

Conserving Red Pandas in Western Nepal

2020 PROGRESS REPORT



RPN is committed to the conservation of wild red pandas and their habitat through the education and empowerment of local communities.

RedPandaNetwork.org



The project entitled “Community-based red panda conservation in Western Nepal” aims for the preservation of wild red panda population and their habitat through the empowerment of local communities by adapting community-based research, education, and sustainable development.

However, the execution of different conservation activities in Western Nepal is very difficult because of the strenuous topography, climatic belts, and conservative society. The project area namely, Jumla, Jajarkot, Kalikot, Rukum West, Rukum East, Rolpa, and Dolpa districts have red panda habitat fragmented into many small patches, which are unlikely to support a viable population if connectivity is not maintained. Protecting this region is a high priority project for RPN. With the goal to ensure the survival of red pandas in the long run and improve habitat connectivity of three protected areas: Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve, Shey Phoksundo National Park, and Rara National Park, a community-based red panda conservation model implemented in these critical regions. Conservation of this species will also ensure the conservation of other sympatric species including Himalayan black bear, leopard, clouded leopard, Assam macaques, and Asiatic wild dogs. This progress report narrates various a series of innovative approaches portraying the cumulative impact of RPN’s work in the year 2019. To date, our community based red panda conservation programs have facilitated conserving populations of red panda in the wild while generating new knowledge and creating positive change in the local communities and government bureaucrats. In total degraded red panda habitat i.e. 5.3 hectares planted with native red panda palatable species. Around 1.8 hectares of the degraded region has been mapped in Jumla district for the plantation. The operational plan of 9 Community forest has been reviewed with red panda conservation issues. Regular red panda monitoring has been conducted all selected 30 Community forests with red panda presence. In total 26 information boards (6*4 ft) and one biodiversity board (8*10 ft) has been prepared and installed. Herders Network and Community Forest users’ group. Regular monitoring and anti-poaching patrolling are being conducted based on translated “Community based red panda survey and monitoring” protocol. Numerous snares and traps identified, dismantled, and collected. Similarly, a homemade gun rifle has been recovered during the antipoaching patrolling. Local people are growing vegetables inside distributed poly-house (tunnel house) in Kalikot and Jajarkot district. This has facilitated reduced dependency on natural resources (i.e. poaching) additionally providing much-needed nutrition.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ang Phuri Sherpa'.

Ang Phuri Sherpa, Country Director

Research & Monitoring





The first photographic evidence of red panda in its westernmost range!

Submitted for publication in:

"Endangered red panda: The first photographic red panda evidence from its Westernmost distribution range."

"Distribution and habitat attributes associated with the Himalayan red panda in the westernmost distribution range, Nepal."



