



Kaipavriksh Environment Action Group



# People in Conservation

Community based Biodiversity Conservation and Livelihood Security

pg 3.....Editorial

pg 3.....Law and Policy

Conservation Reserves and Community Reserves

pg 5.....Case Studies

A Home Stay in Korzok - J&K

From Punishment Zone to Adarsh Gaon - Maharashtra

Toufema - Nagaland

pg 8.....News from Indian States

Andhra Pradesh

Timbaktu No More a Nowhere Land

Tribals Up in Arms Against Poachers

Gujarat

Young Naturalist - Hakabhai Makwana

Karnataka

The Pelican Clan

Bankapura Peacock Conservation Reserve

Madhya Pradesh

Cash Incentive to Protect the Lesser Florican

Manipur

Project on Community-based Slow Loris

Conservation

Orissa

Bartering Medicinal Plants for Medical Treatment

Rajasthan

The Udpuria Village Pond

The Bishnois Do It Again

West Bengal

Teenage Ecological Mappers of Kalikapur

pg 12.....National News

Tiger Body to Rely on Locals

pg 12.....International News

A Tribute to Community Conservation Heroes

pg 13.....Be There

Symposium on Community Conservation in Orissa

pg 13.....Books and Publications

Managing Protected Areas : A Global Guide

Participatory Conservation : Paradigm Shifts in

International Policy - A Compilation of Outputs from Global

Events Related to Participatory Conservation

Linking Conservation with Livelihood : Lessons from  
Management of Gir - Protected Area in Western India

A Simple Guide to Intellectual Property Rights, Biodiversity and  
Traditional Knowledge

Understanding the Biological Diversity Act 2002 a Dossier

Process Documentation of The National Biodiversity Strategy  
Action Plan - India

Brochure on Community Conserved Areas of India

Welcome to the first issue of 'People in Conservation', a tri-annual newsletter that deals with community based biodiversity conservation and livelihood security. India has some of the world's most important natural habitats and harbours about 6% of the world's biodiversity. For generations, thousands of human communities have lived in the midst of this rich biodiversity and evolved sustainable lifestyles, of a symbiotic nature with the natural bounty around them.

In the last two centuries, these equations have been radically challenged and threatened by various factors. Among them are a social and political mandate that favours maximum extraction of natural resources to achieve a certain paradigm of 'Development' and a top-down model of conservation that ignores and threatens the very existence of the first allies of conservation, local people whose lives are deeply entwined with that of their surrounding for their physical, social, emotional and moral sustenance, in fact their very livelihood.

However in the midst of all this conflict, cutting across geographical, ecological and administrative boundaries and located in different castes, class and ethnic milieu, several local communities continue to conserve and sustainably manage the eco-systems and wildlife populations around them.

The community-based protection and management efforts are either a continuation of traditional practices or a revival of traditional systems or a development of completely new systems based on the local specificities and conditions. These efforts may be self-initiated or started with the help of NGOs or even with the help of government officials.

The community based conservation efforts may have many lessons relevant to the formal biodiversity/wildlife conservation strategies, laws and policies. In particular, these lessons relate to institutional structures, the combination of statutory and customary law, the link between livelihood security and conservation, and decentralisation of power.

Given the above scenario, the country must continue and intensify its efforts in community based biodiversity conservation and livelihood security, however there is a tremendous paucity of information on the subject matter that even practitioners and policy makers suffer from. Field level workers have even lesser access to information. Even where information does exist, most people and agencies do not have adequate access to it. This newsletter available in Hindi and English is a step towards filling this lacuna.

## Conservation Reserves and Community Reserves

The history of conservation of India's natural resources, wildlife and forests is not a happy one, strewn as it is with conflicts between State and local communities. Government initiated conservation efforts have followed in the footsteps of colonial conservation where laws were formed without consulting local communities who had (and often still have) a deep relationship and a nuanced understanding of their immediate environment and how it could be sustained. Moreover these laws uniformly have a top down approach where all the control lies with government officials and government institutions while locals are left with very little rights and responsibilities if any at all to their traditional resources from the surrounding environment. This alienation of locals from the source of their sustenance through generations has had disastrous consequences both for local communities as well as for the forests and wildlife of our country. The Wild Life (Protection) Act 1972 suffers from the same colonial hangover and that has narrowed the effectiveness of this otherwise undoubtedly useful Act.

However in spite of being left with no legal standing and facing severe threats from internal as well as external factors, there exists in the country thousands of Community Conserved Areas or CCAs. *Community conserved areas are defined as natural and modified ecosystems with human influence, providing significant biodiversity, ecological services and cultural values voluntarily conserved by indigenous peoples and other local communities through customary laws or other effective means.* In all CCAs, the local community that depends for various reasons on the ecosystem is a major player in the management, decision making and decision implementation process and the community's efforts lead to conservation of habitat, species, ecological services and associated cultural values.

**Community Conserved Areas** are defined as natural and modified ecosystems with human influence, providing significant biodiversity, ecological services and cultural values voluntarily conserved by indigenous peoples and other local communities through customary laws or other effective means.

The Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Act (WLPAA) 2002 introduced 2 new provisions - Conservation Reserves and Community Reserves, which for the first time in post colonial official conservation history seemed to recognize the value of involving local communities in the protection of forests and wildlife. This raised the hope of many and in 2004, a workshop was organized by Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS), Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) and Kalpavriksh to understand the implications of this new piece of legislation. The participants included community members, forest officials, lawyers, conservation activists and NGOs working with conservation

## Conservation Reserves as in the Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act 2002 (WLPAA)

Sec 36 A. Conservation Reserves: "The State Government may, after having consultations with the local communities, declare any area owned by the Government, particularly the areas adjacent to National Parks and Sanctuaries and those areas which link one protected area with another, as a conservation reserve for protecting landscapes, seascapes, flora and fauna and their habitat".

Sec 36B. "The State Government shall constitute a conservation reserve management committee to advise the Chief Wildlife Warden to conserve, manage and maintain the conservation reserve"

Forests or Wildlife Department under whose jurisdiction the community reserve is located".

## Community Reserves as in the Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act 2002 (WLPAA).

Sec 36 C. Community Reserves: "The State Government may, where the community or an individual has volunteered to conserve wildlife and its habitat, declare any private or community land not comprised within a National Park, sanctuary or a conservation reserve, as a community reserve, for protecting fauna, flora and traditional or cultural conservation values and practices."

