



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Her Majesty Gyaltsuen graced RSPN Silver Jubilee Celebration1

Stakeholder Coordination Workshop1, 2

Arrival of Black-necked cranes in Phobjikha 2

Forest Outpost cum Residence inaugurated in Phobjikha.....3

14th Black-necked Crane Festival..... 3

International Wetland Symposium 4

IUCN Congress kicks off in Korea..... 4

UN Biodiversity talks move forward but nature needs more..... 5

Leisure/Info6

Her Majesty Gyaltsuen graced RSPN Silver Jubilee Celebration



Her Majesty Gyaltsuen during RSPN's Silver Jubilee Celebration

The Royal Society for Protection of Nature (RSPN) celebrated its 25 years of service to the environmental conservation on 24 October, 2012 in its new headquarters, Kawajangsa, Thimphu.

As Patron of RSPN, Her Majesty the Gyaltsuen Jetsuen Pema Wangchuk graced the Silver Jubilee celebrations commemorat-

ing pioneer NGO's 25 years of dedicated service towards environmental conservation and inaugurated the new office building and the Jigme Khesar Environment Resource Center which will now serve as Centre for Research in Environment and Development.

(Source: Kuensel)

Stakeholder Coordination Workshop



The participants comprised representatives from various relevant agencies

The Second Annual Black-necked Crane (BNC) Stakeholder's Coordination Workshop was held in Thim-

phu with participants from Department of Forests and Park Services, WWF Bhutan Program, RSPN and print media on 5 Octo-

ber 2012 in Jigme Khesar Environment Resource Center Auditorium.

The workshop aimed at bringing people and institutions working on Black-necked Crane (BNC) at one platform and share information on the status of BNC in their respective areas, developing a common monitoring protocol for the BNC to generate uniform data and information on BNC in the country, dissemination of information on the status and conservation prospects of the BNC in Bhutan and outside world and exploring the opportunities of further collaborative program to protect and save the species.

Some of the outcome of the workshop were to develop a national BNC conservation strategy, develop roost map of all the BNC habitats in Bhutan, explore further trans-boundary conservation program, species conservation training, BNC conservation education and awareness program in BNC habitat and development of a common monitoring protocol. The workshop was collaboratively organized by WWF Bhutan Program and RSPN.

Stakeholder Coordination Workshop



The idea of organizing Annual BNC coordination workshop emanates from the very fact that BNC (*Grus nigricollis*) is a rare species and endemic to the Himalayan region. The most recent and reliable estimated global population of the BNC is about 11,000 individuals, of which close to 500 cranes visit Bhutan each winter spread across various places. Soothingly the BNC sightings in Bhutan has increased by 20 percent in the last 26 years.

It holds vulnerable status under International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and is listed in Appendix I of Convention on International Trade in En-

dangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). The IUCN vulnerable status pertains to those taxa that are facing a higher risk of global extinction (IUCN,2004) and CITES Appendix I pertains to taxa that are threatened with extinction and the trade in specimens of these species is permitted only in exceptional circumstances (CITES,2005). In terms of its conservation status in Bhutan, BNCs are listed under Schedule I, totally protected under the Forest and Nature Conservation Act of Bhutan, 1995, Volume I. Apart from its ecological significance it holds aesthetic, social, spiritual and cultural values in all the countries where BNCs are found.

In Bhutan, it also holds economic value especially in the case of Phobjikha where a large no. of tourist visits the valley to see the cranes and the wetlands.

Globally there are concerns regarding the deteriorating habitats of the BNCs both in breeding and non-breeding areas. In BNCs habitats within Bhutan too the habitats are facing anthropogenic pressure in terms of agricultural expansion, settlements and infrastructure development. There is a weak coordination among the stakeholders. Knowledge gaps among the stakeholders on the presence and habitat quality of the species in different parts of the country remains as one of the major challenges. Addressing this gap will provide the status of cranes in the country and the threat they face, so that this will allow stakeholders within their capacity to design programs to protect the species. Also, the status of cranes in Bhutan can be disseminated outside Bhutan where it would be possible to motivate crane enthusiasts and donor organizations to support the conservation of cranes in Bhutan.

