

IUCN Nepal *Newsletter*

A Quarterly Newsletter of IUCN Nepal

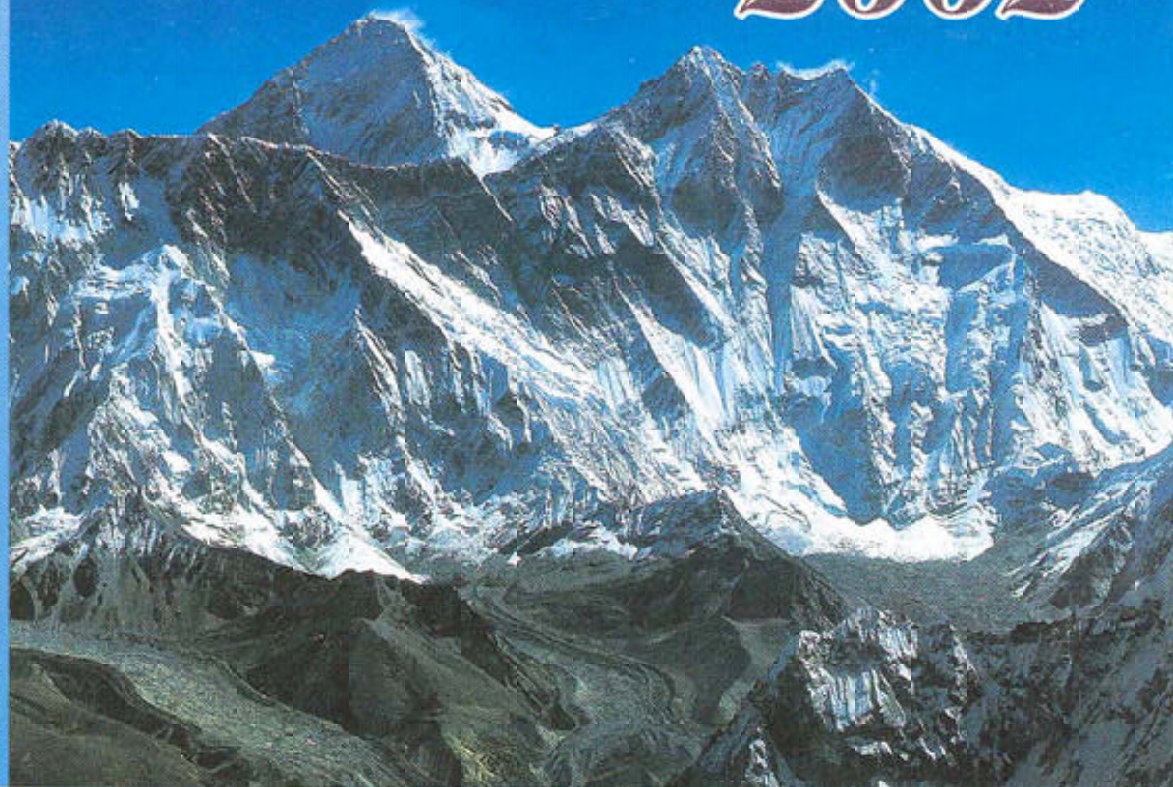
Vol. 5, No. 4-5, Jul-Dec 2001

International Year of Mountains 2002

IYM EVENTS

- Celebrating Mountain Women
28-31 May 2002
Kathmandu, Nepal
- The Namche Conference: People, Park, and Mountain Ecotourism
5-8 December 2002
Namche Bazaar, Khumbu, Nepal
- Mount Everest Golden Jubilee Celebration
1 June 2002 to 31 May 2003
Throughout Nepal
- International Seminar on Mountains
6-8 March 2002
Kathmandu, Nepal

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www.mountains2002.org



IYM official launch

The United Nations has declared 2002 as the International Year of Mountains (IYM). IYM is a celebration of mountain life, a springboard for long-term research and action to enhance the well-being of mountain communities, mountain environments and the communities dependent on them. The decision to celebrate IYM in 2002 constitutes a milestone in the process of raising international awareness about mountains, their global importance, the fragility of their resources, and the necessity of sustainable approaches to mountain development. For IUCN Nepal, the IYM celebrations are an excellent opportunity to make major strides in advocating for and promoting the cause of mountain people through the conservation and sustainable development of mountain ecosystems in Nepal.

On 11 December 2001, the global launch of IYM took place at UN headquarters in New York. About 300 leaders, representatives of mountain people and others attended. In his keynote address, Jacques Diouf, Director General of Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) said: "Armed conflict and hunger must be eradicated to protect the world's fragile mountain ecosystems and alleviate poverty that exists in many mountain communities... Mountain areas are home to most of the armed conflicts in the world as well as many of the world's poorest and least food-secure populations. As we begin commemorating the International Year of Mountains, conflict may be the single greatest obstacle to achieving our goals. Without peace, we cannot reduce poverty. Without peace, we cannot ensure secure food supplies. Without peace, we cannot even consider sustainable development."

Murari Raj Sharma, acting president, 56th session of United Nations General Assembly and Nepal's Permanent Representative to the UN Mission, expressed hope that the IYM will lead to concrete actions and that the international community will benefit from the momentum to ensure true sustainable development of mountain areas. Sharma also noted that Nepal is home to eight of the ten highest mountains in the world and hoped that they will inspire people to think big and create the beautiful. He described the many problems that mountain areas faced and the urgent need to address these problems and enhance awareness of the role of mountains in daily life.

The IYM builds on the process initiated by the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), or the Earth Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Chapter 13 of UNCED's major outcome, Agenda 21, highlights the urgency for action to achieve sustainable mountain development. The IYM is intended to reinforce the implementation of Chapter 13 and initiate new, practical, grassroots-level action in mountain development and conservation.

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Celebrating the Mountains

- Dr. Badri D. Pande

The word "mountain" has different connotations for different people. For the people of Nepal, the mountains are not just a looming physical presence; they determine our ways of life. Therefore, celebrating the mountains in this the designated International Year of the Mountains means celebrating their sheer natural beauty, their immense potential and the mountain ways of life.

