunner to a GEF funded project in three western districts of TAL. Multi-partner initiatives on Business Development Services – Marketing and Production Services (BDS - MaPS) for promotion of NTFP-based income also made important strides.

The TAL Program in Nepal continues to operate in the current conflict situation. We pay close attention to proactive risk management initiatives through regular assessments of the

field situation, contingency plans and precautions, encouraging transparency and clear communications of our goal, objectives, operation modality and resources, emphasizing direct benefits to local people.

Policy and advocacy for the smooth implementation of project activities given the complex and inter-related issues in the landscape was another priority. In the past fiscal year, TAL lobbied extensively to protect biodiversity in the landscape from the proposed joint oil exploration by His

Majesty's Government of Nepal and Cairn Energy PLC. A business plan for the TAL Strategic Plan was completed and the project cycle management was emphasized while on-going activities were reframed into an integrated logical framework. A monitoring and evaluation plan was initiated as was the sustainable livelihood approach and strategy. All these steps were consultative and participatory.

FOREST CONSERVATION

Community forestry, pro-poor leasehold forestry, private forestry and collaborative forest management practices are integral to forest management in the TAL. In the past fiscal year, restoration through plantation and natural regeneration was initiated in 7,000 Ha of degraded forests. GIS analysis reveals significant changes in vegetation in the intervened biological corridors and bottlenecks.

Community forestry promoted sustainable management of forests and was instrumental in democratic practices at the grassroots through participatory decision-making and equitable sharing of the benefits. In the absence of elected bodies at the local level, Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs) have become true stewards of natural resources as well as democratic practices. Community management of forest resources promoted through TAL support saw nearly 2,700 Ha of community forests handed over to 46 CFUGs in the critical areas outside the protected areas and five Buffer Zone CFUGs. Promotion of community forest improved the livelihoods of 8,151 user households.

Community based anti-poaching operations (CBAPOs) in a dozen sites in TAL Nepal are highly effective in controlling illegal activities such as forest encroachment, logging,

WOMEN IN THE CONSERVATION LEAD

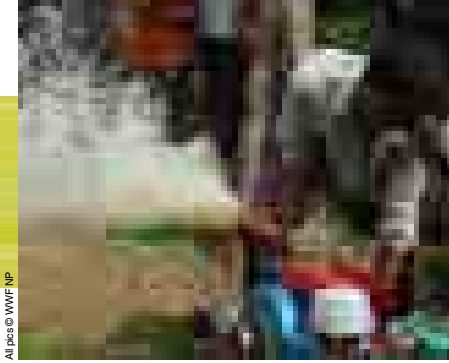
"We built it ourselves," declares a proud Kamala Saud, 34, as she looks up at the tall wooden watch tower. When someone quips about the women in the community being stronger than the men, the chairperson of the Sainyabar Women User Group is quick to answer. "What would you have the women do? It was when our men failed to realize the importance of conservation and community work that we took the lead."

The lookout of the watch tower is perched on four enormous tree trunks at the edge of mustard fields and banana trees in the village of Kotiya in the buffer zone of Royal Bardia National Park in the Terai Arc Landscape of Nepal. This is a dalit community - these people are the poorest of the poor. Most of them are subsistence farmers who work small parcels of land, usually just big enough to feed their families. Kamala's husband left to find work in India and she raises two children.

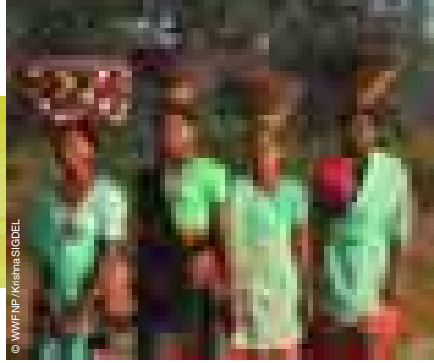
The proximity of the fields to the forests of the protected areas has made it a hotspot for species like rhinos, elephants, deer and wild boars that frequently raid the grains and greens. The people were tired of sleepless nights guarding the fields and hostility towards the animals was increasing when Kamala decided to do something. "I talked to people from the TAL Program and they helped us to build this watchtower," she says. "Less crops are being damaged these days."

Not one to rest on her recent achievement, Kamala has already garnered another success for her community. They are to receive new hand pumps, also through the Terai Arc Landscape (TAL) Program. Something considered as basic as water is now another battle fought - and won - for the Sainyabar Women User Group.





Irrigation pumps for agriculture help better local livelihoods



Indigenous Tharu women



A joint team from India and Nepal plan transboundary conservation activities



Local communities are actively involved in the wise-use and management of wetlands

poaching and illegal foraging in national forests outside the protected areas as well as community forests. CBAPOs contributed significantly to safeguarding wildlife, forest products and vulnerable patches of forests in the bottlenecks and biological corridors. Squatters were removed from 103 Ha of forested land. A hundred and sixty three small traps were found and 5,462 cubic feet of timber, worth US\$ 3,100, was confiscated from timber smugglers. Local communities also promoted conservation education.

The promotion of alternative and energy efficient technologies such as toilet-attached biogas plants and improved cooking stoves (ICS) were instrumental in saving more than 13,500 MT of wood, which further contributed to saving an equivalent of 102 Ha of forests from clear felling. This has made a positive impact on

the protection and restoration of degraded forests in corridors and bottlenecks. The presence of flagship species such as tigers and increasing use of the corridors by rhinos and elephants is encouraging proof that these corridors are functional.

The incomes of 3,000 households were enhanced through technical and financial support in non-timber forest products (NTFP) based, agro-based and off-farm income generating activities. Local communities also received aid for building small-scale infrastructure and basic community services linked to their participation in conservation benefited more than 10,000 households. A district-level forest management was initiated during the fiscal year by forming two district Forestry Coordination Committees following the implementation of the Western Terai Landscape Building Project (WTLBP).

SPECIES CONSERVATION

Protected area management, anti-poaching operations, monitoring of wildlife and research, habitat management and measures to reduce human-wildlife conflict continued to be of importance.

Wildlife research was conducted to determine the home range of translocated rhinoceros, endangered Bengal floricans and ungulates. Tigers were monitored with camera-traps in Royal Shuklaphanta Wildlife Reserve and other critical areas. Wildlife monitoring to establish a scientific database for key species also revealed intensive use of grassland and waterholes by wildlife after scientific management of grasslands and waterholes. A total of 490 Ha grasslands in four protected areas were managed to reduce threats of habitat degradation from invasive species and natural succession. Five

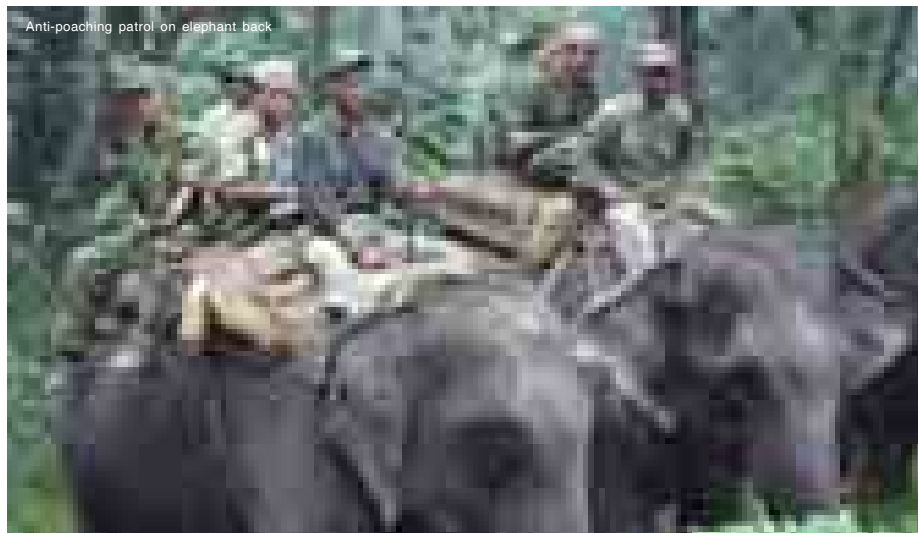
new waterholes were constructed and invasive species were removed from three others. Animal sightings have increased in Parsa Wildlife Reserve and Royal Chitwan National Park.

However, the restoration and ensuing movement of wildlife has increased human-wildlife conflict. The TAL Program is strategizing approaches to human wildlife conflict mitigation through sharing experiences on conflict and mitigation measures. A regional workshop, Experience Sharing on Human Elephant Conflict and Mitigation Measures, was organized by WWF Nepal Program together with the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation in June 2005. On the ground, fences were erected and trenches were maintained in fringe areas to prevent foraging wild animals from entering agricultural lands, thereby reducing retaliatory actions

from affected farmers. Thirty-six watch towers were built in the past year to help local farmers guard their fields from wildlife.

The Rhino Count 2005 at Royal Chitwan National Park found the population of Greater One-horned Rhinoceros had dropped from 544 in 2000 to 372—a 31 per cent decline in five years. At least 94 rhinos were lost to poaching and 66 to natural causes such as flooding, fighting, predation and age. This has been attributed to the reduction in the number of anti-poaching posts, from 32 to eight due to Maoist insurgency that changed

national security priorities, and restrictions on the movement of park staff due to the ground situation. Despite the setback of a reduction in the number of guard posts and the strategic pullout of armed guards by the Royal Nepalese Army in protected areas, anti-poaching operations backed by informant networks aided in the arrest of 77 poachers and their accomplices. The TAL Program organized orientation programs for 55 Royal Nepalese Army personnel and 20 junior staff wildlife conservation laws, poaching and illegal trade in wildlife products, and legal procedures.



Anti-poaching patrol on elephant back

BLACKBUCKS BOUNCE BACK

After a low of just nine animals in 1975, a recent count of Nepal's blackbuck (*Antelope cervicapra*) population has shown that the population has increased to 99. The black buck's beautiful spiral horn made the animal a popular hunting trophy in the early 1950s. Heavy hunting pushed the herds roaming Nepal's lowland districts of Banke, Bardia, Kailali, and Kanchanpur to the brink of extinction. By 1975, when conservation efforts to save the species finally began, Nepal had a total of just nine blackbucks.

Thanks to conservation efforts - which have long been supported by WWF-Nepal Program - the population reached a peak of 177 animals in 1989. However a decade later, this had dropped to 50 due to rapidly shrinking natural habitats, food competition with domestic animals, and reprisal killings by farmers. Stray dogs, hyenas, and jackals also occasionally prey upon the animals.

