

WORKING TOWARDS PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE OF HUMANS AND WILDLIFE

Location: **Nepal**
Sponsoring college: **Future Generation University**

Project leader name: **Hari Basnet**
Dates: **June-September, 2022**

A. Background:

Makalu Barun National Park in Nepal is a biodiversity hotspot area in the Eastern Himalayas and is home to many threatened species. However, locals have disrespect towards this wildlife due to crop damage mainly caused by monkeys, wild boar, bears, and deer species. In some cases, the severity of the crop damage is so intense that farmers completely abandon their agricultural practices. Conflict escalates when carnivores like leopards or Himalayan black bears injure or kill humans and their livestock. In response, animals that are already threatened are often killed in retaliation or harassed, which leads to park-people conflict rather than solving the issues. This situation has escalated in recent years as local demands on natural resources have increased.

B. Project Description

Community conservation management brings communities and government into active dialogue for the protection of nature. This project will utilize community conservation best practices to cultivate respect for all living creatures and promote peace in society. Considering human population growth, the rivalry between humans and wildlife for resources, and the increasing frequency and intensity of human-wildlife interaction. The impact of this conflict could result in the extinction of rare and threatened species. It also creates misunderstandings and animosity between the local community members and the National Park Service. There are several cases in Nepal and worldwide about natural resource conflicts that result when local people end up in a state of conflict with the wild ecosystem and the government entities charged with protecting it.

Peace for co-existence of human and wildlife projects is thus designed to minimize conflict by developing respect for wildlife through awareness and sensitization. Train community members to monitor the natural biodiversity in coordination with the National Park Service. And, improving livelihood opportunities through better utilization of natural resources. The project will change local human behavior toward wildlife habitats, develop local conservation leaders by strengthening capacity in monitoring, and explore alternatives for sustainable income. Locals will develop best practice solutions in coordination with the National Park Service to mitigate human-wildlife interaction, while co-adapting to shared management plans¹.

C. Objectives: The long-term objective of this project is "peaceful coexistence between respectful humans and special wildlife in the Barun Valley, Nepal." The following are the specific objectives for the project period:

1. Promote respect for wildlife through awareness and sensitization training, while building local capacity for monitoring wildlife.
2. Identify local solutions for minimizing crop raiding by wild animals and promote local adoption of these practices.
3. Facilitate local dialogue between community members and the National Park Service to create joint stewardship and natural resource management plans.

D. Output/Activities:

1. **Promote respect for wildlife:** The following activities will promote respect to wildlife in this precious biodiversity hotspot in rural Nepal.
 - **Publication and distribution of pictorial booklet-** *Five hundred copies of the digitally painted pictorial educational booklet will be published. This booklet will discuss the Barun's biodiversity and its importance, the behavior of conflicting species, the benefits of coexistence, human-wildlife conflict and how to act responsibly towards them, and prevention and mitigation measures to reduce crop raiding.*
 - **Conservation Campaign:** *A day conservation campaign will be organized among the LCC members, local youths, teachers, and students located on the edges of the Barun Valley. An awareness and sensitization program in Schools will be organized on July 28th to mark World Nature Conservation Day.*
 - **Capacity building in the field techniques of wildlife monitoring:** *LCCs will learn the general ecology and behavior of wildlife found in their surroundings, particularly focusing on crop-raiding and problematic*

¹<https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/press-release/human-wildlife-conflict-one-greatest-threats-wildlife-species-wwf>
https://awsassets.panda.org/downloads/wwf_hwc_nepal_2008.pdf

species (species of local interest). The LCC will be taught wildlife monitoring techniques such as sign surveys, camera trapping techniques, and acoustics surveys and their applications in science and conservation.

