



ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 1, 2015 - JUNE 30, 2016



ROYAL SOCIETY FOR PROTECTION OF NATURE

STATEMENT FROM THE ROYAL PATRON



"The kingdom of Bhutan is blessed with an exceptional and largely intact natural environment. I have joined RSPN in its mission to raise awareness of the challenge that faces us now. We must all accept our individual responsibility to conserve the rich diversity of Bhutan's plant and animal species, for the benefit of both the natural world and our children's future."

Jigme Khesar Wangchuck

His Royal Highness Dashi Jigme Khesar Namgyal Wangchuck
The Crown Prince of Bhutan, Royal Patron of RSPN

5th August, 2013

Statement by Her Majesty Gyaltsuen Jetsun Pema Wangchuck
Queen of Bhutan

The Kingdom of Bhutan has inherited pristine ecosystems and natural resources. We must, as individuals, personally strive to preserve this endowment through our own sustainable actions. It is our responsibility to ensure that this rich biodiversity abounds for generations to come. I join the RSPN in its efforts of environmental conservation, which remains a pressing concern of our time, and encourage every citizen to embrace the path to a greener future.

Jetsun Pema Wangchuck

Her Majesty Gyaltsuen Jetsun Pema Wangchuck
Queen of Bhutan

Patron of Royal Society for Protection of Nature



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Crane Karma photos : Karma Jigme - Freelance Photographer

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

MR. UGYEN RINZIN



Many of you dedicated members, friends and supporters of the Royal Society for the Protection of Nature (RSPN) would know that our organization has come a long way since it was first established in 1987. This would not have been possible without your continued support and belief in us. Thank you all for the amazing years. In an age when environmental degradation, extinction of species, loss of habitat and man-made pollution have become global phenomena it is now more than ever our country needs to stay its course of giving due importance to the preservation of nature. At RSPN, the staff, the management, and the Board of Directors take great pride in being partners to our nation's growing global prominence in environmental conservation. RSPN is about to embark on a new chapter and we hope you will continue to join us in this important journey.

This is the last year of my tenure and it has been an honor to serve as the Chairman for RSPN for the last three years and witness the continued success and expansion of the organization. In leaving, I am delighted to note that the organization will be taken forward by a Chairman and Board of Directors that have vast knowledge and experiences from the world of conservation, education and governance. We have much to achieve and many challenges lie ahead as our country develops but I remain very confident that the dynamism of the new Board, as well as the efficiency of the management will carry things forward with great competence. As RSPN continues on its mission to inspire personal responsibility and active involvement of the people of Bhutan in the conservation of the kingdom's environment, RSPN will continue to do this through education, research, and sustainable livelihood opportunities.

On behalf of the RSPN Board of Directors, the management, and all our staff I would like to thank you for your long time loyalty and support. You are the backbone of this great organization. Let us keep working together to encourage the future generations of our society and its leaders and nurture environmental ambassadors who will add to the many passionate members that we already have among us.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

DR. KINLEY TENZIN



It is my pleasure to submit to you the annual report for 2016. RSPN is considered a pioneer in environmental conservation effort and as the organization complete 29 years of service, we continue to complement the conservation efforts carried out by the government agencies and other non-governmental organizations. RSPN has also engaged with several agencies on regulatory proposals dealing with environmental conservation, protection of flagship species, community livelihood sustainability program and Environmental Education and Advocacy Program. It has been a great year whereby major strides were made in the field of conservation. RSPN in collaboration with the Ministry of Education embarked on a project to introduce Environmental Science subjects in classes IX and X. The curriculum is being implemented in the schools as optional subject. The first edition of class X Environmental science textbooks will be distributed to all Middle Secondary Schools and Higher Secondary Schools by the end of 2016. In our Conservation and Sustainable livelihoods program, RSPN extended our Community Based Sustainable Development with the implementation of Homestays program in Haa.

RSPN continues to coordinate its efforts and interactions with other organizations to provide a healthy environment and conserve Bhutan's rich natural heritage. Our work will continue to be guided by these values.

Within the Research Program, RSPN has managed to raise fund to build a temporary rehabilitation centre in Phobjikha when a juvenile was injured. RSPN continues to raise more funds to build a permanent centre for such injured cranes. RSPN has also carried out assessment of the effects of natural and human disturbance on wetland and the current gaps between policy and implementation of hydropower and farm roads.

We were also able to make major strides in conservation of the critically endangered White-bellied Heron. The White-bellied Heron international workshop saw experts from around the globe come up with various strategies that set in motion important activities. Some of the major achievements were the satellite tagging of the WBH for better monitoring and establishment of a captive breeding center.

In continuing our efforts, we would like to thank all our domestic and international partners, and individuals who have contributed to RSPN's achievements. On behalf of the Chairman, Board of Directors and staff, I would like to thank all for their continued cooperation and partnership.

OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS



MR. UGYEN RINZIN
CHAIRMAN

Ugyen Rinzin is the founder and chairman of Yangphel Private Limited. He is a prominent businessman whose interests spread across many different business sectors and with over 25 years experience in business. He currently serves as Chairman in Yangphel Pvt. Ltd., and Bhutan Insurance Company Ltd. As an ardent promotor of the National Game of Bhutan, he shoulders the responsibility of serving as the President of the Bhutan Archery Federation.



MR. TASHI
BOARD MEMBER

Tashi Joined His Majesty's Secretariat as Zimpon Wom in July 2009. He is on deputation from the Royal Audit Authority where he holds the post as Deputy Auditor General. Currently he looks after the Queens Project Office under His Majesty's Secretariat. Zimpon Wom Tashi obtained a Bachelor of Commerce from Sherubtse College in 1993 and is a finalist in Chartered Management Accountancy from the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, U.K..



MR. CHENCHO NORBU
BOARD MEMBER

Mr. Chencho Norbu is currently serving as the Director General of the Department of Forests and Park services, Ministry of Agriculture and Forests. Prior to his appointment as the Director General, he served as the Director-Department of Agriculture, Project Director-SLMP, Project Manager-Bhutan Soil Survey Project, Project Manager-Sustainable Soil Fertility & Plant Nutrition Management Project, Officer-in-Charge-Soil & Plant Analytical Laboratory and FAO Fertilizer Project Manager. As a renowned soil scientist, some of his recent publications include Extension approaches for small farms in Bhutan-New Agriculturist, Sustainable Land Management and its Application- Bhutan, in Combating Desertification and Land Degradation: Proven practices from Asia and the Pacific, to mention few.



MR. KARMA YESHEY
BOARD MEMBER

Mr. Karma Yeshey currently serves as the Director General, Department of School Education under Ministry of Education. Originally from Durung village in Trashigang (eastern Bhutan), Mr. Yeshey is well versed on the topics of education quality, infrastructure and overall system in rural and urban Bhutan. Previously, he worked as the Director of Adult and Higher education, Chief of the School Curriculum Division and as a Principal for 17 years in schools ranging from lower secondary to higher secondary schools across Bhutan.



