

Newsletter

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NATIONAL CONSERVATION STRATEGY

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Kathmandu, Nepal

The National Conservation Strategy for Nepal

The National Conservation Strategy (NCS) for Nepal follows the framework set down in the World Conservation Strategy (WCS). The WCS, drawn up in 1980 by IUCN with the World Wildlife Fund and the United Nations Environment Programme, recommends that every country prepare a national conservation strategy to integrate environmental concerns with development and to focus and coordinate conservation efforts of governmental and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Nepal participated in a meeting held at IUCN Headquarters in Gland, Switzerland, to define the guidelines for the National Conservation Strategy.

Work on the NCS for Nepal started with the preparation of a prospectus which was approved by His Majesty's Government in December 1983. The prospectus included a description of major environmental problems facing Nepal and also contained a summary of the possible components that could be included in the proposed strategy.

Work on the Strategy began in 1985 under an agreement between His Majesty's Government of Nepal and IUCN. The final document, *Building on Success: The National Conservation Strategy for Nepal*, was completed in 1987. In the following year the document was formally endorsed by the government. The NCS is now in the implementation phase.

Sectoral Papers

To complement the contributions gathered in the field, the NCS Secretariat commissioned the writing of 19 background papers on different sectors related to resource con-



Discussion in progress during NCS field meeting; Patmara, Jumla District

servation and management. These sectoral papers, prepared by national experts, formed the major base for the drafting of the NCS for Nepal. A team of experts then studied and reviewed the papers.

Following the review, a series of five one-day author-reviewer meetings were held. The purpose of these sessions was to discuss the reviewers' comments and to examine critical cross-sectoral issues. Experts were involved in the sectoral paper preparation and review process.

The findings of field level meetings, the sectoral papers and of the workshops were compiled and a set of ten strategy criteria were developed.

Field Meetings

Preparation of the Strategy entailed extensive field work in each of the country's five development regions, with selected sites representing all four geographic sub-divisions of the country.

Meetings were held to discuss problems of

local resource use and conservation, and to identify practical solutions.

The field meetings played an important role in ensuring inclusion of essential aspects - specifically, the practices and observations of individuals at the village level. Such viewpoints often fail to be reflected in the functioning of institutions and organisations as well as in policies and administrative management; to the detriment of subsequent programme activity. The NCS preparation exercise therefore laid particular emphasis on the opinions of communities in rural areas.

The National Conservation Strategy

The first draft of the Strategy was reviewed by the authors of the sectoral papers. The second draft, based on the review-comments exercise, was then subjected to rigorous examination in a 22 member panel meeting. The comments received from the panel were incorporated into the third draft.

At this stage, His Royal Highness Prince Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah convened a meeting of senior officials to consider the

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The paper used in the production of this newsletter was manufactured in Nepal from sabai grass and rice and wheat straws, thus eliminating the need to use valuable trees.

Strategy, which was then modified in accordance with their observations.

A series of meetings followed, convened by the Vice-Chairman of the National Planning Commission. Secretaries of Ministries, the vice-chancellors of the Royal Nepal Academy of Science and Technology (RONAST) and Tribhuvan University were present at these meetings. Participants provided verbal and written comments on the draft Strategy. The comments were incorporated into the final draft prior to the submission of the document to the Council of Ministers for formal endorsement in December 1987.

Guidelines for the NCS

The relationship between conservation and development is the major theme of the Strategy. Its message: to bring managed use of resources to ensure maximum benefits for present and future generations.

The Strategy was expected to reflect the social, cultural and economic needs of the Nepali people.

The Strategy also aimed at reflecting national policies in the Seventh Development Plan of the Government, taking into account the Royal Directives concerning fulfilling minimum basic needs of the people by the year 2000.

Conservation, according to the NCS, means the wise-use of natural resources. This concept is not new to the people of Nepal who have a long tradition of using resources in sustainable ways. The Strategy is thus an attempt to account for indigenous practices and draw up an overall plan to bind scattered conservation efforts into a collective whole, and to build upon the relationship between conservation and development.

Structure of the NCS

The Strategy comprises of three sections. It opens with a historic review of resource use and conservation practices in Nepal. It also provides a chronology of the government's policies and programmes and those of the private sector that have concerned themselves with the conservation of natural and cultural resources.

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EDITORIAL

While conservation has a long history in Nepal, an increasing population pressure on the country's natural resources has negated many traditional practices. Under the existing circumstances, Nepal will have to struggle to fulfill its national commitment to meeting the basic needs of the population without irreversibly depleting the natural resource base. Development will be sustainable only with prudent use and wise management of natural resources.

Following the formulation of the World Conservation Strategy, which outlines the principles of sustainable development, Nepal was one of the first States to formulate a corresponding National Conservation Strategy (NCS). This landmark policy initiative lays out a general framework for a development direction that seeks to conserve the natural resource base. Given that sustainable development is not possible without a concurrent attempt at conservation, the NCS recognises that ultimately all development and, indeed, all life depends upon the maintenance of a natural resource base. Such dependency is often overlooked or deliberately ignored by short term development planning. The NCS stresses the need for a long term view of our natural resources. This shift in perspective, which accompanies greater ecological awareness, would confirm the axiom that, without conservation, development cannot be sustained.

However, the NCS as a general framework is only an initial step. The greater challenge will come as the NCS is implemented. Increased levels of environmental management expertise will be needed, along with a review of development plans, policies and projects in light of sustainable development. HMG/Nepal has called upon IUCN - the World Conservation Union, its partner in the formulation of the NCS, to assist in the implementation of the NCS in Nepal. In an effort to mobilise and involve people from various spheres, IUCN has sought the cooperation of both governmental and non-governmental agencies in this important national task.

