



Danphe

Bird Conservation Nepal

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 19

BULLETIN NO. 4

DECEMBER 2010

Darwin Ecosystem Services Project in Nepal

Ishana Thapa and Dr Hum Gurung



Water catchment area at Pantimulhan, Park Headquarter of Shivapuri Nagarjun National Park

Background

In Nepal, rich biodiversity and functioning ecosystems provide vital services and livelihoods for most poor people. A progressive body of legislation and policy enshrines the rights of communities to manage their resources to maximise benefits, resulting in, for example, more than 14,000 groups who manage forests. However, exercising these rights is difficult because of lack of information on the condition and trends of biodiversity and associated Ecosystem Services (ES), and impacts of management. This limits communities' ability to engage in informed dialogue with government, and restricts government's ability to support effective conservation and improved livelihoods.

Natural ecosystems provide human societies with an extensive range of benefits, including the production of food and clean water, and the control of climate. Unfortunately, more than 60% of these benefits—known as ecosystem services—are in decline (MEA 2005). The loss and degradation of ecosystems and the biodiversity they support can disrupt and diminish these essential services with severe economic, social and environmental impacts on people. The importance of maintaining and enhancing ecosystem services is increasingly being recognised and it is now a key factor on many national and international agendas (TEEB, 2010).

However, ecosystem services



assessment has largely focused on broad scale, global analyses, using rough proxy measures from remote sensing or on intensive and expensive measures at a few sites. To inform practical conservation decision-making, an intermediate approach is needed. The Darwin Ecosystem Services Project intends to develop a ground-based, site-focused, participatory, robust and inexpensive methodology for ES assessment and monitoring, test and refine it in Nepal, and use the results to support biodiversity conservation in Asia and around the world.

Importance of Ecosystem Services

What are Ecosystem Services?

A very simple definition of ecosystem services is the direct and indirect contributions of ecosystems to human well-being. Ecosystems provide flows of benefits to human societies as a result of biodiversity like raw materials, fresh water, pollination, carbon sequestration, tourism and spiritual experience.

Ecosystem Services and Human Well-being

One useful categorisation of ecosystem services is that from the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MEA, 2005), which divides services into four categories; Supporting, Provisioning, Regulating and Cultural all are linking in a variety of ways to well being underpinned by biodiversity (see Figure 1). The MEA was the first major push of this concept into politics. It showed how these services contribute to all aspects of human life and well-being. The outcomes of this assessment in 2005 demonstrated that everyone in the world depends on ecosystem services to some extent. Human demands for many of these services (food, water, energy and raw materials) are putting pressure on species, sites and habitats resulting in the loss of biodiversity and, subsequently, leading to ecosystem degradation and the disruption of ecosystem services. Pressure on services will increase globally unless attitudes and actions change.

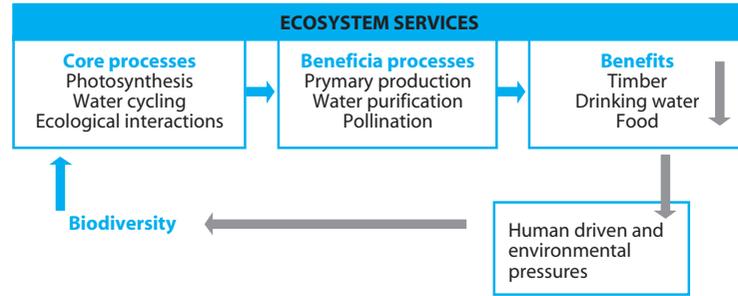


Figure 2: Importance of Ecosystem Integrity
Source: Fisher and Turner (2008) and Balmford et al. (2008)

photosynthesis) depend on biodiversity, these processes feed into beneficial processes (such as crop production) and finally provision of direct or indirect benefits to people (in this case, food). As our demand for food increases, this has a negative impact on biodiversity and hence the processes – resulting in a decrease in provision of services. Biodiversity underpins these processes so any pressures exerted on biodiversity will impact the provision of benefits at the end of this chain. This is why biodiversity and ecosystem integrity is important. More diverse systems tend to be more stable and better able to provide services.

But, ecosystem services only become valuable to society when experienced as a benefit. This is influenced by the nature of the service, the location of service relative to potential beneficiaries and the number of beneficiaries. For example, an ecosystem could purify polluted water, but if that water was not then intercepted for drinking by people, it is not considered a service as it would not have value to society. But, if the same ecosystem was mitigating climate change by sequestering atmospheric carbon dioxide, it would be valuable to the whole global community, as it does not matter to each individual exactly where that carbon dioxide is removed from the atmosphere.

Importance of Ecosystem Services in Nepal's National Economies

As per UNDP-UNEP PEI annual progress report 2009, 86% of population in Nepal resides in rural areas. More than 80% of Nepalese people derive their livelihoods from forest. Traditional energy resources comprise 93.2% of total energy requirements. Biomass provides 86% of total energy consumption. Water crisis has emerged as a national problem. Environmental health costs associated with poor environmental management a significant burden on national economy.

Land Use Involve Trade Offs for Ecosystem Services

A key issue, however, is the way provision of different services is balanced. Natural managed habitats provide a diverse range of goods and services. Extensively-managed ecosystems will increase production of some desired goods and services – but usually at the expense of some reduction in other services. Intensively managed ecosystems focus on just one service (often food) – but the delivery of other goods and services, often essential to wider society, is then much reduced. Policy-makers and land managers have to make decisions about which services are important, and to which stakeholders (local, national and international) as those who benefit, and those who bear the cost, will be different in each of the scenarios 1-3 (Figure 3).

