

Project Update: June 2019

The awareness campaign was conducted to the community in the villages living in vicinity of the Royal Manas National Park, Bhutan at micro scale level. A total of around 560 participants from 14 villages in Manas National Park attended the gathering. The gathering was conducted in villages wise for sensitising vulture conservation importance to the local communities through audio-visual means. Presentations session to instill conservation stewardship mentality were done incorporating religious beliefs, scientific findings, logical explanations and evidences of need of conservation of such species to the local communities from environmental, social and economic perspective. As part of discussion, their attitudes towards conservation were also noted and will be presented in the detailed final report. On brief note, the advocacy team found that local people were quite positive towards conservation of vultures in their vicinity. During the presentation, the presenters explained to the villagers how each of their daily activities (firewood collection, logging, timber extraction) for domestic use from multiple use zone of the park where that place is known to be vulture habitat and locals were educated the necessity to avoid these activities in the vicinity of the vulture habitat. A working lunch and refreshments were served to the participants.

Pamphlets and brochure with message to save the vultures were distributed to locals and posters and signage were posted in strategic locations for further outreach of the message and sensitising purpose.

Further, the project team has completed household survey and questionnaires surveys for the locals as well as veterinary doctors to understand effectiveness of alternative drug Meloxicam in replacing diclofenac. Details from these surveys will be reflected in final report.

To obtain the population status and the number of the vultures in the Royal Manas National Park, observation and recording of the vultures carried out in nesting and roosting areas. The recording of the birds were monitored early in the morning and also late in the evening. Similarly the counting of the birds also observed in the carcasses found area. The total of four white-rumped vultures was recorded during the field survey from the four different colonies. The red-headed vulture was not seen and in the entire study area. Moreover no observation was also recorded from the nesting area. The team is carrying out data collection in the survey areas to achieve intended results.



Left: Introduction by local leaders before campaign begin. Right: Awareness campaign meetings.



Left: White Rumped Vulture at RMNP. Right: Interview with villagers.