



Sahyadri Nisarga Mitra,
Chiplun



ANNUAL REPORT 2015 - 2016

ABOUT US

Sahyadri Nisarga Mitra (SNM) was born when a few likeminded people wanted to do more than sigh away their pangs of conscience about the rampant abuse of nature. The day was 12th February 1992. Out of the brain storming of these individuals, the aim to "Broaden the vision of nature conservation" was taken up as the mission of this organization.

'ठेवू दूरदृष्टी रक्षू निसर्ग सृष्टी' (For a better future, we shall protect the nature) was the slogan taken up and till date, SNM has been continuously striving to live up to the slogan. Conservation of Indian Swiftlets, White-bellied sea eagles, Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher, Mangroves were the areas where we worked in the initial days. In this 25th year, we have achieved many feathers in our cap of conservation. We have successfully monitored, protected and conserved Olive Ridley Sea turtles, White – backed and long billed vultures etc. along the Maharashtra coastline. We have recently initiated conservation of Indian Pangolin. We also intend to purchase a 300 acre private forest land for its conservation.

We are committed towards the betterment of the community we live in. Hence, we have taken up eye donation, blood donation and organ donation initiatives very recently.

We have built a strong base of volunteers spread across Raigad, Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg districts of Maharashtra. We frequently undertake orientation sessions for the volunteers. We are also focused on continuously expanding the network of volunteers across the coastal region of Maharashtra. We are also active for conducting environmental outreach programs for the general public belonging to all age – groups.

QUICK UPDATE

SNM has been monitoring and protecting vulture colonies across 6 locations in the coastal Maharashtra. These efforts were supported by the Peregrine grant from November 2015 to March 2016. Through Rufford Small Grants Program, SNM intends to raise awareness amongst the local citizens and continue monitoring of the vulture feeding grounds.

First ever Marine Turtle Festival was conducted at Anjarle. It was attended by about 1000 tourists.

SNM has also been regularly conducting field visits for the general public in order to raise awareness. The motto is to inculcate a sense of responsibility amongst the general public so that they effectively contribute for the conservation of our biodiversity. Bhairavgad, Khemshe, Vindhya wasini and Kaas Plateau were the destinations wherein field visits were undertaken.

SNM has recently undertaken conservation efforts for the Indian Pangolin in the Konkan region. An orientation cum awareness workshop was conducted at Chiplun on the occasion of International Pangolin Day.

SNM also undertook regular health awareness activities. Blood donation camps, free health – awareness checkups were conducted throughout the year at diverse locations.

Vulture Conservation

The Konkan region harbours two species Vultures viz. *Gyps bengalensis* and *Gyps indicus*. There has been a drastic decline in their population across the globe in past two decades. SNM has been implementing the ‘The Konkan Vulture Project’ since 2013 and has been undertaking various activities for vulture conservation. Till date, SNM undertook a survey of the entire Konkan region and has identified only 6 vulture nesting locations. SNM has been monitoring 76 vulture nests at these 6 identified locations through local community rangers. Of these, Shrivardhan witnesses a unique phenomenon wherein the vultures nest in the coconut plantations which are in a very close vicinity of human habitation. SNM has been providing compensation to the coconut plantation owners at Shrivardhan for the coconut produce foregone. ‘The Konkan Vulture Project: Vulture food base trend due to socio-economic, geographical and policy factors’ which was supported by The Rufford Small Grants Foundation concluded in July 2015. The following are the highlights of this project:

- Identification of 114 sites for the disposal of dead cattle across the entire Konkan region
- Appointment of local community rangers to report vulture sighting at carcass dumping places
- Identification of regular vulture feeding grounds
- Identification of socio-economic-geographical-policy factors that direct the villagers to select a particular method of carcass disposal.
- Fencing of the regular vulture feeding sites in collaboration with the Maharashtra State Forest Department in order to prevent the outburst of botulism

SNM intended to continue its work for the Vulture Conservation through repeated awareness and monitoring activities. Hence, we initiated ‘The Konkan Vulture Project: Monitoring and awareness drives at identified vulture feeding grounds’. This project has secured funds from The Rufford Small Grants Foundation. Local community rangers have been appointed and meticulous records have been maintained. Awareness activities have been planned in this year’s

Turtle Conservation

Workshop on Protection of Marine Turtle was organized at Sathe Auditorium in Anjarle on 27th November 2015. Sahyadri Nisarga Mitra, Chiplun; Maharashtra State Forest Department (Ratnagiri Division) and Anjarle Gram Panchayat teamed up for this workshop. An introduction to *in-situ* and *ex-situ* conservation methods for the protection of turtle hatchlings was the focus of this workshop. The participants were also briefed about the monitoring and necessary care to be

taken for the protection of incubating eggs. The afternoon session was reserved for the beach cleanliness drive. More than 50 citizens actively participated in this workshop.