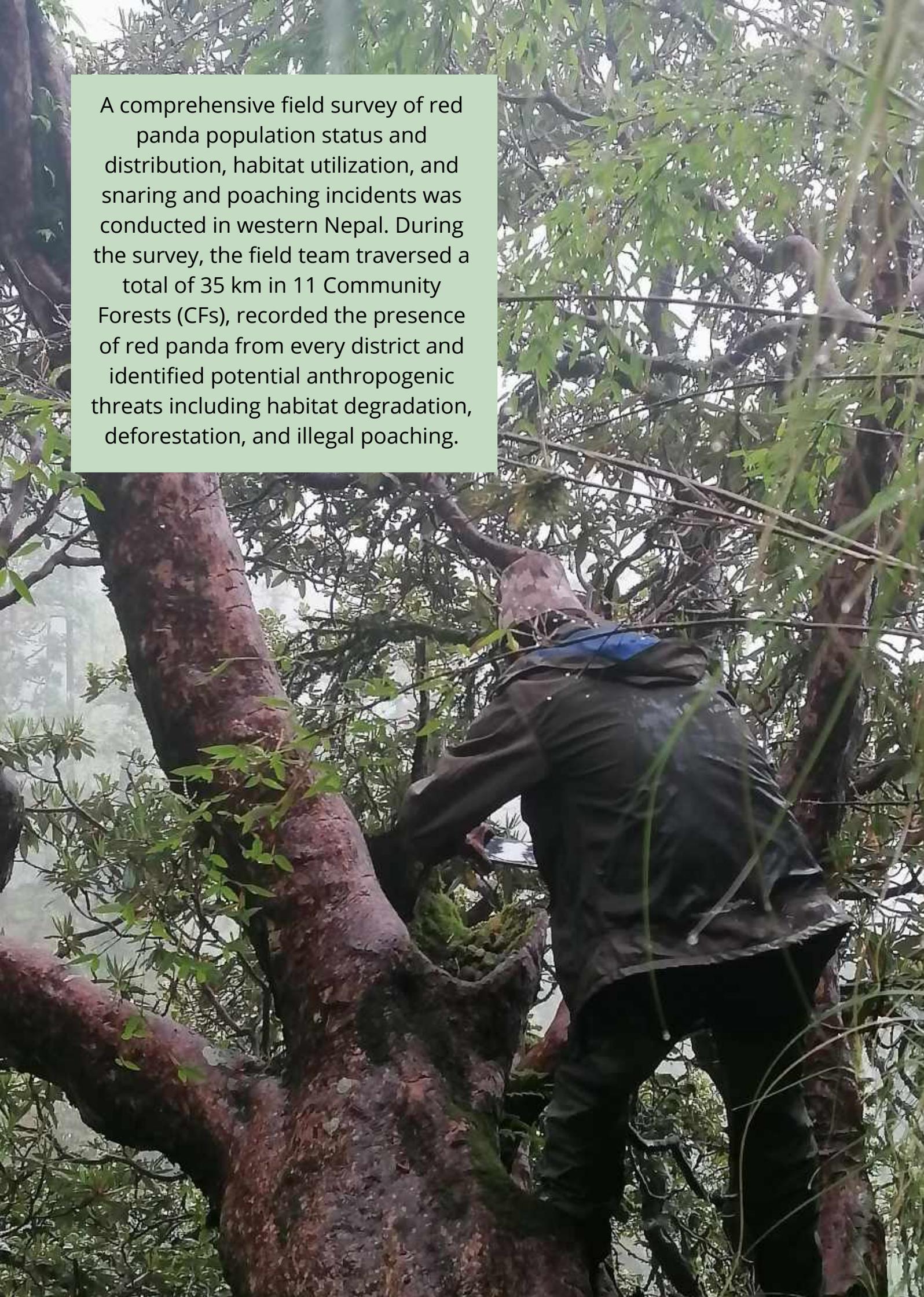
Red panda (*Ailurus fulgens*) presence-absence survey was conducted in all 7 districts (Rukum-East, Rukum-West, Rolpa, Jajarkot, Jumla, Kalikot and Dolpa) from Western Nepal. The species presence was documented from our working (n-27) Community Forests from different RMs of Western Nepal.



Socio-economic and Conservation awareness has been conducted in Rukum East, Rukum West, Rolpa, Jajarkot, Jumla and Kalikot district.



A comprehensive field survey of red panda population status and distribution, habitat utilization, and snaring and poaching incidents was conducted in western Nepal. During the survey, the field team traversed a total of 35 km in 11 Community Forests (CFs), recorded the presence of red panda from every district and identified potential anthropogenic threats including habitat degradation, deforestation, and illegal poaching.





Red Panda Droppings, Gairemela Community Forest, Shubhakalika, Kalikot



Red Panda Scat, Kalikot





Capacity building and refresher training events enhanced the knowledge and capacity of forest guardians (FGs) (n=26) of Western Nepal for establishment of new monitoring blocks, onsite data collection, boundary surveys of CFs, and Nepal's laws relevant to wildlife conservation.



Conservation Workshop/Consultation meetings were accomplished in all projected districts that sensitized various stakeholders like local forest users, herders, CFUGs, RM members, DFO staffs, etc. regarding red panda conservation.