Sec 36 D. "The State Government shall constitute a Community Reserve management committee, which shall be the authority responsible for conserving, maintaining and managing the community reserve". "The Committee shall consist of five representatives nominated by the Village Panchayat or where such Panchayat does not exist by the members of the gram sabha and one representative of the State Forests or Wildlife Department under whose jurisdiction the community reserve is located."

issues. One of the questions raised by the participants at the workshop was whether the two new categories would provide the much needed legal backing to existing CCAs and whether local conserving communities would consider opting for any of these legal spaces to strengthen their conservation efforts.

**Conservation Reserves** can be declared only on government owned land. As most of the common lands and forests where community conservation efforts are going on are government owned land, this category has the greatest potential to include CCAs. However once such a CCA becomes a Conservation Reserve, the de facto control over resources that the community had, would be taken away from the community and handed to the Chief Wildlife Warden (CWLW) of the State. The CWLW can only be advised in the management of the Conservation Reserve, that too by a State government constituted Conservation Reserve Management Committee. It is not clear why a community with de facto control over the resources and management of the forest would agree to such a disempowering process. Thus the category of Conservation Reserves that has the greatest potential for CCAs can hardly hope to have any willing takers in areas where communities are already conserving the environment and have worked out institutions and systems for management of the same, however this category can be used to initiate participatory conservation on government owned land.



**Community Reserves** cannot be declared on government owned land but only on private, institutional or common land and forest that is owned by the community. As already stated, most of the CCAs are on government owned land and so CCAs by and large will not be able to avail of this category except for areas in North East India and the Western Ghats where forests and common lands are still owned by private owners or communities. The participants at the workshop tried to understand what would happen if a private owner or a community that had full rights over land in terms of management, resource use and land use were to apply to this category. After declaration the community or the private body would lose its mandate to manage and conserve the area. The Act provides for a uniform institution, the Community Reserve Management Committee that consists of Panchayat selected members and a forest officer. For example in North East India, the traditional Village Councils which are currently conserving areas like the Khonoma Tragopan Sanctuary (declared by the village) will have to be replaced by a Panchayat based committee. The mandatory inclusion of a forest official on the Community Reserve Management Committee is likely to be viewed with suspicion by communities who have so far been doing the job on hand quite well and may have had a history of distrust with the forest officials. Moreover, once declared a Community Reserve, the community or the private body can no longer make changes in the land use of their own land without the permission of the State Government. Again it is not clear why a community or an individual or an institution with full legal control over the resources and management of the forest or land would



agree to such a disempowering process. Thus this category of Community Reserves which is already limited in its application also is likely to get no takers, for the individuals and communities clearly stand to lose a lot while the gains are not clear at all.

Due to these above mentioned and many other points analyzed at the workshop, the participants suggested that these categories will have very limited use in supporting on going community conservation initiatives and in many cases will be detrimental, undermining long standing efforts and creating more conflicts on ground rather than resolving issues. The participants suggested that urgent amendments are needed to the WLPAA 2002 so that these 2 new categories can provide a strong impetus for conservation. In addition to the amendments there will be a need for detailed operational guidelines clearly specifying process of declaration and management, systems of agreements, checks and balances and implications of not honouring the agreements for the concerned individuals, communities and government agencies.

These findings of the workshop participants have since been intimated to the relevant authorities, however to date there has been no official response. Also Kalpavriksh along with some participants of the workshop had drafted a set of guidelines which was sent to the MOEF. The Ministry had circulated the same to all States for their comments. An update on this is awaited. It has been over four years since the amended act came into place and currently the Ministry of Environment and Forest is in the process of drafting the guidelines for the effective implementation of these categories.

**Source:** Workshop on Community Reserves, Conservation Reserves and other legal spaces for Community Conserved Areas held on 3rd and 4th February 2004 at BNHS Mumbai - Summary of discussions and recommendations.

Neema Pathak, Ashish Kothari and Shantha Bhushan. "Involving Communities in Conservation a lost opportunity"; WWW.hindustantimes.com, 30/03/2004.

Neema Pathak, Tasneem Balanisorewala, Ashish Kothari and Bryan Bushley. "People in Conservation - Community Conserved Areas in India".

**Contact:** Kalpavriksh at the editorial address



## Case Studies

### A Home Stay in Korzok - J&K

Traditionally the Changpas are a nomadic tribe who along with their livestock roam the high altitude Changthang plateau that stretches across Eastern Ladakh and parts of Tibet. Today however many Changpas have given up their nomadic lifestyle and embraced a settled way of life. The village of Korzok situated on the bank of the Tso Moriri Lake in Ladakh is largely a Changpa settlement. The wealth of these people has traditionally been determined by the size of their herds and their most prized possession has been the availability of fresh grazing grounds for these herds.

Tso Moriri is home to important species like the Black-necked Crane (*Grus nigricollis*) and the Bar-headed Goose (*Anser indicus*). It is also a key staging post for many other migratory water birds. At 4995 meters above sea level, Tso Moriri is one of the highest lakes in the world. It is also one of the largest brackish water lakes in the Indian Changthang region. It is a Ramsar site, a part of the Changthang Cold Desert Wildlife Sanctuary declared under the WLPAA 1972 and a Wetland Conservation Reserve under the Jammu and Kashmir Wildlife Protection Act 1978.

The scenic beauty of the lake and the unique wildlife it supports has turned this area into a major tourist attraction. The donkeys and mules that bring the tourists in, compete with the local herds for limited pasture land and have depleted the main resource base of the resident Changpas. This along with other factors has negatively impacted the traditional livelihood of the Changpas and for some time now, they have been on the lookout for an alternative way of earning a livelihood. The women folk had heard of the concept of home stays from their relatives in Rumbak and Markha valley of Ladakh and they too wanted to earn a livelihood by renting out a room or two in their homes to visitors.

Since 1999, WWF-India has been working on developing a strategy and plan for conservation of Tso Moriri and other high altitude wetlands in Ladakh. Their efforts to conserve the highly endangered species found in this area have been thwarted by the high turnover of tourists in the area, which adversely affects the ecological balance of this unique spot. WWF-India realized the need to join hands with local people to conserve this unique area. In mid 2002, the local Tso Moriri Conservation Trust was formed to support local people take over the conservation efforts of the area. The Trust is headed by two highly respected elders of the community. WWF-India facilitated the formation of this Trust.