The National Planning Commission is undertaking environmental planning activities in order to respond to the challenge of sustainable development. The planning approach will emphasise the crucial linkages among development sectors as well as the need to integrate local, regional and national planning efforts. Such integration requires community participation in national development planning, providing an accurate reflection of local level issues, problems and aspirations in the national plan.

This planning endeavour will begin at the local level, testing different approaches and involving local NGOs and community groups. The pilot villages and districts will produce environmental plans which will serve as a model of environmental planning to inform the national planning system and to be replicated in other villages and districts. These local plans will be inter-sectoral and linked with the national level development plans.

Although the planning process might well be complex and time consuming, unless it is relevant to the local level and promotes behavioural change, sustainable development will be more rhetoric than reality.

Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP)



The Annapurna Area, inundated by about 25,000 tourists every year, was said to be in an ecological tailspin. Forests were over exploited to build new accommodation for tourists and cater to their needs. And with the forest loss, the unique biological diversity of the area was diminishing.

The proposal for the Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP) was based on exploratory studies undertaken by Mr. Karna Shakya. The findings of these studies indicated income generation possibilities for the local community through ploughing of the steep slopes within the area, and through developing the potential for tourism with the construction of low-cost resorts. Efforts were made by the National Planning Commission to have a decision in this regard coincide with an unofficial tour of the area planned by His Majesty the King, and in the spring of 1985 His Majesty accordingly issued directives for a meaningful conservation programme to be launched in the area. Since then, there has been no looking back.

The Nepal Industrial Development Corporation, along with commercial banks, provided loans to local residents for building tourist cottages and for developing the use of solar energy for household purposes. Today the region stands out as example of how integration of ecology and economics can help to bring conservation. The King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation (KMTNC), the institution overseeing ACAP, acts as the catalyst and facilitator in this process.

The following pilot activities have been initiated to integrate conservation with human needs.

1. Fuelwood conservation

(plantation of fodder and fuelwood; tree nursery establishment; establishment of

kerosene depots; introduction of improved stoves and water heater technology; solar energy; micro-hydroelectricity)

2. Forest management

(setting up management committee; training of forest guards and nursery managers)

3. Environmental education

(audio-visual programme; school education programme; village extension programme; public campaigns; display work at Pokhara museum; information for visitors)

4. Community development

(improve drinking water supply; health clinic/family planning; construction of latrines and rubbish pits; trail and bridge repairs; agricultural extension work)

5. Research and training

(wildlife habitat survey; tourism carrying capacity; forest management survey; self help courses by ACAP staff; training courses for lodge operators and nursery workers; in service training for staff)

Many changes have already occurred within the project area. For example, villagers who once boiled water in large drums on open hearths to provide hot showers for travellers today do the same using "back-boilers."

With back-boilers, villagers cook food and heat water at the same time.

Another innovation stemmed from the need to find a way to keep the tourist dollar in the ACAP area. The project introduced a practice of collecting entry fees from trekkers. The money collected is used for conservation activities in the area.

The project has helped set up forest nurseries and to draw up community based management plans for protecting the woods. Several drinking water schemes and conservation education classes have also begun. Clean toilets maintained by lodge owners are a noticeable change on the sanitation front.

The project has encouraged income-generating activities through conservation and has helped to improve existing agricultural practices.

KMTNC is a non-profit NGO established in 1982 under the gracious patronage of His Majesty King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev. The trust operates on donations and contributions from donors from all over the world.

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MAP OF ANNAPURNA CONSERVATION AREA PROJECT

GREEN EARTH



The 'Earth Day-1990' was marked in Nepal with various programmes. NGOs had taken the lead in making the observance of the day more realistic and meaningful. The Nepal Environmental Conservation Group and Forestry Services joined hands to organize an afforestation programme at the premises of Kitni Secondary School. Kitni is scenic suburb about 4 km south-east of the historic Patan Bazar. Varieties of fruit seedlings were planted on the occasion.

Prime Minister Krishna Prasad Bhattarai sent a message conveying his wishes for the success of the afforestation programme. Describing deforestation as a serious global problem, Mr. Bhattarai emphasised the need to take effective measures to check the fast depletion of forest resources in the country.

The programme was opened by Dr. Devendra Raj Pandey, Minister of Finance in the Interim Cabinet headed by Mr. Bhattarai. In his inaugural remarks, Dr. Pandey exhorted people not to fell trees indiscriminately. School students, villagers and social workers participated in the tree plantation programme.

Similarly, the Annapurna Conservation Area Project organised afforestation, cleaning and lecture programmes at Pokhara.

ECCA CAMPS



The Environmental Camps for Conservation Awareness (ECCA) in collaboration with IUCN/Nepal has organised a series of training workshops for environmental-counsellors who will in turn conduct conservation camps for school children. The first training programme in 1989 was attended by 17 counsellors. The team camped at Godawari (about 12 km south-east of Kathmandu), discussed issues on "culture and conservation", "energy and technology transfer", "popularising science education in Nepal", "development ecology" and "health and sanitation". ECCA recently organised a Counsellor Training Camp (CTC) in association with IUCN/Nepal, in Narayanghat, Chitwan District. Participants of different youth clubs from Narayanghat attended the training camp. ECCA also organised a Counsellor Training Camp in Godawari during the last week of March. Representatives of Dhulikhel and Bhaktapur Youth Clubs participated in the training.

'JARA-JURI' PRIZE

'Jara-Juri' prizes of this year were distributed to different forest conservation committees of Kaski, Syangja and Salyan districts at a function held at Kathmandu end-March. The 'Jara-Juri' (which translates as grassroots) prize is awarded yearly in appreciation of conservation initiatives at the community or grassroots level.

