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Be a Member of RSPN!

When you become a member of RSPN, you become a part of a dedicated network of individuals and groups working to preserve Bhutan's pristine natural environment and incredible biodiversity for generations to come. As the nation's oldest environmental NGO, we depend on the generosity of concerned individuals like yourself to enable our research and advocacy – we can't do it without you, and every bit counts!

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Awareness workshop conducted on RSAHP



Workshop participants from the local community.

RSPN, with financial support from SAARC Development Fund (SDF) and technical assistance from PHED under Ministry of Health and SNV, has implemented awareness program on Rural Sanitation and Hygiene Program (RSAHP) as part of “Strengthening water,

sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) services in two Gewogs of Phuntshopelri and Yo-eseltse in Samtse Dzongkhag. The mission of this programme is to improve the health of the rural populace by reducing the occurrence of water

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RSPN receives support from KNCF



KNCF

Keidanren Nature Conservation Fund

Logo of Keidanren Nature Conservation Fund (KNCF), Japan

The Keidanren Nature Conservation Fund (KNCF), Japan, will be supporting a yearlong project for RSPN entitled “Environmental Education and conservation of critically endangered White-bellied Heron (WBH) and vulnerable Black-necked Crane (BNC) in Bhutan” with the approved grant of JPY 4,765,000.

The objectives of the project are to:

- Develop adequate awareness and educational materials on WBH and BNC for distribution.
- Sensitize communities, institutions, local authorities and relevant stakeholders on conservation need of the WBH and

BNC in Bhutan through effective outreach programs.

Some of the major activities under this project will embrace development and production of environmental education and awareness materials including books, lapel pins, posters, flyers, brochures, banners, postcards, stamps and habitats to be distributed to the schools and institutions.

Outreach programs will include environmental education program for students of both formal and non-formal institutions including monastic institutions and community members and

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RSPN receives support from KNCF

leaders.

Art and essay competition on conservation of WBH and BNC in Bhutan will be organized among school children

to engage them in learning, exploring and sharing their experience and knowledge about the environment and conservation effort of the birds.

KNCF is a public trust established in 2000 and has supported RSPN in the conservation of Black-necked Cranes since 2012.

Haa CBST Project Working Group formed



RSPN Officials and the group members



Introductory meeting with the group members

A Community-based Sustainable Tourism (CBST) Project Working Group in Haa Dzongkhag was formed on 14th April 2015. The working group comprises of representatives from

the local government of Eusu, Kartsho, Bji gewogs, Dzongkhag administration of Haa, Jigme Khesar Strict Nature Reserve and the National Centre for Riverine and Lake Fishery.

The main objective of the working group formation was to optimize community and cross-sectorial participation in development of community-based sustainable tourism in Haa Dzongkhag.

WASH Project Report presented



Discussion during the presentation among stakeholders

A half-day presentation of Baseline Survey Report on “Strengthening Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) components of two Gewogs of Phuntshapelri and Yoeseltse in Samtse District was organized by RSPN on 13th April, 2015 in RSPN’s Board Room, Thim-

phu. It is a part of SAARC Development Fund (SDF)-funded project on WASH services in selected areas of SAARC Countries.

The objectives of survey was to congregate and establish an independent baseline information on rural water

supply schemes, sanitation and hygiene integrating with socio-economic aspects and gender inclusion of the project areas to kick start the main activities.

Based on the presentation, profound discussions were held and recommendations and suggestion were received from competent stakeholders for further refinement of the report.

It will also set a baseline data for monitoring and evaluating the achievements and impacts of the project at its completion.

RSPN, in collaboration with Public Health Engineering Division and SNV Bhutan-Program Office, have been implementing the project in two Gewogs in Samtse since 3rd June, 2014 with the aim to improve the quality of rural populace life by providing safe, convenient and sustainable water, sanitation services and better hygiene. The project will end by 2nd June, 2017.