Thus while WWF-India needed the support of the local Changpas to conserve the wetland, the locals needed the support of WWF-India to increase their stake in the tourism industry. Consultations between these two groups gave birth to the Tso Moriri Home Stay initiative.

While the initial impetus for the home stay came from the local community, WWF-India used its skills in strategy development and planning, to meet the twin objectives. A questionnaire was prepared to study what tourists expected out of a visit to Tso Moriri. The study revealed that many came seeking an aesthetic and cultural experience and that tourists welcomed the idea of a home stay, as this would give them greater insight into a novel and interesting way of life as well as help the locals earn a decent livelihood. Armed with this knowledge, ten home stays were selected based on location of house, availability of space and other basic amenities.

In 2006, just before the start of the tourist season, WWF-India facilitated a capacity building exercise for the local community with home stay facilities. The resource persons were fellow Ladakhis, who had the experience of running successful home stays from the Hemis National Park. The capacity building exercise included hands on experience on a wide range of subjects, like hygiene, waste segregation, developing marketing strategies, handling finance and drawing up and finalizing guidelines for tourists. All along the program stressed the close and clear link between the ecological conservation of the area and the livelihood sustenance of the locals. Most of the training costs were borne equally by the home stay owners and the Trust, while some seed money was put in by WWF-India.

Rules and regulations have been drawn up to ensure that all the home stays get an equitable share of the business. Tariffs have been fixed and are strictly adhered to. All the money goes to the home stay owners. The Trust is aware of the need for more stringent management systems so that in the future there is minimum conflict due to the initiative. The tourist guidelines, drawn up by the local community, have been put up in every home stay to make the tourists aware of their responsibilities to this unique ecosystem. Home stay owners who now have a larger stake in maintaining the ecosystem play a lead role in protecting the environment.

The Korzok Home Stay has the benefit of a willing and able local community, a local Trust headed by locally respected leaders, facilitation by an external agent like WWF-India, a lot of goodwill between the different stakeholders and well defined rules and regulations that will continue to direct both tourists as well as the local people themselves.

The manifold purposes served by this initiative, is aptly summed in the simple words that a visitor left behind in the feedback register. It said, *"Thank you for your hospitality and good cooking. We hope very much that the excellent Korzok Home Stay System will help local people as well as conserve the wonderful flora and fauna of Tso Moriri. You live in a very special place."*

By: Seema Bhatt with inputs from WWF -India Team.

Contact: Seema Bhatt, B-94, 2nd Floor, Defence Colony, New

## From Punishment Zone to Adarsh Gaon - Maharashtra

Hivre Bazar is a small village of 1250 individuals, situated just 17 kms from the city of Ahmednagar in Maharashtra. The village has a typical grassland ecosystem, with thorny Acacia species and Neem (*Azadirachta indica*) trees. Among the large mammals found here are the Black Buck (*Antelope cervicapra*) and the Black-naped Hare (*Lepus nigricollis*). The Ministry of Environment and Forest on its website on Sept 2006, stated that the forests of Hivre Bazar show an increased wildlife presence. The total livestock of the village is around 2000. Today milk production, farming and poultry are the three main sources of income of this prosperous village.

This is the inspiring story of how a village earlier known for its droughts, high crime rate and widespread alcoholism today is an example of how communities can organize themselves to restore their natural resources, earn decent livelihoods and in general enjoy a better quality of life.

Since the early 1970s this drought prone area showed severe decline in water availability and soil fertility. Due to heavy deforestation the meager rainfall that the village received was lost as surface runoff. The lack of water and fertile land led to poverty, outward migration, rampant alcoholism and crime in the village. The village hit rock bottom and stayed there from 1980 to 1991.

In 1992, Popat Rao Pawar a local who had left for the city to pursue competitive sports was requested to return to the village by the local youth. Popat Rao returned and was elected *Sarpanch* (Head of the Panchayat) of the village. Pawar a charismatic leader, with a strong sense of social responsibility, brought new hope into the village. He catalyzed the formation of the local group called the *Yeshwant Krishi Gram Panlot Sanstha*. The group along with other villagers decided to plant trees as well as construct different types of trenches, storage tanks and percolation tanks, to help raise the level of the underground water table. Pawar availed of various government schemes and roped in external voluntary agencies that supported the integrated approach under their own watershed development programs.

Between 1993 and 1994, an afforestation program was started with the help of the Forest Department on 400 ha of land. Afforestation was also taken up on private land. In the last decade nearly eleven lakh trees have been planted and today 1000 ha of reserved forest are being protected by the village.

The villagers have five self imposed rules that they live by. They are *nashabandi* (prohibition), *charai bandi* (a ban on grazing), *kulhad bandi* (a ban on tree felling), *nas bandi* (sterilization) and *shramdaan* (voluntary labour). Nearly 1/3 rd of the work done for

village development is done through *shramdaan*, a gift of labour by the villagers to themselves.

Since 1994, the cattle are being stall fed, and milk production is a big business which is supported by fodder from the grasslands. The extraction of fodder is done in a regulated manner prescribed by the villagers themselves. Water though now available, is used judiciously and equitably. Water intensive crops are not grown and bore wells are not dug in the village.

The institutions in the village that oversee village matters are the *Gram sabha* (Village Council) and a Village Executive Committee. All major decisions of the village are taken by these groups. The villagers select seven or more members to the village executive committee, which works on village development programs. Both the *Gram sabha* and the District Commissioner have to approve of the committee formed. The Committee has tried to build in a certain level of gender and caste representation by making it mandatory to have at least one woman and one member from a scheduled caste or tribe on the committee.

All these efforts have had positive impacts on both the environment and the community. The availability of water and the growing of organic crops have led to the availability of more nutritious and healthy food. The villagers now grow enough to feed themselves and make a sale in the market place. The increased fodder availability has also led to an increase in the availability of milk. The Forest Department initiated the Joint Forest Management (JFM) scheme in the village and handed over the management of the forest to the villagers. Bio-fuel plants have been built for the purpose of meeting the fuel requirements of the villagers and the number of wild animals has increased in the forests.