The Khairapur area of Bardia district, in the southwest of Nepal, is now the last refuge for blackbucks in the country. To prevent the antelopes from raiding crops, mesh wire fences have been put up near human settlements. This and other conservation measures have resulted in a steady rise in the population, with a recent count recording 99 animals.

A 527 Ha Black Buck Conservation Area in Khairapur has also been proposed for the species. WWF Nepal Program's current support to the conservation of the blackbuck is part of its Terai Arc Landscape Program.



© WWF/Janet Leiff FOOT

Challenges and Lessons Learned

CONFLICT

Project sites in the Terai Arc Landscape did not remain unaffected by insurgency related violence. The general deterioration in the law and order situation coupled with constant closures and blockades, restriction in movement and an atmosphere of uncertainty affected the smooth functioning of project activities. Regular coordination with concerned line agencies, local bodies, and representatives of local people was often hampered.

Despite these constraints, the field staff worked remarkably well with locals to carry out most targeted work. The dedication of over 300 foresters, other park staff and communities especially around the trans-border protected and fringe areas is a positive trend that will reap rich dividends in the future. Without the active involvement of the people in the Terai, conservation would be impossible at a landscape level.

HUMAN-WILDLIFE CONFLICT

Human-wildlife conflict requires constant attention. The past year witnessed loss of human life and damage of property, most of it caused

by wild elephants. These incidents often occur beyond the jurisdiction of park authorities and the absence of proper compensation schemes further complicates the matter. The degradation of forests on the elephants' traditional migratory routes forces them to raid and damage crops near human settlements. Long-term mitigation measures beyond compensation in cases of loss of human life or injury, or damage of crop or livestock within the zone, is vital for the harmonious co-existence of wildlife and people in the Terai.

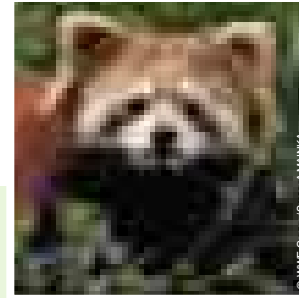
SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS

The challenge that must be met in TAL is to ensure that the needs of the poorest of the poor are addressed more particularly. Special mechanisms will be included in the TAL Program to encourage the participation of the marginalised and indigenous people in benefit sharing activities. At the other end of the spectrum, firewood demand from industries and urban areas that fuel the excessive extraction from forests also needs to be addressed. WWF strongly believes that conservation and sustainable livelihoods are linked in the Terai where people are so dependent on forest products for their livelihoods.



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Our Work in the Mountains



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Situated on the southern slopes of the central Himalayas, 86 per cent of Nepal is hills and high mountains. The mid-hills have the greatest diversity of ecosystems and species with nearly 32 per cent of the country's forests. The high mountains are characterized by a large number of endemic species although they are relatively less diverse in flora and fauna in comparison to the mid-hills and lowlands.

Habitat degradation and over-exploitation of natural resources are the main drivers behind the loss of biodiversity in this fragile ecosystem. Also of critical importance has been the role of climate change in environmental degradation, according to research carried out in preparation of the Nepal Biodiversity Strategy.

Of Nepal's 16 protected areas, 11 are in the mid-hills and high mountains of the country. WWF Nepal Program has projects in several mountain regions in Nepal that encompass three WWF Global 200 Ecoregions:

- Eastern Himalayan Broadleaf and Conifer Forests
- Eastern Himalayan Alpine Meadows, and
- Western Himalayan Forests.

To address the tremendous biotic pressure on scarce forest resources in the high mountains and ensure protection of endangered species, WWF Nepal Program together with His Majesty's Government of Nepal implemented the Sagarmatha Community Agro-forestry Project in Sagarmatha National Park, Northern Mountains Conservation Project in Shey Phoksundo National Park and Kangchenjunga Conservation Area Project in Kangchenjunga Conservation Area.

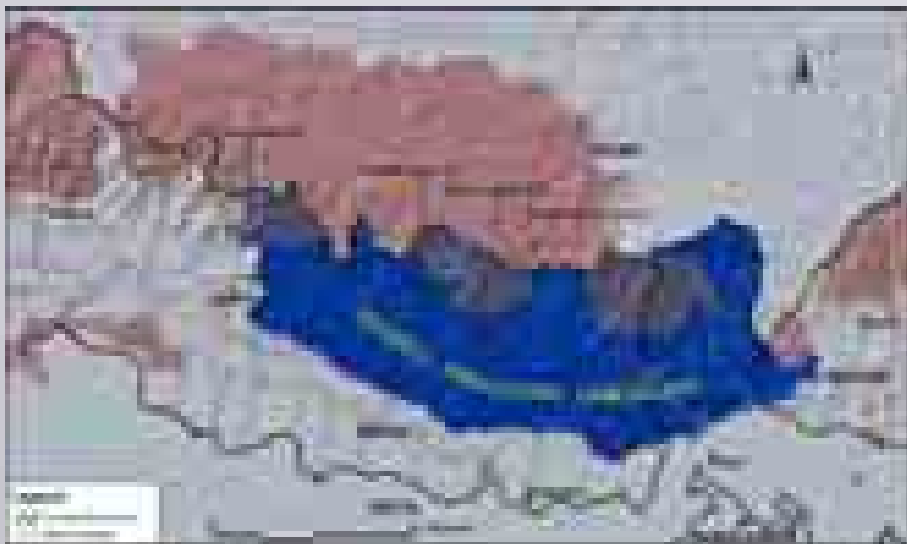
THE SACRED HIMALAYAN LANDSCAPE

The landscape level approach to conservation has been carried through into the Sacred Himalayan Landscape (SHL), which extends 30,021km² from Langtang National Park in central Nepal through the Kangchenjunga region in Sikkim and Darjeeling in India to Toorsa Strict Nature Reserve in Bhutan. The initiative comes under the greater vision of "Transboundary Partnership for a Sacred Himalayan Landscape in the Eastern Himalayas".

In Nepal, the Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation is leading the SHL

initiative in partnership with WWF, ICIMOD, TMI and IUCN. With the formation of the core team, this partnership has extended to include the National Planning Commission, DoF, DNPWC, Eco Himal, UNDP, SNV and DFID. A stakeholders consultation was held at Kathmandu in April 2005 as part of the conceptualization phase. It was part of a series of meetings to develop better understanding and partnerships for strategic planning for the landscape to address the key conservation, cultural and livelihoods issues.

The SHL vision is a **Himalayan landscape where the biological and cultural treasures of the world's highest sacred mountains and deepest valleys are safeguarded while people's rights over resource use are ensured and livelihoods are enhanced.**





Sagarmatha Community Agro-forestry Project

Growing trees on the top of the world!

The Sagarmatha Community Agro-forestry Project (SCAFP) was launched at Sagarmatha National Park in 1996 with the objective of reducing forest pressure through community forestry, sustainable management of forest resources and promotion of alternative energy.

FOREST CONSERVATION

This fiscal year, SCAFP provided management support to nine plant nurseries, five run by community forest user groups of the buffer zone, three by local monasteries and one by the project itself as part of support to the SNP.

A total of 91,557 seedlings were planted in both community and private land. The bare hills around Namche were planted with 26,798 seedlings to link the plantation blocks set aside by the Himalayan Trust.

A notable work completed in the past year was the new survey and design of Lukla-1 Hydropower Project with a generating capacity of 100 KW and the formation of six functional groups for its implementation. A proposal for the Chuserma and Ghatte Khola Micro Hydro Project was made to a potential donor. The project will have the capacity of generating 105 KW of electricity that will benefit 572 local people and reduce pressure on local forests.

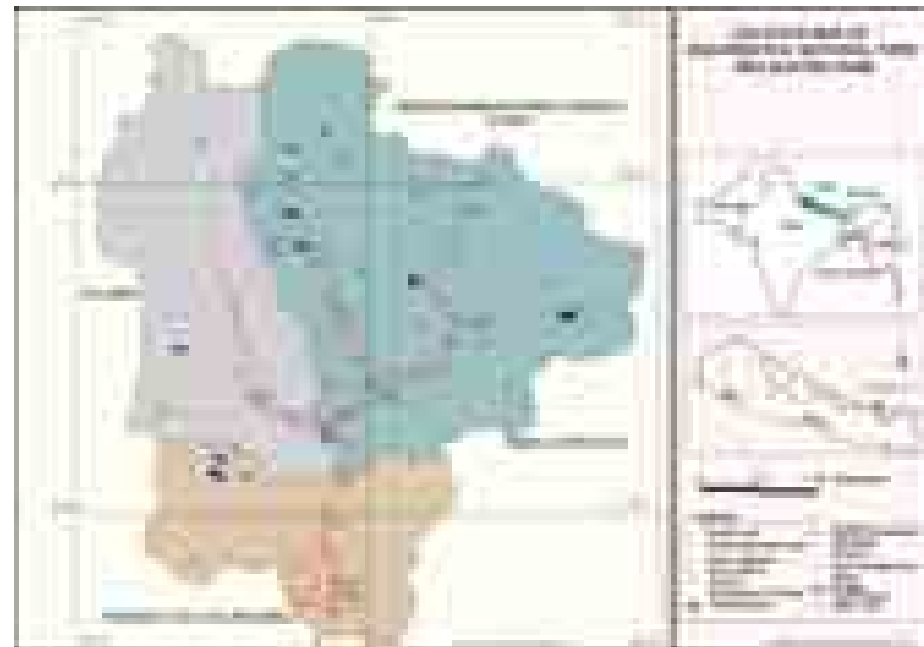
Material for 16 greenhouses were subsidized in Syangboche to promote kitchen gardens. Sixteen members of the community were trained on horticulture. The buffer zone community forest user groups were mobilized to construct stone culverts and maintain a 150 m-long stone trail. Other activities include the institutionalization of four women

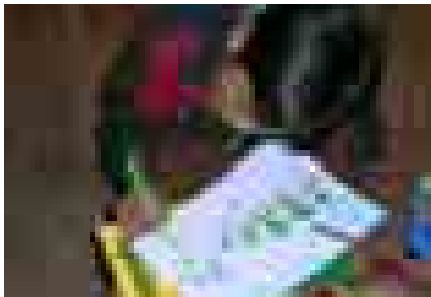
awareness groups, the installation of improved cooking stoves in 12 households as part of the promotion of alternative energy technologies.

