

Annual Report 2021



Royal Society for Protection of Nature
*Inspiring personal responsibility in conservation of
the Kingdom's environment since 1987*

STATEMENT FROM OUR ROYAL PATRON



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Under the Royal Patronage of HRH the Crown Prince of the Kingdom of Bhutan

15/30/99

“The kingdom of Bhutan is blessed with an exceptional and largely intact natural environment. I have joined RSPN in its mission to raise awareness of the challenge that faces us now. We must all accept our individual responsibility to conserve the rich diversity of Bhutan’s plant and animal species, for the benefit of both the natural world and our children’s future.”

His Royal Highness DASHO JIGME KHEGAR NAMGYAL WANGCHUCK
the Crown Prince of Bhutan, Royal Patron of RSPN

Royal Society for the Protection of Nature (RSPN) Post Box 0325 Thimphu, Kingdom of Bhutan
Telephone: +975-2-322056 / 326130 Fax: +975-2-323189 Email: rsn@druknet.net.bt



5th August, 2013

Statement by Her Majesty Gyaltsuen Jetsun Pema Wangchuck
Queen of Bhutan

The Kingdom of Bhutan has inherited pristine ecosystems and natural resources. We must, as individuals, personally strive to preserve this endowment through our own sustainable actions. It is our responsibility to ensure that this rich biodiversity abounds for generations to come. I join the RSPN in its efforts of environmental conservation, which remains a pressing concern of our time, and encourage every citizen to embrace the path to a greener future.

Her Majesty Gyaltsuen Jetsun Pema Wangchuck
Queen of Bhutan

Patron of Royal Society for Protection of Nature

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White-bellied Heron Conservation Center, Chachey Dovan, Tsirang, Bhutan

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON



Greetings from RSPN!

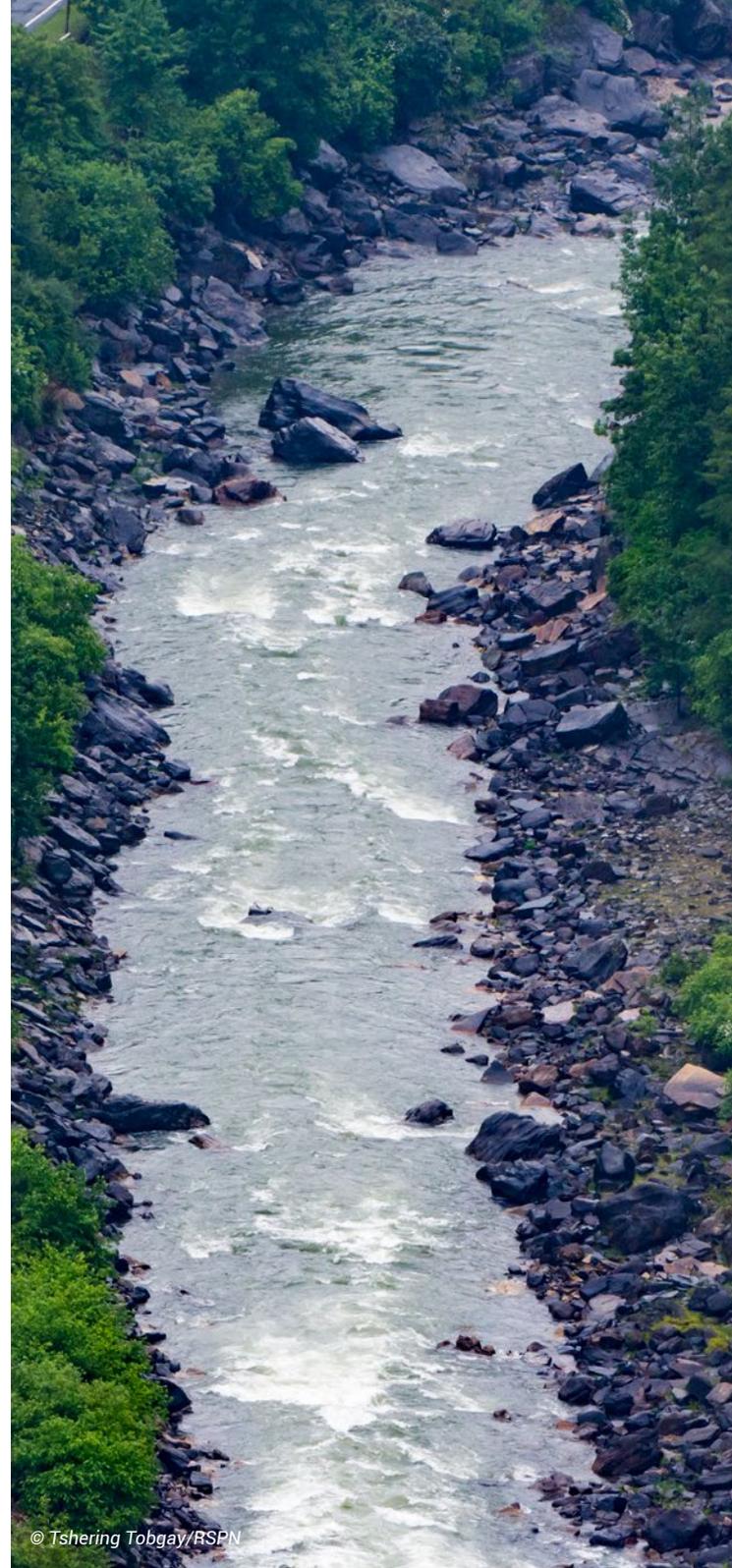
2021 started with lockdown and our employees working from home. The COVID 19 pandemic forced us to take uncharted paths and invent working methods beyond the call of duty. His Majesty The King's peerless leadership and commitment to keep everyone safe ensured Bhutan to continue to enjoy peace and safety despite the trying times. Drawing inspiration from the Throne, the RSPN staffs' efforts in the field of conservation have been commendable. The 34 years of commitment in protecting nature, with special emphasis on conserving endangered species and its habitat has been the hallmark of RSPN. This has further complemented the Royal Government of Bhutan's efforts in the conservation of our Kingdom's pristine environment.