Between 1999 and 2006, milk production increased from 150 litres per day to 2200 litres per day, land under irrigation has increased from 120 ha to 600 ha, the number of families below the poverty line has reduced from 198 to 53, the literacy rate has increased from 30% to 99%, drought and poverty induced outward migration has reduced, in fact inward migration is increasing and many villagers are returning home. Alcoholism is minimal and the crime rates also have sharply declined. The spirit of cooperation and the success of their programs have increased the confidence of the people, which can easily be seen while interacting with any of the villagers.

Hivre Bazar has won many accolades through the years and now the villagers regularly hold lectures and discussions in surrounding villages on conservation and watershed initiatives.

In conclusion a committed leadership, a community willing to impose self discipline, revitalization of traditional institutions like the *Gram Sabha* along with a readiness to work with existing government schemes, reviving old traditions like *shramdaan*

along with embracing newer concepts like *nasbandi* (family planning), a sympathetic Forest Department, availability of supportive government schemes, official recognition and most importantly the visible impacts on the livelihoods and quality of life of the local people have made this village move from a dreaded punishment posting zone to an ideal village.

**Source:** Directory on Community Conserved Areas in India being put together by Kalpavriksh.

**Contact:** Yashwant Krishi Gram and Panlot Vikas Sanstha, (YKGPVS), Hivre Bazar, Block No. 8, Bhaji Market Building, Marketyard, Ahmednagar.  
Phone: 0241-355782

## Toufema - Nagaland

In Nagaland, various tribes from over 100 villages like Khonoma, Luzuphuzu, Chizami and Sendenyu are managing and regenerating hundreds of sq. kms of forest land. Toufema village in Kohima district of Nagaland, located at 1800 feet above sea level is one such village.

Rampant hunting and tree felling had taken a toll on the once dense green cover of this area leading to a rapid decline in forest cover and wild life. Elders of the village who had grown up in the midst of forest and wildlife realized that if they did not act soon to remedy the situation, coming generations would miss out on all that the elder generation had enjoyed and taken for granted. The village elders (*gaonburas*) were also concerned that if nothing was done there would be a severe water scarcity in the village. So in 1990, the Toufema village council (TVC) orally pronounced a ban on hunting and felling in certain parts of the community forests. However this ban was not very effective.

In 2001, the TVC passed a formal resolution banning all kinds of resource use including firewood collection, grazing, wild food picking and hunting inside the community declared forest. Since then 1600 ha of community forest is being protected by the village according to the mandate of the Village Council. Around the same time, the State Government declared Toufema a 'tourist village' and backed this up with state investments to develop tourist cottages and other facilities. Though the State decision did not precipitate the original declaration in 1999, it may have provided an impetus towards more stringent conservation efforts on the part of the community since 2001.

The land in the reserve is mostly community owned, but some patches have been donated by individual families. The village also donated some of the community land that was earlier used for shifting cultivation towards development of a tourist complex in the village. The complex is designed to show the local architecture and construction styles.





In 2003, in recognition of the village effort at forest and wildlife conservation, the State Government extended financial support to the effort through the Forest Department, towards bamboo wood fencing of the reserve, patrolling, construction of the Tourism Reception Centre and other related work.

Villagers report that whereas most wildlife had disappeared earlier, the conservation initiative of a few years has resulted in the reappearance of wild animals like the Leopard (*Panthera pardus*), Black Bears (*Ursus thibetanus*), Jungle Cats (*Felis chaus*), Wild Pigs (*Sus scrofa*), Himalayan Crestless Porcupine (*Hystrix brachyuran*), Slow Loris (*Nycticebus coucang*) and several squirrel species. The villagers also report a marked increase in bird life, including the Kalij Pheasant (*Lophura leucomelana*) and the Red Jungle Fowl (*Gallus gallus*).

In 2005, a team from Kalpavriksh visited the community protected forest and noted that the forest though young, was dense and diverse in patches. A few old trees stood sentry, reminders of what had stood here once. The Kalpavriksh team also observed that while many parts of Nagaland with dense forest cover are very quiet indicating a lack of birds and other wild life, the community reserved forest of Toufema, was noisy and resounded with bird calls. The visiting team prepared a checklist of 100 bird species seen in the forest, based on the observation of the villagers.

The direct economic benefits of this conservation effort and the effect on the livelihood of the local people are not visible as yet, and the villagers hope that more people will be aware of their tourist facilities and that the conservation efforts will also yield economic benefits for the villagers.

The impact of the ban on hunting and resource use in the protected forest has to be studied in greater detail.

The institutions are the local village council, and since the forest is shared between Toufema and another village called Botsa, a Joint Forest Committee has been put in place to monitor and observe rules and regulations. Stiff fines are imposed on those

found violating the rules. Those who do not pay the fines will not be given any benefits accruing from these efforts. Repeated offenders may even be asked to leave the village.

This young initiative, has both local and State Government support and the villagers have taken strong steps towards conservation and livelihood security. In the coming years, a detailed study of this and other similar efforts are sure to provide valuable lessons to community based conservation efforts around the country.

**Source:** Directory on Community Conserved Areas in India being put together by Kalpavriksh.

**Contact:** Mr. Kevi Lusa, Toufema village, Kohima district, Nagaland.

## News from India

### Andhra Pradesh

#### Timbaktu No More a Nowhere Land

Seventeen years ago, Timbaktu was a barren piece of land in the second most drought affected district of India, namely Anantapur District of Andhra Pradesh. In 1990, the Timbaktu Collective, a registered NGO started working from this desolate land. Over the years, the Collective has been working consistently in the area of ecological restoration, natural resource management, generating sustainable livelihoods and a number of other social issues. The Timbaktu Collective has helped transform 10,000 acres of denuded hills into verdant forests and works with the proactive participation of 33,000 villagers in 112 villages in and around Anantapur District.

Currently, the Kalpavalli program which is the natural resource management program of the Timbaktu Collective has built 73 kms of fire break, to protect the life of plants and animals from forest fires that are common in summer in this area. 440 metres of this fire break was built through local *Shramdaan*, while the rest of the work was paid for and created livelihoods for the local people. 360 kgs of 51 plant varieties were collected and dibbled by local youth, women and school children. This will increase the biodiversity of the land that has in recent years been subjected to intense mono-cropping.

