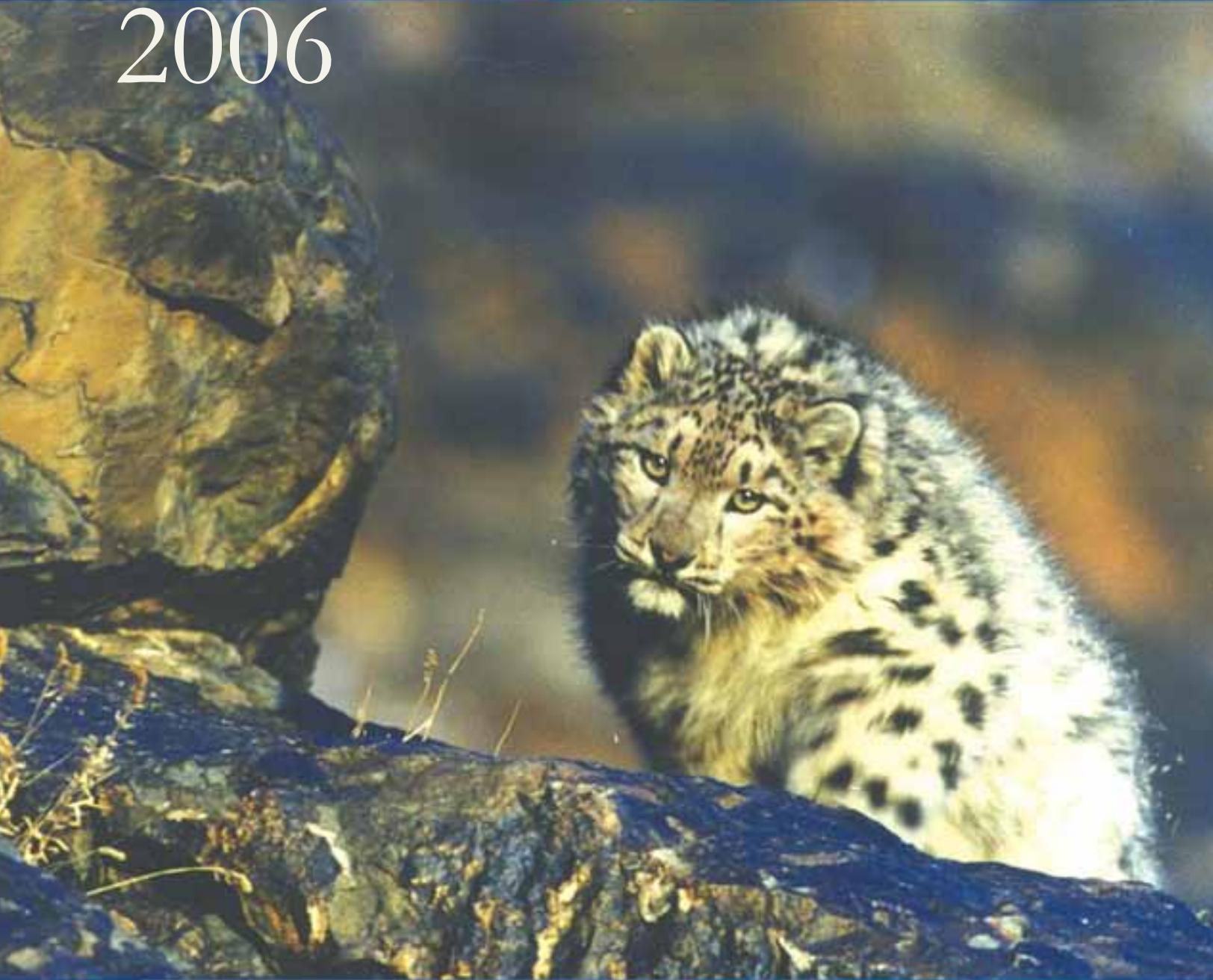




Wildlife Watch Group

# ANNUAL REPORT 2006



# CONTENTS

From the Chairman's desk	1
1. WWG – To Conserve Wildlife	2
2. Member Profiles	7
3. Activities of members	10
4. Membership/Affiliations	11
5. Special Program	12
6. Investigation	16
7. Ongoing Program	18
8. Other Activities	21
9. Workshop/ Interactions	26
10. Courtesy call	32
11. International Meeting	32
12. Visits	34
13. Other I/NGOs actively working on wildlife conservation in Nepal	35
14. Chronology of Wildlife Watch Group (WWG)	37

# From the Chairman's desk

*I am happy to present this annual report of the Wildlife Watch Group (WWG). Since its establishment, WWG has focused its activities primarily in two areas: preparation of an information bank of wildlife trade-related data and the institutionalization of the organization.*



Nepal has earned a bad reputation for its growing illegal wildlife trade. The government does not have any mechanisms to deter traders from engaging in such activities. WWG tries to gather information, through undisclosed sources, to help the government entity, the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC), to act forcefully and actively against the racket. In 2004, two senior members of WWG, published their investigative and research work on the illegal wildlife trade and the government's enforcement mechanisms. These works are believed to be milestones in the field.

WWG is also putting wildlife trade-related data, collected from the mass media, into its resource library. This library will be open, in the near future, to all concerned agency officials and professionals.

WWG has helped British freelance environmental journalist, Mr. Ben Davis, and wildlife photographer, Mr. Patrick Brown, gain access to Royal Chitwan National Park, to carry out an in-depth study on the illegal wildlife trade in Asia.

We are grateful to the Asia Pacific Forum of Environmental Journalists (APFEJ), for granting us associate membership and entrusting us with the secretariat of the Norwegian-funded South South Exchange Program (SSEP).

In 2002, WWG was formally registered as a non-profit non-governmental organisation (NGO). The following four years have been full of activity and progress.

2003 saw the commencement of the journalist volunteer South-South Exchange Program, a journalist exchange program. Seventeen journalists from nine South and South-East Asian countries participated in the program.

WWG moved into Wise-use House June 2004. It shares space with other Nepali NGOs in Wise-Use House, Jwagal, Kopondol. In this year WWG also commenced phase I of the 'Impact of arm conflict on conservation' study. This phase saw journalists visit five of Nepal's protected areas to assess the impacts of the conflict on their conservation. The reports were published in a book 'Conflict and Conservation.' Due to the success of the project, phase II was started in October 2005, when journalists were sent to the remaining eleven protected areas to carry out field research.

Including phase II of the 'Impact of arm conflict on conservation' 2005 was again a busy year for WWG with a workshop being run by Dr. Suman Subedi for students to improve their dissertation writing on endangered species. Further, WWG worked tirelessly to propose a new Environmental Journalism School, to be run in affiliation with the School of Environmental Management and Sustainable Development, Pokhara University. Courses are due to commence in late 2006.

This year, 2006, will also prove to be a busy and successful year. This report will be released to coincide with the International Conference on Conservation in Conflict. This conference will bring together experts in conservation and conflict issues from around the globe. The rest of the year promises to be equally fruitful and full of activity.

Mangal Man Shakya  
Chairman  
August 2006



# 1. WWG – To Conserve Wildlife

Due to its unique geographical position and latitudinal variation, Nepal is one of the richest countries in the world, in terms of biodiversity. Consequently, Nepal has numerous species of wildlife – some of them endangered and endemic to Nepal. In a bid to preserve them and maintain the ecological balance, the government has established eight national parks, three conservation areas, two wildlife reserves and one hunting reserve, which are spread from the terai plains to the highest reaches of the Himalaya. However, the simple efforts of the government are not enough to preserve valuable wildlife. The participation of the public and support of foreign trusts are equally important. Therefore, to provide support, from the public sector, to the preservation of wildlife in Nepal, the Wildlife Watch Group (WWG) was established as a non-governmental, non political and non-profit making organization. WWG aims at designing concepts and initiating programs for the preservation of wildlife, to create public awareness and motivate donor agencies. It will play an important role in the preservation of wildlife, while also raising the living standards of the people.

## FORMATION

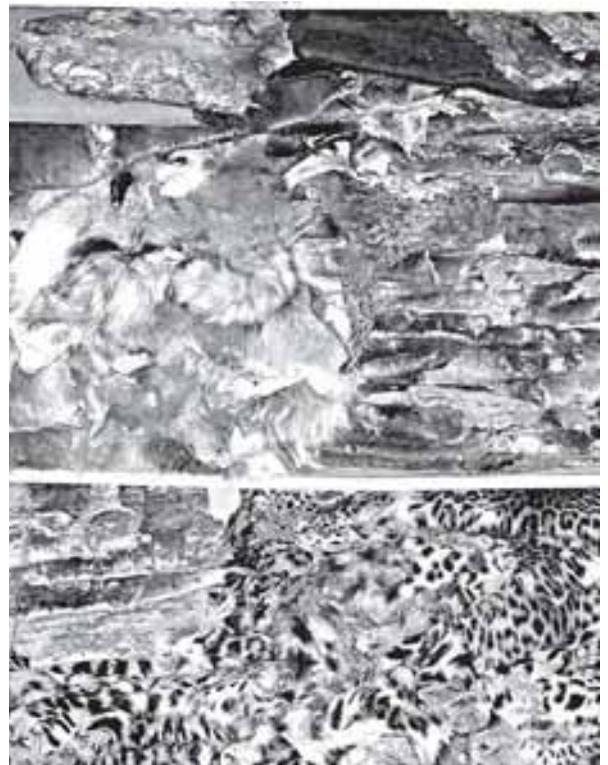
The Wildlife Watch Group, better known as WWG, was formed in 1993 by a small, informal group of members wishing to study and monitor wildlife protection. The team was coordinated by Mr. Hem Bahadur Bista, and in 1996, he was succeeded by Mr. Mangal Man Shakya. Since its inception, WWG has been instrumental in alerting and educating the public on various issues concerning wildlife.

## MISSION OF WWG

WWG's mission is to minimize the killing and illegal trade in wildlife by alerting and educating the people, and urging and reminding the concerned authorities of their responsibilities toward the protection and conservation of wildlife, by implementing the CITES regulations, which will also help conserve biodiversity.

## OBJECTIVES OF WWG

The aims and objectives of WWG revolve around creating awareness about wildlife conservation and protection among journalists, who in turn can inform the public by publishing the information in the mass media. The actions needed to achieve this have been identified as:



- Providing wildlife training to journalists, interested in wildlife, who can work to develop a curriculum.
- Organizing regular interaction programs on major wildlife issues.
- Awarding fellowships to journalists.
- Organizing tours for journalists, to various national parks and wildlife reserves, to gather first hand information on the status of wildlife.
- Publishing an annual media report that covers reports and articles on wildlife in the past year.
- Developing a fully-fledged information/resource center on wildlife and nature.
- Producing audio-video material, including documentaries on wildlife.
- Encouraging joint reporting on trans-boundary biodiversity issues between Nepal and neighbouring countries.
- Publishing a quarterly news feature service on wildlife activities.
- Investigating the illegal trade in, and trafficking of, wildlife species.



## REGISTRATION

On May 23, 2002, WWG was formally registered with the Kathmandu District Administration Office under His Majesty's Government's NGO Registration Act.

## SECRETARIAT OF WWG

During the pre-registration period, WWG's secretariat was located, for three months, in Jyatha, Thamel, sharing space with another NGO, GIFT for Aid Nepal. In July 2003, WWG shifted to Chakupat, Jwagal, Lalitpur, where a building was rented for one year. With the principle of minimizing administration costs and utilizing the maximum portion of the fund in development-oriented programs, WWG signed a MoU with Environmental Camps for Conservation Awareness (ECCA) to share space with the latter in lieu of monetary support to build its building. WWG shifted to ECCA's building, **Wise Use House** at Jwagal, Kopundol, Lalitpur.



## ADMINISTRATION

The WWG administration consists of the chairman, a secretary, a treasurer and members.

Wildlife Watch Group	Executive Committee
Chairman	Mangal Man Shakya
Secretary	Krishna Shrestha
Vice-Chairman	Rabin Das Manandhar
Treasurer	Lal Tamang
Member	Bigyan Pradhan
Member	Sanjay Ghimire
Member	Suresh Manandhar

Executive Committee 2006 ~ 2010

that will ensure the enforcement of wildlife-related policies. The chairman is designated by the executive committee of WWG for a period of four years. The chairman reports WWG's activities and is responsible to the executive committee.

The executive committee consultants with and advises the chairman regarding program development and policies. It reviews all WWG programs and the way they are executed. The members of the executive committee are elected from among journalists and experts who are general members of WWG and who exhibit extensive knowledge and commitment to wildlife issues.

The chairman manages the responsibilities of WWG by analyzing and presenting wildlife-related policy; developing legal arrangements and programs; monitoring the enforcement of legal measures and environmental policy, and finally, presenting programs

WWG uses a separate account, which is run jointly by the Secretary and Treasurer. The chairman advises on the payment as per the approved programs and budget.

### Introduction of Wise-use House

Challenges facing Nepal in conservation and resource management are huge and need to be matched relentlessly by new ideas, strategies and breakthroughs. The economic future of Nepal is also dependent on our ability to make wise use of our natural heritage. Towards this end the Wise-use House had been launched not only to make optimum and efficient use of available resources but also to bring together like minded individuals and groups of people to a common platform from where we can launch our best ideas and efforts to secure a sound ecological, prosperous and just future for Nepal and our planet. The guiding principle behind Wise-use

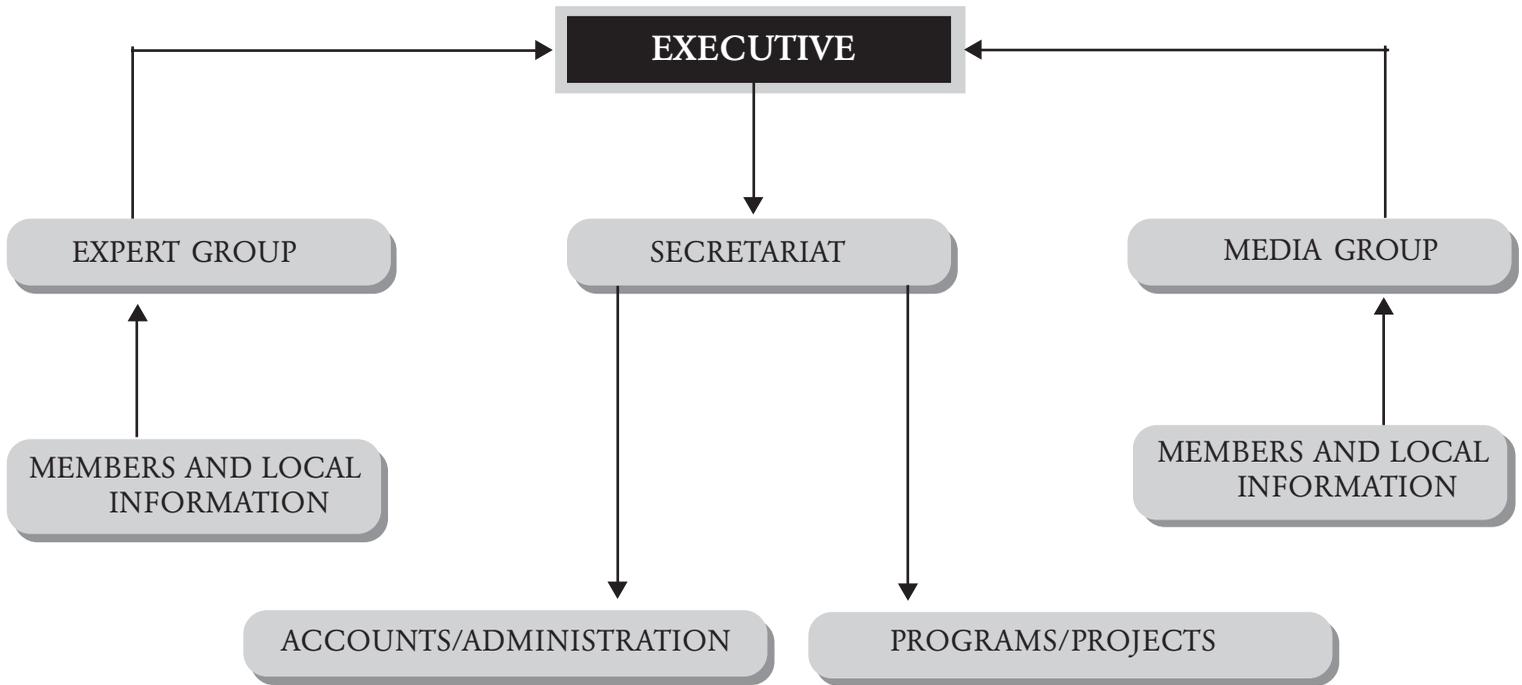
House is that we seek open debate, we seek the best solutions based on what we know and have experienced. Based on this logic (BITARKA) we shall act. We welcome you to Wise-use House.

### Background

ECCA constructed its office building – named as 'Wise-use House' – in Jwagol, Kopundol and its office was shifted there on March 14, 2004. It is envisaged to house several link-minded NGOs in two buildings and develop a new concept in NGO networking. The idea is to operate all the organizations independently for mutual benefit. Some of the benefits foreseen are:



'BITARK' Logo of Wise-use house



- Reduction of overhead expenses for all the organizations (by sharing hall, meeting room, reception, lower office staff, etc.)
- Effective usage of human resources
- Effective usage of physical resources (e.g. photocopy machine, overhead projector, audio visuals, library, etc.)
- Networking for effective output: Positive aspects of the organizations will be combined while developing proposals.
- Programs will be developed and implemented based upon long term partnership
- Value based sharing will be developed among the organizations
- Many organizations are doing good work in their respective field of work. However, it is difficult to show the results of such individual efforts. Networking of organizations working in specialized area needs to be done
- For scaling (from single to many) and spreading (all over the country and the South Asia region)
- For value addition of the deliverables (of the respective organization) so as to tip the balance towards the development
- For more output in less input  
Forum of like-minded organizations will be developed, which practices the basic common value of “wise-use of available resources”



## SUPPORTING STAFF

WWG has appointed staff for its secretariat to run day-to-day office activities smoothly.

The following personnel help run day-to-day office activities:

1. Lal Tamang                      Consultant
2. Bipana Manandhar          Program Assistant
3. Ms. Gyanu Lama              Receptionist (Wise-use House)
4. Mr. Ganga Lal Shrestha      Office Supporter
5. Ms. Laxmi Lama                Canteen Operator (Wise-use House)

In addition a Sweeper and a Guard work as Wise-use House staff

- Arranging visits by distinguished personalities from different national and international organizations
- Participation in different workshops and meetings
- Meetings with executives of different organizations
- Publication of books by executive members

Besides the above activities, WWG has its own website [www.citesnepal.org](http://www.citesnepal.org), which was supported by the British Embassy during 2002-2005.

## PUBLICITY

Be it through news, articles and seminars or other means, wildlife experts and organizations involved in wildlife, environment and nature conservation, both nationally and internationally, know about WWG. As the executive members of the organization are experts in different fields, this has helped broaden its activities among an increasing number of people. WWG has been undertaking the following activities:

## MEMBERSHIP

General members of the Wildlife Watch Group are granted membership by the executive committee. There are four kinds of memberships - general, institutional, honorary and life. Members comprise mostly of experts, journalists and specialists. General members meet every year to review the policies and programs of WWG. ■

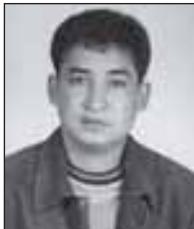


## 2. Member Profiles

### EXECUTIVE MEMBERS



MANGAL MAN SHAKYA is probably the first journalist specializing in wildlife in the country. In 1993, he began writing on the wildlife trade, inspired by a well-placed bureaucrat in the Ministry of Forests. At that time, Nepali newspapers rarely covered issues relating to wildlife trade. In 1996, he coordinated an informal group called the Wildlife Watch Group to motivate young journalists to write more on wildlife issues. As a result, wildlife issues have become a major issue in the mainstream media. Over the last seven years wildlife issues have been afforded unprecedented coverage. In 1993, he won Nepal's Best Environmental Journalist Award, and in 2002 he was one of the four recipients of the International Green Pen Award, from the Asia Pacific region.



RABIN DAS MANANDHAR (SAYAMI) is a well known illustrator in Nepal. His strokes - be it political satire, development woes or complex conservation issues - directly hit the reader. He is equally famous as a brilliant graphic designer of conservation reports and books. Mr. Sayami is a founder member of WWG.



KRISHNA SHRESTHA has been working for the GORKHAPATRA, Nepal's oldest vernacular daily, for over 25 years. He was the recipient of the Abraham Conservation Award in 1995 in recognition of the reports he published on wildlife-related issues in the daily. He also has, to his credit, an investigative report, in book format, on the plight of the Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve, Nepal's Ramsar site. More recently, he has edited the first ever feature service bulletin on biodiversity. Mr. Shrestha is a founder member of WWG.



LAL B. TAMANG is an eco-tourism promoter. He is also heavily involved in social organizations. He is an executive member of the Kathmandu Environmental Education Project (KEEP) and Global Initiative for Foreign Aid by Tourists (GIFT for AID Nepal).



BIGYAN PRADHAN used to work for the King Mahendra Japan Trust as Program Director. He is a conservationist, turned businessman, now based in Kathmandu. Mr. Pradhan is founder member of WWG.



SURESH MANANDHAR is the Editor of the SANDHYA TIMES, a Nepal Bhasa daily published from Kathmandu. He is a prolific writer, poet and play writer. Recently, he has focused his pen on writing about wildlife trade, and his investigative write-ups have become classic. Mr. Manandhar is founding member of WWG



SANJAY GHIMIRE is a television journalist. He is a reporter with Channel Nepal, a cable television channel popular in Nepal as well as overseas.

## GENERAL MEMBERS



ANIL CHITRAKAR is a well known personality in the field of conservation and youth empowerment. He has had many years of experience in conservation and resource management-related activities. He is the initiator of Wise-use House Network and designated as Mentor of it.



DR. RABI S. ARYAL is Under-Secretary (Environmental Lawyer) of the government. He has been with His Majesty's Government (now Nepal Government) for the last 17 years. He has served as an expert in different high-level environmental and forestry committees and commissions in Nepal. He has extensive experience in effecting the implementation of CITES in Nepal and India. Dr. Sharma is a founder member of WWG.



RAJENDRA SUWAL is Director of the Lumbini Crane Sanctuary. Mr. Suwal is one of the founding members of Bird Conservation Nepal and the Lumbini Crane Conservation Centre. Since 1995 he has been a member of the Crane Specialist Group, IUCN - Species Survival Commission. He was also a member of the Environment Protection Council of Government of Nepal.



BIJAYA LAL SHRESTHA is a senior journalist with THE RISING NEPAL, a leading national daily, published in English.



SIDHARTHA SHAKYA is a creative video journalist. He was involved with Channel Nepal as a cameraman. These days he devotes his time to freelance video journalism.



DAMODAR KHADKA is a journalist turn wildlife researcher based in Canada.



