

IN THE ISSUE

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Ranjana Pal

Current Protected Area Network of India

Position as on 31 December 2020

National Parks: 101; Area 40564.04, (1.23%)

Wildlife Sanctuaries: 553; Area: 119756.97, (3.64%)

Conservation Reserves : 86; Area: 3858.25, (0.12%)

Community Reserves : 163; Area: 833.34 (0.03%)

Total Protected Areas : 903; Area: 1,65,012.59, (5.02%)

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Next Issue

- Ten-day Orientation Workshop for Veterinary Officers
- Capacity Building-cum-Stakeholders Consultation workshop under "Inventorization and Prioritization of Potential World Heritage Sites in Madhya Pradesh State."



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Around the Campus

Adi Kailash Landscape Expedition, 8-16 October 2020. A seven-member multidisciplinary team headed by Dr. Dhananjai Mohan, Director, WII conducted an expedition to the Adi Kailash Landscape to identify its key sites of natural and cultural importance for nomination as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The said landscape covers an area of 6,386 sq km within India in Pithoragarh district of north-western Uttarakhand. Through the expedition, the team documented a wide variety of its Himalayan and trans-Himalayan ecosystems, habitat and biodiversity alongside the religious-spiritual significance of the Adi Kailash landscape. During the



expedition, the team completed a kora (sacred circuit) of the Adi Kailash peak (5,975 m) using the high altitude Sinla Pass (5,500 m) to cross over from the Vyans to the Darma valley. The team travelled through several scenic and culturally relevant settlements including Tawaghat, Chhiyalek, Garbyang, Gunji and Kuti along with a slight detour for Kalapani, the origin of the river Kali and Om Parvat. On this mountain slope, snowfall appears to take the shape of the holy word "Om". The team then staged at Jeolinkong, the base camp for Adi Kailash before trekking across Sinla Pass to the village of Daantu in the Darma Valley via stops at Beidang, Smriti Sthal at Kaljyakti, Goto and Go Bridge. The team also experienced the cultural richness of the region's main inhabitants, the Rung community, whose traditional lifestyle is intricately linked with nature. As a member of the team, Shri Bishan Singh Bonal, President, Rung Kalyan Sanstha, Former ADG (Project Tiger/WL & HoFF) brought in the particular perspective of having grown up in the region and the team's visit to his ancestral village of Bon was of specific value. Shri Arun Kumar Saini, Officer Surveyor, represented the Survey of

India on the team to corroborate the boundaries of the proposed landscape.

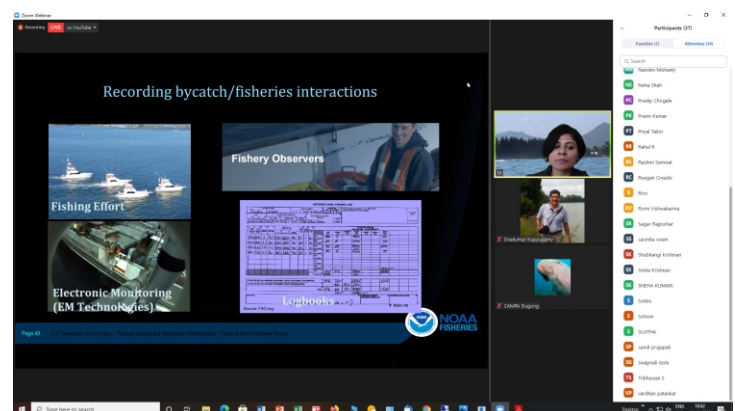
The expedition team concluded that though the region was dotted with culturally significant natural sites, more rigorous work with regard to mapping of historical sources was needed. The potential for eco-tourism in the region was also found to be significant if appropriate training and models could be used to involve local communities, thereby preserving both natural and cultural values of the region.

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Three-day Webinar Series on "Marine Mammal Conservation in India: Status, Challenges and Opportunities", Dehradun, 12- 14 October 2020.

CAMPA- Dugong Recovery Program organized a 3-day webinar series on "Marine Mammal Conservation in India: Status, Challenges and Opportunities". The webinar series was organized online and broadcasted live on the website and YouTube channel of Wildlife Institute of India. The event had talks from six distinguished scientists engaged in marine mammal conservation activities in India and abroad.

