

Strengthening People for Pangolin Conservation in the human-dominated landscapes of Nepal



A Final Report

Submitted To

The Rufford Foundation
UK

Submitted By

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Nepal

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Acknowledgements

On behalf of my team and the communities we serve, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Rufford Foundation for your generous financial award in support of our pangolin conservation project. Your trust and investment in our work have been pivotal in advancing our efforts to protect these critically endangered species and their fragile habitats.

We are also profoundly grateful to the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation and the Department of Forest for granting us the necessary permissions to undertake this vital conservation work. Their collaboration has been instrumental in enabling us to conduct field surveys, install camera traps, and engage communities effectively.

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to Mr. Maheswor Bohora, President of Taudolchhap Community Forest, and Mr. Dipendra Thapa, along with all the active members of Taudolchhap Community Forest, Major Mr Basu Dev Thapa, Ward President of ward Eight Mr Puspa Raj Basnet, Mr Raj Kumar Joshi, Mr Manoj Thapa, Mr Kishor Nepal and entire Suirabinayak Municipality family members for their unwavering support and partnership throughout this project. Their local knowledge, dedication, and active participation have significantly enhanced the success of our conservation initiatives.

With the support of the Rufford Foundation and the invaluable contributions of our partners and stakeholders, we have been able to make significant strides in raising awareness, engaging local communities, and implementing sustainable conservation strategies. Initiatives such as distributing educational materials, conducting awareness campaigns, and preparing a community-based Pangolin Management Plan have strengthened local stewardship and built a foundation for long-term conservation.

Thank you once again the Rufford Foundation for your invaluable support that not only empowered us to achieve our goals but has also instilled hope among the communities and encouraged them to become champions for nature. We look forward to continuing this journey together with the Rufford Foundation family.

Summary of the project

This project built on previous efforts to establish community-managed Pangolin Conservation Areas in Bhaktapur, Nepal, which had been authorized by the Department of Forests and Divisional Forest Offices. However, it faced a lack of funding for effective implementation, as recent pangolin seizures had indicated a growing illegal trade to China, threatening the remaining population.

The project aimed to strengthen these conservation areas by focusing on local capacity-building, community-based monitoring, anti-poaching efforts, and outreach campaigns. It also included the development of site-specific management plans to safeguard the pangolins. The project addressed threats such as habitat loss, poaching, and the elusive nature of pangolins, aiming to reduce pangolin mortality, empower local communities through education, and promote sustainable livelihoods.

The objectives included enhancing the capacity of local pangolin management committees, turning conservation areas into educational hubs, conducting awareness programs, and drafting a conservation management plan. The project was implemented in the Taudolchhap community Forest and we found 53 pangolin burrows during field surveys, with the highest activity in the North-East.

Achievements included reaching 5,000 individuals through community and school programs, media outreach to 10,000 people, and distributing educational materials like calendars, t-shirts, and banners. On World Pangolin Day, interactive programs and live TV interviews encouraged public action. The project also developed a community-based Pangolin Management Plan and reinforced conservation messages with hoarding boards. These efforts fostered community stewardship, strengthened collaboration, and promoted sustainable, locally driven conservation for pangolins.

Introduction

Nepal is home to two species of pangolins: the Chinese Pangolin (*Manis pentadactyla*), which is primarily distributed in the mid-hills and eastern regions, and the Indian Pangolin (*Manis crassicaudata*), which is found in the lowland areas, including the Terai and Chure regions. Both species are listed as Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List due to severe population declines driven by habitat loss, poaching, and illegal wildlife trade.

Pangolins are elusive, shy, and nocturnal creatures that play a crucial ecological role as natural pest controllers by feeding on ants and termites. Despite their significance, pangolins face critical threats in Nepal, including habitat destruction caused by deforestation and unregulated forest resource extraction, as well as direct persecution due to myths, traditional beliefs, and demand for their scales and meat in illegal markets. The exact population of pangolins in Nepal remains unknown; however, estimates suggest their numbers are alarmingly low.

The conservation of pangolins in Nepal is particularly challenging due to their secretive behavior, low reproductive rates, and vulnerability to disturbance at breeding sites. To address these threats, conservation initiatives in Nepal emphasize community-based approaches, integrating ecological understanding with capacity building, education, and sensitization programs. Community forest user groups, women and other local stakeholders play a pivotal role in ensuring the survival of pangolins through habitat protection, reduced hunting pressures, and the promotion of sustainable forest resource management.

Rationale of the study

The rationale for this project lies in the urgent need to conserve pangolins, which are critically threatened by habitat loss, poaching, and their secretive nature, making them highly vulnerable. The project focuses on empowering local communities through ecological education, and creating sustainable livelihoods to strengthen the community based pangolin conservation area. By fostering conservation awareness and enhancing capacity, the project ensured long-term, community-driven protection of pangolins and their habitats with minimal external dependency.

