

**COMMUNITY BASED BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION PROJECT
(CBCP)**

INTERIM REPORT

December 2005 to September 2006



Participants of elderly people workshop

Submitted by

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Introduction and Background

This is an interim report submitted to the Rufford Small Grant (for Nature Conservation) – a first RSG grant award to K.P. Acharya, Nepal for the project "COMMUNITY BASED BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION PROJECT, (CBCP)". The project was started from December 2005 in collaboration with the Federation of Community Forest Users, Nepal (FECOFUN) district chapter – Parbat and the Bharkhore Community Forest User Group, Kusma, Parbat. The report includes the performances during December 2005 to September 2006. The aim of the project was to develop a model user group demonstrating active forest management and biodiversity conservation leading to a win-win situation in community forestry in Nepal. The project also started documenting biodiversity at users' level using Community Forest User Group (CFUG) as an appropriate institution.

Basis of the CBCP

Community forestry was formally launched in Nepal since late 70's to increase participation and control of local people in forest management. It has received highest priority within the forestry sector which is the biggest social mobilization process in Nepal involving more than one third of the total households. Emerging evidences indicated that CFUGs have selective behaviours over the species mainly based on households' level utilitarian benefits. CFUGs often have identified all most all shrub and low quality timber species as non-preferred. These selective species approach of maintaining and removal would cause altered forest structure and composition to be monoculture. Firstly, the forest types are slowly converting from diverse to homogenous. Secondly, the shrub and tree diversity is gradually decreasing with a gradual loss of species, which have no particular fuel, timber and fodder value. The most critical threat is for the shrub species and low quality timber species. Lastly, the drastic change in microclimate is unfavourable to many soils born and small life forms and their extinction. The rapid and human induced disturbance modifies natural environment, ecological process and systems through the mechanism of species preferences and silvicultural application. More importantly, there is serious lack of baseline biodiversity information at local level.

The proposed study aimed to contribute towards the conservation of bio-diversity in community forestry in Nepal. It proposed to increase skill and awareness on conservation of forest ecosystems through training and extension and conservation oriented development activities. The CBCP focused to conduct environmental conservation activities and demonstrate approaches for integration of biodiversity conservation into community forest management. Similarly, it aimed to strengthen linkage and support with different agencies such as community level networking organisation (FECOFUN) for the conservation of biodiversity. The project mobilized community forest user groups fund to conserve and document biodiversity at local level.

Proposed conservation components and activities

The CBCP proposed to implement 28 different activities under five different components. The list of CBCP conservation components and list of activities is presented in the table 1.

- Conservation of Biodiversity
- Capacity building

- Environment protection and forest conservation
- Strengthening linkage and support with FECOFUN and other agencies
- Community biodiversity registration

Table 1: Conservation components and proposed activities

(1) Conservation of biodiversity	1. Assessment of Floral and faunal diversity in Bharkhore CFUG
	2. A Revision of existing Operation plans incorporating bio-diversity issues
	3. A Formation of CFUG network at VDC level
	4. <i>In situ</i> conservation of unique floral species
	5. <i>Ex-situ</i> conservation of important species through private forestry/CF action
	6. Promoting alternative energy biogas
(2) Capacity building	1. Training on identification of important species, habitats and their conservation and best practices
	2. Training on domesticating valuable multipurpose species
	3. Training on income generation activities through development of agro-forest based enterprises
	4. Publication of brochures on bio-diversity status of Bharkhore CFUG- local language
	5. VDC and local level sharing workshops
	6. Training on capacity building of local level service providers
(3) Environment protection and forest conservation	1. Defining participatory biodiversity conservation criteria at CFUG level
	2. Identification of threatened, rare and endangered species at CFUGs level
	3. Establishment of demonstration plot
	4. Expanding through VDC/local level workshop
	5. Mobilize Community Forestry Fund for IG activities such as bee keeping
(4) Strengthening linkage and support with FECOFUN and other agencies	1. Support various line agencies in conducting ecosystems conservation activities
	2. Institutional development
	3. Monitoring and Evaluation
	4. Support to various local level CBOs
	5. School support programs for biodiversity conservation
5. Community biodiversity registration	1. Build the capacity of CFUGs
	2. Establish community biodiversity registration process
	3. Establishment of Community Information Centre (CIC)
	4. Collection, documentation and dissemination of information through the CIC
	5. Coordination and evaluation
	6. Biodiversity fare at VDC level

Achievements to date

Working approach

The approach of the CBCP has been highly participatory, and the activities undertaken are based entirely on the people's articulation of their needs and priority. The project was

initiated with a start up workshop held in the CFUG office. The aim of the workshop was to make local people aware of the project aims and activities proposed. The start-up workshop facilitated for easy implementation of the project activities. During the meeting, it was also agreed that the decision will be made in participatory way.

Participatory decision making

The CBCP is implemented in close collaboration with the FECOFUN Parbat and Bharkhore Forest User Group, Parbat. The decisions on project activities specifically related to Bharkhore CFUG were made by the forest user group while other local and district level decisions were taken in partnership with the FECOFUN.

Stakeholders' collaboration

The CBCP worked in the model of multi-stakeholders forum ranging from local to district level users, civil society to government officers. The Chief District Administrator (CDO) from District Administration Office actively participated in CBCP activities. Similarly, the Local Development Officer from District Development Office, District Forest Officers from District Forest Offices, other officials from district development and administrations offices were actively involved in various activities. Such involvement has huge social importance and recognised values to influence nearby users and local people.