MR. DORJI WANGCHUK

BOARD MEMBER

Dorji Wangchuk has a laurea degree in electronics and information engineering from the University of Bologna (Italy). He began his career in the Bhutan Broadcasting Service in 1986 and rose to the rank of chief engineer. He led the team that brought the FM radio services and television to Bhutan between 1997 and 1999. Subsequently he made a dramatic career shift and moved to documentary filmmaking and journalism where he won three major international awards and several nominations. He has also written for several books and publications and has penned numerous articles as the guest columnist for Bhutan Times – first private newspaper in the country. From 2009 to 2013 he served as the Director of the Royal Office for Media – responsible for all media relations activities for His Majesty the King and the Royal Family of Bhutan.



DECHEN DORJI

BOARD MEMBER

Dechen Dorji is WWF's Country Representative for Bhutan. Prior to joining the WWF, he served as a Public Policy Researcher in the areas of social and welfare assistance for disadvantaged communities and students under His Majesty's Secretariat office. He has a Bachelors (hons) degree in Forestry from University of Wales, UK and a Master of Environmental Management degree from Yale University, USA. He started his career in the Forestry departments as a forestry and environment management planner. At the end of 1996, he moved to Khangma, Trashigang for seven years to work on the World Bank, SDC and IFAD funded regional forestry and agriculture development project covering the six eastern Dzongkhags. Mr. Dorji is also the Founding Director of Ugyen Wangchuck Institute for Conservation and Environment based in Bumthang, a project initiated as a tribute of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests during the Centenary Celebrations of the monarchy in 2008.



DR. KINLEY TENZIN

MEMBER SECRETARY

Dr. Kinley Tenzin served as the Program Director at Renewable Resource Research and Development Center, Yusipang under the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests before taking up the new responsibility as the Executive Director of the Royal Society for Protection of Nature. He went to University of the Philippine at Los Banos for B.Sc. in General Forestry and got M.Sc. in Resource Management from the University of Edinburgh in UK. He obtained his PhD in Forest Ecosystem Dynamics from University of Boku, Vienna, Austria in 2008.

He started his career as Forestry Research Program Officer in RNR-RC, Jakar in March 1997. In 2005, he was transferred to RNR-RC, Yusipang as Deputy Chief Research Officer and back to RNR-RC, Jakar in the same capacity in 2009. Considering his capacity and vast experience in research, he was appointed as the Program Director at RNR-RC, Yusipang in 2010. Besides attending numerous national and international conferences, seminars and trainings, he has made several important publications.

RSPN

A Background

Since 1987, the Royal Society for Protection of Nature (RSPN) has evolved as a complementary partner to the Royal Government of Bhutan in the preservation of Bhutan's rich natural heritage. It is registered with the Civil Society Organization Authority as a non-profit Public Benefit Organization and is managed by a seven-member Board of Directors. The Executive Director, who reports to the board manages the day to day affairs of the organization. Since 1999 till 2012, RSPN has enjoyed the Royal Patronage of His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, the King of Bhutan. The Queen of Bhutan, Her Majesty the Gyaltsuen Jetsun Pema Wangchuck is the current Royal Patron of the organization.

RSPN works on environmental education and advocacy, conservation and sustainable livelihoods, research and emerging issues like climate change, solid waste and water. RSPN programmes are based on its five year strategic plan and include species, ecosystem, and community based conservation programs outside of the protected areas system. All of the RSPN's program continue to involve students/ individuals in schools, institutions, and communities throughout the country for various project activities. Regular advocacy programs on emerging environmental problems are also carried out with the help of local volunteers, stakeholder organizations, partners and members.



Our Vision:

Future generations of Bhutan will live in an environmentally sustainable society.

Our Mission

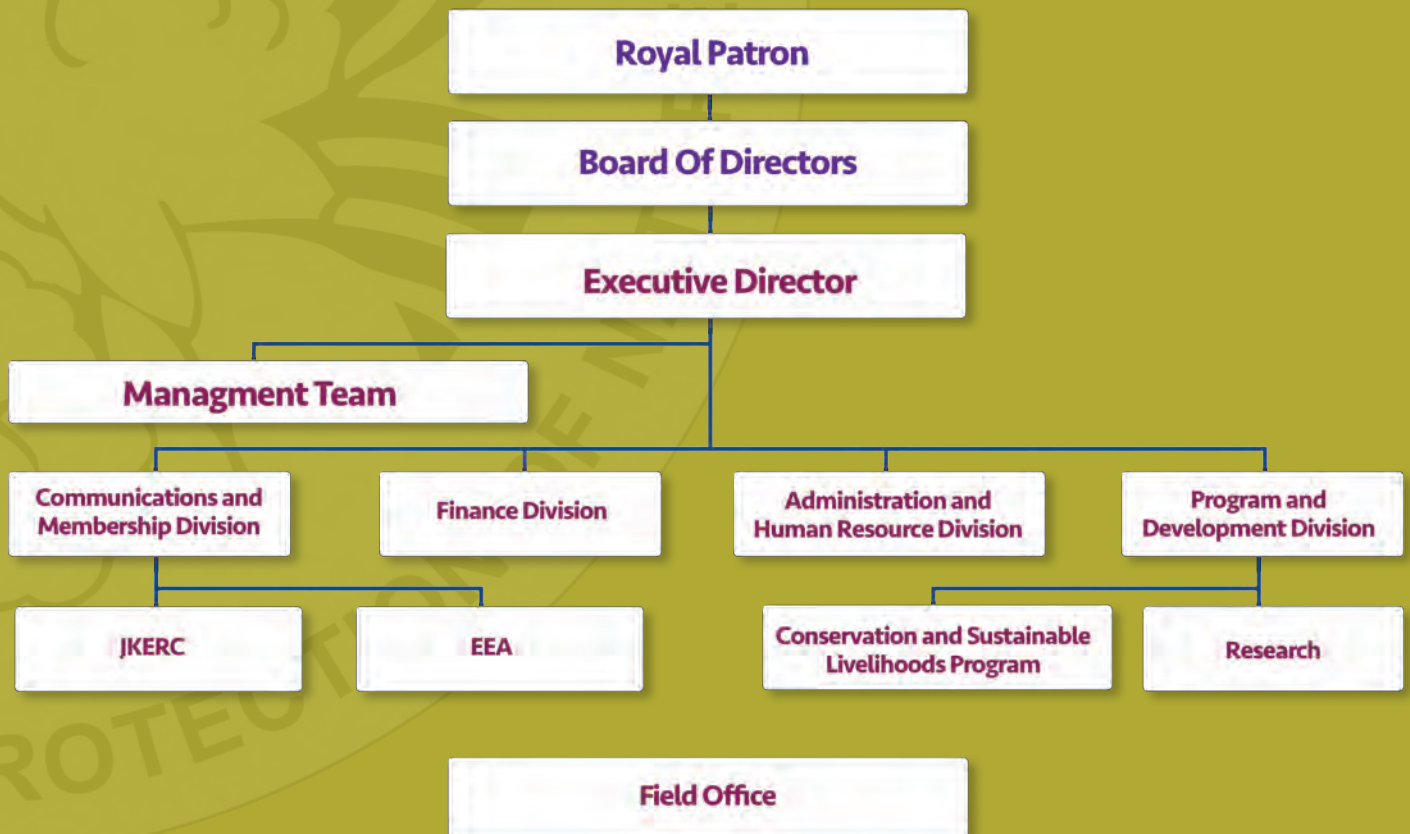
To inspire personal responsibility and active involvement of the people of Bhutan in the conservation of the Kingdom's environment through education, research and sustainable livelihood opportunities.

