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## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Regional CLACC Meeting

The Capacity Strengthening of Civil Society in the Least Developed Countries on Adaptation to Climate Change (CLACC) fellow from RSPN participated in the Asia Regional Advisory Panel Meeting on Sustainable Development and Natural Resources in Bangkok, Thailand from 26–27 August 2008. The meeting was convened by IIED and hosted by the Regional Community Forestry Training Center for Asia and Pacific (RECOFTC). Four key themes emerged from the dialogue.

### White-bellied Heron Habitat at Risk



>> Stakeholders meeting for mitigation strategies

The up-coming 1,095MW Punatsangchu Hydropower Project poses great threat to the habitat of the endangered White-bellied Heron (*Ardea insignis*). The White-bellied Heron (WBH) population worldwide is estimated to be less than 200. Of this, 31 birds have been found in Bhutan so far. Five of the Herons found in Bhutan are local residents of the Punatsangchu basin.

With the objective of drawing up a mitigation strategy to protect the habitat of the White-bellied Heron, RSPN organized a stakeholders meeting on 1st August 2008 in the NEC conference hall. The meeting was chaired by Dasho Nado Rinchen, Deputy Minister, NEC, and discussed several mitigation measures to

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### Water Source Protection

The Bhutan Water Partnership supported the “Gomtu Water Source Protection Plantation” project in Pagli Gewog, Samtse Dzongkhag. The Project Committee submitted the proposal for a financial assistance of Nu. 95,772.00 through the Social Forestry Division, MoA, Thimphu.

The project started in March 2008 and will end in 2011. Under the project, the community of Pagli Gewog will protect 2.12 hectares (5.24 acres) of land in the watershed of the Asheney Khola. The river serves as the main drinking water source for the entire Gomtu community except the industrial areas. With the expansion of the Gomtu industrial area over the years, the population of Gomtu has

seen a substantial increase. Subsequently, the pressure on the existing water source has increased by manifolds.

Plantation activities were initiated in two principal areas: in the upper block lower blocks. The upper block comprising of 1.20 hectares has been barren since 1992 due to illegal timber harvesting. The lower block of 92 hectares has been the water source for the Penden Cement Authority Limited (PCAL) since 1999. This area is now protected by barbed fencing and managed by the Gomtu Water Source Protection Plantation Committee chaired by the Pagli Gup.

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**Water Testing Kits for Schools**



>> *Water testing kits*

On 9th September, 2008, RSPN received 42 World Water Monitoring Day (WWMD) Test Kits from Save the Children-US. The kits will be distributed to schools around the country. The WWMD test kits can be used to determine basic parameters such as water temperature, pH and turbidity, and dissolved oxygen.

One of RSPN's ma-

ior activities, since its formation, has been its involvement with the network of nature clubs to monitor water quality around the country. The kits will be used to introduce this activity in other nature clubs. Through water monitoring activities, school children are encouraged to educate communities on the importance of maintaining good water quality and conserving their watersheds. Besides, the kits will also be useful for practical classes in science, geography, social studies and EVS, particularly in schools that do not have lab facilities.

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**Water Source Protection**

Altogether, three thousand two hundred saplings of a variety of mixed hardwood species were planted in the watershed area with the aim of protecting the community's drinking water source. As the area is prone to landslides, three hundred bamboo seedlings were also planted in the area to reduce the risk of further

landslides.

The project has 72 beneficiaries including the RBP colony, the Gomtu Middle Secondary School and the Hospital. The project will support the maintenance cost of the plantation for the next three years.

**Socio-economic Study**



>> *Farmers planting paddy at Jareygang in Ada*

A socio-economic survey was carried out in Athang gewog from 8th -10th July 2008 to collect baseline data for future planning and program development. The survey covering the three villages of Zawa, Jarigang and Yuetama focused on the social structure, population dynamics, economic status, land management and

use of forest resources in the area. A portion of Athang gewog was integrated as a part of the Phobjikha Conservation Area to ensure contiguous ecosystem conservation and protection of flagship species like the White-Bellied Heron.