The event began with a brief introduction by Dr K. Sivakumar, Scientist-F with a note on role of proposed Project Dolphin on marine mammal conservation in India emphasizing on education, outreach and capacity building. Dr Dipani Sutaria, Adjunct Senior Research Fellow, James Cook University talked about her work on cetacean research and conservation in India, with a specific focus on Arabian Sea humpback whales and Indian Ocean humpback dolphins. Thiru A.S. Marimuthu, Wildlife Warden, Gulf of Mannar Marine National Park, Tamil Nadu talked on marine mammal conservation activities undertaken by the state forest department in Gulf of Mannar. Dr Mridula Srinivasan, Director, Marine Mammal and Turtle Division, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration,



USA, discussed the opportunities to build a comprehensive marine mammal program in India. Dr Anant Pande, Project Scientist, WII talked about the various initiatives undertaken in the Dugong Recovery Program. On the last day of the webinar series, a panel discussion on 'Marine mammal conservation in India: Perspective from developing country and ways ahead' was organized. Several current issues such as challenges in decision-making, strengthening policies, the role of independent young researchers and the contribution of civil society in marine mammal conservation and research were discussed.

The webinar was a huge success with the participation of over 600 attendees from across the country. Discussions in the webinar series underlined the need to expand and increase the resources for marine mammal research and conservation efforts in India.

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Webinar on Snow Leopard Conservation

organized, Dehradun, 23 October 2020. Wildlife

Institute of India organized an online webinar on Snow Leopard Conservation, and the speaker was

Dr S. Sathyakumar, Scientist-G, Wildlife Institute of India.

Total of 447 participants Registered for Webinar.

Dr S. Sathyakumar spoke about the snow leopard, its rarity and endangered status. He discussed the co-existing snow leopards, the prey, threats to the species and their ecology and behaviour and how different countries are trying to save this species and also working together with all stakeholders including NGO's to save the habitats and the people who are living in the snow leopard landscape. A question-answer session was held at the end hosted by Dr Anju Baroth, Co-coordinator, ENVIS.

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World Fish Migration Day Celebrated by WII,

Rudraprayag, 23-24 October 2020. Wildlife Institute of India celebrated a two-day event on World Fish Migration Day, 2020 in Rudraprayag, situated at Alaknanda and Mandakini rivers' confluence. A training workshop was conducted in co-ordination with Rudraprayag Forest Division, Government of Uttarakhand. The main objective of this training workshop was to sensitize the frontline staff of the Forest Department towards promoting the sustainable management of river valleys and fish conservation. A total of 40 participants, including forest officials, frontline staff and students, were trained on fish identification, monitoring aquatic habitat and riparian vegetation. The event was inaugurated by Shri Vaibhav Kumar Singh, DFO,



Rudraprayag Division followed by a talk on the importance of river ecology, wildlife and aquatic habitats by Dr K. Sivakumar. An interactive session on learning and identification of the major fish fauna of Rudraprayag was also conducted. The forest staffs were trained regarding habitat monitoring that included identification of suitable spawning and nursery grounds of migratory fishes. They were trained towards monitoring the water quality and identification of major fish fauna and benthic macro-invertebrates and also on identifying the suitable habitats such as riffles, runs and pools preferred by different fish species. This was followed by a demonstration of techniques that study the migratory movements of fish using telemetry equipment.

At the end of the event, the participants were able to identify local fish species with the help of a field guide provided by WII. The event helped raise the interest among the frontline forest staff on the importance of aquatic fauna, river health and riparian vegetation.

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French Ambassador to India Visited the Institute,

Dehradun, 20 November 2020. His Excellency

Mr. Emmanuel Lenain, French Ambassador to India, has



Around the Campus

Online Workshop with DPOs of NYKS, Dehradun, 26 October 2020. An online two-day workshop "Training the Trainers" was organized with Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS) District Project Officers of all five Ganga states was conducted to sensitize them about the biodiversity of river Ganga and encourage the youth to get involved in the awareness activities. A total of 40 participants attended the workshop.

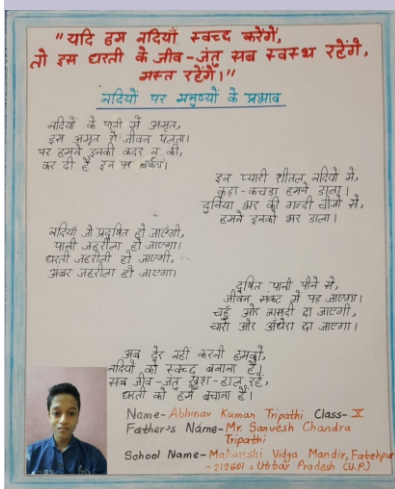


An online training session on "Youth Participation in Namami Gange Program" was conducted on 17 November 2020 in the regional level training workshop, which was organized by NYKS in Lucknow. A total of 41 participants attended the session.

Following the first session of "Training the Trainers" with NYKS District Project Officers of all five Ganga states, a two-day online workshop with NYKS District Youth Coordinators of all five Ganga states was conducted on 28

November 2020 to sensitize them about the biodiversity of river Ganga and encourage the youth to get involved in the awareness activities. A total of 36 participants attended the workshop. The guest session was conducted by Dr Vishnupriya Kolipakam on river dolphins.