AMRIT LAL JOSHI used to work in government of Nepal, ministry of forest and soil conservation for more than two decades overseeing various programs and projects. He later resigned from the ministry and joined FAO headquarter in Rome, Italy. From FAO he came back to Kathmandu as technical advisor of Danish government funded natural resource project. He is widely known as initiator of community forestry in Nepal.



SAHAJ MAN SHRESTHA is a well known producer both in documentary and cinema. He was associated with Nepal Television and Image channel. Recently he was a vice president of Nepal Forum of Environmental Journalists (NEFEJ) ■

## 3. Activities of members

### SHAKYA ELECTED CHAIRMAN OF KEEP

WWG Chairman Mangal Man Shakya has been elected chairman of Kathmandu Environmental Education Project (KEEP).

KEEP is a renowned NGO working with a mission to minimize the negative impacts of tourism on the environment and culture of Nepal while maximizing its benefits for the Nepalese through education, research, practical conservation and social welfare. Mr. Shakya has been actively involved, in different capacities, in this organization since its establishment. His current tenure as chairperson is for a period of three years. During his very first year in office, the Ministry of Environment awarded KEEP with the National Environment Award 2060- 2nd position.

### SHAKYA AUTHORS “TRADING FOR EXTINCTION”

In 2004, following a vast study and long research on the illegal wildlife trade in Nepal, Mr. Mangal Man Shakya has written a book *Trading for Extinction: An expose of illegal wildlife trade in Nepal*. It is, perhaps, the only book of its kind to be published so far, and in it the author has well documented the status of illegal wildlife trade in Nepal. Mr. Shakya has presented cases regarding wildlife conservation, the forests and the environment, and has also cited reasons behind the failure to implement measures to protect wildlife. He has also given possible solutions.

In a review of the book, Mr. Bijaya Lal Shrestha writes “The richly illustrated

book is a mine of information about the illicit wildlife trade.” The book has been published by WordScape and contains 166 pages. It is priced at NRs.250.

**Presentation on Wildlife Trade Issues**  
By invitation of WWF Nepal Program, WWG Chairman Mr. Mangal Man Shakya gave a presentation on Wildlife Trade Issues in Nepal at a special program held on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2005. During the program Mr. Shakya presented accounts of the history of wildlife trade in Nepal and the region, the current status of wildlife trade activities in Nepal with case study examples, trials and networking and illicit wildlife dealers in Nepal. He also highlighted the scenario of Indo-Nepal trans-border wildlife trade.

### BOOK ON CITES

Executive member of WWG, Dr. Ravi Aryal, in 2004, authored *CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) Implementation in Nepal and India, Law, Policy and Practice*. Dr. Aryal, a Ph.D. in wildlife trade and implementation of CITES, has presented the implementation status of CITES in Nepal and India from a legal approach. It is divided into seven chapters. The book is a useful resource for wildlife wardens, lawyers, academics, conservation activists and students.

Rajendra Suwal joins nepalnature.com  
Executive member of WWG, Mr. Rajendra Suwal, has been nominated as the Managing Director of nepalnature.com. This website and organisation organizes fascinating nature tours throughout Nepal and is run by a reputed business house - KGH group of companies. ■

## 4. Membership/Affiliations

*In accordance with its aim to establish cooperation with different organizations and work hand-in-hand, WWG has been taking initiatives for membership or affiliation with other organizations. WWG has membership of or affiliation with the following organizations:*



- SOCIAL WELFARE COUNCIL (SWC)

The Social Welfare Council (SWC) is the roof organization of NGOs in Nepal, representing His Majesty's Government. It coordinates with foreign and local organizations involved in social work to maximize benefits to the target group. It monitors financial and program activities of local NGOs and provides necessary support. As per the decision of the board, WWG applied for affiliation. The Certificate of Affiliation was received in August 2003.



- APFEJ

One of the vigorous and renowned associations of environmental journalists in the Asia Pacific region, the Asia Pacific Federation of Environmental Journalists (APFEJ) granted full membership to WWG on August 15, 2003.



- IUCN

The World Conservation Union (IUCN) is one of the leading international

organizations in the field of nature conservation. WWG has close relation with IUCN Nepal office and most of members of the NNC-IUCN. WWG chairman has been member of IUCN/CEC since 1997. This year WWG is applying for IUCN institutional membership.

- Snow Leopard Network (SLN)

Wildlife Watch Group has been recognized as an organizational member of The Snow Leopard Network (SLN) on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2006. The SLN is a partnership of the worldwide organizations and individuals from government and private sector who work together for the effective conservation of the snow leopard; its prey and their natural habitat to the benefit of people and biodiversity established with the mission to promote sound scientifically-based conservation of the endangered snow leopard through networking and collaboration between individuals, organizations and governments.



## 5. Special Program



*APFEJ 15th congress in Malasia, 2003*

### **SOUTH SOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAM (SSEP)**

WWG administered the first ever South-South Exchange Program (SSEP)-2003/04, as the local secretariat of the implementing organization, the Asia Pacific Federation of Environmental Journalists (APFEJ). Mr. Mangal Man Shakya, Chairman of WWG, was appointed Project Director of the program.

The SSEP is a staff exchange program, among the organizations of the South and South-East Asian countries, which is carried out with the objective of sharing experiences and expertise in order to improve the capacity, enrich the knowledge base and enhance the professional skills and efficiency of the participating individuals and organizations.

The program was held in two phases. The first phase of the program was held from May 2003 to December 2003 and the second phase from September 2003 to April 2004. The program had the

participation of 17 individuals from 12 organizations of nine South and South-East Asian countries. The program initiated by APFEJ was funded by Fredskorpset, a Norwegian organization.

At the beginning of the program, the participating fellows were given a 12-day preparatory course, to give them an insight into the cultural, traditional and practical aspects of the host countries, where they were to spend eight months as volunteers. The workshop was conducted at the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), jointly by Fredskorpset and AIT, in Bangkok from 20 April to 2 May 2003.

The participants worked for eight months as volunteer staff in the partner organizations, exchanging their experiences and knowledge in the relevant field.

The partner organizations and countries were:

#### 1. KATHMANDU ENVIRONMENT EDUCATION PROJECT (KEEP) - NEPAL:

KEEP, a non governmental organization, was established in 1992 with the objective of minimizing the negative



*SSEP preliminary meeting in Dhaka, 2002*



Logo and motto of CMFE



impact of tourism, making it sustainable and distributing the benefits to the local people. Its partnership organization was the Sri Lankan Eco-tourism Foundation (SLEF). Mr. Welgamage Sumedha Devapriya participated as a fellow from SLEF, while Mr. Amit Manandhar was a fellow from KEEP to SLEF.

**2. SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION OF CAMBODIA (SEDOC) - CAMBODIA**

The Federation of Environmental Journalists of Bangladesh (FEJB) was its partner organization. Mr. Monirul Islam from the FEJB worked in SEDOC as a fellow from May to December 2003. Similarly Mr. Heang Sarim from SEDOC worked in the FEJB as a fellow volunteer.

**3. ENVIRONMENTAL BROADCAST CIRCLE (EBC) – PHILIPPINES**

Environmental Broadcast Circle (EBC) is an active organization in environmental media in the Philippines. During the SSEP-2003/04, its partnership organization was the Aafathis daily from the Maldives. Mr. Lamrath Ahmed, senior reporter of the Aafathis daily



*First SSEP regional meeting in progress*

worked from October 2003 to May 2004 in the EBC as a fellow while the EBC sent a staff member to work in the Aafathis daily.

**4. FORUM OF ENVIRONMENTAL JOURNALISTS OF PAKISTAN (FEJP) - PAKISTAN**

The FEJP hosted Mr. Sanjay Ghimire of the partnership organization, the Federation of Nepalese Journalists (FNJ). Mr. Ghimire worked in the FEJP from May to December 2003. Likewise, Mr. Kuram Khan from the FEJP participated as a fellow and worked for the FNJ.



**5. VIETNAM FORUM FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JOURNALISTS (VFEJ) – VIETNAM**

Under the SSEP program-2003/04, The Vientiane Times of Laos was the partnership organization of VFEJ. Mr. Mongkhon Vongsam-Ang, of the Vientiane Times in Laos, worked in VFEJ.



**6. FEDERATION OF NEPALESE JOURNALISTS (FNJ) NEPAL**

The FNJ, the umbrella organization of Nepalese journalists, hosted two fellows - Mr. R.A. Arultherien and Mr. Khuram Khan respectively from the Sri Lanka



Environmental Journalists Forum and Pakistan Environmental Journalists Forum. They worked under the first phase of the program from May to December 2004. Representing the FNJ, Mr. Sanjay Ghimire and Mr. Kedar Prasad Bhattarai worked in the FEJP and SLEF respectively.

**7. SRI LANKAN ECOTOURISM FOUNDATION (SLEF) SRI LANKA**

SLEF, established in 1998, is the pioneer ecotourism society in Sri Lanka. It is a membership based organization and accommodates sectors relating to tourism, academia, environment and environmental journalism. SLEF's partner organizations were the Kathmandu Environmental Education Project (KEEP), Nepal, and the Federation of Nepalese Journalists (FNJ). The participating fellows were Mr. Amit Manandhar from KEEP and Mr. Kedar Prasad Bhattarai from the FNJ.

**8. SRI LANKA ENVIRONMENTAL JOURNALISTS FORUM (SLEJF), SRI LANKA**



*Fredskorpset secretary general Mr. Tor Elden*

The SLEJJ from Sri Lanka participated as a partner organization in the first SSEP program-2003/04. Representing the SLEJF, Mr. R.A. Arultherien worked in the FNJ while Mr. Kedar Prasad Bhattarai of the FNJ worked in the SLEJF.

**9. FORUM OF ENVIRONMENTAL JOURNALISTS OF BANGLADESH (FEJB), BANGLADESH**

The Forum of Environmental Journalists of Bangladesh (FEJB) hosted two fellows in the first and one fellow in the second phase of the SSEP-2003/04 program. In the first phase, the fellows were Mr. Heang Sarim of the Socio-economic Development Organization of Cambodia (SEDOC) and Mr. Pouv Savuth of Cambodia's Media Forum on Environment (CMFE). In the second phase, Ms. Dinh Thi Thu Hong of the Vietnam Forum of Environmental Journalists (VFEJ) participated as a fellow. Mr. Monirul Islam from the FEJB worked in SEDOC, Cambodia.





At the end of the first phase of the program, a debriefing and evaluation workshop was conducted in Bangkok. The four-day long workshop was held from January 2-5, 2004 and had the participation of environmental journalists and activists from Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, Nepal, Vietnam, the Philippines and Cambodia. The participants had completed their eight month stay with the host organizations as an APFEJ/SSEP fellow.

#### 10. CAMBODIA'S MEDIA FORUM ON ENVIRONMENT (CMFE), CAMBODIA

The CMFE hosted Mr. Abu Darda Zubair Bin Habib from the Forum of Environmental Journalists of Bangladesh (FEJB), who worked from September 2003 to April 2004. Similarly, Mr. Pouy Savuth of the CMFE worked in the FEJB, Bangladesh as a fellow for eight months.

The participants emphasized the need for greater cooperation among the countries of the South to help foster South-South cooperation for achieving sustainable development. On the whole the SSEP program was quite successful. ■

#### 11. THE VIENTIANE TIMES, LAOS

The Vientiane Times hosted Ms. Minh Thao of the partner organization, Sai Gon Liberation newspaper of Vietnam. Ms. Thao worked there from September 2003 till April 2004. Similarly, The Vientiane Times of Laos sent Mr. Mongkhon Vongsam-Ang to VFEJ, Vietnam.

