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Climate Change Sensitization Workshop



>> Participants of the workshop

The Royal Society for Protection of Nature, in collaboration with Climate Action Network South Asia (CANSA) and National Environment Commission organized one day sensitization workshop on Climate Change on 26 October 2009. The event, held at Taj Tashi in Thimphu, saw an overwhelming response from the parliamentarians and the government officials.

Memorandum of Understanding between SaciWATERs and RSPN

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the Executive Director, Royal Society for Protection of Nature and the Executive Director, The South Asia Consortium for Interdisciplinary Water Resources Studies (SaciWATERs) on 25th November 2009 in the RSPN conference hall. The signing of MoU was witnessed by Sr. Fellow-Research Mrs. Chanda Gurung Goodrich (PhD) from SaciWATERs and the officials from RSPN.

The MoU was signed after the two partners found it mutually beneficial to have formal understanding for organizing capacity development programs on Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) and water

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11th Black-necked Crane Festival celebrated



>> Festival started with *marchang* ceremony

>> story on page 4

Community Forest Certificate Awarded in Passangphu



>> Certificate award event being graced by Drangpon of Thrimshing Dungkhag

The Certificate Award Day in Passangphu was jointly organized by the Trashigang Dzongkhag Forestry Sector, Kangpara Geog and Wamrong RSPN Field Office. The Dasho Drangpon of Thrimshing Dungkhag was invited as the chief guest to honor the certificate to the members of the Passa Norbulung Community Forest. The other guests present during the occasion were the Dzongkhag Forest Officers, teachers of Passangphu Primary School, Kangpara Gup, Kangpara Territorial Forest officer, Kangpara RNR Extension officers, the Geog Administration officer, and about 120 people from the villages of Passangphu, Maduwa and Padung.

The award day began at 9:30 am with the reception of the chief guest followed by the marching ceremony. After the chief guest handed over the certificate to the Chairperson of the Passa-Norbulung Community Forest, Mr. Dendup Tshering, the Dzongkhag Forest Officer, informed the gathering the goals behind the initiation of Community Forest throughout the country. He significantly mentioned the four main objectives of the Passa-Norbulung Community Forest:

- To generate income and improve the living standard of the Community Forest Management Group (CFMG).
- To maintain and improve the sustainable supply of forest products.
- To maintain and improve the biological diversity and ecological functions of the forest land.
- To maintain equity over the forest resources.

The Dasho Drangpon informed the people of Passangphu and nearby villages, who were present during the occasion, the importance of communities' responsibilities

in conserving the local environment for the sustainable use. He also highlighted on the need of skill enhancement for the rural livelihood and need to promote bamboo crafts, dairy and vegetable gardening for income generation. The Kangpara Gup and the chairperson of the Passa-Norbulung Community Forest expressed their gratitude to RSPN for the financial support. They mentioned that the Community Forest would benefit particularly on the income generation scopes and conservation of the local resources in a sustainable ways.

Initially, the 182 hectares Passa-Norbulung Community Forest comprises of three blocks of Phochutoed, Zeylamo and Changlaphu and has 50 households as CF members. In the words of the Dzongkhag Forest Officer, Dendup Tshering, "The community forest has plans of afforestation and the members will plant trees in the vacant and necessary areas." As per the plan, the Passa-Norbulung Community Forest aims at alleviating poverty and increasing ownership of the villagers towards the natural resources, which would benefit and improve the living standard of the communities of Passangphu. The establishment of CF would further save from forest fire, landslides and deforestation whereby many farms and homes of many villages in Kangpara geog would be protected in future. According to Dzongkhag forestry officials, formation of community forests begets better ownership and management by the local people.

One significant benefit is getting a permit to buy the timber, which earlier took months, "It will now be completed within a few days," said Ap Sangay Wangdi. He also said that the community felt important to

>> *Contd. from page 1*

Memorandum of Understanding between SaciWATERS and RSPN

issues in Bhutan in 2010 under the "Crossing Boundaries Project" with SaciWATERS. As part of MoU, in May 2010, RSPN will also organize the 5th Research Workshop in Thimphu on 'Globalization of Governance: Implications for Water Management in South Asia.

The signing of MoU was yet another milestone for RSPN to have ventured in the management water resources. The two partners are expected to continue the collaborative effort in capacity building and water education in Bhutan in the years to come.

have Ringshu management plan for the Passangphu Ringshu Management Group. Although they formed the group in early 2005 and initiated re-plantation of Ringshu in 30 acres land in the government reserved forest with the technical support from RSPN and funding from JAICA and SNV yet they do not have the management plan till date due to lack of funding and proper setup guidelines for NTFP.