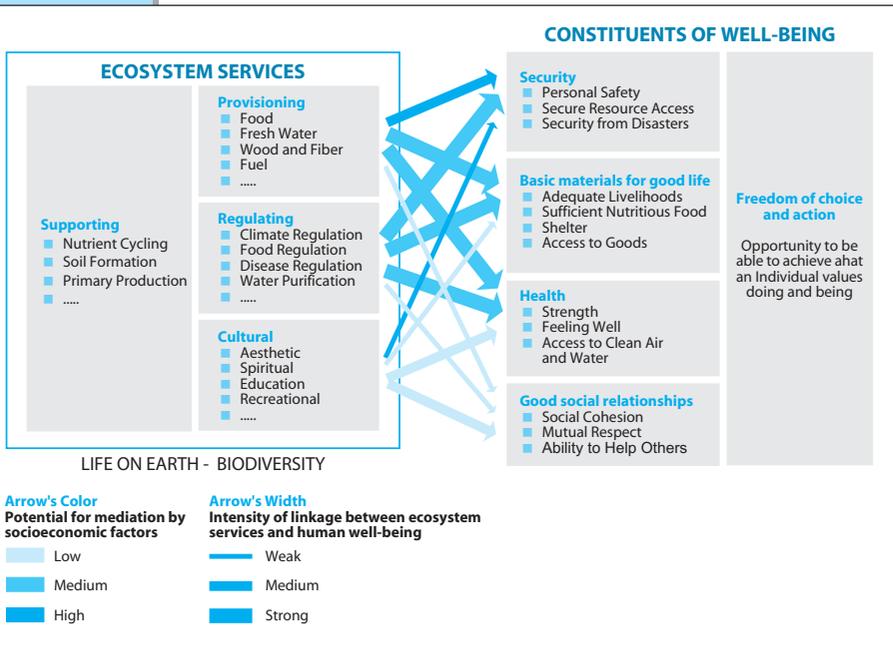


Figure 1: Ecosystem Services and Human Well-Being
Source: Millennium Ecosystem Assessment

Ecosystem Integrity and Its Importance

There is a very close links between human, biodiversity and ecosystem services (Figure 2). The core processes (such as



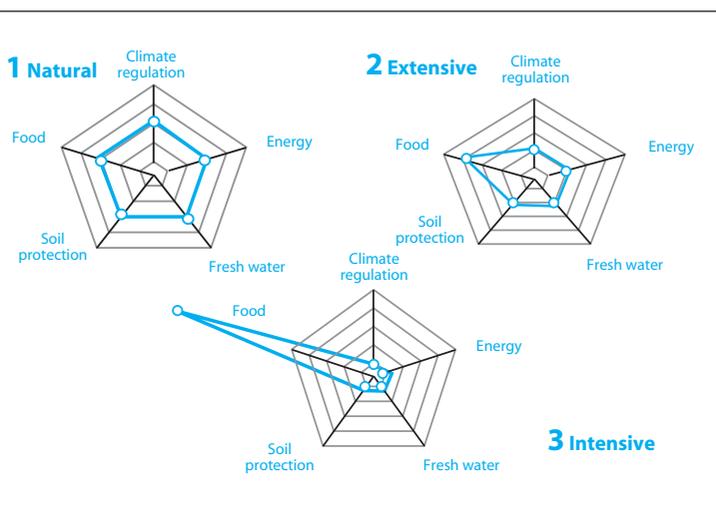


Figure 3: Trade Offs between Ecosystem Services and Land Uses
Source: Brink (MNP) 2008.

Understanding Ecosystem Services Benefits for Management Strategies and Help to Design Payment System

In Sourou Valley wetland (Burkina Faso) government and agency development efforts were focused on agriculture. However, valuation of wetland benefits revealed that more than 80% of its value related to forest products, fodder, and fisheries. Agriculture accounted for only 3%. Figures now help reorient management and development strategies – maintaining ecosystem services (TEEB for Local and Regional Policy Makers 2010).

The Makwanpur District Development Committee (Nepal) receives 12% of royalty from Kulekhani Hydropower as per the Electricity Act and Regulation of Nepal and Local Self Governance Act. 20% of the hydropower royalty has been secured as Environment Management Special Fund (EMSF) (Upadhaya 2005). EMSF supports conservation and development projects proposed by upland community. Though this has established a very good example but there are some management issues like EMSF spent mostly on development projects such as road, though some conservation projects are also supported and some conflicts also exist between upstream and downstream Village Development Committees on the share of royalty.

However, just because there is not as Ecosystem Services argument for protection doesn't mean an area shouldn't be protected. Intrinsic value of a site must not be lost. Some benefits cannot (yet) be measured. Price does not equal value as 'value' cannot always be quantified. The key point is whatever 'value' you get from Ecosystem Services methods will never be the whole story. The science is still developing –increasing collaboration between scientists and economists is constantly improving and developing our knowledge and methods. There is still an enormous challenge to capture these values properly in markets and regulation, to affect behavioural change without losing sight of the 'real total value' of a site.

Project Overview

The Darwin Ecosystem Services Project "Understanding, assessing and monitoring ecosystem services for better biodiversity conservation" is a three year project from April 2010 – March 2013. The main purpose of the project is to build the capacity of BirdLife Partners to collect and use information on ecosystem services for better biodiversity conservation at Important Bird Areas implemented by Bird Conservation Nepal with support from BirdLife International Secretariat and Cambridge Conservation Initiative.

Project Need

- Limitations of current data (coarse scale or expensive site analysis)
- Limited capacity to conduct complex analysis on the ground no easy to use, robust, practical guidelines that are applicable to any ecosystem in any country
- More research and scientific evidence needed on Ecosystem Services which can feed into decision making at all levels
- BirdLife Partners want to know about Ecosystem Services at their sites. Seen as an important area of work for linking conservation goals with policy in their countries

Key Outputs

- Develop an easy-to-use, field tested research methodology
- Pilot the methodology at three sites in Nepal
- Publish a simple, practical toolkit document
- Publish a National Report 'Ecosystem services at high biodiversity sites in Nepal' including analysis of all 27 Important Bird Areas (IBAs) in Nepal
- Increase understanding and awareness of the importance of biodiversity conservation and maintenance of ecosystem services for local livelihoods

The Methodology Toolkit for Tracking Ecosystem Services at the Site Scale

Toolkit Focus and Outline

The 'toolkit' will develop methodologies for

- Climate change mitigation (e.g. carbon storage)
- Water (e.g. reduced flood risk, quantity)
- Harvested wild goods
- Cultivated goods
- Tourism / recreation