#### 12. AFATHIS DAILY, MALDIVES

Mr. Lamrath Ahmed, senior reporter of the Aafathis daily worked from October 2003 to May 2004 in the EBC for the SSEP-2003/04. Likewise, a fellow from the EBC worked in the Afathis daily for eight months.



*SSEP 2nd phase participants*

## 6. Investigation

### BEAR BILE TRADE IN NEPAL

Covering an area of 147,181 sq. km, Nepal is rich in biodiversity and harbors a large, diverse population of flora and fauna. Among the many prominent species, Nepal is also home to three species of bear, the Asiatic or Himalayan black bear (*Ursus thibetanus*), brown bear (*Ursus arctos*) and sloth bear (*Melursus ursinus*) inhabiting the different ecological zones of Nepal.

The sloth bear inhabits the grasslands, thorn shrubs, and sal (*Shorea robusta*) forests of the terai belt. The Himalayan

or Asiatic black bear (*Selenarctos thibetanus*) largely inhabits the temperate zone, between elevations of about 2,000 - 3,000 meters. The brown bear resides in the mountains and is rare. By Nepalese law, the brown bear is better protected than the other two species although all bear species found in Nepal are listed in schedule one in the CITES appendix.

The National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1973, which has been amended four times, states that any person found guilty of killing or injuring, or found guilty of possessing trophies of the brown bear, sloth bear



*Himalayan Black bear in Khaptad National Park*



*bear bile  
seized from  
poacher*

and Himalayan black bear or any person found guilty of the intending to sell, buy or transfer the trophies of these bears are punishable with a minimum fine of Rs. 50,000 to a maximum of Rs. 100,000 or imprisonment ranging from 5 - 15 years, or both.

Despite these legal measures, poaching and the illegal trade in bear products continues. The bear is hunted for its bile and skin. The bile is yellow to light green. Technically, it is called *Ursodeoxycholic acid* (UDCA) and comes from the bear's gall bladder. It is used for medicinal purposes. Medical applications include treatment of life-threatening cancers, burns, pains and redness of the eyes, asthma, sinusitis and general pain.

The poachers hunt bears using traditional methods. They set up traps or chase the bears into a cave and suffocate them or use a trident to kill them. A lot of people are involved in the trade. The trade route can be divided into two major parts: southern region and northern region. The southern region shares an open border with India while the northern region borders Tibet, China and India.

The primary urban centers where the bile is traded in the southern region are Nepalgunj, Kohalpur, Biratnagar,

Birgunj/Raxaul and Kakarbhitta. Kathmandu, the capital, possibly remains the largest trading center. Delhi and Motihar (in Bihar), on the other side of the Nepalese border, are the major cities where goods are either locally sold or further exported to other countries.

The northern region of Nepal is less accessible due to the poor road infrastructure. This makes it easy for the poachers to kill animals and transport them either on foot or by mules to the Tibetan border in the north and the Indian borders to the west, east and the north-eastern territories. Due to the remoteness of many of these areas, the trade could actually be taking place on a much larger scale than in the southern region. Also, most of the wildlife that is hunted takes place outside the protected areas, which further reduces the chances of poachers being caught.

In Asia and the sub-continent, the trade in the bear bile is a highly profitable business. From its place of origin to its final destination, the international market, the price of the bile or its products fluctuates many times as it changes hands. Most of the arrests that have been made over the past years have occurred within the Kathmandu Valley, which goes to show that the capital is one of the hotspots of the trade.

Although there have been several reported cases of traffickers being arrested, they are often set free with light punishment. The trade in bear bile can be minimized or discouraged by providing proper training to the concerned officials, i.e. forestry and wildlife personnel and conservation and customs officials, and bringing awareness and motivation to the people. ■

## 7. Ongoing Program



*Orientation program for journalists*

### CONFLICT AND CONSERVATION-PHASE I

Nepal is a small but rich country in terms of biodiversity due to its unique geographical position and latitudinal variation. Protected areas play a vital role in conservation of biodiversity. In addition, one of the major sources of revenue collection in Nepal is through tourists visiting the protected areas. Nepal, although small in size, has contributed remarkably to the conservation of global biodiversity by setting aside more than 19 percent of the country's landmass for perpetual conservation purposes.

Unfortunately, the prolonged armed conflict over the past decade, which began with the launch of the Maoist insurgency, has adversely influenced the conservation activities. It is necessary to identify the current situation in regards to conservation to design and implement

future programs effectively. In September 2004 WWG sent journalists to five of the protected areas of Nepal to prepare field reports on the influence of conflict on conservation, with financial support from the Embassy of Finland, Kathmandu.

The field study was accomplished in the following protected areas:

1. Annapurna Conservation Area
2. Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve
3. Khaptad National Park
4. Langtang National Park
5. Makalu Barun National Park and Conservation Area

In the absence of concerned personnel in the protected areas, poaching of wild animals, illegal collection of herbs and their trafficking, and deforestation have increased. The presence of Maoists in the forests, and the activities of the two armed forces in the jungle, has killed many wild animals. As a consequence, the wild animals take to the surrounding farms in search of food for survival. In turn, aggressive farmers kill the wild animals. Tourism used to be a major source of revenue for the protected areas and a basis of livelihood for the local communities living around the protected areas. With the decline of tourist numbers in the protected areas, the revenue collected from the tourists, in national park and conservation area entry fees, has plummeted.

Whether it is the destruction of physical infrastructure, human casualties, threats to staff and security personnel or activities between the two armed forces, the conflict has had a significant impact on two primary sectors, i.e. conservation of biodiversity and the country's economy.

The type of influence and degree of its impact varies from one national park to another, depending upon the geography, distance from the headquarters of the security forces, density of population in that area, education, awareness, social status, religion and customs.

On the basis of the field reports submitted by the assigned journalists and investigative report on the influence of the conflict, by wildlife expert Ukesh Raj Bhujju and Aditya Man Shrestha, WWG published a report, titled "Conflict & Conservation", and distributed it to concerned organizations and individuals.



## PUBLICATION OF BOOK

In 2005, WWG published a book titled *Conflict & Conservation*. The book, edited by Mangal Man Shakya and Anil Chitrakar, highlights the conservation of biodiversity in the protected areas of Nepal during the Maoist conflict.



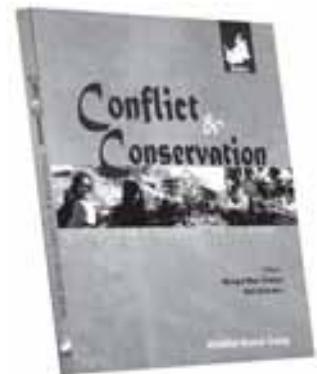
WWG and Embassy of Finland signing an agreement

## CONFLICT AND CONSERVATION: PHASE-II

Finding the field study carried out in five of the protected areas effective, on the basis of feedback from concern organizations and individuals, WWG was desirous to continue the field study in rest of the protected areas of Nepal. With financial support from the Charge d' Affairs of the Embassy of Finland, in October 2005 WWG, through journalists, conducted field studies in the eleven other protected areas of Nepal.

Before sending the journalists into the field an orientation program was held in order to enable the participants to become acquainted with the study program, the importance of conservation, techniques for field study, norms and values and general information of the protected areas.

Based on the field report a book with title "Cost of Conflict on Nepal's Conservation Efforts" was published. ■



The following are areas where the field studies were conducted and the journalists assigned:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. KOSHI TAPPU WILDLIFE RESERVE  | 6. SHEY PHOKSUNDO NATIONAL PARK                         |
| Yam Pradhan<br>Bijay Shantoshi Rai   | Ajay Raj Bam<br>Puskar Thapa                            |
| 2. PARSA WILDLIFE RESERVE  | 7. RARA NATIONAL PARK                                   |
| NK Dahal<br>Ganesh Chowdhary<br>Krishna Bhandari<br>Gopal Tiwari<br>Jitendra Bajracharya | Kalendra Sijuwal  |
| 3. ROYAL CHITWAN NATIONAL PARK   | 8. SAGARMATHA NATIONAL PARK                             |
| NK Dahal<br>Ganesh Chowdhary<br>Krishna Bhandari<br>Gopal Tiwari<br>Jitendra Bajracharya | Sangeeta Lama   |
| 4. ROYAL BARDIA NATIONAL PARK  | 9. MANASLU CONSERVATION AREA PROJECT                    |
| Shiva Raj Yogi<br>Prem KC<br>Sanjay Ghimire  | Bindu Kant Ghimire<br>KP Gautam                         |
| 5. SUKLA PHANTA WILDLIFE RESERVE   | 10. KANCHANJUNGHA CONSERVATION AREA PROJECT             |
| Karn Bohara  | Ananda Gautam<br>Mahendra Bista<br>Chandra Sekhar Karki |
|  | 11. SHIVAPURI NATIONAL PARK                             |
|  | Ram Prasad Dahal  |

## 8. Other Activities

### SUPPORT FOR PHOTO EXHIBITION

In February 2004, WWG provided financial support for a photo exhibition organized by World Conservation Nepal (WCN). Most of the photos were taken by students, which showed that the young generation was aware and taking an interest in the conservation of nature.

### BLACK MARKET :INSIDE THE ENDANGERED SPECIES TRADE IN ASIA

The utilization of wildlife is in practice since prehistoric times when man hunted wild animals for food, clothing, medicines, religious rituals, etc. With the increase in consumption of wildlife parts and derivatives for clothing, medicines, laboratory experiments and adornment, gradually the dealing turned into trade. Asia is one of the regions where wildlife poaching and trading activity is in the peak.

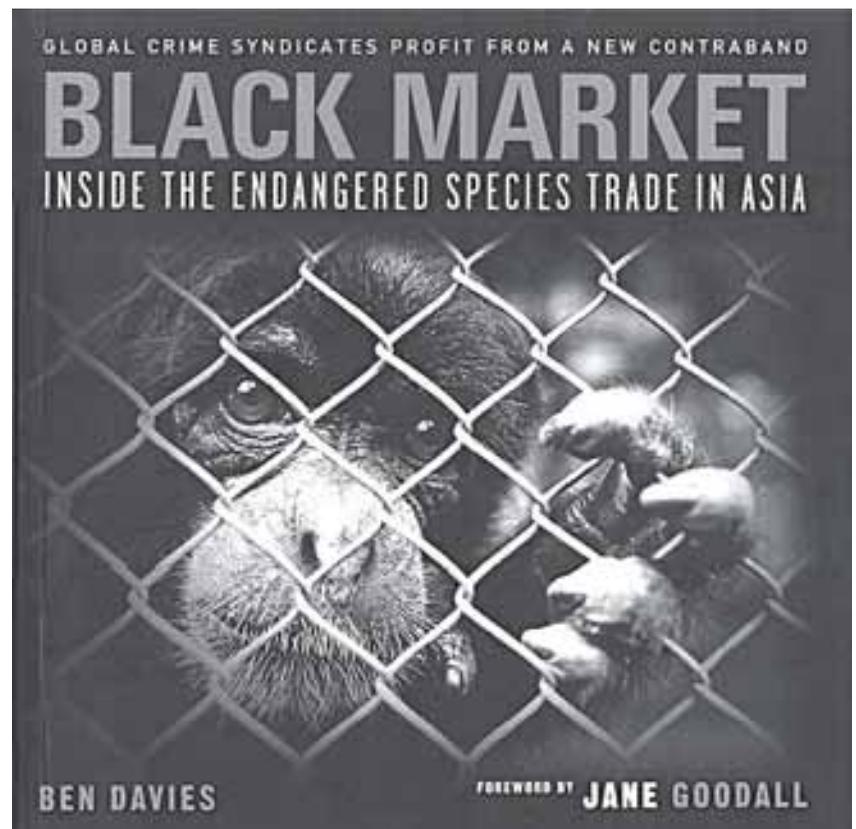
In August 2005, **BLACK MARKET**, a book reflecting the poaching and trading of the endangered species in Asia, authored by Ben Davis, an environmental journalist from the United Kingdom was published. In the book, vivid portrait, punctuated by gripping images and eyewitness accounts of the trade in endangered species in Asia is found. In deed it is a tale of organized crime and cruel exploitation ranging from Australia to china and of a black market whose tentacles extended from the remote forests and jungles of Asia to the marketing centers of Tokyo, London, Beijing, New York and other world capitals.