Program diary

A program diary was maintained for each activity. The diary includes date, functions carried out, expenses and the responsible person by activities. The various events to accomplish each activity were recorded by date. The diary was found to be instrumental to facilitate monitoring of each activity and also aimed for timely and effective implementation of the project.

Quantitative performance

The quantitative performance of the CBCP is presented in the table 2 against the work plan proposed.

Table 2: Performance of the CBCP

S.N.	Activity proposed	Status	Remarks
1	Assessment of Floral and faunal diversity in Bharkhore CFUG	Completed	An assessment of the community forest was carried out.
2	A Revision of existing Operation plans incorporating bio-diversity issues	Completed	Support was provided to revised the operation plan
3	A Formation of CFUG network at VDC level	Completed	A network of all 6 CFUGs of the Siwalaya VDC was formed to support biodiversity conservation in respective CFUGs
4	<i>In situ</i> conservation of unique floral species	Completed	<i>Rhododendron</i> spp , <i>Castanopsis</i> spp, conservation plot established

5	<i>Ex-situ</i> conservation of important species through private forestry/CF action	Completed	Seedlings distributed for community and private plantation
6	Promoting alternative energy biogas	Completed	Two farmers supported for biogas
7	Training on identification of important species, habitats and their conservation and best practices	Completed	One event of training conducted
8	Training on domesticating valuable multipurpose species	Completed	One event of training conducted
9	Training on income generation activities through development of agro-forest based enterprises	Completed	One event of training conducted
10	Publication of brochures on bio-diversity status of Bharkhore CFUG- local language	On going	Expected to complete within two weeks
11	VDC and local level sharing workshops	Completed	Siwalaya VDC level sharing workshop organized
12	Training on capacity building of local level service providers	Completed	One events of training was organized.
13	Defining participatory biodiversity conservation criteria at CFUG level	Completed	Criteria developed through an interaction workshop with the elderly people and CFUGs workshop.
14	Identification of threatened, rare and endangered species at CFUGs level	Completed	A list of the species for each of the six CFUGs prepared
15	Establishment of demonstration plot	Completed	A demonstration plot established in the Bharkhore CFUG.
16	Expanding through VDC/local level workshop	Completed	One event of workshop organized
17	Mobilize Community Forestry Fund for IG activities	Completed	Two farmers supported for goat rearing as an income generating activity
18	Support various line agencies in conducting ecosystems conservation activities	Completed	District level line agencies were supported
19	Institutional development	On going	Office support to the Bharkhore CFUGs was provided
20	Monitoring and Evaluation	On going	Is realized as ongoing process,
21	Support to various local level CBOs	Completed	Local CBOs organized biodiversity conservation oriented folk music competition as an awareness campaign
22	School support programs for biodiversity conservation	Completed	A (all high school from the Range post) quiz contest was organized on the Earth day- June 5,

23	Build the capacity of CFUGs	On going	Bharkhore CFUG supported for a record keeping training
24	Establish community biodiversity registration process	On going	The registration process was linked with the format developed by the ministry of forests.
25	Establishment of Community Information Centre (CIC)	On going	
26	Collection, documentation and dissemination of information through the CIC	On going	On going and documenting of forest species completed and farm and crop is on going
27	Coordination and evaluation	On going	Regular process
28	Biodiversity fare at VDC level	Plan for coming months	Planned for coming months
	Reporting	Plan for coming months	Planned for coming months

The table 3 shows the categorisation of activities on their present status. From the table it was revealed that until, the reporting period, the proposed activities are being implemented in time.

Table 3: Status summary of the activities

S.N.	Status	Number of Activities
1	Complete	18
2	On going	8
3	Planned for coming period	2

Lesson learned and Issues

The implementation of PBCP until the reporting period revealed that the local partnership with FECOFUN and forest user group has helped for easy, smooth and timely implementation of the project.

Forest user groups networking such as FECOFUN can be taken as an appropriate implementing partner for biodiversity conservation activity.

Local forest user group are willing to contribute and shared their funds for environmental conservation activities.

The discussion with local elderly people about the loss of biodiversity in the area turned in a sentimental event where these senior citizens were stroked with the loss of various natural heritage, water areas and big trees from their area. They expressed their commitment to initiate conservation activities with the partnership with the respective forest user group and local government.

Local classification of species lost with category has been prepared which help to realise all participated CFUGs that they need to initiate some activities to conserve biodiversity of the area. This can be considered as a milestone awareness activity at user level

The local people are able to link species ecology and habitat. One species Rhododendron is not common of this altitude, but seeing its existence in the community forests, they planned for the conservation of this species in the forest.

There was significant demand for alternative biogas which has huge potential too. It has multiple implications on demand and supply of fodder resources. It help to reducing fodder demands from public forest as farmers are encourages in maintaining more fodder trees to maintain livestock. The increase private trees will also help to improve supply of fodder and thereby preserving forests. -

Biodiversity registration is under implementation and is expected to generate significant body of information and experiences.

After a monitoring visit, action plan is developed to complete all remaining activities in a joint meeting with the FECOFUN and the forest user group.



Chief District administration Officer inaugurating planting activities



Construction of biogas plant in Bharkhore



Participant's schools student for Inter-school quiz competition on biodiversity conservation organized on the Earth day- June 5