Although the Covid-19 pandemic posed significant challenges, 2021 was a successful year for RSPN. One of the significant achievements was the commencement of a five-year project '*Developing Ecosystem-based Solutions for Managing Biodiversity Landscapes in Bhutan*', which aims to establish approaches and tools for protecting and managing habitats for the White-bellied Heron (WBH). The establishment of the WBH Conservation Center in Tsirang Dzongkhag and nurturing Crane Karma and Pema at Gangtey-Phobjikha in an aviary showcases the significant strides made in conservation by RSPN, this year. I am confident these interventions will value add on the existing efforts of the organization in the conservation of White-bellied Heron and the Black-necked Crane.

These and many other conservation accomplishments can be directly attributed to the invaluable support and recognition showered on us by our dedicated friends and supporters, both national and international. I conclude by commending the unwavering dedication of the RSPN staff, led by the Executive Director. Wishing everyone a happy, prosperous and peaceful year!

Tashi Delek!

(Phub Dorji)



WHO WE ARE?

RSPN was established in 1987 under the Royal Command of His Majesty The Fourth King of Bhutan as a citizen based Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) devoted to the conservation of the Kingdom's environment.

His Majesty The King was the Royal Patron of RSPN from 1999 to 2012. Her Majesty The Queen of Bhutan is the Royal Patron. RSPN is managed by a seven-Board Directors, the Executive Director is the head of the organization.

VISION



To be the Leader in conservation ensuring future generations of Bhutan live in an Environmentally Sustainable Society.