Within the framework of 5 year cycle strategic plan document of RSPN (strategic plan document for 2011 to 2015), under the conservation of threatened species, RSPN aspire to ensure that annual winter population of BNCs does not decline below 300 for Phobjikha and 500 for Bhutan through; protection of BNC habitats especially wetlands, monitoring winter populations and conduct annual counts and by fostering trans-boundary research

Arrival of Black-necked cranes in Phobjikha



Black-necked cranes in Phobjikha (File picture)

A group of three cranes including one juvenile arrived on 27 October 2012 at around 12:30 pm (BST) in their winter home, Phobjikha. According to 2011-

2012 winter record, the cranes arrived on 7 November 2011.

Similarly, two adult Black-necked Cranes arrived in Bumdeling, Trashiyangtse at

around 1:00 pm (BST) on the afternoon of 30 October, 2012. According to Ap Phurba Wangdi, RSPN's focal crane observer in Bumdeling, this year the crane have come a month earlier corresponding to 16th Day of the 8th Month of Bhutanese Calendar. Last year BNC arrived in Bumdeling on 10th November corresponding to the 15th day of the 9th month of Bhutanese Calendar.

A total of 347 cranes spent their winter in Phobjikha during 2011-2012 winter period. The cranes usually spend over four months in major winter habitats in Bhutan and leave for their summer habitats in Tibet by mid-March.

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. Whatever financial support you pledge will be used to aid our projects in schools, communities, and protected areas throughout the country. As the nation's first 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!

www.rspnbhutan.org/be-a-member



We are on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/rspnbhutan

Forest Outpost cum Residence inaugurated in Phobjikha



The forest outpost cum residence in Phobjikha was inaugurated by Director of DoFPS and Executive Director of RSPN with the signing of MoU.

On 3 October 2012, a single story Forest Outpost cum Residence was inaugurated in Ramaychen in Phobji Gewog, Wangduephodrang. The outpost was constructed by RSPN and handed over to the Department of Forest and Park Services (DoFPS), Ministry of Agriculture and Forest. The forest outpost was inaugurated jointly by Mr. Chencho Norbu, Director, DoFPS and Mr. Lam Dorji (Ph.D), Executive Director, RSPN. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between RSPN and DoFPS for the purpose of strengthening conservation efforts and law enforcement in Phobjikha conservation area.

The MoU emanates from the longstanding collaboration between the two institutions to conserve the biological diversity of Phobjikha executed under RSPN's project to strengthen conservation management of Phobjikha conservation area under Phobjikha and Gangtey Gewogs.

While RSPN, as non-governmental agency, deems it necessary to strengthen the legal status of Phobjikha as a conservation area for sustained ecological significance of area and associated ecosystem services in the long term, the DoFPS concurs with the proposal of RSPN for strengthened status of Phobjikha as a Conservation Area.

The need for stronger presence of the department in monitoring and enforcement of forests and nature conservation regulations in the area is critical for continued efforts to preserve the pristine ecology of the area.

By signing the MoU the DoFPS agreed to expand its monitoring and enforcement reach by establishing an additional outpost at Ramaychen, Phobji Gewog and staffing and equipping the outpost with two forester staff. The forest outpost was constructed under RSPN's project titled 'Sustainable Natural Resource Management' in Phobjikha Landscape Conservation funded by The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation based in USA.

The outpost is constructed on a piece of land measuring 25 decimals registered in the name of DoFPS, located at Ramaychen, Phobji Gewog. The facility includes: Office space with 2 office rooms, 1 waiting room (hall way) and 1 large wash room (toilet) and Residence space with 2 bed rooms, 1 living room, 1 kitchen, 1 toilet, 1 hallway and open verandah.

The ceremony was attended by RSPN officials, DoFPS officials from Phobjikha and Territorial Forest Division, Wangduephodrang, Local Government Officials of Gangtey and Phobji gewogs, Phobjikha Environment Management Committee members and the local community. The Outpost has been built at the cost of Nu. 2.5 million.