WWG had provided support to collect information on the illegal wildlife trade in Nepal to Mr. Patrick Brown, a photojournalist, who had come to Nepal to gather information for the book.

Some extracts from the book about conservation activity in Nepal :

( 99 CHAPTER THREE: THE UNDERGROUNDCHANNELS)

"The web of intrigue that surrounds the wildlife trade in Nepal extends far beyond the armed rebels, international traffickers, and small-time poachers that flourish in this increasingly lawless kingdom."



"In 1992 a trust operated by the Nepalese Royal family was giving pairs of live rhinos to zoos in various foreign countries in exchange for US\$ 250,000 donations. The amount was placed in a numbered bank account at a bank in Kathmandu and not even the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation knew of its existence. Questions remain about whether the money was a gift or a cover up for a major incident of wildlife trafficking."

"A reporter turned wildlife investigator, this generous and warm-hearted man has done much to bring the plight of the country's wildlife to the attention of both the government and conservationists. Mr. Mangal Man Shakya, who is now chairman of the Wildlife Watch Group, has traveled all around the region in a bid to pressure governments to take action to stem the trade."

"When corruption goes all the way to the top, there is nobody left to set an example"

**BLACK MARKET** is produced by Adam Oswell in cooperation with Earth Aware Editions, CA USA. Part of the proceeds from the sale of the book will be used to develop further awareness of this critical issue facing Asia's Wildlife. The producer has requested for assistance in distributing the book worldwide. The producer can be reached at [blackmarket@earthware.org](mailto:blackmarket@earthware.org)

## WWG BUILDS UP DIGITAL DATABASE

Data is an important source of information, which require for the purposes like research, policy making, strategy building, etc. With an objective to develop database of conservation relating publication, report, news, articles, thesis, in 2002 WWG has started to collect and digitalise the archives. It aims to develop a giant digital database so that it would foster researchers, students, development agencies and even government by providing relevant materials for their research, study, survey and design strategies and policies.

The collections are:

1. Dissertation and reports
2. Annual Reports
3. Program reports
4. Articles
5. News clips
6. Information of protected parks and related organizations

We are collecting theses relating wildlife conservation, wildlife poaching, wildlife trade issues, and forest resources related. These include Ph.D., M.Sc. and B.Sc. level theses and reports.

Our archives include annual reports and program reports of major organizations involved in biodiversity conservation, articles published in major magazines and national weekly and daily news papers, information of all protected parks and related organizations.

We are thankful to WWF Nepal, KMTNC, IUCN, ICIMOD, DNPWC and TU Library for providing dissertations, annual reports and program reports and other publications.

## FAREWELL PARTY TO ERIC KNUT HELLE

A farewell party was hosted by WWG in honor of Eric Knut Helle, a Norwegian journalist who was in Nepal. Knut-Erik Helle, is Norwegian journalist who worked as assistant editor of Folkevett magazine published by Future In Our Hands in Oslo, Norway. Helle has previously worked in different newspapers in Norway and in the Norwegian Broadcasting Company (NRK). He has university degrees in mathematics, philosophy and journalist. He was in Nepal during 2002-2003 as Fredskorpset funded north south fellow program. WWG chairman Mr. Shakya negotiated this program with Norwegian organizations during his visit in that country in year 2001.

## ENVIRONMENTAL JOURNALISM SCHOOL

The professionals working in the journalism sector need technical knowledge of environmental issues. On this basis it is felt necessary to provide them with technical knowledge in such a way that the general public will also have the opportunity to become informed about the environment in a straightforward manner, WWG has initiated the establishment of an Environmental Journalism School, in collaboration with the School of Environmental Management and Sustainable Development (SchEMS), which is affiliated with Pokhara University.

This sort of school is the first in its kind in Nepal. The School will have two different levels

- a. Advanced Environmental Journalism
- b. Basic Environmental Journalism

A MoU between WWG and SchEMS has been signed and other preliminary works such as determining experts in concern fields and conducting consultation meetings, designing a draft curriculum and preparing a program prospectus are currently underway. Classes are proposed to begin in late 2006.

## PEOPLE'S NATURE CONSERVATION TRUST

A delegation of stakeholders, conservationists, lawyer and journalist lead by Mr. Mangal Man Shakya, Chairman of WWG met Hon'ble State Minister for Forest and Soil Conservation Mr. Gopal Rai at his office, Singha Durbar today afternoon and handed over a Memorandum prepared to turn King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation (KMTNC) into People's Nature Conservation Trust.

The Memorandum states that in the present context of political turn, there should be substantial alteration in leadership and management of KMTNC. It is urged in the memorandum that the prevailing act which has a provision that only the royal family member can be patron and chair of the Trust should be withdrawn and make the provision to appoint it's chairman by the cabinet. KMTNC is the esteem and leading organization involved in nature

conservation in Nepal . Also it has been a controversy organization time to time; accusing of sale of rhinoceros labelling them as gift and not keeping its activities and financial status transparent. Other members of the delegation were Mr. Indra Singh Karki, chairman of Nepal Forest Association, Mr. Ishwor Man Pradhan, General Secretary of Nepal Heritage Society, Mr. Shankar Malla Thakuri, General Secretary of Nepalese Federation of Forest Resources Users Group, Conservationists Dr. Tirtha Bahadur Shrestha, Mr. Ukesh Raj Bhuju, Mr. Rana Bahadur Rawal, Mr. Rajendra Shrestha former head of IUCN Nepal Mr. Anil Chitrakar, former joint secretary of ministry of forest and soil conservation Mr. Amrit Lal Joshi, and senior environmental journalist Mr. Aditya Man Shrestha.

The highlights of the Memorandum

The suggestions to be implemented immediately are:

1. Rename the organization as “ Nepal Nature Conservation Trust” instead of King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation.
2. Appoint the new chairman and s/he should prepare whitepaper reflecting the activities and financial status of the trust since its establishment. Manage the report to be tabled in parliament and later bring it to the public.
3. The candidate to be nominated for the chairman should be:
  - Proficient in nature conservation, highly experienced, and distinguished personality in national and international level.



*Discussion before submitting memorandum to foreign minister on the reform of KMTMC*

- Nepalese citizen residing in Nepal
  - Not a controversy personality
4. Dissolve the present executive body and form subcommittee by the chairman.
  5. Promulgate the whitepaper, redesign organizational structure, strategy and policy of the trust making involvement of the stakeholders.

chairmanship of Mr. Mangal Man Shakya. Other executive members are Mr. Rabin Sayami, Vice-Chairman, Mr. Krishna Shrestha, Secretary, Mr. Lal Tamang, Treasurer, Mr. Suresh Manandhar, Mr. Bigyan Pradhan and Mr. Sanjay Ghimire as members. As per the constitution of WWG the term of the executive committee shall be four years. ■

Later a memorandum justifying the legal aspect to deny the provisions in the “KMTNC Act 2039 B.S.” which are contradicted with the recent parliament proclamation 2006 has been handed to the Hon’ble State Minister for Forest and Soil Conservation Mr. Gopal Rai. The State Minister Mr. Rai has assured that he would leave no stone for the implementation of the suggestion as far as possible.

## WWG NEW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Wildlife Watch Group (WWG) held its fourth Annual General Meeting. The AGM took place in its office premises at Wise-use House, Jwagal, Lalitpur in Chairmanship of WWG Chairman Mr. Mangal Man Shakya. Chair of the ceremony Mr. Mangal Man Shakya instigated the meeting welcoming all the executive and general members of the organization.

Secretary of the organization Mr. Krishna Shrestha delivered brief account of program highlights. Likewise Treasurer Mr. Rabin Sayami presented the financial report of the organization. New executive body was formed under



*WWG new executive committee*

## 9. Workshop/ Interactions



### **WORKSHOP ON “NEED FOR PRODUCING BETTER DISSERTATION IN MASTER’S THESIS IN ENDANGERED SPECIES OF NEPAL**

Workshop on “Need for Producing Better Dissertation in Master’s Dissertation” in endangered species of Nepal was held on July 2, 2005 in Jwagal, Kuponhole, Lalitpur. Wildlife Watch Group (WWG) organized the workshop. Seventeen former and current graduate students of Central Department of Zoology, Tribhuvan University attended the meeting.

The workshop aimed to highlight the importance of the dissertation and the research methodology in the dissertation. The specific objectives were:

- To share the experience regarding the process of dissertation
- To find out major difficulties in preparing the dissertation

- To explore possible areas for helping the students to motivate writing better dissertation
- Make a common ground of understanding for dissertation

#### THE WORKSHOP

Dr. Suman Suvedi, coordinator, initiated the workshop by welcoming all the participants. She highlighted the theme of the workshop and hoped that the workshop would be useful to develop a practical and collaborative proposal to work with students.

Mr. Mangal Man Shakya, President of Wildlife Watch Group, gave a brief introduction of WWG and described the importance and background of the workshop. He reiterated the wish of WWG to work more closely with student researchers in the field of endangered species. He informed participants of the possible collaboration to work on wildlife and publicizing research work. He gave a brief history of wildlife journalism in Nepal and stressed the need of field biologists as resource persons for quality journalism. He indicated that he looks forward to the workshop’s suggestions for close cooperation with wildlife researchers.

#### KEY NOTE SPEECH

Mr. Top B. Khatri, PCP/UNDP, presented key note speech on “Writing a good dissertation- Some practical and pragmatic tips”. He began his speech by stating the essence of good dissertation is critical thinking and presentation. He observed that in the beginning many students come up with very rough, vague and broad ideas. He explained the importance of various steps

of research: including preparatory phase, literature review, selection of subjects and title, proposal writing, selection of suitable methodology, reconnaissance survey, data collection and analysis and write up for a quality dissertation. He suggested that students should work with a clear view and on the subjects which have funding and career growth opportunities.

At the end he discussed the scopes of good dissertation. He believed the quality dissertation should have immediate management implications and career growth opportunities for the researcher.

#### GROUP DISCUSSION

Keynote speech was followed by group discussion. Participants divided into three working groups to share their problems in dissertation work, define specific priorities for action, and formulate concrete recommendations. Discussions were held simultaneously in individual groups. Group discussions were followed by presentations from each of group. Many issues were raised in discussion. Finally, the students came up with some common problems and practical recommendations which primarily focused on improving the quality of dissertations.

#### ISSUES

- Lack of sufficient and recent literatures
- Lack of proper orientation for research
- Lack of financial support
- Lack of field equipment
- Security problems
- Lack of future opportunity

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

Literature should be made easily accessible to the researcher from different libraries.

Orientation- Research training focusing on research, research methodology, equipment handling, data collection and analysis and dissertation preparation should be given to the students before the initiation of the research work.

Small scale research grants should be provided to the students.

