

Project Update: February 2017

Objective 1: Determination of microhabitat preferences

The aim is to understand the microhabitat preferences of *N. sahyadrensis* with respect to three aspects: feeding behavior, breeding behavior and tadpole microhabitat. In this respect, some ecological data about the breeding behavior and feeding behaviour was collected during the field study in June – July 2016. Additional data and observations need to be conducted during the monsoon season (May – August) of 2017. The study site for conducting these studies has been finalized.



Figure 1. Locating tadpoles in seasonal streams at Nelliampathy, Palghat in Kerala.

Objective 2: Ecological Niche modeling (ENM)

No data collection was done during this reporting period with respect to ENM. However, about 20 locations have been finalized from where relevant data required for ENM will be collected.

Objective 3: Identifying high priority conservation areas

This objective was part of the earlier project. However some data remained to be collected with respect to particular localities. This was done during the field visit in June-July 2016. Effort was also made to gather ecological knowledge of few selected indigenous communities with respect to *N. sahyadrensis* that can be useful information for conservation planning. The data was compiled and analysed during the reporting period.

Objective 4: Community education:

As part of this objective, we visited three new areas (previously not visited) during June- July 2016 and interacted with the local people. Posters and pamphlets were used in order to educate the people about the species. Some of the

people shared interesting experiences while others raised their doubts regarding Purple frog and other amphibians found in their locality. However, most people acknowledged that such programs and discussions about amphibians should be held more frequently in their localities.

I also visited 12 families with whom I had interacted during the awareness visits in 2015. The aim was to assess their response and attitude towards *N. sahyadrensis* and the harvesting of tadpoles post the awareness and education interaction held previously. Three families showed a positive change wherein they refrained from harvesting the tadpoles. Other families did appreciate the importance and concern towards Purple frog but did not seem willing to completely refrain from harvesting. Once again, efforts were made to dissuade this practice among these families through a cordial interaction and discussion.



Figure 2. An interactive discussion about the Purple frog held at a gathering place of the villagers in Mankulam, Idukki.

Additional activities

Prepared and submitted a work report to the Kerala Forest Department for the duration of the permission. The report was submitted in December. Application for a new permission was submitted in February.