



Western Terai Landscape Complex Project



e-newsletter

Vol 4 Issue –III

September-November 2010

In this issue

Corridors are protected	1	Livelihood support programme assessed	4
Krishnasar Conservation Office Inaugurated	2	Biodiversity in Mohana Corridor Assessed	5
Trans-boundary Meeting Organized	3	PES Workshop organized	6
Mid Term Evaluation conducted	3	GESI Audit of WTLCP	6
Agrobiodiversity intervention assessed:	4	Free Grazing Zone Declared	7



“Biodiversity is Life,
Biodiversity is Our Life”

Corridors are protected

The Western Terai Landscape Complex Project (WTLCP) since 2006 has been working for the conservation of the three biological corridors—Laljhadi, Basanta and Khata situated in the western terai (plains). Besides these three corridors, Mohana Kailai forest area that has potential to be important biological corridor is also conserved. The main challenges for these corridors are illegal forest encroachment for settlement, agricultural extension and uncontrolled grazing.



Photo 1 Laljhadi Corridor- Kanchanpur

The WTLCP has been promoting community forestry and supporting for plantation, river bank protection and alternate energy for cooking. The project is also supporting for livelihood opportunities to the people living near corridor areas.



Recognizing conservation values of biological corridors, the Government of Nepal has recently declared these three biological corridors as protected forest areas. These corridors inter-connect Bardia National Park, Shuklaphanta Wildlife Reserve and chure forests of Nepal with Dudhuwa Tiger Reserve and Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary of India. The project is also facilitating transboundary cooperation for conservation of wildlife particularly rhinoceros, tiger and elephants that regularly moves across the national border.

A biological corridor is an important part of a landscape connecting two or more similar habitats. Such corridors play a very important role in the conservation of biodiversity by facilitating natural migration of wildlife species among their prime habitat areas.

As a way forward, the WTLCP is providing facilitation support to the Government to develop corridor management policy for Nepal.

Krishnasar Conservation Office Inaugurated

Krishnasar Conservation Area Office and Krishnasar Conservation Area Management Council were formally inaugurated on August 26, 2010 by Mr. Tikaram Adhikari, Chief Warden of Bardia National Park. It could be anticipated that establishment of Krishnasar Conservation Office and Conservation Council will accelerate the momentum of conservation efforts of Krishnasar (Blackbuck) particularly by addressing crucial issues of grazing and encroachment of conservation area.

Khairapur, Bardia is only place in Nepal that refuges last remaining wild population of *Krishnasar*. In 1970s, Krishnasar was thought to be extinct from Nepal. A small population of nine Krishnasar was discovered in Khairapur area of Bardia District in 1976. Since then efforts to conserve the species has been continuously carried out at various levels. Government of Nepal acquired a 172 Ha of private land for Krishnasar, which now stands as Krishnasar Conservation Area. Thanks for conservation efforts, there are 216 Krishnasar in this conserved area a significant growth today.

Working closely with 84 users' groups (42 Male and 42 Female) and four Users Committees, WTLCP has been raising awareness about Krishnasar conservation and supporting local people's livelihood issues in order to involve community people in the conservation endeavours.



Photo 2 & 3 Inauguration of Krishnasar Conservation Area Office; a male blackbuck



Trans-boundary Meeting Organized

With the objective of strengthening cooperation for conserving biodiversity at transborder areas, an interaction meeting between India and Nepal was held in Dudhuwa Tiger Reserve (DTR).

The meeting discussed on some conservation issues such as poaching, illegal logging and increasing incidence of wild animal and people conflict. The meeting also emphasized on the need of initiating regular joint patrolling at border sides and livelihood improvement activities focusing poorest of the poor segment of a society along the trans-border areas.

The delegates agreed to work proactively for better coordination, monitoring and information sharing mechanism between the neighbouring countries.

In total 25 members Nepalese team representing protected areas, Kailali and Kanchanpur district forest offices, buffer zones, journalists, WWF – TAL-Nepal, Nepal Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC) and Western Terai Landscape Complex Project (WTLCP) attended the meeting. Similarly, Indian side comprised of Dudhuwa Tiger Reserve Deputy Director, three District Forest Officers, Wardens, Sashastra Sima Bal (SSB), and WWF – TAL-India. Far Western Regional Forestry Director Dr. Rajan Kumar Pokhrel and DTR Field Director Mr. Shailesh Prasad led the Nepalese and Indian team respectively.

Mid Term Evaluation conducted

An independent Mid Term Evaluation (MTR) of WTLCP was conducted between 6 and 19 September 2010. The evaluation team comprised of Mr. Alan Ferguson, Mr. Shyam Bajimaya, and Mr. Dhruva Acharya.

