

Dear Colleagues,

Please find below periodic thematic digest on '**Biodiversity and Forest**', Issue 10 from the Asia Pacific Mountain Network (APMN).

Regards,
APMN team

News

1. A forest falls in Cambodia

June 30, 2010

The lucrative logging industry in Southeast Asia has always blurred the lines between legal and illegal, with huge payments greasing the wheels of easily corruptible bureaucrats and politicians. As a result, entire industries have learned to accept inputs gotten by hook or crook, causing profit-hungry firms to fall over each other to meet rising demand.

Destruction of rainforests from Indonesia to China affects rainfall levels, causing droughts like the one that has gripped several provinces in Cambodia.

Source: <http://bit.ly/bPugUg>

2. Rats drive island lizard to extinction

June 29, 2010

The Selmunett lizard (*Podarcis filfolensis ssp. Kieselbachi*) which was last seen in 2005 is very likely extinct. Over-predation by introduced rats is thought to be the primary cause of lizard's extinction in Selmunett Island (North Europe) - the lizard home.

Source: <http://bit.ly/9k9vNG>

3. Climate change brings back endangered butterfly

June 28, 2010

A globally endangered butterfly is making a comeback in Britain thanks to climate change. It was only in the last 20 years that enough knowledge about the strange life cycle of the country's only cannibalistic butterfly was understood, that it was possible to reintroduce the large blue back to Britain. The programme was hailed as a great conservation success by Sir David Attenborough and copied around the world. It is only

now that the climate is warming and suitable spots have been discovered in the Cotswolds that the species is able to start spreading across Britain once again.

Source: <http://bit.ly/c2hMrI>

4. Long-ignored freshwater mollusks in Cuba under threat

June 28, 2010

Despite wide diversity of mollusks (about 3000 species) Cuba is facing a threat to one type of mollusk. Out of 42 known species of freshwater mollusks ten species are only found in Cuba. The study found that a number of these mollusks are in need of protection.

Source: <http://bit.ly/9WakFU>

5. How do Asian elephants survive in fragmented and unprotected landscapes?

June 28, 2010

A new study in Tropical Conservation Science has found that Asian elephants living in a combination of fragmented forests and agricultural landscapes still depend on natural landscapes—rivers and forests—for survival.

The authors provide a number of suggestions to ensure elephant survival in such fractured landscapes, including conservation of the remaining natural landscapes.

Source: <http://bit.ly/bpl0nY>

6. Scientists warn that Malaysia is converting tropical forests to rubberwood plantations

June 27, 2010

Rubberwood plantations in Malaysia have expanded nearly 30-fold in three years from 1,626 hectares to 44,148 hectares last year. The Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation (ATBC) has condemned this practice, arguing that the conversion threatens Malaysia's biodiversity, endangered species, and releases significant greenhouse gas emissions.

Sources: <http://bit.ly/99pUta>

7. Massive forest loss spurs Nepal to ban logging for two months

June 23, 2010

Nepal has announced a two month ban on logging throughout the mountainous country, reports the AFP. According to one official over 100,000 hectares (250,000 acres) of

forest was lost in a few months, nearly double the amount of forest lost on average each year from 2000-2005.

Source: <http://bit.ly/c5RWmN>

8. Conservation Award for Elephant and Gorilla Work in Uganda

June 22, 2010

National Geographic Society/ Buffett Award is given to a community based conservation proponent who helps protect and restore critical wildlife habitat.

John Makombo was given one of two 2010 National Geographic Society/Buffett Awards in recognition of his efforts in helping safeguard endangered mountain gorillas and African elephants through ecosystem restoration and natural resource management in Uganda's national parks.

Source: <http://bit.ly/8Z26QG>

9. Forest ministry to levy 50 pc tax

June 19, 2010

The ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation (MoFSC) is preparing to amend the existing law of the community forest to curb rampant deforestation by increasing the revenue from community forest user groups from the existing 15 per cent to 50 per cent.

Source: <http://bit.ly/aBpFqQ>

10. UN body will assess ecosystems and biodiversity

June 16, 2010

The United Nations is setting up a body to monitor global ecology modeled on its influential climate panel. Last week, representatives from 85 countries gathered in Busan, South Korea, to approve the formation of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), which will operate much like the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

Source: <http://bit.ly/dhVdu0>

11. Poachers kidnap and murder ranger in India

June 14, 2010

Hassan Ali was found with two bullets in his stomach after being kidnapped by four men allegedly connected to poaching operations targeting the Orang National Park.

Source: <http://bit.ly/cBAwXg>

12. Still no recognition of forest rights for tribals, say activists in India

June 14, 2010

Community members and social organisations from across Maharashtra West are the sufferers. In Chandrapur, for example, people are facing the problem of fake gram sabhas that grant "illegal" claims even as legal claims are awaiting replies, according to a community member.

Source: <http://bit.ly/ctEI6L>

13. Forest personnel undertake measures to tame rogue crocodiles in Orissa

June 14, 2010

7-year-old boy and few others have been killed by the crocodiles since May 18. The breeding season of salt water crocodiles is now picking up. "Disturbed over human interference in waterbodies, the crocodiles have turned violent," said officials.