MISSION



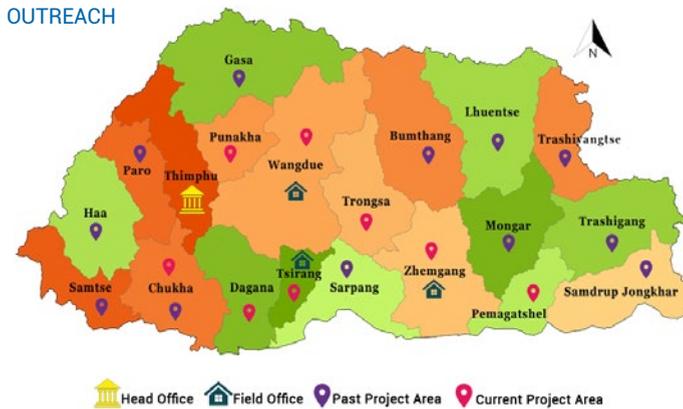
To inspire personal responsibility and active involvement of people of Bhutan in the conservation of the Kingdom's environment through, Education, Community Engagement and Sustainable Livelihood Opportunities.

CORE VALUES



- Promote innovative technologies and methods;
- Be proactive towards environmental issues;
- Be accountable and transparent;
- Be efficient and effective in delivering programs and services.

OUTREACH



WHAT WE DO?



RSPN'S CONSERVATION MANDALA

The mandala represents our systemic approach and efforts, geared to implement sustainable solutions to emerging environmental challenges through, innovation, citizen engagement, education, and empowerment.

Using this approach, it affirms our belief and commitment to addressing the global issues which are interdependent in nature to support our goal of an 'Environmentally Sustainable Society'.

HIGHLIGHTS 2021


SPECIES AND HABITAT

RSPN's species conservation program focuses on conservation and protection of highly threatened species for which there is only a short window of opportunity to make a difference. While Critically Endangered White-bellied Heron and Near Threatened Black-necked Crane are current targets, RSPN in collaboration with Department of Forests and Park Services (DoFPS) supports conservation of charismatic species such as Red Panda, Himalayan Musk Deer, Wild Dog (Dhol) and Asiatic Elephant.

RSPN as a Birdlife partner also works at grassroot level on conservation of Important Bird Areas, Key Biodiversity Areas, wetlands, riverscapes and High Conservation Values (HCVs) outside protected area networks in partnership with local communities integrating scientific data with applied habitat and species management practices to conserve, protect or restore key habitats and populations.



22 White-bellied Herons **counted** in Bhutan during the annual White-bellied Heron population survey.



3 White-bellied Heron active **nests** found in Bhutan in 2021.



8 White-bellied Heron **chicks fledged** in 2021 in Bhutan.



22 Local Conservation Support Groups (LCSGs) and **27** Forest Rangers **engaged** in monitoring White-bellied Heron and its habitats across the country.



White-bellied Heron Conservation Center **operational**: First captive population of WBH established with a **pair of chicks lifted** from the wild nest.



'Developing Ecosystem-based Solutions for Managing Biodiversity Landscapes in Bhutan', a project focusing conservation of White-bellied Heron landscapes **commissioned**.



552 Black-necked Cranes **wintered** in Bhutan (2020 - 2021).



White-bellied Heron newly sighted in Jigmechhu, Chhukha District



Crane Karma and Pema in the aviary, Gangtey-Phobjikha, WangduePhodrang



Installing flight diverters in Chumey, Bumthang District



10 acres of degraded land **restored** in Bumdeling for Black-necked Crane conservation.



4 species **supported** by RSPN: Red Panda, Himalayan Musk Deer, Wild Dog (Dhol), and Asiatic Elephant.



White-bellied Heron newly **sighted** in Wangchhu and Jigmechhu, Chhukha District.



Flight diverters **installed** on a 33 KB power lines in Black-necked Crane habitat of **Chumey**, Bumthang District.



Study on Black-necked Crane dietary composition and BNC habitat assessment & management **completed**.



The annual Black-necked Crane **roost maintenance** at Chumey and Gangtey-Phobjikha **conducted**.



Black-necked Crane Conservation Action Plan **developed**.