Some key findings of the evaluation are:

- The project is beginning to develop and demonstrate a participatory and transparent model of conservation.
- The project has had a visible effect on livelihoods and incomes at the project sites.
- Project has given a priority to outreach minorities and ultra poor groups and women nonetheless; there are constraints in involvement of the poor that still need to be overcome.
- WTLCP has made substantial progress at the site level in a wide range of field activities, and visible improvements have occurred in forest cover and grassland management Protected Areas/Buffer Zones and Corridors and forests
- Progress in conservation on adjacent agricultural lands is less apparent and its contributions to landscape-level conservation also remain to be determined.
- Inter-sectoral planning, sustainable financing mechanisms and institutional structures at the national, district and local levels needs to be further consolidated.

The MTR recommended updating the project implementation strategy, to undertake an assessment of sustainability status and adapting exit strategies with implementing partners.



Agrobiodiversity intervention assessed

An assessment was carried out to assess WTLCP's Agro-biodiversity intervention in Bardiya, Kailali and Kanchanpur district. The team visited four VDCs namely, Belawa of Bardiya, Gadariya and Masuriya of Kailali and Shankarpur of Kanchanpur and observed Diversity Blocks, Home Garden, Community Based Seed Production, Community Seed Bank, Genetic Resource Improvement, Participatory Varietal Selection, Fruit and Fodder Nursery, Income Generation through CBM fund, Social Seed Network, Participatory Plant Breeding (PPB), Cyber Plant Conservation Program (CPCP).



Photo 4 Interaction between agrobiodiversity review team and community

The study found most of the farmers of study areas were increasingly aware on the need and importance of conserving agro-biodiversities. The study recommended to balance technical, social and economic dimensions of agrobiodiversity conservation for sustainability and long-term impact of project intervention. The study also suggested strengthening monitoring and backstopping, and ensuring active participation of the local government, particularly VDCs in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluation phases.

Livelihood support programme assessed

WTLCP recently carried out impact study of the livelihood support programme. The study surveyed 235 beneficiaries, who have either received skill enhancement training or seed grant support or material support from the project prior to January, 2009. Of the total respondent surveyed, nearly two third were men (62.6 percent) while rest were women (37.4 percent). Likewise, nearly half of the participants surveyed were from Brahmin/Chhetri caste (45.1 percent) followed by Janajati (37.4 percent) and Dalit (17.4 percent).

More than half of the participations are from agro-based IGAs (50.5 percent) followed by forest based (41.3 percent) and off-farm (8.2 percent). Majority of the IGAs promoted or supported by the project are either neutral or supportive to natural resource conservation and created positive effects to restore ecology and environment. The study reported that on average each household were able to increase income of Rs. 5,620 per year after project intervention.

The study concluded that the project has been able to generate positive attitudes towards the conservation. Community people's direct dependency on forests for firewood and fodder is gradually decreasing through resource base creation, use of energy efficiency devices and shift towards the alternative energy, especially bio-gas. The study also cautioned promoting cultivation of exotic species of aromatic plants in forest area.

In past four years (2006-2009), WTLCP provided entrepreneurship/ skill training to 1267 people and provided seed grant support to 2347 people to initiate micro enterprises.



WTLCP works through community institutions such as BZUC, CFCC, FECOFUN, Cooperatives, for implementing Income Generating Activities (IGAs) for generating local employment for forest dependent people in order to reduce pressure on forest.

Biodiversity in Mohana-Kailali Corridor Assessed

WTLCP has recently carried out an assessment of mohana kailali corridor. Mohana Kailali corridor which joins Churia-forests of Nepal with Dudhwa Tiger Reserve Park of India lies in the Kailali district, far western region of Nepal. The total area of the corridor is 47.1 square kilometres of which nearly one third of the area is occupied by the vegetation or green cover. WTLCP, since its front loading period has been working to restore Mohana corridor with an aim of regaining ecological integrity and enhance human wellbeing in degraded or barren landscapes. The project has invested Rs 5.4 millions for forest restoration of Mohana Kailali corridor. Of the total amount, nearly half (45.1 percent) is spent on livelihoods improvement followed by biodiversity conservation (40.3 percent), conservation awareness (7.4 percent) and others (7.1 percent).

The assessment analysed satellite images between 2004 and 2009 which showed that barren area in the corridor is being gradually replaced by low, medium and high vegetated area implying gradual improvement of habitat condition in the corridor.

