Project Update: January 2022

Work progress:
The team initiated the field survey in February 2021. Initially, a reconnaissance survey was carried out between 1 February and 7 March 2021 across the North Andaman Islands to identify suitable sites for intensive sampling. The field team visited 11 sites on the west coast and 12 sites on the east coast of North Andaman and carried out a reconnaissance survey on the species diversity, composition, field logistics, etc. (Figure 1). Based on this survey, suitable sites were identified for site-specific intensive surveys as per the proposal. In addition, during this time the team met with the respective forest departments and consulted about the restoration activities carried out in the past. After consultation and reconnaissance survey, field data collection was initiated in two sites (Hara Tikiri and Aerial Bay) in March 2021. Due to the resurgence of COVID-19, the field team had to abandon the field survey towards the later part of March 2021 and have come back to the office headquarters in Dehradun.

The fieldwork restarted in December 2021 after the monsoon season in the Andaman Islands that extends from June to November. The team has made good progress in collecting the field data and soil samples (Figure 2-A&B). A total of nine sites constituting four habitats (old and new growth mangrove, and old and new growth terrestrial forest) were proposed in three tectonic uplift categories (0-50 cm, 50-100cm, >100cm) (Figure 2-C, D, E&F). Five sites have been competed so far (Table 2). It is expected that the field data collection will be completed by early March 2022. The team in consultation with the forest department is planning to conduct a workshop on mangrove restoration for the forest department staff in March 2022.

S. No	Site Name	District Name	GPS Location	Uplift Categories	Vegetation Sampling	Soil Sampling
1.	Rampur, Mayabundar	Middle & North Andaman Is.	12° 53'06.40" N 92°55'05.22" E	0-50cm	Three belts transect which includes nine 10*10 vegetation sampling plots in three habitats @ NGMF, OGMF, OGTF.	One soil sample from each vegetation belt were collected which add up to nine bulk and nine normal sample. All they were dried in shade at room temperature for further analysis.
2.	Karmatang, Mayabunder	Middle & North Andaman Is.	12° 51'17.96" N 92°56'21.35" E	0-50cm	Three belts transect which includes nine 10*10 vegetation sampling plots in three habitats @ NGMF, OGMF, OGTF.	One soil sample from each vegetation belt were collected which add up to nine bulk and nine normal sample. All they were dried in shade at room temperature for further analysis.
3.	Austin 1, Mayabunder	Middle & North Andaman Is.	12° 54'26.79" N 92°51'28.28" E	50-100cm	Three belts transect which Includes nine 10*10 vegetation sampling plots in three habitats @ NGMF, OGMF, OGTF.	One soil sample from each vegetation belt were collected which add up to nine bulk and nine normal sample. All they were dried in shade at room temperature for further analysis.
4.	Buchanan Island/Austin 2, Mayabunder	Middle & North Andaman Is.	12° 54'19.33" N 92°47'17.16" E	>100cm	Three belts transect which includes nine 10*10 vegetation sampling plots in four habitats @ NGMF, OGMF, NGTF, OGTF.	One soil sample from each vegetation belt were collected which add up to twelve bulk and twelve normal sample. All they were dried in shade at room temperature for further analysis.

5.	Haratickry, Mayabunder	North Andaman	12° 58'03.13" N 92°47'35.95" E	>100cm	Three belts transect which includes nine 10*10 vegetation sampling plots in four habitatsb@ NGMF, OGMF, NGTF, OGTF.	One soil sample from each vegetation belt were collected which add up to twelve bulk and twelve normal sample. All they were dried in shade at room temperature for further analysis.

As an output of last (2021) field season, one short article on "Are the uplifted reef beds in North Andaman letting nesting Olive Ridley Sea Turtle Lepidochelys olivacea stranded?" was published by the team in Journal of Threatened Taxa (DOI: 10.11609/jott.7603.13.12.19860- 19863).