'चरलाई चार'
अभियानमा सहकार्य गरौं।



a BCN initiative to save Nepal's endangered birds.
PLEDGE AND DONATE TODAY



The outline of the toolkit will be as shown in Figure 4

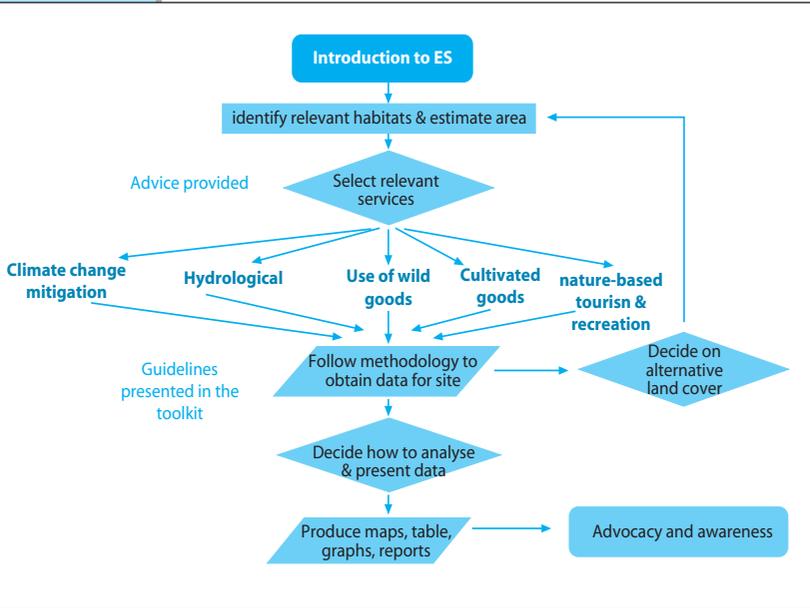


Figure 4: Ecosystem Services Toolkit Outline

These methods will be tested in detail at three pilot sites (Shivapuri Nagarjun National Park, Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve and Rara National Park, see Figure 5) which has been selected according to ecological zone, development zone, services they provide, imminent threat to birds/biodiversity, beneficiaries and conservation status.

Establishing Monitoring

- Methods can be repeated at regular intervals to measure change in ecosystem services at sites
- This will provide important information about how changes to sites impact on ecosystem services
- The methodology can be used in line with current monitoring of bird populations and habitat condition as an IBA monitoring programme of all BirdLife partners to assess the impacts of land use change on both biodiversity and ecosystem services.

Alternative State of a Site

The alternative state of a site will also be evaluated as Total Economic Value of a site does not provide useful information. Decision-makers want to know the net impact of a particular action at a site hence needs to consider a 'plausible alternative state' for land cover (restored forest, conversion to agriculture). Time-scale is important as shown in Figure 6.

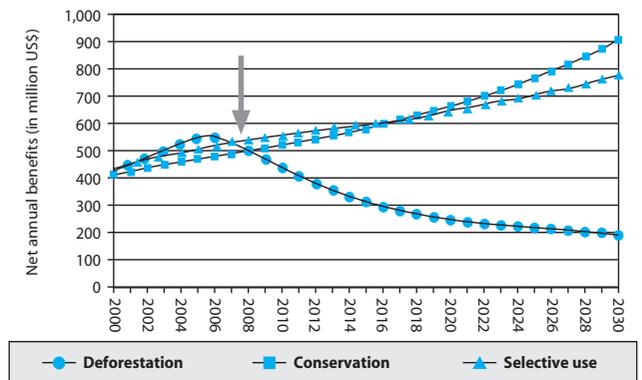


Figure 6. Net annual benefits over time of Leuser National Park
Source: Vanbeukering et al. (2003).

