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RANGZHIN



RSPN Bi-Annual Newsletter

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Royal Society for Protection of Nature

June 2021

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BECOME A MEMBER

Become an RSPN Member and help give nature the home it needs. RSPN membership is a great way to get close to nature and enjoy fantastic membership benefits. Show your support and join us today!

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Or scan the QR code



MESSAGE FROM RSPN TO OUR FRIENDS ACROSS THE GLOBE

RSPN family is delighted to bring to you [Rangzhin Newsletter-Volume 14, Issue 1](#) for the year 2021. This issue is packed with updates on our conservation programs. RSPN has been instrumental in imparting environmental education, awareness and community engagement and development since its establishment in 1987.

It has been a challenging year amid the covid-19 pandemic. Most of our conservation works are either on halt or delayed. However, we remained committed to address our conservation needs. Consequently, our programs were mostly focused on virtual events. Such platforms have proven an effective way to communicate and engage people.

We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and extend our appreciation to our loyal philanthropic, donors, partners and collaborators. We would also like to extend our solidarity to all those individual and institutional members across the world who have meaningfully contributed to our conservation journey. We are looking forward to the same spirit of support, partnership and collaboration. [Happy reading!](#)

Communications & Education Division

Rangzhin is a bi-annual newsletter publication introduced in 2003 as a communications tool to inform, educate and connect with the friends of RSPN. This newsletter is being shared with our donors, supporters, partners, members, students and the general public within and outside the country.



Celebrating Her Majesty's 31st Birth Anniversary

To commemorate the 31st Birth Anniversary of Her Majesty The Gyaltsuen Jetsun Pema Wangchuck, RSPN together with our conservation friends WWF Bhutan, Bhutan For Life, and Bhutan Ecological Society came together to offer butter lamp and prayers for Her Majesty's well-being and good health.

Dedicated to Her Majesty's profound passion for environmental conservation, RSPN also launched the Black-necked Crane educational video "Lhabja, the Secret Flight". The music video is part of conservation education and outreach program for these majestic birds.



From left-right: Dr. Pema Wangda (BFL), Mr. Tashi Jamtsho (WWF Bhutan), Ms. Pem Lama (BES), Dr. Kinley Tenzin (RSPN)

WATCH VIDEO



WBH Annual Population Survey

The 19th White-bellied Heron (WBH) annual population survey was conducted from February 27 - March 03, 2021. The survey confirmed 22 Herons which is five less than the previous year. Out of 22 Herons, 19 are adults and three sub-adult individuals. The decrease in population was mainly observed in upper Punatsangchhu basin; Phochu, Mochu, Adha and Harachhu which were oldest and previously the most abundantly used habitats in Bhutan. The survey covered all currently known and expected habitats along Punatsangchhu, Mangdechhu, Chamkharchhu, Drangmechhu, Kurichhu, Kholongchhu and major tributaries. Using the Epicollect5 mobile app, a digital data collection platform, all the data were recorded and uploaded to the central WBH database and analysed.



22

WHITE-BELLIED HERONS

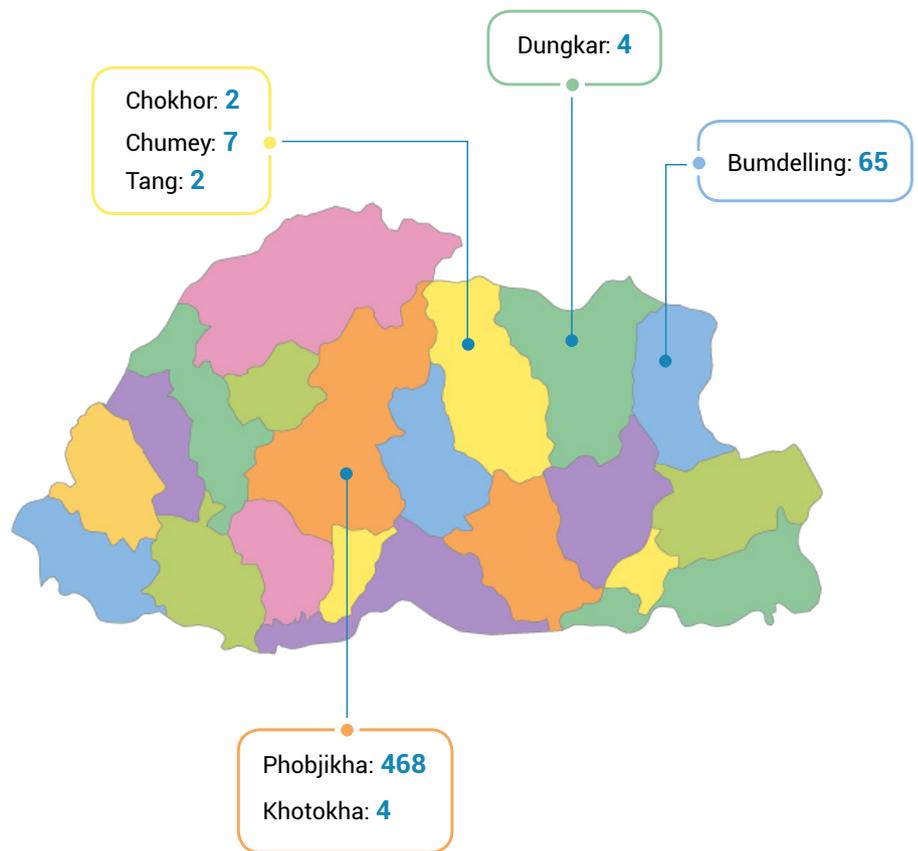
LOCATION	COUNT
Taksha-kamechu	3
Wakletar-Burichhu	4
Balwani	2
Rangaetar	1
Lamoyzhingkha	3
Phibsoo WS	1
Berti	3
Goling-Tsidang	4
Chamkharchhu	1
Total	22

READ REPORT



BNC National Count

RSPN is delighted to report the national count of Black-necked Crane (BNC) for the winter of 2020-2021. A total of 552 BNC was reported and the count was conducted on February 15, 2021, in all the habitats in Bhutan. This winter, we have been receiving reports of BNC sightings from various sites across the country. We are ever grateful to our partners in the field, Forest Division Offices and others, for their support and cooperation. The annual Black-Necked Crane count has been conducted since the winter of 1986-1987 to monitor the wintering population trend in Bhutan.



BNC Conservation Action Plan Launched

Coinciding with World Wildlife Day, Bhutan's Black-necked Crane (BNC) Conservation Action Plan, 2021-2025, was launched. The action plan was developed to further strengthen the partnership and synergize actions towards the BNC conservation in the country. The Department of Forests and Park Services and RSPN worked together to develop this action plan with inputs from various other stakeholders. The identified actions within this plan are to enhance knowledge in the ecology of this species and protect their habitats while improving the livelihoods of the local communities.

[VIEW DOCUMENT](#)



From left-right: Dr. Kinley Tenzin (RSPN), Mr. Tashi Jamtsho (WWF Bhutan), Mr. Lobzang Dorji (DoFPS), Dr. Pema Wangda (BFL), Mr. Singye Dorji (BIFEC)

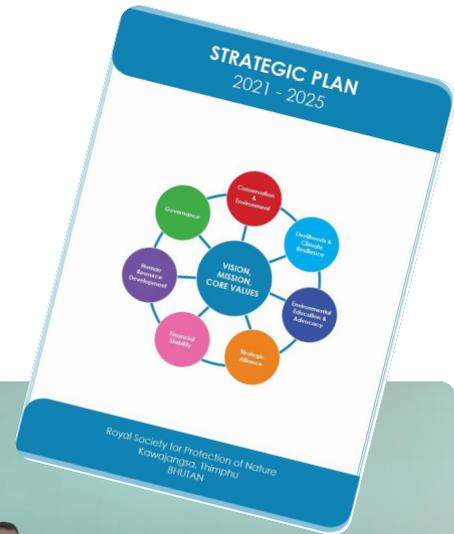


RSPN's Strategic Plan Launched

The Five-year Strategic Plan (2021-2025) document will provide strategic direction and set up a clear course of action in achieving RSPN's goals and objectives. It will also give opportunity for RSPN and its stakeholders to prioritise time, money and people for efficient use and growing itself to a sustainable competitive conservation NGO. The identified institutional goals constitute high-level direction setting outcome-based statements that outline the long-term vision of RSPN. They are:

1. Strengthen conservation program to address current and emerging environmental issues
2. Promote community stewardship in conservation through sustainable livelihoods
3. Increase awareness, understanding and policy support of public for conservation
4. Maximize existing partnerships and identify new opportunities

5. Create an organization that attracts, engages and retains highly motivated staff to support RSPN program
6. Strengthen the governance structure
7. Build an organization that is financially sustainable.



[VIEW DOCUMENT](#)

Our Newest Institutional Members



We extend our appreciation and gratitude to each institutions. Such support is an inspiration for us in achieving our conservation milestones.
Together, we achieve more!

Online Video Story Competition

RSPN in partnership with Bhutan For Life and WWF Bhutan organized an online video story competition with the theme **'Ecosystem Restoration'** on June 5, 2021. A total of 38 entries was received with many clips of degraded ecosystems in Bhutan that can be restored or revived for the good of the community and nature. The event was dedicated to Her Majesty The Gyaltsuen's 31st Birth Anniversary and also to observe World Environment Day 2021. *Click the below buttons to view their entries:*

1 ST POSITION	 Sonam Yangdon
2 ND POSITION	 Yeshi Nidup
3 RD POSITION	 Pema Yangzom
3 RD POSITION	 Kinga Tandin



Conservation Organizations Celebrates Social Forestry Day

To mark the Social Forestry Day and also to commemorate the Coronation Day of His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo, RSPN together with our partners WWF Bhutan, Bhutan For Life, Bhutan Ecological Society, Bhutan Trust Fund for Environmental Conservation and Guide Association of Bhutan celebrated the day with a symbolic tree plantation at Ancient Takin Trail, Motithang, Thimphu. The event was a symbol of our continued commitment and dedication to the conservation of the environment.



From left-right: Mr. Garab Dorji (GAB), Mr. Singye Dorji (BTFEC), Dr. Kinley Tenzin (RSPN), Ms. Pem Lama (BES), Mr. Tashi Jamtsho (WWF Bhutan), Ms. Rinchen Wangmo (RSPN), Dr. Pema Wangda (BFL), Mr. Dorji (BTFEC)

Cleaning Program

RSPN in partnership with Guide Association of Bhutan (GAB) had a mass cleaning program along the entire stretch of the chubachu stream starting from Motithang till Tourism Council of Bhutan office on April 17, 2021. Despite numerous cleaning and advocacy programs initiated for over more than three consecutive years, waste dumping is still seen to be a continuous trend. A total of 38 participants from GAB and RSPN took part in the event.



628
KGS OF WASTE COLLECTED



The participants





Black-necked Crane Rescued

On February 7, 2021, a Black-necked Crane was rescued from a pack of stray dogs at Langthel in Trongsa. Residents at the site suspected that the crane collided with overhead power lines and dropped on the ground. The crane was then moved to Phobjikha at the Black-necked Crane Visitor Centre by Forest officials of the Jigme Singye Wangchuck National Park. Veterinarian Doctors from the National Veterinary Hospital inspected the injured crane and found fresh bruises on both the joints of humerus and radius ulna (Elbow). The crane was initially placed in the enclosure alongside Crane karma with a partition, dividing the aviary with green net to avoid any harm among each other. Through the DNA analysis, Japanese researchers found out the new crane was a female. After two weeks under observation, the partition net was removed. After few first rough encounters, the two crane gradually bonded and got along with occasional unison calls. Hearing the news of the crane, Her Majesty Royal Queen Mother Sangay Choden Wangchuck, graced the crane with the name, Pema.



The rescued crane Pema



The aviary

Crane Karma and Pema in the aviary

Meet Our New Team



DR. NORBU WANGDI
Project Coordinator



SAMTEN LEKI
Veterinary Officer



TSHERING TOBGAY
Research Officer



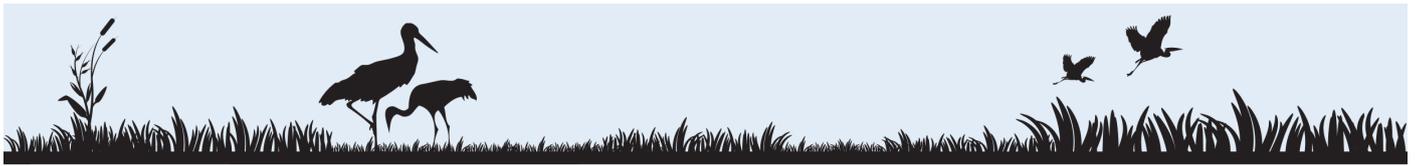
THINLEY PHUNTSHO
Research Officer



SANGAY DEMA
Communications Officer



KARMA WANGCHUK
Project Officer



A New Project Kick-started

TITLE OF THE PROJECT

Developing ecosystem-based solutions for managing biodiversity landscapes in Bhutan

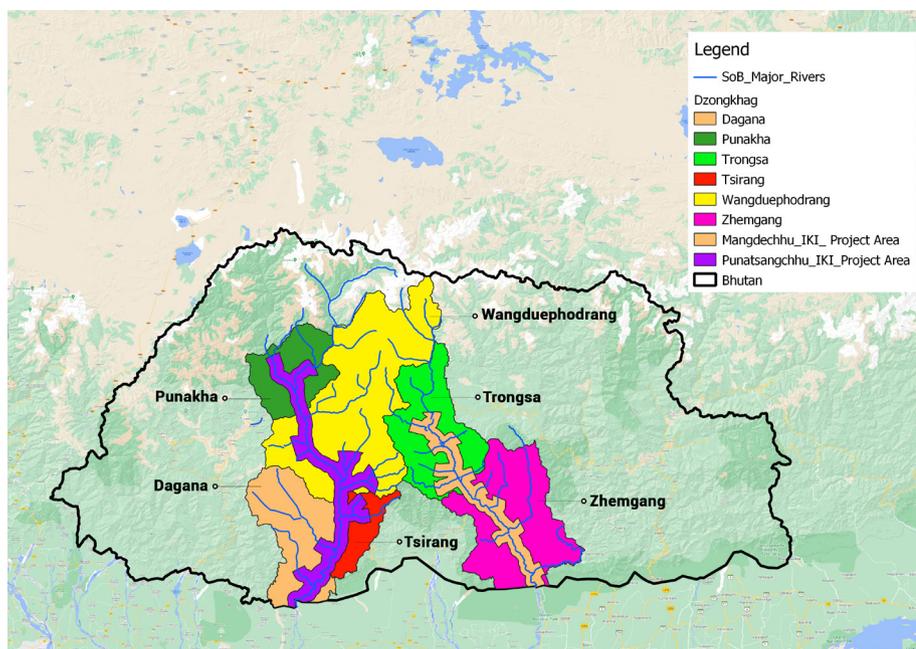
ABOUT THE PROJECT

The project aims to develop ecosystem-based solutions for managing biodiversity landscapes, with a special objective to establish approaches and tools for protecting and managing White-bellied Heron (WBH) habitats along Punatsangchhu and Mangdechhu basin, central part of Bhutan.

The project is funded by the Federal Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Germany through International Climate Initiative and jointly implemented by the Royal Society for Protection of Nature in collaboration with the Royal Government of Bhutan (RGoB).

GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE

The Developing Ecosystem-based solutions for managing biodiversity landscapes in Bhutan project covers Punakha, Tsirang, Dagana, Wangduephodrang, Trongsa and Zhemgang districts.



IMPACT

WBH population stable or increasing in Bhutan and other Himalayan countries through ecosystem-based conservation measures.

OUTCOME

Effective adaptive ecosystem solutions for WBH conservation in Bhutan (and other Himalayan countries) created through habitat restoration and livelihoods enhancement.

OUTPUT

1. Ecosystem-based biodiversity survey and community engagement strategies for WBH conservation based on ESRAM approach, designed and applied.

2. Degraded and new potential WBH habitats rehabilitated and created (feeding, roosting and nesting)
3. Capacity of all stakeholders on planning and implementation of ESRAM study, ecosystem-based adaptation and livelihood options strengthened.
4. Ecosystem-based adaptation livelihood options in the WBH habitat areas, applied and established.
5. Knowledge base on ecosystem-based biodiversity conservation, WBH habitat & population and climate adaptation, established and disseminated.

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

- Gross National Happiness Commission Secretariat
- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Forests & Park Services
- Department of Livestock
- Department of Local Governance, MoHCA
- Planning and Policy Division, MoAF
- World Wildlife Fund Bhutan
- Department of Hydropower and Power Systems, MoEA
- Tourism Council of Bhutan

'This project is part of the International Climate Initiative (IKI). The Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) supports this initiative on the basis of a decision adopted by the German Bundestag.'



Supported by:



Federal Ministry
for the Environment, Nature Conservation
and Nuclear Safety

based on a decision of the German Bundestag

MILESTONES ROADMAP

Developing Ecosystem-based Solutions for Managing Biodiversity Landscapes in Bhutan

- Training reports on ESRAM and habitat restoration prepared.
- Beekeeping and fishery scheme established
- New potential nesting sites surveyed
- Seedlings for tree plantation produced
- Policy brief prepared

2025

- Documentary on Project Results & Impacts produced
- National & International WBH Conference and meetings organized

2026



END

- Capacity building on community based ecotourism
- Prepared training materials for various climate-smart livelihoods activities.
- New potential nesting sites surveyed
- Seedlings for tree plantation produced

2024

- Training reports on ESRAM and habitat restoration prepared
- Degraded WBH habitats identified and mapped
- New potential nesting sites surveyed
- Seedlings for tree plantation produced
- WBH data-base system established
- Ecotourism feasibility study published
- HWC management group formed
- HWC fund established

2022

2023

- Local Conservation Support Group Established (LCSG)
- Training on community-based ecotourism Conducted
- Agro-ecological farms enterprise established
- New potential nesting sites surveyed
- Seedlings for tree plantation produced

2021

- ESRAM Report Published
- Biodiversity Survey Manual Published



START

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