The day long program was followed by cultural programs by the Community Forest Management Group (CFMG) members. The day's program fruitfully ended at 3:30pm, however, the evening program continued with Degor (flat stone-throw) competition between the officials and the communities. The day ended with singing and dancing around the born-fire which lasted till 10 p.m.

In connection to the above mentioned program, RSPN has supported three CFs till date. The Wagkhar Community Forest Management Plan and bylaws will be completed by the end of December 2009. However, approval of CF Management Plan and bylaws by Social Forestry Division of the DoF will take few months to complete.

RSPN Annual Report FY 2008-2009

Download our latest Annual Report by visiting
<http://www.rspnbhutan.org>.

'Local Environment Management Committee' consultation meeting held



>> Consultation meeting in session

Kangpara Geog under Thrimshing Dungkhag, Trashingang, consists of 17 villages and home for more than 3000 inhabitants who sustain their livelihoods on subsistence farming. They significantly rely on forest resources such as cane and bamboo. However, over the last few years, heavy harvesting and unsustainable practices has caused degradation of the forest resources especially a bamboo species *Nemicrocalamus andropogonifolius* locally known as Ringshu. This resulted in declining the crafts business.

An appropriate intervention will provide the opportunities to enhance both conservation and socio-economic welfare for the local people. Since 2007, a community based natural resource management (CBNRM) program was started in Wamrong-Kangpara areas to replicate some of the best experiences of ICDP program in Phobjikha. Establishment of Local Environment Management Committee (LEMC) is one such experience that we had planned under CBNRM program. The establishment LEMC

in Maduwa and Passangphu will promote the conservation of the local environment.

The main objectives of establishing the committee are:

- It will act as linkage between the local communities and that of government and conservation agencies in promoting a community based environmental conservation and community development.
- It will coordinate the conservation activities at a local level.
- It should be able to exist and function even when projects and agencies end.
- It will promote a transparent decision making and implementation process based on community participation and collaborate efforts.
- To ensure an effective management of natural environment and protection of wildlife in the area.

On 19th November, 2009, the consultation meeting Passangphu and

Maduwa was organized in Passangphu. The meeting was attended by extension forestry officers, agriculture and livestock officer of the Kangpara RNR, Geog Administration officer, Passangphu Tshogpa, Passangphu CF Chairperson and two CF members.

The participants were informed on the main objectives of the committee. In addition, the participants were also informed on the success stories of ICDP program and Local Environment Management Committee in Phobjikha. Even though there are similar groups with varied interests and focus, some are project-based, which may exist depending on the project terms. In this context, we felt that it would be useful to have a group that would bring all those interest groups together and coordinate the conservation activities at the local level in the area. Its main aim is to sustain and function even after the project terms.

In response to this proposal and idea, the officials and community members shared their appreciation and thanked the RSPN for providing them with financial and technical support in various forest and environment management related activities. They expressed that formation of such committee can be of great help in ensuring sustainable conservation and development programs in their areas.

For the smooth flow of the program, RSPN identified 14 potential committee members comprising extension officers from three RNR sectors, officials from Geog Administration, Kangpara territorial officials, officials from Health and Education sectors, Tshopas of Passangphu and Maduwa, CF Chairpersons of Passangphu and Maduwa, Ringshu Chairperson and one woman representative from CF/Ringshu. RSPN Field Office will develop management guidelines, constitution and articles for local committee followed with a committee meeting in the second week of March 2010 in Wamrong.

RSPN participates in COP15

Over 192 countries and 125 heads of the state participated in the Fifteenth Conference of Parties (COP 15) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held in the city of Copenhagen, Denmark from December 7-18, 2009.

COP 15 has been an important climate change negotiation platform to agree on the Bali road map - Kyoto Protocol (KP) and Long-term Cooperative Action (LCA), since COP 13 in Bali. Several intersessions were held before COP 15 within the Ad Hoc Working Groups on KP and LCA. The

draft decisions from those intersessions were brought to Copenhagen.

After two weeks of intensive discussions and negotiations including the high level segment, the conference ended with the "Copenhagen Accord" agreed by few countries. The decisions of the COP on KP and LCA still remains in the draft form and the COP has adopted and decided to continue working on it to present the outcome at COP 16 in Mexico.