The Himalayan region, the mid-hills and the Terai plains comprise 15 percent, 68 percent and 17 percent of the land area of Nepal respectively. Only 23 percent of the country's land area is considered flatland or plain. The country's rugged topography, formidable mountains and hills, poses a great challenge for development planners. On seeing the mountains, some visitors remark that Nepal is Shangri-la. Others feel that even God has cheated this country, for many Nepalis living in the remote areas are deprived of motorable roads, other infrastructures and urban facilities because of the mountains. They blame the mountains for lack of access to markets for their produce and for the lack of health and education facilities. At times the mountains are blamed even for the abject poverty in Nepal. Yes, there is some truth in these views. But a greater truth is that the mountains are there to stay and we have to live with them. Therefore, let us celebrate the mountains.

There are many reasons why we should celebrate the mountains. Several of these reasons also relate to opportunities for development and poverty reduction.

Rich Biodiversity

There is more than one reason for Nepal's amazing species richness. One concerns altitudinal variation—if it were not for the mountains and hills, Nepal could not have boasted this biodiversity richness. Within a relatively short stretch of land, north south, the vegetation ranges from tropical Sal forest to sub-tropical deciduous forest, temperate coniferous, sub-alpine birch and rhododendron, and alpine grasslands. Some of the plant and animal species found in this stretch are endemic. A number of non-timber forest products found all over the Himalayas and mid-hills have high medicinal and economic value, and can be harvested for commercial purposes. IUCN's limited experience in this area, in the hills of Doti district, suggests that local communities can generate additional income by harvesting these plants.

Tourism/Adventure Tourism

If it were not for the majestic mountains and rolling hills, Nepal would not have become the tourist's paradise that it is today. These peaks and hills offer a host of choices for tourists—ranging from a comfortable hour-long mountain flight for a close encounter with world-famous snow peaks to long trekking and mountaineering activities that can take weeks or months. Rafting down the fast flowing Himalayan rivers, paragliding, canyoning and bungee jumping are other adventure tourism attractions that are gaining increasing popularity. There is ample scope for the world to take advantage of tourism in Nepal and for Nepal to capitalise on her unique natural beauty. There is also ample opportunity to promote eco-tourism. IUCN Nepal has already made efforts in this direction in the rhododendron-blessed hills of east Nepal. The International Year of the Mountains provides yet another opportunity to promote tourism.

Water Resources

The Himalayas are a perennial source of water. The snow-fed rivers are a source of hope for economic growth in Nepal; the potential for hydro-electricity generation is indeed immense.

These rivers also meet the drinking water and irrigation needs of millions of people. They are home to numerous fish and other aquatic species. But Nepal's water resources are in trouble largely due to human activities. Activities that adversely affect the rivers and streams should be regulated and the IYM may be a good time to make a start in this direction.

Health Tourism

The popular belief in Nepal has been that the people living in the hills are healthier than those living in the cities. For decades, city dwellers have temporarily moved to the hills to recuperate and convalesce. Now that more parts of Nepal are accessible by motorable roads and telephones, entrepreneurs may benefit from promotional programmes to attract the health conscious to the hills. Of course, additional infrastructure such as hospitals, senior citizens nursing homes and special health care centres, in addition to other facilities, will be necessary. Promotion of green accounting in the health sector will be a boost in this direction. IUCN has taken some initiatives in this regard but more efforts are needed.

Educational Centres of Excellence

Just as in India, where it is in the hill stations that well-known schools are located, Nepal can also establish educational centres in the hills with the purpose of imparting quality education. Many districts in Nepal provide such opportunities. If convinced, thousands of parents will prefer to send their children to cheaper but quality schools in the country rather than spend money educating them abroad. This is yet another opportunity for investors and entrepreneurs.

Diversified Economic Opportunities

Apart from traditional farming of rice, wheat, corn, millet and the like, the hills offer tremendous scope for a range of other farming activities. They include growing medicinal plants, vegetables and a number of cash crops like cardamom, tea, coffee and ginger. Districts like Ilam, Dhankuta and Sankhuwasabha are already benefiting from such ventures. Other districts with similar physical characteristics can reap these benefits too. Each one of the 75 districts has the potential for several, often area specific, economically beneficial activities.

Conclusion

The fact that the United Nations declared 2002 as the International Year of the Mountains itself signifies that mountains have great value. It is a great opportunity for those living in Nepal and working for Nepal to reflect on the positive impacts of the mountains and plan for getting the most out of them. The potential is immense.

While the mountains offer all these opportunities and more, it is also time to reorient development efforts to address the issues of the most marginalized communities in our mountain areas. These areas get little media attention, and more often than not it is to report conflict, famine or disease. It is time that development agencies reflect on the work that they are currently pursuing and design specific future interventions, with the active participation of the marginalized groups, to address the issues of the marginalized areas, particularly in the far-flung frontier regions and the trans-Himalayas. The IYM is a good time to make a shift, make commitments and contribute significantly to policies and practices that will empower and make a difference in the lives of the most marginalized mountain people.

Therefore, even as we celebrate the mountains, let us commit ourselves to planning and working for the marginalized communities of the mountains.

(Dr. Pande is the Coordinator of Knowledge, Advocacy and Communications Unit, IUCN Nepal)



IUCN at Work in the Mountains



Community mobilisation for conservation in the Ilam Siwaliks



Bee-keeping for alternative income generation in the TMJ and Ilam Siwalik project sites



Cultural programmes raise conservation awareness in the TMJ area



Community members plant NTFP seedlings on degraded lands around Chhathiwan Lake in Doti district

Through its field projects, research, policy papers, advocacy and knowledge dissemination, IUCN Nepal aims at conservation of natural resources and their sustainable use, and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of conservation of genetic resources. The focus is not on mountain areas alone, although policies and practices that IUCN helps promote significantly impact these areas. In this issue of the newsletter, the focus is on IUCN's work of relevance in mountain areas and models that contribute to sustainable management of natural resources, make sound use of productive capacities and lead to protection of the environment.

Alternative Livelihood Options, Sustainable Practices, Conservation

In 2000, IUCN Nepal introduced a small-scale action research project in 6 VDCs of Jorajal, Doti district, in the mid-mountains, to address issues like community forest management, over-exploitation and premature collection of medicinal plants and conservation of forest areas that were home to valuable medicinal plants and NTFP (Non Timber Forest Products) species. The project focuses on community participation, engages marginal farmers, the landless and women in plantation and conservation, and assists rural communities in preserving these forests and increasing income through sustainable harvesting.