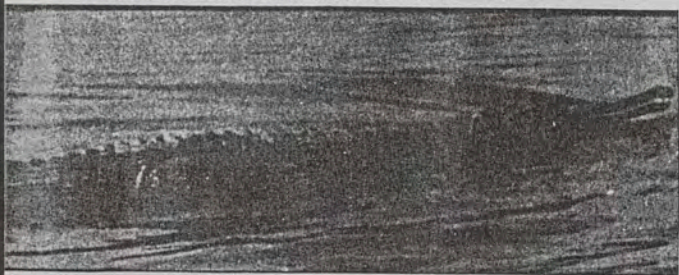
This year there are three recipients of this prize: the Kalilekh forest conservation committee of Armak Chhaharepani village Panchayat, Kaski district; Syangja district as a whole for conservation work at Hirapata; Satupasal village of two localities (Khilung Deurali and Arjun-Chaupari), Kolkholako Salghare Ban and Jamune ko Ban of Satu Pasal village and the forest conservation committee of Dadgaon village of Salyan district. These forest conservation committees were given this year's 'Jara-Juri' prize for their role in preserving 'green' in their surroundings. Dr. K. K. Panday, a senior expert associated with ICIMOD, is the founder of the 'Jara-Juri Prize'.



A CAP FOR ACAP

The Annapurna Area Conservation Project (ACAP) was awarded the DRV-Environment Award for 1989. The award, instituted by the Deutscher Reiseburo-Verband (German Travel Bureau of the Federal Republic of Germany) is awarded to individuals, organisations or communities for their contribution to the environment in tourist areas.

GHARIAL CONSERVATION



akash Rauniyar

A gharial crocodile (*garialis gargetians*) conservation project has been launched at the Royal Chitwan National Park by the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation in collaboration with KMTNC. Under the project, the eggs of gharials (crocodile) are collected and hatched in a natural or artificial manner and protected until the gharials are able to be rehabilitated. Gharials have been rehabilitated in the Narayani, Kali Gandaki and Babai rivers this year. The main objective of the Gharial Conservation Project is to protect the crocodiles from extinction.

INTERNATIONAL



AFRICAN ELEPHANT NOW ENDANGERED

The African elephant has now been classified as an endangered species in an effort to halt poaching by ivory hunters, who have drastically reduced its numbers. The action, by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), bans trade in ivory but allows countries with growing populations of elephants to apply for permission to sell ivory from herds culled by conservation departments. Immediately after the vote, which followed a contentious and sometimes chaotic meeting in Lausanne, Switzerland, five African nations announced that they would leave the convention so they could continue to trade in ivory. Throughout the African continent, the elephant population has fallen by more than half in a decade, to about 625,000 from 1.3 million in 1979.

The five countries determined to trade outside the convention are Zimbabwe and Botswana, which have flourishing elephant herds and relatively little poaching, and Mozambique, Malawi and Burundi. Burundi has no elephants but a large stock of ivory poached from neighbouring Tanzania, and Mozambique has scattered stocks. Malawi has fewer than 3,000 elephants. The United States and the European Community voted for the moratorium and have indicated they will no longer buy ivory. Both they and Japan, which consumes 40 percent of the world's ivory, unilaterally banned ivory imports in June. Mr. Rowan Martin, the deputy director of Zimbabwe's wildlife department, dismissed the vote as a 'listing made in Switzerland that poachers would ignore. Poachers will kill the elephant and store the ivory,' he said. 'They may have difficulty in getting rid of it, but they will continue killing.'



Opponents of a total ban in ivory sales have cited the dismal experience of the black rhinoceros, whose horn is valued for dagger handles and for its supposed medicinal qualities. Despite an official ban on trading in the horns, the rhinoceros population in Africa has dropped to 3,800, from 60,000 in 1970. But proponents say a properly controlled ban will curb elephant poaching. Unlike rhino horn, these experts say, ivory is a popular consumer item that can be made unfashionable by public opinion. The United States and other countries banned imports earlier this year and since then, prices have plummeted. Ivory is used in jewellery, ornamental carving and art objects. Since the outcry against poaching began, most piano makers have stopped using it for keys. The moratorium on trading in ivory will last until the next meeting of the convention, probably in 1992. At that time, African countries that are recognised to have successful conservation and management policies might be allowed to trade with the blessing of the treaty. This provision was made as a way of encouraging African countries with poor elephant conservation policies to improve them.

FEARS OVER EXPORT OF NILE CROCS

Environmentalists fear the sale of 110 Nile crocodiles to a Brazilian ranch could trigger an ecological catastrophe on a continental scale unless they are sent back to Africa or destroyed before they have the chance to escape. The Nile crocodile, which grows to more than 4.5 metres, twice the size of the native Brazilian species, the Caiman, is a ferocious predator. 'It kills more people in Africa than any other wild animal. It would attack and kill Brazilians and their domestic animals,' said Mr. Stephen Edwards, co-ordinator of the species conservation program of IUCN, the World Conservation Union. 'It would also raise havoc with Amazonian fauna, including the Caiman'. The crocodiles were shipped to Rio Grande do Sul in the south-eastern corner of Brazil last summer by Zimbabwean crocodile ranchers. Brazilian researchers at the National Institute for Amazonian Research said the reptiles could carry diseases against which native species would have no resistance. These could be transmitted from crocodile farms into rivers. The issue is up for discussion at the next Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, at which Governments, environmental groups and traders will be represented.