14th Annual Black-necked Crane Festival



14th Black-necked crane festival in Phobjikha

As the community of Phobjikha valley sheltered themselves in the confines of their warm houses escaping the cold morning and windy afternoon, the majestic Black-necked Cranes punctuated the frost laden wetlands of Phobjikha valley looking for cozy place to feed and play around. The arrival and departure of the cranes is very much the part and parcel of the lives of the locals.

The local conservation group called the Phobjikha Environment Management Committee (PEMC) has successfully organized

the 14th Annual Black-necked Crane Festival. This year the festival was celebrated, in the court yard of the famous Gangtey Goemnpa, once again on 11th November 2012 coinciding with the birth anniversary of His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo Jigme Singye Wangchuk. The festival marks the arrival of the cranes in the valley and also as one of the National print media, Kuensel, put it the festival is a "welcome party" for the cranes. The festival attracted more than 400 international tourists. The locals gathered in hundreds in their best attire with their family members.

The festival was organized first in 1998 by RSPN to remind the local people about the importance of the conservation of the cranes and its habitats and also to generate some income to finance local conservation initiatives. Now the festival is organized by PEMC.

The festival was graced by the Khenpo of the Kunzachholing Thorim Shedra as the chief guest. During his speech he addressed the importance of the environment conservation linking it with Buddhism. He also mentioned about the prominence of the Black-necked Cranes in traditional paintings, folklores and songs. The chairperson of the committee also stressed on the reason for having introduced the entry fee to support the sustenance of the festival.

Annually the festival is organized by PEMC, a local community group composed of elected leaders and development sector representatives in the valley. This year the PEMC introduced an entry fee of Nu. 500.00 for every tourists to help sustain the fund for the annual festivals. The fund will also be utilized by the committee to provide better services for the visitors who support festival and to improve the festival programmes.

The local communities, the monastic institution and the schools collaborate to present a variety of cultural performances including traditional masked and folk dances. The limelight of the festival was the locally choreographed crane dance performed by the local school children with grace and beauty.

International Wetland Symposium



Opening of International Wetland symposium in Nepal.

An International Wetland Symposium (IWS): Safeguarding Wetlands; Securing Future was held in the beautiful city of Pokhara, Nepal, between 7- 10 November 2012. It was organized by the

Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation (MFSC)/Conservation and Sustainable Use of Wetlands in Nepal (CSUWN) in collaboration with International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD),

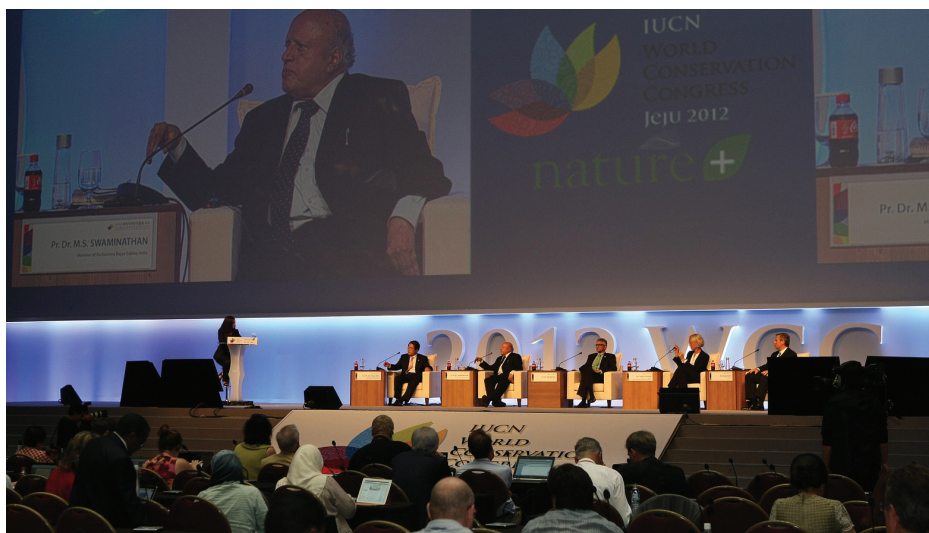
International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Nepal Academy of Science and Technology (NAST), National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC), WaterAid (WaterAid) and World Wildlife Fund (WWF).