The active participation of local communities has resulted in the regeneration of the surrounding forests in spite of consistent scanty rainfall through successive years. Last year, fodder from the forest supported local livestock of 5000 sheep and goat. Besides this, fodder worth Rs.1,58,000 (current market price) was distributed free of charge to farmers and herders of



surrounding villages. 6000 saplings of a variety of forest trees are being grown in nurseries. 273 acres of land in 9 villages have been transformed into tamarind orchards. Thousands of date palms have regenerated profusely along the main stream of the Kalpavalli forest and 69 of the poorest families from 9 villages collected these dates and sold 22,000 kgs of the fruit for Rs. 1,02,000.

**Source:** Annual Report 2005-2006, The Timbaktu Collective.

**Contact:** Mr.C.K.Ganguly, Timbaktu Collective, C.K.Palli village, Anantapur District, Andhra Pradesh, India 515101.  
Email: timbaktu@vsnl.com

### Tribals Up in Arms Against Poachers



Till recently the forest of Annapureddipalli in Khammam District of Andhra Pradesh had been a favourite haunt of wildlife poachers and timber smugglers. However due to recent developments, wildlife offenders now prefer to keep their distance from this forest.

The local tribal youth, work closely with the Forest Guards and have formed a *Vana Samrakshana Samiti* (VSS) to save the flora and fauna of their forest pocket. As part of their efforts they have seized a van packed with teak logs and other cars used for smuggling forest timber and other forest resources. Two well connected politicians who were accompanying the vehicle were also detained by the youth and handed over to the Forest Department. Annoyed by the vigilance of the local youth, wildlife offenders made a midnight attempt on the life of VSS member Vaddepalli Babu. However the terror tactics were thwarted as alert villagers rushed to help the VSS member under attack and nabbed the would be killer.

**Source:** D. Chandra Bhaskar. "Tribals up in arms against poachers"; *The Hindu*, 08/12/2006.

### Gujarat

#### Young Naturalist - Hakabhai Makwana

More often than not, coconut cutters or *padavalas* consider vultures nesting on coconut trees a threat to their livelihood and are known to destroy the nests in order to access the trees. However coconut cutter, Hakabhai Makwana, in spite of his profession joined the "Save the Vulture" campaign started by Gir

Nature Club in Bhavnagar. Makwana's sincere efforts have paid off and today a group of 50 *padavalas* have joined *Jatayu Mitrya* or The Friends of Vultures group.

Now, Makwana divides his day judiciously into two parts. The first half of the day is used to cut coconuts from trees and the second half of the day is used in his conservation efforts. This includes counting vulture nests, helping injured vultures and keeping the Forest Department informed on the status of vultures.

Impressed by the work of the coconut cutters, the State Government has sanctioned compensation to coconut cutters for their losses for not accessing the coconuts trees that have vulture nests. In recognition of his work, Makwana has been awarded The Young Naturalists Award 2006 by ABN-Amro.

**Source:** Divya Sama. "From Jatayu Mitra to Gidh Raj: Makwana is young naturalist 2006"; *Express India, Mumbai Newslite*, 08/12/2006.

### Karnataka

#### The Pelican Clan

Spot-billed Pelicans (*Pelecanus philippensis*) are a globally threatened species. The villagers of Kokkere Bellur in Karnataka have a traditional bond with these birds and have for generations provided the birds a safe haven to nest and breed on the village trees. The fish eating birds in turn provide potassium and phosphate rich guano which is excellent natural manure for the fields of this largely agrarian community. The early 90s, saw a huge reduction in the local tree cover and consequently the number of visiting pelicans and storks came down drastically too. The new apathy and the disinterest in the birds was checked by Manu K. a researcher, whose interest in the birds acted as a catalyst in reviving the bond between villagers and the birds and in fact convinced the villagers to play a more proactive role in the conservation effort than their previously benign tolerance of the birds. Today the youth and children of the village are part of a group called the *Hejjarle Balaga* (The Pelican Clan). This young group keeps the water bodies clean, plants tamarind, banyan and Portia trees along the roads and in their backyards to provide more nesting trees to the birds, dissuades others from cutting down old trees and finally rescues and look after fallen chicks in a pen till the chicks are fit enough to join their relatives in the wild.

In 2006, the nest count in the village stood at an all time high of 400. Seventeen fallen chicks were reared and returned to the wild. In the last two years, many birds had accidentally got electrocuted on the high tension lines that passed through the village very near to the nesting trees. According to the latest report received, the community has been successful in getting the authorities to increase the distance between the power lines and the neutral lines of the high tension wires, which has put an end to the birds getting electrocuted on these wires. The villagers



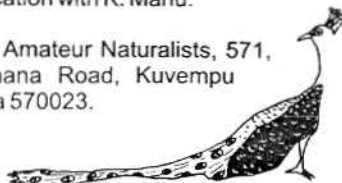
are also wary of the government's plan to open up the small village as a big tourist attraction as this will tear apart the fabric of the local society and affect the birds as well. The *Hejjarle Balaga* has recently obtained some land with 4 big nesting trees, where they plan to start a local environment interpretation centre built with local material and local

know how.

**Source:** Personal communication with K. Manu.

**Contact:** K. Manu, Mysore Amateur Naturalists, 571, 9th Cross, Anikethana Road, Kuvempu Nagar, Mysore, India 570023.

### Bankapura Peacock Conservation Reserve



The Karnataka State Government has declared an area of 139.10 acres at Bankapura village in Haveri District as the Bankapura Peacock Conservation Reserve. A press release from the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) said that the declaration had been made after consultation with local communities and concerned government departments.

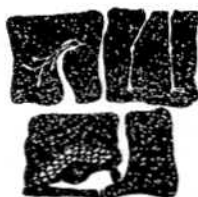
**Source:** 'Peacock sanctuary at Bankapura', *The Hindu*, 09/07/06.

