

Project Update: February 2011

1. Abraham Conservation Award

The Jatayu Vulture Restaurant Lumbini, our project site, shared the Abraham Conservation Award for 'outstanding contribution to conservation by community based group' with another of our project sites, the Jatayu Vulture Restaurant at Nawalparasi – these awards were made on National Conservation Day 23rd September 2010. Similarly, the Abraham Conservation Award for the individual with an outstanding contribution at grassroots level was won by project team member Hirulal Dangaura. The team leader of the project, Anand Chaudhary, won the Mathew Preece and Yeshi Lama Young Conservation Leader Award. The Vulture Conservation Program of Bird Conservation won the most awards on the day.

2. Diclofenac Free Zone declaration

The Chairperson of the Natural Resource Committee of Parliament declared Dang as the first Diclofenac Free Zone in the world on 27th November 2010. Subsequently, she called a high-level meeting on vulture conservation attended by 26 members of parliament, secretaries of two ministries and key conservation organisations. During the meeting the participants were briefed about the vulture decline and its causes and planned solutions, resulting in key commitment from the Secretaries of Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation and Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives to conserve vultures and control the drug diclofenac. During the meeting this was followed by Rupandehi District on 17 February 2011. Diclofenac Free Districts were officially declared by district-level government line agencies, political parties, media, veterinary professionals and conservation organizations as diclofenac-free after veterinarians, para-veterinarians, veterinary pharmacists in the area had signed a pledge not to use the drug. Both these districts now form a part of a wider Vulture Safe Zone*, covering just over 21,000 sq km.

3. Infrastructure development

This project completed the construction of an additional cow shed and surrounding grazing area for cattle at its cow rescue centre in Lumbini. The new cow shed has a capacity of 30 and is surrounded by a grazing area of 1 ha. Signboards have been placed in key areas to promote the site.

4. Nest numbers, captive breeding and satellite tagging

Nest monitoring results of this season has shown an increase from 59 to 75 nests this year in Dang district. However in Rupandehi, there is a slight decrease this season from 25 last year to 15 this year. Nest numbers in another nearby colony in Kapilvastu district served by the safe feeding site in Lumbini have increased from 14 to 22. All nests this season are of the Critically Endangered oriental white-rumped vulture. A total of 15 chicks from the three colonies were captured and taken to Nepal Government's Vulture Conservation Breeding Centre for captive breeding purpose (75% of the new additions this year) with the support of project team and local communities. Similarly, six vulture chicks close to fledging were equipped with satellite tags to better understand their foraging habit and distribution to help aid in studying the impact of Vulture Safe Zones.

5. International Vulture Awareness Day

The 2nd International Vulture Awareness Day on 4th September 2010 was celebrated across the two project districts and in Kathmandu Valley through various events. In both project districts a rally was held followed by an interaction programme. In addition, awareness activities and classes in schools were focused in and around those dates. Overall, the day was celebrated by the project and our partners in 17 districts of the country through 29 events including rallies, interaction programmes with key stakeholders, school and college awareness events, documentary shows, song, street drama involving 2,360 individuals directly and reaching out to countless others. The events were covered by 22 newspapers articles, five radio stations and two TV channels.

6. Training

Training was held by the project team for community based partners working in the field of vulture conservation on 14th November 2010 at the Vulture Restaurant at Nawalparasi. A total of 20 individuals representing 13 organisations participated in the training. The training was followed by 'Learning cum Observation Tour' from 15th-17th November 2010. The participants visited seven project sites including four safe feeding sites and learned about vulture conservation and community development activities in each site.

7. Publications

Vultures are often associated with a social stigma as 'bearers of bad omen related to health'. This belief was found to be especially strong among strongly religious Hindu middle-age and elderly people living in rural areas. A poster was specifically designed targeting this audience, highlighting the role of a vulture king '*Jatayu*' in fighting with a demon to rescue a goddess as per a popular Hindu epic the '*Ramayana*'. The poster also contains message about the cause of decline of the vultures and the need to conserve them. 3,000 copies of the poster was printed and distributed widely. A leaflet (6,000 copies) informing the public about the decline in vultures, its cause and the conservation measures taken by the government, international community and the project partners was published. The first issue of a newsletter dedicated to vulture conservation '*Giddha sandesh*' was published in dual English and Nepali language.

*Vulture Safe Zones are defined as areas of potential vulture habitat that have been subject to intensive advocacy and awareness-raising, and through rigorous monitoring found to be completely free of diclofenac and any other serious threats that would jeopardise vulture recovery.



Award winning Vulture Conservation Programme team of National Conservation Day, September 23, 2010



Diclofenac free zone declaration at Dang; School awareness at Lumbini



New cowshed at cow rescue centre under construction; orientation for field assistants for questionnaire survey



Training followed by 'learning cum observation tour' for community based groups working for vulture conservation

प्रकृतिका कुचिकार शिक्षणको संरक्षण गरौं ।

- विद्वक प्रकृतिका एक अमूल्य धन हुन्, तर विनियम अडिको चोरा हुने अवस्थामा पुगेका छन् ।
- नेपालमा पारेने अरु प्रजातिको विद्वक मध्ये धारा प्रजातिको विद्वकः अरु विद्वक सन्ने ठोरो विद्वक, पुन विद्वक र कोरी विद्वक अतिरि संरक्षण परेका छन् ।
- विद्वक रत रथीय विद्वकको संख्या १५ प्रतिशत भन्दा बढीले घटेको छ ।
- विनियमको विनियमको अनुप बहाना जसको उपचारमा अरुप गरिने औषधी डाइक्लोफेनेक छ ।
- डाइक्लोफेनेक जसको औषधीयता उपचार लाग्दाका जसको विरि धाराको विद्वक को विरिने गर्छन् ।
- प्रकृतिक विद्वकको विनियम लागू गिन्छत उपको विनियम अरुका भेडा, गधामाती तथा अन्य चौपायाको प्रयोग बढ्छ ।
- पशु उपचारमा डाइक्लोफेनेक जसको प्रयोगारी तर विद्वक जसमा अरु चराकोमाती तथा अन्यजसमा अरु गरने औषधी मेरोसिक्लोफेनेक नेपालमा उपचारमा तथा विद्वक जसमा अरु चराकोमाती ।
- पशु उपचारमा मेरोसिक्लोफेनेकको प्रयोग गरी विद्वक जसमा अन्य अन्यजसको संरक्षण गरि ।
- यतिबेलाको अरु अन्यजसको डाइक्लोफेनेक उपचारमा उपचार गरिने ।
- विद्वक संरक्षण गर्ने जेका संरक्षण, जस तथा कुनैजसमा जसकोमा ५ वर्षे को कायौ औषधमा जोडिो छ । जस औषधमा अरुका विद्वकको विद्वकको संरक्षणमा विद्वक जसमा जस प्रजनन जेका खोलीको छ र जेकाका विनियम विनियमकोमा डाइक्लोफेनेक जस विनियम उपचारमा गर्नुपर्छ ।

अन्याय विरुद्ध ज्ञान दिने जतायूको संरक्षण गरौं ।

पशु उपचारमा औषधीयता
डाइक्लोफेनेक औषधीको स्थान
अनुसन्धानमा प्रयोग गरि ।

**Use Meloxicam
Stop Diclofenac**

New leaflet and poster published by the project