Core Values

RSPN's core values are statements based on clear, concise, and shared beliefs of the organization that will contribute towards achieving its mission in the long run. Its core values are to:

- Provide leadership in conservation
- Promote innovative technologies and methods
- Be proactive towards environmental issues
- Be accountable and transparent
- Be efficient and effective in delivering programmes

Organogram



PDD

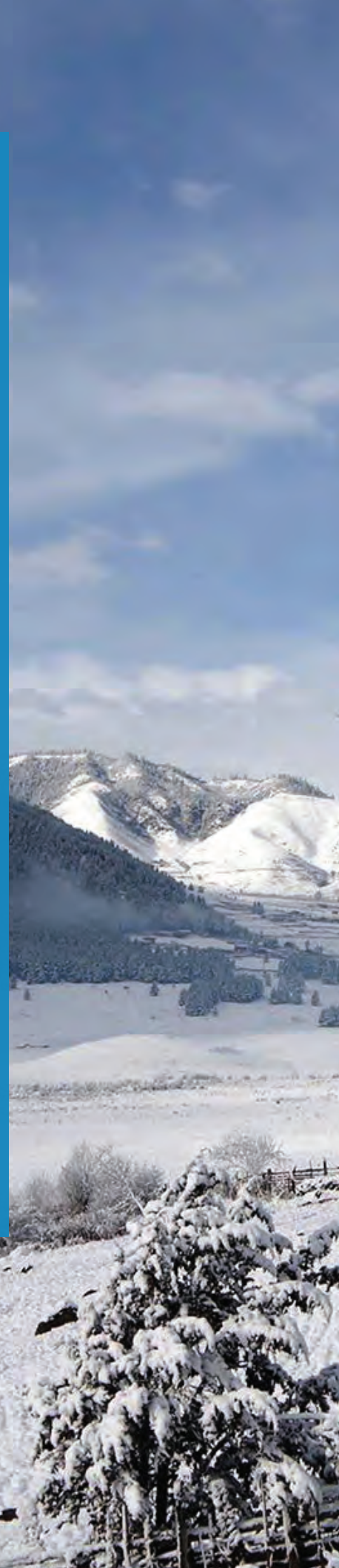
PROGRAM AND DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

PDD is an integral divisions that assists the ED and the management with regard to overall planning for the organization, proposal development, initiating project related discussions with donors, monitoring of project progress, and reporting to donors including, collection, compilation and submission of reports.

2015-2016 has been fulfilling year whereby PDD were able to prepare several project proposals in collaboration with respective divisions and programs, and submit it to potential donors or partners. Some of the proposals have already secured funding and we are hopeful that we will be able to get more partners on board and execute majority of it. PDD besides executing these functions, are also responsible for overseeing the implementation of all Programs.

List of proposal Prepared by PDD in collaboration respective division and programs

1. Buli wetland conservation
2. Promoting responsible living through sustainable lifestyle practices
3. Consumer education and awareness for sustainable consumption
4. Human Wildlife Conflict management; Buli
5. Waste Management proposal for Haa
6. Enhancement of Haa visitor centre
7. Access to water for Buli community
8. CUTS international regional proposal on inland water ways
9. Concept Environment education in river basins
10. Community-based Sustainable Tourism in Buli.
11. Sustainable agriculture program Year III in Wamrong
12. Prepared draft proposal for organic agriculture.



1.2 BHUTAN WATER PARTNERSHIP (BhWP)

RSPN also functions as the Bhutan Water Partnership Secretariat, and some of the major achievements in 2015-2016 were:

- Observed World water day at Samtaygang and Buli central School
- Conducted IWRM Sensitization program for local government leaders, Business community, schools and institutions in Wangdiphodrang
- Rapid Country level Assessment (SWOT format)
- Assessment and Compilation of traditional knowledge and practice in water resource management in Bhutan
- Awarded three grants for community based water project



1.3 EVALUATION REPORT ON THE WASTE PROJECT IN PHOBJIKHA

Phobjikha, the largest wintering habitat of the Black-necked Cranes, is one of the most important ecosystem areas and a tourist hotspot in the country. The vast wetland in the middle of the valley is highly sensitive to any human induced changes. Littering is among many anthropogenic activities that can negatively affect the aesthetic beauty of the valley, lead to deterioration of the water quality, wetland, wildlife and the human health.

Waste management programs in Phobjikha started as early as 2003. To further consolidate the efforts, RSPN with support from JICA, MacArthur Foundation, and Wangdue Dzongkhag Administration initiated a community based waste management project in 2011, mainly focusing on institutionalization of waste management system and facilities. This project was first of its kind implemented in a rural setting. Therefore, to assess effectiveness, status and sustainability of the project, an evaluation was carried out in 2016.

Most required components of the projects were established successfully and while the system in general was functional for about three years, there was consistent instability in the functioning of the program, mainly due to poor management which led to series of other problems like poor maintenance of the waste collection tractor, irregular services and fund constraints.

Some of the major findings were:

- Weak post project monitoring
- Deteriorating level of commitment and participation from the waste management committee members
- Poor understanding of their roles and responsibilities of the committee members
- Poor maintenance of accounts: a separate budget head for waste as required by the waste management guide line. There was also no record keeping
- The loss of confidence from the general public due to unreliable service
- Inconsistent contribution from the business entity deviating from initial agreement

The findings in essence indicate that while the project has not been able to completely address waste management problem in Phobjikha as desired, the strategy and approach could still work provided that the system is followed seriously with some amendments. It is palpable that the challenges and failure in the project was mainly due to inefficiency in governance or management post project and lack of ownership, rather than the shortcoming in project design, inputs and implementation. It was also learnt that in projects like this, one-time capacity development or implementation is not adequate. There is a need for post project follow up activities like refresher training or orientation, basic accounts and bookkeeping training, creation of forum for proper communication and participation of the beneficiaries in decision making, a more transparent and systematic management of the waste management fund, and exploring the possibility of integrating waste management as a part of Gewog Administration's regular program to ensure sustainability and compliance.

Winning back the confidence of the people by providing consistent and reliable service is perhaps the only way to secure the support of the people.

1.4 THE GREEN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT IN BHUTAN PROJECT (GPP BHUTAN)

The Green Public Procurement in Bhutan project (GPP Bhutan) is an EU-funded project under the Europe Aid SWITCH-Asia Programme. It establishes a strategic approach to scale-up public demand for environmentally and socially preferable goods, services and infrastructure. It provides a cross-cutting industrial strategy to support Gross National Happiness and the stewardship of natural resources in Bhutan. The project aims to increase the positive environmental, social and economic multipliers of public consumption; provide an incentive for sustainable production among suppliers, particularly CSMEs; and build demand-side and supply-side capacity to write and respond to GPP tenders.

The project is being implemented by a consortium of five non-governmental organizations, namely the International Institute for Sustainable Development (Project Lead, Canada), the Bhutan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Bhutan), the Royal Institute of Management (Bhutan), the Collaborating Centre for Sustainable Consumption and Production (Germany), and the Royal Society for Protection of Nature (Bhutan). Three and a half year partnership agreement between IISD and RSPN was signed in May 2014.