The symposium began with opening remarks from the Hon'ble Yadu Bansh Jha, Minister and Hon'ble Dr. Krishna Chandra Paudel, Secretary, Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation of Government of Nepal.

The main aim of IWS was to provide a platform for knowledge sharing between national and international researchers, practitioners and managers engaged in the areas of wetlands conservation and management. It also aimed at providing opportunities to enhance technical understanding on contemporary issues through plenary discussions. Additionally, the symposium also aimed at documenting best practices and lessons learned in the above mentioned areas.

The symposium was attended by about 80 participants from 13 countries including Bhutan. Participants also included representatives from government agencies (of Nepal), UN agencies, international, regional and national wetland projects, organizations, educational institutions and other stakeholders working in the area of conservation and wise use of wetland.

IUCN Congress kicks off in Korea



IUCN Congress in session in Korea

The IUCN World Conservation Congress, the world's largest and most important conservation event, begins today on Jeju Island, South Korea.

More than 8,000 people from more than 170 countries are in Jeju to discuss, debate and vote on solutions to some of the globe's most pressing environmental and development issues.

Held every four years, the Congress, which runs to 15 September, brings together government and non-governmental organi-

zations, scientists, business and community leaders from around the world to look at how nature provides the solution to many of our problems.

"Nature is inherently strong, but we must improve how quickly nature and people adapt to change," says Julia Marton-Lefèvre, Director-General of IUCN. "If we strengthen nature, we'll see that ecosystems are more resilient and people, communities and economies are healthier."

A huge range of issues is on the agenda,

including the latest news from the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™, growing threats to tuna populations, fresh figures on coral reef destruction and the urgent need to stop countries making false claims on ocean protection.

Several important multimillion dollar announcements on initiatives and corporate partnerships with major international business will also be made. Climate change, growing threats to natural ecosystems and improving global decision-making on environmental issues will also feature.

While conservation is focused on global issues, various local issues will also be in the spotlight. Korean and German experts will be debating how to use the Demilitarized Zone between North and South Korea, and its surprisingly intact nature, to promote peace, referencing experiences from the former iron curtain. Across the border, replanting and rehabilitating the destroyed forests of North Korea will also be addressed.

Delegates will be joined by notable figures including South Korean President Lee Myung-bak, human rights advocate Bianca Jagger, leading author and oceanographer Sylvia Earle, Japanese singer/songwriter Iruka and HRH Prince Carl Philip of Sweden amongst other CEOs, and several government ministers and heads of major NGOs and UN agencies.



UN Biodiversity talks move forward but nature needs more



The biodiversity talk in session in Hyderabad, India (Picture: RSPN)

Hyderabad, India, 20 October 2012 –

Despite good progress towards achieving the 2020 targets to halt the loss of biodiversity, efforts to conserve nature must be urgently scaled up if we want to meet the 2020 deadline to save all life on earth – says IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature).

The UN Biodiversity talks closing today in Hyderabad, India, saw an overall consensus on the urgent need for more and better managed funds to reach the targets but countries have failed to agree on the exact amount needed to ensure their successful implementation.

“The lack of agreement on public funds required to conserve biodiversity and save the

natural world highlights the need for innovative ways to seek support from other sources,” says Julia Marton-Lefèvre, IUCN Director General. “We’ve seen good progress towards achieving the targets we set two years ago. These efforts now need to be urgently scaled up with adequate funding from all sources if we want to avoid failure.”

Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity met in Hyderabad to evaluate progress towards the implementation of decisions taken at the Nagoya Biodiversity Summit in 2010, including the 2020 Aichi Targets to save and restore nature. The meeting saw examples of concrete conservation action and a strong focus on turning the decisions taken in Nagoya into action on the ground.

Some key issues have been agreed in Hy-

derabad, such as the recognition of marine ecologically and biologically significant areas, including those in the international waters, which should largely increase their chances to be protected under international law.

