

Project Update: June 2016

The project has been able to meet all the objectives till now.

PROPOSED OBJECTIVES AND THEIR PROGRESS

A. Survey on ethno-herpetofauna has been carried out in 20 villages of Balasore district. A total of 100 individual farmers (five from each village) has been surveyed about: –

- Their demographic background.
- Types of pesticide input.
- Availability of herpetofauna both seasonal and throughout the time of harvest.
- The outcome to such encounter.
- The present status of herpetofauna.
- The reason for their decrease.
- Whether pesticide is playing a role in their decrease.
- Any such cases witnessed by them in their fields.
- Availability of herpetofauna in agricultural lands.
- What might they feed on.
- What role according to the farmers are played by these animals in an agroecosystem.
- Their faiths, myths about these creatures.
- Checklist on the types of herpetofauna seen by these farmers in their agricultural lands.

B. A same survey has been done in 12 other villages for the field site selection part.

C. A part added to the work apart from those mentioned

A validation of the information obtained about the farmers' perception from these 100 farmers was done in the 20 villages so mentioned so as to get an even better view of the herpetofaunal status and to prepare a robust checklist of the herpetofauna available in such agricultural lands. 2 groups of 5 individuals each, were formed in each of these 20 villages to validate the information (a total of 200 more farmers).

1. Trap construction, site selection has been done.

2. Sampling has started and four sites have been intensively sampled till now and data collected on the types of herpetofauna in an agroecosystem. All amphibians and reptiles so trapped are measured, weighed, photographed for individual patterns and released some distance away from the field site. Sampling method includes three trap arrays installed at a distance of ≥ 100 m from each other. Each trap includes four drift fences arranged in a cross shape, five pitfall traps and eight double-ended funnels. The 100 m distance between each trap consist of six cover-boards laid at a distance of 20 m starting from one trap array to another. Traps are left open from 5 pm on day 1 (i.e. installation day) till 8 am on day 4 (i.e. 3rd day of observation).

3. Simultaneously farmers in field are given information informally on the difference between venomous and non-venomous snakes, the usefulness of these animals, ways of avoiding these animals so as to prevent any hazards and so on.

NEXT PHASE OF THE PROJECT

1. Sampling is to be done in eight of the remaining field sites in the next couple of months.
2. We wish to conduct an awareness programme on herpetofauna separately in and around the field sites if time permits.

PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE ONGOING PROJECT

INDIVIDUAL FARMERS SURVEYED DURING FIELD SITE SELECTION



PHOTOGRAPHS OF VALIDATION SURVEY



A TRAP ARRAY



FEW PHOTOGRAPHS OF HERPETOFAUNA



GREEN KEEL BACK JUVENILE



INDIAN PAINTED FROG



INDIAN SPECTACLED COBRA



GREATER BALLOON FROG



MARBELED NARROW-MOUTHED FROG



TREE FROG



INDIAN PAINTED FROG



ORNATE NARROW-MOUTHED FROG



MEASURING A SPECIMEN



WEIGHING A SPECIMEN