DEVELOPING ECOSYSTEM-BASED SOLUTIONS FOR MANAGING BIODIVERSITY LANDSCAPES IN BHUTAN

RSPN kick started the implementation of a new ecosystem-based project to strengthen the conservation efforts of the Critically Endangered White-bellied Heron (WBH) and enhance community resilience to climate change. The project is funded by Federal Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU), Germany through International Climate Initiative (IKI). The project aims to develop ecosystem-based solutions for managing biodiversity landscapes, with a special focus on establishing approaches and tools for protecting and managing WBH habitats along Punatsangchhu and Mangdechhu basins in Bhutan. The project will introduce the Ecosystem and Socio-economic Resilience Analysis and Mapping (ESRAM) approach for biodiversity conservation and management in Bhutan. ESRAM is an integrated planning tool which focuses on analyzing and mapping resilience linked to ecosystem and socio-economic systems taking into account existing trends and climate impacts.

In addition, the project will document new knowledge and approaches on management of natural resources, ecosystem services and climate resilient livelihood options resulting in improvement of biodiversity management and enhancement of livelihoods of the communities living in WBH areas. Further, new knowledge and experiences on management of natural resources, ecosystem services, eco-tourism, and climate resilient livelihood options resulting in improving biodiversity management and livelihood enhancement of the communities living in WBH areas will be documented and shared. The project also focuses on supporting alternative economic and employment opportunities, to strengthen community support for WBH conservation activities, through a community incentive-based and participatory approach to project planning and implementation. The project contributes to achieving the long-term goals of climate mitigation and adaptation actions through conservation, sustainable use of biodiversity ensuring co-benefits from sustainable development, social and environmental safeguards in Bhutan.



IMPACT(S)

WBH population stable or increasing in Bhutan and other Himalayan countries through ecosystem-based conservation measures.



OUTCOME

Effective adaptive ecosystem solutions for WBH conservation in Bhutan (and other Himalayan countries) created through habitat restoration and livelihoods enhancement.



OUTPUTS



OUTPUT I: Ecosystem-based biodiversity survey and community engagement strategies for WBH conservation based on ESRAM approach, designed and applied.



OUTPUT II: Degraded and new potential WBH habitats rehabilitated and created (feeding, roosting and nesting).



OUTPUT III: Capacity of all stakeholders on planning and implementation of ESRAM study, ecosystem-based adaptation and livelihood options strengthened.



OUTPUT IV: Ecosystem-based adaptation livelihood options in the WBH habitat areas, applied and established.



OUTPUT V: Knowledge base on ecosystem-based biodiversity conservation, WBH habitat & population and climate adaptation, established and disseminated.



SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS

Agriculture plays a central role in the lives of the rural communities in Bhutan. The Issues associated with agriculture have diverse linkages, which entails integrated intervention, and the general trend is that agriculture is isolated from environment conservation, which eventually affects the livelihoods and sustainability of agriculture due to factors like climate change, water shortages, and wildlife crop damages and livestock loss. Therefore, enhancing agriculture needs a shift in the approach we take in tackling agriculture issues.

In this light, the project on increasing climate resilience agroecological farming is implemented in Bardo Gewog in Zhemgang District through Canada Fund for Local Initiative (CFLI).



Agriculture



Piggery



Fishery

100+

Households of Bardo Gewog under Zhemgang District to **benefit** through strengthening community resilience to **climate change** and contribute to pandemic recovery by promoting environmentally, socially, and ecologically sound agriculture (On-going).



Gewog and community **consultation meetings** successfully completed to disseminate up-to-date project information.



Rapid watershed assessment completed in **two chiwogs** of Bardo gewog in collaboration with Zhemgang Forest Division Office.



Water sources **mapped** and **identified** in the two chiwogs for conservation intervention.



WETLANDS AND FRESHWATER

Bhutan has a tremendous amount of inland freshwater resources including glaciers, lakes, high altitude wetlands, rivers, streams, and springs across the country; however, deteriorating watersheds, water sources, and quality were some of the emerging issues popping up across the country.

This issue is further exacerbated by increasing pressures on the watershed caused generally by rising demands and competition from various users. Concern over the availability of water for drinking and agriculture is growing as many spring water sources are drying up from a loss of forest cover and watersheds due to fast depletion of forests in the upstream by increasing population, effluents from mining activity, construction of farm roads, soil erosions, landslides, and flash floods.

