Global Conservation Program Cooperative Agreement

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Performance Monitoring Report

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for

World Wildlife Fund

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WWF

Terai Arc Landscape FY09 Narrative

Indicator 1: Improved Management

Within the Terai Arc Landscape's 2.1 million hectares under improved management, a total of 8,244 ha will be brought under community based forest management by December 2009:

- In FY09, WWF TAL Program provided technical and financial assistance to 47 new CFUGs and Buffer Zone CFUGs for the preparation of Community Forest Operational Plans (CFOPs). The CFOPs are currently being reviewed by District Forest Offices and Protected Area offices. After the District Forest Offices and Protected Area Offices approve the CFOPs, 8,244 ha of forest (more than twice the target of 3,500 ha) will be handed over to 47 CFUGs and Buffer Zone CFUGs (likely by December 2009). Likewise, the WWF Nepal field team supported 41 pre-existing CFUGs in their revision of the CFOPs, which allows them to continue to manage 11,317 ha. of community forests. CFUGs are managing the resources through grazing control, regulated harvesting and silviculture practices and are improving the management of the forests in Terai Arc Landscape.
- In FY09, 41 existing CFUGs were supported in the revision of their CFOPs. CFOPs are prepared for 5-year terms. After 5 years, CFOPs must be revised or renewed. Both financial and technical resources are required for renewal of CFOPs. The process of revising CFOPs and group charters is expected to strengthen group management, forest management practices, and revenue generation. This activity was implemented in close coordination with DFOs and PAs. The TAL Program provided the financial support, and DFO/PAs provided the technical support for renewal of the CFOPs of 41 CFUGs. While the original target was to facilitate the renewal of 50 CFOPs, only 41 CFOPs could be revised during this reporting period because of frequent changes in the government technical staff required to lead the process, frequent strikes and blockades in Terai. However, the renewal of the 41 CFOPs for CFUGs has been instrumental in promoting community management of 11,317 ha of forest (greatly exceeding the target of 2,500ha in our proposal to GCP).
- WWF Nepal team provided initial institutional development support to 38 newly formed CFUGs and buffer zone CFUGs. This included basic operational support for improved office management - stationery, chairs, tables and cupboards. In addition, 16 CBAPOs were supported with office management and field gear to effectively operate the anti-poaching operation and mobilize CBAPO members. The CFUGs will be able to meet the continuing costs of office management from the revenue generated from mobilization of local resources.

Indicator 2: Improved Biophysical Conditions

Preliminary analysis based on the satellite imagery has shown both increase in the forest cover and improvement in the forest quality. Such analysis of forest cover change in Khata and Basanta corridor revealed a net gain of 1,705 ha forest between 2001 and 2006. The net gain of 1,705 ha forest is attributed to restoration interventions and community forestry. The local communities have perceived changes in biophysical conditions after restoration of degraded forests in corridors and bottlenecks. The following case substantiates changes in biophysical conditions as perceived by the local communities:

> **Case 1:** Just over a three decades ago, forests in Lamahi bottleneck on the foothills of the Churiya range in Dang district had disappeared due to a growing population, who migrated from the hills. Heavy deforestation caused the area to become arid, threatening the fragile ecosystem in the Lamahi bottleneck - an important biological corridor that connects Bardia National Park in the west and Chitwan National Park in the east. As a result of active management of community forests and restoration of barren forests,

natural sources of water have started reappearing in the forested area. According to the data provided by the Narti Rangepost Community Forest User Group Coordination Committee, the appearance of over 120 such natural water sources has been recorded in 22 different community forests after starting forest conservation. In 2008, 16 new water sources were discovered in six community forests.

- WWF TAL Program has created a database documenting socio-economic and biological information, project progress, and achievements of project offices and the Monitoring and Database Unit of WWF Nepal. The database will permit GIS analysis and data management to help analyze TAL's conservation results in the past seven years. The database complements the case studies on results of GCP supported interventions, by helping to build more quantitative analysis of these results. The database management system developed by Monitoring and Database Unit of WWF was replicated in TAL CBRP, one of WWF's other projects in TAL at Dhangadi. For this, two training sessions (two days each) on database management were provided to five TAL staff.The CBRP project has now developed a very good database of their conservation program activities which will now feed into the central database system of WWF Nepal.

Indicator 3: Improved Policy

Improved policy was not an objective during this fiscal year.

Indicator 4: Funds Leveraged

TAL leveraged $1,591,190 of which $105,000 went towards match.