SPECIES CONSERVATION

Important activities carried out as part of species conservation and habitat management in the past year included

the management of existing and potential red panda habitat by planting *nigalo* (*Aurindinaria sp*), construction of fences to prevent domestic cattle from entering wildlife habitat, regular monitoring and awareness raising. The project also provided field gear to national park staff to help them on their anti-poaching patrols.





Alphas © WWFNP

SCAFP helped in the formation of a network of seven community-based anti-poaching units from local community forest user groups. Training and orientation was given on laws governing wildlife conservation, problems of wildlife poaching and illegal trade in wildlife products, techniques used by poachers, the legal procedures following the arrest of wildlife criminals and the provisions of CITES. The anti-poaching groups

were successful in removing several snares set for musk deer.

A field exploration team lead by an Amchi, a traditional Tibetan doctor, recorded a total of 125 medicinal plants, of which 70 species have been prioritized for inclusion in a book on medicinal plants to be published in 2006. Partial financial support was extended for an information and exhibition centre on high-altitude Himalayan medicinal plants and their conservation and sustainable use at the Amchi clinic established by Tengboche Monastery in Namche Bazaar. This year, SCAFP also supported the survey and study of the farming potential of seabuckthorn (*Hippophae tibetana*) to promote its use in increasing off-farm livelihoods.

affected by the ongoing insurgency and most of the targeted activities were carried out successfully through close coordination with local communities and partner organizations. Conservation was possible primarily because people internalized the importance and necessity of conservation and developed a sense of ownership. Future activities will focus on developing leadership and self-reliance in local community-based organizations, and continue to support local livelihoods while promoting species and forest conservation.

The emphasis in this fiscal year was to enhance cooperation between WWF Nepal Program and major stakeholders regarding key policy issues related to sustainable livelihoods and landscape-level conservation, especially in the newly conceptualized Sacred Himalayan Landscape.

CROSSING THE IRON GATE

Ngima Yangi Sherpa, student in Chaurikharka, Khumbu, was optimistic about getting through the School Leaving Certificate (SLC) exam, often called the "Iron Gate". For Ngima, getting this far is an achievement in itself. "Being able to sit for the SLC exam was a dream for me because my parents almost took me out of school in grade six since they couldn't afford to pay the bills," Ngima says. "Fortunately, I was selected for a scholarship from the Women Awareness Group formed by Sagarmatha Community Agro-forestry Project." It hasn't been an easy path for this young girl. It takes her an hour to get to school and another hour to reach home. But Ngima finds time way from studies to pursue other interest: she is an active Eco Club member and works with her group to raise awareness and participate in clean-up campaigns. Her teachers praise her diligence and hard work, her family is proud of her progress at school. "I would like to continue studying and then work to help my people lead better lives," says Ngima. "Thank you SCAFP for helping me!"

CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

SCAFP was comparatively less



Kangchenjunga Conservation Area Project

Ecological integrity with economic benefits

The goal of the Kangchenjunga Conservation Area Project (KCAP), initiated jointly by WWF Nepal Program and DNPWC at Kangchenjunga Conservation Area in 1998, is to ensure the management of biodiversity in the conservation area by communities for ecological integrity and socio-economic benefits. Unsustainable harvesting of natural resources, intensive livestock grazing, slash and burn agricultural practices, forest encroachment, wildlife poaching and illegal extraction of medicinal plants are major threats to the rich biodiversity of the Kangchenjunga region.

The decision of His Majesty's Government of Nepal to hand the management responsibilities of the conservation area over to the Kangchenjunga Conservation Area

Management Council (KCAMC) reflects the success of KCAP in building capacity and institutionalizing community-based organizations. The KCAMC has been registered as a local NGO and a community management regulation, operation manual, and business plan were drafted.

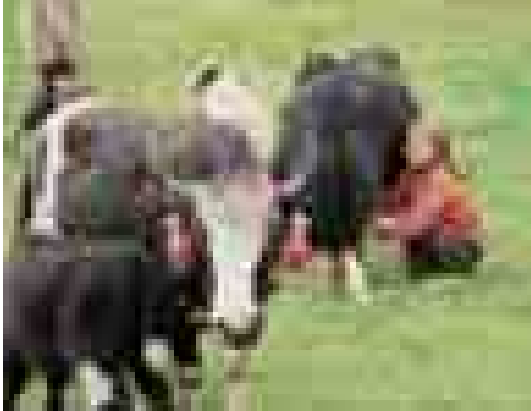
To better local livelihoods, KCAP supported the production of Nepali handmade paper from Lokta (*Daphne bholua*) by two local entrepreneurs. A two-month hotel development training for local residents was conducted along with other skill enhancement activities like veterinary and community medical assistant training. KCAP also helped in the construction of a child daycare centre to enable mothers not only to set aside more time to better the family's livelihood

but also to contribute substantially to conservation. Communities also benefited from infrastructure development like bridges through support from the Kadoorie Agriculture Aid Association (KAAA).

FOREST CONSERVATION

KCAP secured NRs 17 million from KAAA for the construction of two micro-hydro plants, which will greatly reduce fuelwood pressure on forests. Although construction has yet to





begin, this project has already mobilized local communities to initiate preliminary groundwork. The reforestation and natural regeneration program continue to motivate mother groups, user committees and local Eco Clubs. They planted 8,191 tree and fodder seedlings in 3.3 Ha of community and privately owned land. Three plant nurseries managed by user groups and mother groups planted a commendable 18,691 seedlings of 22 species of fruit, fodder and trees.

SPECIES CONSERVATION

As part of community-based wildlife monitoring, a team comprising community members and government employees conducted wildlife monitoring in critical areas of Walangchung Gola in December

2004. The team monitored sites where musk deer had been poached and removed several snares.

The Snow Leopard Conservation Committee monitored nine snow leopard transects in November 2004. There was no sighting of the elusive animal. A total of 210 blue sheep in both sites were seen. A livestock depredation survey revealed that 19 livestock, including yak, *chauri* and goats, were killed by snow leopards in Ghunsa and Yangma between April-September 2004. In consultation with local communities, KCAP prepared a community-based livestock insurance scheme and received funding from the Swiss Development Committee.

Walangchung Gola harbours several species of high value medicinal and

aromatic plants but its close proximity to Tibetan settlements across the border has led to illegal harvesting and export of valuable plants, especially *kutki* (*Neopicrorhiza scrophulariiflora*) and *maikopila* (*Saussurea tridactyla*). A seven-member community-based monitoring team set up by KCAP confiscated 91.5 kg of *kutki* from illegal harvesters. The team also removed several traps set for blood pheasant in the area.

CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

An atmosphere of high uncertainty coupled with restrictions imposed by the insurgents, affected the implementation of a significant amount of KCAP activities in the second half of the fiscal year. This allowed for more policy work to be conducted at the

central level from Kathmandu where WWF Nepal Program actively engaged in coordinating local and national support to improve the working situation. For instance, KCAP utilized the golden jubilee celebrations of the first ascent of Mt

Kangchenjunga as an opportunity to highlight the biodiversity of the area and the achievements of the ongoing project.

The past year underlined the need for project activities to address local problems and sustain conservation work through the involvement of people. Partnership development and collaborative effort remains crucial to the effective implementation of activities in remote, rural areas like the Kangchenjunga Conservation Area. On a brighter note, the preparation of the Strategic Plan for the Sacred Himalayan Landscape is underway, which primarily holds onto lessons learned from KCAP and the Terai Arc Landscape Program.



LIGHT ON THE MOUNTAINS

A solar lighting system has been installed for villagers in north-east Nepal. WWF Nepal Program, together with the Kadoorie Agricultural Aid Association, coordinated the distribution of solar panels to 193 households in the village of Tapethok in the Kangchenjunga Conservation Area. The majority of the rural poor living in the more remote parts of the country still depend on kerosene lamps. For those who can't afford kerosene, they collect pinewood to burn.

"The solar lighting system has not only enabled us to work late but also help our children to do homework at night," said Bishnu Kumari Limbu, one of the villagers who received a solar panel. "Now there is also no discomfort from the burning wood and kerosene smoke."

The aim of the solar lighting system project is to encourage local people living in the conservation area to use alternative energy and to reduce biotic pressure on the surrounding forests. The solar panels have been provided to the poorest households of the area who are largely dependent on forest resources for energy.

"The local villagers have a positive attitude towards the project and are highly appreciative of our efforts," said Ang Phuri Sherpa, project manager of WWF's Kangchenjunga Conservation Area project. "We will train some sixteen locals of Tapethok and other villagers to facilitate the installation of another 333 sets of solar panels."



Northern Mountains Conservation Project

Better conservation together with good governance

The aim of the Northern Mountains Conservation Project (NMCP), implemented in Shey Phoksundo National Park and buffer zone, is to conserve the pristine ecology of the park by strengthening the capabilities of local user groups, NGOs, and park staff to carry out integrated conservation and development initiatives.

NMCP is a joint initiative of WWF Nepal Program and DNPWC. It has a two-pronged project: People and Plant Initiative (PPI) and the Strengthening of Governance in Utilization of Natural Resources (SAGUN). Initiated in 1997 and completed in June 2005, PPI addressed conservation and development issues related to the use of plant resources. SAGUN was initiated in 2002 to focus on strengthening governance among

local communities for the sustainable use of natural resources.

In order to promote indigenous knowledge for conservation and local livelihoods, the project continued to support Amchis in Dolpo through the two Amchi traditional health care centres (THCCs) in the villages of Phoksundo and Dho. These THCCs provided service to 135 local patients during the year and generated funds towards its running costs.