- 2. Identifying and adopting the local solution to crop raiding:** A day workshop will be organized among the LCCs to understand the underlying causes of crop raiding. Possible local solutions to minimize crop raiding issues will be identified through active participation from all stakeholders.
- 3. Community dialogue with government for stewardship and natural resource management:** A day workshop will be organized among the bottom-up communities and top-down (government representatives) to open up dialogue about the emerging issues of human-wildlife interaction and natural resource management. The workshop will facilitate an active partnership between the national park and communities to reduce illegal activities and prevent conflict between communities and nature. Moreover, it will reduce potential conflicts between the park and people in the future.

E. Coordination and Networking:

- **Learning and sharing meeting:** LCC will organize a day of awareness and sensitization programs to share the knowledge gained from the project with their communities. Moreover, they will be discussing identified solutions for crop raiding and feedback from their communities, which will feed into the local action plan. These activities will be facilitated by the project team.
- **Action planning:** At the end of the activities, LCCs will develop a one-year action plan to share the knowledge, continue wildlife monitoring as well as find resources for conducting different events.

F: Project Implementation:

The project leader has extensive knowledge of local wildlife monitoring and conservation. He will increase his knowledge of community-based conservation, natural resources management, and reducing human-wildlife conflict with consultation with global leaders in peace building from the US by visiting Central Appalachia. The project will facilitate and mobilize the human energy of Local Coordination Committee (LCC) members for the implementation of project activities. The LCC members are also members of various forest user committees in different adjoining villages of the buffer zone. The LCC members will be direct beneficiaries, and they will scale up their learning to their respective forest user group members, and these members will share it with their families and neighbors at the household level. Hence, LCCs will serve as the centers for implementing awareness and sensitization in their communities. The project will be implemented in a three-way partnership approach. The project team as outside experts, LCC as a community (bottom-up), national park, and Rural Municipality as government (top-down) for collaboration so that the project's long-term viability is ensured.

G: Project Timeline:

June: Booklet production and travel to US to learn peace building and natural resources management

July: Workshop, awareness and sensitization (LCC), action plan preparation, meeting and information sharing

August: Awareness and sensitization (youth/students and teachers)/capacity building training to LCC

September: Monitoring and evaluation and reporting

H: Monitoring and Evaluation: A participatory monitoring and evaluation process will be established, involving the local community, stakeholders, and government for the purpose of learning and sharing. The monitoring of the project is envisioned in a way through the monthly update and quarterly progress report of the activities against the plan.

I. Sustainability:

The sustainability of the project will be based on three major indicators, which are: 1) consistent access to a resource for the project activities; 2) the utilization and expansion of skills in the community; and 3) the institutional development of LCC to continue. The project aims to facilitate the process of developing long-term collaboration between partners for the sharing of resources and to strengthen coordination. LCC will be encouraged to act as an ambassador to their community, develop leadership skills, and continue best practices learned or gained from the project. Moreover, minimizing human-wildlife interaction will foster harmony with nature. Co-existence with wildlife can bring huge potential for sustainable eco-tourism that brings opportunities and benefits for community.

Name: Hari Basnet
 Project Name: PEACE FOR CO-EXISTENCE OF HUMAN AND WILDLIFE
 School: Future Generation University

TOTAL FUNDS REMAINING:
 \$0.00

Total Additional Funding: NA

TOTAL EXPENDITURES:
 0

Student Expenses					Project Expenses				
Travel (Including Airfare)	Lodging	Communications	Food (Biweekly)	Miscellaneous	Non-Student Travel and Lodging	Direct Equipment and Supplies	Marketing and Event Support	Staffing Costs	Miscellaneous
\$90.00	\$160.00	\$132.00	\$148.00		\$880.00	\$299.00	\$427.00	\$214.00	
\$615.00	\$70.00		\$74.00		\$840.00	\$256.00	\$1,068.00	\$214.00	
\$154.00						\$171.00	\$85.00	\$1,026.00	
\$1,239.00						\$641.00	\$513.00	\$299.00	
							\$385.00		
Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total
2098	230	132	222	0	1720	1367	2478	1753	0

Total Student Expenses:
 \$2,682.00

Total Project Expenses:
 \$7,318.00