To mitigate the challenges, the project on *'Improving wetland and agriculture lands through integrated community-based conservation approaches'* in Dechheling Gewog under Pemagatshel District is implemented with fund support from GEF-Small Grants Programme, UNDP Bhutan.



Conducted monthly water discharge measurement to assess the impacts of water collection trenches.



The community group **constructed** educational **walking trail** with an approximate distance of 5 kilometers with 3 resting benches around the Peling-Tsho.

120

Households of Dechheling Gewog to be **benefitted** by the end of the project through **establishing** community-based land and water conservation and management system.



Peling Tsho (Lake) conservation group **created** with proper functioning guidelines in place.



Socio-economic and avian diversity assessment **completed** and report **compiled**.



Biodiversity survey successfully **completed** in collaboration with Pemagatshel Forest Division Office.



Water collection trenches **installed** by the Community Group.

PROJECT PROFILE 2021

Sl. No	Project Title	Donor	Approved Grant (Nu.)
01.	Enhancing increase climate resilient through gender responsive agro-ecological farming, provision of agricultural tools and developing marketing linkages.	Canadian Foundation - Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI)	1,918,127.83
02.	Improving Peling tsho and agriculture through community-based conservation approaches in Dechheling, Nganglam.	SGP/GEF- UNDP	1,406,019.81
03.	Solving extreme water shortage at Zamza village and basic sanitation facilities at Phasuma village, Chhukha.	Christopher Hunt Jebba, USA	1,851,750.00
04.	WBH Conservation Center Operational fund - Endowment fund	MAVA Foundation	6,375,000.00
05.	Upscaling WBH recovery plan - Phase - II	Bhutan Trust Fund for Environmental Conservation	2,374,264.00
06.	WBH Conservation & Breeding Program	Synchronicity Earth	1,231,340.00
07.	WBH-Conservation & Breeding Program (Purchase of Vehicle)	Synchronicity Earth	2,262,217.00
08.	Building Capacity and enhancing WBH Recovery plan	Jonathan Charles Eames (OBE) and Dinh Hoa	2,166,943.68
09.	WBH - Satellite tagging	Jonathan Charles Eames (OBE)	1,062,345.00
10.	WBH Conservation	Zlin Zoo	874,209.48
11.	WBH Conservation	Keidanren Nature Conservation Fund (KNCF)	2,317,724.95
12.	Black-necked Crane Conservation Project - Phase V	KRUUP/ICF	1,613,784.00
13.	Black-necked Crane Conservation -Phase - V	Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union (NABU)	882,639.56
14.	Research & Conservation of Black-necked Crane	NABU/BMU	442,000.00
15.	Black-necked Crane Enclosure Extension	International Crane Foundation (ICF)	1,505,394.72
16.	Developing Ecosystem-based Solutions for Managing Biodiversity Landscapes in Bhutan	BMU/IKI	16,679,805.00
17.	Saving the endangered alpine musk deer from local extinction in western Bhutan	Whitley fund for Nature	3,540,319.57
18.	Conservation of Red Panda	Red Panda Network	1,618,249.60
19.	Understanding Carnivore Community Ecology to reduce Dhol Prediction to Livestock in Bhutan	Segre Fondation	2,428,440.00
20.	WBH Information Center Construction, Changchey	Punatsangchhu Hydroelectric Project Authority-II	2,323,436.82
21.	Citadels of Conservation	Bhutan Foundation	134,820.00
Grand Total			55,008,831.02

