

Project Update: August 2013

We couldn't able to do many activities within this period because of rainy season and the communities are very busy rice planting. We were just able to do some field level preliminary surveys and coordination which has helped us to plan our activities in a sound and robust way. So, coordination with the local stakeholders and local level information collection has been done which have provided the basis for further effective implementation of the project. Some of the progresses are as follows,

1. Coordination with Multi-stakeholder Committee: A multi-stakeholder committee has been formed for the overall management of the lake. The committee is comprised of government and non-governmental local institutions. Local Development Officer chairs the committee and District Forest Officer serves as Member Secretary. We briefed the committee members and the local stakeholders about our project, project objective and methodology. They have appreciated and are positive towards the project activities.
2. Information collection: We have collected information and figured out the communities, schools, forest offices, customs offices, police stations for the conservation education awareness activities around the project area. Contact details of these institutions have been collected and a plan has been made.
3. Consultation with the local youth and local fishermen: Consultations with local youths and few local fishermen on the current conservation status of the lake and the turtle's trade have been made. According to the consultation, illegal activities such as fishing, turtle exploitation and other resource exploitation has been currently banned and monitored by the Multi-stakeholder committee. But, illegal activities have been still continuing to some extent. According to them this is why due to the low awareness level of the communities and their high dependency on the lake resources. Due to this ban, livelihood of previous fishermen and turtle hunters has impacted and they are gradually changing their occupation. They pointed out conservation awareness as a major interventions required in this area.
4. Turtle monitoring surveys: Few monitoring surveys were conducted at local Hatbazar (local weekly markets). Local products (vegetables, fishes, grains and other agricultural products) are sold at these markets. Previously, turtles were heavily and freely sold in these market places but we didn't found any fish and turtle trade activities during our monitoring survey. The database has been maintained.
5. Conservation awareness materials production: Designing of conservation leaflets have been completed and about to go to the press. We are planning to produce posters instead of conservation calendar as we later came to know that posters can be effective awareness tools in the local context.

We are implementing our programme activities rapidly in close coordination with the committee. We have worked out and have planned to engage local stakeholders in the project

interventions to build up their local ownership on the project and for the lake conservation. We will keep on updating you on the project progress. Few photographs of the project activities have been attached herewith.



Jagadishpur Reservoir



Left: Jagadishpur reservoir invaded with lotus and other aquatic plants. Right: Local youth during consultation about the conservation status of the lake and turtle.



Left: Researcher interacting with local fisherman on the status of the turtle exploitation. Right: Researcher interacting with the local old man on the history of the conservation status of the lake and turtle trade.



Left: Monitoring survey of turtle trade at local Hatbazar. Right: Monitoring survey of turtle trade at local Hatbazar.