- Courtesy: Habitat Magazine

(Contd. from Page 3)

The NCS then makes a comprehensive subject-by-subject analysis of 19 sectors that are related to conservation in terms of existing policies and programmes. Finally, it sets out a Conservation Action Agenda (CAA) that is based on the sectoral analysis.

Major Findings

Knowledge and experience concerning natural and cultural resource conservation already exists in Nepal. Yet effective conservation management is inhibited by financial constraints and the needs of an ever increasing population.

There is strong potential for increasing productivity in areas in the agriculture and forestry sectors, which are currently under-productive or unproductive. The Strategy observes the prevalence of a tendency to rely too much on the government to find solutions, and too little on giving responsibility to user groups. Despite the key roles women play in day-to-day resource management, for example, existing opportunities to involve them in local development projects and conservation training programmes are disproportionately low.

Nepal has had some success in the conservation of the art and cultural heritage. Much still needs to be done to adequately conserve Nepal's extensive cultural base. One major impediment is the lack of adequate resources to manage and protect the large number of monuments.

Conservation Action Agenda (CAA)

The CAA, comprising of 80 detailed resolutions, forms the heart of the Strategy. The CAA resolutions are grouped under seven subject areas.

Institutions: The National Council for the Conservation of Natural and Cultural Resources (NCCNCR), a senior policy making body, is responsible for overseeing and facilitating the NCS implementation. The Council will be supported by a full time secretariat. This body will work closely with international and regional programmes relating to conservation and development, as for example through cooperative initiatives of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), the South Asian Committee for Environmental Planning (SACEP) and the

International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD). As sectoral ministries have thus far been unsuccessful in providing effective coordination of environmental activities, and given the need to involve intersectoral leadership, this institution functions within the NPC.

Conservation awareness: The CAA outlines eight programmes that can help improve understanding of conservation within the government, the private sector and the community at large. It recommends training at both the regional and national levels and also stresses the need for tertiary conservation education for women.

Policy: The policy section outlines eleven subject areas divided into three broad policy areas. One such group addresses issues directly related to the food and shelter targets of the Government's basic needs programme and proposes policies on agriculture, livestock development, forestry, medicinal plants and forest products. These policies emphasise an increased role for user groups in improving resource productivity through better management.

Other policies deal with issues such as drinking water source protection, pesticide use and control, and environmental controls for large-scale construction projects. Resolutions in the third policy group address the need to safeguard natural and aesthetic values and maintain the vast cultural heritage of Nepal. The subject areas included are the conservation of cultural heritage, national parks and other protected areas, and trekking and mountaineering activities.

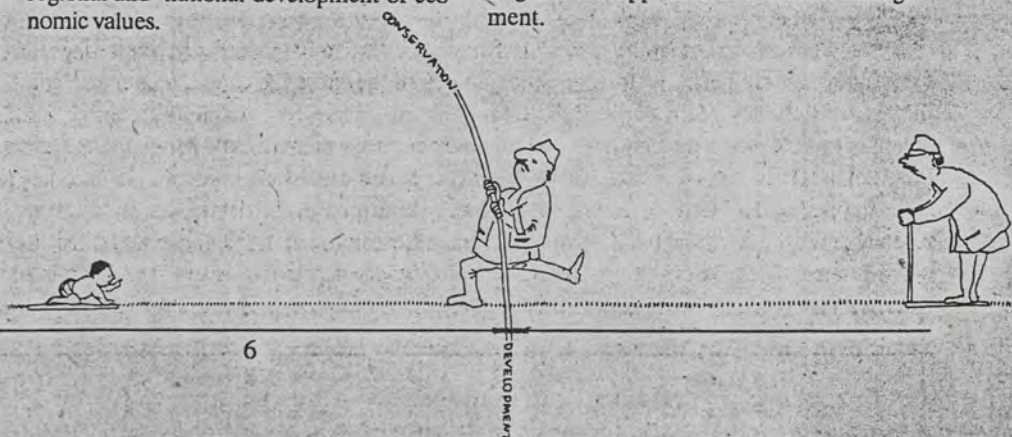
The policy section recognises the existence of major omissions in policy implementation within several sectors, and the need to provide orientation and develop interlinkages. Policies must thus be studied holistically with a view to environmental impact and coordination framework, within the context of the regional and national development of economic values.

Organisation and administration: The CAA resolutions call for a multi-sectoral approach in establishing an integrating mechanism for NCS implementation. The proposed NCS Corporate Planning Process consists of committees comprised of representatives of relevant Ministries and NCS regional, district and local level committees. The resolutions also outline steps needed to improve the day-to-day operation of the government in the field of resource conservation.

Research and inventory: Adequate research and inventory data already exists for NCS implementation. The CAA outlines other areas where studies can be conducted for a better understanding of the problems and towards the attainment of NCS objectives. Some of the areas outlined are: air and water quality, mine-sites, reclamation, and alternative energy sources.

Resource planning: This area consists of resolutions relating to impact assessment, review processes and a system for land use planning. An impact assessment involves the preparation of an environmental impact statement for all major development projects (by the implementing agencies) for review by government, non-governmental groups and the communities potentially affected by the development activity. The projects approved will be subject to terms and conditions based on the findings of the assessment. Land-use planning will be carried out primarily at the regional and district levels through the NCS Corporate Planning Process.

Wise-use of natural resources cannot be achieved without taking into account the basic inter-relationships between land, water and forest as well as the cross-sectoral implications associated with their use. The NCS proposes a model or 'vanguard' integrated resource management programme in appropriate districts to enhance productivity and help minimise the negative effects implicit in single-sector approach to resource management.