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Receipt

Operational Funds Nu. 12,504,775.28

Interest return-Investment Nu. 10,000,000.00

Project Funds Nu. 59,818,069.60

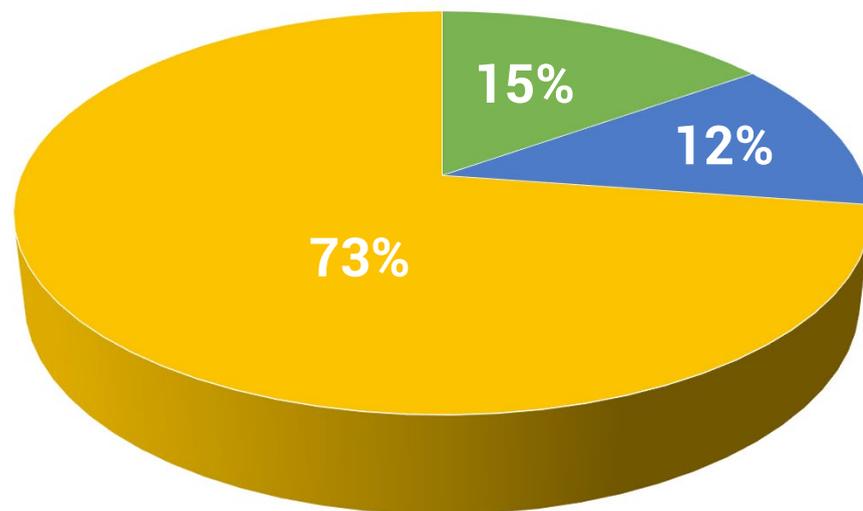
Total Receipt Nu. 82,322,844.88

Payment

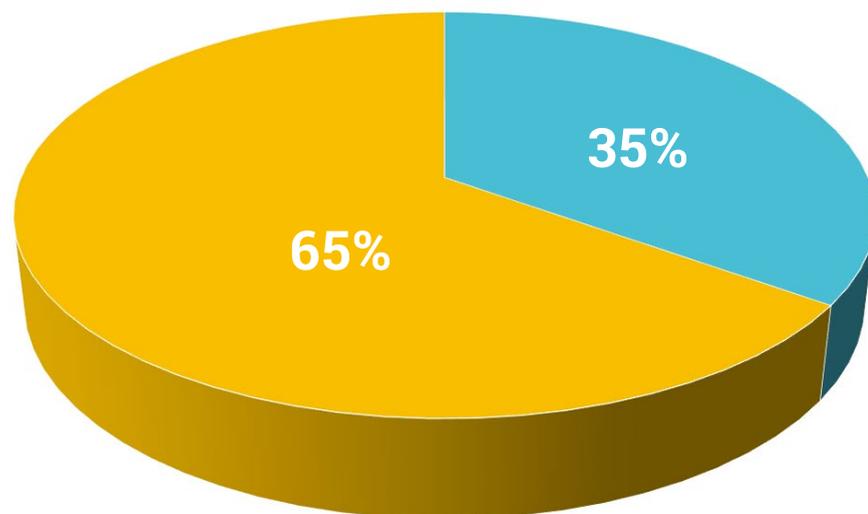
Operational Expenses Nu. 29,543,264.04

Project Expenses Nu. 55,135,590.94

Total Payment Nu. 84,678,854.98



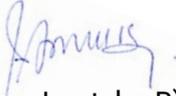
● Operational Funds ● Interest return-Investment ● Project Funds



● Operational Expenses ● Project Expenses

ROYAL SOCIETY FOR PROTECTION OF NATURE
UN-AUDITED RECEIPT AND PAYMENT STATEMENT
 from 1st January to 31st December, 2021

RECEIPT	Schedule	Amount (Nu.)	Amount (USD)	PAYMENT	Schedule	Amount (Nu.)	Amount (USD)
1. Opening Balances:				1. Expenditure:			
Cash-in-Hand		1,841.94	59.50	a. Operational Expenses	3	29,543,264.04	
Cash at Bank - OPERATION		7,734,391.58	120,527.22	b. Project Expenses	4	55,135,590.94	
Cash at Bank - BNCVC		2,516,473.00	-	2. Recoveries & Remittances:			
Cash at Bank - REDD+ Project		31,293.14	-	Recoveries & Remittances	5	10,196.66	
Cash at Bank - Organic Denmark		1,586.88	-	3. Advance & Adjustment:	6		
				a. Advance to Employees		412,841.01	
				b. Advance to Party		1,315,156.84	
				c. Fuel Deposit Advance		488.35	
2. Revenue:				Closing Balances:			
a. Operational Funds	1	12,504,775.28		Cash-in-Hand		42.94	59.50
b. Interest return - Investment		10,000,000.00		Cash at Bank - OPERATION		1,922,512.09	161,745.22
c. Project Funds	2	56,767,937.60	41,218.00	Cash at Bank- BNCVC		1,216,473.00	-
				Cash at Bank- IKI Project		1,733.55	
Total		89,558,299.42	161,804.72	Total		89,558,299.42	161,804.72