The anti-poaching patrolling monitoring is carried out once a year where FGs and DFO staff patrol red panda habitat, remove traps and snares, educate locals on the importance of red panda conservation, and report poaching activity to enforcement agencies.



In 2019, Wildlife Crime Control Training was organized for 50 members of the anti-poaching network in Kalikot and Dolpa districts.



Red Panda Conservation Network (n=2) within working CFUGs was formed in Jumla and Kalikot District as institutional development of the project. Network combines three CFUGs in Jumla whereas 5 CFUGs in Kalikot.



Education & Outreach





Information boards (n=40) containing general information about red panda and their significance in conserving biodiversity were prepared and installed the districts

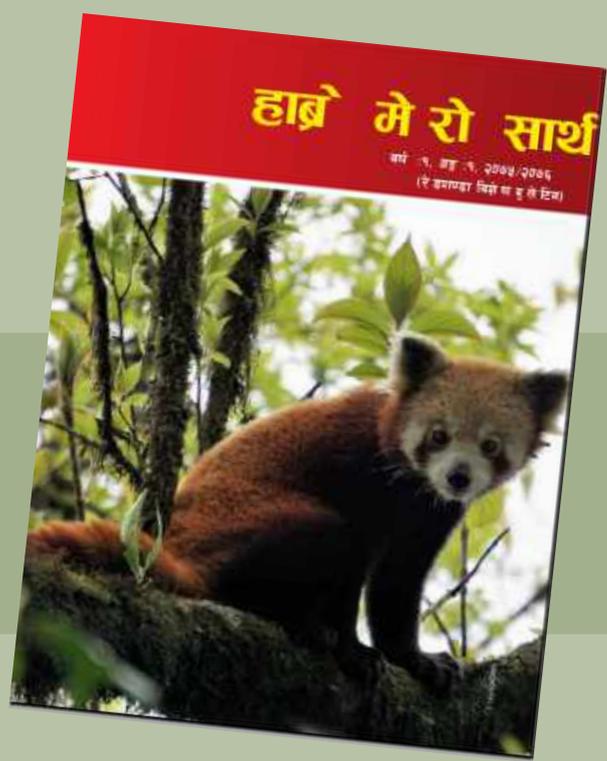


Local journalists of Kalikot, Jumla, Jajarkot, Rukum (West), and Rukum (East) districts were sensitized regarding the prioritization of stories on illegal poaching and red panda conservation during “Role of Media in Combating Wildlife Crime” workshop.





The first-ever workshop on the forest monitoring and alert system was conducted for the Division Forest Officers (DFOs), Assistant Forest Officers (AFOs), field conservation officers, FGs, officials of the local councils, and members of four CFs from Kalikot district, western Nepal.

