

Project Update: March 2011

School teaching programme

The orchid conservation awareness school teaching programme has been conducted in five different schools of Kaski district in January and February 2011. Those government schools were selected which were near to the forests area (orchid habitat). Sixty-five students of grade 9 and 10 of each school participated in programme. The conservation sessions lasted 2 hours in each school. In conservation school teaching, the importance of orchid's conservation and their conservation status, locally and nationally, were discussed. Samples of orchids were shown to make the conservation session more interesting and effective and to show them what orchids look like. Students were curious to know about the orchids. They were not aware of the importance of this magnificent species. They said that they have seen the orchids but they didn't know that they were orchids and many of them have used flowers of orchids for decoration. The orchid brochure was also distributed to each student and teacher and some copies were given in library of the school so that every student and teacher gets access of it.

Forest committee/Forest users/villagers training

Forest user group/villager awareness camps were conducted in seven different villages of Kaski district in November and December 2010 in which community forest users including livestock herders, timber harvesters and local fuelwood and fodder collectors participated. About 50/60 persons participated in each village and the programmes were organised in community building and village resting place (*Chautari*, a raised platform) adjacent to forest from where number of orchids in the trees can be seen. The participants of each village were excited to know about the orchid, its importance and uses. They actively participated in discussions and in the development of a problem tree for the conservation and management of the orchids in the district. The discussion lasted for 3 hours in each village in which sustainable management, collection, problem in sustainable management of orchid and mitigation measures to overcome were discussed. Due to a lack of awareness, villages said that they have been using orchids to feed their cattle and they believed that it helps to increase the yield of milk. A problem tree was constructed in each village and finally the general problem tree was constructed. The problem tree will be further refined and will be used to prepare a comprehensive management plan for the conservation of orchids.

Additionally, three forest management plans of the community forest users' groups have been amended with the help of range post staffs and some orchid related provision are included.

The initial problem tree looks like:



