

APPENDIX VII

IARD/NTRES/SNES¹ 4850: Case Studies in International Ecoagriculture and Environmental Conservation

Cornell University

Term Assignment for Human-Wildlife Conflicts in Bhutan Case Study

Spring Semester 2012

Practitioner: Dr. James Lassoie² (e-mail: lassoie@cornell.edu)

Student Team: Sean Callahan, Sara Cullen, Anna Kusler, and Simone Passarelli

Basic Question:

What should the Government of Bhutan do to protect wildlife biodiversity and rural livelihoods?

Sub-questions:

1. The *Bhutan National Human-Wildlife Conflicts Management Strategy*, published in 2008, was based on the then available knowledge of human-wildlife conflicts in Bhutan and elsewhere. What new knowledge has emerged worldwide, including Bhutan, that is now relevant to the programs outlined in the *Strategy*?

2. Chapter 2 of the *Strategy* outlines an integrated approach to addressing human-wildlife conflicts in Bhutan by linking conservation with development using integrated conservation and development programs, environmental education, and ecotourism. Since the development of the *Strategy*, a new integrated conservation approach has emerged, the use of payment for ecosystem services (PES). Based on successful programs elsewhere, design a PES scheme that would address human-wildlife conflicts in Bhutan.

3. Bhutan's move to democracy in 2008 "...may open a new process for concentrating local resistance to conservation policies, possibly leading to detrimental changes to certain wildlife populations" (*Strategy*, pg. 2). How might the Bhutan Government incorporate the democratic process into its nine model sites (*Strategy*, Ch. 8) to garner local support for conservation?

Final Product (see Appendix VII):

Develop an annotated bibliography as an addendum to the *Bhutan National Human-Wildlife Conflicts Management Strategy* that provides updated references for each chapter. Develop a PowerPoint presentation, with supportive references, that could be used to interest buyers and sellers of ecosystem service that would address Bhutan's human-wildlife conflicts. Prepare a proposal to the Bhutan Government that emphasizes the importance of local participation in the nine model sites, including a structure and process for doing so.

SPRING SEMESTER 2013

Practitioner: Phuntsho Thinley³ (e-mail: pt96@cornell.edu)

¹ IARD = International Agriculture and Rural Development; NTRES = Natural Resources

² Jim is an International Professor of Conservation in the Department of Natural Resources, Cornell University. Originally educated as a forester and forest ecologist at the University of Washington, his research and teaching programs now focus on community-based natural resource management, conservation science, and sustainable development. He has worked extensively in Africa, Latin America, and Asia, as well as the US. Jim has been working with Bhutanese graduate students since 2001 investigating migratory grazing, ethnobotany, and human-wildlife conflicts. Throughout 2007 he helped to develop the *Bhutan National Human-Wildlife Conflicts Management Strategy*, and wrote the introductory chapter to this policy document, which was published in 2008 and is available electronically at: www.moa.gov.bt/moa/downloads/downloadFiles/MoADownload5lv1595os.pdf

Student Team:

Maggie Anderson, Jake Benedict, Ali Hoffman, and Sara Moore

Basic Question:

What new elements should Jigme Dorji National Park insert in the new management plan to adapt to the changing socio-cultural and biophysical settings in Bhutan and in the Himalayan sub-region?

Sub-questions:

1. Despite the change of several managers since 1998, the park could not revise its management plan that dates back to the period 1998-2002. Many socio-economic and biophysical priorities have changed over the years and some may not be relevant to the current context. One of the biggest changes in the socio-economic realm is Bhutan's transition to Constitutional Democracy in 2008. Another major change in the park was construction of a several roads inside the park. Given the influences of such changes, what are the adaptive mechanisms that should be built in the management plan to ensure persistence of endangered species such as tiger, snow leopard, and wild dog?
2. The park is also faced with increasing human-wildlife conflicts that can fuel negative sentiments of the people towards the wild predators as well as the park management. What innovative ideas should be included in the management plan to deal with human-predator conflicts?
3. Situated in the Himalayas, Bhutan is one of the victims of climate change which it isn't its creation. Majority of the park's residents live in the upper Himalayas, areas above 3800 meters above sea level. Livestock rearing is their mainstay which is now threatened by climate change. How can the park's new management plan address this issue?

Final Product (see Appendix VIII):

Develop a proposal to improve the park's management plan providing a summary of innovative ideas and adaptive management strategies supported by annotated bibliography to tackle the above-mentioned changing scenarios in the country and in the park.

Key Resources:

1. Conservation Bridge Case Study: <http://www.conservationbridge.org/casestudy/human-wildlife-conflicts-in-bhutan/>
2. 2012 Capstone Course Final Report: see Confluence
3. Government of Bhutan. 1998. Management Plan for Jigme Dorji National Park (1998 2002). (available from Phuntsho Thinley)
4. Government of Bhutan. 2008. Bhutan National Human-Wildlife Conflicts Management Strategy. Nature Conservation Division, Department of Forests, Ministry of Agriculture, Royal Government of Bhutan, Thimphu, Bhutan. 88p. (available at: <http://www.globaltigerinitiative.org/download/ELF/session-papers-and-presentations/Bhutan-National-Human-Wildlife-Conflicts-Management-Strategy-2008.pdf>)

³ Phuntsho is the Manager of Jigme Dorji National Park, Bhutan. He has also managed Bumdeling Wildlife Sanctuary in the north easternmost part of the country. He has 8 years of experience in protected area management, including the biological corridors. He studied forest and wildlife ecology in his Bachelors degree from the Philippines and natural resources policy and applied conservation ecology in his Masters degree from Cornell. Currently, he is a Ph.D. candidate at Cornell pursuing the same concentrations with focus on conservation of large sympatric carnivores for harmonious co-existence.