IUCN has also been assisting communities in the Eastern Mountains in conservation of forests and managing their community forests since 1999. Community participation, sustainable and equitable use, and gender issues, are central to this intervention aimed at protecting rhododendron forests. The experience gathered working in Seti has been helpful in the efforts in TMJ area. Existing Community Forest Users Groups are being assisted in scientifically assessing the output of their community forests, a survey has been conducted on valuable NTFP and wild vegetable species, alternative energy practices are being introduced and eco-tourism is being promoted. Alternative livelihood options and better energy use practices are crucial because economic opportunities are scarce and the pressure on forests is intense in this cold region—fuel wood consumption is over twice the national average.

Through the programme in the Siwaliks—Conservation of Critical Ecosystem in Ilam Siwaliks—IUCN Nepal aims to train and prepare local institutions as custodians and managers of natural resources. The project covers Chulachuli, Danabari, Chisapani, Mahamai, and Sakpara VDCs in Ilam district and a forest area of 25,000ha. It focuses on conservation and creating economic opportunities for poor households, women, community forest user groups, and disadvantaged communities. Degradation in the Siwaliks will have a negative impact on the water resources, waterways and agricultural lands in the Terai and in turn increase pressure on forests in the hills and mountains.

Policy Review and Research on Conservation Options

The Assessment of National Forest Restoration Policy and Practices carried out by IUCN stresses the need for proper documentation of

forests and NTFPs in the upland region of the High Himalayas. This could help in developing alternative livelihood options for marginalized mountain communities and also assist in conservation efforts, limiting destructive extraction of timber and other forest produce that contributes to degradation in upland regions with low carrying capacities.

IUCN is also working on studying the carrying capacity, changes and other factors affecting rangelands and pasturelands of mountain areas in Tinjure-Milke-Jaljale (TMJ) region. This study will address changes in grazing patterns and composition of livestock herds, an inventory of palatable and unpalatable grass species, invasive and alien plant species and the like.

Promoting Ecotourism

IUCN Nepal is studying ways to promote Eco-tourism in TMJ area in the Eastern region. Crucial to developing an eco-tourism is improved facilities for travellers in an area that is devoid of basic tourism infrastructures. IUCN is promoting better energy use practices by inns/tea houses, facilitating small hotel management training, and has organised an exposure visit for entrepreneurs to establish eco-tourism sites like the Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP) and Sirubari.

Linking Policy with Practice

The corpus of IUCN work, research, policy reviews and consultation, is aimed at developing better practices on the ground, empowering local communities and ensuring equitable sharing of benefits.

- ◆ Mountain communities have developed many local approaches regarding access to common property resources. In this regard, IUCN Nepal is studying various ways to integrate some of these in conservation in the TMJ area.
- ◆ IUCN Nepal's review of the TMJ area will help in preparing a management plan that maintains the ecological integrity of a mountainous corridor habitat linking three important protected areas of the East, namely, Makalu Barun National Park, Kanchenjunga Conservation Area and Qomolangma Nature Preserve in Tibet (China).
- ◆ IUCN Nepal Wetland Conservation Strategy will assist in the management of wetlands in the region, including in the upland regions.
- ◆ In keeping with its mission statement, IUCN has prepared the draft Access to Genetic Resources and Benefit Sharing Policy that will empower local communities, recognise their knowledge and technologies and ensure equitable sharing of benefits from any application/use of resources and traditional knowledge.
- ◆ IUCN Nepal has completed an Environmental Audit of the construction of Upper Bhote Koshi Hydroelectric Project. Integration of environmental concerns into major development projects has been a useful experience for other hydel projects in mountain areas.
- ◆ The Sub-Watershed Management Plan for the Siwaliks is being readied for application in other fragile regions of the Churia/Siwalik-range.

By ensuring that resources remain productive for the future and by introducing better management practices that boost productivity and diversify income sources, IUCN Nepal seeks to promote conservation and sustainable use of fragile mountain environments.



Women members attend an adult literacy class



Laxmi Pokhari, a cultural and biodiversity rich site



Community plantation of NTFP in Seti zone



One of the several rhododendron species found in the TMJ area

Post-audit EIA Study

IUCN Nepal has completed the Environmental Post-Audit study of the Bhote Koshi Hydroelectric Project (BKHP). The Report was submitted to the Bhote Koshi Power Company Pvt. Ltd. in November 2001.

IUCN Nepal had earlier carried out Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the project in 1995, and environmental monitoring of construction from March 1998 to December 2000. With this, IUCN Nepal's involvement in EIA, monitoring and auditing of the project completes a full circle.

Its major recommendations include:

- Completion of spoil deposition through removal of excess spoils;
- A proper vegetation plantation plan for affected areas;
- Implementation of the Hutani stream protection plan;
- Repair of roads, trails and trail bridges;
- Initiation of an effective mechanism for coordination and cooperation with local bodies; and,
- Supervision of water release and temperature.



The Bhote Koshi Hydroelectric Project site

New Wetland Project

IUCN Nepal signed an agreement with UNDP to implement a GEF PDF Block B grant for "Conservation and Sustainable Use of Wetlands in Nepal" project in December 2001. By the end of 2002, this project will outline activities for wetland conservation for implementation with a full size GEF Grant. The focus of the larger project is to conserve globally significant species and habitats prevalent in major wetland sites in Nepal. Within the overall context of the National Biodiversity Action Plan, these will be selected through intensive fieldwork and consultation. The project will address the removal of the underlying causes of threats to biodiversity in Nepal's wetlands.

Rio+10 Opinion Survey

The Society of Population and Environmental Journalists (SOPEJ) carried out an opinion survey regarding achievements under Agenda 21 and the role of Nepal in Rio+10. The survey, conducted with various target groups, assessed Nepal's achievements after the formulation of Agenda 21. SOPEJ report makes observations on the role Nepal should play at Rio+10 Convention to be held at Johannesburg in 2002.