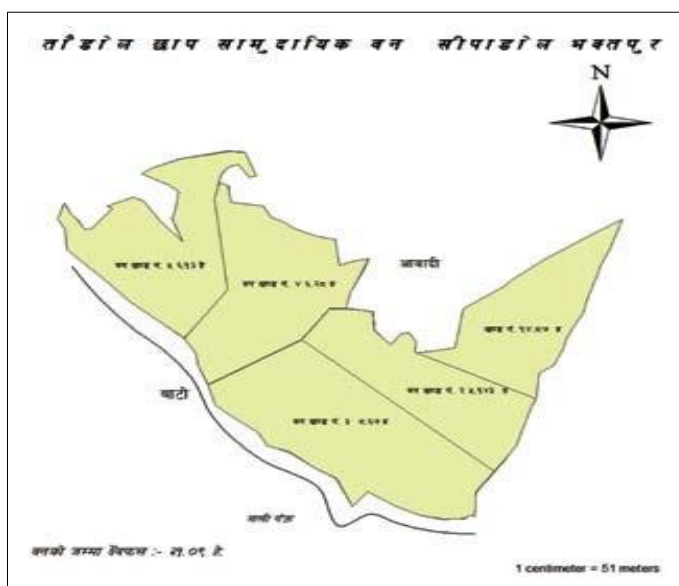
Objectives

- To enhance the capacity of Community- based pangolin management committee, community women, volunteers and key stakeholders,
- To conduct promotional activities for the community-based pangolin conservation areas as a local resource/ educational center,
- To conduct conservation awareness programs and sensitize the local people on the importance of pangolin conservation as a life support system,
- To draft a site-specific pangolin conservation management plan at the local level

Methodology

Study Area:

Bhaktapur is located between 27°36' and 27°44' North latitudes and 85° 21' and 85°32' East longitudes with an area of about 199 sq. km. It lies in the middle mountain physiographic zone, its elevation ranges from 1331 meters above sea level to 2200 (Nagarkot) msl. It is the smallest district in the country but bears about 17.92% (2132.52 ha.) of forest area and about 90.82 % (1937.08 ha.) of district forest land is managed as community forest land i.e managed by community members. Most of the forest area is dominated by coniferous pine forest. It comprises 0.97 ha per household (DFO, Bhaktapur, 2015.) The southern part of district bears more natural broadleaved forests dominated by Schima-Castanopsis species than in other parts of district.



Acquisition of study permission

Since Pangolins are protected species of the country, we filed up necessary documents and took permission for the study from the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation and Department of Forest, Kathmandu.

Community consultation programs & Field visit

Community consultation meetings were conducted with multidisciplinary people to collect primary data, adopting a participatory approach, along with field visits.



Fig: 1. Survey team during field-based survey



Fig: 2. Cattle shed and cattle manure deposition to use as organic fertilizer for farming



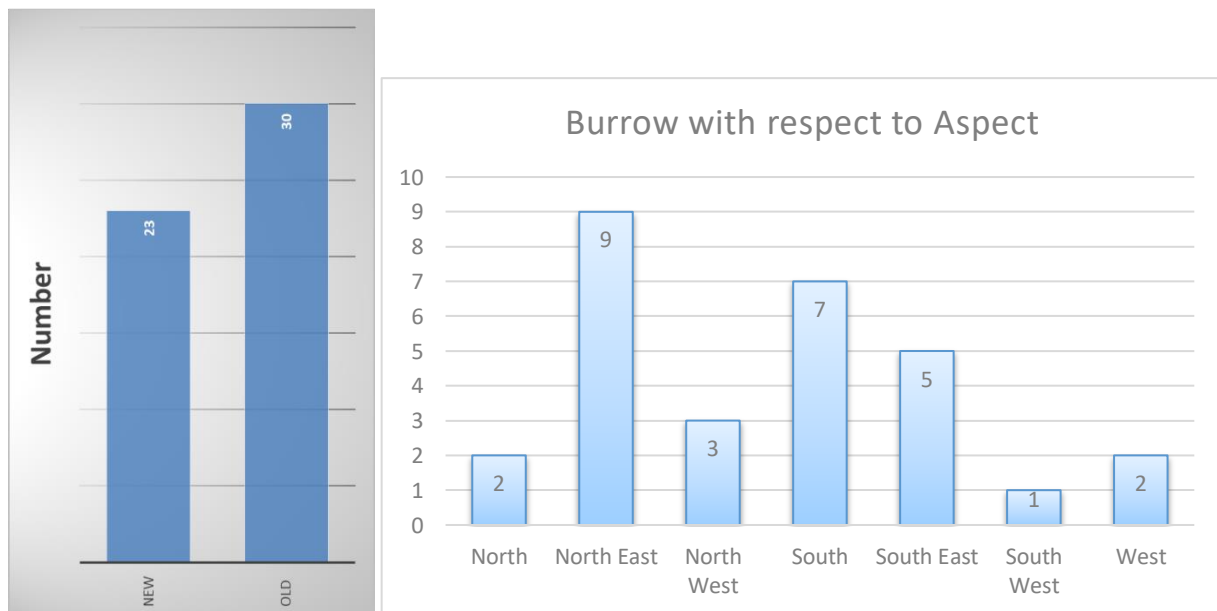
Fig: 3. Life with livestock and a dried mushroom found around the new pangolin burrow

Field surveys

Field-based surveys and habitat assessments were carried out after training to collect traditional knowledge about pangolins, including their habitats, behaviors, and threats. This information was crucial for conducting subsequent field surveys and installing camera traps.



