

Project Update: November 2017

Preliminary field visit: A preliminary field visit was carried out to document the biophysical and socioeconomic condition of the study site. I visited the study site with three field assistants and one local resource person (the Chairperson of the Hattidamar Ghuiyabari Buffer Zone User Committee, Banke). During the field visit, consultations were carried out with the Buffer Zone Community Forest User Groups to gather information about conservation issues of Chure ecosystem in their areas. In particular, problems associated with conservation of forest and wildlife in their areas was discussed.

Awareness among local communities: A training workshop on "Ecosystem Conservation in Chure Buffer Zone Areas" was held to aware local people, with a particular emphasis on fragility, vulnerability, and the importance of the Chure ecosystem. About 60 people from Hariyali Community Forest User Group of Ghuiyabari site and adjacent forest users participated in the workshop. The workshop was successfully completed with a combination of teaching and discussion. By the end of the workshop, it was observed that people were able to discuss the biodiversity, ecosystem and its services, conservation issues of the Chure ecosystem in buffer zone areas and the importance of conserving it.

Awareness among school students: In order to sensitise young children to Chure ecosystem conservation, teaching was carried out with the participation of 50 students from both primary and secondary level. This programme was held at "Nepal Rastriya Secondary School", located at the Ghuiyabari site of Kaprechaur, Salyan. The programme was performed in an interactive way with particular emphasis on the importance of conserving the ecosystem in Chure Buffer Zone Areas.

After teaching, in order to provide knowledge of issues of the Chure ecosystem and the importance of its conservation, a drawing contest was carried out with the theme of "Conserving ecosystem in Chure Buffer Zone Areas". The best drawing was awarded with a prize of approx. NPR 3000.00, and the other top 10 drawings were awarded with prizes of approx. NPR 1000.00 to each as an encouragement.

Poster distribution: 300 illustrated posters that included fact sheet information on the Chure Ecosystem in Nepal were prepared in Nepali language to create awareness. These posters were distributed to local communities as well as school students during our awareness campaign.

District workshop with stakeholders: In coordination with Banke National Park (BNP) Office, a training workshop was carried out in the BNP sector office at Kohalpur. 35 people participated in the programme. Participants were from the Chairpersons of the Buffer Zone User Committee of BNP, park staff of BNP, representatives from District Forest Office and stakeholders from local non-governmental organisations.

I presented about the purpose of my research in Chure Buffer Zone Areas. In my presentation, I clarified about the global context of ecosystem services and their implications at a local level. I also emphasised the need of conserving Chure ecosystem of BNP. Moreover, the field visit experience was also shared and discussed with the participants. The Chief Warden of BNP (Mr Dil Bahadur Purja Pun) presented an overview of the current issues and challenges of conserving Chure

ecosystem in and around the park. He also highlighted the strategies and tactics implemented by the park authority in conserving the park ecosystem.

At the end of the workshop, a structured questionnaire survey was carried out with the participants. Questionnaire survey sheets were distributed to all participants. The survey was envisioned to triangulate the information generated from household level survey and gather the foremost ideas about the major ecosystem services available in Chure site of BNP, conservation issues, major anthropogenic impacts in buffer zone areas, and to understand participants' perceptions.

Summary of the progress

S.N.	Activities	Status
1	Community level awareness campaign	completed
2	School level awareness campaign	completed
3	District workshop with stakeholders	completed
4	Household questionnaire survey	ongoing
5	GIS mapping, analysis	ongoing
6	Secondary data collection	ongoing

Photo plates: Community consultation and awareness campaign



Figures (clockwise from top left): Training to local communities, poster distributed to local people, participants of community awareness campaign, a talk delivered by Chairperson of Hattidamar Ghuiyabari Buffer Zone User Committee

Photo plates: Chure Buffer Zone Areas of Banke National Park



Figures (clockwise from top left): Agro ecosystem in Chure areas, livestock grazing on riverside, landslide in Chure hills with flash flood during rainy season, pristine Babai River

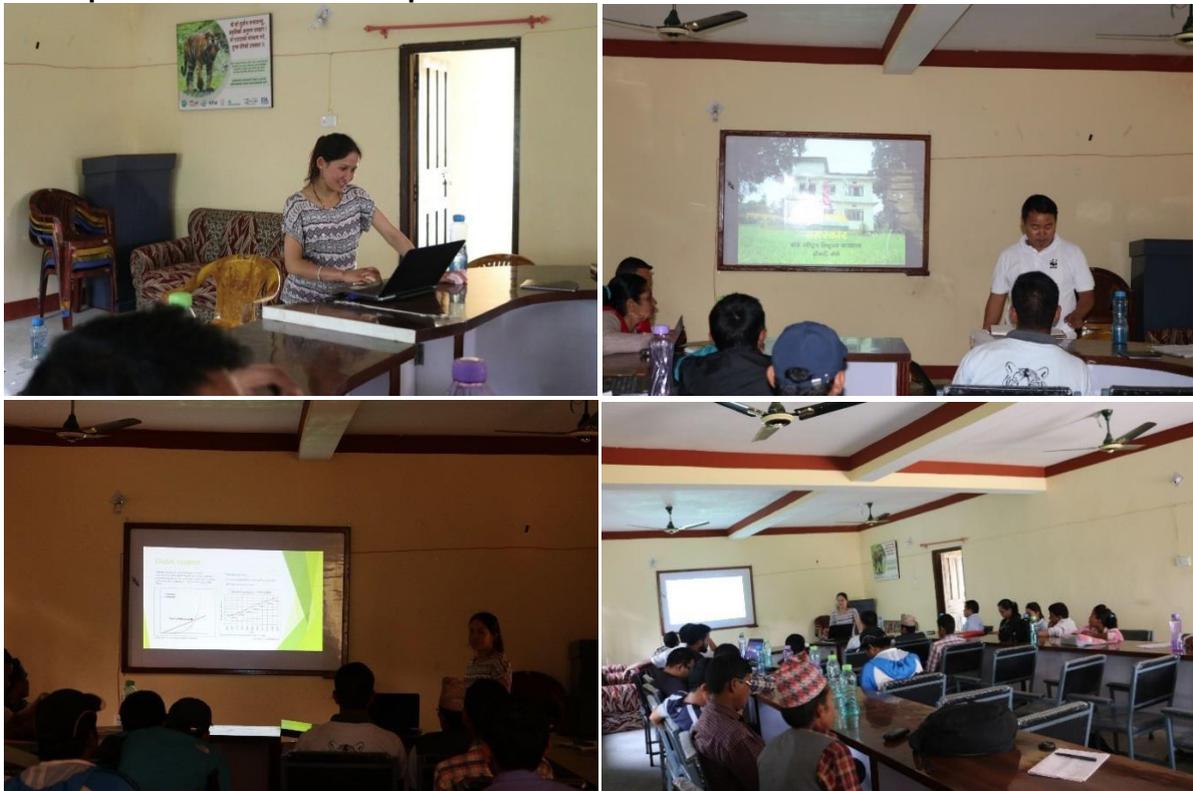
Photo plates: School awareness campaign





Figures: (1st top row) teaching to school children, (2nd row) art competition, top 10 arts of the contest, (3rd row) conservation related drama playing, participants of school awareness campaign

Photo plates: District workshop with stakeholders



Figures (clockwise from top left): My presentation during workshop, a talk delivered by Chief Warden of Banke National Park, participants in the workshop