ADB Project Review Mission visited project sites



Review mission team with the local community representatives



The officials review the activities

The project on Gender-inclusive Access to Clean and Renewable Energy in Bhutan was approved by Asian Development Bank (ADB) on 18th March 2011 with a total amount of USD \$3 million through JFPR (Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction) grant to increase women's role and visibility in policy across South Asia and at the ground level through direct energy sector interventions in Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bhutan. Pursuant to the grant assistant report, ADB has conducted the semi-annual project review mission to determine the efficiency and effectiveness of the use of the project grant.

The main purpose of the mission are:

1. Review overall implementation of the project;
2. Update the project implementation schedule in consultation with the implementing agency (IA);
3. Examine the problems that the project has encountered and work out

measures with the IA to solve them;

4. Visit project sites.

The project review mission was scheduled from 26th to 30th May 2015. Two mission officials Ms. Hongwei Zhang, Finance Specialist (Energy)/ Mission Leader and Ms. Annie Vizcarra, SAEN Consultant/Mission Member from ADB, along with Ms. Damchoe Dema from DRE and Mr. Tsheten Dorji from RSPN visited the project sites in lower three Gewogs of Phangkhang, Nagangla and Bjoka in Zhemgang.

The officials met with the women and other community members of Panbang Organic Group in Ngangla Gewog who were trained on organic agriculture, vegetable production, book-keeping and group management. They also interviewed the group and made the field visit for determining the benefits and success of the trainings. They met with the local community who were trained on bamboo

and cane product development on their visit to Bjoka Gewog. By interviewing the members, the mission reviewed to determine the benefits and success of the trainings. They also met with few of the recently electrified household members in Bjoka and Pantang.

Despite the road-blockages in various locations due to heavy rainfall, the mission officials from ADB were able to visit the areas and could determine the impacts and benefits of the project to the rural communities. The officials were of the views that the project has been implemented as per set targets and has benefited the Bjoka Bamboo Group and Panbang Organic Group in particular.

However, the groups need further support from the concerned organizations and agencies for sustainable management.

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Awareness workshop conducted on RSAHP

borne related diseases and to bring about improved health quality of life through access to quality sanitary toilets, hygienic use of toilet and adequate facilities for hand washing with soap.

RSPN believes that the implantation of RSAHP will benefit and greatly

supplement Ministry of Health and Samtse Dzongkhag in improving rural areas, and contribute significantly towards better sanitation and hygiene for the well-being of the rural people at large.

CONTRIBUTE ARTICLES OR PHOTO

We invite you to contribute any articles or pictures related to environmental conservation in Bhutan. It will be published in our periodic publications and on our website.

You can send it to rspn@rspnbhutan.org or pyonten@rspnbhutan.org.

RSPN participates in World Environment Day 2015

“Seven Billion Dreams. One Planet. Consume with Care.”



His Excellency the Agriculture Minister delivers his address on the day



The Chief Guest visited exhibition stall put up by RSPN to commemorate the day.

Coinciding with World Environment Day on June 5, 2015, Royal Society for Protection of Nature participated in an exhibition on solid waste management at the Clock Tower in Thimphu.

Speaking to hundreds of students gathered to observe the day, the Minister for Agriculture and Forest Lyonpo Yeshe Dorji said that it was important not only to celebrate the day, but more so to take part in conserving Bhutan’s rich environment and natural heritage for our future generations.

One-day waste management awareness exhibition was organized by Thimphu Thromde and Japan Environmental Sanitation Center in collaboration with Royal Thimphu College, Clean Bhutan, RSPN, Greener Way and JICA.

Wetland Conservation and Sustainable Management in Buli



Workshop participants

An introductory meeting was organized to create awareness among local community and stakeholders in Buli on RSPN’s new project on Wetland Conservation and Sustainable Management funded by Small Grant Program, UNDP. The meeting was primarily aimed at conservation of ecosystem service provided by wetland in isolated pockets of Buli in Zhemgang.

The three-day introductory program was attended by gewog officials, Buli health officials, school principal, teachers, RNR staffs, community center officials and BDBL officials together with representatives from 40 households. As project seeks to approach for greater women’s participation as required, it was mostly attended by women.