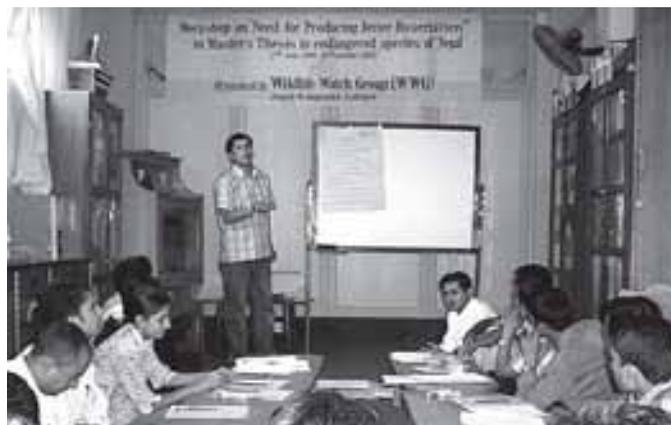
Concerned authorities should encourage students in their research.

Media should cooperate in publicizing the student's works.

For better research students should have an interdisciplinary team of supervisors. Young researchers should have an environment and support to continue their work after completion of their Master degree.

To create a supportive environment the concerned authority of Tribhuvan University should coordinate all the organizations involved in the wildlife management.

Enhanced networking and the creation of strategic alliances between various stakeholders in wildlife management is highly recommended.



**WRAP UP AND CONCLUDING OF WORKSHOP**

Mr. Sahaj Man Shrestha, Vice president of Nepal Forum of Environmental Journalist (NEFEJ), highlighted the role of media to disseminate the research work and establish the researcher in the society. He noted that problems, solutions and prospects are common in all sectors of society, thus researchers should search for an opportunity within the constraints. He stressed the importance and need of an e-library and e-journal to disseminate the research works and hoped that the WWG can initiate some work.

Tej B. Thapa, as rapporteur, summarized the workshop. He observed the workshop is a new and timely initiation to link up the student researcher and media. Such initiatives would bring many future benefits including creating awareness among common people about the

wildlife of Nepal. He stressed that the workshop was a beginning rather than an end in itself and noted perceived problems and recommendations forwarded in the workshop will be beneficial to sensitize media in wildlife, explore opportunities for research and formulate a concrete collaboration program between student researchers and WWG.

Dr. Suman Suvedi, thanked to all the participants for their cooperation and active participation in the workshop. She hoped to work together in future.

**WWG WITH NEFUG ORGANIZED AN INTERACTION PROGRAM**

WWG with Nepalese Federation of Forest Resource Users' Groups (NEFUG) organized an interaction program to



discuss the ordinance which His Majesty's Government (HMG) promulgated on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2006, to amend the National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act (NPWC) 1973. Conservationists, journalists, present and former HMG officials, advocates and representatives of organizations dedicated in biodiversity conservation in Nepal participated in this interaction program.

The Ordinance 2062 (2005/2006) is the Fifth Amendment of NPWC Act 1973, and has made provisions to handover the management of the national parks to the private organizations involved in nature conservation. Furthermore, it is mentioned that only the institutions which are capable and established by Act are eligible for the above. The King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation (KMTNC) is the only such kind of organization and it makes clear that only KMTNC can apply for the management of national parks and conservation areas. Hence, the ordinance has stirred controversy amongst the stakeholders. The interaction program was organized to understand the view of the stakeholders and for further discussion on the issue.

The participants expressed their view on the ordinance and later a group discussion was held. Addressing the program, former Attorney General Mr. Badri Bahadur Karki said that in the name of privatization, the government is encouraging monopolization of national resources, which is going to confine the whole development of wildlife conservation to a limited circumference. Another participant Mr. Ukesh Raj Bhujju, a conservationist said that the protected areas could be managed either by the state, para-state



authority, community, non profit organization or profit organization, but the recent ordinance, as it has come, could create several problems in the long run. Conservationist at the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation, Mr. Shyam Bajimaya said that the ordinance follows the government's policy of handing over the national parks to NGOs.

*Participations at WWG discussion program*

Other speakers were Mr. Purna Man Shakya, advocate, and Shiva Gaunle, journalist. The program chaired by Mr. Shankar Mall Thakuri, General Secretary of NEFUG was moderated by Mr. Krishna Prasad Sigdya, senior environmental journalists while WWG Chairman Mr. Mangal Man Shakya highlighted the program. There are sixteen national parks, conservation areas, wildlife and hunting reserves in Nepal.

## **HONOUR TO WILDLIFE CONSERVATIONIST**

Wise-use House and nepalnature.com organized a program, in honor of Dr. Tirtha Man Maskey, on 9 January 2006, to recognize his contribution to wildlife conservation in Nepal. Dr. Maskey is one of the pioneers in wildlife conservation

in Nepal and has recently retired from his service as the Director General of the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation. He has made outstanding contributions towards conservation of gharial in Nepal.

Distinguished personalities in the field of conservation, diplomats, personnel of departments of HMG and journalists were present at the ceremony. The program was organized in coordination with WWG Chairman Mr. Mangal Man Shakya. While WWF Nepal Program Country Representative Dr. Chandra P. Gurung, famous conservationist and hotelier Mr. Karna Shakya and Mentor of Wise-use House Mr. Anil Chitrakar delivered words of appreciation to Dr. Maskey. Dr. Maskey was offered a souvenir with an appreciation letter during the ceremony. The formal program was adjourned with a vote of thanks from Rajendra Suwal, MD of nepalnature.com. Celebrations

## **PARTICIPATION IN WORKSHOP**

On 21<sup>st</sup> December 2005 WWF Nepal Program organized the “Stake holder’s Consultation Workshop for the Development of WWF Nepal’s Strategic Plan” with the objective of obtaining stake holder input to design its six year (2006 ~ 2011) strategic plan.

WWG representative, Mr. Lal B. Tamang participated in the workshop. Dr. Chandra P. Gurung explained about the Wise-use House network and its importance, in his welcome speech.

To acquire the input of stake holders a group discussion session was held during the second half of the program. WWG participated in the “species” group.

Other participants of the group were Dr. K.K. Shrestha, Professor at Tribuvan University, Dr. Tirtha B. Shrestha, DNPWC, Prof. Dr. Karan B. Shah, Natural History Museum, Dr. Ram Preet Yadav, Senior Conservationist, Mr. Rajendra Suwal, nepalnature.com, Dr. Sharla Khaling, WWF Nepal and Mr. Anil Manandhar, WWF Nepal.

The species group suggested to support:

- a. Research
- b. Partnership
- c. Wildlife trade
- d. Livelihood program
- e. Data base and access
- f. Avoid duplication
- g. Involvement of Media sector  
(produce media programs)
- h. Plants
- i. Endemic species
- j. Tradition

Renowned personalities in the conservation sector, namely Mr. Karna Shakya, Mr. Ram Preet Yadav, Dr. Chandra P. Gurung, Dr. Pralhad Yonjon, Dr. Karan Shah, Dr. K.K. Shrestha, Dr. Tirtha Bahadur Shrestha, Dr. Tirtha Man Maskey, Mr. Anil Chitrakar and other scholars such as Dr. Harka Gurung and Mr. Bhairab Risal, and representatives

## **AN INTERACTION PROGRAM ON YARSAGUMBA IN NEPAL**

of different I/NGOs and government sectors were present at the workshop.

WWG in association with Snow Leopard Conservancy (SLC) and Biodiversity Research and Development Centre (BIRD) organized an interaction program on Yarsagumba (*Cordyceps sinensis*) in Nepal on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2006. The program was conducted to deliver the

detail information on Yarsagumba and its trade.

Yarsagumba (*Cordyceps sinensis*) is a blessed herb for the people of Karnali, the least developed remote zone in Nepal. Also known as Himalayan Gold, it is the main cash generating source for the poor people of Karnali, however they have to bear life threatening risks while collecting it in the high Himalayas.

The program moderated by WWG chairman Mr. Mangal Man Shakya was followed by a presentation of Mr. Rana Bahadur Rawal and Mr. Nagendra Budhathoki. Documentaries on Yarsagumba prepared by Mr. Sam Farmer of BBC and Asia Network for Sustainable Agriculture and Bioresources (ANSAB) were screened.

“Yarsagumba ‘summer plant winter insect’ in Tibetan is a precious herb found only in a few territories of Nepal, Tibet and India, which is believed to be first used as herbal medicine during the Ming Dynasty in thirteenth century. It gained popularity in 1993 when Chinese track team set the record breaking” said Mr. Rana Bahadur Rawal, Medicinal and Aromatic Plants Expert, who is also the first industrialist starting processing of Yarsagumba in Nepal. According to Mr. Rawal the Yarsagumba, also known as *Jeewan Buti* is a highly nutritious herb with rich contents of vitamins, minerals and phytochemicals.

Mr. Nagendra Budhathoki, Nepal representative of Snow Leopard Conservancy, who is also the first exporter of Yarsagumba delivered a presentation on the trade of Yarsagumba. “Trade of Yarsagumba in Dolpo started fifteen years ago when local people

started to collect it and export to Tibet . Such business used to take place secretly as the government had not permitted for export. Now export of Yarsagumba is legal and annually bulk quantity of yarshagumba is exported to Tibet , Singapore , USA and Japan . Dolpo of Karnali zone is the flourishing area for the Yarsagumba. The Yarsagumba of Dolpo is designated as the best quality but unfortunately it is known as Tibetan Yarsagumba in International market because of lack of branding.” mentioned Mr. Budhathoki. Price of one kilo gram Yarsagumba costs Rs. 2,00,000 at present in the local market, which was Rs. 5,000 during early days of trade.

“Should the government initiate to build clear and conducive policy environment for production, processing and marketing aspects of Yarsagumba, doubtlessly it can be one of the important income generating resources for Nepal.” said Mr. Budhathoki.

Experts, Conservationists and Journalists had participated the program. Focusing on the objective of program WWG Chairman Mr. Mangal Man Shakya said that the main objective of the program is to initiate towards preparation of an exclusive documentary on Yarsagumba. ■



## 10. Courtesy call

### **MEETING WITH SWC VICE CHAIRPERSON**

WWG Chairman Mr. Mangal Man Shakya held a meeting with then Vice Chairperson of the Social Welfare Council (SWC) Mr. Ganesh Gurung. During the meeting, Mr. Shakya gave a brief description about the activities of WWG and also talked about possible cooperation in future programs.

### **MEETING WITH FINNISH ENVOY TO NEPAL.**

On March 1, 2004, WWG Chairman Mr. Mangal Man Shakya met with the new Finnish envoy to Nepal, Mr. Pauli Mustonen. During the meeting, Shakya presented his new book on the illegal wildlife trade in Nepal to the envoy and discussed potential programs that the embassy could support.

### **MEETING WITH CEO OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION NEPAL**

A collaborative meeting was held with the CEO of Wildlife Conservation Nepal Mr. Prassana Yonjon. Later WCN trustee Mr. Deepak Rana also paid a visit to the WWG office and held talks with WWG officials. ■

27-31 October 2002 and in Malaysia in the first week of December 2003. He also participated APFEJ's 16<sup>th</sup> AGM held in Shenzhen, China. In this 16<sup>th</sup> congress Mr. Rabin Das Sayami, Treasurer of WWG, also participated in the 15<sup>th</sup> congress of APFEJ, which was held in Shenzhen, China.

### **SOUTH ASIA WILDLIFE TRADE WORKSHOPS - FINDING THE WAY FORWARD FOR REGIONAL CO-OPERATION**

In late April 2004, delegates from six South Asian countries including identified priority actions to be taken at national and regional levels to mitigate illegal wildlife trade and to enhance wildlife trade regulations, particularly CITES, in a region where trade is threatening the long-term survival of some of the world's rarest species, such as Great Indian Rhinoceros, Tiger, and Tibetan Antelope. Two workshops were held in Kathmandu, Nepal, a three day "Diagnostic Workshop" (26-28 April) to identify key issues and seek solutions and a two day "Enforcement Workshop" (29-30 April) to provide training, raise awareness and develop co-operative approaches to enforcement problems.