“This is good but it’s not enough,” says Jane Smart, Global Director of IUCN’s Biodiversity Conservation Group. “If we want to respond to the growing biodiversity crisis, we need more concrete action. We must engage with all levels of society, including the private sector, and look into conserving all levels of biological diversity: the diversity of genes, species and ecosystems. Two years into the International Decade of Biodiversity, this is now more urgent than ever.”

According to the latest update of The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™ released during the meeting, 20,219 of the 65,518 species listed are threatened with extinction, including 83% of Madagascar’s palms, putting the livelihoods of many people at risk.

Addressing the ministers gathered in Hyderabad, IUCN President Zhang Xinsheng highlighted the need for new sources of funds to conserve nature, such as the private sector, and stressed the importance of including the protection of the natural environment in national development policies.

“The government of India has done a fantastic job in organizing this meeting,” said IUCN President Zhang Xinsheng. “In two year’s time we’ll be looking at a mid-point towards the 2020 deadline to save the natural environment. We look forward to working with the government of South Korea to make sure that at the next meeting of the Convention, we see more positive progress. We’re up against a crisis that’s threatening all life on earth – we cannot afford to lose this race.”

Source: IUCN

JIGME KHESAR ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE CENTRE

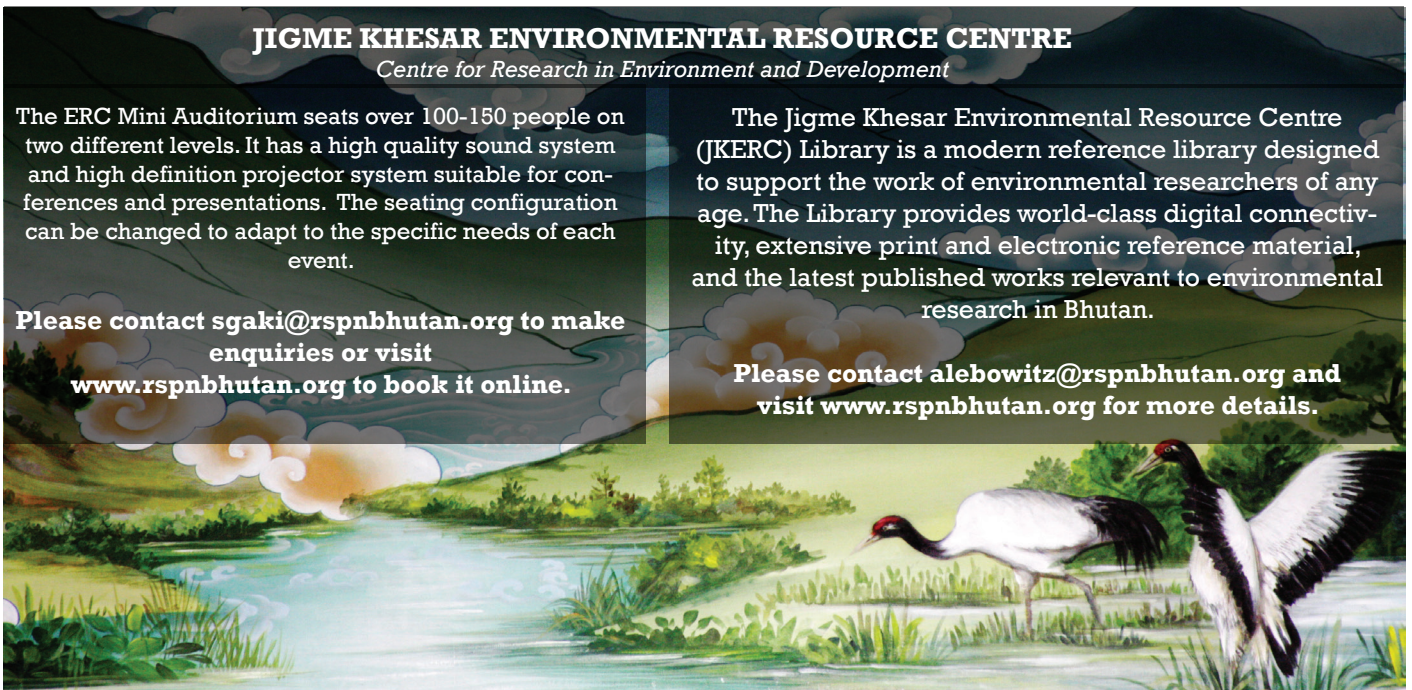
Centre for Research in Environment and Development

The ERC Mini Auditorium seats over 100-150 people on two different levels. It has a high quality sound system and high definition projector system suitable for conferences and presentations. The seating configuration can be changed to adapt to the specific needs of each event.