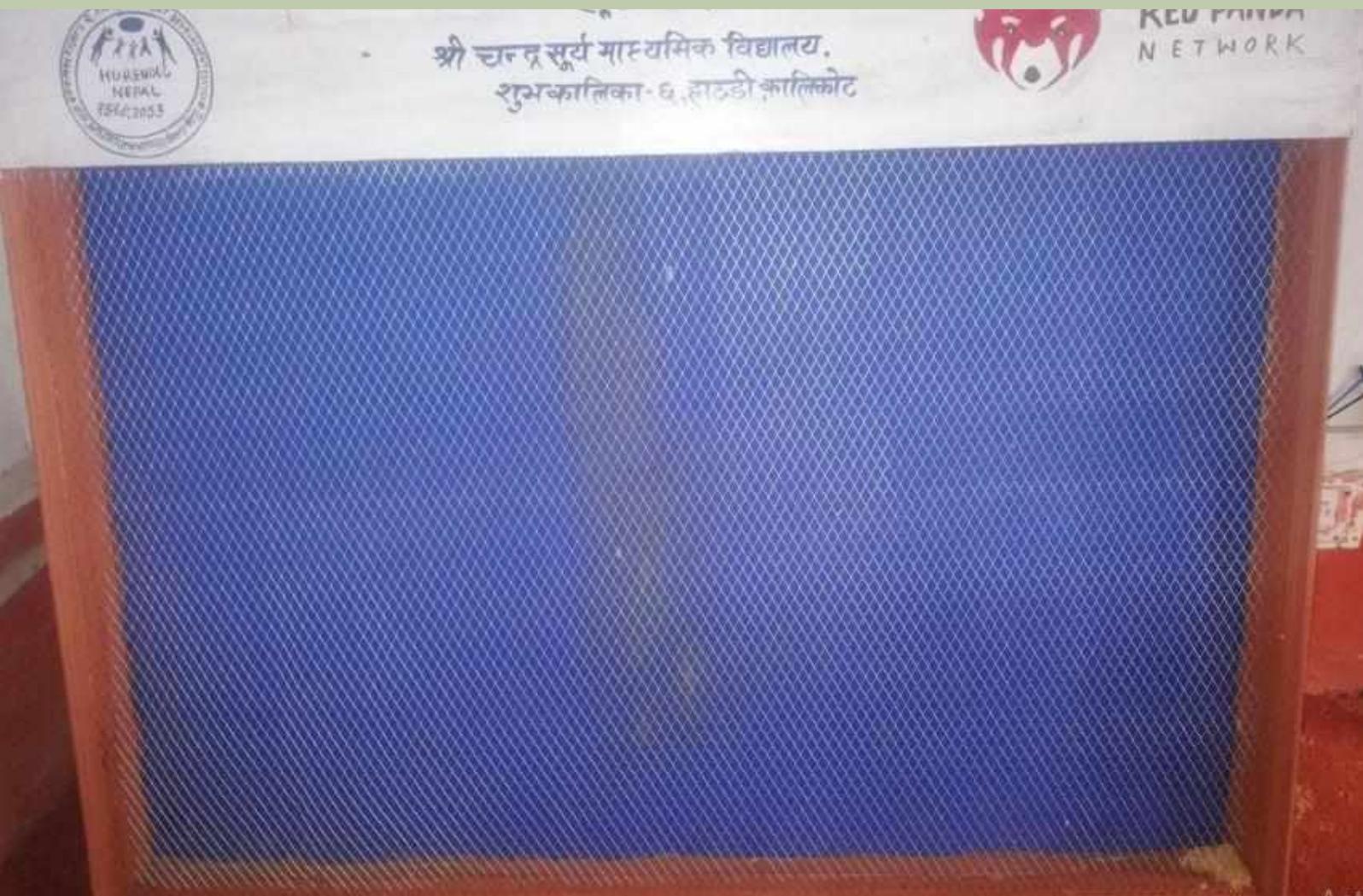


This year, 46 roots and shoots groups participated in a red panda bulletin publication —produced by students—which included poems, short stories, essays, and art projects that conveyed a conservation message.



A biodiversity board containing the information regarding six different wildlife species and conservation measures was installed in Nagma, Jumla district.

An information board installed for the eco-clubs in Kalikot district to highlight the conservation importance of red panda through their creative art collection.





In 2019, 326 students from 10 Red Panda Roots & Shoots Group schools participated in a day-long red panda mini eco-trip.





Conservation days (IRPD and World Environment Day) were celebrated by organizing debate, essay, art, poem, quizzes, singing competitions, and field trips in local schools where students learned about the importance of red panda and Himalayan biodiversity.





49 Students from marginalized communities of Kalikot (n=29), Jumla (n=10), and Jajarkot (n=10) districts of western Nepal were provided with in-kind Red panda conservation scholarship support (stationery materials, bags, and books).



To enhance awareness about red pandas and biodiversity conservation through local cultural promotion, the Deuda Program (n=2) was organized at Kalikot District.