## Madhya Pradesh

### Cash Incentive to Protect the Lesser Florican

Western Madhya Pradesh is one of the main breeding grounds for the Lesser Florican (*Sypheotides indica*). Payments of cash incentives are being used as a strategy to protect the highly endangered species in Madhya Pradesh. The Lesser Florican is protected under schedule I of the WLP 1972. In 1983, the Madhya Pradesh Government notified two sanctuaries Sailana in Retlam District and Sardarpur in Dhar District to protect and improve the habitat of the Lesser Florican. The sanctuaries however comprised of revenue land and private fields and put restrictions on the land use of these areas causing hardship to the farmers who owned the land as a result the farmers did not support this conservation effort. In order to overcome this hurdle, the Forest Department came up with the idea of cash incentives for those who informed the Forest Department of the presence of the 'Kharmor' or the Lesser Florican on their land and protected the nest and eggs from harm. A total of Rs. 89,000 was paid to 23 farmers in Retlam District, where the scheme was launched last year. Another 60,000 was spent on spreading awareness on the scheme in the villages in and around the sanctuary.

Between 2004 and 2006, the number of Lesser Florican in Sailana Sanctuary has increased from a mere 9 to more than 26. According to Dr. H.S.Pabla, "the Cash Incentive Scheme has achieved within a year, what the creation of sanctuaries could not."



The same scheme however has not shown any result in Sardarpur Sanctuary.

**Source:** Milind Ghatwai, "Cash incentive Scheme gives endangered bird fresh lease of life"; *Indian Express*, 27/01/2006.

## Manipur

### Project on Community-based Slow Loris Conservation

Salam Rajesh has been selected for the Aaranyak-Rufford Small Grant for 2006-2007 under the program 'Aaranyak Small Grants for Nature Conservation in Northeast India'. The topic of his project is 'Community-based Slow Loris Conservation'. This project is to be taken up in the Sadu-Tokpa village forest lands under Henglep subdivision of Churachandpur District, Manipur as a community initiative towards protection and conservation of Slow Loris habitat and species. The Slow Loris is the flagship species of the target area.



**Contact:** Salam Rajesh, Sagolband Salam, Leikai, PO: Imphal-1, Manipur. Phone: 0385-222395  
Email: [salamrajesh@rediffmail.com](mailto:salamrajesh@rediffmail.com);  
[salraj\\_imp@yahoo.com](mailto:salraj_imp@yahoo.com); [salraj\\_imp@yahoo.com](mailto:salraj_imp@yahoo.com)

## Orissa

### Bartering Medicinal Plants for Medical Treatment

*Sabuja Biplav*, a unique and local community based green revolution is taking place in a quiet corner of Bolangir District in Orissa, due to the innovative actions of an ex Forest Department employee Santosh Kumar Das and his wife Lily Das. The duo has started an inexpensive Ayurvedic hospital where people can pay for their medicine and treatment by bringing in locally available medicinal plants. At least 70% of the people who come in, pay by bartering medicinal plants a resource available in plenty in the area. The hospital has a 'Home Herbal Garden Project' that promotes the growth of 20 medicinal herbal plants used to traditionally treat common health problems, and people are encouraged to grow these plants in their backyards. The hospital also organizes camps to teach villagers the old art of identifying

medicinal plants that grow in the village and the surrounding wilderness.

Western Orissa, is a treasure trove of medicinal plants. Previously people, who collected these plants, did not get a fair price for them. Now the Das's have with one stroke of genius and plenty of hard work given the villagers a means to access good health and at the same time provided a local platform to market abundantly available medicinal plants at a fair price. This effort will also encourage local residents to retain the biodiversity of medicinal plants in the area and retain the traditional knowledge associated with these plants. Currently Lily Das looks after the practical aspects of tending to the nursery and Santosh Das is busy studying Ayurveda and other ancient scriptures. This means more good news for the biodiversity of the area as well as the health of the local people.



**Source:** Biswajit Padhi. "Pay with medicinal plants at herbal hospital"; *Civil Society*; Vol. 3, No. 5, Feb 2006.

## Rajasthan

### The Udpuria Village Pond

Udpuria village pond is a Community Conserved Area in Kota District in Rajasthan. The pond is rain filled and in the dry season receives water from the Chambal River. According to locals, since 1994 this has been a good breeding ground for Painted Storks (*Mycteria leucocephala*) however in 1998, due to the pond being covered with water hyacinths only 7 pairs of Painted Storks raised their families near the pond. In 1999, the Hadothi Naturalists Society, a local body along with other villagers took up the task of manually removing the water hyacinth and cleaning the pond. The following breeding season 95 nests were made and all the chicks survived. In 2005, the continued conservation efforts led to the planting of appropriate indigenous trees around the pond jointly by the villagers and the Forest Department.

The latest news from Anil K. Nair, who has been involved with the rejuvenation of this pond from the very beginning, is that water hyacinths have started filling up the pond again and talks are on between the villagers and government officials regarding the clearing of the same. The 2006 count yielded 232 nests and nearly every nest had 3 to 4 chicks. An interesting phenomenon noted this time was that all the birds made their nests on the outskirts of the village, where there are some old trees and many young trees and none of the birds made their nests in the village centre as was the case earlier.

**Source:** Directory on Community Conserved Areas in India being put together by Kalpavriksh and Personal communication with Anil K. Nair.

**Contact:** Anil K. Nair, 81 Shopping Centre, Kota, Rajasthan 324007.  
Email: crane\_anil@rediffmail.com

## The Bishnois Do It Again

Amruta Devi, the legendary Bishnoi lady and her 362 fellow villagers from the Bishnoi community, who had died clinging to khejri (*Prosopis cineraria*) trees in an attempt to save them from the axe hundreds of years ago, would be proud of the current Bishnoi community that continues to show the same commitment to wildlife protection as the earlier generations did. It was due to the sheer grit of the Bishnoi community that the well connected and popular Hindi film actor Salman Khan was sentenced to 5 years of rigorous imprisonment and fined Rs. 25,000 for killing a Chinkara (*Gazella bennettii*) over eight years ago in Bishnoi land. Hailing the judgment, ex MLA Hiralal Bishnoi says it reinforces the 520 year old commitment of the community to protect nature and wildlife at all costs.

**Source:** Purba Kalita. "Bishnois pledge to bring back Salman, punish him"; *Civil Society*, Vol. 3, No. 8; May 2006.

## West Bengal

### Teenage Ecological Mappers of Kalikapur

Mithun Dhara, Raju Das, Sanjoy Mondol, Bhole Baidya and Shushanto Gharai are illiterate teenagers from Kalikapur, a rural outpost in East Kolkata that the current development model has not touched as yet. Shanu Maiti another friend of theirs has attended a missionary school. However they all have one teacher in common, the Kalikapur canal which drains the sewage from Kolkata into her wetlands.