## 11. International Meeting

### **SHAKYA ATTENDS APFEJ AGMS**

Mr. Mangal Man Shakya attended the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> AGM of the Asia Pacific Forum of Environmental Journalists (APFEJ) held in Sri Lanka

Altogether 70 representatives (including WWG) from government departments, law enforcement and non-governmental organisations from South Asia (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) and key neighbouring countries of China and

Myanmar. The participants sought to understand each other's concerns, needs and constraints to find ways that the region can move forward through collaborative efforts towards common set of goals. The key themes of the workshops were co-ordination, co-operation and communication between countries in South Asia, and the region's neighbours.

A TRAFFIC overview study of the wildlife trade in South Asia was provided to advise the workshops on the current situation and this had been undertaken through field visits to several countries in the region, questionnaires and correspondence directly with the key stakeholders, as well as desk based research. Participants discussed how wildlife trade brings with it many potential benefits and threats through the use of species for purposes ranging from ornaments and luxury items to medicine, food and shelter. Ensuring that trade regulation addresses the balance between the needs of wildlife and those of human populations is a huge challenge. Although each country in the region has already established national laws and programmes to protect wildlife species and manage wildlife trade, it was generally acknowledged that these policies could be further improved and streamlined.

Steven Broad, the Executive Director of TRAFFIC International, who facilitated the Diagnostic Workshop stated "This was the first event of its kind in South Asia, bringing the governments, IGOs, NGOs and donors to work together to seek consensus on the future of wildlife trade regulation and enforcement through improved co-ordination, co-operation and communication. The



realisation that there was so much potential for improvement was overwhelming, the hope is now that this realisation catalyses change."

Establishing active networks for communication and information sharing on wildlife trade was identified as a priority issue that needs to be overcome both at regional level, and between agencies in each country. Participants emphasised that active exchange regarding such matters as enforcement, scientific data, and legislation, would enable development of best-practice models to combat the variety of challenges facing government wildlife agencies in the region.

Conclusions and recommendations from the Diagnostic Workshop fed directly into the Enforcement Workshop, and this looked specifically at the challenges of law enforcement to protect wildlife from the ongoing illegal trade at national, regional and international levels. ■

## 12. Visits

Different personalities from various organizations visited the WWG office during the period.

British wildlife photographer, Mr. Patrick Brown, visited the WWG office in Kathmandu which facilitated his visit to Royal Chitwan National Park (RCNP). Mr. Brown was accompanied by wildlife journalist Mr. Prateek Bhandary. Chief Warden of the RCNP extended necessary support during the visit to the journalists.

Mr. Quamrul Islam Chowdhury, Chairperson of the Asia Pacific Forum of Environmental Journalists (APFEJ), Bangladesh visited the WWG office in January 2004. He showed satisfaction at the arrangement WWG had provided to the SSEP secretariat.

Mr. Ashok Kumar, founder Director of TRAFFIC (Trade Records Analysis of Flora and Fauna in Commerce) India, and Trustee of Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) visited WWG. Similarly WTI Executive Director, Mr. Vivek Menon visited the WWG office on April 30, 2004. During his visit, Mr. Menon obtained information about the activities of WWG.

Mr. Manoj Mishra, former director of TRAFFIC India visited the WWG office on November 26, 2003. During his visit, discussions were held on issues relating to the current wildlife trade in the country.

Kenyan wildlife expert, Esmond Bradely Martin visited the WWG office on December 16, 2003 and acquired information about the program activities of WWG. Dr. Martin arrived in Nepal in January 2006 to appraise the current status of

rhinoceros conservation in Nepal. Dr. Martin has been studying the worldwide trade in ivory and rhinoceros horns since the early 1970s and he has already visited Nepal several times in the past. During his recent visit Dr. Martin had scheduled to visit Royal Chitwan National Park and Royal Bardiya National Park. Due to the current circumstances he visited only RCNP. In his visit to WWG office Dr. Martin acquired data and news on rhinoceros in Nepal.

The results of his research with Daniel Stiles from 1999 to 2004 were published in *Pachyderm*, *BBC Wildlife*, *BBC History*, *Oryx* and in three major monographs. He is currently carrying out research on supply to the unregulated ivory markets and the status of rhinoceros poaching in Africa and Asia.

### VISIT OF HIGH OFFICIALS

In different occasions high officials from ministry of forest and soil conservation (MFSC) and department heads under the ministry visited the WWG office and inquired about the ongoing programs of the WWG. Acting secretary Dr. Damodar Prasad Parajuli, former director general of department of forest Dr. Uday Raj Sharma, and Mr. JK Tamrakar, former director general of department of national parks and wildlife conservation (DNPWC) Dr. TM Maskey, MFSC officials Pem Kandel, Ganesh Pant, DNPWC officials Shyam Bajimaya, Laxmi Manandhar, Shiva Raj Bhatta, Jhamak Karki, Tika Ram Dhakal are among the visitors. ■

# 13. Other I/NGOs actively working on wildlife conservation in Nepal

## 1. RESOURCES HIMALAYAN FOUNDATION

Resources Himalayan Foundation has been dedicating in conservation for the last 18 years with mission statement and goal to conserve diversity of life in the Himalaya, involve biological considerations, promote sustainable use of resources including soil, water, forest and rangeland, and benefit the poorer segment of human society.

It aims to be a regional promoter of “good science” to facilitate “politically correct” decisions so that biodiversity conservation in the Himalaya is secured and benefits of conservation practices accrue to the poorest segment.

Its has been actively dedicated in the conservation efforts with the objective to operate as an independent think-tank, seek international support, share all and every accurate knowledge and information, and initiate collaborative conservation efforts on biodiversity and natural resources in the region;

For more information visit [www.resourceshimalaya.org](http://www.resourceshimalaya.org)

## 2. NEPAL FORUM OF ENVIRONMENTAL JOURNALISTS (NEFEJ)

NEFEJ is one of the most active environmental NGOs in Nepal. It was formed in 1986 with the objective of

raising public awareness in the spheres of environmental protection and sustainable development. Since its establishment, it has been creating awareness on environmental and development issues among journalists, policy and decision makers, politicians and the public through a multi-media approach.

NEFEJ is a membership organization. Nepalese journalists, either working in print, radio or TV, are awarded full membership. Nepali experts or others who are involved in environmental conservation can become associate members of the forum. For details, visit [www.nefej.org.np](http://www.nefej.org.np)

## 3. WWF-NEPAL

World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) was established in 1961 by a group of scientists, naturalists and business and political leaders as an international fund-raising organization that would collaborate with existing conservation groups to bring substantial financial support to worldwide conservation efforts. It is dedicated to protecting the world's wildlife and wild lands.

The largest privately supported international conservation organization in the world, WWF has more than 1 million members in the U.S. alone. Since its inception in 1961, the WWF has invested in over 13,100 projects in 157 countries. The WWF directs its conservation efforts toward three global goals: protecting endangered species,

saving endangered species and addressing global threats. Today, WWF is the leading privately supported international conservation organization in the world. For details, visit [www.wwf.org.np](http://www.wwf.org.np)

#### 4. THE MOUNTAIN INSTITUTE

The Mountain Institute (TMI) was founded in 1972 in United States of America with objective to conserve high priority mountain eco-systems, increase environmentally and culturally sustainable livelihoods for mountain communities and promote support for mountain cultures and issues through advocacy, education and outreach. Based in Washington DC, TMI has offices and community based programs in the mountainous countries including Nepal, Peru, TAR China and Sikkim of India. TMI's programs work to improve the livelihoods of people living in remote mountain regions; use the mountains as a learning environment for mountain leaders of all ages; undertake rigorous research and protection of habitat for some of the world's most endangered and unique animals, and promote conservation of natural resources and traditional cultures in mountain regions around the world.



In Nepal, The Mountain Institute is working to nurture the rich diversity of nature and culture nestled beneath the revered Himalayan peaks—Mt Everest, Lhotse, Makalu, Cho Oyu, Shisha Pangma, Khanchendzonga—six of the highest mountains in the world.

#### 5. IUCN NEPAL

IUCN-The World Conservation Union) was created in 1948. IUCN brings together 82 States, 112 government agencies, 850 plus I/NGOs, and some 10,000 scientists and experts from over 180 countries in a unique worldwide partnership and it works globally to enhance ecosystem conditions and the well-being of people.

IUCN began work in Nepal in the 1960s, assisting early government efforts at conservation. Nepal became a state member of IUCN in 1973, and the Nepal Country Office was officially established in 1995. Over the years IUCN has supported the Government by helping to design and implement the National Conservation Strategy (NCS) and the Nepal Environmental Policy and Action Plan (NEPAP), developed national and sectoral EIA guidelines, promoted environmental education for formal and non-formal education, and supported various aspects of environmental law and policy including Access to Genetic Resources and Benefit Sharing Bill and Policy (AGRBS), National Wetlands Policy and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora (CITES). ■

## 14. Chronology of Wildlife Watch Group (WWG)

1992		Interaction program on wildlife poaching in Kathmandu
1993		Eight journalists visit Royal Chitwan National Park
1994		Report on wildlife conservation in Nepal. This report contained the latest information on species richness and conservation efforts in Nepal, the problems and opportunities, and the issues raised by parliamentarians during the preceding six sessions
1995	July 23	Discussion program on the control of the trade in wildlife specimens
1996		Eight journalists visit Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve
	August 15-18	Twelve journalists participated in a four day training/workshop on wildlife
	November 23	One day workshop on transboundary wildlife migration in Royal Bardiya National Park
	September 13-23	Four journalists visited parks and wildlife reserves in the Terai belt, sponsored by park and people project
1997		Thirteen journalists visited seven national parks
	January 5	Interaction program on tiger counting and conservation
	March 26	Interaction program on cross border bird trafficking
	April	WWG handed over a memorandum to the Prime Minister to protest against the government's decision to grant a gift of two rhinoceros to London Zoo. WWG demonstrated in front of the British Embassy, and the Lufthansa office at Kathmandu
	April 29	The rhinoceros left for London Zoo

*A brief talk with founder of Wildlife Watch Group, Senior Journalist, Mr. Hem Bahadur Bista. Mr. Bista had initiated the Group in 1993 and he was active in the Group till 1995*

**Q. WHILE ENVISAGING THE FORMATION OF WILDLIFE WATCH GROUP, WHAT ACTIVITIES HAD YOU PRESUMED THAT THE GROUP SHOULD CARRY OUT?**

The Watch Group was assumed as one of the program activities with anticipation that it would help increase interest of the involved journalists towards the subject matter and foster their knowledge and skill in the area as well as institutional development of the group. Therefore, while designing the programs, it should be taken into consideration that both the objectives would be fulfilled.