The Bhutanese delegation was lead by the Minister for Agriculture, Dr. Pema Gyamtsho and technical negotiators from National Environment Commission and other in line agencies attended the conference. There were also representatives from our local

civil society, media and youth at the COP.

RSPN has been following the conference since COP 11 in Montreal as part of the Capacity Strengthening of Least Developed Countries for adaptation to Climate Change (CLACC) Program. The society in the course of time have also carried out research studies in the field of human health and Climate Change and initiated the vulnerability mapping assessment of Thimphu city.

The RSPN has also organized sensitization workshop in October 2009 involving all relevant stakeholders. It plans to organize similar workshop in February 2010 to keep abreast of the activities and events on Climate Change.

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11th Black-necked Crane Festival commemorated



>> Local people mark festival with great interest

With the arrival of cranes, the people of Phobjikha once again celebrated the 11th annual Black-necked Crane festival on 12th November 2009. Apart from the large crowd gathered at the festival, over 130 Black-necked cranes graced the valley, the highest numbers to arrive at this time of the year.

Dasho Dzongrab of Wangdue Dzongkhag graced the festival as the chief guest. The other important guests present

were Aum Rinsy Dem, the First Lady of Bhutan, accompanied by Finance Minister's wife, Minister of Economic Affairs' wife, and Ministry of Works and Human Settlement's wife. In his address, the Chief Guest highlighted the importance of Phobjikha as a habitat of the Black-necked Crane and urged the community of Phobjikha and the visitors to support the crane conservation in the valley. The highlight of the festival was

the Chief Guest launching the ecotourism travel guide "Explore Phobjikha" during the festival.

The local communities, the schools, the monk and the lay monks came together to entertain the crowd with the traditional & cultural dances, mask dances and dances on the Black-necked cranes. The distinctive program this year was the play based on the theme 'Environment and Religion,' staged by the Kuenzanchholing Monastic Institution.

As usual, the crane dance performed by the local school children dressed up as cranes received big applause from the audience. The event is organized annually by Phobjikha Environment Management Committee (PEMC), a local community group composed of elected leaders, the government sector representatives, the monk body, and RSPN. The festival was first initiated by RSPN in early 2008 and it has now become a part of the annual local event in Phobjikha valley.

The ecotourism travel book for Phobjikha, developed with support from the Program for the South Cooperation is the first of its kind developed by RSPN. The book gives a comprehensive guide and information on Phobjikha's environment, socio-cultural values and related tourism activities in the valley. The book is now available for sale at the Black-necked Crane visitor centre in Phobjikha.

Clean Bhutan Day 2009 celebrated



>> The day saw various awareness campaigns being organized by schools

For the second time, the Clean Bhutan Day was marked on 1st November 2009 throughout the country. The event was joined by civil servants, monks, schools, armed forces and general public and a mass

cleaning campaigns were carried out while some Dzongkhags also initiated awareness programs on waste management.

The volunteers collected different types of waste including, plastics, papers, pet bottles,

glass, metal and textile. The collected waste were later sorted out and disposed of properly. In some Dzongkhag many of the participants voiced out for the need to carry out such program in future at regular basis. According to Gasa Dzongkhag, one of the participant said that "so far I saw many different kinds of rubbish thrown all around; places looked so dirty, now after cleaning villages look clean". There was similar reaction from most of the Dzongkhag. We looked forward to such initiative and hope to realize the event as an annual activity in the future.

Students from different schools in Thimphu also participated in cleaning campaign. The students also organized awareness program on proper waste management through skits, songs, and dances. Around 3400 teachers, students and parents took part in the event and collected over 9700 kgs all together.

Clean Bhutan Day is an annual event initiated jointly by RSPN and Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs under the Clean Bhutan Program with financial support from Global Environment Facility Small Grants Program and Programme for South – South Cooperation.

The ultimate objective of such an event is geared towards stewardship of every citizen to act and commit against littering and adopt proper waste management practices.

Mass cleaning campaign conducted in Phobjikha



>> Local community and students actively participated in the activity

To commemorate the National Day of Bhutan, the Wangduephodrang Dzongkhag and the RSPN, through the Clean Bhutan Project organized a cleaning

campaign in the Phobjikha valley. The participants of the campaign were the communities, schools, government sectors and the business community of Phobjikha

valley. The campaign covered the whole valley under both the Gangtay and Phobji Gewog, focusing on the surroundings of village settlements, footpaths/ trails, and roads.

The objectives of the campaign were:

- To encourage individual responsibilities among the local communities towards proper waste management.
- To control littering in the Phobjikha Conservation Area.

As suggested by the Environment Education Officer, RSPN, the participants were provided with the refreshments (tea and zaw, local snack). By providing such refreshments, it aimed at promoting local products and also in reducing waste. The campaign was funded by Clean Bhutan Project and Dewachen Hotel, Phobjikha.

As a follow up to the activity, the Dzongkhag is initiating to set up a proper waste management facility in the valley for which they are seeking financial support from the local hotels and the RSPN.

The Return of Crane Gangtep

On 13th November 2009, the crane named Gangtep returns to Phobjikha from its summer habitat. Gangtep along with its juvenile named Phobjib was captured and attached with coloured leg bands and a Platform Telemetry Transmitter (PTT) on

1st January 2006 to study the trans-boundary movement of the Black-necked cranes in Bhutan.

Gangtep has been observed returning to Phobjikha ever since the early 2007 winter. During most part of the day the bird is seen

feeding in the valley floor and could be easily observed from the Black-Necked Crane Visitor Centre. In the same year, two more cranes, the male crane named Jigme was attached with the PTT, while the other crane was attached with colour band to track their movements.

Cranes return to their wintering habitats

The first flock of black-necked crane, comprising of two adults and a juvenile, arrived in Phobjikha on 29th October 2009 at around 3:10 PM. It was on the same date that RSPN recorded the first arrival of cranes in the year 2008.

Meanwhile a flock of two cranes arrived in Bumdeling on 11th November 2009 at around 3:10 PM. More cranes are expected to arrive in other parts of the winter habitat.

As of 18th November 2009, about 440 cranes arrived in the country (see box).

Phobjikha	: 326 cranes
Bumdeling	: 101 Cranes
Khotokha	: 9 cranes
Bumthang	:
Chumey & Thangbi	: 4 cranes

Foresters Trained in Wildlife Survey and Monitoring Techniques



>> Trainees on their field trip with their instructor

A week long training course on wildlife survey and monitoring techniques for group of foresters was conducted at the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun. The trainees included four forest guards from

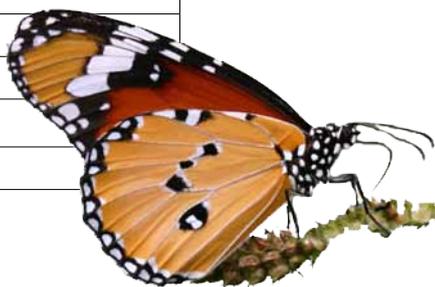
National Parks, two from Wangdue territorial forest and two from RSPN. The 7 day training program included classroom lectures and field visits with practical training on wildlife survey and monitoring techniques.

WORD SAFARI

In this edition, we compile some of the common bird butterfly species found in Phobjikha under Wangdue phodrang district. (Source: *Explore Phobjikha, Travel Guide, RSPN, Thimphu 2009*)

Please find and encircle the names highlighted in bold letters. We have encircled one to help you get start with.

Yellow Pansy
India Fritillary
Common Tiger
Hill Sergeant
Dark Clouded Yellow
Indian Tortoiseshell
Azure Sapphire
Queen of Spain Fritillary



R	S	P	A	N	S	Y	T	V	L	P
I	L	H	F	I	B	S	O	O	R	T
T	K	E	R	T	R	E	R	I	O	I
H	H	A	I	R	K	T	T	N	N	C
Y	E	S	T	O	D	K	O	I	L	R
U	F	T	I	G	E	R	I	F	F	I
H	N	N	L	O	E	U	S	L	A	E
I	S	T	L	P	Y	L	E	W	L	N
N	C	E	A	A	O	I	S	A	C	S
I	P	S	R	N	R	N	H	N	O	E
A	R	I	Y	G	S	G	E	G	G	G
G	E	N	I	Y	E	Y	L	C	E	S
L	B	G	F	U	A	A	L	H	R	A
A	N	Y	D	H	B	L	N	U	I	S
I	T	E	P	I	I	B	O	T	Q	T
Q	S	A	P	P	H	I	R	E	O	A
S	U	R	E	A	K	I	N	G	X	R
E	F	E	L	O	U	D	E	D	O	U
W	I	G	E	T	I	N	Z	J	Y	G
W	I	G	H	N	R	I	E	N	T	K
S	M	B	N	X	V	C	Z	E	G	L



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