Indicator 5: Number of People Trained in Natural Resource Management

- In FY09, WWF TAL Program supported the institutional development of 16 CBAPOs and 36 newly formed CFUGs and Buffer Zone CFUGs. Approximately 1,125 community members benefitted from the capacity building efforts. CBAPOs received financial assistance to purchase needed field gear and were taught the laws and regulations regarding biodiversity conservation in Nepal. In addition, CBAPO members were taught how to conduct safe patrolling and community based biodiversity monitoring, how to apprehend an offender, and record keeping skills. This support will help them be more effective in their efforts to patrol their forests and control illegal activities. Similarly, newly formed CFUGs and Buffer Zone CFUGs received financial assistance to purchase basic office furniture and print documents on official letterhead. More than 350 executive members of CFUGs, Buffer Zone CFUGs, CFCCs and Buffer Zone institutions received training in sustainable forest management, account keeping, good governance, and leadership development. Local Resource Persons (LRPs) were instructed how to train and support the local CBOs in institutional development and management, as well as participatory biodiversity monitoring. These training activities were solely funded by GCP2.
- With support from the WWF TAL Program, the regional training center in Dhangadi held a three-day event to train local resource persons (LRPs) in participatory bio-diversity monitoring and documentation. The trained LRPs conducted two two-day training sessions for executive members of Khata and Lamahi CFCCs, with 61 community members (49 male and 12 female) benefitting from the program. The LRPs learned techniques for recording floral and faunal diversity in the sample plots and transects as well as how to use a standardized format for recording the data. The training included both theoretical and practical sessions. As a result, participatory biodiversity monitoring and registration is under operation in 64 CFUGs of Khata and Lamahi CFCCs covering over 12,000 ha. In FY09, a community managed database of the bio-diversity registered in Community Forests was established and maintained. This activity is expected to help local communities realize the impact of restoration

activities on vegetation and biodiversity. By monitoring the biodiversity, local communities will be more involved in its conservation. Biodiversity monitoring records maintained by the local communities will provide important information for analyzing (scientific/technical) impacts of restoration activities and to make more informed decisions for future management.

- WWF TAL Program hired an external expert to train 15 local resource persons[1] (LRPs) how to assess the capacity of CBOs. The fifteen local resource persons then conducted 12 3-day events to assess the capacity of 11 CFCCs and one NGO partner. Their objective was to identify the current status, gaps and capacity development needs of the CFCCs. The assessments focused on institutional capacity in managing natural resources, development activities, and the linkages of integrated activities with biodiversity conservation. Based on this assessment, the project also developed a plan for capacity building activities, some of which were implemented during this fiscal year with the funds gained from dollar exchange, while most of the recommended activities will be carried out in the coming fiscal year with WWF's own funding sources after close out of GCP2. The training and capacity building support provided will meet the needs of CFUGs and local institutions to enable them to more effectively deliver the CFOP targets, covering the management of over 20,000 ha of forests. During this reporting period, LRPs trained a total of 292 office bearers of CFUGs, Buffer Zone CFUGs, CFCCs, co-operatives and Buffer Zone institutions, in sustainable forest management, group management, account keeping, computer use, good governance, proposal and report writing, planning and leadership development. These training activities were solely funded by GCP.
- During this reporting period, WWF TAL Program staff were oriented to biodiversity monitoring concepts, methods, and techniques. A systematic monitoring mechanism and practice was established at the project level to document the progress of activities. As a result of the new monitoring practice, the frequency of WWF TAL Program staff monitoring visits has increased; field offices have developed checklists and formats to document information during monitoring visits; and local communities have largely been involved in participatory monitoring. Results and outcomes level monitoring is being done regularly by the monitoring unit of WWF in Kathmandu, while a joint monitoring team comprising the representatives of DNPWC, DoF and WWF is done at least once a year at impact level. At the same time, periodic reviews and lessons learned/reflection workshops were instrumental in providing feedback to program management, identifying programmatic and operational issues and assessing the status of activities and directing our future planning and implementation process. These workshops contributed to an in-depth discussion among project staff about implementation, planning and management. Participants were able to identify the issues, find solutions, and take actions.
- In addition, WWF TAL Program staff (Project Managers and Co-managers – 4 staff) received five days of training on people management, which is an essential skill for managing individuals and achieving results with a team. Through this training, the managers developed people management skills and learned how to manage a team more effectively and efficiently, how to manage staff performance, and broadened their knowledge of management theory and its real life applications, while sharing experiences with a network of WWF colleagues.

Indicator 6: Number of People Experiencing Increased Economic Benefits

Livelihood enhancing activities were not an objective for FY09.

[1] Local resource persons are locally based volunteers WWF trains in certain skills so they can provide services to the community-based organizations, thus eliminating the need to bring in experts from Kathmandu in the future.