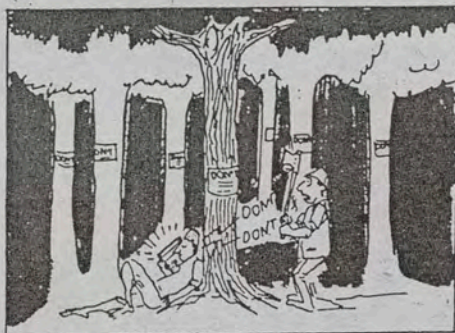
IUCN/NEPAL PROJECTS

IUCN/Nepal has launched major programmes as part of the NCS implementation, relating to public information, environmental education, and environmental planning and assessment. The programmes on public information and environmental education are intended to raise the level of awareness in all sections of society of the need for conservation.

Public Information Programme

This is a multi media communication programme designed to promote the dissemination of information on environmental and conservation issues in the far flung rural areas of Nepal. One project involves the publication of a wall newspaper for rural communities throughout the country.

An environmental radio series that is expected to have a wider reach is another element of this programme. A television documentary on contemporary environmental issues is being produced to complement the wall newspaper and radio programmes. Besides these projects, a series of public seminars and workshops are being organised. These forums will promote debate on environmental and conservation problems and the means of tackling them.



A major partner in IUCN's public information programme is the Nepal Forum of Environmental Communicators (NFEC), an organisation that groups journalists and other professionals who are working to spread the conservation message. Many other members of the IUCN coalition of environmental NGOs in Nepal are involved in the programme.

The information programme also includes the publication of background papers that were part of the preparation process of the NCS. These papers will serve as an information resource for scholars and people working in the field of conservation.

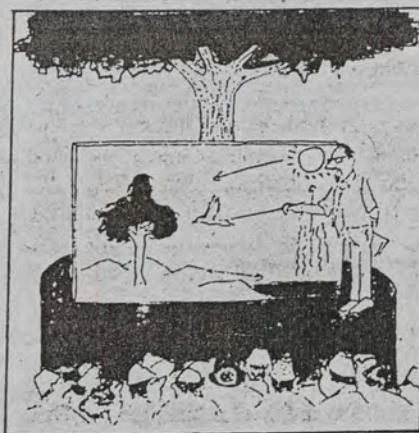
Environmental Education Programme

As a first step, this programme reviewed existing curricula and resource materials of the formal and non-formal education systems. This review covered courses for instruction in school up to class 10, and for intermediate instruction in Tribhuvan University, as well as for the institutes of agriculture, forestry, health and engineering.

Courses reviewed at the intermediate levels included those for extension workers such as junior technicians and technical assistants, forest rangers, auxiliary health workers, nurses, Baidyas (Ayurvedic medical practitioners) and overseers.

Also reviewed were curricula for training run by the Nepal Administrative Staff College, Training Centre, Women's Training Center, Hotel Management and Tourism Training Centre and adult literacy programmes run by the Department of Education. This comprehensive evaluation of environmental education will be published in the IUCN/Nepal Project Report Series.

As follow-up to the reviews, pilot courses and packages of resource materials are being developed and finalised in appropriate educational institutions and training courses. Special emphasis is being given to the needs of primary schools and extension workers.

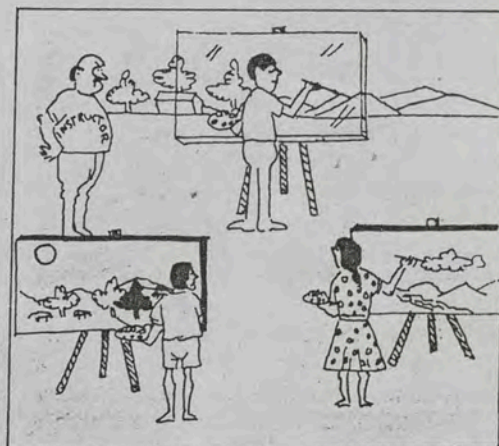


Environmental Awareness Camps

An important component of the education programme is a project to organise a series of conservation awareness camps for school children. The camps are organised jointly by Environmental Camps for Conservation Awareness (ECCA) and IUCN. ECCA trains local youths as counsellors, who in turn organise camps in the localities they come from. ECCA projects also include day-long "nature-walks" on weekends for children from different schools in and outside the Kathmandu Valley.

Environmental Art Workshops, Competitions and Exhibitions

A series of workshops, art competitions and exhibitions on environment and conservation issues was launched early in 1990. Their aim is



to raise environmental awareness in school children.

Teachers and students from different schools in Kathmandu Valley will be invited to participate in the project. In all, there will be 120 students and 20 teachers who will form the core-group in the project. The project involves fine art instructors working in selected schools once a week to teach students to paint and to organise exhibitions. A number of art competitions will be organised.

INTERVIEW

In June 1988, Dr. Krishnakumar Panday received the United Nations Environment Programme's (UNEP) Global 500 Roll of Honour Award for his work on a programme called "Jara-Juri".

This year the honour was awarded to a Nepali radio-broadcaster, Ms. Krishna Tamrakar for her work in communicating environmental issues. She has logged about twenty years as a broadcast journalist for Radio Nepal. With about ten years of producing forestry programmes behind her, Ms. Tamrakar has recently begun producing an environment-radio series under a project run jointly by IUCN/Nepal and the Nepal Forum of Environmental Communicators.

The UNEP award instituted three years ago is the United Nations "tribute to the successes of those on the frontlines of global environmental action". The scope of the award - like the environment - is global. UNEP hopes to list 500 recipients (institutions and/or individuals) by 1991. In 1987 there were 91 awards for institutions and individuals in 43 countries. In 1988 the number rose to 94 awards in 54 countries, and in 1989 there were 144 awards in 50 countries.

Jara-Juri, as Dr. Panday's programme is known, translates as "grassroots" and is an attempt to recognise work done by villagers "for saving the soil". Jara-Juri has its own system of annual awards to deserving groups and individuals.

A Kathmandu-born agronomist, Dr. Panday has spent some 15 years working in different rural development programmes. During his years with an integrated hill development programme in Sindhupalchowk and Dolakha districts, he developed and worked with a unique programme called the "Tuki".

Tuki means the traditional wick lamp burned to light traditional Nepali village homes. Panday's Tukis were trailblazing villagers carrying the development message across the Himalayan foothills.

Dr. Panday has authored a book on Nepal's fodder trees and at present works as a senior professional at the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD).

IUCN/Nepal met both Panday and

Tamrakar to talk about their work and the environmental problems facing Nepal. Dr. Panday says: it is time for action, not rhetoric. And Ms. Tamrakar: A big NO to conservation without the participation of women. Excerpts of the interviews follow:



Urbanisation is one area where the problems are starting to be seen....We still have time to prevent these problems from being repeated in other parts of the country--provided we act now. It is time for action, not rhetoric.

On being awarded the Global 500

Panday: In the beginning it came as a surprise. I had not thought that I had done something worth recognition. All doubts were cleared after I came to know that the honour was being extended to the Jara-Juri. And it is the recognition of the efforts of villagers in the hinterlands who are working in their own ways to save the environment.

Tamrakar: It was only when I stood up to receive the award that I actually realised I had won this important global honour. I am proud of receiving the recognition.

On how the Jara-Juri evolved

Panday: After completing school I spent most of my time trekking through villages. On each new trek, and in each new village, I found there was always a lot I could learn from the villagers. The treks have left strong impressions of village life in me. Those early treks can be said to be the seed for the Jara-Juri.

I compare the work of the villagers to the roots of a tree. Everyone notices and admires the tall trunk, wide boughs, shiny leaves, beautiful flowers and sweet fruits that the tree gives. Very few bother to think twice that the tree is what it is because of the nourishment provided by the roots. Villagers have a similar role in development. Their role is seldom noticed.

On the messages carried in her radio programmes for the past 10 years

Tamrakar: The primary message in all programmes is "let us plant more trees and conserve the existing woods". The programmes include interviews, features and poems, but the message is the same. I have also made numerous jingles that call for the preservation of forests. I had no idea that the programmes would be judged good and worthy of the honour. Initially I had run the programmes with no money but love. And perhaps out of love today I think twice before plucking even a leaf from plants in my garden.

Who is eligible for the Jara-Juri award

Panday: Basically it is an attempt to recognise the efforts of all working to save the soil in their own ways. The group includes firstly the farmers. They are the users of the soil and if all of them save it, it means the whole nation's soil is being saved.

The other groups eligible for the Jara-Juri award are teachers who impart knowledge and spread the message on the need to conserve to young children. Even journalists campaigning for the cause are eligible. The award comprises a small cash award and a congratulatory letter. The first Jara-Juri was awarded in 1985.

On her radio programmes

Tamrakar: The programme I started in August 1978 was called *Hamro Ban* (Our

Forests). In 1980 I started *Desh Ko Mato* (Soil of the Country). This programme, dealing with soil conservation, was on the air for two years. The next programme was *Ban Hamro Jivan* (Forests, Our Life). This is a programme which gave me much satisfaction. There was a lot of listener-feedback as we received about 300-600 letters each month. The letters soon started generating enough material for the weekly programmes. Today in the same time slot I am running a programme on the environment in collaboration with IUCN for which I hope to have even greater listener-response.

On Nepal's current environmental problems

Panday: The issue today is not that of problems like deforestation. We already know they exist but have been slow to respond to control them. The major problem today is that, despite the understanding of the issues and the existence of basic rules and laws, we have not yet decided who will look after the environment. A forest ministry cannot and should not do so since a forest alone is not the environment. The environment includes all sectors related to life and living.

Thus, in order to coordinate all activities related to conservation there is a need for a central body that can oversee environmental quality as a whole.

The changes after 10 years of effort

Tamrakar: I feel that the programmes have helped in convincing the rural masses on the need to conserve the forests. They are today aware that the forests are the source of water, oxygen and that they provide fuel and fodder. This is why they need to be conserved. These practical reasons are the most convincing to villagers.

I have seen and participated in many afforestation programmes. I have also seen that in areas where afforestation is carried out there is little conservation of the plantations established. I also feel there is little abatement in deforestation. The rate is about the same as it was 10 years back, if not worse. More afforestation without conservation is not the answer.

On the central environment coordinating body

Panday: This should be something different

from a government ministry. This body should be one that can gain the confidence of one and all working on the environment. It must be able to win the trust of both the villager and the scientist and also get due respect from the administration.



Despite the fact that women work more than men both on and off the farms, there has been little effort to recognise this and involve them in mainstream conservation initiatives. Conservation cannot be achieved if women are excluded.

The body should be equipped with the necessary tools to investigate problems and should have the authority to bring the offenders to account and be able to educate them. This body should also be able to screen development projects and industries for their ecological compatibility.

On major problems and solutions in the forestry sector

Tamrakar: I do not agree that the villager is destroying the forests. Even if he cuts down the trees it is because he has no other alternative. They must burn firewood to cook food,

no one cooks by burning limbs. The reason for the deforestation thus could have something to do with government policy itself.

The hope lies in community forestry. People should be allowed to feel that the forests belong to them. The policies in themselves look good, the problem is with their proper implementation.

On the possible steps for the future

Panday: There is still time to start something. On a small scale, the Jara-Juri farmers have shown that conservation can be achieved with a little effort. Tree loss is not a big problem for Nepal. They can be easily got back with a little care. There are other areas that need to be addressed immediately.

Firstly, we need to think about our planning process itself. And we must start to act since, by investing a little more for environmental protection programmes today, we can prevent the problems that will show up later.

Urbanisation is one area where the problems are starting to be seen. In Kathmandu we have already started to see the problems that result from unplanned building construction. We still have time to prevent these problems from being repeated in other parts of the country--provided we act now. It is time for action, not rhetoric.

On the role of women in resource use and conservation

Tamrakar: Despite the fact that women work more than men both on and off the farms, there has been little effort to recognise this and involve them in mainstream conservation initiatives. Conservation cannot be achieved if women are excluded. They are the ones who use the resources more and feel more of the need.

Women should be encouraged to form exclusive women forest groups and other resource using groups. It is most unusual for women to find a place in the forest user-groups that are in operation today. It is time to think in terms of *Cheli bheti ban* (daughters' forest). Since they cook the food using firewood, feed the cattle and are also the hardest workers in the field, there can be no conservation without having them in the forefront.

Environment & Resource Conservation Division National Planning Commission

The Environment and Resource Planning Division of the National Planning Commission [NPC] was established in February 1987. At the Tenth National Development Council meeting, His Majesty the King stated in His directives that the NPC's structural framework required reorientation in view of current and emerging national needs and priorities, within the context of geographical and ecological realities. Consequently, the National Planning Commission reorganised its areas of major involvement under five divisions: the Economic Analysis Division, the Planning Division, the Environment and Resource Conservation Division, the Programme Division, and the Regional Planning Division.

The NPC has traditionally been involved with environmental affairs, such as through its association with UNESCO's Man and Biosphere programme since 1974. The NPC also organised, jointly with UNESCO, the South Asian Mountain Systems Regional Workshop, an outcome of which was the establishment of ICIMOD in Nepal.

At present the key role of the Environment and Resource Planning division is that of inter-sectoral leadership in environmental issues. The need for this division within NPC stemmed from recognition of the fact that environment issues cannot exist in isolation from other development concerns, and have thus to be amalgamated within the framework of the national development programme.

The Environment and Resource Planning division has two sections, dealing with Environment and Land Use respectively. The scope of this division covers the following major elements:

- Policy formulation in the field of watershed management, conservation, land use, rehabilitation and pollution control;
- Designing and implementing studies related to integrated land use, utilisation of natural resources, as well as developing statistics on natural resources and preparing reports on environmental issues;
- Programme formulation in regard to environment impact, biosphere reserve, erosion control; development of alternative energy, national parks and wild life reserves; conservation of natural resources and cultural heritage; and legislation relating to the use of natural resources, environment protection and ecological balance.

Over and above these functions, this division plays a coordinative role within the NPC in reference to land use, resource management and environmental concerns. It also functions as a consultant to relevant donor agencies, to avoid duplication of work and to ensure adherence to priorities. In addition, the division promotes environmental and

land use management activities by NGOs and social action groups.

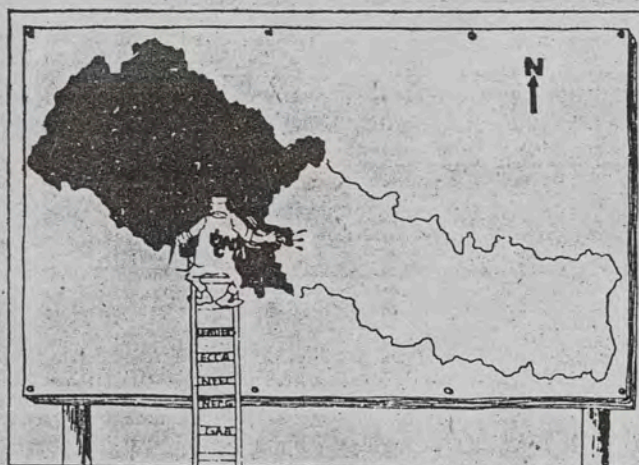
This division of the NPC is also the focal point for all international institutions engaged in environment and resource conservation. It has forged close linkages with foreign governments, NGOs and major institutions to broaden Nepal's participation in environmental programmes. It prepares reports and comments on the effects, upon the Nepalese environment, of developmental projects undertaken by international agencies.

A number of agencies are working closely with the division. The Asian Development Bank, in particular, has manifested a great deal of interest and support towards rendering this division even more effective in its sphere of influence.

These insights into the concept and functions of the Environment and Resource Planning division were provided by Dr. Chiranjeevi L. Shrestha (Vaidya), Chief of the division. Dr. Shrestha has been involved in the field of nature and natural resources conservation since 1974. He was previously Chief of the Water Resources division, and is also one of the chief architects of ICIMOD. In discussing the ongoing and future programmes of his division, Dr. Shrestha mentioned a World Bank sponsored study being undertaken in the hilly regions of Nepal, examining the relationship between economy and the environment. Preliminary findings indicate that around 33% of the loss in national production is due to the degradation of natural resources. Dr. Shrestha feels very strongly that 'Environment' is not, and should not, be an area of passing interest -- the environmental situation faces a very real crisis, and we must seriously work towards conserving our environment, avoiding wastage of our natural resources.

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LEADERS/IUCN ENVIRONMENTAL SEMINAR SERIES

Leaders Inc. in collaboration with IUCN/Nepal organised a one-day seminar in December last year at Dharan -- a scenic town in Nepal's eastern region. The theme of the seminar dealt with the impact of flood disasters caused by Sardu, Khare and Seuti rivers on the environment of Dharan and its adjoining areas. The seminar focussed on flood disasters in the Dharan area and identified

urgent mitigation measures required to prevent recurrence of flooding.