The first ever ‘Marine Turtle Festival’ was conducted at Anjarle on 6th and 7th February 2016. This festival was jointly hosted by Gram Panchayat and residents of Anjarle village along with Maharashtra State Forest Department and Sahyadri Nisarga Mitra. Raising awareness amongst the general public for turtle conservation and attracting tourists to watch the release of hatchlings into the sea was the motive for conducting turtle festival. The turtle hatchlings were released at 7 am and 6 pm into the sea during the festival. Nature trails, Mangrove trails, bird-watching exercises were also organized for the tourists in order to raise their awareness and generate curiosity about various components in nature. More than 1000 tourists visited Anjarle during turtle festival.

My Jungle

A 22 km long run titled ‘Tera Mera Run’ was initiated by Sahyadri Nisarga Mitra in association with Imapct Guru under the leadership of Shri. Jagadish Damania. This run was held on 24th December 2015 from 6 am to 9 am. Shri. Mohit Raysoni, Shri. Avinesh Saini, Shri. Brijesh Gajariya, Shri. Bharat Ramnath, Shri. Ajay Choudhari, Shri. Bharat Srinivasmurthy, Col. Shrikrishna, Smt. Arundhati Rao, and Shri. Jagadish Damania were the contributing members for the run. About 125 people enthusiastically participated in this program.



Pangolin Conservation

Sahyadri Nisarga Mitra (SNM) has recently taken up awareness generation and sensitization of local communities in coastal Maharashtra, on conservation of Indian Pangolin. After two incidents of seizure of persons carrying huge amounts of Pangolin scales, SNM has decided to initiate a systematic awareness generation on Pangolin conservation in Konkan. 'International Pangolin Day' being celebrated on the third Saturday of February was the most fitting day to start this initiative. Thus, on 20th February 2016, an orientation cum awareness generation workshop on Pangolin conservation was conducted at Chiplun. Maharashtra State Forest Department and Maharashtra Police Department collaborated in organizing this workshop. About 200 participants like officials of State Forest Department and Police Department, Village heads, Presidents of dispute-free villages and nature lovers were present at the workshop.



Environmental awareness drives for the general public

SNM regularly undertakes field trips for the general public in order to generate curiosity about nature and bring in more people for the protection and conservation of local biodiversity.

One day field visit at Bhairavgad fort was conducted on 19th April 2015. The field visit was free of cost and was open for citizens of all age classes. 50 people ardently participated in this outing. The participants were provided with the information pertaining to the history of the fort, its surrounding, the various types of snakes present, identification of venomous and non-venomous snakes, the forest dynamics throughout the day and across the different season etc. The participants were exposed to bird watching and identification of birds through different calls. They were also briefed about ethics of wildlife photography.

With a similar intention, another one day outing was conducted on 1st May 2015 at Khemshe. The participants were involved in bird watching, identification of birds through calls, identification of animals through pug marks and were informed about ethics while clicking and

shooting the wildlife. Similar field visits were conducted on 7th June 2015 at Vindhya wasini and on 2nd October 2015 at Kaas plateau.

4th Konkan Pakshimitra Meet was conducted on 17th May 2015 at Madhav Auditorium in Bhogale, Chiplun. The event was inaugurated by Divisional Forest Officer of Ratnagiri - Shri. Amar Sable. Renowned oncologist and ornithologist Dr. Vikram Ghanekar chaired as President for the meet. More than 100 bird-watchers took part in this event to make it a great success.

A pilgrimage outing was conducted on 25th October 2015. Dhareshwar, Waterfall at Ozarde, Sundargad, Dattadham were the places covered under this trip. This outing gave a message on climate change mitigation and adaptation for the betterment of the future generations.