Red Panda Day and Red Panda Scholarship Program
रेडपाण्डा दिवस तथा रेडपाण्डा छात्रवृत्ति वितरण कार्यक्रम
स्थान : श्री देव मा.वि, मार्ग २ (पारमघाट), कालिकोट
मिति : १४ सेप्टेम्बर २०१९
संस्था : श्री देव मा.वि, ईशो मठ

10th
INTERNATIONAL
RED PANDA DAY

सहयोगी
RED PANDA NETWORK
I-CFC

Day
Sunday
Monday
Tuesday
Wednesday
Thursday
Friday
Saturday

शुक्रवादि
रविवार
सोमवार
मंगलवार
बुधवार
गुरुवार
शुक्रवार

शुक्र
रविवार
सोम
मंगल
बुध
गुरु
शुक्र



The Red panda bulletin (n-700) comprising of poems, articles, drawing has been published from Jumla, Kalikot and Jajarkot districts. Students and teachers from eco-clubs participated in this intervention.

Yearly calendar (n=500) comprising red panda biodiversity conservation messages has been developed and published in western Nepal.

Sticker (n=500) of sizes 4 inches comprising red panda conservation messages has been published and distributed in Jumla Districts.

Stories of Forest Guardians and eco-club school students have been prepared in Western Nepal.

Under technical support of local F.M., a radio program (n=25 episodes including jingle) was launched for broadcasting red panda conservation messages in Jajarkot, Rolpa, Jumla and Kalikot Districts.

Red panda story Reading books were distributed to 2 eco-clubs school in Kalikot Districts.



Habitat Management





Degraded red panda habitat has been mapped for plantation from Jumla, Kalikot and Rukum East district.



Degraded and denuded red panda buffer areas (2.4 Ha) were restored in Kalikot district.





Potential red panda habitat from Himkalika Community Forest, Kalikot district: Our conservation programs have outreached in 35 CF of 7 districts in Western Nepal.



Identification of traps and snares by the patrolling team during regular monitoring of red panda and their habitat.



MoU has been signed with Barekot rural municipality with regards to dog vaccination and Neutering intervention.

Free roaming dogs (N=1800) were vaccinated in Barekot rural municipality of Jajarkot district.

Pachal Jharana rural municipality of Kalikot district vowed half a million Nepalese rupees for red pandas and biodiversity conservation within its rural municipality for 2021.

Mudkechula rural municipality of Dolpa district has allocated half million Nepalese rupees for biodiversity conservation within its rural municipality.

Consultation meeting with the local community for tourism promotion was conducted in Rolpa and Rukum East of Western Nepal.

Identification of water resources and its restoration was done in Rukum west, Kalikot, Jumla, Jajakot, Dolpa and Rolpa districts.

Red panda conservation provision has been endorsed with revised 9 community forests operational Plan of Jajarkot district.

New community Forest named Basa Pachal Jharana from Pachaljharana RM with Red panda Conservation Approach was handed over in Kalikot District under technical support of Division Forest Office, Kalikot.

Consultation meeting with the local community for tourism promotion was conducted in Rolpa and Rukum East of Western Nepal.

Boundary Survey of 3 community forests (Bhimachulinga, Himkalika and Basa Pachaljharana) have been carried out in Kalikot Districts.

RPN has planted & fenced 2.1 hectares of degraded red panda habitat with red palatable species in Kalikot district.



Sustainable Livelihood





A saplings distribution program was conducted for the marginalized communities of Jajarkot and Kalikot district for the promotion Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) cultivation. 1373 saplings of different plant species such as Okhar (*Juglans regia*), Timur (*Zanthoxylum armatum*), Ipil (*Ipil Ipil*), Amriso/Broom (*Thysanolaeneae spp*s) and Napier (*Pennisetum purpureum*) were distributed.



To support local CFUGs in green house farming, ploy house plastic (n=17) were distributed along with seedings of topographically favorable vegetables in Jumla, Jajarkot and Kalikot district.





Two events of Interaction workshop on livestock insemination with local herders were conducted at Kalikot district under technician support of the Livestock Office, Kalikot.



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