 (Sonam Jamtsho B)
 Chief, Finance & Investment Division


 (Kinley Tenzin, Ph.D.)
 Executive Director

DONORS AND PARTNERS

Donors



Partners



OUR PHILANTHROPISTS



Dr. George Archibald
Co-Founder, ICF, USA



Dinh Thi Hoa
Vietnam



Jonathan Charles Eames, OBE, UK



Anis Abadi
Germany



Dr. Pamela Anne Isdell, Australia



Francois & Sheila Brutsch, USA

Christopher Hunt Jebba, USA

Barbarra Green
Australia

Heather Henson
USA

We also acknowledge our **Institutional Members** for their support:

01. All Bhutan Connect Pvt. Ltd.
02. Amen Bhutan Tours & Treks
03. Athang Private Limited
04. Bank of Bhutan Ltd.
05. Bhutan Agro Industries Ltd.
06. Bhutan Development Bank Ltd.
07. Bhutan Birding & Heritage Travels
08. Bhutan Eco Lodges
09. Bhutan for Life
10. Bhutan Power Corporation Ltd.
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12. Druk Green Power Corporation Ltd.
13. Druk Wang Alloys Ltd.
14. Firefox Tours
15. My Bhutan
16. Natural Resources Development Corporation Ltd.
17. Norbu Bhutan Travel Pvt. Ltd.
18. Royal Insurance Corporation of Bhutan Ltd.
19. Royal Thimphu College

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



As the year 2021 marked the completion of the 34 years of the Royal Society for Protection of Nature's existence, it gives me immense pleasure to bring forth RSPN's Annual Report 2021 highlighting the major achievements for the year. Despite several challenges faced due to the COVID 19 pandemic, RSPN has continued working

and has made considerable accomplishments in the national and international conservation fronts. This is mainly attributed to the blessings and inspiration from the Royal Patron and the consistent trust and stewardship provided by the board members, friends and donors across the globe. The year has seen us succeeded in leveraging numerous conservation efforts particularly in the field of species conservation.

It is a great moment of contentment to inform that RSPN has been able to establish the White-Bellied Heron (WBH) Conservation Center, the first of its kind in the world. The Center is fully operational and the works on ex-situ program has started.

This year, RSPN is also successful in mobilizing several donors and philanthropic supported projects that are highlighted in this report. On another positive note, our Black-necked Crane Karma is joined by Crane Pema at the Black necked Crane Education Center in Gangtey-Phobjikha. Guided by our vision and mission, we are as committed as ever in educating and engaging communities to enhance the livelihood opportunities at large while conserving the Kingdom's environment.

We thank you and look forward to working together towards achieving yet another fulfilling year ahead!

Tashi Delek!

(Kinley Tenzin, Ph.D)

CONTACT US

HEAD OFFICE

P.O. Box: 325,
Building No.: 25
Lhado Lam, Kawajangsa
Thimphu 11001, Bhutan
Tele: +975 2 322056/326130
Fax: +975 2 323189

BLACK-NECKED CRANE EDUCATION CENTER

Gangtey - Phobjikha
Wangdue Phodrang 14001, Bhutan
Tele: +975 17767330 (Officer In-Charge)

WHITE-BELLIED HERON CONSERVATION CENTER

Chachey Dovan
Tsirang 36001, Bhutan
Tele: +975 17523744 (Officer In-Charge)

PROJECT OFFICE, ZHEMGANG

Zhemgang 34001, Bhutan
Tele: +975 17493732 (Officer In-Charge)

CONTACT US VIA

Email: rspn@rspnbhutan.org
Web: www.rspnbhutan.org



Black-necked Crane Rescue and Rehab Facility, Gangtey-Phobji valley

www.rspnbhutan.org

