

Project Update: May 2011

Following activities were successfully organised.

- 1. Wildlife Week Celebration:** The first week of Nepalese New Year has been declared as "the **Wildlife Week**" by Nepal Government in order to strengthen biodiversity conservation mission by creating awareness, motivating people and encouraging concerned stakeholders to organize conservation related activities. This week falls in between 16 - 22 April (approximately) of every year of international schedule.

In Chitwan, in the initiation of Chitwan National Park Bufferzone Mrigakunja User Committee and in the joint effort of different local stakeholders, wildlife week was successfully celebrated by organising different activities. Motto for this year wildlife week is "Forest and Wetland for Wildlife"

Mrigakunja User Committee called a stakeholder meeting on April 13th, 2011 for the planning, strategy formulation and preparation of detail schedule for wildlife week celebration. In meeting, stakeholders shared their ideas and committed the way of contribution in terms of participation, financial assistance and other possible support. Mrigakunja User Committee, Chitwan National Park, Hotel Association Nepal Chitwan, Bird Education Society, Partnership for Rhino Conservation (PARC/Nepal), Nature Guide Association, Wildlife Conservation Society-Sauraha, National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC), Terai Arc Landscape programme (WWF/TAL), Patihani User Committee, Barandabhar User committee, Eco farmer group, Bachhauli VDC, Baghmara Bufferzone Community Forest User Committee, Janakauli Bufferzone Community Forest User Committee, Youth clubs for anti-poaching awareness, were participated to make the Wildlife Week 2068 (Nepalese year) a success.

Rufford Small Grant Foundation (RSGF) funded projects, "Rhino Conservation" and "Farmland Bird Conservation", had also participated in each activity and supported the programme through PARC / Nepal. The 6th day programme "Conservation Based Quiz Competition" was conducted in the financial support of Rufford Small Grant "Farmland Bird Conservation" and Saving.rhinos.org and the arrangement was done by Mrigakunja User Committee and its Anti-poaching unit and RSG project "Rhino Conservation". Altogether eight schools took part as contestants.

The quotation for the wildlife week 2068 was "Forest and Wetland for Wildlife".

- 2. Livelihood Programme:** Project had encouraged advanced farmers for adopting conservation-based livelihood activities: vegetable farming, pig rearing, beekeeping and poultry. Somewhere model of integrated income generation activities were also established. Altogether 10 farmers have adopted integrated concept which included pig farming, fishery, beekeeping, poultry (duck keeping) and fruit plantation in a small piece of land. Project had also rewarded some farmers for their devotion in conservation-based work and creating awareness in locality by exploring their progress.
- 3. Radio Programme:** Radio programme is continuously running through Vijaya FM, Nawalparasi. Radio programme is one of our most successful programmes so we are trying to run radio programme continuously. After the approval of Booster grant, altogether 82 episodes had been already broadcasted. Out of 82 episodes, 52 and 26 episodes were launched by Rhino Conservation project and farmland conservation projects respectively in joint effort. Remaining four episodes were handled by Vijaya FM in free of cost. To continue the radio programme, project has urged FM station to run programme for some months so that other support can be searched. If another support is available, programme will go on without any disruption.

Our Radio programme "Conservation Campaign" has been regularly running since 2007 and it has covered many updated issues and set prosperous relation with public.

- 4. Library Establishment:** Students, journalists and other local people are main beneficiary group of this programme. We are providing biodiversity and environment conservation related books and conservation articles are being published in the notice boards regularly. Similarly, many organisations had provided their publication to these libraries.

Our radio journalist has been utilising library to develop radio programme. According to her, she is experiencing more comfortable to work in conservation field after the establishment of libraries in radio station.

- 5. Networking Buildup:** Project has built networking in local level, national level and international level. Though it has built simple relationship, it became able to disseminate local issue to international level and vice versa.

To this date, project has made relation with Savingrhinos.org, Bushwarriors, and Jeff Corwin website in international level. These parties have been promoting us by publishing our achievements and efforts, providing financial support and ideas to conduct activities efficiently.

Local media: Local radio (FM), television and paper have also been broadcasting and publishing our activities report regularly.

Bufferzone user groups, Bufferzone forest user groups, schools, eco-clubs, teacher forum, schools have been supporting us to carry out the programme.