RSPN has successfully completed the major project activity on Mapping of Institutional Arrangements and Procedures for Public Procurement in Bhutan. The report was published in September 2015. The report covers public procurement organogram, reporting hierarchy map, and decision-making sketches for the procurement of goods, services and infrastructure. It also captures three case studies and the survey of procurement officers conducted in consultation with various departments and divisions within Ministry of Finance (MoF).

In order to scale up the project, the RSPN project team has also successfully completed several minor activities in consultation with GPP Bhutan office and other project partners. The activities include, among others, the development of GPP Handbook for Goods and Services (Volume I) and GPP Handbook for the Procurement of Public Works and Infrastructure (Volume II), GPP project visibility program at College of Natural Resources, Sherubtse College, College of Language and Cultural Studies (CLCS) and Gaeddu College of Business Studies (GCBS), GPP Project Second High Level Sensitization Seminar, First and Second Training of Public Procurers, Training on Sustainable Supply Chain Management, GPP presentation during the Second Hospitality Seminar by Hotel and Restaurant Association of Bhutan (HRAB) and GPP Sensitization and Awareness Raising among Cottage, Small and Medium Enterprises (CSMEs) and other Suppliers.

CSLP

THE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS PROGRAM

The Conservation and Sustainable Livelihood Program (CSLP) was created in the late 1990s as a regular program unit of RSPN to focus on conservation, development and enhancing sustainable livelihood in Phobjikha. After recognizing that community participation is an integral part of conservation efforts, several activities fostering environmentally viable livelihood options have been implemented over the years. Such programs have enabled local communities to make sustainable choices and have rendered communities support for RSPN's conservation initiatives. Currently, CSLP besides overseeing the BNCVC at Phobjikha has four ongoing projects: Buli wetlands, SAP, WASH and CBST Haa project.



2.1 BULI CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF BULI WETLANDS, ZHEMGANG

GEF Small Grants Project, UNDP and RSPN is currently working together to protect and conserve the wetlands of Buli in Nagkor Gewog (Block) in Upper Zhemgang. It is a two year project with the main objective to come up with a viable mechanism to protect, conserve and manage the rich watershed and the wetlands through participatory approach and by involving local communities.

Buli wetland (3269.05 acres), 54 kilometers away from Zhemgang town, is one of the low altitude wetlands of the Bhutan Himalayas located at 1670 meters above sea level. Preliminary study shows that Buli watershed is ecologically rich with over 90 bird species, 30 mammal species, 65 tree species, 70 shrubs and 102 herb species. The ecosystem services provided by these wetlands and the watershed are enormous. The watershed (between 1400-2960) is drained with several high quality streams which is the life blood for the 600 local people from over 90 households. These wetlands are the water reservoirs and play an important role in the hydrological processes in the ecosystem.

While the traditional conservation values and local norms of sacred grove and forests has added to the contemporary conservation system of these watershed, urbanization brings increased threats to these wetland. Some of the other major achievements towards garnering community support for wetland conservation are:

- The Buli Environment Management Committee members were trained on group management and experienced the wetland management in Phobjikha, which is the largest wetland in the country.
- Around 80 female and 20 male farmers from the Buli Organic Agriculture group were trained on organic agriculture. The group was also supported by the project to fence their 50 decimal leased land with barbed wire.
- To keep the watershed clean and waste free, eight waste bins are under construction.
- Two of the three monasteries in the area are provided with fuel efficient cooking stoves and it is expected to reduce fuel consumption by about 50 percent.
- The students of the Buli Central School, monks of the Buli Shedra and the local communities are regularly engaged in wetland and watershed awareness programs.
- The community celebrated the 2016 World Water Day on March 22 with various advocacy programs and sensitization activities highlighting “sustainable livelihoods”.

2.2 IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE THROUGH WASH

The project on “Strengthening of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) services in selected areas of SAARC Countries is a three years term regional project funded by SAARC Development Fund (SDF) Secretariat Office based in Thimphu, Bhutan. The project was designed in line with 11th five-year plan to supplement the Ministry of Health of the government on WASH Sector and to address WASH issues in selected rural areas in Bhutan. The project commenced from June 2014, with the Royal Society for Protection of Nature (RSPN) as the Implementing Agency (IA), and PHED of the Ministry of Health, SNV-Bhutan Programme Office, Engineering and Health Sector of Samtse District as provider of technical assistances. It will be completed by June 2017. The WASH project is implemented in two Gewogs of Phuntshapelri and Yoeseltse under Samtse District covering about 1095 rural households.



RSPN has strictly followed the implementation guidelines of the Project Financing Agreement (PFA) between SFD and RSPN; and also followed and used the procedures and standard design modules of the Royal Government of Bhutan while implementing the project activities. Some of the significant achievements are:

1. Signed Project Contract Agreement with Samtse District on November 26, 2015 for a period of 1 year (November 26, 2015 till December 31, 2016) for the Rehabilitation and Construction of Water Supply Systems/Schemes in two Gewogs.
2. Comprehensive Baseline Information on WASH of the two Gewogs was submitted to SDF and PHED, MoH.
3. Initiated consultation with key stakeholders, Samtse District and beneficiary communities of two Gewogs on WASH Project.
4. Conducted Awareness on Rural Sanitation and Hygiene Programme (RSAHP) under Sanitation and Hygiene components to 914 communities in two Gewogs against the project target of 539 households.
5. Conducted Awareness Behavior Change Communication (BCC) under Sanitation and Hygiene components to more than 1362 students, teachers and monks in two Gewogs against the project target of 1095 numbers.
6. Conducted awareness and training on Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) under Hygiene component to 141 adolescent girls in schools against the project target of 100 adolescent girls.
7. Observed Global Hand-Washing Day and advocated the importance of hand-washing with soap to 1165 local communities against the project target of 1095 numbers.
8. Conducted Masonry and carpentry training on construction of improved toilets under Sanitation and Hygiene component to 47 interested local communities against the project target of 20 numbers.
9. Installed 1 number of Mass Hand-washing Station in one of the school under Hygiene component against the project target of Zero (0) number.
10. Conducted consultation on Community Participation and Management of Water (CPMW) under Water component to water users of two Gewogs.
11. Conducted baseline inventory survey of two Rural Water Supply Systems/Schemes of two Gewogs under Water Component.
12. Tender bid for Dumsidara (Phuntshopelri Gewog) Water Supply Scheme through Pumping System is advertise in Kuensel and BBS and Work Awarded to bid winning firms for the Construction Yoeseltse Gewog Water Supply Scheme. The constructions of Water Supply Schemes are schedule to be completed within February 2017.

2.3 BLACK-NECKED CRANE VISITOR CENTER

BNCVC Gangtey Phobjikha from June 2015- June 2016.

Thousands of visitors come to Gangtey-Phobjikha each year to witness the beauty and behaviors of the wintering Black-necked crane, and sometimes to better understand RSPN's research and conservation programs. The visitor center is first of its kind in Bhutan and has facilities like theater room with mural narration and crane documentaries, photography spot with large dummy Black-necked crane, stuffed replica and mural of crane, observatory with spotting scope and information of Black-necked crane.

Crane Karma

In October, 2015 the annual roost restoration works in two major Black-necked Crane habitat areas was carried out. With the help of the volunteers from Amankora and Gangtey lodge, the pond was cleaned, the area cleared of unwanted vegetation, and drainage overflow contained. In December, 2015 a one-day environmental education program with the students of Beta primary school and Phobjikha central school was conducted. 25 students took part in the program, which mainly focused on the importance of conservation of wetland and Black-necked crane at Gangtey-Phobjikha valley, waste management, waste segregation, cardboard composting etc.

