

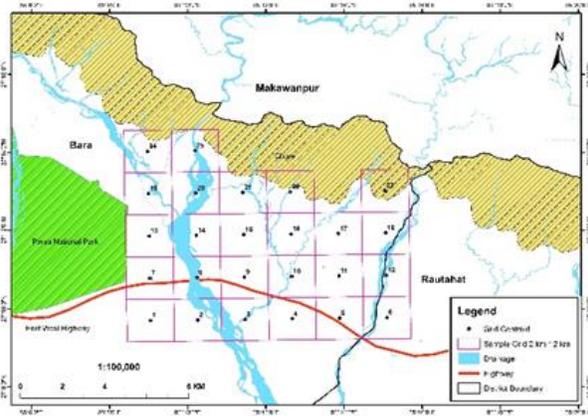
Project Update: July 2019

1. Field Survey and Biological Monitoring:

For the survey, our field team of five members (three technical team members and one forest guard of Division Forest Office and one forest watchman of community forest) in coordination with staff of Division Forest Office in support help of local citizen scientist (forest watchman) after proper orientation by the investigator and technical field team. Monitoring was carried out by deploying camera traps in the designed grids. Camera trap deployment was based on signs recorded from the sign survey previously conducted in the study area. Camera traps grids of 2 × 2 km were overlaid on the study area under District Forest office and community forests that lie on eastern part from Nijgadh to Dhansar Bridge and its periphery including Singaul area. Altogether 25 grids were required to cover the study area. Two camera traps each were installed in two different locations of every grid to acquire more capture events for the target species. The best locations to install camera traps were determined after conducting a recce in the area. The parameters considered to choose the best locations were, track sign of animal seen, presence of fire line, proximity to water sources, river banks, places where dead animals are thrown nearby the settlement etc.

In presence of CF members, representatives of local government, and forester of District Forest Office, we conducted sensitisation programmes for the people of Simara, Sadak Tole (Nijgadh) and Singaul (October and November 2018). Following this, we conducted camera trapping for the monitoring of striped hyena from 10th -26th January 2019 in two deployments. Out of 25 systematic grids, 16 grids were surveyed and others were kept offline due to high disturbance in some area which include dense settlement of Nijgadh, a small town, road and high human movement and quite complex to avoid trail cameras from being stolen. Those 17 grids were monitored by camera traps with thermal and motion sensors (Covert, Loreta, Scout Guard, Cuddie Back and Spartan). Cameras were deployed in the evening and pulled out every next morning. Each grid was monitored for 7 nights. First deployment was conducted in nine grids (Grids: 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18 and 23) from 10th-18th January 2019 and second deployment was conducted in seven grids (Grids: 13, 16, 19, 20, 21, 22, 25) from 19th -26th January 2019. The deficit camera traps were supported by ZSL-Nepal, NTNC-BCC and from Rama Mishra: an independent wildlife researcher. Data analysis and remaining post project work yet going on with few remaining field stuff.

An additional survey was conducted in eastern adjoining area in Rautahat district. After image sorting, we have recorded 19 species of mammals including striped hyena. Moreover, we have also recorded many track signs of striped hyena.



Left: Installing camera traps with DFO staffs. Right: Map showing camera trap grids

2. Awareness Campaign for Hyena Conservation:

Ongoing project “Status, distribution and participatory based conservation initiatives for striped hyena (*Hyaena hyaena*) in Central Lowland, Nepal” led by Wildlife Researcher, Dipendra Adhikari, and funded by Rufford Grants is ongoing at Bara District of Province 2 in central terai, Nepal. The one and only recorded hyaenid species in Nepal is striped hyaena.

Several conservation initiatives have been carried out through this project; sensitising citizen scientists for the conservation of threatened striped hyaena was conducted in Simara, Nijgadh and Singaul. 80 citizen scientists of Simara, Nijgadh, Singaul and Dhansar sub division office, Rautahat have been sensitised through four awareness raising programmes in September-November 2018. . Likewise, open discussion for school students (Grade 7 and 8) of Shree Little Angel School Amlekhgunj, Bara and for Bachelors Level students of Zoology, Makwanpur Multiple Campus was held at Hetauda on 22nd January 2019 for the conservation of striped hyaena in this region. The principal researcher, Dipendra Adhikari delivered a presentation on threats, challenges and opportunities of the species conservation. In addition, we did sensitisation discussion with forest office staffs of Dhansar sub division office, Rautahat in January 2019. Along with the awareness programme, the major objective of this project was to produce and apply vehicle stickers regarding the importance of hyaena and avoiding the species from road kill in East-West Highway. Altogether 300 such stickers were applied on vehicles that pass through Hetauda- Jhapa section.



Left: Interaction with DFO Staffs of Rautahat. Right: Interaction with CFUG members at Nijgadh.



Left: Awareness for School students at Bara. Right: With BSc students at Hetauda.



Left: Conservation sticker at fuel station. Right: Conservation awareness poster.

Link to media:

http://himalkhabar.com/news/10853?fbclid=IwAR0H7cerrEoAK4IRRK588DJT_JL3JGTRpHw8TIWKjgz5oFrEzI02Y9V7ZI