Apart from crocodile conservation programme, the safety of human lives and livestock remains on the top of forest departments agenda.

Source: <http://bit.ly/bX2nnu>

14. China, Nepal reach historic biodiversity agreement

June 10, 2010

The two countries agreed to implement the obligations of international multilateral environmental agreements and conventions to protect the environment and conserve biodiversity. The agreement comes as the world's governments have not met the promise they made in 2002 to significantly reduce the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010, the International Year of Biodiversity.

WWF China and WWF Nepal, along with TRAFFIC, WWF's specialized global wildlife trade programme, played a pivotal role in fostering cooperation between the governments of the two countries.

Source: <http://bit.ly/aupiXe>

15. Asia-Pacific forest area expands as biodiversity disappears - Bhutan hosts 23rd session of Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission.

June 07, 2010

Forest cover in the Asia-Pacific region has risen by 14 million hectares since 2000. China, in particular, has shown remarkable progress, increasing its forest area by almost 30

million hectares in the past decade. Viet Nam, India and the Philippines have also recorded increases, lending hope to wider efforts to reverse global forest cover loss.

Source: <http://bit.ly/cmtv9Z>

16. Nepalese Forest Minister declares Swayambhu Forest a sacred forest

June 4, 2010

At a special ceremony, the Nepalese Forest Minister, Mr. Dipak Bohara, handed protection of the Swayambhu Forest to the Federation of Swayambhu Management and Conservation (FSMC) and declared it a sacred forest.

Source: <http://bit.ly/cFgOg9>

17. Inauguration of Pakistan Botanic Gardens Network

June 4, 2010

GC University Lahore has established Pakistan Botanic Gardens Network Secretariat (PBGN) in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment for developing links with national and international botanic gardens.

The secretariat is helping in establishing botanic gardens of different colleges and universities all over the country. The building includes lecture room, herbarium, laboratory, and seminar room. PBGN hold its first seminar on 'Conserving and Restoring the Undesignated Remnants of Natural Plant Communities' that includes remnants, Harrapa Forest, Butea Forest and Birch Forest.

Source: <http://bit.ly/agfZha>

18. Wetland aliens cause bird extinction

May 26, 2010

BirdLife International announces in an update to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species for birds, the extinction of Alaotra Grebe *Tachybaptus rufolavatus*. Restricted to a tiny area of east Madagascar, this species declined rapidly after carnivorous fish were introduced to the lakes in which it lived. This, along with the use of nylon gill-nets by fisherman which caught and drowned birds, has driven this species into the abyss.

Source: <http://bit.ly/dCcFY7>

Events

1. **International Conference on Biodiversity, Livelihood and Climate Change in the Himalayas calls for papers; Deadline: oct.31, 2010 (program date:2010-12-12 to 2010-12-14)**

More at: <http://bit.ly/dcije7>

2. **Political Conflicts and Community Forestry: Understanding the Impact of the Decade-Long Armed Conflicts on Environment and Livelihood Securities in Rural Nepal**

CAPRI Workshop on Collective Action, Property Rights, and Conflict in Natural Resources Management, June 28 – July 1, 2010, Siem Reap, Cambodia

More at: <http://bit.ly/9wTuMx>

3. **Conference on Forest and Biodiversity, Community Rights and Indigenous Peoples**

Friends of the Earth Asia Pacific (FoE APAC) is pleased to host the Conference on Forest and Biodiversity, Community Rights and Indigenous Peoples with the theme "Ecological Equity: Sharing the Stories, Reclaiming our Rights", which will take place at the Jerejak Rainforest Resort, Penang, Malaysia, in October 14-17, 2010.

More at: <http://bit.ly/9MXLTv>

Announcements

1. **The WCS Research Fellowship Program**

The Program seeks to support the field work of graduate-level students (Masters, PhD, DVM, or equivalent) who will work with WCS staff in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and in special cases, North America (limited to Native Americans and First Nations, Métis, or Inuit).

More at: <http://bit.ly/cqzVRP>

2. **Hong Kong PhD Fellowships**

Those who are seeking admission as new full time PhD students in Hong Kong institutions funded by the University Grants Committee (UGC), irrespective of their country of origin and ethnic background, should be eligible to apply. Applicants should demonstrate outstanding qualities of academic performance, research ability / potential, communication and interpersonal skills, and leadership abilities.

More at: <http://bit.ly/9WIIAN>

Resources

1. **Western Ghats Forest Biodiversity portal- a portal of research applications and databases on forests and trees of the Western Ghat**

More at: <http://bit.ly/d8OxhJ>

- 2. State of forest genetic resources conservation and management in Nepal... List of publications on seed, seedling, nursery and plantation research in Nepal**

More at: <http://bit.ly/b3ZmKp>

- 3. Biodiversity conservation in community forests of Nepal: Rhetoric and reality**

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Source: International Journal of Biodiversity and Conservation Vol. 2 (5), pp. 98-104, May, 2010: More at: <http://bit.ly/bzIRMA>