BNCVC 2016 Performance Summary Highlights

- * Average guest per month : 599
- * Av, guest per day in a year : 20 guests
- * Highest no. of guests recorded in a month : October (1476 guests)
- * Lowest no.of guests recorded in a month : August (182 guests)





Black-Necked Crane Information Center - Phobjikha



2.4 HAA

HAA CBST aims to demonstrate the potential of rich ecosystem as a basis for economic welfare of the community, thereby incentivizing communities to preserve their natural environment. The Project is implemented in partnership with the Japan Environmental Education Forum (JEEF) with the financial support from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and in collaboration with Tourism Council of Bhutan and HAA Dzongkhag Administration.

In 2015 – 2016, the project was able to complete majority of the planned activities in the project areas of Bjee, Kartsho and Eusu Gewogs in Haa Dzongkhag. The baseline study conducted in between March to April 2015 to analyze status of tourism, the future scope of tourism enterprises and the implementation of CBST project confirmed the potential for Tourism and the viability of the project. Rich rural life surrounded by living culture and tradition, pristine environment, and strong community willingness and support are some of the positive attributes.

1. FAM TRIP TO PHOBJIKHA

Haa CBST working group members and Gewog Tshogpas visited Community-based Sustainable Tourism (CBST) project sites in Phobjikha from May 4 to 7, 2015. The study tour was organized by RSPN to share experiences and learnings from CBST project activities in Phobjikha. RSPN implemented first CBST project in Phobjikha in Wangduephodrang, and it is widely viewed as a success story. While in Phobjikha, the participants interacted with the local community and visited homestays in Gangtey and Phobji Gewog. They also visited the Black-necked Crane Visitor Center where they met representatives from the Gangtey - Phobjikha Environment Management Committee and the CBST Group Management Team for a discussion session. By interacting and learning from the CBST group in Phobjikha, the participants were highly motivated to implement CBST programs back in their own communities in Haa. The participants, also visited RSPN head office in Thimphu and had familiarization meeting with the Executive Director and staff of RSPN.

2. LOCAL GUIDES TRAINED

During two separate trainings conducted from May 8 to 14 and May 31 to June 5, 2016, a total of 16 local youths were trained as local guides in Haa. Although the registration for the training was open to anyone from the local communities, the participants mostly consisted of local youths who could not complete schools and are unemployed. The participants were introduced to the concept of community-based sustainable tourism (CBST), on how to get involved in development of CBST in their community, be interpreters of their local heritages and actively practice the methods of sight doing and experiencing along with sightseeing. The participants took part in organizing, coordinating and developing sample tour packages which consisted resources based on nature, culture and human. They learned about important and necessary safety measure and preparedness during disasters from officials from the Department of Disaster Management.



3. HOMESTAYS INITIATED

The Community-based Sustainable Tourism (CBST) project team in collaboration with the Tourism Council of Bhutan and the Dzongkhag Administration of Haa assessed and selected 20 households from 40 applicants. The applicants were invited from three gewogs of Bjee, Eusu and Kartsho in Haa Dzongkhag. The selected households along with some existing homestays were given training on hospitality, basic housekeeping, food and safety measures. The first phase of the training was conducted from May 22 to 27, 2016. The second training concentrating on refresher course and food service will be conducted within July 2016. The training was conducted in partnership with the Royal Institute for Tourism and Hospitality.

Steering Committee meeting



LOCAL SOUVENIR PRODUCTS IDENTIFIED

Yak hair handicraft products, wood crafts products and edible souvenir out of buckwheat are identified to promote as Tourism Products in Haa.



HAA SUMMER FESTIVAL

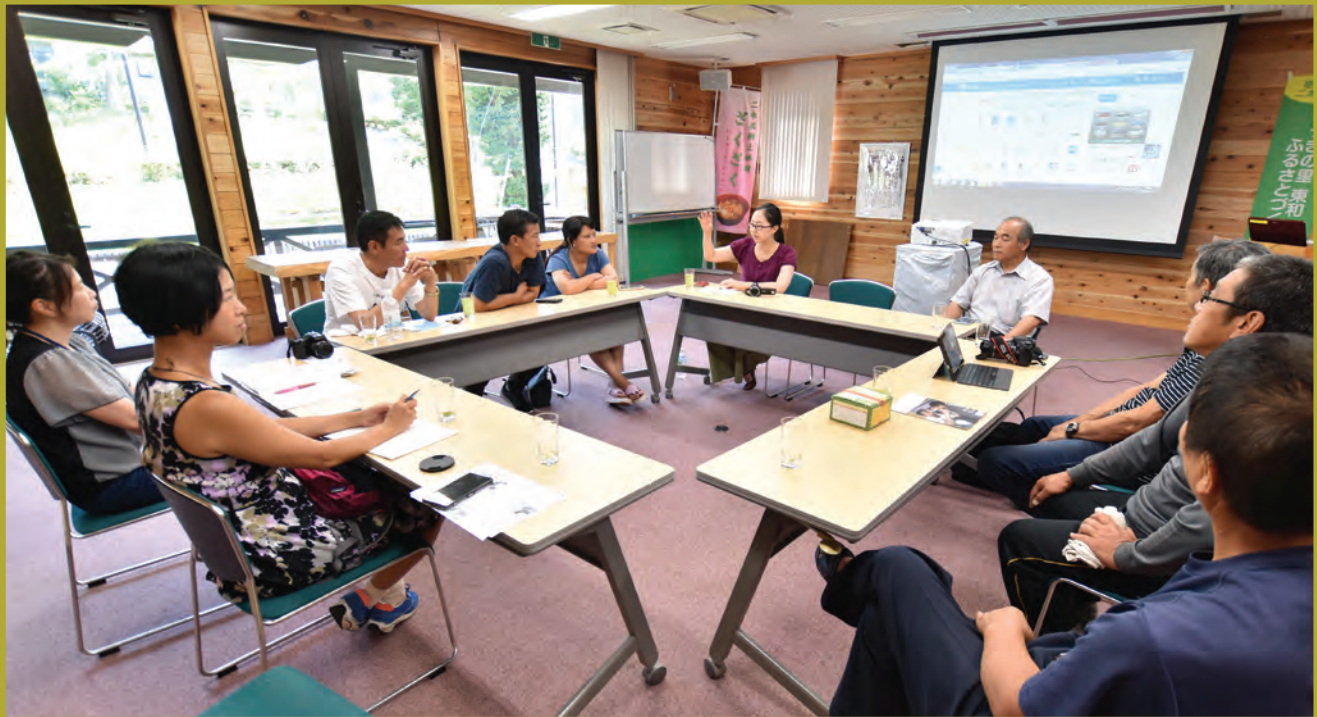
Royal Society of Protection of Nature (RSPN) partook in the festival with the main objective of creating greater awareness on conservation and to raise funds for the White-bellied heron and Black-necked crane conservation in Bhutan. It was a good avenue to promote RSPN's publicity products and also to showcase the ongoing Community-based Sustainable Tourism project (CSBT) in Haa. The festival was organized by the Dzongkhag and funded by Tourism Council of Bhutan. The festival was held at the Dzongkhag's Sports ground where tents and an elevated stage were prepared.