Local NGOs: HC/Nepal, BICORF/Nepal, TSBC/Nepal, WEB/Nepal and Youth clubs; Jaya Manakama youth Clubs, Friendship Chiwtan, are becoming out local partners.

Similarly, project members were sharing own learning and working in close coordination with RSGF grantees; Dolraj Thanet, Paras Bikram Shingh, Deepa Paudel, Bishnuhari Wagle, Uttam Luitel, Erica Udas, Bishnu Devkota etc. Some programmes were conducted jointly that had helped to cover more area.

For more details, visit

- <http://bushwarriors.wordpress.com/2010/09/16/orphaned-rhinos-highlight-need-for-wildlife-rescue-center-in-nepal/>
- <http://www.rhinoconservation.org/2010/09/15/orphaned-rhinos-highlight-need-for-wildlife-rescue-center-in-nepal/>
- <http://www.ecomii.com/blogs/jeff-corwin-citizen-blog/2011/04/27/orphaned-rhinos-prompt-nepalese-conservationists-to-consider-wildlife-rescue-center/>

- 6. Poster / Hoarding Board Production and Distribution:** Recently, Savingrhinos.org has designed and provided some digital posters and fliers having the message "Rhino Horn is Not Medicine" to share in the local communities. These posters were printed in the assistance of RSG and savingrhinos.org and distributed to Bufferzone user groups, NGOs, clubs, forest user groups, schools etc. Similarly, posters having the message of rhino conservation and result of poaching and smuggling of rhino and its trophy were also distributed and dispatched in key areas in hundreds of numbers. Somewhere hoarding boards were also installed and reprinted.

- 7. Participation:** Project members have been playing vital role in other grantees' projects through active participation, facilitator/resource person in training and guide in field visit programme. Members had supported Deepa Paudel, Dolraj Thanet, Bishnu Hari Wagle, Uttam Luitel, Paras Bikram Singh to organise their project activities as resource person, facilitator, participant, guide and co-worker. These grantees were also requested to support rhino project in time to time.

8. Eco-club Formation and Mobilisation: Children are future driver and management responsibility of each, and everything will go on their hands in near future. No doubt, responsibility of conservation will also go to them. If we do not empower and sensitise them on time, continuity of any task and existence of any living being will not be any more in the world. It is utmost need to produce such type generation who can give continuity of today's success story and evolve new approach.

By realizing the above fact, project has formed four eco-clubs in different schools in the coordination of Chitwan National Park Bufferzone Lothar User Committee, Chitwan. In the formation process, club members were taught about the environment, biodiversity and natural resource management ideas. Similarly, they were taught what are the roles and responsibilities of eco-clubs. How they can run a club. How they can put effective role to create awareness in local level. How they can empower themselves for conservation. RSG grantee, Deepa Paudel, had also facilitated and provided financial assistance in the formation of eco-clubs.

This concept was emerged to establish network at local level and mobilise them to put long term role in conservation.



9. Regular Field Visit: This project is totally field based project so team member use to pass their most of time in the field. Every month, we use to organise 10 days field visit programme in order to collect field level information, monitoring project impact and encourage local people.

10. Success Story: We all know that rhino census 2000 had found 612 rhinos in Nepal and among of them, 544 were found in Chitwan Nation Park. Census 2005 had found only 446 in Nepal and among of them, 372 were found Chitwan Nation Park (Rhino Action Plan 2006). This record confirmed that there was

massive poaching and natural death. Record also showed that there was immense poaching in early 2006 period.

By looking such misery, awareness creation project was launched as first project in the end of 2006 by generating support from Rufford Small Grant Foundation (RSGF). The rate of poaching was decreasing enormously. As result census 2008 found out 435 rhinos and out of them, 408 were found in Chitwan National Park.

In 2008 and 2009, RSG second and booster projects were launched. Census 2011 had found 534 rhinos in Nepal and among of them, 503 were found in Chitwan Nepal.

These scenarios prevailed that contribution of this projects had also played effective role to increase rhino population in Chitwan National Park.

In the achievements, many people and institutions had contributed directly and indirectly. So, credits go to all. Though RSG projects were too small, credit should also be given to RSGF for this success story.

For more information: www.rhinonepal.org/past.php