In this fiscal year, NMCP provided infrastructure for basic amenities like drinking water and toilets to benefit nearly 150 rural households. Funds for 256 sets of improved cooking stoves were secured. A watermill and an oil processing mill were made in two villages. The economic empowerment of women was boosted through a fund of NRs 35,000 each to two local

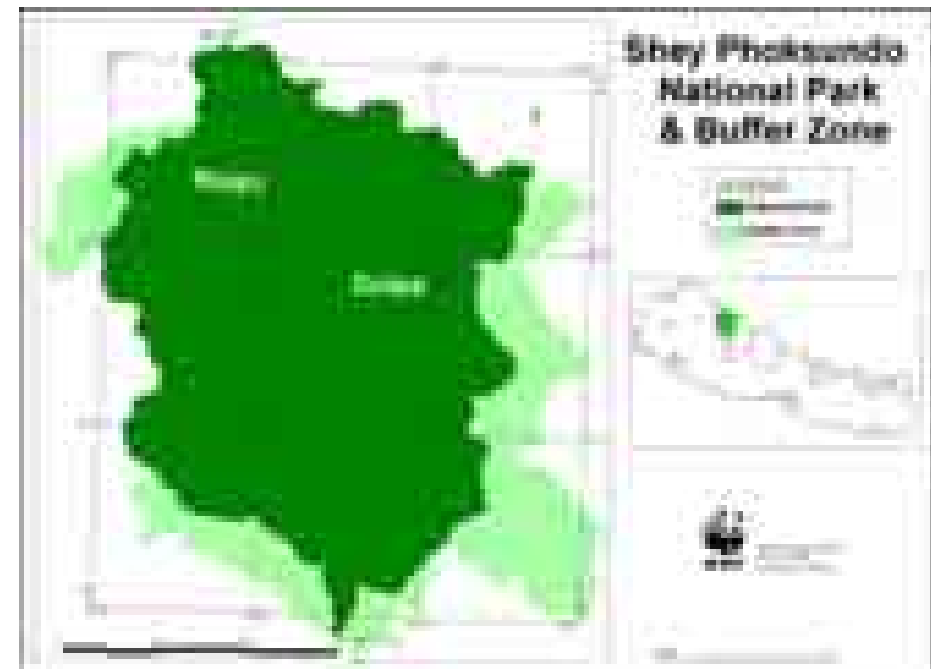
sister groups with training on its proper utilization to benefit all members.

To encourage the participation of marginalized and the disadvantaged groups, 27 local women participated in a training course on growing kitchen gardens. With at least one community member as a 'conservation farmer' in each village,

others in the village are all set to 'learn by doing'.

FOREST CONSERVATION

Nursery management and plantations were strengthened through forest user groups and buffer zone user committees in NMCP. They planted 2,145 seedlings of pine, walnut and salix. The survival of the plants is 73



per cent on average. To promote the use of local medicinal plants, the NMCP supported research on medicinal and aromatic plants (MAPs) nurseries during the fiscal year. The People and Plants Initiative continued to provide support for *in-situ* and *ex-situ* conservation of MAPs. Although slow-growing species has yet to yield commercial benefits, local communities remain motivated about the long-term benefits of cultivating MAPs.

School children learned traditional skills of using locally available medicinal plants from the traditional Amchi discipline. The operational plans for two Traditional Health Care Centres at Dho were finalized during the year. Other activities included an orientation workshop on non-timber forest products and the institutionalization, capacity building and strengthening of community-based organizations through various activities like inventory keeping, rangeland management, a public hearing and audit, financial management, and an exposure tour to

exchange experiences with other communities.

To promote alternative energy, NMCP provided solar sets to 128 households in upper Dolpa and organized a five-day training on its fittings and maintenance. Improved cooking stoves were given to 113 households of lower Dolpa to reduce fuelwood pressure on natural resources. A feasibility survey was conducted in five sites for micro-hydro electricity estimated at a capacity of 51 KW. This is expected to not only reduce dependency on forest resources but also effect changes in rural lifestyle practices.

SPECIES CONSERVATION

In order to generate awareness and seek local people's support for snow leopard conservation, the project set up a nine-member Snow Leopard Conservation Committee (SLCC) at Dho VDC. A training program was also organized during the year for the committee members about the importance of conservation of the

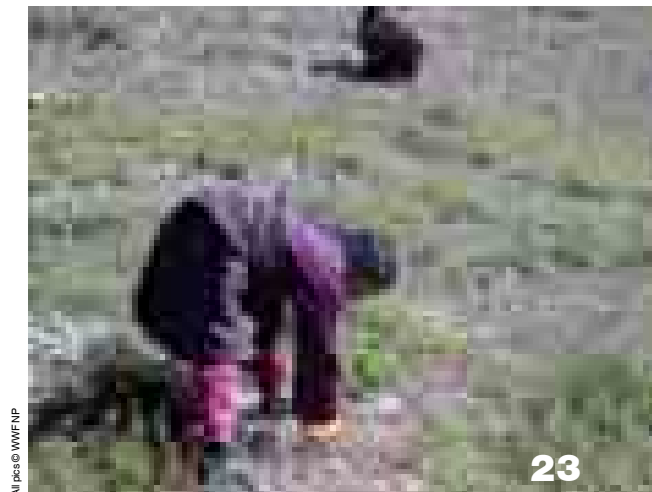
globally threatened species, its distribution and status in Nepal, and threats faced by the charismatic cat. The other training program organized for park rangers and local game scouts was focused on monitoring techniques of snow leopard transects and data collection.

A WWF survey carried out to assess livestock depredation in critical areas as part of the snow leopard conservation program found more damage was caused by wolves than the elusive cat, with sheep as the major prey. The study also concluded that crop damage by ungulates was negligible.

An orientation program to promote anti-poaching succeeded in consolidating local efforts to deter wildlife poaching. Members of community forest user groups, buffer zone user groups, Eco Clubs and youth clubs actively patrol their respective forests. Hundreds of snares set for wild animals were removed.



© WWF NP/Gautam POUYAL
Schoolgirls in Dolpa



All pics © WWF NP
Amchi gathering medicinal plants

CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

Increased insurgency related disturbances in the area and an atmosphere of uncertainty severely restrained the mobility of NMCP field staff. As a result, project monitoring was hampered. The importance of capacity building to institutionalize community-based organizations became of critical importance as NMCP implemented most project activities through community-based organizations and local NGOs. The People and Plants Initiative, which has drawn to a close, not only contributed to the institutionalization of traditional health care services but also to the sustainable livelihoods of the people. The People and Plants Initiative showed the absolute necessity of providing tangible benefits to local communities to win their support and stewardship for biodiversity conservation.



LEARNING HER LETTERS

When Hansi Sarki's neighbors asked her to volunteer as a health worker in her village of Tripurakot, she was afraid to face the ridicule of other women that could read and write. Apart from being illiterate, Hansi's hesitancy had a deep-rooted foundation in her family's poverty and Dalit background in this remote district of Dolpa in Nepal's northwest. Despite her misgivings, she joined the centre.

One day at work, a colleague told her about a non-formal education program conducted by the Northern Mountains Conservation Project (NMCP). Hansi immediately joined the class conducted for local women, worked hard and soon learned to read and write. Today, everyone comments on her transformation. Hansi brims with confidence. She spoke to Pabitra Thapa, a field staff at NMCP, and proudly said: "I can now write my name, read the calendar, register children who come to the health center and maintain a record of medicines. I can also keep an account of domestic expenditures and help children with their schoolwork."

Hansi is sad the informal education program in her village has ended. She wants to learn more. Like Hansi, many local men and women have benefited from NMCP's non-formal education program in Dolpa's isolated villages. With a project goal that aims to conserve biodiversity in Shey Phoksundo National Park by strengthening the capacities of the local communities, educating those like Hansi is a perfect way of not only helping people to help themselves but also to conserve nature.



© WWFNP / Sandeep CHAMLING RAI

Climate Change Program: From Local to Global



Climate change is a global concern. With every degree rise in temperature - vulnerability is increasing. We know that the major cause of global warming is the excessive emission of greenhouse gases, the major contributors of which are developed nations. Nepal's population comprises less than 0.4 per cent of the global count and we are responsible for emitting only about 0.025 per cent of greenhouse gases annually. Yet Nepal is one of the most vulnerable countries due to our fragile mountain ecosystems, poverty coupled with slow economic growth and more importantly, lack of resources, both financial and technical, to adapt with the rapidly changing climate. Unfortunately, climate change is not a priority in the national planning process. It is evident that there is an information gap and a relatively low level of awareness among key stakeholders on climate change issues in comparison with other environmental threats.

Recognizing these challenges, WWF Nepal Program started its Climate Change Program in August 2003. Since then, the program has evolved tremendously, and now focuses on four areas of intervention:

- **Impact Research** leading to effective national and international negotiations for national climate change policy formulation and reducing impacts;
- **Adaptation work** to address climate change vulnerabilities and build resilience of those vulnerable communities;
- **Facilitating international negotiations** of the government and civil society to initiate effective dialogues at international platforms such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC); and
- **Raise awareness** to enhance the understanding of climate change issues at local, national and international levels.

As a part of impact research, WWF Nepal Program initiated the Himalayan Glacier and River Project. The regional research project generates data to be used in forecasting changes under different climatic scenarios and to verify the direct relationship between climate change and glacier retreat.

Apart from research, we have been actively involved in enabling the voices of climate change vulnerable communities to be heard at national as well as international fora through the Climate Witness Project. A major output of the Climate Witness Project is the production and the launch of

"Meltdown in Nepal", a documentary that highlights Nepal's vulnerabilities from global warming in the form of glacier lake outburst flood (GLOF) events. It has been instrumental in getting the attention of the global community at various occasions like the Conference of Parties (COP 10) for UNFCCC at Buenos Aires, Argentina, in December 2004.

Further to this, the Climate Change Program is a member secretariat of the Climate Change Network Nepal (CCNN), a network of nine different NGOs/INGOs that has been successful in lobbying for reviewing national policy, raising awareness, capacity building and providing technical support to the government of Nepal. This year, CCNN's lobbying was fruitful in bringing out a new policy that led to the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol by His Majesty's Government of Nepal.



PROGRAM VISION (50 Years):

Nepal's people, biodiversity, ecosystem, watersheds and Himalayan water towers are safeguarded from climate change impacts.

PROGRAM GOAL:

By 2014, the vulnerabilities of biodiversity, ecosystems and people to climate change impacts in Nepal are mainstreamed in the national development planning process and adaptation strategies are implemented to address and reduce the impact of climate change.

NORBU SHERPA

WWF Climate Change Witness - Nepal

Extract from the speech at
Climate Witness Events during COP 10
December 2004



Both pics © WWFNP / Sandeep CHAMLING RAI

“Life in the mountains is already very hard, but when dangers like a flood are added, it threatens everything we build and grow with so much difficulty.

“I know this from bitter experience. Nearly 19 years ago, at 3 pm on 4 August 1985, a glacier lake in Langmoche Glacier burst. This flood from Dig Tsho Glacier Lake came so rapidly and with such force that it washed away five houses, many cattle and large chunks of fertile farm land. My family home was one of those houses. The flood swept away our vegetable farm and I can remember how terrified our cow looked as it drowned.

“The water rushed by for two hours and after that my family was left with nothing. The next day, our neighbours helped us to look for anything we could use in the mud near the river bank. All we could get was a few things from our kitchen - nothing else. We were homeless and landless but the Sherpa people are kind. Our neighbour gave us refuge for more than month.

“I am thankful that the Dig Tsho flood happened during the day. Had it been at night, I would not be here to tell you my story. We had our lives but that event lost us everything we owned, equal to about Rs 12 lakhs in our currency or \$16,000 at that time. This is no small sum. For many Sherpas in the mountains, this is the earnings of a lifetime. Later, I heard the same flood had destroyed the

almost completed Micro Hydro Power Plant in Thamo. I hear that cost \$1.5 million. I cannot even imagine how much money that is but any loss, big or small, is hard to bear. The suspension bridge in our village was destroyed by the flood and for a long time it was hard to get food and supplies.

“That flood changed my life. I was studying to become a monk but after we lost everything, I had to take a different path. Now I am a trekking guide and with my earnings, my family has built a small trekkers lodge in Ghat.

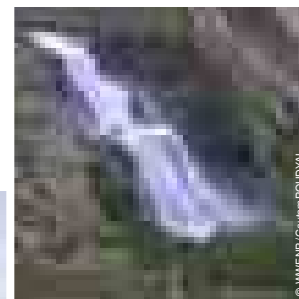
“My story is not unique to the people of the Khumbu. I was not the only person whose life was changed forever by the Dig Tsho flood in 1985. Now I hear that events like this can become more frequent in the Himalayas. In the years that I have worked as a trekking and expedition guide, I have seen snow lines and glaciers go back higher and higher. Meanwhile, new lakes are forming; others are growing larger and larger.

“I am a man of the mountains, of my people. We do not usually have access to the big international groups who will hear our pleas for help to save the mountains and our lives. Please, take the issue of climate change seriously because it’s about people, lives and livelihoods everywhere, from Buenos Aires to my small village of Ghat in the shadows of the Himalayas.”



© WWF NP / Neera SPRACHAN

Freshwater Program: Conserving the Source of Life



© WWF NP / Gauri POLJAL

We inhabit a "water planet", where almost 70 per cent of its surface is covered by water, out of which less than 2.5 per cent consists of freshwater and the rest is salt water. Life on this planet depends on only 0.26 per cent of freshwater, which is accessible. Freshwater ecosystems have a higher species density than either terrestrial or marine habitat. However, this critical resource is under greater threat than the other habitats, showing a far greater decline in freshwater fish species.

Nepal has been blessed with approximately 6,000 rivers and rivulets and more than 600 lakes. All rivers flowing south from Nepal form part of the headwaters of the Ganges River Basin, one of the 20 largest rivers in the world and home to nearly 500 million people. The rivers flowing from Nepal comprise 40 per cent of the main annual flow and 70 per cent of the dry season flow of the Ganges.

Despite this water wealth, the average Nepali does not have enough water to meet basic needs, nor is all the available water potable. A sharp growth in Nepal's population has increased pressure on the available water resources resulting in intense pressure on water resources being used for groundwater extraction, drainage for irrigation and fishing to sustain livelihood. As Nepal rushes closer to an inevitable water crisis, WWF Nepal Program initiated partnership with like-minded organizations to consolidate efforts to safeguard our freshwater resources to conserve biodiversity dependent on it and enhance the livelihoods of people.

The Freshwater Program was initiated in October 2004 to work on the emerging issues, minimize impacts and threats, and sustainable utilization and conservation of freshwater for future generations by integrating with the ongoing projects in the mountains and the Terai Arc Landscape - Nepal. The major focus of the program is to:

- support government policy to safeguard freshwater resources;
- enhance institutional capacity and improve co-ordination and co-operation among related government agencies and institutions at the local, district and national level to work on freshwater issues;
- achieve increased participation (at various levels) in conservation and sustainable management of freshwater habitats by generating awareness and strengthening decision capabilities;
- maintain and restore freshwater habitats and environmental processes of river basins and

wetlands; and

- establish/maintain viable populations of freshwater indicator species and conserve its habitats.

Highlighting the importance of freshwater and its habitat conservation, various awareness raising activities were conducted for target groups like students, environmental journalists and local communities. WWF Nepal Program also identified pressing issues pertaining to freshwater in the Terai and the mountains.

Conservation of High Altitude Wetlands (HAW) has become an increasingly significant global issue in recent years, especially given that these wetlands function as water towers for the world. In Nepal, very limited studies and research have been carried out on high mountain wetlands. There is paucity of information especially with regard to wetland threats and management.

Hence, WWF Nepal Program, with support from WWF International (Freshwater Program) and WWF-UK (PPA), joined hands with His Majesty's Government of Nepal and initiated a study to prepare an inventory of HAW in Nepal. The main objective of this study is to develop a comprehensive database on HAWs of Nepal where WWF Nepal Program and DNPWC have collaborative programs: Kangchenjunga Conservation Area,



VISION: Himalayan water towers and freshwater habitats in Nepal are conserved and sustainable managed to benefit people and nature.

GOAL: By 2011, WWF Nepal Program will champion the conservation and management of wetlands and ecological processes are maintained and restored through conservation efforts.

WISE USE OF WETLANDS + COMMUNITY RUN FISH FARMS = PEOPLE FOR CONSERVATION

Nepal's far-western districts of Kailali and Kanchanpur are dotted with natural lakes and ponds. With a growing understanding for the need of the wise use of wetlands, local communities are beginning to put their knowledge into practice. With the technical and financial support of the Terai Arc Landscape (TAL) Program, community forest user groups in these districts are learning to enrich their wetland resources and their livelihoods.

They began by forming smaller groups in charge of the ponds in their patch of community forest. Then they contributed labour to clean these wetlands, some of which were close to disappearing. "We got the idea of fish farming in our neglected lakes and ponds from the TAL Program," says Madan Singh Badayek, the coordinator of the Laljhadi Community Forest User Group. "It's simple to see that taking care of our ponds and lakes means that we also benefit." In 2005, the fry of commercially popular species of fish were released in the newly restored ponds.

The fish ponds are expected to earn between NRs 25,000 - 200,000 (US\$350 - 2,800). The fish has a ready market at the district headquarters and the locals are already exploring the possibility of taking their fish further. Most importantly, this local initiative has not only improved sustainable livelihoods but has also garnered the stewardship of people for the conservation of ecologically important wetlands.



Sagarmatha National Park and Shey Phoksundo National Park. This study will also incorporate Langtang National Park in view of the recent planning for the Sacred Himalayan Landscape (SHL), which is an initiative led by the Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation and key partners.

In the Terai belt, river dolphins (*Platanista gangetica*), the freshwater flagship species, are highly vulnerable to external threats as their habitat requirements often place them in areas where human activities are most intense. The river dolphin population is believed to be close to local extinction in the Karnali River in the absence of conservation actions on both sides of the Nepal and India borders. Taking this into consideration, WWF

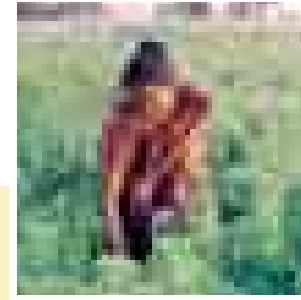
Nepal Program, with the support from WWF UK (Freshwater Program), initiated a status survey of dolphins in the Karnali River and its tributaries in TAL-Nepal, a threat analysis of its habitat and awareness raising at local and national level on dolphin conservation.

Through the TAL Program, WWF Nepal Program is also working in the Ghodaghodi Lake system, one of four Ramsar Sites in Nepal, for the conservation of biodiversity and enhancement of livelihood of local communities. The overall goal of the project is for Ghodaghodi Lake to be managed by local indigenous community institutions and benefit livelihoods by ensuring ecological integrity of the wetland ecosystem.



Sustainable Livelihoods for Better Conservation

Bahadur © WWF/NP

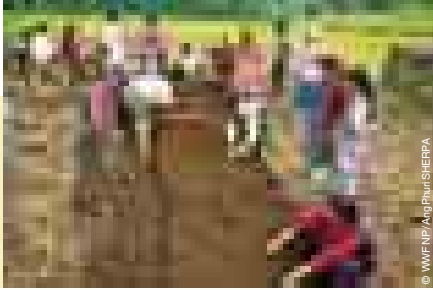


Poverty is a grim reality for many Nepalis and with more than 80 per cent of the population dependent on agriculture, there is high pressure on natural resources. This is especially acute on the fringes of protected areas, accounting for nearly 18 per cent of Nepal's total land cover, because local communities are heavily dependent on forest resources for their livelihoods. To save fragile ecosystems, poverty needs to be tackled with appropriate strategies without compromising natural resource bases. Neither the mountains nor the lowlands can be regarded as an unlimited natural resource for rapidly growing populations.

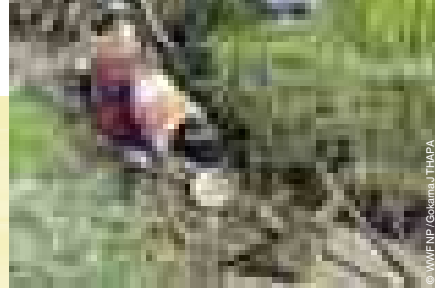
Three decades of biodiversity conservation in the country has shown effective conservation is not possible without the active and participatory involvement of local people. WWF's support for conservation in Nepal has evolved with the change in government policy from strict law enforcement practices of the early years to a more conciliatory approach. This has culminated in the establishment of buffer zones around protected areas and revenue sharing with local people for community development works.

WWF Nepal recognizes that conservation is intrinsically interwoven with the issues of livelihoods of local people. In 2002, we adopted the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) to maximize conservation benefits directly with improving the lives of people, which in turn would bring about their meaningful participation in the wise-use of natural resources.

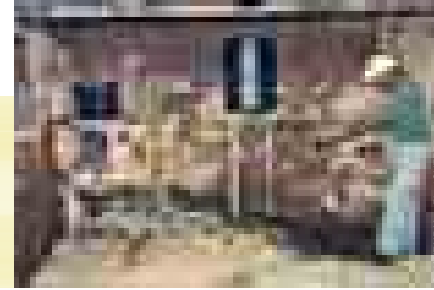
Sustainable development is a major component in all our programs implemented in both the lowlands and the mountains. Development work aimed at improving local livelihoods has created a positive attitude in locals. Community groups living in fringe areas are not only contributing significantly in natural regeneration and restoration of degraded patches of forest in crucial biological corridors but also helping to curb wildlife poaching and illegal extraction of forest products.



Preparing a vegetable nursery: An exercise of learning by doing in KCA, Taplejung



Terai wetlands: Traditional source of foods for indigenous communities



Back-boiler: An energy efficient device installed in KCA, Taplejung



Farmers map local natural resources in the Terai

Our programs link the issues of local livelihoods with natural resources conservation, and encourage local participation and stewardship by creating opportunities of income generation. Our efforts are not confined to immediate tangible livelihoods needs but also to build local capacity to transform conservation benefits to other subsistence resources.

The major achievement of the past fiscal year was designing and publishing *Sustainable Livelihoods: A Sustainable Livelihoods Mainstreaming Strategy*. This document is well on

its way to becoming an important guide in integrating SLA by giving strategic directions and raising issues that need to be considered. It examines how this approach may be incorporated in the various stages that

make up project cycle management for use in adaptive management practices. Recommendations have been made in the areas of entry points and activities to support good governance, institutional assessment, policy analysis and advocacy, and monitoring and evaluation. It emphasizes the need to deliver multiple benefits that ensure people are not alienated from natural resources that they depend on.

The broad areas that WWF supports are as follows:

- Promotion of non-timber forest products;
- Agro-forestry based income generating activities;
- Forest-based enterprises;
- Building institutional capacity of conservation/ natural resource management groups or community-based organizations;
- Promotions of affordable and appropriate alternative energy technologies; and

- Promotion of eco-tourism and species tourism through human skills enhancement.

In the past fiscal year, the activities undertaken focused primarily in these areas. Ten different Livelihoods Impact Indicators were developed for WWF Nepal Program to define conservation contribution to livelihoods and current monitoring activities are based on them. A pre-feasibility study in June 2004, using SLA in Langtang National Park, defined potential entry points for further feasibility studies. Major issues identified were grazing pressures, potential of eco-tourism and species tourism, community forestry and livestock diseases. A similar assessment to identify SLA entry points was conducted in Sagarmatha National Park in April 2004. Community consultation and consent, and different tourism and species based livelihoods opportunities were identified. This visit initiated the

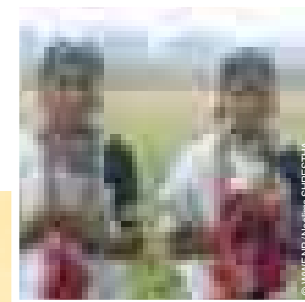
development of the next phase of the Sagarmatha Project Document.

Different indicators that reflect livelihoods changes at various level of log-frame outputs were designed and an orientation on key sustainable livelihoods issues of social inclusion and vulnerability assessment was conducted at WWF NP offices. Sustainable livelihoods were an important component in assessing the overall contribution of WWF Nepal Program to achieving the Millennium Development Goals for AIN. The sustainable livelihoods component was also incorporated in the preparation of a four-year achievement assessment of WWF Nepal Program and to determine the future direction of the organization. This gave us critical feedback and identified information gaps in our efforts and helped us chart our future steps.



© WWF NP

Sharing Conservation: Communication and Conservation Education



© WWF NP / Anshu SHRESTHA

In the past fiscal year, WWF Nepal Program has continued to explore ways and means to strengthen our communication and education work, especially in the field. We worked extensively in sharing conservation messages in our program areas and with national and global audiences.

In our efforts to reach different audiences, our online portal, www.wwfnepal.org received an update in keeping with new branding guidelines to make it fit the profile of a global conservation organization. Several new features, like postcards and a photo gallery were added. The website is updated with news, feature stories and digital versions of our latest publications.

We actively supported regional, national and international press interest in conservation work in Nepal. An MTV documentary with major Hollywood stars was filmed at Royal Chitwan National Park. Initiatives in the park and the Eco Club of Nawalparasi were featured on MTV Trippin' in March 2005. Working with WWF Netherlands, a press trip to the Himalayas for four Dutch journalists to witness climate change impact in the mountain environment was organized in November 2004. The coverage the Netherlands generated important interest for climate change issues in the Himalayas. A team from British Broadcasting Cooperation (BBC) Television visited Nepal to document the climate change impact issues in June 2005. They visited the weather monitoring station of Department of Hydrology and Meteorology at Dolalghat and interacted with the local people. The documentary was broadcast during the G8 summit in July 2005.



Alphas © WWF NP

Filming a rhino documentary at RCNP

Visitors at a WWF exhibition stall

Conservation education class for Miss Nepal contestants 2004

We lay great emphasis on the planning and production of the fortnightly radio program *Bhuparidhi*, which enjoyed continued success in the Terai. Dramas, interviews and information-sharing in the enjoyable format refined in the past year highlighted many important issues and succeeded in winning a wider audience.

WWF Nepal Program has always supported environmental journalism in the country. On World Wetlands Day (2 February 2004) a sensitization workshop for environmental journalists was organized jointly by DoF, DNPWC, WWF Nepal Program and IUCN. We participated in a technical session on the 11th Anniversary of Society of Environmental Journalists (SEJ). Program Officers updated the attendees on new developments in their projects and highlighted the links between journalism and effective

conservation. A team of journalists from Bardia, Kailali and Kanchanpur district led by Umid Bagchand of BBC Nepali Service, visited the Royal Bardia National Park and Buffer Zone, RSWR Buffer Zone, Khata corridor and project sites in Kailali districts.

Dates of importance in the conservation calendar feature prominently for communication drives in WWF Nepal Program. On the occasion of Mt Kangchenjunga Golden Jubilee, a seminar on “Adventure Tourism, Conservation and Development in Kangchenjunga” was organized by Nepal Mountaineering Association on 25 May 2005. World Environment Day 2004 was celebrated with various programs in the Terai Arc Landscape. Together with the Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology (MOEST) and Climate Change Network Nepal (CCNN), WWF organized a workshop

“Prospect and Challenges for Nepal after ratifying Kyoto Protocol” and other programmes.

Communications is a vital part of sharing conservation lessons and successes. We are now in the process of developing a Communication Strategy in line with a new Strategic Plan for the organization, which will be complete in June 2006. Communicating within the organization is also an important priority. The 12th Anniversary celebration was an in-office event focused on and fostered a sense of pride in the staff with the initiation of peer-voted awards in several categories like Employee of the Year and Best Team Player.

After the discouraging results of Rhino Count 2005, the Save the Rhino campaign kicked off on 22 May 2005, International Biodiversity Day, at

Meghauri in the Buffer Zone of Royal Chitwan National Park (RCNP) with the theme “*Ustai Prani Ustai Pida, Milera Jogaun Ek Singe Gaida*”, which emphasizes the pain that all living creatures suffer and therefore, encourages everyone to unite in saving the rhinos. Events included a door-to-door campaign among indigenous communities, discussions with buffer zone user committees (BZUC), a speech competition focused on rhino conservation, skits, media trip for journalists and interactions with Chief Warden Shiva Raj Bhatta and Dr Sarala Khaling of WWF NP, and a popular *lok dohari* (folk song) session with a rhino conservation theme. Conservation Ambassador Payal Shakya also attended the campaign and stressed the responsibility of young people in the conservation of rhinos.

Publications



CONSERVATION AMBASSADOR: BEAUTY WITH A PURPOSE

Payal Shakya, Miss Nepal 2004, was our first Conservation Ambassador. She was in the unique position of reaching different communities and age groups not only here in Nepal but also in the international arena. As a young person, she influenced her peers on the urgency of conservation and proactive measures by sharing experiences and impressions.



Payal played an important role in highlighting the issue of climate change and its impacts. She traveled to Sagarmatha National Park to witness firsthand the effects of global warming on the Himalayas. The subsequent documentary *"Meltdown in Nepal"* was launched as part of the international Climate Witness Project to create awareness among the public and policy-makers on the impact of climate change in the country. Payal, accompanied by Sandeep Chamling Rai, Climate Change Officer of WWF NP, trekked to Imja Tsho and Dig Tsho glacier lakes, talking to locals along the trail, many of them whose lives have been affected by glaciers melting in the Himalayas.

Payal contributed immensely to the success of the Save the Rhino campaign on the occasion of International Biodiversity Day. Her presence and active involvement helped in bringing wider attention to the issue of poaching and illegal wildlife trade. Her stress on the importance of the role and responsibility of youth towards the conservation of the Greater One-horned Rhinoceros has undoubtedly inspired many young Nepalis.

She also played an important role in many of our celebrations like the WWF Nepal Program 12th Anniversary, the Abraham Conservation Award 2005, awareness raising drives among schools in Pokhara and the Kangchenjunga Golden Jubilee Celebration among others.

Conservation Education



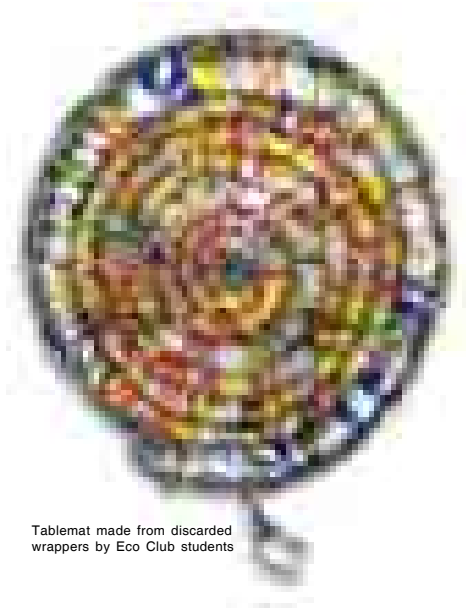
Eco Club members welcome guests to a conservation essay competition, SCAFP



Non-formal education helps women learn how to read and write

The ongoing conservation education programs are designed for the school children, teachers, community members and general public in order to enhance their decision capability for conservation and sustainable development.

This is aimed at school children through the formation and support of the school-based environment groups called Eco Clubs. Fifty-three new Eco Clubs were formed during the fiscal year, bringing the total number of these clubs in WWF Nepal Program project areas to 265. Exposure tours, training, orientation and interaction activities were organized and this has encouraged conservation awareness among students, effecting positive changes in attitude and behavior. In Lamahi, a critical area for the TAL program in Nepal, Eco Club members organized an intensive campaign to raise awareness on community forest among 19 CFUGs.



Tablemat made from discarded wrappers by Eco Club students

Support for the education of deserving students continued with 139 deserving and needy students in the Terai and mountain project areas provided with stipends: 88 came from families affected by human/wildlife conflict. We continued to focus on the involvement of communities in conservation efforts by building capacities through non-formal education (NFE) classes. This fiscal year 16 NFE classes were organized in the project areas from

which 261 people benefited through both basic and post-literacy classes. Additionally, 38 children received basic education classes through the TAL program.

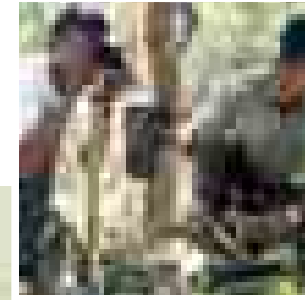
An important focus for the conservation education program was to improve the quality of environment education in schools through Eco Clubs. Eighty teachers in the mountain project areas KCAP, NMCP and SCAFP were trained on mountain environment, its biodiversity and resources. They were also taught to use the Applied Environmental Education Training Package to build their capacities on environmental education.

Investments made in conservation education and communications yield important benefits from the local to the global level. We look upon new challenges and new opportunities to work with people to ensure a living planet.



Michien for wildlife monitoring © WWF-NP

Program Development, Research and Monitoring



Supporting the development of projects, monitoring the achievements, learning from the successes and meeting challenges to reach our conservation goals.

Program development involves the establishment of desired goals in order to identify a plan for achieving them. Teams comprising of staff from different program units and finance and administration work together according to a mutually agreed process and an action plan. This year some of the major work in program development were:

GRACEFUL EXITS:

We have been working in Sagarmatha National Park (SNP) and Shey Phoksundo National Park (SPNP) for nearly a decade. From site-based conservation to a landscape level focus, we have moved also from an Integrated Conservation and Development Projects to the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach. The latter is a more holistic approach to addressing the conservation-livelihoods interface, particularly in the very complex operating environment that we work in. Comprehensive plans were developed for the phase-out that involved community consultations, other stakeholder consultation, consolidation of work and documenting lessons learnt on the successes as well as the shortcomings of our intervention in these sites.

NEW PROGRAMS - NEW FOCUS:

In SNP and SPNP, we will be implementing the 2nd Phase Programs with new focus areas that include species conservation, in particular snow leopards and its prey base, non-timber forest products as a major livelihoods strategy, institutions strengthening in terms of good governance, sustainability, service providers and implementations, addressing vulnerabilities of climate change, alternative energy and freshwater biodiversity issues. A new area of operation - Langtang National Park has also been identified and pre-feasibility surveys and a district level planning exercise have already been conducted. Project documents with these new focus areas are being prepared following a systematic process and an action plan

AN EYE ON THE TERAI WILDLIFE:

Wildlife monitoring focusing on flagship species like tiger, ungulates, rhinos, Bengal Florican was carried out in

TAL. Tiger monitoring was conducted using camera traps in Royal Shuklaphanta Wildlife Reserve. Preliminary data analysis showed an estimate of 27 breeding tigers in the reserve. Prey monitoring showed a high abundance of ungulates in protected areas and in the corridor forests. Royal Chitwan National Park has been one of the best habitats for rhino population in Nepal. The Rhino Count 2005 conducted in Royal Chitwan National Park in March 2005 showed a population of 372 rhinos in the park.

RESEARCH:

Key research and documentation focused on lessons learnt from the TAL Field Learning Site as part of the Ecosystem, Protected Areas and People project supported by IUCN

Regional Office. The study is the process of sharing knowledge and experience of different stakeholders including DNPWC, DOF, NGOs and Buffer Zone institutions, community forest institutions and other civil society organizations. A Socioeconomic Assessment of the Sacred Himalayan Landscape, Nepal was conducted with the main objective of identifying key stakeholders, analyzing key threats and opportunities and proposing strategies for livelihood and conservation issues.

SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM:

Action research grants were provided to 16 students, out of which two were PhD scholars, nine Masters and five Bachelors level students. Five students were provided research grants through the Terai Arc Landscape Program. Research activities were carried out in diverse geographical locations that involved snow leopard and prey species study in Sagarmatha region to NTFP study in Sikles in Annapurna Conservation Area to ungulate and grassland research in the Terai.





Species Monitoring: Rhino Count 2005

CENTRAL DATABASE SYSTEM

holds programmatic and information data that allow statistical and socioeconomic analysis. The data has been assembled differently for various projects and the system is capable of generating reports in a tabular format. The information in the system can be used in reports, handouts, electronic presentations and for publications.

Noteworthy work from the

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (GIS)

sub-unit were: **Forest cover change analysis of 20 Terai Districts** to find out the rate of forest cover change in Terai districts over a 10-year period (1991-2001). WWF Nepal Program was a key member in a team lead by Department of Forests. Key findings were that the annual rate of deforestation in 20 Terai districts is

-0.08 per cent excluding protected areas while it was -0.06 per cent including protected areas. **Snow Leopard Habitat Modeling** for the Eastern Himalaya region (especially Nepal, Bhutan and India) was prepared under the supervision of Dr Eric Wikramanayake, WWF-US. The analysis was based on the ruggedness index, slope, vegetation coverage, elevation and the sighting location all derived from peer reviewed published sources.

MONITORING is key to project development and this year the DRM unit undertook: **Planning and using the logical framework analysis:** Logical Framework (also known as a Project Framework), which is tool for planning and managing projects, was developed for all programs of WWF

Nepal Program. One key feature was its linkage to Adaptive Management Plan and Monitoring Plan. This was greatly supported by WWF-UK (Jennifer Headley, Debbie Heaney and Will Beale). We also initiated Root Cause Analysis to identify direct and indirect causes of environmental degradation and develop conceptual models based on which log frames were developed for all the project sites. **Ecoregion targets and milestones:** To contribute to the global targets of WWF network, we operate in four G200 Ecoregions and four thematic areas. Targets and milestones have been identified in coordination with WWF India and WWF Bhutan as and are monitored annually through WWF Network's Global Monitoring System. **Monitoring Plan** outlines steps to ensure that the project is on track. Based on the logical framework, a

monitoring and evaluation plan was developed for all projects and programs. A series of workshops were organized to develop these plans while also building the capacity of the program staff in designing the log frame and monitoring and evaluation plans. We were greatly supported by WWF-UK and in particular Julie Thomas, Social Development Advisor of WWF UK and Cathy Butcher. **Learning and adapting:** Lesson learning tools were used to train program staff in documenting lessons learnt during project implementation to provide feedback for program design. The information and analysis obtained through monitoring will be used internally to make tactical modifications in the design and implementation of ongoing projects, programs and strategic plans so as to better meet conservation goals.



Policy and Advocacy

Policy and advocacy are key areas where WWF Nepal Program plans to build its strength and focus in the coming years. Many of our goals and objectives in practicing conservation will bear results or become sustainable only if certain policies of the government are revised or formulated. **With more than 30 years of experience in field implementation, this is the most opportune time for us to be part of the policy and advocacy scenario in Nepal by playing a more active and effective role in policy issues.** In the year gone by, some of the policy and advocacy activities that are worth mentioning are:

CAPACITY BUILDING:

We organized a series of internal workshops to build staff capacity in understanding policy analysis and policy advocacy. A strategy for strengthening policy advocacy over

the next five years in line with Organisational Assessment was chalked out.

ADDRESSING CAIRN ENERGY OIL EXPLORATION:

In August 2004, Cairn Energy PLC signed an agreement with HMGN for oil exploration in the Nepali Terai, including districts where WWF Nepal Program works: Kanchanpur, Kailali, Banke, Bardia and Dang. In response to this development, we organized a series of meetings with the Petroleum Exploration and Promotion Project, Department of Mines and Geology and with visiting Cairn Energy executives to ensure that the protected areas and areas identified as corridors and bottlenecks in the Terai Arc Landscape come under areas that require Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA). Cairn Energy PLC had already relinquished exploration rights of over 2,700 km² of designated protected areas in the Terai Arc Landscape. A dossier on the importance of these areas from an environmental

perspective was prepared. WWF Nepal Program also communicated with Cairn Energy through the WWF Network, especially with people working on Extractive Industries sector in WWF UK and US. As a result of the advocacy, Cairn Energy PLC has verbally agreed to maintain transparency in all its future exploration related work in Nepal through coordinated efforts with WWF Nepal Program.

ENDORSEMENT SNOW LEOPARD ACTION PLAN:

Snow Leopard Action Plan for the Kingdom of Nepal, which was prepared by Dr. Prahlad Yonzon with the support of WWF Nepal Program over two years ago, was finally endorsed by His Majesty's Government of Nepal, Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation in January 2005. This is part of the greater efforts of the HMGN to conserve mountain biodiversity and consolidate ongoing conservation initiatives for endangered wildlife species such as the snow leopard.