**Clean Bhutan Theme Song Launched**



A theme song was developed and choreographed for the Clean Bhutan Program. The theme song was officially launched during the opening of the National Conference on Solid Waste Management at the Royal Institute of Management, Semtokha, Thimphu on 18th August 2008.

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**White-bellied Heron Habitat at Risk**



>> *Stakeholders on a site visit to WBH habitat*



Yeshey Dorji

>> *The White-bellied Heron*

safeguard the habitat of the WBH.

As a follow up to the August meeting, the task force representing various agencies met on 5th September 2008 in the conference hall of RSPN. Once again the members discussed various mitigation options to protect the habitat of the critically endangered 'Gentle Gi-

ant' without hindering the Punatsangchu Project. Proposed mitigation strategies included the construction of artificial feeding ponds for the bird, construction of fish ladders, construction of a hatchery and catch and release fishing to ensure continuous food supply for the bird.

On 20th September 2008, the

task force members also visited the core zone habitat of the WBH in the Punatsangchu basin. The RSPN will monitor the implementation of the mitigation measures and work to ensure that the WBH will continue to grace the Punatsangchu basin. RSPN appreciates that trade-offs between the survival of the WBH and the Punatsangchu project are unavoidable but advocates that we should act responsibly to have a win-win situation where the WBH has an equal chance to exist.

**Refresher Course for NFE Learners and Nature Club Members**



>> *NFE learners engaged in a group work*



>> *A Nature Club member presenting his views*

In continuation of RSPN's efforts to enhance the level of awareness and understanding of the environmental status and issues of Phobjikha valley among institutions and local communities, the

Environment Education Unit conducted a refresher course for adult learners from four Non-Formal Education (NFE) centres. Nature Club members and Coordinators from three schools in the valley also attended the course. The course

was conducted from 6th to 8th August, 2008. Four NFE instructors and thirty adult learners, Four Nature Club Coordinators and thirty Nature Club members attended the course.

**FREE RESOURCES ONLINE**

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**RSPN Members can access online resources with RSPN's credentials.**

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## WORD SAFARI

Climate change is a growing concern all over the world. Several meetings, conferences, talks are being held now and then to address the impacts of climate change for a global agreement.

However, to understand the climate change debate, it helps to understand the jargon, a mixture of diplomatee, pundit-speak and techno-talk. There are numerous jargons being used and we have few to go with this issue of *RANGZHIN*. Please find the abbreviated term in the word maze.

- GHGs** : Greenhouse gases
- NAPA** : National Adaptation Programme of Action
- KP** : Kyoto Protocol
- CDM** : Clean Development Mechanism
- LEG** : Least Developed Countries Expert Group
- UNFCCC** : United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
- GWP** : Global Warming Potential
- LDCF** : Least Developed Country Fund
- IPCC** : Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
- CFC** : Chlorofluorocarbon

R	G	J	K	B	C	X	S	L	F	P
F	O	H	I	L	A	D	Y	U	C	F
Z	P	Y	G	D	O	R	A	L	I	S
Q	M	D	A	S	L	I	G	I	F	N
M	A	S	P	F	D	E	K	P	U	K
R	L	U	N	F	C	C	C	C	S	H
R	A	B	A	S	F	B	I	C	O	G
I	G	W	P	H	U	I	Z	R	N	G
F	O	U	A	I	N	G	E	R	P	I
I	R	R	E	L	C	P	N	O	C	E
K	I	N	G	E	P	D	Z	T	F	O
O	C	E	A	G	N	C	M	E	C	P
T	U	L	C	E	R	U	L	E	A	N
U	S	V	M	L	O	P	O	D	U	K
T	H	R	E	E	R	I	N	G	R	I
H	Y	P	E	R	Y	D	H	R	U	S

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