Project Update: August 2018

Social Survey: We examined the patterns of human injury and death, livestock depredation and crop raiding caused by wildlife during 2005 to 2018 using direct family/victim response and official data; 700 respondents were selected randomly. Conflict cases were mostly related to livestock depredation by tiger and leopard and crop raiding and house damage by elephant. Data related to wildlife damage relief support were also collected. People were not happy about the relief support. They told that it is very time consuming and lengthy procedure. Even many people are not aware about wildlife damage relief support.

Most of the attacks on humans were caused by elephant and tiger. Underprivileged ethnic communities were attacked by wildlife more frequently than expected. Tiger and leopard caused most of the livestock depredation. Tigers killed both large (cattle and buffalo) and medium-sized (goat, sheep, pig) livestock but leopard mostly killed medium-sized livestock. Elephant were largely involved in crop depredation and property damaged. Thori VDC of Parsa district and Ramauli Pratappur village of Manahari VDC were highly prone area for human-wildlife conflict. Each day, wildlife like elephant and tiger visit to these site and causes lot of loss. Local people are implementing some mitigation measure like noise, drumming, wire fencing, planting tall thorny cactus plant around the land.

Field surveys for road-killed animals: Nepal's major highway, the Mahendra Highway passes through the core of Parsa National Park and its buffer zone. Many incidents of vehicle-wildlife collision are heard. We tried to do a scientific observation on vehicle-wildlife collision by making 10 transects each of length 5 km. Transects were visited in November 2017 and April 2018. There was 45 road killed incidents total recorded. The estimated number of road kill incidents per year along this 50 km transect of Mahindra highway was 411. A total of 18 species were observed as road kills, of these, 10 were mammals, four reptiles and four bird species. Two birds and one snake couldn't be positively identified due to being repeatedly run over. The species most commonly involved in road kills were rhesus macaque (*Macaca mulatta*) with 12 road kill incidents.

Workshop: A 1-day workshop was organised at Nirmal mabi, bastipur. Workshop was primarily focused on the human-wildlife conflict in Parsa National Park. Students, researchers, local people and park officials were involved in the programme. They shared their knowledge and experiences about human-wildlife conflict.

Awareness Campaign: After examining the cause, associated conflicts and the pattern of conflict, an awareness outreach program was conducted in conflict hotspot area like Subarnapur, Nirmal basti, Manahari etc. We organised programmes in colleges, schools and communities in the buffer zone area around Parsa National Park. Posters, leaflets and banner were prepared. Poster and leaflets were designed by providing lot of information like causes, consequences and control measure of human-wildlife conflict, provision of relief support and necessary procedure to be taken to get relief support. Awareness programmes were also given to the vehicle drivers who drove through the park as well to try to reduce the animal road kills.

Community involvement and their role in the project: Local community has very important role in project sustainability. Community involvement is a key ingredient in the delivery of good planning outcomes. Entire field work was successfully accomplished with direct involvement and support from local communities and community forest user groups. Community assessment helps us in understanding their perception towards conservation, community's priorities and vision.

Local communities were actively involved in group discussion, awareness programme and workshop. Furthermore they have assisted us kindly during questionnaire survey and group discussion. Their kind cooperation helps in acquiring lot of information about wildlife threats like retaliatory killing, hunting, snaring etc. Mr Birendra Kumar Bhandari, a local ethnic, from Sikaribas Thori, Kamal Rai form Manahari village, Dilman Lama from Parsagadi, did a lot of assessment in our project. Furthermore, they were trained to conduct the field survey and questionnaire. They were taught about the importance of wildlife conservation, causes of human-wildlife conflict, mitigation measure to be taken and about the provision of compensation scheme. We hope that this kind of training and their involvement with us will definitely be beneficial for them. Our project helped them to understand more about the causes, consequences and control measure of human wildlife conflict. Furthermore we taught them about the provision of relief support and the procedure to apply for relief support if any loss from wildlife.

Data Management, analysis and reporting:
Since a large volume of data has been collected from the field we are now in the phase of data analysis. Some data of road survey has already been analysed. Final report will be prepared and submit soon. The results obtained after the analysis will disseminate through media and surely be used to write scientific papers and articles.