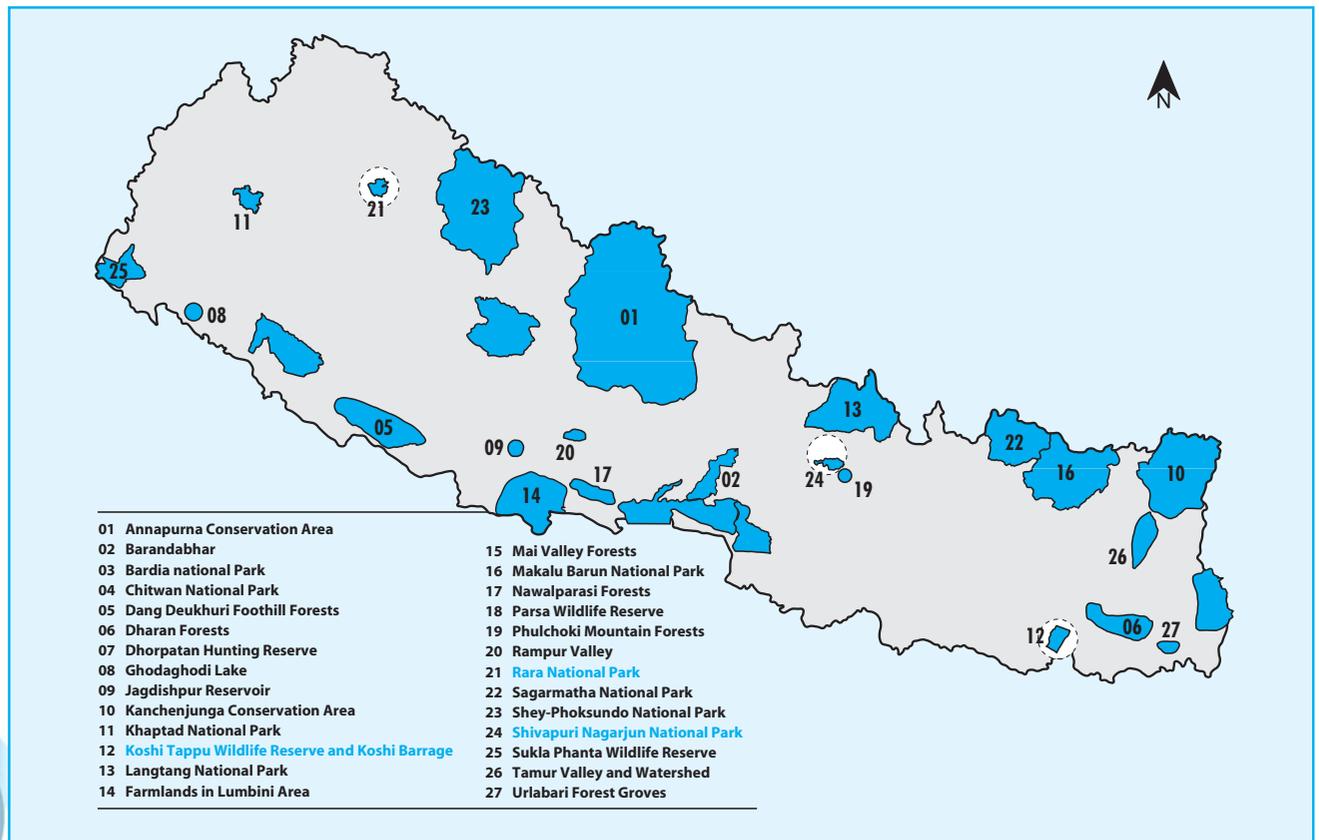


Figure 5. IBAs of Nepal Source: Baral and Inskipp 2005



Target Users

- Site managers
- Developers / planners
- Conservationists / lobbyists
- Co-ordinators of site networks
- Site stakeholders

The key challenge is that can we collect data which is meaningful at site level and which has broader power with planners and policy-makers? The methodology must be appropriate for use by non-experts including in developing countries with minimal resources.

The toolkit will have user-oriented manual and provides simple, replicable guidelines on how to identify and collect simple data on important services.

Field Testing of Methodology at First Pilot Site (Shivapuri Nagarjun National Park)

Following the National Workshop on Darwin Ecosystem Project on 18 November 2010 in Kathmandu, field testing of methodology in carbon and tourism survey is being undertaken at Shivapuri-Nagarjun National Park by project team members. In addition to this survey on wild harvested goods is being carried out in Phulchoki Mountain Forest IBA following a community workshop on 23 November 2010 which identified fuel wood, fodder and leaf mulch (used as a bedding for livestock and to make compost fertiliser) as the three most significant harvested wild goods.



Ecosystem Services Project Team at Shivapuri Nagarjun National Park

Altogether 21 carbon transects were laid in 3 different forest types Pine forest, *Schima Castanopsis* forest and *Quercus* forest to measure the above ground carbon stock. Likewise data has been obtained so far from 35 household survey interviews on wild harvested goods and 22 tourism survey interviews.

Project Key Steps

A scientific paper on the methodology toolkit will be prepared and submitted for review by mid 2011. Training to BirdLife Asia partners and publication of toolkit will be done by end of 2011. National report on Ecosystem Services at High Biodiversity Sites

in Nepal will be published in 2012. Project work will be shared at the BirdLife global meeting in 2013.

Project Challenges

- Not losing sight of intrinsic value of nature and the importance of other services not assessed
- Methodological limits – simple but with clear scientific rationale; current ‘best information’ but with many caveats and assumptions
- Recognising trade-offs between ecosystem services and inequitable delivery of costs and benefits to people
- Using advocacy appropriately and effectively to argue the case for conservation using evidence on ecosystem services

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank UK government’s Darwin Initiative for funding this project. We are very much grateful to BirdLife International, especially Alison Stattersfield, Head of International Science, for her key role in bringing this project as well as providing Bird Conservation Nepal an opportunity for the project partnership.

We are indebted to Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation for their vital support in initiating the project.

References

Baral H. S. and Inskipp C. 2005. Important Bird Areas in Nepal: key sites for conservation. Kathmandu, Nepal and Cambridge, UK: Bird Conservation Nepal and BirdLife International.

Balmford A., Rodrigues, A.S.L. Walpole M., ten Brink P., Kettunen M., Braat L and de Groot R. 2008. The Economics of Biodiversity and Ecosystems: Scoping the Science. Cambridge, UK: European Commission (contract: ENV/070307/2007/486089/ETU/B2).

Brink B. T. 2008. *The Economics of the Global Loss of Biological Diversity Workshop 5-6 March, Brussels, Belgium*

Fisher B. and Turner. R. 2008. Ecosystem Services: classification for valuation. *Biological Conservation* 141: 1167-1169.

Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005. Ecosystems and Human Well-being: Biodiversity Synthesis. World Resources Institute, Washington, DC.

TEEB 2010. A Quick Guide to The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity for Local and Regional Policy Makers.

Upadhaya S. K. 2005. Payment for Environmental Services: Sharing Hydropower Benefits with Upland Communities. RUPES Working Paper 1.

Vanbeukering P., Cesar H.J. and Janssen M. 2003. Economic valuation of the Leuser National Park on Sumatra, Indonesia. *Ecological Economics* 44(1): 43-62.

Bird Conservation Nepal
bcn@mail.com.np



News

Membership

Preeti Shrish Thapa joined BCN as a Life Member. She has done her Masters in Environment Science from Cardiff University, UK and was involved with BCN as a Research Associate for three months.

Krishna Gurung an artist by profession joined BCN as a Life Member. He has done artwork of birds and mammals for several Nepali conservation books, posters and leaflets. He loves nature and birds.

Anand Chaudhary, Vulture Conservation Programme Officer joined BCN as a Life Member. His contribution on strengthening and up scaling BCN's Vulture Conservation Programme has been highly valuable.

Molly Kim Geok Manison from Singapore joined BCN as a Life Member. She has great interest towards birds and is very keen to support bird conservation efforts in Nepal.

Krishna Thakali, former Minister for General Administration joined BCN as a Life Member. He has a very keen interest in birds and biodiversity.

Basanta Raj Kunwar joined BCN as a Life Member. He is very attached with birds and also much committed in conserving birds.

Dr. Sagar Paudel, Veterinary Officer at BCN has joined as a Life Member. He has a great interest in caring the wild birds.

Sunrise Bank Limited joined BCN as a Corporate Member. The bank has a vision to become a dominant player in the Nepalese Banking Industry by the year 2012. It has also committed to support publication of BCN's Nepali newsletter *Munal* for the year 2067.