1998		WWG successfully foiled a plan by villagers from the Mankha village in Sindhupalchowk, 60km east of Kathmandu, to kill hundreds of rhesus monkeys as the monkeys were responsible for damaging their crops
	May	Quarterly feature service on wildlife began
	June	Press release issued to protest against the government's decision to give two leopards to the Zoological Garden of Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
1999		Investigation into the shahtoosh, an endangered Tibetan antelope, trade in the Hima layas
		Book publication: <b>A Tale of Rhino Translocation</b>
		Manual publication: <b>Great One-horned Rhinoceros Translocation Manual</b>
		Report launch: <b>CITES Compliance in Nepal</b>
	April	Two journalists sent to both Royal Bardiya National Park and Royal Shuklaphant Wild life Reserve for reporting
2000		Four journalists and five experts took part in a three day workshop on wildlife reporting held in Sauraha, Royal Chitwan National Park
	February	One day workshop on Nepal's preparedness for the 11 <sup>th</sup> CITES conference. The conference was held in Kenya in April 2000
2002	May	Formal registration in District Administration Office, Under Home Ministry of Kathmandu, Nepal for WWG as an independent non- profit non- governmental organization (NGO)
2003	May	Commencement of the South-South Exchange Program where seventeen journalists each spent eight months on a volunteer exchange to one of nine participating countries from Soth and South-East Asia (program continued until Arpil 2004)
	December	WWG Chairman Mr. Magal Man Shakya attended the 15 <sup>th</sup> AGM of the Asia Pacific Federation of Environmental Journalist in Malaysia

**Q. HOW DO YOU PERCEIVE THE ACTIVITIES OF THE WILDLIFE WATCH GROUP AFTER YOUR DETACHMENT WITH THE GROUP?**

I remain only as a well wisher of the group after my detachment with the group as its member. Hence, I don't have any detailed information about the activities of the group.

**Q. IN ORDER TO DEVELOP THE WILDLIFE WATCH GROUP AS AN INSTITUTION, IT HAS BEEN REGISTERED AS THE ORGANIZATION IN MAY 2002. IN THE PRESENT CONTEXT WHAT KIND OF PROGRAMS SHOULD THE GROUP CARRY OUT?**

Despite so many turns, politically the situation of Nepal is still unstable. At present the major issue is finding the way for political stability. In this situation political issues have shadowed the other development activities of the country, and seem as if it is irrelevant to talk about. Even though, I think such groups should act in such a way that people would not forget about wildlife conservation, environment and sustainable development even during political turmoil in their minds. ■

2004	<p>Book Publication: <b>Trading for Extinction: An expose of the illegal wildlife trade in Nepal.</b> Author: Mr Mangal Man Shakya, WWG Chairman</p> <p>Book Publication: <b>CITES Implementation in Nepal and India, Law, Policy and Practice.</b> Author: Dr. Ravi Aryal, WWG Executive Member</p> <p>February Funding provided for a photo exhibition by the World Conservation Union (WCN)</p> <p>June WWG shifted to its new home in Wise Use House, Jwagal, Kopondol</p> <p>September WWG sent journalists to five of Nepal's protected areas. The journalists prepared field reports on the influence of conflict on conservation</p>
2005	<p>WWG has initiated the establishment of the Environmental Journalism School, run in affiliation with the School of Environmental Management and Sustainable Development, Pokhara University. Courses are scheduled to commence in 2006.</p> <p>Book Publication: <b>Conflict and Conservation.</b> Edited by Mr. Mangal Man Shakya, WWG chairman and Mr. Anil Chitrakar, WWG Mentor</p> <p>July 2 Workshop on the "Need for Producing Better Dissertation in Master's Thesis on Endangered Species in Nepal". Seventeen students participated in the workshop facilitated by Dr. Suman Subedi</p> <p>October Reporters were sent to the remaining 11 protected areas to research the influence of conflict on conservation. Field reports were prepared</p> <p>December 10 Mr. Mangal Man Shakya, WWG Chairman gave a presentation on Wildlife Trade Issues in Nepal at a special program run by WWF Nepal Program</p> <p>December 21 WWG representative, Mr. Lal B. Tamang, participated in the "Stakeholder's Consultation Workshop for the Development of WWF Nepal's Strategic Plan."</p>
2006	<p>Ongoing preparation of a book containing the remaining 11 field reports on the condition of Nepal's protected areas</p> <p>January 1 Ongoing preparation for the International Conference on Conservation in Conflict Interaction meeting held to discuss the amendment of the National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act (NPWC) 1973</p>

## INTERVIEW WITH DR. TIRTHA MAN MASKEY

*Dr. Tirtha Man Maskey is a well known name in the field of conservation in Nepal especially for significant contribution in conservation of gharials crocodile in Nepal. Dr. Maskey started his career in conservation as a Warden in Chitwan National Park in 1982.*

Later he held the position of Chief Warden in Chitwan National Park and Langtang National. He did Ph.D. in Wildlife and Range Science from University of Florida, USA in April 1989 and continued his service as Chief Ecologist in the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation. Holding the responsible positions like Acting DG of DNPWC, Acting Executive Director/Chairman of Central Zoo



January 9	Felicitation program in honour of Dr. Tirtha Man Maskey, who has recently retired as the Director General of the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation, for his outstanding efforts in wildlife conservation
January	Dr. Esmond Martin arrived from Kenya to assess the current status of rhino conservation. WWG assisted him in his efforts
April	WWG Chairman Mr. Mangal Man Shakya met with the Pakistani Ambassador His Excellency Mr. Sohail Amin. Other participants in the meeting were Mr. Brian Peniston from The Mountain Institute and Mr. Sagendra Tiwari from the IUCN. Topics of discussion were the upcoming conference and general environmental issues
May 19	WWG in association with Snow Leopard Conservancy (SLC) and Biodiversity Research and Development Centre (BIRD) organized a presentation on Yarsagumba ( <i>Cordyceps sinensis</i> ) in Nepal. The program was conducted to deliver the detail information on Yarsagumba and its trade ■

Development Committee, Joint Secretary and Chief of Environment in Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation, and Director General of DNPWC, Dr. Maskey retired from the government service in January 2006. After his retirement from the government job Dr. Maskey is still involved actively in conservation by getting affiliated with different organizations. Currently Dr. Maskey is Co-chair South Asia./IUCN/SPC of Asian Rhino Specialist Group (AsRSG). Dr. Maskey has traveled broadly throughout the world and has been awarded by the International medals like The Duke of Edinburgh Conservation Medal and The Order of the Golden Ark and various National honors.

#### WHAT WAS THE STATE OF ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE DURING YOUR EARLY DAYS AS CHIEF WARDEN OF ROYAL CHITWAN NATIONAL PARK?

There used to be rhino poaching in early days and we used to recover some of the rhino horn. We believed that there must be some rhino horn trade because one time we caught some 17 poachers and rhino traders in 1973 and one of them was female. Most of the poachers were from local Chitwan and Dhading Districts and most of them were from Tamang Tribes. One very notorious poacher called Thing Kainla who used to kill many rhinoceros was arrested and after his arrest, the poaching was stopped for a decade. All of them were local level hired

poachers and we found a lady mediator who used to collect rhino horn from the local poachers and passed it over to traders living in Kathmandu. Definitely the trade used to be in small scale. We didn't know about the trade happened openly as today and it was limited to rhino horn only.

#### HOW EFFECTIVE THE GOVERNMENT LAWS TOWARDS CURBING WILDLIFE TRADE?

In compare to other countries in the region, the existing Govt law and regulations as the National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1973 are very powerful and it could helps to curb the poaching and trade activities if implemented strictly. The only problem in Nepal in implementing is that the persons who are authorised to look the poaching and illegal trade cases don't follow the regulation strictly. For example during early stage the Warden don't have any power to judge the case and they have to file the case to the district court where it was treated very lightly and all the traders and poachers freed on bail. After facing these problems, the govt. then transfer the judiciary power to the Warden. Warden can punish the poachers and wildlife traders straight. After that it became very effectively. But different institute punish different way for the same kind of case. For example, the Warden punish for rhino poaching and traders a maximum of 15 years jail and 100,000 Rs. fine but for the same kind of cases, Dept of Forest fine very minimal amount and release them. Last year, the DFO of Kathmandu District Forest office confiscated five rhino horns but later he released all the traders with the bail of 100,000 NRs. This type of light punishment promote the illegal trade. This make really different in controlling poaching and trade. Otherwise if everybody implement the existing law and regulation without any vested interest, it is enough to control the illegal trade. However we need to prepare a separate complete CITES Act to make clear which is not clear in the existing laws.

#### WHAT IS YOUR COMMENT ON THE STATEMENT NEPAL BEING A MAJOR TRANSIT POINT OF INTERNATIONAL LEVEL ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE?

Because of the extraordinary geographical location of the country which lie between two giant countries, both Chinese and Indians illegal traders used Nepal land as the transit point for the illegal trade of the animal parts. This may be because of easy access to both direction and also may be because the custom and police check post in Nepal are not that strict in law implementation. This may be because of the lac of knowledge on the animal parts which are ban for trade. However the Govt of Nepal and WWF Nepal program are trying to train regularly to the personal from the police and custom Departments, as a result Nepalese Govt. are successful to confiscate so many consignment of hides of tiger, leopard, otter and tiger bones and rhino horns as well.



THE CURRENT ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE DNPWC SHOW LOSS OF INFRASTRUCTURES IN NATIONAL PARKS AROUND THE COUNTRY, IS THIS A SETBACK TO CONSERVATION SUCCESS?

Regarding the infrastructure destruction, yes we lost many infrastructures in different protected areas during insurgency which impact our patrolling and monitoring system. For example in two mine blast in Parsa and Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve, we lost very honest and sincere rangers and staffs, which resulted demoralization of other staffs. During this difficult period the park staffs work very hard and are successful in conservation, as a result, the Govt was successful to confiscate several consignment of the wildlife part and arrested many traders from Kathmandu and they are also looking for notorious trades in Kathmandu. In local level also the park authorities were successful to arrest so many poachers, recover three rifles from them. I will say this is a great successful effort in controlling poaching in the field. As you know we lost seven best staff in the mine blast during their monitoring process. The frequent seizure of tiger and leopard skin and bones also proves the success of our frequent CITES training to the police and custom officials.

## WHAT SHOULD BE FUTURE MODEL OF CONSERVATION POLICY IN NEPAL?

With more than three and half decades of experience in conservation, we can say that the future conservation policy in Nepal should base on

- Participatory conservation concept
- Landscape conservation Concept
- Conservation in Partnership Concept

## IS DECLINING TREND OF RHINO POPULATION , A BAROMETER OF CONSERVATION FAILURE?

No I don't believe on that. When we look back to the beginning of the conservation era during early 70s. What was the population of rhinoceros? It was less than 100 about 85 animals. After effective conservation by the park staff, Arms guard from RNA, with cooperation from local community and coordination from the partners, the population of rhinoceros grows to 612. What you say? Its a failure? Whenever you say success or failure, you have to compare it with the past status. Yes we have some problem in the recent years during the insurgent period in conservation because of various reason. Today We returned back from Chitwan and in Chitwan we found that every body are worried about the decline of the rhino population. In Chitwan meeting, the political leaders, the Buffer Zone Committees members, the park staffs, the media people and the local communities, everybody are committed for the conservation of rhinoceros and after observing this spirit we are confident that within short period of time, the rhino population will cross 600.

## WHAT IS YOUR ASSESSMENT TOWARDS WORKS OF NGOS LIKE WWG (WILDLIFE WATCH GROUP) ON THE CONSERVATION FIELD?

The Wildlife Watch Group is very young by age. I am very happy to know that it has already done some very important works which within short period of time and we are confident that this will contribute to the conservation of wildlife in Nepal. It is a sort of watch dog organisation and need to point out immediately if something wrong in conservation is observed. In addition to this, the awareness program is very important to curb the illegal trade of wildlife parts, poaching and the conservation of biodiversity. The proposed conference on the conflict in Conservation will be an important event to aware the communities regarding the damage done to conservation by conflict. This type of awareness program is very important to let know the people the impact of conflict to the biodiversity conservation in Nepal. This will also help the communities to divert their mind towards the conservation of biodiversity in Nepal. ■





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