Fig: 4. Fresh burrows with tail markings of pangolin during field-based surveys



During the regular field survey, a total of 53 pangolin burrows were recorded. Among these, 30 (56.6%) burrows were identified as old, indicating they were not actively in use, while 23 (43.4%) burrows were fresh or newly dug, suggesting recent or ongoing activity by pangolins. Data

provided valuable insights into the habitat utilization and behavior of pangolins in the surveyed area.

During the survey, the highest number of burrows (9) were observed in the North-East direction, followed by 7 burrows in the South and 5 in the South-East. In contrast, fewer burrows were found in the North-West (3), North (2), West (2), and South-West (1). Distribution suggested a potential preference for certain directions, particularly the North-East, which may be influenced by environmental factors such as vegetation, soil conditions, or microclimate favorability in that area.

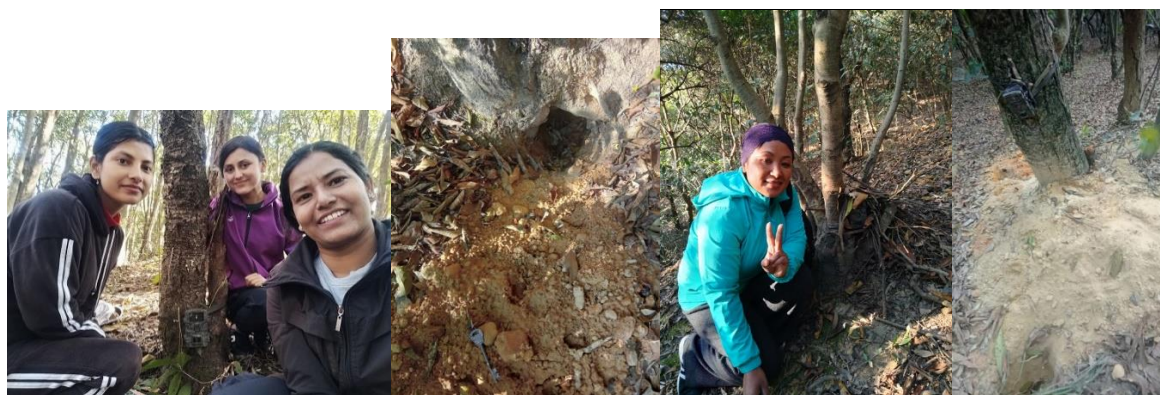


Fig: 5. Camera trap installation with our interested youths and footprints markings

Camera Trapping

We conducted a rapid assessment of pangolins by placing 4 camera traps in our study forest for a total of 15 days. Pangolins are nocturnal mammals, hardly seen in daytime. Therefore, we selected camera trap locations based on sign abundance indicative of fresh burrow activities to maximize the capture probability and confirm the presence of pangolins.

Results

During the rapid assessment of camera trap images, we identified several species including the Chinese Pangolin.



Fig: 6. A camera trapped Chinese Pangolin getting out from its burrow Fig: 7. A Jackal around the fresh burrow



Fig: 8. Deer crossing nearby the pangolin burrow Fig: 9. Bird foraging on the heap of excavated soil by pangolin

Potential Threats to Pangolins

We observed some prominent threats to the pangolin such as keeping stones to block pangolin burrows and collecting fodder in the forest can threaten the critically endangered pangolins by disrupting their shelter and nesting sites, leading to stress and further vulnerability. Additionally, these activities can disturb the pangolin's habitat and food sources, leading to habitat degradation further endangering their survival, one of the major threats to ground dwelling pangolins.



Fig: 10. Blockage in the pangolin burrow by placing stones inside & women with fodder collections

Preparation and publication of Pangolin conservation awareness programs

To enhance awareness and understanding of the critically endangered Chinese pangolin among local communities in Bhaktapur district, we published 1,000 calendars, 50 t-shirts, 100 caps, 150 cups, 50 educational banners featuring the pangolin sketches drawn by the student during the celebration of World Pangolin Day 2024 and different occasions. All of the published materials were distributed among a wide range of participants, including youths, women, support groups, students, communities, and media personnel.

Our publications aimed to raise awareness about the legal measures on the Chinese pangolin species in Nepal, focusing on their features, declining population status, conservation issues, reward, and penalties for illicit activities. Our goal was to educate communities and stakeholders about the local and global importance of pangolins sharing habitats, with the ultimate aim of minimizing threats to pangolins and their habitats through increased knowledge and awareness. Some glimpses of the educational tools were as follows:

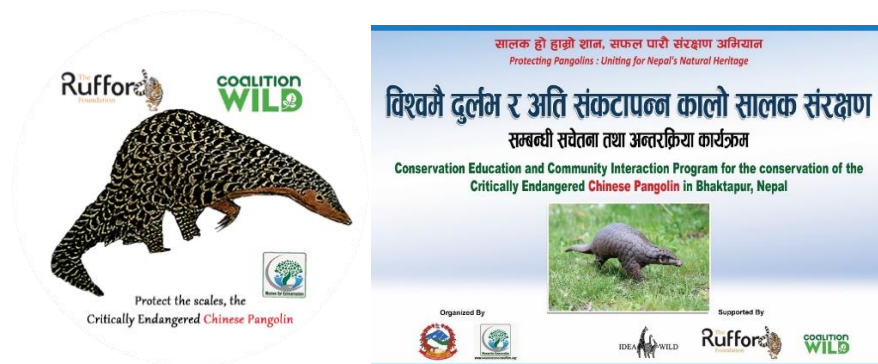


Fig: 11. Design for cap & banner for Conservation education banner

We are Guardians of Pangolins, Protectors of Nature!