Yeti Airlines joined BCN as a Corporate Member. It provides the widest and best network of flights in Nepal. The airlines started operating commercial flights since September 1998 and within a short span it has garnered a lot of patronage from passengers and travel agencies.

Nepal River Conservation Trust (NRCT) joined BCN as a Corporate Member. It is a non-profit organisation that was established in 1995 by a group of concerned river guides and has worked towards conserving Nepal's Himalayan river system, preserving Nepal's cultural heritage and developing an environmentally responsible river tourism.

Prasadi Academy Higher Secondary School joined BCN as a Corporate Member. It was established in 1997 and has secured a formidable place among Nepal's reputed groups of Higher Secondary Schools with its dedication to the highest educational standards.

Workshops/Meetings

National Workshop on Ecosystem Services

National workshop on Ecosystem Services was organised on 18 November 2010 in Kathmandu. The workshop was

opened by Nepal's Joint-Secretary of the Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation, Dr Annapurna Das. The workshop was part of a Darwin Initiative project, "Understanding, assessing and monitoring ecosystem services for better biodiversity conservation", which is being implemented by BCN and BirdLife International.

Dr Das said that efforts to reduce poverty would be undermined if Nepal's biodiversity continues to be lost and the country's ecosystem services degraded. "One way of tackling this is to demonstrate how sites of high biodiversity value: like Important Bird Areas and Protected Areas can also provide ecosystem services that significantly help poor communities", said Dr Hum Gurung, CEO of Bird Conservation Nepal. "We believe that this Darwin Project will have great impact in our country", he added.

The workshop was also attended by senior representatives of Department for National Parks and Wildlife Conservation. Also in attendance was staff of national and international NGOs, IUCN Nepal, WWF Nepal Programme, and the United Nations Development Programme's Small Grant Programme.

The Darwin Initiative project has been running since April 2010 and will end in 2013. Participants were given the opportunity to learn about the progress that has been made in the past six months in developing a site-focused, robust and inexpensive methodology to assess and value ecosystem services at sites. There were also presentations on other projects in Nepal relating to ecosystem services; their measurement, routes to policy and establishing payments for services.

The project team invited feedback and comment to further improve the methodology, so that it will be shaped in a way that provides the most useful information to end-users and policy planners. "We want to build on the efforts of other projects in Nepal, refine our approach and produce a really practical scientific tool for assessing ecosystem services that can be used widely in sites in Nepal and, indeed, by other BirdLife Partners in countries around the world" said Alison Stattersfield, Head of Science at BirdLife International.



Dr David Thomas from BirdLife International presenting on Ecosystem Services and their Policy relevance



National Workshop on State's of Nepal's Birds 2010

BCN organised a National Workshop on 20 December 2010 at Hotel Ambassador, Lazimpat to discuss on draft report of State of Nepal's Birds 2010, an updated version of State of Nepal's Bird 2004. The workshop was highly remarkable due to the presence of most of the renowned ornithologists from all over the country along with Tim and Carol Inskipp who are best known for Nepalese Ornithology. Mr. Krishna Prasad Acharya, Director General of Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation was the Chief Guest of the programme.



Mr Krishna Prasad Acharya, Director General of DNPWC delivering his opening remarks

Welcoming all the participants, Mr. Shree Ram Subedi, President of BCN said, "This timely publication of State of Nepal's Birds 2010 with enormous information will enable conservation measures to be implemented to prevent birds from becoming extinct in this country". He further claimed that it will help to aware the general public and policy makers on the real situation of Nepal's birds.

Chief Guest, Mr Krishna Prasad Acharya in his opening remark said "As we know that 133 bird species were already listed as nationally threatened in the previous document and I am sure that with the growing threats, more will be added in the list but our National Park and Wildlife Conservation Act 1973 only provides protection to 9 bird species. So it is a high time that we all should work together to include more bird species in our national priority". He also assured that DNPWC has seriously taken the recently recommended over 90 species of birds to be listed as protected.

The workshop included four main presentations. The first was by Tim Inskipp on IUCN threat categories followed by Carol Inskipp on changes in State of Nepal's Birds from 2004 to 2010. Dr Hem Sagar Baral provided very useful information on threats to the birds of Nepal. Likewise Dr Hum Gurung, CEO of BCN highlighted some key responses to bird conservation in Nepal.

The workshop was very useful in receiving enormous feedbacks from the participants which will help to make the document as the most essential reference for bird studies, conservation work and policy development. BCN will incorporate all the experts' views at its level best and bring out the publication soon.

In his closing remark, Dr Maheshwar Dhakal, Ecologist of DNPWC mentioned that the department is always ready to extend its full support for this type of important work which BCN has taken forward and also added that government should be closely involved in such type of work which will encourage them to take the ownership.

28th Annual General Meeting

28th Annual General Meeting of BCN was organised on 21 December 2010 at Hotel Shangrila, Lazimpat. On the same occasion, British ornithologists, Tim and Carol Inskipp were felicitated by Chief Guest, Senior Nepali Ornithologist and Founder President of BCN, Hari Saran Nepali 'Kaji', recognising over four decades of their dedication and contribution in Nepalese ornithology.

On the same occasion, Dr Hum Gurung, CEO also highlighted on the impact of Climate change to birds with shifting habitat and urgency of landscape level approach for their conservation. He also mentioned that BCN will be working on corridor development in the near future linking the 27 Important Bird Area Network in the country with suitable habitats.

There were huge presence of advisors, executive council members, patrons, life members and ordinary members of BCN.



BCN members with renowned ornithologist Carol and Tim Inskipp

BCN upgraded as BirdLife Partner designate

The Global Council of BirdLife International based in Cambridge, United Kingdom has upgraded BCN to Partner Designate status in December 2010. BCN as a leading organisation for conservation of birds in Nepal was affiliated to BirdLife International in 1994. BirdLife International, a scientific authority on birdlife worldwide, conducted a rigorous assessment of BCN's works in different sites, habitats, research and working with people commonly known as health check in 2009 which revealed its strength in bird and biodiversity conservation with twenty eight years of experience in conservation.

