



Editorial

Wetlands continue to be degraded and lost despite their immense ecological, economic and socio-cultural values. Wetland ecosystems are part of our natural wealth. At a worldwide scale they provide us with services worth billions of dollars every year—entirely free of charge, making a vital contribution to human health and well being.

Wetlands' being a cross cutting and multidisciplinary sector requires a coordinated and a coherent approach in dealing with the wide spectrum of issues and concerns. Realizing this gap, under the aegis of Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation (MFSC) a National Wetland Committee has been operational to bolster inter-sectoral coordination and collaboration.

Wetlands issues at the national level are being dealt in two major ways. Firstly, through the review and harmonization of wetland impacting sectoral and economic policies and the revision of National Wetland Policy (NWP) 2003 based on the review recommendations. Secondly, with a view to effect long term changes to the perception, value and understanding on wetlands at various levels, different capacity enhancement activities are being carried out. Based on the sectoral policy review recommendations the National Wetland Policy 2003 has been revised. The revised NWP 2011 takes into account the sectoral needs and their priorities for harmonization. The revised wetland policy also envisions the creation of an umbrella wetland act for strong enforcement and compliance.

The revised NWP 2011 has been shared and discussed at various levels. MFSC has endorsed the revised policy and with necessary formalities the revised NWP will be forwarded for cabinet approval. With the cabinet approval, the revised NWP 2011 will become a binding policy document across all sectors. With the approved NWP 2011 in place and the operationalization of the National Wetland Committee at the central level, wetland issues and concerns will be addressed to a larger extent. However, sustained efforts have to be made towards creating an enabling environment for the creation of a regulatory framework in the form of an umbrella wetland act and regulations.

1. News in brief

❖ Sharing of Knowledge base products

As part of CSUWN's knowledge sharing and networking initiatives with local bodies and institutions, the wetland related technical knowledge base products were shared in two additional Ramsar sites; Jagadishpur Reservoir, Kapilvastu and Mai Pokhari, Ilam. A team comprising of Dr. Annapurna Nand Das, NPD, Mr. Prakash N. Pyakurel, Focal person, DoF, DoF; Mr. Top B. Khatri, NPM; Dr. Hum Gurung, CEO, BCN and Ms. Shalu Adhikari, GMCO paid a field visit to Jagadishpur Reservoir from 10th to 11th June 2011 to take stock of the current status of wetland management, share products prepared by CSUWN and develop linkages for future cooperation in the areas of wetland management. On the occasion, the NPD inaugurated the information centre developed with the support of BCN and handed over the wetlands products to information centre, VDC, DDC, DFOs Kapilvastu and Rupandehi. On the occasion, remarks were made by Local Development Officer and District Forests Officer, Kapilvastu, BCN, NPM and NPD.



Similarly, a team comprising of Mr. Mohan Koirala, Planning Division, MFSC, Mr. Prakash Pyakurel, DoF, Mr. Top B Khatri, NPM, and Mr. Hari K Upreti visited Maipokhari from 13th to 15th June 2011. During the visit, the team took a full tour of the site and interacted profusely with the local communities on how the lake is being managed. Similarly, a consultative meeting comprising of Government line agencies and CBOs was organized to share the objective of the visit. Mr. Mohan Koirala, Planning Officer, MFSC handed over the products to the LDO and DFO, Ilam. The wetland products shared include; Wetland Inventory, Assessment & Monitoring Tool, CEPA products such as FAQs, posters, flyers, Wetland Resource Book, TOT Manual and Wetlands Indigenous Knowledge Documentation Methodology.

❖ POB Meeting

The first Project Outcome Board (POB) Meeting of CSUWN was held under the Chair of Mr. Yuba Raj Bhusal, Secretary, Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation on 4th May 2011 in Kathmandu. The POB is primarily responsible for providing strategic and policy guidance. During the meeting, Dr. Annapurna Nand Das, NPD shed light on the salient features of the project. Mr. Top B. Khatri,



National Project Manager then made a power point presentation on the overview of the project, major milestones and the key achievement made till date. Officials from sectoral Ministries including Energy, Local Development, Forests & Soil Conservation, Agriculture & Cooperatives, Irrigation; DGs from DNPWC & DOF; NTNC WWF, UNDP and ADDCN took part. Remarks were made by Mr. Jorn Sorensen, UNDP; Mr. Bhaba K. Bhattarai, NPC and Mr. Shambhu Dev Baral, ADDCN. Mr. Yuba Raj Bhusal, provided his concluding remarks and thanked all the POB members for their valuable time and participation.

❖ **ToT for LRP development**

As part of capacity building initiatives, a three days training on TOT (Training of Trainers) was conducted to develop local resource person (LRP) from 8th to 10th May 2011 and from 22nd to 24th June 2011 at KTWR and GLA respectively. A TOT Manual on wetlands developed by CSUWN was imparted to mid-level managers with a view to develop their capacities on wetland knowledge and values. A total of 26 (12 at KTWR and 14 at GLA) Local resource Persons (LRPs) have now been developed.



❖ **Exposure visit**

With a view to generate awareness and sensitize on the importance and values of wetlands in the context of Payment of Ecosystem Services (PES), an exposure visit for women technical Officials to Kulekhani was organized from 19th to 20th May 2011. A total of eight women officials from sectoral Ministries, Irrigation, Industry, Tourism, Local Development; Nepal Electricity Authority and Departments of Soil Conservation & Watershed Management, Plant Resources and Research & Survey of MFSC took part in the visit. During their

visit, the team interacted with the Indrasarowar Fishery Management Committee, NEA Officials and other stakeholders to acquire information on the existing revenue sharing mechanism including the institutional arrangement for operationalizing the PES mechanism in Kulekhani.



❖ **Gender Audit**

CSUWN had commissioned DIDIBAHINI, a national INGO to undertake the Gender Audit of the project with a view to assess, analyze and gauge the efforts of the project towards the promotion of gender equality and social inclusion. During the process, DIDIBAHINI held consultative meeting with PMU, paid a visit to both the project sites and interacted with a wide range of actors. The consultant has submitted the report and the findings will help in addressing the gaps in mainstreaming GSI across key areas of the project.

❖ **PEB Meeting**

The Thirteenth Project Executive Board Meeting of CSUWN was held under the Chair of Dr. Annapurna Nand Das, National Project Director, CSUWN on 4th July 2011. Mr. Top B. Khatri, NPM, presented the Second Quarter Progress, Third Quarter Plan and the Revised Annual Work Plan 2011. After necessary discussion and deliberation, the meeting endorsed the revised AWP and the third quarter work plan for 2011. During the meeting, remarks were made by Mr. Krishna P. Acharya, DG, DNPWC; Mr. Harihar Sigdel, DG, DoF; Mr. Dinesh Karki, Environment Program Analyst, UNDP; Mr. Vijaya P. Singh, ACD, UNDP; and Mr. Jorn Sorensen, Deputy Country Director, UNDP. At the end, Dr. Annapurna Nand Das gave his concluding remarks and thanked all the PEB members for their valuable time and participation.



❖ WIAM Tool Training

As part of the capacity enhancement programme, a three day training to impart the Tool on Wetlands Inventory, Assessment and Monitoring (WIAM) for various officials was organized from 8-10 August 2011. A total of fifteen Officials representing Irrigation, Energy, Agriculture, Environment, Local Development, MFSC and its departments National Planning Commission, took part in the training. CSUWN had developed various wetland related technical knowledge base products including the WIAM Tool in 2010. This is the first training on WIAM for Officials and plans are underway to have such trainings in the days ahead. It is anticipated that this training will enhance the existing technical skills and knowledge on wetlands.



❖ Gender Development Training

A three days training on Gender Development for field social mobilizers was organized by PMU from 27th to 30th July 2011. The main objective of the training was to educate, aware and capacitate them on the various aspects of gender related issues and concern. It is expected that this training will make the social mobilizers more sensitive towards gender related issues in their day to day functions.

2. Field Snippets

❖ Event Celebration

World Biodiversity Day and Environment Day were celebrated in both the project sites. GLA Field office teamed together with the Ghodaghodi Community Forestry Network for a conservation rally from Sukhad Bazaar which eventually ended up with the cleaning activities in and around the GLA surroundings. Around 2000 people from local CFUGs, students and members of the wetland clubs, teachers' network, civil societies and the media participated. Similarly, in KTWR, the Village Animal Health Workers that were trained and groomed by CSUWN organized an awareness program to sensitize them of the harmful effects of the drug "Diclofenac" on cattle and its impacts on the survival of vultures.

❖ Construction of Foot trails

With a view to augment the numbers of visitors at GLA and its surroundings, CSUWN has constructed 1.3 km natural foot trail. This trail has been built along the projections of the lake which provides access and connections to six vantage points for viewing the lake. Plans are underway to place information signage along the trails.



❖ Restoration of wetland sites

Management interventions for the restoration and rehabilitation of critical wetland sites are underway at both project sites. Accordingly, the Tendi Lake in GLA is being restored with the construction of a 250 meter long earthen bund in the southern section. Tendi Lake is an important site for wild rice.

Similarly, a sluice gate has been constructed to regulate the water level in Tengwa Lake. This lake provides an ideal habitat for the cotton pigmy goose.

Similarly, Forests User Group have volunteered for the cleaning of weeds and invasive species in the main Ghodaghodi Lake.

❖ Alternative Energy

In order to promote alternative energy to offset the existing pressure on fuel wood, the field offices have provided support for the installation of toilet attached biogas in both the sites. A total of 26 biogas plants have been installed at KTWR.

Similarly, in GLA 23 Biogas plants have been installed and 36 HHs of free Kamaiyas in Darakh, VDC have been supported with ICS.

❖ Nursery and plantation

GLA has provided support for the establishment of multipurpose nursery at Sukhad Range Post. Around 30, 000 saplings of fast growing fodder, fuel wood and timber species have been raised and distributed for plantation.

Similarly, KTWR/CSUWN also supported for the plantation of 7,000 seedlings in the buffer zone area of Saptari and Sunsari Sectors. In addition, 4 fruit seedlings were distributed to each of 67 WDCs.



❖ Handover of Raft Boat

With a view to capacitate the field team of KTWR for the evacuation of feral cattle, CSUWN has recently procured a raft boat and handed over to DNPWC amidst a special gathering on 21st June 2011. Dr. Annapurna Nand Das, National Project Director, CSUWN handed over the raft boat to Mr. Krishna P Acharya, Director General. Speaking on the occasion, the DG, DNPWC thanked CSUWN wholeheartedly for providing the much needed support that would eventually help in the law enforcement regime.



❖ NPD visit to KTWR

MFSC's Chief, Planning & HR Division and the newly designated NPD of CSUWN, Mr. Harihar Sigdel together with Mr. Top B. Khatri, NPM of the project visited KTWR from 24th to 26th August 2011. The main objective of the visit was to get firsthand information of the field level activities. During the visit, the field manager, Dr. V.N Jha briefed on the overall status of KTWR and the overall activities carried out by the project since its inception. The team also observed various conservation and livelihood activities including the solar fence, bio gas village, poultry farming, fishery and plantation etc and also interacted with the beneficiaries. The NPD appreciated the good team work of the KTWR for making the Reserve free from the feral buffalo.

❖ SRI training

Twenty farmers from KTWR buffer zone were provided training on the System of Rice Intensification (SRI) to increase productivity. It is expected that this training will provide skills for increasing the paddy yields with less inputs of water and fertilizers.

❖ Livelihood support

As part of alternative livelihood options, the project has provided support for Wetland Dependent Communities (WDCs). In this reporting period, a total of 35 WDC HHs have been supported with goat rearing at GLA. Similarly, 12 WDC households have been supported with poultry at KTWR.

3. Field Visits

❖ UNDP high Officials to KTWR

A team comprising of Mr. Jorn Sorensen, Deputy Country Director, UNDP; Mr. Vijaya P. Singh, ACD, UNDP together with Dr. Annapurna Nand Das, NDP and Mr. Top B. Khatri, NPM visited KTWR from 31st April to 2nd May 2011. During the visit, the team was briefed by Field Manager, KTWR on the interventions and achievements made by the project since its inception. The visiting team made a quick observation of various interventions undertaken by the project. The DCD also inaugurated the Pater Processing Center at Kusaha that was built in collaboration with KERP program.



We extend a very warm welcome to our new NPD, Mr. Harihar Sigdel, Chief, Planning and HR Division and wish him a very successful tenure ahead. MFSC has designated Mr. Sigdel as the new NPD for CSUWN. Prior to joining the Planning Division, MFSC, Mr. Sigdel was DDG, DOF.

Similarly, we extend a very big thank you to our outgoing NPD, Dr. Annapurna Nand Das for his valuable support and guidance in steering CSUWN project to this stage.



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