

## **Project Update: October 2008**

### **18 point commitment of Rhino Seminar - *September 15-17, Sauraha, Chitwan***

The seminar was attended by 40 rhino related individuals primarily researchers, policymakers and managers of the rhino conservation areas from Nepal and India. It was organised by Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) and Asian Rhino Specialist Group (South Asia) with the assistance of National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC), WWF Nepal and WWF-AREAS. Seminar was focused on assessment of existing situation and challenges of one horned rhinos, threats in rhino habitat posed by invasive grass species and ways to overcome it. Seminar has determined the future course in 18 point, as following:

#### **A) About Population census**

1. To undertake rhino population census in the period between 3 to 5 years along all rhino conservation areas of Nepal and India. Year 2010 will be the base year.
2. To monitor individual rhinos through ID based or Radio Collar method in the conservation areas with low number of rhinos particularly in Shuklaphanta wildlife reserve and Bardia National Park (Nepal) and Gorumara, Manas, Dudhawa and Katarniyaghat areas (India).
3. To consolidate the biological corridor on potential rhino habitat linking Western Terai of Nepal and Uttar Pradesh state of India along Bardia-Karaniyaghat and Sukhlafanta-Dudhawa-Pilivit sector. These areas will be managed as a single rhino habitat.
4. To translocate rhinos in Manas Tiger Reserve (India) and extend translocation in Lakhawaburchapori Wildlife Sanctuary (India), according to the Indian Rhino Vision-2020.
5. To undertake feasibility study on rhino translocation in Baxa Tiger Reserve (India) and initiate translocation process. Study will be conducted Asian Rhino Specialist Group and WWF.
6. To suggest on existing conservation system and its effectiveness.

#### **B) About habitat**

1. To study the impact of invasive species on the rhino habitat.
2. To identify alternative rhino habitat in Nepal and India.
3. To scientifically manage the rhino habitat (in grasslands, wetlands and other).
4. To exchange rhino related study and research report between Indian and Nepalese rhino experts and managers. To develop website on South Asian Rhinos.

### **C) About capacity building**

1. To train the local communities and park staffs on rhino monitoring. To develop training manuals and translate it into local language.
2. To enhance the capacity of technical staffs (including livestock service) in and around conservation areas for the management of troubled rhinos.
3. To improve capacity of the park staffs, mobility and communication against rhino poaching and rhino trade.

### **D) About coordination and collaboration**

1. To build up the system of exchanging knowledge and information on rhino conservation among the rhino managers of two countries.
2. To request Indian Government for trans-boundary meeting between Nepal and India.
3. To prepare details on trade of rhino horn and other organs. Asian Rhino Specialist Group will co-ordinate and collaborate with CITES, traffic and local government authorities.
4. To regularly orient law enforcement agencies like army, police, customs offices, forest etc.

### **E) About Award**

- 1) To provide "Dr. Thirthaman Maskey Award" for the individuals serving best for the rhino conservation.