The BirdLife Partnership covers 116 countries/territories in the world and is made up of 117 conservation organisations.

Donation

BCN welcomes all kinds of support from individuals and institutions. You can even help us by providing us your camera, binocular, telescope, scientific equipment etc. Further more, we will also be grateful if any one provides educational materials for our library. All support will be duly acknowledged.





Tune in to
Panchhi Sansar

on **IMAGE FM 97.9**
at **7.45 am**

Second and Fourth Saturday
of **Nepali Month**

International Conference on Biodiversity, Livelihood and Climate Change

Dr Hum Gurung, CEO and Ishana Thapa, Senior Conservation Officer participated in International Conference on Biodiversity, Livelihood and Climate Change in the Himalayas organised by Central Department of Botany from 12-14 December 2010 at Nepal Academy Hall, Kamaladi. They presented on the BirdLife Darwin Ecosystem Services project. There were more than 450 participants from 22 countries, including more than 150 international participants representing numerous governmental, inter-governmental and non governmental organizations. Kathmandu Declaration on Biodiversity, Livelihood and Climate Change in the Himalayas 2010 was a great success of the conference.



Ms Ishana Thapa, Senior Conservation Officer delivering the ES project

Project Updates

Vulture Conservation

Inauguration of Safe Feeding Sites (Restaurants) at Vulture Safe Zone Kaski and Kailali

Vulture Safe Feeding Site established at Ghachowk, Kaski has been officially inaugurated jointly on 12 October 2010 by Member Secretary of National Trust for Nature Conservation, Mr Judda Bahadur Gurung and Mr Shree Ram Subedi, President



Mr Judda B. Gurung, Member Secretary of National Trust for Nature Conservation delivering his speech

of BCN. Likewise the Vulture Safe Feeding Site established at Samaiji Community Forest, Khutiya-Kailali has been officially inaugurated on 2 November 2010.

Surveys at Nawalparasi

Electrocution risk survey on vultures and other birds was carried from 13-17 November 2010 in Nawalparasi district. Also questionnaire survey on potential future threats to vultures was conducted from 11-18 November 2010 in Nawalparasi with involvement of community youth.

During this preliminary survey 328 poles were observed. An Indian spotted Eagle *Aquila hastata* was found hanging in electricity wire at Daunne – Bardghat survey section, 2 km eastward from Bardghat, on 14 November 2010. The survey also found 5 dead crows on the base of the pole at different places in this Nawalparasi highway section of 99 km. The survey revealed that the junctions of more electricity wires, metal poles and closely extended wires are highly risky for the birds.

Learning, Review and Observation Programme for Local Partners

Learning cum review workshop was organised for 14 CBO partners from 11 districts at Jatayu Restaurant, Pithauli/Kawasoti on 14 November 2010. This was followed by a 3-day observation and learning tour for all participants to Vulture Safe Zones at Kawasoti/Pithouli and Panchnagar in Nawalparasi, Madanpokhara in Palpa, Gaidatal-Lumbini in Rupandehi, Buddi in Kapilvastu and Maurighat and Bijouri in Dang.

CEPF Final Assessment Workshop and National Advisory Committee Meeting

Vulture Conservation Programme Officer, Anand Chaudhary participated and presented the progress report of Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) funded project in CEPF National Advisory Meeting held in Kathmandu on 23 November 2010. He also participated and presented on two CEPF funded projects at Final Assessment Workshop for Northern Himalayas of Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund held in Paro, Bhutan on 7 and 8 December 2010. Posters on the projects were also presented during the workshop.

Dang District Declared as First Diclofenac Free Zone

On 26 November 2010 Dang was declared as the first Diclofenac Free Zone (DFZ) by Chairperson of the Natural Resource Management Committee of Constituent Assembly, Honourable Shanta Chaudhary. The declaration committee was led by District Livestock Service Office and involved District Development





Honourable Shanta Chaudhary, Chairperson of the Natural Resource Management Committee of Constituent Assembly delivering her keynote speech

Committee, District Forest Office and a host of government line agencies, conservation organisations, veterinary institutions and CBOs. The event was covered live by four FM stations and made the news in many national dailies. Similarly, Chitwan and Kanchanpur Districts were also declared as DFZ on 25 and 28 December 2010 respectively.

High Level Meeting for Vulture Conservation

As a follow up to the declaration of Dang as a DFZ Chairperson of the Natural Resource Management Committee of Constituent Assembly, Honourable Shanta Chaudhary called a meeting at Singha Durbar to discuss on the vulture issues on 9 December 2010. The meeting was attended by Constituent Assembly members of NRM committee, Yubraj Bhusal (Secretary – Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation), Nathu Prasad Chaudhary (Secretary – Ministry of Agriculture and Co-operatives), Santosh Nepal (Adviser, WWF Nepal), Juddha Gurung (Member Secretary – NTNC), Dr Hum Gurung (Chief Executive Officer – BCN), Khadananda Paudel (Field Biologist – BCN), and Journalists from different media. The presentation on “Status and Conservation of Vultures in South Asia -A brief history and updates” was presented by Dr. Hum Gurung. He also explained the major issues on vulture conservation in Nepal.



Dr Hum Gurung, CEO BCN presenting on vulture issues to the Parliamentary Committee on Natural Resource Management

All the Honorable members of the Committee delivered their views on the topic that the Vultures are in alarming situation and we have to concentrate our efforts in conserving them. Overall views kept in the programme agreed that the conservation of vultures should go in a combined way from government and non-government agencies since it is a multi-sectoral issue. Secretary of Ministry of Agriculture and Co-operatives committed to direct Department of Drug Administration for monitoring of NSAIDs. Secretary of Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation committed to issue Diclofenac Free Zone guideline; Vulture Conservation Action Plan in Nepali and stop cutting of tall trees in Nepal and support satellite tracking for vulture monitoring in Nepal. Lastly, Honourable Shanta Chaudhary committed to have some more discussion in the committee afterwards and direct the respective ministries accordingly.

Bird Survey in Reshunga Forest, a Potential IBA

First field visit was carried from 11-17 November 2010 Jyotendra Jyu Thakuri, Research and Training Officer. A total of 80 bird species were recorded by using Mackinnon's listing method in six days survey. Seven important survey areas have been identified for future repeat survey.