VISITOR CENTER TRAINING IN JAPAN

Three representatives from Haa Dzongkhag went to Japan for visitor center training in Japan from July 30 to August 10, 2016.



2.5 WAMRONG

Sustainable Agriculture project (SAP) funded through NORLHA started in September of 2012 with 39 beneficiaries. Initial activities mainly involved awareness and capacity building programs. One such program was a study tour to Tsihang District, which sees the incorporation of one of the best land management practices in the country. Through the project, the farmers were introduced to preparation of bio-pesticides, Napier hedgerows, construction of better animal housing and other modern day organic farming practices.

While most of the beneficiaries make use of the organic farming techniques introduced through the project, the project intends on facilitating for improvements in areas like organic farming, pig farming and bio-gas implementation, extension of the project to other areas, advocating on extensive one crop/product farming to increase commercial value and marketability and exploring of other revenue generating activities like promotion of indigenous crafts.

CMD

COMMUNICATIONS AND MEMBERSHIP DIVISION

The Communications and Membership Division strives to strengthen communications, outreach and the visibility of RSPN by facilitating the organization with necessary tools in educating, motivating, and mobilizing people's participation in environmental conservation activities.

3.1 ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY

Environmental education programs are geared towards helping the people of Bhutan enhance their understanding of the environment and providing them the knowledge and skills to actively participate in conservation at the grassroots level.

Integration of environmental education in formal and non-formal education systems and capacity building are priority areas being pursued in collaboration with the Ministry of Education.

Environmental Science curriculum for class 9 and 10 were developed jointly by RSPN and Royal Education Council (REC) and launched in 2015. The provisional textbooks shall be reviewed and the revised textbooks circulated later this year.

Once the final edition is printed, the Environmental Science curriculum would be formally handed over to the Ministry of Education.

3.2 JIGME KHESAR ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE CENTER

The Environmental Resource Center, one of its kind in Bhutan, is equipped with online environmental resources, journals and other materials; a mini auditorium and a furnished working space for visitors and researchers.

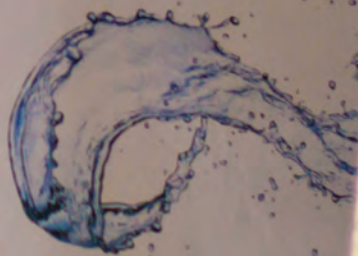
The Library portal for Online Public Access Catalogue was developed using an integrated library management system Koha and over 3200 books catalogued this year.

3.2 MEMBERSHIP

RSPN's membership has been growing stronger from the initial 21 members in 1994. In 2016, member count reached 716 from 600 in 2015, making our voice stronger.

Membership Program (May 7, 2016) - Rivers for Life

82 members collected over 600 kg of trash along the Thimchhu between Luntenzampa and Changjiji bridges on May 7, 2016.



American Public Health Association®
American Water Works Association®
Water Environment Federation®

RESEARCH

RSPN continually strives to cement its place as a premier science-based institution in the country. Through research, we intend on providing a platform for generation and dissemination of science-based information as a means to advocate for environmental education and support informed decision-making.

PROTECTING THE WBH FROM EXTINCTION

One of the most significant researches of RSPN is on White-bellied Heron. 2016 saw a plethora of activities that would perhaps assist in protection of these critically endangered birds from extinction. 2016 started on a very positive note with news of White-bellied Heron sightings in two new places; Doksum in Trashiyangtse and Lhamoizhingkha(Kalikhola) in Dagana. However, the survey confirmed the total WBH count of 2015-2016 to have remained constant at 28. The annual Nationwide Population Survey, 2016 was conducted from February 26 to March 2 and involved 24 LCSG member and nine foresters including three RSPN research team members.



(The research team makes constant field visits to collect important data through monitoring of habitats, observation of feeding and nesting activities. The data collected through these visits are complemented by the monthly recordings by the respective Local Conservation Support Group (LCSG) and the resource group.)





NEST MONITORING FINDINGS

The research team monitored the WBH nesting sites during peak season of their nesting activities from March to June 2016. The following number of nest, chicks and eggs were found in three WBH sites:

1. Hararongchu – the new nest located at Harachu was destroyed by forest fire which occurred from April 7 lasting for weeks. Since then no other nest has been located, however recently our LCSG member reported the sightings of three chicks and two adults.
2. Burichu - the same nest which was abandoned in 2014 and 2015 was found to be reused this year. From the four eggs, three hatched but only two chicks survived.
3. Berti - A nest was located but number of eggs could not determined due to the height of the tree. However, it is reported by LCSG member and resource person that two chicks have fledged.

Until June 2016 a total of seven chicks fledged out.



(Awareness and Advocacy program on WBH)

WBH CHICKS RESCUED AND TAGGED WITH SATELLITE TRANSMITTER

On the fourth day of observation during the monitoring of the new WBH chicks at Burichu from May 26 to June 16, 2016, the team witnessed one chick accidentally fall down from the nest to the next branch. After the incident, the chick was abandoned by the parents who refrained from feeding it and the chick in its struggle to get back fell further down to the bush. Immediately, the team rushed in to attend the fallen chick.

It was a successful rescue mission, which presented the team the opportunity to try mounting the satellite transmitter. Coincidentally, a training exercise on how to mount the satellite transmitter, retrieve and analyze the data was being conducted by Dr. Lubomir Peske, wildlife Biologist and Specialist on electronic application on zoology. Dr. Lubomir had volunteered through Synchronicity to train and guide the research team.

The chick was rescued and with the satellite transmitted, was put back to its nest. During the exercise the other chick in the nest flew away towards Burichu stream. The team again went in search for the other chick and luckily found it. It was also successfully tagged with satellite transmitter and returned to its nest.

RECRUITMENT OF NEW STAFF FOR THE PROJECT

Two new officers were recruited in Research to strengthen the research program:

1. Project officer: Mr. Indra Prasad Acharya
2. Assistant project officer: Mr. Tshewang Lhendup



1. RESEARCH

Information on White-bellied Heron (*Ardea insignis*) is still deficit, some of the critical biological (breeding, philopatry, life cycle), environmental (breeding habitat, feeding habitat), dispersal and migration, distribution and other ecological aspects need rigorous scientific research to better understand the species for conservation. Since 2015, various researches on WBH has been initiated in collaboration with College of Natural Resources (CNR). Following researches has been completed:

- i. Assessment of species composition and structure of vegetation in nesting habitat of White-bellied Heron along the Punatsangchu basin.
- ii. Influence of forest fires and its frequency in the habitat of White-bellied Heron along Punatshangchhu basin.
- iii. Vegetation structure and composition of forests along the dry slopes of Burichu, Punatshangchu valley- a nesting site for critically endangered White-bellied Heron
- iv. Assessment of Forest fire impacts on White-bellied Heron Habitats along Bertichu, Zhemgang Dzongkhag.
- v. Assessment of Habitat preference by White-bellied heron along Bertichu under Zhemgang Dzongkhag
- vi. Feeding frequency and dietary composition of white-bellied heron (*Ardea insignis*) along the Punatshangchu basin
- vii. Assessment of White-bellied Heron Habitat at Punatsangchhu Hydropower project site
- viii. Assessment of community awareness, interaction and perception on White-bellied Heron along Punatshangchu basin.
- ix. Assessment of community awareness on critically endangered White-bellied Heron and endangered Black-necked Crane in Bhutan.
- x. Acoustic monitoring of White-bellied Heron in Bhutan.