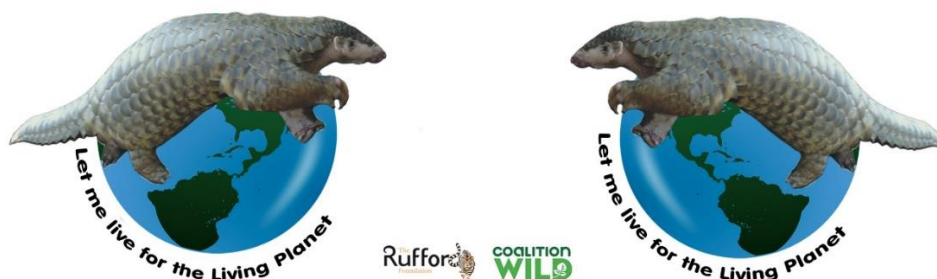
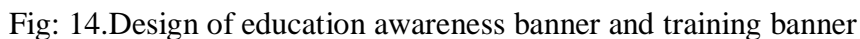


Fig: 12. Design for a cup



Fig: 13. Certificate design



We were heartened by the enthusiastic engagement of women, who were receptive to our message. We discussed the local, national, and global status of the Chinese Pangolin, highlighting the threats it faces and the conservation measures needed to combat rampant poaching and hunting. Additionally, we addressed the precautions and dangers of forest fires, drawing from recent experiences and emphasizing the impact of fires on life, the economy, wildlife, weather patterns, and the broader issue of climate change. We had three community consultations representing diverse ethnic backgrounds.

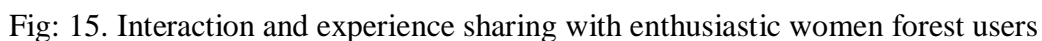




Fig: 16. Interaction with ethnic members to compile their own pangolin story

Capacity-Building Program for Pangolin Conservation and Sustainable Livelihoods

We organized a day-long capacity-building program for 20 interested and underprivileged women to foster local stewardship for pangolin conservation while promoting long-term economic and environmental sustainability. This initiative focused on educating participants about pangolin ecology, community-based monitoring, and developing alternative livelihood options.

Training Focus

The training covered income-generating activities such as:

Liquid detergent production

Promotion of eco-friendly tourism

Sustainable farming techniques

By equipping community members with diverse livelihood options, the program aimed to reduce reliance on forest resources, create economic opportunities, and strengthen conservation initiatives.

Expert Facilitation

The training was led by Mrs. Laxmi Ranjitkar from Bhaktapur, a highly knowledgeable expert in sustainable livelihood practices. Her expertise ensured the program was well-targeted for local women and marginalized community members.

The program was designed to be informal and interactive to enhance engagement and participation. Participants began with theoretical knowledge, including an introduction to entrepreneurship, startup methods, and key techniques. Practical sessions followed, providing hands-on experience. All participants were supplied with necessary equipment, including gloves, face masks, aprons, chemicals, and bottles. Additionally, five participants received chemical sets to help them kickstart their small-scale businesses.



Fig: 17. Expert Mrs Laxmi Ranjitkar taking class on theoretical session before the demonstration

Acknowledgment and Appreciation with token of love

All participants, trainers, and volunteers were provided certificates of training and appreciation letters. Each participants were presented with a Chinese pangolin-printed cup as a souvenir. We acknowledged the Rufford Foundation, Rufford Foundation for the generous financial support and Coalition WILD for the Excellerator Fellowship and Idea Wild for equipment support.

This initiative not only empowered women by providing alternative livelihoods but also contributed to conservation efforts by reducing community dependence on forest resources. It underscored the importance of sustainable practices for both economic and environmental benefits.



Fig: 18. Happy faces of the trainee after receiving certificate, pangolin cup, mask, gloves and chemical set to initiate the business by their own



Fig: 19. Delighted participants with the certificates & trainer



Fig: 20. Our active participants Ms Chinimaya Tamang filling the bottles with the detergent the next day of the training as guided by the trainer & participants with the freely distributed detergent the next day

Pangolin Conservation Education Programs

We targeted college students because they were often more receptive to new ideas and can effectively transmit them to their parents and neighbors. Our programs aimed to educate students about the importance of the Chinese Pangolin, its status, and the causes of its population decline. Moreover, we conducted an interaction program with fresh graduates to bring in new perspectives, energy, and ideas. These individuals were often eager to learn and contribute, making them valuable assets for innovative solutions. We engaged them to build their capacity and expertise, nurturing future leaders in conservation. Through students, we created a ripple effect of awareness and conservation action within their communities.