Mr Kunjar Mani Gautam, Secretary of Reshunga Conservation Committee delivering his opening remarks

On 17 November 2010 a workshop was organized with local stakeholders at Tamghas, Gulmi. The main aim of the workshop was to make them aware about the importance of birds and conservation of Reshunga forest for birds and biodiversity. A total of 40 participants were present representing different institutions and groups. This programme was facilitated by Reshunga Conservation Committee.

This is the first time the detail bird survey is being carried out in this potential IBA.

Great Hornbill *Buceros bicornis* Survey at Chitwan National Park

First field visit for the preliminary survey of Great Hornbill was conducted from 12 - 16 December 2010 at Chitwan National Park by Jyotendra Jyu Thakuri and Dhan Bahadur Chaudhary. The main aim of this visit was to locate the potential survey site. Thirteen different potential survey sites have been identified for the future survey. The final survey will be carried in May 2011.





BCN research team observing the food of Hornbill

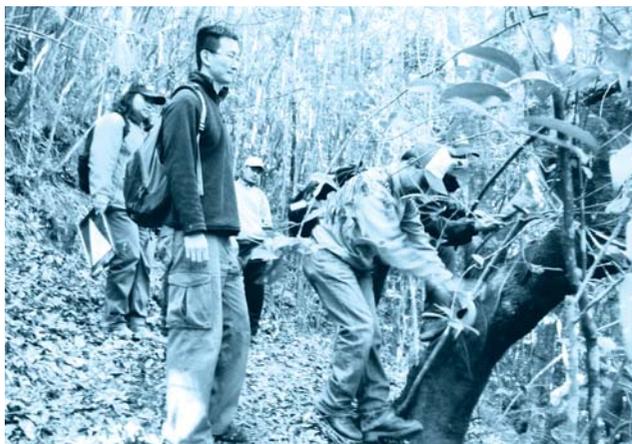
Altogether 25 individual Hornbills were recorded during the survey.

Sarus Crane *Grus antigone* Survey at Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve

The survey of Sarus Crane at Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve has been recently completed. Only 3 cranes are recorded which are struggling for survival due to a number of threats. The final report is under preparation.

Darwin Ecosystem Services Project

With the support of the UK expert team, the Ecosystem Services assessment methodology toolkit is being first piloted at two Important Bird Areas in the Kathmandu Valley - Shivapuri Nagarjun National Park and Phulchoki Mountain Forests. Field work is already underway for carbon, wild harvested goods, tourism and hydrology.



Ecosystem Services project team conducting field work for carbon at Shivapuri Nagarjun National Park

Meeting on the project was organised at BCN office on 19 November 2010 where all the wardens from the project sites Shivapuri Nagarjun National Park, Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve and Rara National Park actively participated. This was followed by training to BCN staff for collection of data on ecosystem services.

Indrawati Bird Survey

A feasibility study was carried from 28 October 2010 - 2 November 2010. Initial meeting was held at Indrawati Project Field Office, Chautara. The BCN field survey team received

overall information on the Indrawati River basin and its priority catchment areas from the WWF Field Project Officer. The most accessible routes for survey were also discussed.

The team visited the river basin area using the routes Chautara - Nawalpur, Nawalpur to Melamchi, Melamchi to Tipeni, Tipeni to Yangri, Yangri to Bhotang, Bhotang to Thampaldhap, Thampaldhap to Melamchi.



BCN field survey team at Indrawati River

Field team worked out on the most appropriate routes where points will be laid for counting of the birds and obtaining habitat information. A questionnaire survey form has also been developed to obtain information on importance of the water bodies to the local livelihood as well as associated threats.

Visit

CBD COP 10 Meeting

CEO, Dr Hum Gurung presented BCN in the CBD COP 10 Meeting which was held in Nagoya, Japan from 18 to 29 October 2010. He also presented the impacts of climate change on birds in Asia at the side event of CBD COP 10 organised by BirdLife International and MacArthur Foundation. Mr. Yuba Raj Bhusal, Secretary of Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation, Government of Nepal also presented national perspective on birds, biodiversity and climate change on the same event.



Dr Hum Gurung, CEO BCN presenting at the side event of CBD COP 10, Nagoya, Japan

Staff Appointment

Dr. Sagar Paudel was appointed as a Veterinary Officer for the Vulture Conservation Programme. He joined BCN from 22 December 2010. He comes from Sunwal, Nawalparasi and has Bachelor's Degree in Veterinary Medicine from Rampur Agricultural College, Tribhuvan University.

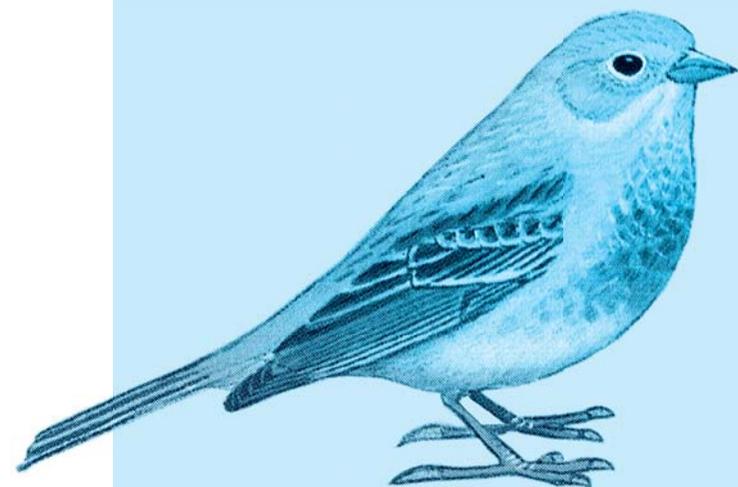


Additional Sightings!



Long-Billed Wren Babbler by Craig Robson

A Long-billed Wren Babbler *Rimator malacoptilus* was sighted on 3 June 2009 in Makalu Barun National Park (JHC). A new species for Nepal!