RSPN Field Office in Zhemgang relocated



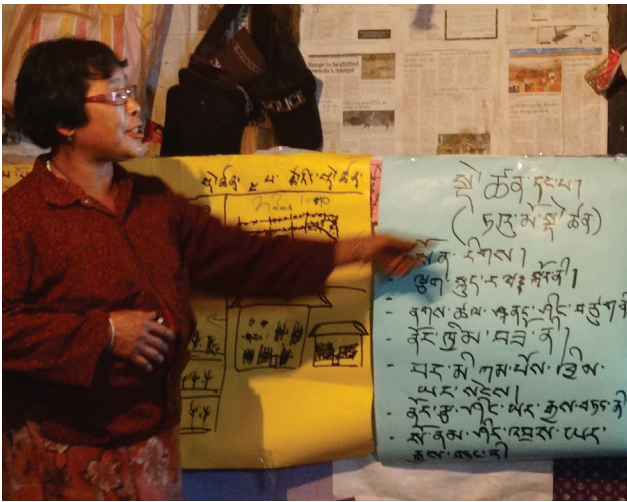
RSPN’s field office at Buli, Nangkor Gewog

With the introduction of “Conservation and Sustainable Management of Wetland in Buli” the field office of RSPN in Zhemgang is now re-located to Buli, Nangkor Gewog which is at a

distance of little more than 58kms.

The office is located overlooking Buli valley and is connected by a farm road from the main feeder road. The office has been functional since May 2015.

Refresher Training on Sustainable agriculture



One of the group leaders present on behalf of her group during the training

A total of 39 pilot farmers and few non-pilot farmers from Wamrong and Kangpara in Trashigang participated in the refresher training on sustainable agriculture from 2nd to 3rd week of June 2015. The training focused on the three main project components: (1) Slope management, (2) organic farming and (3) livestock management.

The farmers were introduced to new techniques and methods that will help them for napier hedgerow development, vermin-composting, preparation of Bio-pesticides, slope management through stone bunding, awareness on zoonotic diseases, livestock housing, and feed and fodder management.

The training was conducted in collaboration with the respective Gewog RNR-extension officers and Gewog administration representatives with financial support from Norlha, a Swiss-based NGO.

RSPN's international partner, Norlha visits Bhutan



Dr. Joep Slaats with Executive Director and officials of RSPN

The Head of Operations, Dr. Joep Slaats of Norlha, an international Non-Governmental Organisation based in Lausanne, Switzerland visited RSPN and project sites in Wamrong in Tashigang from 19th May to 2nd June to understand RSPN's model of project implementation at the ground level and to see the progress of the project in the project sites and its benefits to the communities.

Norlha has been funding a project on sustainable agriculture in Lumang Gewog (Wamrong Dungkha), and Kangpara Gewog (Thrimshing Dungkha) both situated in Trashigang Dzongkha. It aims to promote organic agriculture and sustainable land management by rural communities in these Gewogs through capacity enhancement of farmers and supporting them in the application of appropriate agricultural practices and measures to control soil erosion.

Dr. Joep and Dr. Kinley Tenzin, Executive Director of RSPN described the visit as "fruitful" and acknowledged the role of national and international NGOs to support environmental conservation and the livelihoods of the communities in the Himalayas.

Since October 2013,

RSPN staff participates in plantation program



The program was led by His Excellency Agriculture Minister



On 22 June 2015, RSPN staff joined volunteers from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests (MoAF), National Environment Commission and Community Based Scouting in preparation of terraces for plantation above Samarzingkha.

The plantation in about 85 acres is being organized by the MoAF to commemorate 60th Birth Anniversary of the 4th Druk Gyalpo.

Birds of Bhutan

In commemoration of the 60th Birth Anniversary of His Majesty the Fourth King Jigme Singye Wangchuck, we will publish collection of pictures of birds found in Bhutan. His Majesty was awarded Champion of the Earth in 2005 for his exemplary leadership in environmental conservation.

Bhutan ranks in the top 10% of countries with the highest species density on earth, and it has the highest fraction of land in protected areas as well as the highest proportion of forest cover of any Asian nation.

- (<http://www.unep.org/champions/laureates/2005/DrukGyalpo.asp>)



Common name: Common Kingfisher
Scientific name: *Alcedo atthis*

Photographer: Koji Tagi

CONTACT INFORMATION

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