Fig: 21. Presentation in progress in Khwopa College Auditorium hall



Fig: 22. Principal of Khwopa College delivering token of love to the project leader

To engage and sensitize diverse groups about pangolin conservation, we conducted targeted school campaigns designed to inspire the younger generation and their communities. These campaigns included interactive learning sessions with visual presentations, storytelling, and activities tailored to students of all ages. Conservation-themed competitions, such as art contests and critical thinking about environmental and biodiversity stewardship. We distributed educational kits, including calendars to ensure that conservation messages extended beyond the classroom. By empowering students with knowledge about pangolins' ecological importance and the threats they face, we aimed to build a foundation for lifelong conservation advocacy within schools and their surrounding communities



Fig: 23. Pangolin conservation education class with demo presentation



Fig: 24. With students of Crescent Academy and students and teachers watching our pangolin educational videos



Fig: 25. School kids with pangolin calendar and banners



Fig: 26. Students after conservation classes



Fig: 27. Schools students going through the calendars that were distributed free to all students



Fig: 28 School kids watching pangolin educational video and with pangolin calendars



Fig: 29. Local shop keeper Aaama reading through the pictures and messages in the calendar



Fig: 30. Pangolin education banners being installed in the famous pilgrimage site of Bhaktapur



Gaijatra Program: Linking Culture & Pangolin Conservation

Month of August was very special to us, we celebrated our festival Gaijatra, a religious roots are deeply tied to Hinduism and reflects the Newar community's resilience and humor in the face of adversity.

It is a traditional festival celebrated mainly in the Kathmandu Valley of Nepal, particularly by the Newar community. In general, the festival is a blend of humor, satire, remembrance, and celebration, marked by a deep cultural significance tied to the remembrance of the deceased ones, usually, marked by the parade through the streets in a procession, accompanied by children, youths, women from families who had lost their loved ones and interested people. It is believed that it helps the souls of the deceased reach to heaven.

Meanwhile, we took this an opportunity to showcase cultural performances with pangolin conservation message banners where local dancers with wooded stick were followed by musicians. This cultural dance is popularly known as Gintang Ghisi in Newari etymology. We had performed a day long activities to commemorate that day long different activities among the over 500 people.

Pangolin-themed Procession

We had pangolin themed procession in which participants carried pangolin conservation themed banners. During the Gai Jatra procession, we distributed educational banners, t-shirts, caps and calendars about pangolin conservation and their endangered status to make the connection between the festival and conservation.



Fig: 31. Gaijatra procession with local Newar communities with pangolin caps & protecting the musical instruments with rain shower at Bhaktapur city



Fig: 32. Gaijatra procession with pangolin education banners helping to spread conservation message through pictures & messages



Fig: 33. People at festive celebration in Taumadi, front of Nyatapola, the tallest five tiered temple in the heart of Bhaktapur city

The Storytellers of Pangolins

We had a wonderful session with the elder knowledgeable people who shared their story on pangolin sighting, capture and release over 20 years back in the areas. They shared us three such incidences and we had a story telling session from three people during that day. They also shared tales that highlight the importance of nature, wildlife, and pangolins. We distributed informational calendar that talked about pangolins, their conservation, and how local communities can contribute. Some glimpses were as follows:



Fig: 34. Listening to pangolin tales of their times



Fig: 35. Group memory with the pangolin witnessed elder citizens after listening to their story

Feast program

After the procession, all the participants' helped had the local popular food called Samay Baji that consists of beaten rice, soybeans, buff meat, lentils, pickles and so forth.



Fig: 36. Samay Baji, a typical food set of Newar communities

Distribution of pangolin awareness outreach materials

We distributed pangolin calender were distributed to all the visitors and local watchers. The calender was very useul as per the communities and women. A total of 100 calenders were distributed in that day.



Fig: 37. Distribution in progress



Fig: 38. With happy faces after having pangolin educational kits in the historic city, Bhaktapur

Celebration of World Pangolin Day 2024

World Pangolin Day is celebrated annually on the third Saturday of February to raise awareness about these unique and endangered creatures. Pangolins are the only mammals wholly covered in scales and are often poached for their scales, which are used in traditional medicine, and their meat, which is considered a delicacy in some cultures.

To mark the day, the thirteenth annual World Pangolin Day, we carried out an interaction and awareness program in collaboration with community forest user groups, government officials and school teachers and students.

Moreover, the principal investigator was invited for the interview by the television program named Good Mood, a live program. It was a program about an hour in which various queries on pangolin ecology, behavior conservation challenges and conservation measures were discussed in local Nepali dialect. The interview was taken to mark the 13 th World Pangolin Day to reach a large audience and inspire action to protect these unique and threatened animals.

The program can be visited through the links below. Kindly please click the following links for details. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_yc1WBV4Zg

<https://www.facebook.com/7star4ktv/videos/410986827986463>

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid0Cxgbh8jxxSyrvMiCvmS7W5AgUjrhPVh6Ew82KUSJeVU72G5W3UiYQYo6bn1X5uz4l&id=100008826605353¬if_id=1708151330445948¬if_t=feedback_reaction_generic&ref=notif



Fig: 39. Project leader in talk program with the program host

Moreover, we organized art competitions under the title "My Pangolin, My Pride." These competitions played a crucial role in nurturing creativity and talent among students, providing them with a platform to showcase their artistic expressions and raise awareness about pangolin conservation. This competition also provided students with an opportunity to delve into research about pangolins, their habitats, and the threats they face.