Grey Necked Bunting by Clive Byers

One Grey-necked Bunting *Emberiza buchanani* was sighted feeding on open ground amongst scattered bushes and photographed on 20 April 2010 at the edge of Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve. (AT and DC). A new species for Nepal!

One male Rufous-bellied Niltava *Niltava sundara* was seen near Temple Tiger Resort, Chitwan National Park in 15 December 2010 at 471 feet (JJT, DBC and SC). A new species for Chitwan National Park and an unusual record at this elevation !

AT: Anish Timsina, DBC: Dhan Bahadur Chaudhary, DC: Dheeraj Chaudhari, JHC: Jack H. Cox, JJT: Jyotendra Jyu Thakuri, SC: Shambhu Chaudhary

Compiled by Tika Giri and Hathan Chaudhary



Together for birds and people

BirdLife International is a global conservation federation with a worldwide network of Partner organizations, Representatives and committed individuals.

BirdLife International seeks to conserve all bird species on earth and their habitats and, through this, it works for the world's biological diversity. It recognizes that the problems affecting birds, their habitats and our global environment are linked inseparably with social, economic and cultural factors and that these can only be resolved if human societies function in an ecologically sustainable manner and if the needs, welfare and aspirations of people form a part of all conservation action.

Birds provide BirdLife International with a uniquely valuable focus: they are sensitive indicators of biological richness and environmental trends and fulfil many key ecological functions; they contribute greatly to our understanding of natural processes; they are an important economic resource; and they have inspired and delighted people of many cultures for centuries, which makes them excellent ambassadors for the promotion of conservation awareness and international collaboration.

BirdLife International pursues a programme of:

- Scientific research and analysis to identify and monitor worldwide the most threatened bird species and the most critical sites for the conservation of avian diversity;
- Advocacy and policy development to promote the conservation of birds and biodiversity through sustainability in the use of all natural resources;
- Field action and country conservation programmes, ranging from community-based land-use and management projects to species recovery programmes benefiting both wildlife and humans;
- Network and capacity building to expand and strengthen the global partnership of conservation organizations and to promote worldwide interest in the conservation of birds and the wider environment.

Editorial Board

Dr Hem Sagar Baral (Chief Editor),
Ishana Thapa (Sub Editor),
Suchit Basnet, Yub Raj Basnet, Dr Hum Gurung

Copyright © 2010 Bird Conservation Nepal.
All rights reserved. The opinions expressed by
the authors do not necessarily express
the policies of the Bird Conservation Nepal.



The newsletter is produced quarterly for members of Bird Conservation Nepal. The aim of the newsletter is to inform BCN members on the recent development of ornithology in Nepal and any other relevant news on birds. It is circulated to all members free of cost. The individual annual membership is NRs. 300 for any SAARC nationals and equivalent Nepali rupees of US\$ 15.00 for others.

Those who would like to donate to or be a member of BCN can do so by a direct bank transfer, to the bank details below, or via cheque. Cheques should be made payable to Bird Conservation Nepal and sent to the address below.

Sunrise Bank Limited, Gairidhara
A/C No: 002 00200026CL
Account Holder: **Bird Conservation Nepal**
SWIFT CODE: SRBLNPKA

Founder President
Hari Sharan Nepali 'Kazi'

Patrons

Mr. Karna Shakya, Nepal
Mr. Rajendra Lal Shrestha, Nepal
Miss Michie Kashiwabara, Japan
Mr. Shyam Khatri, Nepal
Field Marshal Sir John Chapple GCB, CBE, DL
Mrs. Nicole Nooren, Netherlands
Mr. Yozo Koshiyama, Japan
Mr. Lalit Jung Lalchan, Nepal
Mr. Bishwa Tuladhar, Nepal
Mr. Tara P. Lama, USA
Mr. Krishna Karki, Nepal
Mr. Uttam Raj Kayastha, Nepal
Mr. Sarbendra Pachhai, Nepal
Mr. Deepak Chettri, Nepal
Dr. Joel T. Heinen, USA
Mr. Lok Nath Wosti, Japan
Mr. Rajendra Gurung, Nepal
Mr. Syam Krishna Prasai, Nepal
Mr. Ganga Jung Thapa, Nepal
Prof. David Simmons, New Zealand
Dr. Guy Castley, Australia
Dr. Jean-Marc Hero, Australia



नेपाल पंखी संरक्षण संघ

**Bird
Conservation
Nepal**

Bird Conservation Nepal (BCN) is the largest and oldest civil society organisation dedicated to the interests of ornithologists, birdwatchers and conservationists in Nepal. It seeks to promote an interest in birds among the general public, encourages research on bird biology and ecology, identifies the major threats to birds' continued survival, and acts to conserve birds and their habitats. It also provides the most authentic information on birds and their habitats all over Nepal.

BCN is a membership-based organisation. At present, it is supported by a Founder President, 22 Patrons, 188 life members and several ordinary members. Members are the major strength of this organisation and people from various backgrounds viz. students, teachers, professionals, bird enthusiasts, conservationists, and the general public are involved.

BCN is committed to educate the public on the value of birds and the relationship between birds and people. It has also prioritized the significance of peoples participation as future stewardship to attain long-term national conservation goal.

Our staff form the heart of BCN but the lifeline is provided by the invaluable contributions of volunteers and supporters. Both financial and in-kind support is greatly appreciated and we welcome any kind of help that can be offered. For further information, please write to:

Bird Conservation Nepal

Post Box 12465, Lazimpat, Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel 4417805, 4420213, Fax 0097714413884
Email bcn@mail.com.np
www.birdlifeneपाल.org



Tiger MOUNTAIN

TIGER MOUNTAIN POKHARA LODGE



Bardia National Park. For high altitude birding expeditions, ask Mountain Travel - the pioneers and leaders of Himalayan trekking.

Tiger Mountain Central Reservations:

01 436 1500

reservations@tigermountain.com

GPO box 242, Dhapasi, Ring Road, Kathmandu, Nepal

www.tigermountain.com

Part of the **Tiger MOUNTAIN** group of companies.

PUBLICATION OF THIS NEWSLETTER IS KINDLY SPONSORED BY TIGER MOUNTAIN POKHARA LODGE

