

Project Update: March 2011

The survey has documented some otter-human conflicts and threats to otters. Threats to otters especially the habitat deterioration and intentional killing are more important to mention than the direct conflict between otters and humans. It can be related to the scanty presence of otters in many watersheds, as reported by the local communities, and the rare chance of direct sighting of this animal in natural habitats in these watersheds. Habitat destruction in watersheds of high hills of Gorkha district was observed in many forms: stone quarrying, drying water sources in the context of changing climate, lack of water pools essential for otter swimming, excessive fishing in the streams, forest fire adjacent to the water sources causing excessive heat and the pollution in water sources, forest clearing around the water sources/streams, and conversion of the streamlets into the rice paddy fields. Intentional killing of two Eurasian otters was reported in Kapringkhola and Pyaudikhola watersheds 10 years ago for the meat and skins. Killing for skin trade has not been reported from these areas. Direct conflict between otters and human beings has not been reported in the areas, and it can be related to the non-presence of the fish farming in artificial ponds in these areas.



Extraction of sand and stones from the streams is one of the major causes of habitat destruction of aquatic biodiversity including otters in Nepal.