On the occasion of the 'International Day for Biological Diversity', SNM hosted multiple events for raising awareness at Harihareshwar on 30th and 31st May 2016. Mobile exhibition providing information about Marine turtles, Importance of beach cleanliness, models of eco-tourisms, screening of a film show were the highlights of this celebration. Village head of Harihareshwar Gram Panchayat – Mrs. Sheela Dilip Bhosale, Deputy Village Head – Shri. Sachin Gurav, and member of Gram Panchayat Shri. Amit Khot graced the celebrations through their presence. Shri. Ramashish Joshi, Shri. Vaibhav Rajdeep, Shri. Mourya Sadwilkar, Shri. Devendra Chitale and Shri. Shubham Mudrale were present on behalf of SNM.

Awareness drives for Eye Donation, Blood Donation and Organ Donation

World Eye Donation Day was celebrated on 10th June 2015. On this occasion, relatives of the deceased eye donors were felicitated at Savarkar Auditorium, Chiplun. Successful eye-donation of 7 deceased patients took place in the last year. President of NAB, Chiplun and ex – Mayor of Chiplun, Mr. Suchay Anna Redij, was the chief guest of this program. Dr. G. L. Joshi, Dr. Markad of the Primary Health Centre, Tale-Khed, Dr. Nishant Rathi of NAB, SNM's President Shri. Bhau Katdare and Secretary Shri. Uday Pandit were amongst others present at the function.

SNM conducted a blood donation camp in collaboration with Blood Bank of Dervan Hospital and Shri Dev Juna Kalbhairav Temple Trust on 29th June 2015. The camp was arranged in the premises of Shri Dev Juna Kalbhairav temple. 34 people successfully donated blood for the well-being of the society.

Volunteers working for the noble cause of eye-donation and concerned doctors assembled at SNM's office on 19th August 2015.

Eye – donation fortnight was celebrated from 25th August 2015 to 10th September 2015. The event was inaugurated Dr. G. L. Joshi by launching online portal for submitting resolution and registration forms of people willing for eye-donation and organ donation. A series of events like essay competition, exhibitions and meets in various villages across the entire Chiplun Taluka, distribution of pamphlets, inauguration of mobile app, publicity through posters and street-plays

etc. were conducted for sensitizing the general public about posthumous eye – donation. 100 peoples passed a resolution to donate their eyes and have filled in the necessary forms by providing essential details.

On the auspicious occasion of ‘Sight awareness day’ 65 people from Watad – Khandala submitted the eye-donation resolution forms to SNM. This day was 8th October 2015. Shri. Bhau Katdare (President, SNM), Shri. Uday Pandit (Secretary, SNM) and Shri. Kamlakar Bendke (Treasurer, SNM) generously accepted their resolution forms and appreciated their vow of eye – donation.

Sahyadri Nisarga Mitra, Chiplun; Gram Panchayat, Khadpoli; B. K. L. Walawalkar Hospital; NAB Eye Hospital, Chiplun; Ratnagiri District Health Department and Netra Seva jointly ventured to conduct a free health check-up camp at Khadpoli village. 35 people donated their blood during this camp. Resolution for posthumous eye-donation was pledged by the citizens of this village. Along with this, free medical check-up was conducted for entire village. 79 patients were benefitted since they could undergo various medical tests and could avail treatment from the expert doctors.

Sahyadri Nisarga Mitra and B. K. L. Walawalkar Hospital collaborated to conduct a free eye-check up camp on the occasion of Mahaparinirvan Day (Death anniversary) of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar which falls on 6th December. The camp was organized at Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Chowk. 11 people filled in eye-donation resolution forms while 36 people underwent free eye-checkup.



Appeal

Volunteering, donations for specific activities and donations through online purchase of products like books, CDs helps SNM to carry out various activities and also plan for the future. SNM appeals donors to check the details on the website and contribute generously towards a noble cause. Donations made within India will be entitled for IT exemption under 80G. Foreign donations are now accepted. Kindly call for the details.

Donations within India

Account holder's name: Sahyadri Nisarga Mitra

Name of Bank: Bank of India, Chiplun	Name of Bank: Bank of Maharashtra, Chiplun
Account Number: 141110110000077	Account Number: 20061344941
IFSC: BKID0001411	IFSC: MAHB0000296