Major recommendations:

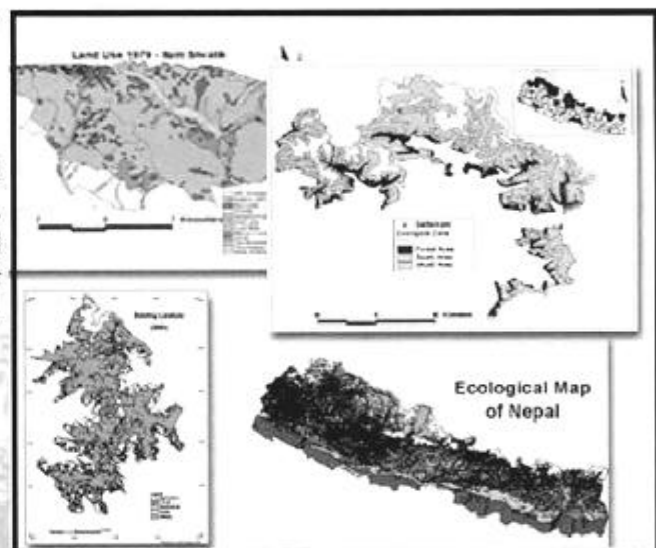
- Formulate programmes and policies for sustainable development involving local communities;
- Enforce existing Environmental Protection Act and Regulations effectively;
- Advocate for establishing patent rights in international fora;
- Integrate natural resource conservation and tourism development programmes;
- Promote crossborder cooperation at WSSD; and,
- Stress the need for biodiversity conservation and ozone layer protection.

GIS Database

Over the years, IUCN Nepal has accumulated extensive data on flora, fauna, river systems, population and national parks. With the help of trained in-house staff and acquisition of necessary equipment and software, a GIS database has been established.

The GIS database comprises:

- Flora and Fauna
- Wetlands
- Socio-Economic
- Physiography/Ecology
- Roads and Rivers



Wetland Conservation

IUCN Nepal in collaboration with the Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation organised a workshop on "Draft National Policy on Collaborative Management of Wetlands in Nepal" on 3 August 2001. The objective was to assist the government in developing a national policy for collaborative community management of wetlands.

To facilitate conservation, wise use and management of wetland resources by local communities, the Task Force constituted under the chairmanship of Dr. Tirtha Man Maskey, Director General of DNPWC, prepared the Draft Wetland Policy with support from IUCN Nepal.



Participants at the workshop on Collaborative Management of Wetlands in Nepal

AGRBS Sensitisation

IUCN Nepal and the Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation (MoFSC) jointly organised sensitisation workshops in Biratnagar for judges and government officials of the Eastern Development Region on International Conventions relating to Access to Genetic Resources and Benefit Sharing (AGRBS) in July-August 2001. The workshops, aimed at capacity building and sensitisation, were attended by 60 judges and government officials.

Based on consultations at various levels, the draft Bill on Access to Genetic Resources and Benefit Sharing has been prepared. It covers trade in flora and fauna in the context of genetic resources and focuses on benefits to communities and protection of traditional knowledge.

Invasive Alien Species

Consultation on Invasive Alien Species (IAS) in Nepal was organised on 1 September 2001, with the objective of getting the scientific community to develop a knowledge base and facilitate preparation of an inventory of Invasive Alien Species in Nepal. The participants discussed problems of invasive alien species with a focus on plant species. Discussion focussed on the definition of IAS, methodology for preparing an inventory of IAS in Nepal, and management interventions.



A consultative meeting on Invasive Alien Species

PSC Meeting

The restructured Programme Steering Committee (PSC) had its first meeting on 14 September 2001 at Kathmandu. Presiding over the meeting, Honourable Member of the National Planning Commission (NPC) Dr. Jagadish Chandra Pokharel stressed the importance of the Committee as a forum for discussing conservation issues and improving coordination between IUCN programmes and HMG environmental goals and plans. PSC serves as an important forum for strengthening coordination on conservation issues between the government and IUCN Nepal.

Pre-SBSTTA meeting

The Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation and IUCN Nepal jointly organised a pre-SBSTTA-7 (Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice) national consultation meeting on 1 November 2001. The meeting made recommendations on conservation and sustainable use of pollinators, plant conservation activities, policies and strategies in Nepal, and biodiversity considerations in Nepal's EIA processes.



Dr. Baidri D. Pande of IUCN-Nepal addressing the pre-SBSTTA national consultation meet

In-house Interaction

An in-house Planning and Review workshop was organised in December 2001 to review progress against workplans and discuss questions of relevance, effectiveness, impact and results-based management. The Programme Log Frame was reviewed and greater coordination between thematic units was emphasised. There was general agreement that it is too early to assess the impact of the programme. A more comprehensive performance framework is to be developed for 2002.

"Successful conservation practices have not become the educating tool"

• Nepal has been trying to achieve "sustainable development" through conservation and sustainable use of natural resources. However, despite decades of serious efforts, actual achievements have been limited. What is your opinion on the environmental and conservation situation of the country?

Conservation itself has to be interpreted as a way of improving people's lives and eventually attacking poverty, and rural communities must understand this message. Both conservation and development should always go hand in hand. We have not been able to successfully replicate best practices. Replication and demonstration, which ought to have been done in a much more aggressive manner, has not happened. **Successful conservation**

practices have not become the educating tool for students, teachers, policy makers and rural communities. People are both the means and end of environmental conservation. Conservation is not for the elites and the haves, it is for the have-nots and common people. Communication and education are key to conservation, for success in such efforts depends on educating and managing the learning process in a participatory way. This means involving people who have a stake in the issues, as this develops ownership of the solution and responsibility to maintain results. Hence, protection and promotion of environmental resources is not feasible without the active participation of people. Despite laying special emphasis on disseminating awareness and information among the masses through various media, people on the ground have not benefited adequately.

Born in Tanahun District in 1953, Dr. Jagadish Chandra Pokharel trained as an architectural engineer in Greece. In 1978, he began teaching at the Institute of Engineering, Tribhuvan University (TU), where he taught for about 12 years. Later, he studied at the University of Hawaii from where he graduated in Regional Planning.



Dr. Pokharel then went to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology where he received his doctorate in Environmental Policy and Governance in 1991. His dissertation dealt with environmental negotiation between unequal powers. Dr. Pokharel has relentlessly worked for Nepal's water resource policies and relevant negotiations with India.

Besides teaching at TU, Dr. Pokharel has also worked as a consultant for various international agencies. In 1997, he was nominated as a member of the National Planning Commission where his sectoral responsibilities include transport, local development, environment and population.

Dr. Pokharel is an optimist. He believes that Nepal's transformation is inevitable and that the people of Nepal should be prepared to face the bright days ahead.

• As the NPC member responsible for environmental matters, what do you see as the pressing problems of Nepal? Could you also please shed light on what role NPC is playing and can play to overcome challenges in the fields of conservation and environment?

