

Project Update: August 2009

This is a second phase progress report of the project *Biodiversity Conservation for the People by the People: awareness raising and capacity building project in the buffer zone of Chitwan National Park, Nepal*. This project was implemented in 29th September 2008, aimed on awareness raising and capacity building of local communities, youths, students and underprivileged ethnic groups to support biodiversity conservation through sustainable management of buffer zone forest, grassland and park ecosystem as a whole.

As per the programme schedule, a range of activities have already been conducted and some of are still been conducting, i.e.

1. Radio Programme (named Conservation Campaign)....continued

Radio programme, named Conservation Campaign, was conducted since March 2009 from Vijaya FM Community Radio, a local radio station located in the project area. This is basically a weekly based radio programme which was conducted every Friday at 7.00 pm in order to spread over biodiversity conservation related issues, challenges and sustainable conservation measures to the public hearings and this radio programme is designed for a one-year period. In this state of affairs, interviews from different stakeholders, park authorities and core staff of other concerned organizations are taken from time to time relevant to field actual situation and those conservations related issues are broadcast to the public hearings.

2. Buffer Zone Community Forest Management Training- platform for wildlife habitat management and conservation:

Three-days community-based forest management training cum field visit programme was conducted in the Dibya Buffer Zone Community Forest and Kalika Buffer Zone Community Forest, Nawalparasi in order to build the capacity of local people in forest management activities, grassland management, nursery establishment, afforestation/reforestation, etc, which are the basis of habitat conservation for many wildlife species. In this programme, more than 50 participants from different 15 Buffer Zone Community Forest User Groups actively participated and they were trained by couple of forestry/wildlife sector professionals through both theoretical as well as practical basis.

3. Publication of Community Biodiversity Register:

Community Biodiversity Register (CBR) is a record of biodiversity and associated knowledge of a particular locality. To know the extent and distribution of biological resources and to document their associated traditional knowledge, CBR will be maintained. The CBR is simply a register (farmer information database) maintained by community based organizations for keeping inventory of biodiversity and associated knowledge holders and monitoring local biological diversity for the community benefits and needs.

Documenting traditional knowledge in a participatory fashion can lead to protection of Intellectual property Rights (IPRs) of knowledge contributors and benefits sharing thereof can promote sustainable utilization of biodiversity. This is demonstrated by Community's Biodiversity Registers in Nepal, which are documents of people's knowledge of biodiversity and their perceptions about its usage, trade, besides efforts for its conservation and

sustainable utilization. The CBRs are developed by the local school/college teachers and students and/or NGO researchers along with the villagers, at the level of villages. Biodiversity registers from villages can be compiled at the level of wards, VDCs, districts, zones/states and nation, in the form of register book/computerized databases, to provide the relevant information to the people, government and industry.

There are altogether 50 copies of CBR has been published and will be distributed to different community based organizations (CBOs), buffer zone community forest user groups, eco-clubs, etc, in the near future soon after providing relevant training to them. The publication of CBR, which aimed at maintaining documentation, monitoring, marketing, exchange, fight bio-piracy, ownership, etc. about our local biological resources and associated peoples' traditional knowledge.