Documentary filmmaker and environmentalist Nilanjan Bhattacharjee met young Mithun Dhara at a fish market, while the latter was helping a fishmonger clean fish. Bhattacharjee was impressed by the vast knowledge that the teenager had about the biodiversity of Kalikapur and this in turn led Bhattacharjee to start the ecological mapping of Kalikapur with Mithun and his friends.

The team of teenagers has identified 142 varieties of plants, many of which are edible and have medicinal properties, 16 species of birds some of which are threatened and many varieties of fish in the Kalikapur canal.

While working in Kalikapur along with his young friends, Bhattacharjee noted the environment friendly lifestyle of the local community. In his own words, "Every single person in Kalikapur uses twigs and biomass for fuel, yet nobody would ever fell a tree. They ate ripe, nutritious babla fruit and wild Figs that we city dwellers do not even know of. The unripe fruits would be scooped out to make long lasting oil lamps."



Bhattacharjee feels strongly that city planners should value such virgin lands and preserve these unique ecosystems which have survived the onslaught of the current paradigm of development, where one destroys natural biodiversity and then spends money to green the area.

**Source:** Rina Mukherjee, 'Boys Map Kolkata's Biodiversity'; *Civil Society*, Vol. 3, No. 8; May 2006.

## National News

### Tiger Body to Rely on Locals

As recommended by the Tiger Task Force, the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) was constituted on September 4, 2006 under the Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act, 2006. The NTCA is a body consisting of 19 members from various ministries and eight non-official experts

At its first meeting held in Delhi, the NTCA decided to ask all tiger states to launch a special drive to recruit local forest dwelling people to fill up ground staff vacancies in all Tiger Reserves. Rajesh Gopal, NTCA member secretary, while talking to The Indian Express stated that one couldn't save the tiger by isolating the local population and that one had to engage them in the process, even if it meant relaxing the prescribed qualifications for such posts.

**Source:** "Tiger body to rely on locals, hunting communities"; *Express News Service*, New Delhi, November 29.



(KCAMC) representing all resident communities had been set up. The KCAMC chairman Dawa Tsering Sherpa perished in the accident.

This devolution of authority over a conservation area is a bold step. It is unfortunately a rather rare one, for much of the Indian subcontinent remains steeped in colonial notions of conservation that centralise all powers in the hands of a bureaucracy. In taking such a step, Nepal has shown that it intends to entrust biodiversity and natural resource management to communities who live closest to such resources, rather than rely on distant and continuously changing government officials.

Across the world, a new paradigm of conservation is spreading, one in which responsibility for wildlife protection and benefits of forests are shared with communities. Two trends have emerged - Collaborative Managed Protected Areas (CMPAs), in which governments and communities jointly manage conservation, and Community Conserved Areas (CCAs), in which the predominant role is that of local people.

In Nepal, one of the biggest protected areas in the subcontinent, Annapurna, became a CMPA when its management was entrusted to a NGO and local communities in the 1990s. Over its 7,000-plus sq km area, wildlife populations have increased as have livelihood and revenue benefits to local people living inside the area. Chandra Gurung and Mingma Norbu Sherpa, two of those who died, were instrumental in making this happen.

Not all initiatives towards participatory conservation are successful. However, many government-managed protected areas too are prone to failures. See what happened in the infamous Sariska Tiger Reserve.

## International News

### A Tribute to Community Conservation Heroes

On September 24th, 2006, 24 people perished in a helicopter accident in the Nepal Himalaya. Several of those who died were pioneers in advocating a saner way of living with the earth. Among them were Nepalese State Minister for Forests and Soil Conservation, Gopal Rai, and prominent conservationists like Chandra Gurung, Mingma Norbu Sherpa, Narayan Poudel and Tirth Man Maskey.

They were, in fact, translating their vision into practice when the mountains swallowed them up. The group was on its way back from Taplejung, where they had handed over management of the Kangchenjunga Conservation Area to local communities.

A Kangchenjunga Conservation Area Management Council

If one looks at the enormous social costs of the conventional model of conservation, including the displacement and dispossession of millions of people, it is surely time we did what the Nepal government started doing with Annapurna, and continued with Kangchenjunga. We could have used either of these two models in the Great Himalayan National Park in Himachal Pradesh. Instead, we used outdated models to kick people out, create an enormous ring of hostile people around the area, and then try desperately to compensate with thoroughly inadequate eco-development inputs. A strategy of joint or community-based management, with appropriate inputs to help build capacity and tackle threats, would do much more to conserve wildlife.

Even where zoning to maintain inviolate areas for wildlife is necessary, it will work more effectively if done with local people. If we can try out such an approach for even a handful of protected areas in India, it will be a fitting tribute to the conservationists who died recently.

### Be There!

#### Symposium on Community Conservation in Orissa

A 3 day symposium on Community Conservation in Orissa will be held in September 2007, at the Regional Institute of Education, Bhubaneswar, Orissa. The symposium is being organized by the NGOs Vasundhara and Kalpavriksh and will be sponsored by Concern World Wide, HIVOS, Deccan Development Society, and Wildlife Society of Orissa.

Orissa has the unique distinction of being one of the few states in India where there are thousands of local communities that are actively protecting and conserving biodiversity along with meeting their own livelihood requirements. These initiatives by communities play a very crucial role in the protection of biodiversity, maintenance of ecological services and maintenance of corridors between important wildlife habitats. They also play an equally important role in providing local people with their basic livelihood needs, financial resources, cultural and political identities.

The objective of the symposium is to facilitate effective and useful interaction among conserving communities, who often work in isolation and to increase the level of awareness about these community conservation initiatives among politicians, policy makers, industrial houses and the general public. Another objective of this symposium is to highlight the various threats that such initiatives face and the steps that are being taken and can be taken to face these threats.

The four main themes of the symposium will be Community Conservation in Forest Ecosystem, Community Conservation in Specific Species, Community Conservation in Marine Ecosystem and Community Conservation in Agriculture.

The symposium will have formal presentations as well as informal presentations in the form of photo exhibitions, slide presentations, film shows, street plays, songs and dances, *kavi sammelans* (Poetry recital by a gathering of poets) and other forms of oral and visual presentations.