In Nepal, there is a deterioration in both the rural and urban environments. Overuse of natural resources has led to massive disturbances in the natural balance of ecosystems. Not to speak of rural masses alone, urban people too seem generally unaware of the negative health and economic impacts of environmental degradation. Nepal's economy, being primarily dependent on land and natural resources, depends on the conservation of natural resources and improvement of the physical environment. We have not been able to successfully link environmental

matters with the major national goal of poverty reduction. In my view, the National Planning Commission (NPC) should work more aggressively. NPC provides guidance and internalises new ideas and models into policy; new concepts and approaches are developed and then integrated with macro policies. In other words, NPC has been playing the role of a policy innovator at the national level.

From an institutional point of view, strong enforcement mechanisms, rather than mobilising resources alone, must be developed especially for the urban areas. In the rural areas people are more dependent on nature and hence the need for greater environmental education.

"We should convert problems into opportunities"

- What is your evaluation of IUCN Nepal's initiatives with respect to the Ninth Five Year Plan on the environment and conservation fronts?

IUCN deserves special recognition in this regard. I am impressed with the catalytic role that IUCN has played during the Ninth Five Year Plan period. With its comparative advantages and credible scientific findings, IUCN has contributed in several ways to policy, regulatory frameworks, demonstration models and planning tools. Through the National Conservation Strategy, several guidelines and demonstration initiatives, IUCN has contributed significantly to Nepal's policies and Acts (for instance the Environmental Protection Act of 2053 BS). IUCN Nepal has been able to successfully address conservation and environment issues of the country with appropriate policies and programmes.

IUCN has helped to promote environmental education and awareness both directly and through support organisations. It has also helped in networking between national and international agencies. Its unique strength is that it can work at various levels, making connections between them to achieve conservation.

- What are the main actions or plans for sustainable development that have been incorporated in the Tenth Five Year Plan?

The government has made explicit mention of environment in all major development sectors in the Tenth Five Year Plan, which will be better articulated as a poverty reduction strategy. Adequate attention has been paid to development and environmental problems, and to various objectives of Agenda 21. Addressing the problems posed by a diverse natural setting is the challenge in the Tenth Plan and we see it as an opportunity. **We should convert problems into opportunities.** In addition, environmental education will be further consolidated in the primary and secondary curricula for students and through informal education for other people.

Extensive legal provisions have been made and implemented for environmental management. While sustainability has been taken as the primary objective in formulating such legal provisions, emphasis has been laid on adopting an integrated approach in all environmental policies.

"IUCN Nepal should replicate its successful initiatives on the ground through active people's participation"

- As Chairman of the recently constituted Programme Steering Committee (PSC) of IUCN Nepal, how do you think IUCN Nepal can further improve its effectiveness to guide the country towards its goal?

By looking ahead with renewed spirit of hope! Firstly, in the field of biodiversity conservation and environmental protection, IUCN Nepal is the most experienced organisation in Nepal. In close collaboration with NPC, IUCN has been assisting various government and non-government organisations, both financially and technically, to improve the environmental situation of the country. IUCN Nepal has an excellent team of professional staff,

technical expertise and access to a global network of experts in the field of biodiversity conservation and environmental protection. Therefore, it can play an instrumental role in managing natural resources and enhancing environmental conservation in the country through policy level support to the government.

Secondly, in order to ensure that natural resources are equitably and ecologically sustainable, **IUCN Nepal should replicate its successful initiatives on the ground through active people's participation.** It should expedite its work with grassroots constituencies to have considerable outreach and strengthen local institutions for sustainable living.

Thirdly, IUCN Nepal should increasingly support capacity building processes for various organisations, mainly local bodies like DDCs, VDCs and local NGOs.

Finally, IUCN should help the government in mobilising global resources earmarked for conservation. It should work more aggressively on sectoral issues.

- Do you have any message for the valued readers of IUCN Nepal Newsletter?

If I have a message for readers it is to say what I have said repeatedly, that IUCN's potential to influence and encourage the changing trend is still being realised only to a limited degree. We have to become more aware and advocate assertively at all levels to attain our overall national goal of poverty alleviation.

We are gradually acquiring the skills and expertise to make this leap forward. Let us now have the nerve to do so.

- Interviewed by Deependra Joshi

DNPWC

Established in 1980, the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) presently manages 8 national parks, 4 wildlife reserves, 3 conservation areas, and 1 hunting reserve (including 6 buffer zones in and around protected areas), covering a total of 18.14 percent of the country's total land area.

In October 2001, a 9-member Nepalese delegation, led by Mr. Gopal Man Shrestha, Hon. Minister of Forests and Soil Conservation, Joint Secretary Dr. UR Sharma and Dr. TM Maskey, Director General, DNPWC, observed various national parks of South Africa. DNPWC has recently published its Annual Report.

New Executive Body of NEFEJ

The Annual General Meeting of the Nepal Forum of Environmental Journalists (NEFEJ) elected a new executive committee.

President	Mr. Laxman Uprety
Vice President	Mr. Kedar Sharma
General Secretary	Mr. Rajesh Ghimire
Secretary	Mr. Dhurba Basnet
Treasurer	Mr. Raghu Mainali

YAEF

The Youth Awareness Environmental Forum (YAEF) was declared the 11th member of IUCN Nepal after the IUCN Council granted it NGO membership status in its October 2001 meeting. YAEF was established in 1994 with the objective of helping people protect and maintain a clean and healthy environment through environmental education and awareness campaigns involving local youth. IUCN Nepal is pleased to welcome YAEF as a member. The YAEF Steering Committee comprises Mr. Astaman Kisee Maharjan as Chairman, and Mr. Shiva Shrestha, Mr. Tahir Shah, Mr. Krishna Gopal Maharjan, Mr. Hari Prasad Bhattarai, Mr. Rabindra Jung Thapa and Mr. Binamra Bikram Sijapati as members.

YAEF's address:
Youth Awareness Environmental Forum
Bade Gaon, Godawari, Lalitpur
P.O.Box: 8975, EPC: 1556
Ph.: 560157, Fax : 977-1-560782
E-mail: mugi@csl.com.np

Women in Environment

Women in Environment (WE) was established in 1990 with the objective of recognising the role of women in preserving natural resources and facilitating sustainable development of the marginalised, deprived and downtrodden segments of Nepali society. WE has been active in community development activities and environment programmes in 11 villages of Mahottari District with support from DANIDA, and one VDC of Bardia with support from WWF Nepal.