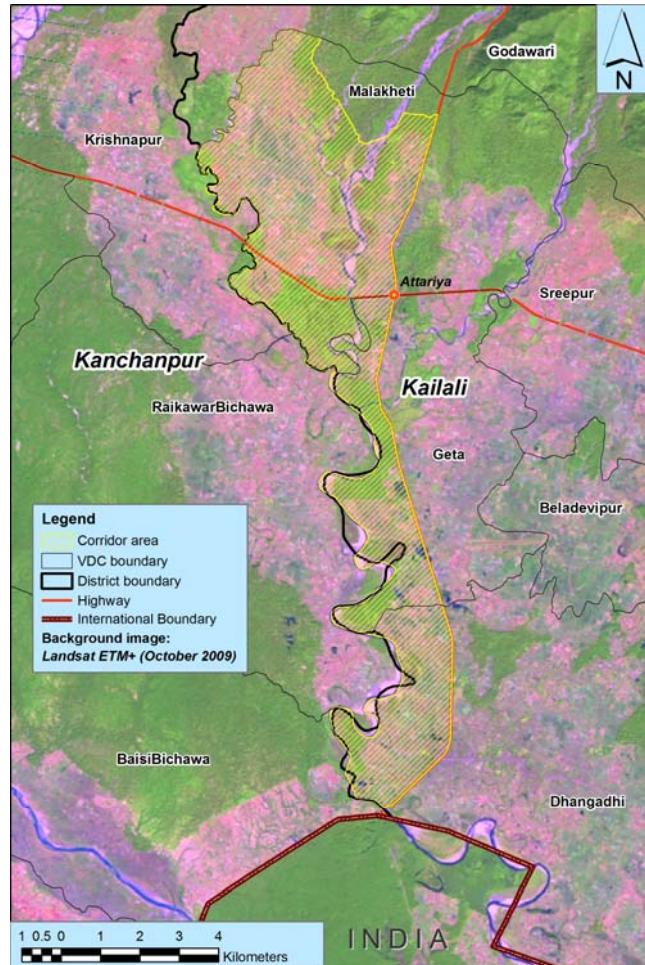


Photo 5 Mohana Kailali corridor of Kailali

The assessment reported five species of threatened/protected species of reptile in the Mohana Kailali corridor. Likewise, 92 species of bird has been recorded in the corridor. The study found occurrence of 12 species of wild mammals in the corridor.

The study found that Mohana Corridor is highly appropriate for trans-boundary movement of wild animals between Dudhuwa Tiger Reserve, India and Churiya (Siwalik) range of Nepal. Mohana Rivers and river bank which passes across the forests has further facilitated the movement of wild animals and also helped to reduce crop damage in surrounding areas and provided alternative passageway to wild animals.



PES Workshop Organized

WTLCP organized the Payment for Environmental Services (PES) workshop on 27 October 2010. Around 40 participants including representatives from National Planning Commission (NPC), Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation (MFSC), Reducing Emission from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) Cell, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Local Development, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperative, International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), SNV Nepal, WWF Nepal, Biodiversity Sector Programme - Siwalik and Terai (BISEP-ST), Nepal Foresters' Association, Conservation and Sustainable Use of Wetlands in Nepal (CSUWN) attended the workshop

WTLCP is planning to pilot the PES mechanism in Machheli-Mohana watershed of Kailali and Kanchanpur districts of far-western Nepal. In this context, the PES workshop was organized to share learning from other locations in Nepal and develop common understanding among the stakeholders on PES concept, institutional framework, economic valuation and negotiation process to materialize PES.

Some of the key points that participants came up with are :

- There is a need of umbrella/ country acts and policies for PES. PES related policies need to be tied up with national plan.
- As political debate and lobbying is high at grassroots level, political party consensus is important for PES negotiation process.
- Run sensitization programme about environmental services and its economic values among local people both at upstream and downstream.
- PES should consider the issues of local people, including minority groups.
- NGOs such as Community Forest Coordination Committees (CFCC) might become effective PES negotiation bodies.

The chair person of the program Dr. Annapurna Nand Das, National Project Director-WTLCP and Chief, Planning and Human Resources Division of Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation, said that this PES workshop helped to create common understanding among stakeholders and paved way for future actions on PES activities.

GESI Audit of WTLCP

WTLCP conducted Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) audit to assess participation and empowerment of women, Dalit, Janjati and poor.

The audit found adequate women participation in the program and recommended to enhance their leadership and decision making skill. The audit pointed out that the project has to work harder to reach poorest of the poor groups.

The audit recommended adopting Gender Responsive Activities and Gender Responsive Budget approach for planning and budgeting of the program.



Photo 6 Gender expert interacting with community women



Free Grazing Zone Declared

Chure Conservation Network and District Forest Office Kanchanpur declared over 1,000 hectares of biodiversity rich area as grazing free zone. Ten community forest user groups in Bhimdutta Municipality and Suda VDC has been actively working for making this biodiversity rich area as grazing free zone.

To create a conducive environment, District Forest Office (DFO) organized several rounds of site and district level meetings and interaction programs on the issue of deforestation and degradation in Chure.

WTLCP have been supporting Chure Conservation Network and Community Forest User Groups for awareness activities, enrichment plantation, wetland maintenance, fire line maintenance and community based anti-poaching operations.

This e-newsletter has been sent by the Western Terai Landscape Complex Project (WTLCP)
For your comments and suggestions, mail us at info@wtlcp.org.np

Western Terai Landscape Complex Project
Forestry Complex, Babarmahal, Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel: +977-1-4262310, 4218458 Fax: +977-1-4225553 , P.O.Box: 24417
[Web: www.wtlcp.org.np](http://www.wtlcp.org.np)