

## Project Update: October 2017

During the first field survey the local people also indicated that the elephants normally come to Suklaphanta from August-October and return the beginning to November. This time the elephants came mid-September. The night, when we arrived at Gobariya, six elephants were sighted in the site. The next morning when we went the area we see the elephant crushed some rice fields. Fortunately, this time the elephant could not do much damage except crushed some rice field. We were in constant communication with park authorities, other stakeholder and locals of buffer zone area still date but no further movements were reported from the area during the following days. We are still working for data collection related to HEC.



Local people's complains about damage caused by wild elephant



Left: Elephant dung. Right: Elephant footprint



Rice field being crushed by the elephant



Paddy damaged by wild elephant at Gobariya, Kanchanpur

## September 2017

The Rufford Foundation supported human-elephant conflict mitigation and awareness project is a unique and pioneer project. On the occasion of World Elephant Day, 2017, interaction programme and conservation rally were organised. Two banners were developed, one for interaction programme and another for awareness rally. The interaction programme was organized Tribhuvan University, Siddhnath Science Campus, Kanchanpur (Megha Hall). A total of 100 persons including faculties, staffs and bachelor level students and local media persons participated in the interaction programme. These events were organised in close collaboration with Suklaphanta National Park (SNP), National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC)/Suklaphanta Conservation Programme (SCP) and Buffer zone management committee (BZMC) of SNP.



Left: Agriculture land near by forest (SNP). Right: Burning fire for elephant chasing

Mr Bed Kumar Dhakal, Chief Conservation Officer of SNP, was the chief guest, Mr Shiva Prasad Sharma, DFO of Kanchanpur district was the special guest, guest by Mr Anil Prasai Conservation Officer (OIC) NTNC/SCP, and Mrs Bimala Shakya, Acting Campus chief of Siddhanath Science Campus, Kanchanpur. In the interaction programme, three presentations were presented- "An Overview of Elephants" by Anil Prasai, Conservation Officer (OIC) NTNC/SCP and "Human Elephant Conflict Scenario in Far-west Nepal" by Balram Awasthi, Lecturer SNSC, Rufford Grantee. The interaction programme covered different aspects of elephant conservation, elephant behaviour and ecology, causes of conflict, status of conflict and mitigation measures to minimise conflict.

The DFO of Kanchanpur, gave his valuable views on the elephant conflict scenario and role of forest office to minimise the conflict. Annually the local residence of the Kanchanpur district face conflicts coming from India. The lack of awareness and high expectation of local people for the compensation is the main challenge for the elephant conflict.

Similarly, Associate Professor Dr Mahadev Bista, Head of The Department of Zoology (SNSC) gave his concluding remarks and the role of students in conducting research related to mitigating HEC.

The researcher is full time faculty member of Siddhanath Science Campus, Tribhuvan University Kanchanpur. It is easy to deal with the campus authorities. The campus chief and Head of Department (Zoology) is happy include the elephant project as topic in their students' project and also recommending students for internships. One student was supported with finance to pursuing his dissertation work entitled status of human-elephant conflict in Suklaphanta National Park. This is really good news that the university is cooperating with the project. Local media person have kind participation in this programme.



Presentations on World Elephant Day by Mr. Balram Awasthi with Chief Guest, guest and other participants.



Presentation on an Overviews of Elephant by Anil Prasai, Conservation Officer/NTNC



The DFO of Kanchanpur, giving their views on the interaction programme

  
**WORLD ELEPHANT DAY-2017**  
**Intraction Programme**  
**"Bringing the world together to help elephant"**

**Date : 12 August 2017**  
**Time : 7:00 am onwards**  
**Venue: Siddhanath Sciecn Campus**

**Organized by:**  **Department of zoology  
Siddhanath Science Campus  
Kanchanpur, Nepal**

**Collaborated with**   

**Supported by:** 

Photo: @ Ramesh Thapa

  
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## August 2017

### Preliminary survey

Reconnaissance survey was conducted in the month of Falgun, 2074 (February 2017). We consulted park authorities, stakeholders, and members of Buffer Zone User Group (CFUGs). Group discussions with the villagers and a key informant discussion were made to identify the core conflicting areas of the Suklaphanta National Park (hereafter SNP). Furthermore, necessary secondary information related to human-elephant conflict were collected from Buffer Zone Area Management Committee (BZMCZs)', SNP office, National Trust of Nature Conservation (NTNC)/ Suklaphanta Conservation Programme (SCP) and District Forest office Kanchanpur regarding the dimension of human-elephant conflict (HEC) in buffer zone area of Suklaphanta National Park.

### Field Survey

We completed first phase of field survey during June and July at Suklaphanta National Park and its buffer zone area. For the survey of HEC, the study sites were divided into five blocks named Dodhara-Chadani, Majhagaun-Piparaiya, Nimbukheda-Gobariya, Baghphanta, and Beldandi area. A structural questionnaire sheets were used to collect information gather empirical data about human–elephant conflicts as well as to determine the human dimension of the HEC such as crop damage, human casualties and property damage. Details on the time and location of the conflict incident, including the age, sex and addresses of the person affected the incident were also noted. During the field survey we collected GPS location of several human-elephant conflict areas through the questionnaire survey, Group discussion, key informant survey and direct observations. Furthermore information on past HEC events and movement of elephants in Kanchanpur districts were also noted during the study periods. We surveyed 300 household. Mainly the Chadani, Gobariya, Baghphanta, and Beldandi are found to be much affected by HEC.



Group discussion with local residents of Suklaphanta Bufferzone area



Left: Elephant dung seen in crop field in Gobariya. Right: Elephant entering area Gobariya, Kanchanpur



Left: Questionnaire survey with local HHs. Right: Key Informant survey with senior game scout Mr Bikram Chaudhary

A male elephant died in Punarbas Municipality-10 Bikas Basti near the Laljhandi Mohana corridor adjoining area of Suklaphanta National Park. The elephant was electrocuted after coming in contact of electric wire which was used by local farmer.

The incident occurred when the elephant was entering in to farmland to eat crop late Thursday night. According to forest officials, the elephant was killed by laying a trap inside the local Namuna Community Forest. "A preliminary report shows that the poachers planted the trap to catch a boar, but the male elephant got trapped instead.

Acting forest officer at the DFO Bir Bahadur Thagunna said an investigation was ongoing. Necessary action will be taken against those who were found guilty, he added. The locals also criticised the negligence of the elephant search group deployed to track the location of elephant.

The killed elephant was seen by local people when entering to jungle for cutting grass at early morning on the occasion of "Ganesh Chaturdaashi". It was really painful and very

sad incident because the elephant is worshipped on the occasion of "Ganesh Chaturdaashi" as a symbol of lord god Ganesh son of Shiva and Parwati in Hindu religion. On Ganesh Chaturthi, Lord Ganesh is worshipped as the god of wisdom, prosperity and good fortune.



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