The Seminar was inaugurated by Hon. K.K. Budhathoki, the former Assistant Minister of Water resources.

Another seminar in the series, focussing on the 'Environmental Impact of Tourism

Development -- a Case Study of Sagarmatha National Park Area' was held in Kathmandu in February this year. The seminar provided a forum for active discussion on the adverse impact of tourism-related activities on the environment of Sagarmatha National Park area. The seminar was inaugurated by Hon. Hari B. Basnyat, Minister of Water Resources.



The National Seminar on Women as Environmental Conservationists and Resource Managers
R to L: Prime Minister K.P. Bhattarai; Raymond Janssens, UNICEF; Sahana Pradhan, Minister for Industry and Commerce

More recently, the Leaders/IUCN Environmental Seminar Series held a National Seminar on Women as Environmental Conservationists and Resource Managers. The seminar, organised by Women in Environment and funded by UNICEF, was held on June 3 and 4 in Kathmandu and was attended by around 200 participants. The Prime Minister, Mr. K.P. Bhattarai, inaugurated the seminar. The key note address was delivered by Ms. Sahana Pradhan, Minister of Industry and Commerce.

The background papers presented on the first day of the seminar covered women's roles in environment conservation; as resource managers; and as resource mobilisers. Subsequent group discussion on these issues led to the formulation of resolutions, which were presented at the close of the seminar.

A GREENER SAARC



A meeting on environmental issues in agriculture and rural development in South Asia, organised by the Forum of Agro-Rural Media (FARM) and the Asian Forum of Environmental Journalists (AFEJ), was held in India. The need was stressed for greater cooperation on environmental issues affecting the SAARC region.

The meeting also called for greater interaction and information exchange on environmental issues among journalists within the

region. The meeting observed that environmental problems did not respect political boundaries and that no country could remain indifferent to the effects its development activities have on neighbouring countries.

The meeting discussed the concept of preparing an "environmental balance sheet" for the SAARC region, and stressed the need for a regional environmental survey and the establishment of a regional gene bank.

If you wish to receive the National Conservation Strategy Newsletter free of charge on a regular basis, or if you would like to propose an article on a subject of current interest to the environment, please address: National Conservation Strategy Newsletter, IUCN - The World Conservation Union, P.O. Box: 3923, Kathmandu, Nepal.

PUBLICATIONS

VATAVARAN SAMACHAR (Environment News): Published by Environmental Division, Department of Soil Conservation and Watershed Management.

This bi-monthly newsletter in Nepali has been in circulation for the past seven years. It reports developments on environmental studies carried out under projects administered by the department. Its regular departments include news briefs, investigative reports on environmental issues, general knowledge items and so on.

RONAST Communicator: Published by the Royal Nepal Academy of Science and Technology.

This monthly newsletter in English provides information on activities of the Academy and progress in on going scientific research activities. The publication also profiles a scientist and his work in each issue.

PRAKRITI: Published by the King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation.

The bulletins of the KMNTC report on different projects being carried out by the Trust. Additionally, Prakriti carries interesting ar-



PRAKRITI

The Bulletin of the King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation

**RONAST
COMMUNICATOR**

**वातावरण समाचार
ENEL**

[Environmental News Letter]



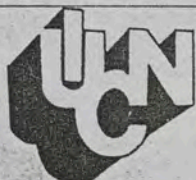
ICIMOD

ICIMOD: Published by the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD). This full-colour newsletter lists activities taking place at the six-nation International Centre for Mountain Development, based in Kathmandu.

The bulletin provides insights into different approaches adopted to manage the environment in the HinduKush Himalaya. It also carries information on the senior research fellowships granted by the Centre and summarises the areas of study undertaken by the scholars. Besides in-house news items the newsletter also features abstracts on reports published by the Centre that could be of interest to a lay reader.

VATAVARAN: Published in Nepali by the Nepal Forum of Environmental Communicators (NFEC) in cooperation with IUCN/Nepal, this poster size wall newspaper has made its debut with a view to communicating environmental conservation issues to rural communities, and raising conservation awareness in rural areas. The wall newspaper can also serve as useful reading material for the neo-literates in rural areas.

ticles on conservation issues and areas meriting special attention. The bulletin is produced in English in full colour.



The World Conservation Union

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) was founded in 1948 in Fontainebleau in France. Today it is the largest professional world body working to conserve the soil, land, water, air and life systems that the earth supports.

IUCN--the World Conservation Union is active in over 120 countries and groups 83 States and 121 governmental agencies as members. Most member States are from the developing world. This is the only world body that groups governments and non-governmental organisations and provides them equal opportunity to participate in the cause of conservation.

One major activity undertaken by IUCN is its support to countries to prepare National Conservation Strategies. It has helped over 30 countries prepare strategies that are based on the guidelines laid down by the World Conservation Strategy.

IUCN provides knowledge and leadership for the sustainable use of the planet's natural resources and helps governments to develop conventions and laws on conservation.

The Conservation bodies of the world join in a true partnership. IUCN is itself a partnership of over six hundred member organisations throughout the globe. Within the past few years IUCN has, inter alia, pressed governments for action on establishing national policies to achieve a stable balance between population and natural resources. It has helped to develop and operate conservation treaties and national legislation, including the conventions on World Heritage and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of wild fauna and flora (CITES). IUCN has also built up the World Conservation Monitoring Centre and Environmental Law Centre as repositories of data in their respective fields.