2. WBH INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP

The second international workshop, themed “Fostering international co-operation for conservation of the critically endangered White-bellied Heron” on conservation of White-bellied Heron was organized in collaboration with Department of Forests and Park Services (DoFPS) from December 1-6, 2015. The workshop discussed on the current global status of WBH, efforts made and status in each range counties.

One of the major outcomes of the workshop was the finalization of the White-bellied Heron Conservation Strategy, 2015. The workshop also provided recommendations, and short and long term priority activities for each range countries. It was also agreed that international collaboration, based on adequate resourcing is vital for the survival of the species and the IUCN SSC White-bellied Heron Working Group would help to do this.

3. ESTABLISHMENT OF CAPTIVE BREEDING CENTER

Establishment of captive breeding center has been one of the major components of WBH recovery plan project. It was also one of the priority activities recommended for Bhutan during WBH international workshop and the groundworks for the establishment of captive breeding in collaboration with Department of Forests and Parks Services has already been initiated:

- * The Government of Bhutan has allocated 18.2 acres plateau at the confluence of two rivers at Changchey Dovan and the land has been registered in the name of White-bellied Heron conservation
- * Approvals from Tsirang Dzongkhag, Tsirang forestry division and environmental clearance has been acquired
- * The Punatshangchu Hydropower Project Authority (PHPA I&II) is supporting the construction of the CBC that includes construction of access road, staff quarters, laboratory, office building, fish pond and aviary and water supply. The MoU signed between the two agencies (RSPN and PHPA 1 and 2) has been signed. The construction of infrastructure will begin by mid of January 2017 and will be completed by end of 2018



SAVING KARMA

Karma was found in the lower valley of Phobjikha in the afternoon of January 6 2016. It was peak winter and the crane had endured the frosty winter cold and the fear of predation. A few locals who saw the helpless bird called Santa, the manager at the Black-necked Crane visitor center of RSPN. The Center's assistant, Tashi, immediately reached the scene but it took him close to three hours to get hold of Karma. It was with much caution and care that the young bird was caught. The bird was severely injured. It could not move its left wing due to the injury. As we read this story, Crane Karma is already in the improvised facility for eight months. It has not seen its kind for about six months.

With the support of the livestock extension officer, Karma was examined, nursed and fed. It spent its first few nights in one of the Crane center's room, as there was no facility to cater to such cases. Karma's diet comprised food grains such as wheat, corn and chicken feed and fresh water. To further supplement its diet, the crane was fed raw eggs. It was observed that, Karma was restless and constantly making calls. The pain it went through, both physical and mental, is something we can never imagine and comprehend. Later, Karma was moved to a wooden shack near the center, which was little larger than one meter by one meter in size with transparent sheet roof. With passing days, the Center managed to expand the facility in terms of size and ventilation.

Tashi, who is an excellent carpenter, made the enclosure facility. Karma now had rectangular mesh wire facility which measured 2.5 meters by 4 meters and roofed with transparent sheet at the height of two meters. A pond was also made inside the facility, which had fresh water flowing in. To avoid too much attention and to discourage visitors taking photographs of Karma, proper signages were placed at the facility. The staffs started feeding worms, chopped turnips, radish, spinach and grasses. Egg shells were also fed regularly but in quantities appropriate to the bird. At one time, in June, Karma weighed seven kilograms. Upon the advice of ornithologists, a mirror was placed in the facility and viola! Karma's reflection was a delight as it gave an optical companionship to the bird. Karma would occasionally look at the mirror, peck at it, bite and stay stunned.

One of our colleagues at RSPN was so amazed to see such behavior that he committed to sponsor a large mirror for Karma. The Center staff also played Black-necked Crane's calls through their mobile phones to make Karma feel at home. Often, it was observed that when crows flew from above and made their calls, Karma would restlessly run around and make high pitched calls. Most of the time Karma would preen its feathers, flap its wings, walk, dig muds with its long and sturdy beak and feed on the grains and edibles in the wood-cut out container. It would calmly sleep on its one leg for elongated time with its head tugged into its wings or rested on its body. Karma is growing each day, visible by the growth in size and color change in its plumage. It is growing into a healthy and intelligent bird. As soon as Santa would knock at the door of the facility, which is his ritualistic manner to enter and feed the bird, Karma would straighten its neck, feel excited and stay aside while Santa filled up the wooden container. If, sometimes, the meals were not served on time, Karma would make prolonged loud calls.

In May, medical examination and radiographic imaging (X-ray) of Karma revealed that multiple bone fractures were found in its left wing and callus formation had commenced. It also had ankylosed joint with dislocation and deformity. The medical report concluded that Karma might never be able to go to the wild. Let alone fly back to Tibet! This is a unique case and Crane Karma is perhaps the first Black-necked Crane that has spent a full summer in Bhutan, at least by RSPN's record since 1987. RSPN continues to raise fund to built a large Crane Rehab Facility and the designs has been already prepared. It is hoped that, with such facility, cranes like Karma and other birds could be rehabilitated quicker in future.



Unaudited Financial Report 2015- 2016

Overview of RSPN's financial performance in 2015-2016

RSPN's unaudited account statements reveal a total receipt of Nu 60,530,645.74 and US\$ 1,537,676.16 equivalent to total of Nu. 164,231,525.97 in the fiscal year 2015-2016. As of 30 June, 2016

RSPN maintains a cash and bank balance of Nu. 3,296,661.39 And US\$ 49,215.02 summing up to an equivalent of Nu.6,615,722.34

In addition, RSPN's endowment fund maintained with the Bhutan Trust for Environmental Conservation (BT FEC) is valued at US\$1,364,210.12. This exclude the accrued interest, if any for the fiscal year 2015-2016.

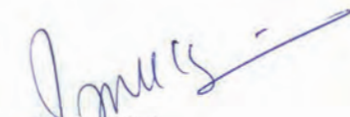
On the whole, RSPN's entire resources including assets and capital fund amounts to Nu.142,397,589.67 i.e, the overall worth of RSPN as on June 30, 2016.

ROYAL SOCIETY FOR PROTECTION OF NATURE THIMPHU : BHUTAN

UN-AUDITED RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT for the year ended June 30, 2016

Particulars	Schedule	Receipts				Particulars	Schedule	Payments						
		Nu.	US\$	Equivalent Nu.	Total			NU.	US\$	Equivalent Nu.	Total			
To Balance b/f.														
Cash		13,535.03	59.50	4,012.68	17,547.71	Project Payments	I	34,007,309.34	124,251.02	8,379,488.79	42,386,798.13			
Bank		6,278,872.01	142,567.54	9,614,754.90	15,893,626.91	Others	II	21,288,832.78		-	21,288,832.78			
Receivables & Prepayments		(1,489,398.76)			(1,489,398.76)									
Investment with BT FEC			1,364,210.12	92,002,330.49	92,002,330.49									
Project Fund	I	39,308,355.21	13,564.00	914,756.16	40,223,111.37									
Other receipts	II	16,419,282.25	17,275.00	1,165,026.00	17,584,308.25									
						To balance c/f.								
						Cash		2,160.00	59.50	4,012.68	6,172.68			
						Bank		3,294,501.39	49,155.52	3,315,048.27	6,609,549.66			
						Receivables & Prepayments	III	1,337,842.23		-	1,337,842.23			
						Investment with BT FEC		-	1,364,210.12	92,002,330.49	92,002,330.49			
						Investment with BIL		600,000.00	-	-	600,000.00			
		60,530,645.74	1,537,676.16	103,700,880.23	164,231,525.97			60,530,645.74	1,537,676.16	103,700,880.23	164,231,525.97			

Note: Dollar equivalent calculated at exchange rate of USD 1= Nu. 67.44 as of June 30, 2016(Bank of Bhutan Ltd.)