By the end of 2001, WE had completed construction of 3 school buildings and 1 community health centre in Mahottari with assistance from SAME-International Nepal. Besides, a series of discussion programmes on human rights issues was launched during the same period.

APEC

Established in 1988 and admitted as an IUCN NGO member in 1996, the Association for Protection of Environment and Culture (APEC) has been implementing conservation awareness programmes in the Koshi Tappu Wetland Area, chiefly in Prakashpur and Madhuban VDCs. Its other activity is black buck conservation in the Royal Bardia National Park. APEC has been carrying out awareness campaigns, research on black buck, web publishing, motivational campaigns and activism. So far, APEC has encouraged 125 schools to establish eco-clubs in Morang, Sunsari, Jhapa, Udaypur, Saptari, Panchthar, Terhathum, Dhankuta and Bardia districts. APEC has also established Environment Resource Centres in Jhapa and Gulariya and is in the process of establishing another at Inaruwa.

Congratulations ICIMOD!

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) became an IUCN member in 2001. It was recently awarded the prestigious ESRI President's Award on 9 July 2001 in the presence of international geographers and GIS professionals at the 2001 Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) Users Conference.

ICIMOD also bagged the Educational Excellence Award instituted by AmericanUniversity.Net®, a leading web-portal for educational resources, for displaying the best educational resources on the World Wide Web.

ICIMOD's mission is to help promote the development of an economically and environmentally sound mountain ecosystem and to improve the living standards of mountain people in the Hindu Kush-Himalayan (HKH) Region.

KMTNC



The King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation (KMTNC), established in 1982, was admitted as a national member of IUCN in 1990. His Majesty

King Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev recently appointed His Royal Highness Crown Prince Paras Bir Bikram Shah Dev as the new Chairman of the Trust. Mr. Aroop Rajouria has been appointed as the new Member Secretary.

The Trust is governed by a Board of Trustees of national and international standing involved in nature conservation and sustainable development. KMTNC's ongoing projects are the Annapurna Conservation Area Project, Manaslu Eco-tourism Project, Nepal Conservation Research and Training Centre, Bardia Conservation Programme, and the Central Zoo in Kathmandu.

Green Camp - Nepal



Green Camp Nepal was established in 1993 and admitted as an IUCN member in 1998. The organisation focuses on alleviation of key environmental problems

through an action-oriented and trans-disciplinary approach.

Recently, Green Camp Nepal has proposed to establish a "Dipendra Memorial Park" in Patan Multiple Campus, Lalitpur. Green Camp Nepal has also supported various eco-club activities in Kathmandu. In addition, besides supporting Patan Multiple Campus in the installation of green bins for waste collection, Green Camp Nepal has also carried out several action-oriented environmental activities in the Kanchenjunga Conservation Area (KCA). It is also pushing the idea of establishing a tri-nation peace park in the region.

HWEPC



The Dang-based Human Welfare and Environment Protection Centre (HWEPC) was established in 1991 and became an IUCN member in 1998. Its long-term vision

is to aid and support the development of a self-reliant society which is economically, socially, educationally and environmentally secure.

Some of their recent activities include the Sustainable Rural Development Programme (SRDP), natural resource management, environmental/general education, women's empowerment, poverty alleviation and rural self-reliance, promoting alternative energy systems and development of an eco-village.

IUCN Nepal supported HWEPC with travel and accommodation expenses for one participant to attend an environment education related seminar in New Delhi in November 2001.

NHS



Nepal Heritage Society (NHS), admitted as an IUCN member in 1991, now has a new constitution. Its recent activities include publication of a souvenir magazine, the seventeenth Annual General Meeting, felicitation of 15 senior gurus of *Dhaa* drums and an exhibition on the Bamiyan Buddha. Recently, the Society celebrated its 20th Anniversary by organising various heritage preservation programmes.

ECCA



ECCA was established in 1987 with the aim of providing Nepali children with a broad environmental programme geared to raising their level of awareness about conservation and better management of resources. The organisation was admitted as an IUCN member in 1991. It has been training youth and children in various districts of the country with assistance from several organisations. ECCA is also generating awareness through schools by organising clean-up campaigns and other environmental preservation activities in which students participate. Its activities cover about thirty-five of the country's seventy-five districts. The group has also been preparing educational training materials, suited to the local context, and audio-visual slides and posters to instil the conservation message in young minds. To further the process of "learning by doing", ECCA helps spread conservation awareness among tomorrow's leaders, decision makers and experts.

Other ECCA activities accomplished during the bi-annual period 2001 include Improved Cooking Stoves training for counsellors in Bhaktapur, a survey for forthcoming programmes in Kanchanpur, and several talk programmes held at its office in Thapathali, Kathmandu.

REAP

Regional Environment Assessment Programme (REAP) focuses on assisting Asian countries in implementing recommendations of the various international environmental Conventions—Climate Change, Desertification, Biodiversity and Trans-boundary Movement of Hazardous Materials—through the use of impact assessment and auditing techniques.

Activities undertaken in 2001:

- EIA Guidelines of 6 South Asian countries were analysed for their level of attention to biodiversity concerns. These countries included Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka and its outcome was shared with the concerned officials and EIA practitioners. Information generated from this exercise was fed into global efforts for integrating biodiversity concerns in EIA process as recommended by the Convention on Biological Diversity.
- An assessment was made of crocodile conservation efforts in Nepal. This information was provided to concerned officials and conservation professionals.
- A study was conducted on the health impacts of vehicular emission on traffic police in Kathmandu City. The study focused on the impacts on on-duty traffic police personnel due to vehicular air and noise pollution in Kathmandu.
- An ecological and socio-economic study on land-use change and pollution of Nakkhu Khola was conducted.
- A study was conducted on the likely impacts of climate change on water resources of Nepal.
- An assessment was made of the carbon sequestration potential of 10 tree species in Nepal.
- An assessment of the present and future shifts in rainfall patterns across watersheds in the Himalayas has been initiated. Shifts in rainfall pattern is one major impact of climate change causing flooding in one area and drought in another. Such a situation poses a threat to the environmental security of indigenous people living in the Himalayan Mountain range. The study assesses the vulnerability of biodiversity and local communities to such changes.
- Inputs were provided to various IUCN country offices in dealing with technical environmental issues and project proposal development.
- Input was provided for the development of an IUCN strategy for re-building of Afghanistan.
- A project proposal on 'no-regret' Climate Change Mitigation Options was developed for capacity building of 8 countries where IUCN has a presence in Asia. It is now being negotiated with potential donors.
- A project proposal is being developed for promoting the effective use of impact assessment approaches to integrating environment and development in South Asia.

