

Project Update: July 2010

As an important part of the project activity, conservation awareness programmes were conducted at various areas adjoining the park, Bishnupur district and in the state capital, Imphal. The overall aim of the environmental awareness and education programme was to provide people with information about all aspects of the species, park and its management. The objectives was to help promote a better understanding of the natural history, ecology, available resources, human interactions, significance of sangai and its habitat. Publication materials like posters, pamphlets and banners were printed with detailed information on the biological, ecological and conservation significance of Sangai and its habitat (Soft copies attached as pdf document as annexure). Stakeholder's workshop and focused group discussions were conducted involving indigenous local communities, forest department, non-governmental organization, local clubs, academic and research institutions on the importance of Sangai and reasons to preserve and protect the biodiversity of the Keibul Lamjao National Park thereby ensuring long lasting survival of Sangai. The awareness programmes also cover the local school children and college youth in which education materials such as posters, brochures and pamphlets were circulated to them. Existing knowledge gaps and further scope of research were elaborately briefed and discussed with the college and university students and they were encouraged to conduct short term studies, dissertation work and doctoral work to enhance the scientific knowledge for better management of Sangai and its habitats.

The awareness programme was aimed to impart conservation awareness to all the peoples living around the park and also reach as many citizens of Manipur to join hands to conserve Sangai. During the workshop numerous topics were covered through group discussions with the aim of informing, educating and sensitizing the target audience. Issues covered include:

Natural history, ecology and conservation aspects:

1. Ecological importance of Sangai and its habitat
2. Major anthropogenic pressure and threats to be addressed to conserve Sangai on a long run
3. How and why poaching needs to be controlled inside the park and what measures should be taken.
4. Probable alternative livelihood opportunities in order to minimize the dependency of local communities on the park resources
5. Socio-economic conditions of the local people and how to improve the park with the help of ecotourism
6. Ideas and suggestions to improve the condition of the park were also discussed.
7. Will the people of Manipur support the proposal of re-introduction to other sites outside the National park
8. Scientific methods used to assess population monitoring, genetic assessment, inbreeding, behavioural aspects and their relevance to conservation.

Management aspects:

1. Why the park has been established
2. Management planning
3. Benefits of management
4. Boundaries and zoning
5. Regulations and why they are needed

6. Protected species
7. What is being monitored, and why

Target groups:

During the educational activities the following target audiences were sensitized:

1. General public: local and regional
2. Schools in and around the National Park
3. Schools elsewhere in the Bishnupur district
4. College and University students in Bishnupur district
5. College and University students in State capital, Imphal
6. State government departments and agencies
7. Visitors: local and regional
8. Vehicle owners
9. Special interest groups and local youth clubs



Photo 1. A group photo with members of an active local NGO (Sangai protection forum) and members of a local club (Young Ideal Club) near KLNP. **Photo 2.** Group discussion with local NGO's and club near Keibul Lamjao National Park, Manipur.



Photo 3. Group discussion with forest guards of Keibul Lamjao National Park. **Photo 4.** Distribution of posters and pamphlets to students in Manipur University.



Photo 5. Distribution of posters and pamphlets at the Manipur University Library. Publication materials handed over to the Librarian, Manipur University. **Photo 6.** Interactions with research fellows of Life science department students of Manipur University after a lecture session.



Photo 7. Awareness programme given to college students in Manipur. **Photo 8.** Awareness program conducted in Nightingale college students in Manipur.



Photo 9. Awareness programme conducted with young students and teachers of The Ideal school, Thanga, Manipur. **Photo 10.** Distribution of posters and pamphlets to the Vice-Principal of Moirang college, Manipur



Photo 11. Conservation awareness given to students, teachers and non-teaching staff of Loyal public school, Moirang