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WII organized online slogan/poem writing competition "Kavya Ganga" on 2 November 2020 for school students of three groups, i.e. classes 5-8, classes 9-10 and classes 10-12. Over 80 entries were received from all over the country.



Painting on walls was done in the months of October and November 2020 in Uttarkashi, Bijnor and Hooghly to create awareness about the biodiversity of Ganga and its importance.



visited the Wildlife Institute of India on 20 November 2020. The dialogue on potential collaborations between France and WII in Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management has been initiated during his visit.

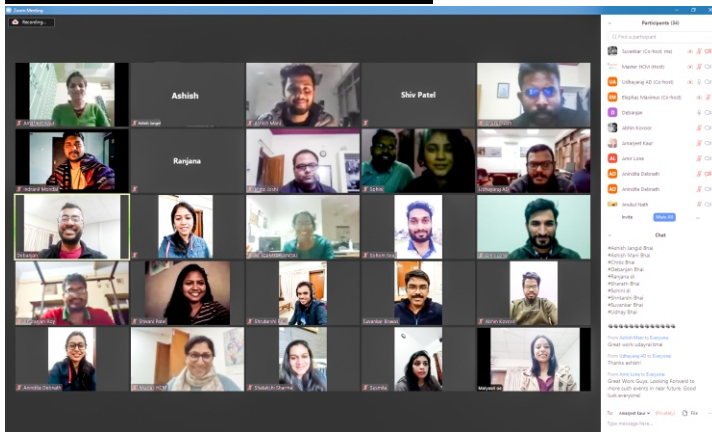
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GIS Day Celebrated at WII, Dehradun, 22

November 2020. On the Geography Awareness Week, the GIS day was celebrated in the Wildlife Institute of India campus as a one-day online workshop on RS-GIS and cartography. Seventy researchers of the Institute participated in the virtual workshop.

Dr Gautam Talukdar welcomed all the participants and spoke about the importance and purpose of celebrating GIS Day. The full-day program consisted of six different sessions on theories and applications of Remote Sensing and GIS. These sessions covered topics on WII's GIS lab, and data accessibility, a demonstration of GIS analytics tools on open-GIS platform, basic cartography skills, enhancing GIS outputs through graphic designing, Google Earth Engine, Basics of RS-GIS and its applications in conservation research and management

carried out through the Institute, and available open-access RS-GIS datasets. In the afternoon session, fourteen researchers presented lightning



talks on their RS-GIS based research works. Fun games like short quizzes and virtual treasure hunts were also organized for the participants to make the event more interactive and a map contest was declared open. The workshop concluded with the closing remarks by Dr Dhananjai Mohan, Director, WII.

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Constitution Day 2020 Celebrated at WII,

Dehradun, 26 November 2020. On the occasion of Constitution Day, an "Oath-taking" ceremony was held at Wildlife Institute of India. Its scientist and staff reiterated their commitments towards the "Preamble" of India's Constitution.

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Creation of International Convention Cell at the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun, 18 December

2020. In compliance with the 49th GB and with the approval of competent authority, the Institute established a Convention Cell to provide technical assistance to MoEFCC in meeting its obligations towards International Conventions relating to wildlife. The Convention Cell will function as a think tank to address the Sustainable Development Goals.

The mandate of the Cell are as follows: (i) The Cell will critically analyze primarily the three Rio Conventions, i.e. UN CBD, UNCCD, UNFCCC and other related conventions to wildlife, biodiversity and ecosystem services specifically in the Indian context; (ii) Act as repository and dissemination of information to the Conventions; (iii) The Cell will work towards building the capacity of relevant stakeholders to deal with various activities of International Conventions in India; (iv) The Cell will provide specific inputs to wildlife, ecosystem, disaster risk reduction and National Status Reports for each Convention.

The Cell will function under the direct control of Director, WII. The Nodal Officer, Wildlife Policy Research Cell (WPRC) will deal with all necessary routine works and secretarial support. A team of four scientists is constituted to coordinate the required functioning of the Cell towards fulfilling its mandates. The Cell will be housed in WII-C2C building henceforth.

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Farewell...



Shri P.L. Saklani

Senior Technician-2

(29 December 1986 to 31 December 2020)

Shri Ajay Sharma

Senior Technician-2

(1 January 1987 to 30 November 2020)



Shri Navin Chand Kandpal

Driver Grade-I

(22 July 1987 to 30 November 2020)

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"No matter how few possessions you own or how little money you have, loving wildlife and nature will make you rich beyond measure."

— Paul Oxton

Source: <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/tag/wildlife-conservation>