(Sonam Jamtsho)
Finance Coordinator
Royal Society for Protection of Nature

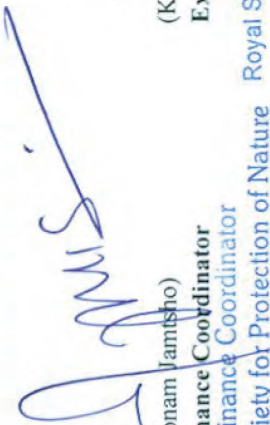

(Kinley Tenzin, Ph. D)
Executive Director
Royal Society for Protection of Nature


(Ugyen Rinzin)
Chairman
Chairman
Royal Society for Protection of Nature

**ROYAL SOCIETY FOR PROTECTION OF NATURE
UN-AUDITED STATEMENT OF AFFAIRS (BALANCE SHEET) AS AT JUNE 30, 2016**

Assets	For the year ended June 30, 2016				For the year ended June 30, 2015			
	(A) NU.	(B)		(A+B) TOTAL (NU.)	(A) NU.	(B)		(A+B) TOTAL (NU.)
		US\$	Equivalent NU.			US\$	Equivalent NU.	
Fixed Assets (Net Block)								
Furniture & Fixture	2,071,391.35	-	-	2,071,391.35	2,270,466.95	-	-	2,270,466.95
Office Equipments	5,733,555.33	-	-	5,733,555.33	4,771,996.04	-	-	4,771,996.04
Trekking Equipments	208,990.72	-	-	208,990.72	245,871.44	-	-	245,871.44
Vehicles	2,319,449.29	-	-	2,319,449.29	2,728,763.88	-	-	2,728,763.88
Communication/Other Equipments	134,357.20	-	-	134,357.20	158,067.29	-	-	158,067.29
Building (Observation Center)	1,240,206.02	-	-	1,240,206.02	1,278,562.91	-	-	1,278,562.91
Building (Head Office & JKERC)	38,105,881.01	-	-	38,105,881.01	39,284,413.41	-	-	39,284,413.41
Investment with BTFFC		1,364,210.12	92,002,330.49	92,002,330.49	1,364,210.12	86,927,468.85	86,927,468.85	86,927,468.85
Total Fixed Assets	49,813,830.92	1,364,210.12	92,002,330.49	141,816,161.41	50,738,141.92	1,364,210.12	86,927,468.85	137,665,610.77
Current Assets								
Cash	2,160.00	59.50	4,012.68	6,172.68	13,535.03	59.50	3,791.34	17,326.37
Bank	3,294,501.39	49,155.52	9,084,403.65	12,378,905.04	6,278,872.01	142,567.54	9,084,403.65	15,363,275.66
Receivables & Prepayments	1,337,842.23	-	-	1,337,842.23	2,082,845.25	-	-	2,082,845.25
Stock Balance	-	-	-	-	80,500.00	-	-	80,500.00
Total Current Assets	4,634,503.62	49,215.02	9,088,416.33	13,722,919.95	8,455,752.29	142,627.04	9,088,194.99	17,543,947.28
Liabilities								
Less:								
Long-term liabilities (for 20 yrs. From May, 2013)								
Endowment Fund	12,795,548.70	-	-	12,795,548.70	12,795,548.70	-	-	12,795,548.70
Current Liabilities								
Recoveries/Remittances	345,942.99	-	-	345,942.99	436,976.51	-	-	436,976.51
Total Liabilities	13,141,491.69	-	-	13,141,491.69	13,232,525.21	-	-	13,232,525.21
Total Assets	41,306,842.85	1,413,425.14	101,090,746.82	142,397,589.67	45,961,369.00	1,506,837.16	96,015,663.84	141,977,032.84
Financed by:								
Capital Fund	(16,160,682.61)	(93,412.02)	(6,299,706.63)	(16,691,033.86)	(12,258,564.77)	(31,034.95)	(1,977,547.01)	(14,236,111.78)
(Surplus/deficit)								
Opening Accumulated Fund	57,467,525.46	1,506,837.16	101,621,098.07	159,088,623.53	58,219,933.77	1,537,872.11	97,993,210.85	156,213,144.62
Total Accumulated Fund	41,306,842.85	1,413,425.14	95,321,391.44	142,397,589.67	45,961,369.00	1,506,837.16	96,015,663.84	141,977,032.84

Note: Dollar equivalent calculated at exchange rate of USD 1= Nu. 67.44 as of June 30, 2016 (Bank of Bhutan Ltd.)


(Sonam Jamsho)
Finance Coordinator
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Royal Society for Protection of Nature


(Kinley Tenzin, Ph. D)
Executive Director
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(Ugyen Rinzin)
Chairman
Chairman
Royal Society for Protection of Nature

Our Supporters

SI No	Project	Funding agency
I	Conervation and Sustainable Livelihood Program (CSLP)	
1	Strengthening Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)	SDF, Bhutan
2	Conservation & Sustainable Management of Buli Wetland	GEF/SGP- UNDP
3	Community Based Sustainable Tourism - HAA	JEEF/JICA, Japan
4	Sustainable Agriculture Project	Norlha
5	Enhancement of Black Necked Crane Visitor Centre - Phase -III	KNCF Japan
6	Env. Edu. & conservation of critically endangered WBH & venerable BNC in Bhutan - Phase - IV	KNCF Japan
II	Research Program (RP)	
1	WBH recovery Plan	BT FEC
2	White Bellied Heron Monitoring and conservation in JSWNP	WWF
3	WBH Conservation Project	Felburn Foundation
4	Wetland Study in Phobjikha	Bhutan Foundation
III	Communications and Membership Division	
1	Introducing Environmental Science in formal education in Bhutan	BT FEC
IV	Program and Development Division (PDD)	
1	Green Public Procurement Project	IISD
2	RSPN-ADB - TA	EGIS - EAU
3	Bhutan Water Partnership - CORE	GWP
4	Bhutan Water Partnership - WACDEP	GWP



Your Support Matters

Environmental degradation, pollution, rising waste issues, threat to species and Climate change are a reality and a growing concern, and we can only save our pristine but fragile environment by working together.

YOUR SUPPORT EMBOLDENS US IN OUR QUEST TO SECURE A GREEN FUTURE FOR OUR FUTURE GENERATIONS.



SUPPORT US, BE A PART OF RSPN CONSERVATION EFFORTS BY VISITING OUR WEBSITE AND SUPPORT PAGE AT

<http://www.rspnbhutan.org/support>

OR YOU CAN ALSO SCAN THE QR CODE TO VISIT THE DONATIONS PAGE





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