SANDEE

The South Asian Network for Development and Environmental Economics (SANDEE) seeks to bring together analysts from various countries in South Asia to address environment development problems. SANDEE's mission is to strengthen the capacity of individuals and institutions in South Asia to undertake research on the inter-linkages amongst economic development, poverty and environmental change, and to disseminate practical information that can be applied to development policies.

SANDEE has been organising bi-annual research and training workshops that complement the grants programme. Out of about 70 proposals received, 5 research and 2 study grants have been awarded. The Beijer Institute of Ecological Economics at the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences held an

Advanced Teaching Workshop on Property Rights in Egypt in 2001.

Similarly, the Beijer Institute and SANDEE are now jointly organising an Advanced Training Workshop on Computed General Equilibrium Modelling and the Environment. SANDEE has also tried to experiment with 'up-stream' training for research applicants. A recent workshop was also organised with IDRC Canada and the Nepal Water Conservation Foundation on proposal writing and effective writing skills. A third component of the training effort is focused on strengthening institutions. In this context, the University of Peradeniya in Sri Lanka and SANDEE recently advertised and hired a visiting Professor for environmental economics faculty Post Graduate Institute of Agriculture at Peradeniya.

People Speak

IUCN Nepal's contribution to NTFP conservation through people's participation in Doti District is remarkable. Regular interaction between DDC, VDC and communities has provided a forum for exchange of ideas and experiences and for ensuring sustainable use of medicinal plants and other NTFPs.

This Project has empowered under-privileged people, especially women, and enabled them to participate actively. They now feel more confident of voicing their interests in NTFP conservation and sustainable use.

*Mr. Taranath Gautam
Chief District Officer
Doti District*

The relationship between User Groups, Village Development Committee and District Development Committee is like that of foetus and expectant mother. The DDC is so supportive that it is like the umbilical cord, a lifeline for the continued survival of local communities.

*Mr. Jhanak Bahadur Gurung
Secretary, National Organisation for Rhododendron
Conservation and Management Committee (NORM)
Basantapur VDC, Terhathum*

This programme has opened our eyes to several issues. At meetings, we discuss our common problems and solve them collectively. Now we feel the common urge to do something for the betterment of women in society. We feel that it is our responsibility to work for our own development. We had never thought about this before.

*Mrs. Kalpana Diyali
Member, Melkhola Women Herb Conservation
Group
Melkhola, Doti*

With the initiation of community forestry programmes and the Participatory Disaster Management Programme, villagers are participating more actively and feel a sense of ownership over the project. This has not only made project selection more meaningful but also helped generate additional resources at the local level.

*Mr. Ishwar Gajumer
Secretary, Bakuwa Community Forest User Main
Committee
Chulachuli 8, Ilam*

tribute

Anil Agarwal

(23 Nov. 1947 - 2 Jan. 2002)



The region loses a leading environmental campaigner

In the passing away of Anil Agarwal, who died of cancer aged 54 on 2 January, the region, and the developing world at large, has lost a leading environmental campaigner. Besides establishing one of India's most dynamic NGOs—the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE)—and broadening its campaigning to include development and social justice questions, he was a pioneer who recognised the futility of trading off the needs of people and the environment against each other. In this respect he was one of the first campaigners to talk about sustainable development.

Anil worked tirelessly at educating himself and others and using the information to campaign and highlight the ways in which the environment could be destroyed. The CSE State of the Environment Report for India was a first and soon a much emulated document in our parts. CSE's corpus of knowledge, for over a fifth of the world's population, is an example of the work that Anil truly believed in knowledge dissemination and advocacy.

In its portrait of the man, Outlook magazine had this to say: "Other than Mahatma Gandhi, and perhaps Jayaprakash Narayan, no single Indian has done so much for so many millions of people, mostly but not all poor, in so short a time." During the preparatory meetings leading to the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, he emerged as a leading NGO advocate for a fairer world order. An inspirational leader and courageous campaigner he commanded attention through a powerful rhetorical style, and gained credibility from his clear thinking and grasp of detail and fact.

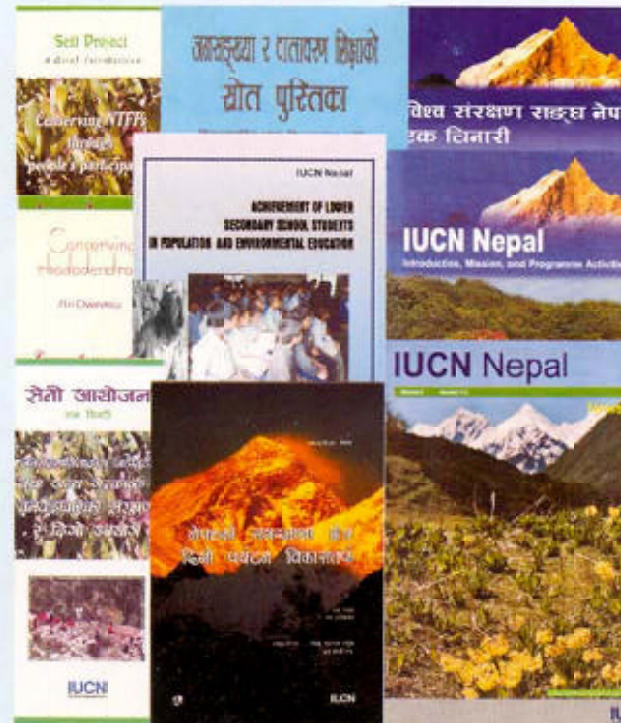
In 1987, in recognition of his achievements, the United Nations Environment Programme elected Agarwal to its Global 500 honours list. He wrote prolifically. As editor of Down To Earth, CSE's journal and India's leading science and environment magazine, he wrote on a vast array of environmental and development issues. His work appeared in several international publications, including Earthscan and New Scientist, and he wrote/edited over 20 books on science and environment in India.