It was inspiring to see that all the winners of the art competition during the 38th anniversary of Ganesh School were young girls. They showed great enthusiasm and expressed a strong willingness to assist in our field-based surveys, interactions, community education, and monitoring activities for pangolin conservation.

Some glimpses of the 13 th World Pangolin Day Celebration



Fig:40. Students busy in sketch



Fig: 41. With art selection judge teacher



Fig: 42. 1 st winner pangolin art



Fig: 43. 2nd sketch



Fig: 44. 3rd sketch



Fig: 45. Other sketches

Prize distribution and pangolin conservation sensitization program with policy makers

During the 38th anniversary of Ganesh School, a day-long formal program was held under the chairmanship of the school principal, with Honorable Parliament Member Kiran Thapa Magar as the Chief Guest. Other distinguished guests included ward presidents, head teachers from other schools, and local social activists. The event included a sensitization meeting with policymakers and ward presidents, focusing on the promotion and further improvement of the locally declared Pangolin Conservation Area within Kathmandu. The program also featured a prize distribution ceremony for an art competition held to mark the 13th World Pangolin Day 2024, where twenty-one participants showcased their talents and five winners were selected for recognition. All participants received letters of appreciation, while the winners were presented with certificates featuring their artwork, along with t-shirts and stationery items.



Fig: 46. Felicitation to the School former Principal Mr Rabindra Thapa



Fig: 47. Pangolin certificate and gift hampers to winner artists



Fig: 48. Winners with certificates and gifts



Fig: 49. Winners with school teachers



Fig: 50. Appreciation letter to school family for their support for pangolin classes and programs and the participants

Pangolin Education and Conservation Wall

Pangolin Education and Conservation Wall was important for public education as it serves as a visual and informative platform to raise awareness about pangolins. We shared the pangolin conservation message through the conservation wall with highlight ecological importance, conservation status, and the threats they face, encouraging people to take action to protect these unique animals and keep eye on illicit activities.



Fig: 51. Curious visitor reading through the message

Chinese Pangolin Action Management Plan for a Community-Based Pangolin Conservation Area (CBPCA)

The Action Plan for the conservation of the Chinese Pangolin (*Manis pentadactyla*) in the Community-Based Pangolin Conservation Area (CBPCA) in Bhaktapur outlines a comprehensive and sustainable strategy to protect this critically endangered species and its habitat. Situated in a mid-hill ecosystem with dense forests, such as the Taudolchhap Community Forest, this area serves as a vital refuge for pangolins, fostering biodiversity conservation while addressing ecological and anthropogenic challenges. The plan highlights the importance of community forests in providing safe habitats, maintaining dense vegetation, supporting ample insect populations, and reducing human disturbance. By involving local communities through user groups, the plan fosters a sense of ownership, enabling active patrolling to curb poaching and illegal logging, while reducing human-wildlife conflict through education and buffer zones.

The plan incorporates habitat restoration, reforestation, and monitoring of pangolin populations using techniques like camera trapping and scat analysis. Community engagement is bolstered through outreach programs, capacity-building efforts, and the integration of traditional knowledge into conservation initiatives, ensuring cultural alignment and local participation. Additionally, the plan addresses threats like illegal wildlife trade and habitat degradation by collaborating with law enforcement, conservation organizations, and research institutions. By formalizing conservation efforts, empowering local leaders, and creating sustainable frameworks, the Action Plan not only protects the Chinese Pangolin but also establishes a replicable model for biodiversity conservation, ensuring the long-term survival of this species and the ecological integrity of its habitat.

Letter of Honor for the pangolin conservation work in Nepal

During the 40th School Day of Om Secondary School, The entire school family and the Principal, Mrs Sanu Ghimire, presented a Letter of Honor to the project leader, who was a former student of Om Secondary School in recognition of her decade-long dedication, hard work, and empathy towards the conservation of the critically endangered pangolin in Nepal. In that occasion, we talked about the Nepal's pangolins, their status, conservation issues and opportunities. There were a total of around 700 students teachers, parents and media personnel.



Fig: 52. Four awarded former students from various categories of achievement

Rescue of Chinese Pangolin in Makwanpur district

On the early morning of February 5th, 2024, we received news of the rescue of a live pangolin from Makwanpur Gadhi. It was then delivered to the Pangolin Park of Chuchekkhola community forest. Due to the lack of proper veterinary services and medicinal facilities for rescued pangolins in Nepal, we decided to release it inside the pangolin park of Chuchekkhola community forest without further delay and stress, with assistance from our team members.



Fig: 53. Kedar Gautam, Secretary of the Chuchekkhola Community Forest with the rescued Chinese Pangolin Photo @Ananda Shrestha



Fig: 54. A rescued Chinese Pangolin on the ground. Photo @Ananda Shrestha

Collaborative Conservation: Addressing Challenges for Globally Threatened Pangolins in Nepal

The project leader is serving as the vice-president of the Nepal National Committee of IUCN Nepal and she highlighted the different conservation challenges to the globally threatened pangolins conservation through communities based programs. She emphasized the need for collaborative efforts to address these wildlife and people in Nepal with Dr. Maud Lelievre, President of the

IUCN French Committee and International Councilor of IUCN during her visit to Nepal.



Fig: 55. Discussion with Dr. Maud Lelievre, President of the IUCN French Committee & International Councilor of IUCN in IUCN Nepal Office, Kupondole

Connecting the Power of Media for Conservation Education and Outreach Initiatives

We seized valuable opportunities to leverage the power of media for conservation education and outreach initiatives aimed at protecting the critically threatened Chinese pangolin in Nepal. Recognizing the extensive reach and influence of media platforms, we utilized national televisions and FM stations to raise awareness about the challenges faced by the pangolins. Through these channels, we reached a wide audiences. Our efforts also focused on dispelling myths and misconceptions surrounding pangolins, which are often poached for their scales and meat in Nepalese cultures due to perceived medicinal properties. We emphasized the national protected status of pangolins and the legal consequences of poaching. By sharing this information, we aimed to educate the public about the true nature of pangolins and the urgent need to protect them.



Fig: 56. After the TV interview in the early morning of the third Saturday of February to mark the 13th World Pangolin Day in Kathmandu, I had the pleasure of meeting with TV presenter Ms. Manita Pokharel. The program directly reached over 170 viewers. For more details, please click on the link below. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_yc1WBV4Zg

Likewise, the principal investigator was invited for an interview to discuss the status of Nepalese pangolins and other wildlife on Nari TV, Nepal's first women's channel dedicated to amplifying women's voices and sharing their untold stories. As a women-led television, Nari TV promotes peace, freedom, and justice for women and girls. The program reached approximately 7500 viewers from diverse backgrounds. For more details about the program, please click on the following link. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ULe58NHxRxI>



Fig: 57. In Naari TV office after the interview program

The principal investigator was invited for an hour-long talk on pangolins and their conservation status by Bhaktapur FM 105.4 MHz, a radio station. During these programs, funding sources were acknowledged. The radio interview was later uploaded to Bhaktapur FM's official YouTube channel, where it garnered 200 views. For more details about the program, please click on the link.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gsawZB4Dkl4>



Fig: 58. With Radio presenter Ms Nabina Shrestha after the session

Throughout our programs, we expressed gratitude to the Rufford Grants Foundation for their financial support for this project and others. Their contribution has been instrumental in enabling us to carry out these crucial conservation initiatives.

Eighth IUCN Regional Conservation Forum

The 8th IUCN Asia Regional Conservation Forum (RCF) is held every four years, took place from September 3 to 5, 2024, in Bangkok, Thailand. In the key event, discussion on conservation strategies across Asia was conducted with the theme "Reimagining Conservation in Asia: A Nature-Positive Future," The three day program brought more than 450 participants from various stakeholders, including governments, NGOs, and Indigenous communities, to evaluate conservation progress and set future priorities. The forum featured thematic discussions, side events, and exhibitions focused on biodiversity, nature-based solutions, and community empowerment. In one of the side event organized by Nepal member institutions, chaired by His Excellency Mr Dhan Bahadur Oli, we presented a presentation on the role of women, indigenous people in saving the culture, nature, wildlife and natural resources in Nepal. We presented our work on pangolins, Fishing cat and community conservation initiatives in Nepal. WE have

acknowledged The Rufford Foundation and other conservation supporters for their invaluable support in scaling up our conservation programs in human dominated landscapes.

The forums served us as a platform for exchanging knowledge, fostering collaboration, and setting conservation priorities.



Fig: 59. Presentation in progress with Newari attire: locally hand woven sari, popularly called as Haaku patasi from Bhaktapur



Fig: 60. Q & A after the presentations from Nepal & with His Excellency Mr Dhan B. Oli in the forum



Fig: 61. Nepal at the side event during 8 th IUCN RCF & with the Regional Director, Dr. Dindo Campilan



Fig: 62. With IUCN Director General, Dr. Grethal Aguilar and IUCN Nepal National Committee members