Please contact sgaki@rspnbhutan.org to make enquiries or visit www.rspnbhutan.org to book it online.

The Jigme Khesar Environmental Resource Centre (JKERC) Library is a modern reference library designed to support the work of environmental researchers of any age. The Library provides world-class digital connectivity, extensive print and electronic reference material, and the latest published works relevant to environmental research in Bhutan.

Please contact alebowitz@rspnbhutan.org and visit www.rspnbhutan.org for more details.



WORD SAFARI

In this edition, we have compiled other rodents, birds of pre and scavengers and the park they are found in. We will continue to publish this data in series in our next Rangzhin editions. (Source: *Bhutan's Natural Heritage - A Legacy of the Monarchs*, RSPN, Thimphu)

Find and encircle the words which are **bold** and underlined. We have encircled one to help you get start with.

IUCN Status	Major Herbivorous Mammals		Protected Areas**								
	Common name	Latin name	J D N P	J S W N P	B W S	R M N P	S W S	P W S	W C P	T S N R	K W S
	Himalayan Marmot	<i>Marmota himalayana</i>	X	X	X		X		X		
	Indian <u>Porcupine</u>	<i>Hysteric indica</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Malayan Gian Squirrel	<i>Ratufa bicolor</i>		X		X		X		X	X
	Giant Flying Squirrel species	<i>Petaurista spp.</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Critically End.	White-rumped Vulture	<i>Gyps bengalensis</i>								X	X
Endangered	Greater Spotted Eagle	<i>Aquila clanga</i>									
Engangered	Imperial Eagle	<i>Aquila heliaca</i>									
Endangered	Pallas's Fish- eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucoryphus</i>	X	X		X	X				X
Near threatened	Lesser Fish-eagle	<i>Ichthyohaga humillis</i>					X				
Near threatened	Pallied Harrier	<i>Circus macrourus</i>				X					X

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

** **JDNP**: Jigme Dorji National Park; **JSWNP**: Jigme Singye Wangchuck National Park; **BWS**: Bumdeling Wildlife Sanctuary; **RMNP**: Royal Manas National Park; **TNP**: Thrumshingla National Park; **SWS**: Sakten Wildlife Sanctuary; **PWS**: Phibsoo Wildlife Santuary; **WCP**: Wangchuck Centennial Park; **TSNR**: Toorsa Strict Nature Reserve; **KWS**: Khaling Wildlife Sanctuary

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PTT banding of black-necked crane in Phodkha

Royal Society for Protection of Nature (RSPN)

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1987 - 2012
RSPN celebrates
25 years
IN ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

This year, The Royal Society for Protection of Nature celebrates its silver jubilee, commemorating the past 25 years of work to its environmental conservation and education in Bhutan.

RSPN was founded in 1987 by Dasho Pajee Dorji, commonly known as Dasho Birey, with the permission from the Fourth King, His Majesty, Jigme Singye Wangchuck. In the early years, the Society focused on engaging youth through nation-wide art and essay competitions on environmental themes. RSPN also began an annual count of Black-necked Cranes, are birds who make their winter home in Bhutan, primarily in the Bumdeling and Phodkha valleys. Read more...

Home

Latest News & Events

Legal teeth to bite litterbugs

With the waste prevention and management regulation, 2012 coming into force yesterday, people littering or dumping waste in the wrong places, or urinating or defecating in a public place, will be slapped fines, ranging from Nu

Latest Announcements

■ Notification on Bhutan Water Partnership Secretariat

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Latest news; Membership forms; Project Reports; Newsletters;
Annual Reports.

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