- Dr. Banskota, Country Representative, attended the ARD meeting in Bangkok, Thailand, 9-11 August 2001. Various issues were discussed and agreements relating to PDF B wetland project, programme and human resource development and SDC review made during this meeting.
- Dr. Banskota also visited Switzerland in early October, 2001, to participate in a preparatory meeting for the International Year of Mountains 2002. Dr. Banskota presented an overview of the Hindukush Himalayas, showing major dimensions of the mountain economy and mountain environment. The seminar provided valuable inputs for the World Mountain Summit to be held in 2002. The seminar concluded by urging concerned country governments to highlight the role of mountain people, mountain resources and mountain environment in their official submissions to the World Summit.
- At the invitation of the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), Dr. Badri D. Pande, Coordinator, Knowledge, Advocacy and Communications Unit, attended a two-day consultative meeting on "Towards WSSD - South Asian Priorities and Strategies" organised in New Delhi, India, in November 2001. During the meeting, Dr. Pande presented IUCN Nepal's experience with national strategies for sustainable development and also informed participants about Nepal's preparations, at the government level, for The World Summit on Sustainable Development.
- Dr. Pande visited Ahmedabad, India, on December 4, 2001, to serve as a resource person for the Sixth International Certificate Course in Environmental Education and as Chief Guest for the valediction of this course .
The Centre for Environment Education (CEE) has been running a three-month Intensive International Certificate Course in Environmental Education with support from IUCN Commission on Education and Communication, WWF and UNEP.
- Mr. R K Raut, Finance Manager, participated in the regional meeting of finance managers at Bangkok, Thailand, in November 2001. The meeting provided significant insights into understanding accounting procedures for IUCN, standardization/optimisation of Sun accounting system and financial reporting mechanism, strict adoption of financial manual, cash flow management, understanding KRAs & KEGOs and budgeting and allocation to KRAs/KEGOs and its results and the overall financial performance and discipline compliance.
- Mr. Sagendra Tiwari, Dr. Mohan Siwakoti (IUCN Nepal) and Mr. Tikaram Adhikari (DNPWC) undertook a joint study tour to Keoladeo National Park in Rajasthan, India, in late November 2001. The objective was to enhance knowledge of Ramsar Site management and replicate successful initiatives in PA management.
- Ms. Julia Robinson and Dr. Hari K. Pradhan of Programme Development Unit (PDU) attended a 3 day workshop for Regional PDU staff from 2-7 December 2001, in Bangkok, Thailand. The meeting, organised by Global and Regional M&E Coordinators, focused on issues of planning, development, coordination, monitoring and evaluation, challenges, priorities and reporting.
- Mr. Surendra Bhandari, Coordinator, SETLPU, went on a week-long visit to India in early October 2001 for enhancing understanding in developing future action plans and sharing knowledge on environmental law programmes.
During his visit, Mr. Bhandari held talks with senior officials of Gene Campaign and CUTS (NGOs), Ford Foundation, Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) and International Development Research Centre (IDRC). Besides discussing trade and environmental issues, it was generally agreed upon that more avenues must be explored to address common problems by expanding and exchanging knowledge, experience and information.
- Dr. Mohan Siwakoti, Wetland Consultant, participated in the Asian Wetland Symposium 2001 held in Penang, Malaysia, 27-30 August 2001. The Symposium, attended by 485 participants from over 30 countries, had this theme: "Work together to maintain wetlands and prevent further degradation and loss, to ensure their wise use, and to maintain and restore wetland and ecosystem functions through regional and international partnership towards the wise use of wetlands in Asia."
On the occasion, Dr. Siwakoti made a presentation on the status of wetlands in Nepal.

Publications

IUCN publications since July 2001:

- Two IUCN Nepal brochures, in English and Nepali.
- A Source Book on Population and Environmental Education for Lower Secondary School (grades 6-8) teachers (400+pages). This was prepared in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Sports.
- Promotional brochures of the Seti Project in English and Nepali.
- Nepali version of "Towards Eco-tourism in the Everest Region" (82 pages) in collaboration with ICPL.
- Achievement of Lower Secondary School Students in Population and Environment Education (146+ pages)



Book Fair and Exhibition

IUCN Nepal and six other organisations—ICIMOD, Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation/Park People Programme, World Wildlife Fund (WWF), The Mountain Institute (TMI) and Himal Association—participated in the Annual ICIMOD Book Fair and Exhibition from 16-18 August 2001, at ICIMOD premises. The exhibition was inaugurated by the Honourable Mayor of Lalitpur Sub-Metropolitan City, Mr. Buddhi Raj Bajracharya.

Roughly 3,000 visitors, including students, lecturers, professors, researchers, planners and government officials, visited the book fair complex. Besides generating awareness and disseminating information, IUCN Nepal offered a 50 percent

discount on the actual price of books and sold publications worth Rs 110,000. IUCN Nepal also offered some old and duplicated publications free of cost to visitors.



Visitors browse through IUCN publications at the Annual ICIMOD Book Fair and Exhibition

New Staff at IUCN Nepal

IUCN Nepal warmly welcomes its new staff members

Ms. Julia Robinson	Coordinator, Programme Development Unit
Ms. Suriti Aryal.....	Library Assistant
Mr. Ashish Karmacharya.....	Information Systems Officer
Mr. Naresh Subba.....	Information & Communication Assistant
Dr. Usha Sharma	Consultant - Social, Economic, Technical, Legal and Policy Unit
Mr. Samuel Thomas	Editor
Mr. Sameer Karki	Team Leader, Conservation and Sustainable Use of Wetlands in Nepal Project



Editorial Team: Dr. Mahesh Banskota, Dr. Badri D. Pande, Deependra Joshi and Samuel Thomas. Design and layout: Deependra Joshi with support from Nareesh Subba

IUCN - The World Conservation Union was founded in 1948. It brings together states, government agencies, and a diverse range of non-governmental organizations in a unique world partnership: over 900 members in all, spread across some 138 countries. The World Conservation Union builds on strengths of its members, networks and partners to enhance their capacity and to support global alliances to safeguard natural resources at local, regional and global levels.

As a Union, IUCN seeks to influence, encourage, and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable.

IUCN - The World Conservation Union officially launched the Nepal Country Office on 23 February 1995 with the Ministry of Finance, His Majesty's Government as the government partner. IUCN Nepal has been developing partnerships with various government line agencies as well as non-governmental organizations to carry forward its activities to conserve Nepal's natural resources and ecological processes.

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