Outcomes of the project

- 2 support units were established, each comprising 10 members (youth researchers, local forest users, and students) who were fully trained, enhancing their capacity to contribute to conservation efforts.
- A field trip for 24 graduates and lecturers provided hands-on training on pangolin behavior, ecology, equipment handling, and rescue protocols.
- 10 community programs and 20 school awareness programs successfully reached an estimated 5,000 individuals, with a specific focus on students, women, and marginalized groups.
- Distributed 1,000 calendars, 50 t-shirts, 100 caps, 150 cups, 50 educational banners, and certificates/tokens of appreciation, all featuring pangolin sketches and conservation messages, further amplifying awareness.
- Radio/TV broadcasts expanded outreach to approximately 10,000 people, spreading conservation messages to a broader audience.
- A Pangolin Management Plan for the Community-Based Pangolin Conservation Area was prepared that provides a framework for pangolin protection, research, and stakeholder collaboration and addresses local threats and conservation needs.
- Placement of hoarding boards reinforced conservation messaging at critical sites.
- Widespread distribution of materials (calendars, banners, pangolin cups, caps, t-shirts products) and media outreach enhanced the visibility of pangolin conservation.
- The initiatives strengthened community stewardship, fostering sustainable and locally driven conservation efforts for the last remaining scaly mammals.
- The combination of awareness, training, and targeted outreach promoted behavioral changes and strengthened active participation from various stakeholders, including students, researchers, local forest users, and marginalized groups.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the project successfully laid a strong foundation for the conservation of pangolins in Bhaktapur, Nepal, despite the growing threat of illegal trade. Through community engagement, education, and capacity-building, it empowered local stakeholders to actively participate in pangolin conservation. The development of a Pangolin Management Plan and the widespread outreach efforts helped raise awareness and fostered a sense of responsibility among the community. By addressing critical threats like habitat loss and poaching, the project contributed to the long-term protection of the pangolin population, promoting sustainable conservation practices and ensuring that the local community played a central role in safeguarding this elusive species for future generations.

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Annex I List of burrows in the Taudolchhap forest

S.N	Latitude	Longitude	Altitude	Burrow Old	Burrow New	Remarks	Slope
1	N27 38.717	E85 26.394	5345 ft		New	Footprints	N
2	N27 38.717	E85 26.394	5344 ft		New	Footprints	S
3	N27 38.717	E85 26.394	5343 ft		New	Tail markings	N
4	N27 38.717	E85 26.394	5344 ft		New	Scratches	N
5	N27 38.716	E85 26.392	5338 ft	Old			E
6	N27 38.716	E85 26.392	5337 ft	Old			NE
7	N27 38.715	E85 26.391	5349 ft		New	Tail markings	NE
8	N27 38.716	E85 26.392	5346 ft	Old			N
9	N27 38.715	E85 26.390	5345 ft		New		N
10	N27 38.715	E85 26.389	5338 ft		New	Pangolin droppings	SE
11	N27 38.718	E85 26.393	5349 ft	Old			S
12	N27 38.719	E85 26.396	5361 ft		New		N
13	N27 38.719	E85 26.397	5361 ft	Old			NE
14	N27 38.719	E85 26.397	5358 ft	Old		Scratches	N
15	N27 38.701	E85 26.394	5398 ft	Old			E
16	N27 38.543	E85 26.628	5700 ft		New	Tail markings	NE
17	N27 38.861	E85 26.499	5008 ft		New	Tail markings	NW
18	N27 38.861	E85 26.500	4969 ft	Old			E
19	N27 38.880	E85 26.486	4851 ft	Old			E
20	N27 38.879	E85 26.502	4844 ft		New		SE
21	N27 38.877	E85 26.502	4853 ft	Old		Near natural	E
22	N27 38.862	E85 26.496	4914 ft	Old			SE
23	N27 38.840	E85 26.447	5089 ft		New	Tail markings	E
24	N27 38.839	E85 26.446	5086 ft	Old			NE
25	N27 38.841	E85 26.450	5081 ft	Old			S
26	N27 38.840	E85 26.450	5083 ft		New	Tail markings	NE
27	N27 38.840	E85 26.450	5086 ft		New	Scratches	N

28	N27 38.840	E85 26.449	5086 ft	Old			E
29	N27 38.839	E85 26.447	5092 ft	Old			NE
30	N27 38.838	E85 26.446	5089 ft		New	Tail markings	E
31	N27 38.840	E85 26.443	5093 ft	Old			N
32	N27 38.832	E85 26.444	5107 ft		New	Scratches	S
33	N27 38.830	E85 26.435	5107 ft	Old	New	Tail markings	SE
34	N27 38.784	E85 26.439	5260 ft		New	Tail markings	N
35	N27 38.784	E85 26.439	5260 ft	Old	New	Tail markings	N
36	N27 38.783	E85 26.439	5260 ft	Old	Old		N
37	N27 38.947	E85 26.434	4896 ft	Old			S
38	N27 38.948	E85 26.432	4903 ft	Old			S
39	N27 38.919	E85 26.421	4956 ft	Old		Pollution	S
40	N27 38.908	E85 26.427	4976 ft	Old		Forest clearing	SE
41	N27 38.912	E85 26.399	4899 ft		New	Tail markings	E
42	N27 38.907	E85 26.383	4852 ft	Old		Scratches	E
43	N27 38.906	E85 26.384	4850 ft	Old			NW
44	N27 38.888	E85 26.382	4856 ft		New	Tail markings	W
45	N27 38.881	E85 26.388	4859 ft	Old			W
46	N27 38.878	E85 26.373	4857 ft	Old			S
47	N27 38.885	E85 26.365	4868 ft	Old		Cuttings	E
48	N27 38.888	E85 26.323	4853 ft		New		NE
49	N27 38.888	E85 26.323	4848 ft	Old			NW
50	N27 38.894	E85 26.271	4927 ft	Old			NE
51	N27 38.767	E85 26.388	4954 ft		New	Scratches	E
52	N27 38.773	E85 26.391	5140 ft		New		SW
53	N27 38.717	E85 26.394	5344 ft		New	Scratches	N

Thank you very much!