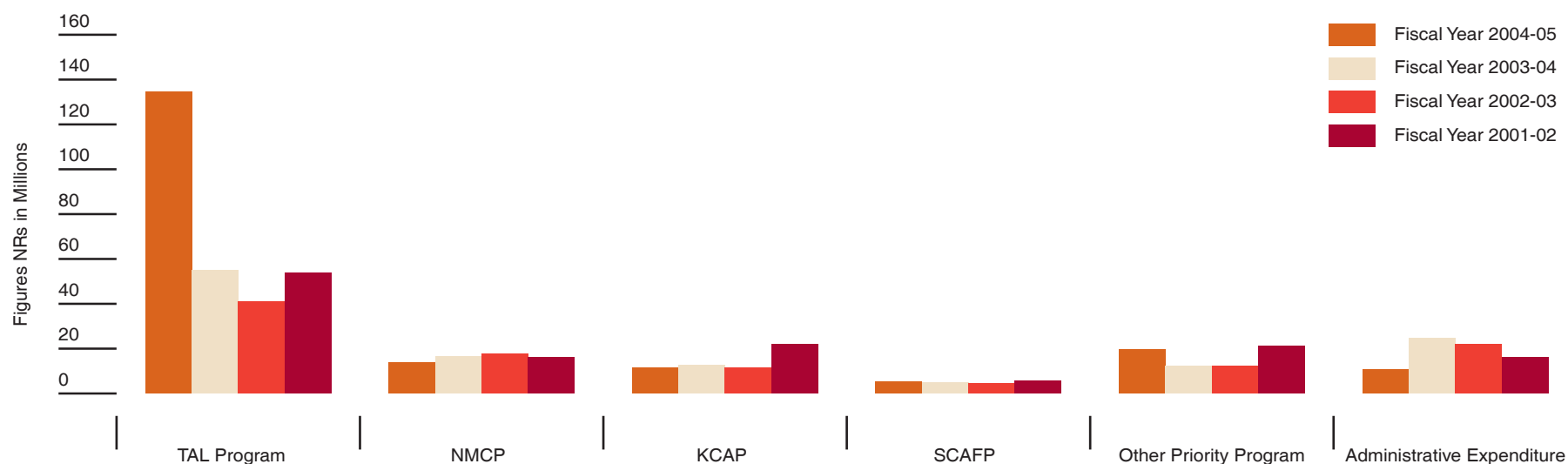
DRAFTING OF KCA COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS:

As part of a long standing commitment to the communities of Kangchenjunga Conservation Area (KCA) and in response to the government's call for handing over of certain protected areas to non-government organizations and "other institutions", we supported DNPWC in the preparation of a separate KCA Community Management Regulations. This has been submitted to Ministry of Forests and Soil conservation for endorsement. This provides for effective and sustainable management of Conservation Area, by handing over of KCA to the KCA Management Council. The most important part of this regulation, which is the first of its kind in Nepal, was that 100 per cent of the KCA revenue would go to the Management Council. In addition sustainable mechanisms for revenue generation have been prescribed for in the regulation.

Financial Overview

WWF NEPAL PROGRAM AUDITED STATEMENTS OF EXPENDITURE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2001-02 TO 2003-05

Particulars	Total amount FY 2001-02	Total amount FY 2002-03	Total amount FY 2003-04	Total amount FY 2004-05
Terai Arc Landscape Progrm	53,814,324	40,845,915	54,884,679	134,605,465
Mountain Program	43,627,912	33,574,649	34,158,975	30,780,747
i) Northern Mountain Conservation Project	16,074,704	17,589,025	16,413,198	13,937,434
ii) Kangchenjunga Conservation Area Project	21,825,096	11,592,223	12,772,069	11,442,380
iii) Sagarmatha Community Agro Forestry Project	5,728,112	4,393,401	4,973,708	5,400,933
Other Priority Program	21,006,135	12,288,053	12,118,447	19,642,577
Administrative Expenditure	16,256,192	22,000,167	24,519,353	10,499,923
Total Expenditure	134,704,563	108,708,784	125,681,453	195,528,712



HIGHLIGHTS

2004

JULY

Conservation Ambassador: Miss Nepal-World 2004 Interaction program organized for Miss Nepal contestants on 28 July. WWF NP announcement of Miss Nepal - World 2004 to be first Conservation Ambassador



Using Hollywood: The Climate Change Network Nepal (CCNN) organized a special screening of the Hollywood blockbuster 'The Day After Tomorrow' followed by a discussion at Jai Nepal Cinema on 27 July

AUGUST

TAL in TIME! Landscape level conservation in the Terai recognized by *Time* magazine



SEPTEMBER

Documentary on Climate Change Impacts: First Conservation Ambassador and Miss Nepal 2004, Payal Shakya and WWF Nepal Program team travel to Sagarmatha National Park to film a documentary

OCTOBER

MTV in Chitwan for a reconnaissance trip to see conservation activities at Royal Chitwan National Park for US program 'Trippin'' featuring several Hollywood stars



DECEMBER

WWF Nepal Program Organizational Assessment Internal Analysis workshop held in Kathmandu from 22-24 December

The Everest Conference of Amchis

held in Namche, Sagarmatha National Park. An Everest Declaration of Amchis 2004 also prepared



2005

JANUARY

Climate Change Documentary: "Meltdown in Nepal" launched as part of International Climate Witness Project to create awareness on the impact of climate change in Nepal. Payal Shakya formally instated as Conservation Ambassador



FEBRUARY

Research Climate Change Impact on Himalayas: A Memorandum of Understanding signed between WWF Nepal Program and Department of Hydrology and Meteorology for five-year period for research on climate change impacts in Nepal

World Wetlands Day in Nepal highlighted by WWF Nepal Program and partner conservation organizations on 2 February 2005. English translation of National Wetlands Policy released



MARCH

Information Centre Inaugurated by Dr Tirtha Man Maskey, Director General of DNPWC, at Majhgaon, Shuklaphanta on 29 March

HIGHLIGHTS

Rhino Count 2005: New figures reveal the population of endangered Greater One-horned rhinos in Royal Chitwan National Park has dropped from 544 in 2000 to 372 - a 31 percent decline in five years



APRIL

Stakeholders' Consultation on Sacred Himalayan Landscape:

Organized jointly by WWF Nepal Program, MFSC, ICIMOD and TMI on 7 April 2005

Wildlife Week: 10th year of celebrations together with DNPWC and other partner organizations to promoting conservation awareness



10,000 Biogas Plants: MOU signed between WWF Nepal Program and Biogas Sector Partnership - Nepal for five years to install 10,000 toilet-attached biogas plants in 30 per cent of households in critical TAL areas

MAY



Save the Rhino Campaign: Week-long campaign themed "*Ustai Prani Ustai Pida, Milera Jogaun Ek Singe Gainda*" kicked off on International Biodiversity Day at Royal Chitwan National Park. Successful involvement of local people, celebrities, farmers,

journalists, school children and the business community

Kangchenjunga Golden Jubilee:

Seminar on 'Adventure Tourism, Conservation and Development in Kangchenjunga' was organized by Nepal Mountaineering Association in partnership with ICIMOD, TMI, IUCN, TRAPAP and WWF NP on 25 May. Kangchenjunga summiters felicitated by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Paras Bir Bikram Shah Dev

12 Years and Counting... on 19 May 2005, WWF Nepal Program celebrated its 12th Anniversary

JUNE

Abraham Conservation Awards

2005 presented to five institutions and three individuals for their outstanding contribution to biodiversity conservation,



conservation education and sustainable development by WWF Nepal Program in Kathmandu on 10 June

Policing the waters: Two inflatable motor rafts to enhance anti-poaching patrols on the River Rapti handed over by Dr Chandra Gurung, Country Representative of WWF Nepal Program, to Royal Chitwan park staff on 15 June



Tackling Human-Elephant Conflict:

Sharing knowledge, experiences and key lessons of human-elephant conflict and mitigation strategies was the main agenda of the regional conference in Kathmandu from 12-14 June

WWF Nepal Program acknowledges with gratitude the support received from the following partners, donors and supporters:

His Majesty's Government of Nepal; Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation (MFSC); Ministry of Environment; Science and Technology (MOEST); Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation (MOCTCA); Ministry of Finance (MOF); Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperative; National Planning Commission (NPC); Social Welfare Council (SWC); Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC); Department of Forests (DOF); Department of Plant Resources (DPR); Department of Forest Research and Survey, Department of Soil Conservation and Watershed Management (DSCWM); Department of Hydrology and Meteorology (DHM); Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock; Nepal Tourism Board (NTB); Water and Energy Commission Secretariat (WECS); Alternative Energy Promotion Center (AEPC)

Ministry of Foreign Affairs-Finland; The British Embassy; The American Embassy; The Embassy of Finland; The Embassy of Pakistan; Royal Netherlands Embassy (New Delhi)

United Nation's Development Program (UNDP); US Agency for International Development (USAID); DGIS/ Netherlands Development Organization (SNV); Department for International Development (DFID); Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA); Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA); European Commission (EC); UK-Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs-Darwin Initiative; US Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS)

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Jim Ottaway; Late Hendrik J Schure; Dr Croucher, Singer Rankin; Cherie Bremer-Camp; Dr Ted Tai-Sen Lin; Victor and Caroline Adams; Dr Judith and Michael Brown; Nancy Abraham

WWF US; WWF UK; WWF Finland; WWF Netherlands; WWF New Zealand; WWF France; WWF Germany; WWF


Sweden; WWF Asian Rhinos and Elephant Action Strategy and WWF Tiger Program; WWF International; WWF China; WWF Indonesia; WWF South Pacific; WWF India

International Center for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD); The World Conservation Union Nepal (IUCN), CARE Nepal; The Mountain Institute (TMI); Practical Action, Nepal; Winrock International; International Water Management Institute (IWMI); ECO Himal; University of Minnesota; International Trust for Tiger Conservation (ITNC)

King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation (KMTNC); Resources Himalaya Foundation; Wildlife Conservation Nepal; Federation of Community Forestry Users, Nepal (FECOFUN); Society of Hydrology and Meteorology - Nepal (SOHAM); Dolphin Conservation Society; Environmental Camps for Conservation Awareness (ECCA); Nepal Forum for Environmental Journalists (NEFEJ); Society of Environmental Journalists (SEJ); Clean Energy Nepal (CEN); Pro Public; Biogas Sector Partnership Nepal (BSP); Kathmandu University; Tribhuvan University (TU); Himalayan Amchi Association (HAA); Nepalnature.com; Wildlife Watch Group; Bird Conservation Nepal; National Environmental Coalition of Indigenous Nationalities (NECIN); Women Entrepreneurship Association, Nepal (WEAN); Ethnobotanical Society of Nepal (ESON); BDS-MaPs; International Development Enterprises Nepal (IDE)

WWF NP would like to express special thanks to: Community Based Organizations; Nepali media organizations; Forest Users Coordination Committees; Community Forest User's Groups, Buffer Zone User's Group; Buffer Zone User Committees; Buffer Zone Management Committees; Eco Club Networks; Eco Clubs; Ghodaghodi Area Conservation and Awareness Forum Kangchenjunga Conservation Area Management Council; Nepal Red Cross Society; Mother Groups; Youth Clubs; District Development Committees (DDCs); Village Development Committees (VDCs); Women Awareness Groups and local communities all over Nepal

Acknowledgements

A young child with dark hair, wearing a blue patterned jacket, stands in a mountainous landscape. The child is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. The background shows a vast, hazy mountain range under a cloudy sky.

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WWF's Mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature by:

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- Reducing pollution and wasteful consumption

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