Work to be done in extension period (January 2022 – August 2022):

S. No	Work	Deadline
1	Field data collection in the remaining four sites	07 March 2022
2	Workshop for the forest staff on mangrove restoration	31 March 2022 & August 2022
3	Identification of plant herbarium sample collected during the fieldwork followed submission to the regional Botanical Survey of India	30 April 2022
4	Soil sample analysis	30 June 2022
5	Data processing and writing the final report and publications	31 August 2022

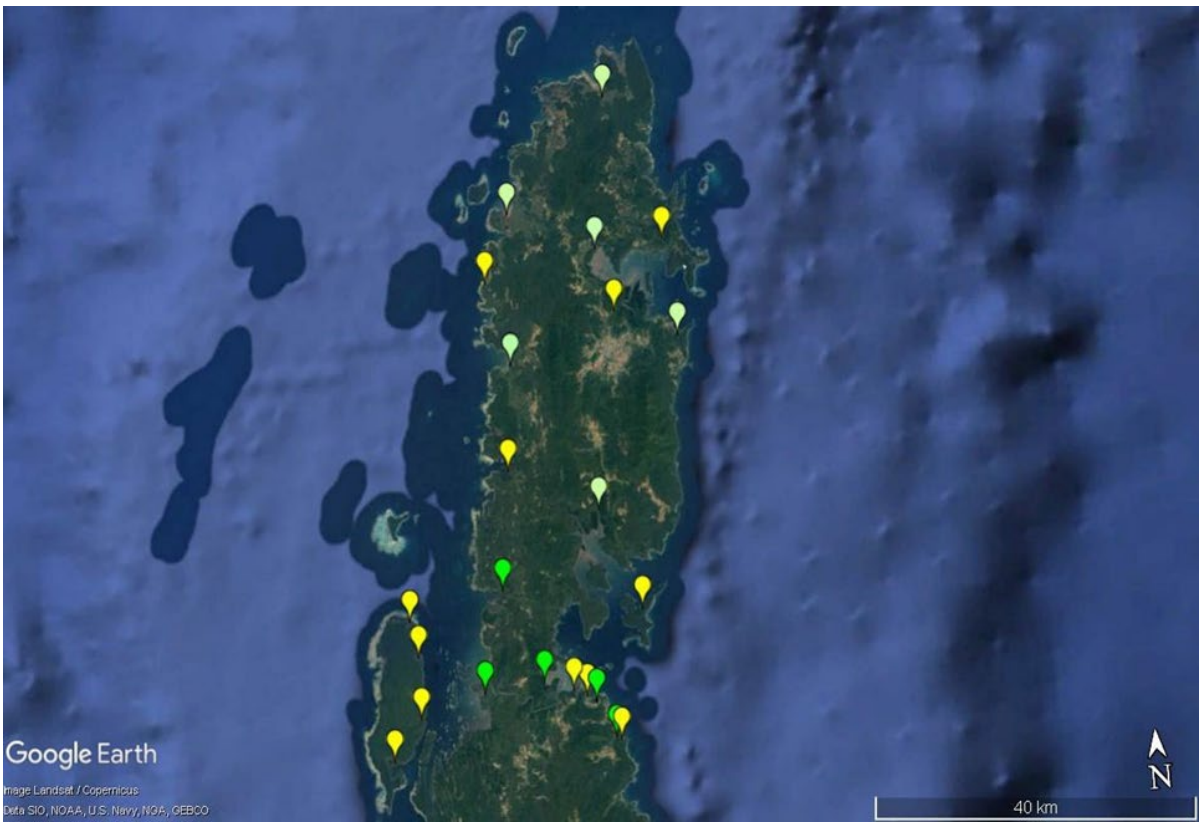

Figure 1: Map of North Andaman Indicating the distribution of survey points. Yellow – sites only included in the reconnaissance survey; Dark green – Site-specific data collection is completed; Light green – Potential sites for further data collection.


A


B


C


D

Figure 2: Glimps of fieldwork. A) Soil sampling, B) Vegetation sampling, C) New growth Mangrove Forest, D) Old growth Mangrove Forest, E) New growth terrestrial forest, F) Old growth tertial forest.