



Sahyadri Nisarga Mitra,
Chiplun



Annual Report 2016-2017

Acknowledgement

Sahyadri is thankful to Forest Department, Maharashtra for extending support in all programs and also Police Department. The E-mammal project has been supported by ICICI Bank Pvt Ltd. We would also like to thank GIZ for supporting turtle conservation project and Aashirvadam Trust for the Konkan Vulture project. Global Giving has been supportive in Eye donation and Body donation projects. In addition, the local Gram Panchayats in each village and, villagers and all the volunteers have worked to ensure the large-scale success of conservation programs as well as Eye Donation, Body Donation and Blood Donation programs.

The support of individual donors has always been the back bone of our activities.

Introduction

Sahyadri Nisarga Mitra (SNM) an eminent endangered species conservation organization came into existence in the year 1992. The organization was an outcome of few nature enthusiasts from Chiplun who came together and directed to work towards the conservation of Mother Nature. The mission of the organization is “**Nature Conservation Through Field Protection, Awareness, Education and Scientific based Act**”.

SNM has successfully organized various projects in nature conservation, protection and education with its limited resources. The focus area of organization is the Konkan region of Maharashtra state as it is comprised of different ecosystems and very bio-diverse.

Pangolin Conservation

Indian Pangolin is most trafficked mammal in the world. SNM is working in the pangolin conservation since last year and half. SNM has been conducting day and night patrolling in few selected areas where pangolin activity was observed. Recently we have launched a research project to know habitat preference and prey preference of the pangolin. Where we surveyed a sample area and collected information regarding its burrow size, site selection for burrow etc. We opportunistically collected scat samples of the Indian Pangolin. Further the scat samples were examined to know its prey preference. So far the result has revealed that pangolin preys upon 5 species of ants found in the area. Also to know more about this shy creature and its behavior we deployed 10 Trap cameras for 591 days along the different locations. We were able to capture the pangolins activity only thrice on the camera. Along with the research activity SNM is also involved in spreading awareness about pangolin crisis. To sensitize the masses we have put up hoardings in villages. We also celebrated World Pangolin Day with a save pangolin rally. A workshop was also organized at Khed, dist-Ratnagiri, to sensitize Village heads, Police patil, President (Dispute free village committee), Forest Department and Police Department of Khed taluka. 200 people from 120 villages of Khed taluka attended the workshop. Village level meeting were conducted and flyers were also distributed during the meetings. A painting competition on subject Indian Pangolin was conducted at schools along with it a pangolin trophy cricket tournament was also organized. We will continue our efforts in pangolin conservation through long term monitoring, Research as well as by spreading awareness.



E-mammal- A Citizen Science Project

E-mammal a project funded by ICICI Bank Pvt Ltd. and implemented by Sahyadri Nisarga Mitra (SNM) with technical assistance from Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS). E-mammal project seeks to promote scientific understanding among school children between the ages of 11 to 14 through the lens of applied scientific research between middle schools Maharashtra, India. Twenty rural/tribal schools across the seven districts located in Sahyadri region are involved under the project. It is a science based project that uses camera traps to document animal population sizes, activation patterns and habitat use. Results of the camera trapping study will be uploaded onto the e-mammal website and stored in a depository, which will become part of the larger database used by scientist worldwide studying biodiversity. 40 students and 20 teachers represented 20 schools in a State level workshop organized at Chiplun on April 1st. Under the workshop training was provided on how to use trap camera and other electronic equipment's also a Laptop, a Projector, 3 Trap cameras and Internet dongle were also handed over to each participating school. All the schools deployed their cameras for almost two months and the results are fascinating. We are getting a healthy response from students as well as teachers. The way project is making its progress surely it will make a positive impact on the student and will help them to create a healthy bond with nature.



Saguna Rice Technique (SRT)

Rice is the staple food of Konkan region. Almost 4.136 lakh ha of area is under the rice cultivation and it produce a yield of 10.42-15.10 lakh tons of rice annually. In traditional rice cultivation method, before sowing the crop the field to be sowed is covered with dry grass stacks and it is set on fire. Productivity of soil increases due to it is a thought behind it. The consequence of all this burning is release of pollutants and CO₂ as green house gas. The second drawback is release of methane which is also a GHG. To help curb this pollution and warming we are promoting SRT. SRT is a new technique where burning and flooding of water in paddy is not involved. On the other hand it cuts down hard labourwork by 50% and increases the productivity by almost 2-3 times than the traditional method. On an experimental basis we are practicing the technique with 27 volunteer farmers belonging to 4

villages around Chiplun. The total area under SRT is 188.13 ha. If the experiment turns out to be a success then we aim to spread the technique all over the konkan region. The SRT cultivated area is showing good results till now. At the start of the project awareness campaigns were held and also a training workshop was organized under the guidance of Mr. Chandrashekhar Bhadsavle of Saguna baug and Taluka Agriculture Officer.



Eye Donation, Body Donation and Blood Donation Drive

In India 1% of blind people are bilaterally corneal blind out of which only approximately 60,000 can be delivered vision by penetrating keratoplasty. Rest 50% cannot be provided vision due to associated involvement of posterior segment. Considering annual addition of 20,000 fresh cases of corneal blindness, maximum utilization of collected corneas and back log of corneal blindness and India needs approximately 140,000 eye donors as of today against 40,621 cornea collections as per NPCB.

To overcome lack of awareness and counseling, Sahyadri initiated Eye Donation awareness and cornea collection in 2014 with the help of network of local eye specialists and Drushti Daan Eye Bank, Sangali. This year, 10 instances of cornea collection and subsequent transplant took place. To sensitize general public SNM conducted 8 awareness camps and also celebrated Eye donation day on 10 June 2016. To appreciate and promote eye donation SNM felicitated family members of the donors in October 2016.

Sahyadri has been associated with Dervan Hospital for body donation through which 2 instances of body donation took place. Blood donation camps are being held every quarter. During the year 3 blood donation camps were held in Chiplun and 115 donors participated in the camp. Sahyadri plans to spread these activities in Chiplun Taluka and also felicitate next of kin for taking eye / body donation decision.

Vulture Conservation

SNM has been involved in conservation and protection of the critically endangered vulture species of the Konkan region under the Aashirvadam Trust Grant. Konkan is home to two species of vultures viz. White rumped vulture and Long billed vulture. Vultures play an important role of clean-up crew in nature and help in keeping the surroundings clean. Their number is catastrophically declining in our own country as well as in neighboring countries.

Eventually there are six nesting sites present in Konkan region mainly distributed in Raigad and Ratnagiri districts. SNM makes visit to these sites every month to monitor their population size as well as nesting population. During the year we visited the sites regularly and observed 56 nests in total comprising of all six sites. To maximize the efforts we distributed brochures depicting save vulture slogans and their importance in nature. In-addition we also took up awareness campaigns involving workshops for Forest officials and general public. During the year in collaboration with Forest Department we conducted a vulture conservation workshop to sensitize the masses.

Turtle Conservation

Sahyadri Nisarga Mitra received support from GIZ for the turtle conservation for the period of two years till March 2017. Various activities were conducted under the project. One of them was biodiversity survey of Aanjarle, Kelshi and Velas beach of Ratnagiri district. In-addition a nature guide workshop was conducted to encourage and turn locals into nature guides which will serve as a livelihood option to the locals. Under the GIZ project sensitization of school children was taken up by delivering lecture on various aspects of marine biodiversity. Marathi and Urdu medium schools were involved in these activities. Moreover many other activities too were run under GIZ project.

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