

Project Update: April 2002

We have selected two forest user groups for our study:

- Pallo Pakha in the Baglung district (middle hills), and
- Siswa in Nawalparasi district, in the buffer zone of Royal Chitwan National Park

Although we had originally planned to undertake research in only one location, we have decided to pick two sites to further strengthen the project's impact. We have visited both sites and held meetings with community leaders and resource users so as to explain the meaning of Biodiversity and the importance of its conservation in community forestry management; to explore the interest and willingness of the communities to work with us on the project; and to identify ideas for the project from the user's side.

I am pleased to inform that we have successfully set up the project on two sites - one in the hills and one in the Terai. In the Terai site (Rajahar area of Nawalparasi), the project is being smoothly implemented, whereas in the hill site (Kushmisera area of Baglung district), the security situation has worsened following our inception activity. We have refined the project log frame in the light of new learnings, and prepared a plan until the end of December. One almost full time staff (Him L Shrestha) has been hired, who will be supported by other ForestAction professionals whenever needed. I am coordinating the entire project as the principle investigator.