Contact: Sweta Mishra, Vasundhara, Plot no.15, Saheed Nagar, Bhubaneswar.  
Phone: 0674-2542011/12  
E-mail: swetamishra1@gmail.com or vasundharanr@satyam.net.in

Or

Neema Pathak, at the editorial address  
E-mail: natrails@vsnl.com or kalpavriksh@vsnl.net

#### Managing Protected Areas: A Global Guide

Edited by: Michael Lockwood, Graeme L. Worboys, Ashish Kothari

Published by: Earthscan, UK and USA in 2006

Copyright: 2006, IUCN, Michael Lockwood, Graeme L. Worboys, Ashish Kothari

This handbook spans the full terrain of protected areas management. It employs dozens of detailed international case studies, hundreds of concise topical snapshots, maps, tables, illustrations and a colour plate section, as well as evaluation tools, checklists and numerous appendices to cover all aspects of park management from biodiversity to natural heritage to financial management. The handbook establishes a conceptual underpinning for protected area management, presents guiding principles for the 21st century. Besides, it also reflects recent work on international best practice and provides an assessment of skills required by professionals.

#### Participatory Conservation: Paradigm Shifts in International Policy

A Compilation of Outputs from Global Events Related To Participatory Conservation

Edited by: Tasneem Balasinorwala, Ashish Kothari and Madhulika Goyal

Published by: IUCN, Switzerland and UK in collaboration with Kalpavriksh, India in 2004

Copyright: 2004, IUCN and Natural Resources

This booklet outlines the critical points raised at two events of global significance, namely the Vth World Parks Congress (WPC) and the 7th Conference of Parties to the CBD, held in Durban in 2003 and in Kuala Lumpur in 2004 respectively. It deals with the overall theme of PAs, communities and equity. It highlights the major paradigm shift from considering PAs as islands of biodiversity which need to be protected from human intervention to that of recognizing the value that local, indigenous and mobile communities can bring to the process of conserving biodiversity. The book also stresses on the need for site specific conservation models ranging from strict protection to models that involve multiple sustainable use by local communities.

#### Linking Conservation with Livelihood: Lessons from Management of Gir-Protected Area in Western India

Author: Amita Shah

Working Paper No. 148, September 2004

Published by: Gujarat Institute of Development Research, Ahmedabad.

The paper explores alternative approaches for management in the context of Gir National Park and Sanctuary in Western India.

It analyses the effectiveness of the Eco-Development Projects (EDPs) implemented for the conservation of major Protected Areas (PAs) in the country. The central focus of the EDPs has been to enhance livelihood support systems through regeneration of CPLRs and other resources in the peripheral villages. The author suggests linking up of regeneration efforts within and outside PAs and treating such linked areas as integrated ecological systems, which will in turn help better management and protection of Protected Areas.

### **A Simple Guide to Intellectual Property Rights, Biodiversity and Traditional Knowledge**

Author: Tejaswini Apte

Published by: Kalpavriksh, Grain and IIED, Pune/Delhi in 2006

Despite the wide-ranging implications of IPRs, debate on the issue is restricted to a relatively small number of policy-makers and academics. This handbook introduces the world of IPRs, biodiversity and biodiversity related traditional knowledge in clear, simple language. Presented in a 'Question & Answer' format, it begins with the most basic questions and progresses to more complex issues, making it easily understandable to laypersons as well as those who are already familiar with the subject. The Jargon Buster section breaks through the complicated language commonly used in IPR-related writing, and is designed to be a handy reference.

### **Understanding the Biological Diversity Act 2002 a Dossier**

Edited by: Kanchi Kohli

Published by: Kalpavriksh, Grain and IIED, Pune/Delhi in 2006

India's biodiversity legislation was enacted as the Biological Diversity Act 2002. Even though the Act has critical bearing on the conservation and management of biodiversity, its existence is not widely known. This dossier aims to put together scattered information available on the Act, related rules and agreements. This is critical, not just to understand the text of the legislation but also the perspectives that go with it. The compilation includes a background to the passage of the legislation and a brief introduction to its key components, along with the rules and agreements. It attempts to bring together the range of perspectives on the legislation and includes well researched critiques as well as voices from the communities.

### **Process documentation of The National Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan - India**

Authors: Seema Bhatt, Kanchi Kohli, and Ashish Kothari

Published by: Kalpavriksh, Delhi/Pune in 2006

This publication brings together the experiences, methodologies, and some results of India's National Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan (NBSAP) process. Over 11 chapters, it

gives a background to the initiatives, the institutional structure and an insight into various levels of planning. It further documents the innovative mechanisms used in both outreach and planning along with the process followed for preparing the draft NBSAP. It clarifies why this draft was ultimately produced as a Final Technical Report, and not the National Action Plan as originally decided.

### **Brochure on Community Conserved Areas in India**

Kalpavriksh has brought out an informative brochure on Community Conserved Areas in India. This brochure has been prepared by Neema Pathak, Tasneem Balanisorewala, Ashish Kothari and Bryan R Bushley and been funded by the Bombay Natural History Society. For free copies of this brochure contact Neema Pathak of Kalpavriksh and for more details visit [www.tilcepa.org](http://www.tilcepa.org).

#### **People in Conservation - Community based Biodiversity Conservation and Livelihood Security**

Volume No. I, Issue No. 1, January 2007

Editor: Erica Taraporevala

Advisory Members: Neema Pathak, Ashish Kothari and Pankaj Sekhsaria

Book Reviews: Bina Thomas

Cover photo: Ashish Kothari

Illustrations: Madhuvanti Anantharajan

Layout and Design: Manisha Gutman

Published by: Kalpavriksh, Apt.5 Shree Dutta Krupa, 908 Deccan Gymkhana, Pune 411004

Phone: 91-20-25675450, Tel/Fax: 91-20-25654239

Email: [kvoutreach@gmail.com](mailto:kvoutreach@gmail.com)

Website: [www.kalpavriksh.org](http://www.kalpavriksh.org)

Funded by MISEREOR, Aachen, Germany

**People in Conservation**  
Kalpavriksh Environment Action Group  
Apt 5, Shree Dutta Krupa  
908 Deccan Gymkhana  
Pune 411 004



To: