

# Royal Society for Protection of Nature

## ANNUAL REPORT

July 2006 - June 2007



# RSPN



*Inspiring personal responsibility in  
Environmental Conservation*

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 challenges 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 Majesty the King  
Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck**

*(On the occasion of assuming the patronage of RSPN in 1999)*

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## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

I have the pleasure in reporting that the fiscal year 2006-2007 has been fruitful and progressive to RSPN. While we endeavor to bring out the Annual Reports soon after the completion of the fiscal year, awaiting the audited statements has caused this delay. We also make it a point to publish the annual audited accounts. In this report, we have presented our report under four program areas of 1) Research and Conservation program 2) Environment for Sustainability program, 3) Conservation and Development Program, and 4) Institutional Development Program.

RSPN's continued work in the research and conservation of the critically endangered White bellied herons provided added knowledge on the status of the species in Bhutan and served to garner public support for the protection of the species. Surveys and research findings have established that an estimated 20 individuals of the species roost and feed along the Puna Tsangchhu river. Further, with the help of its members, RSPN was successful in advocating for the discontinuation of stone and sand quarry along the Phochhu River, a prime feeding area of the White-bellied herons. The joint investigation reports submitted to through the National Environment Commission was positively responded to by the Royal government. RSPN hopes to work closely with the National Environment Commission and the Department of Forest towards carrying out the directives of the Royal Government to 1) declare the Phochhu as the protected habitat of the White belied herons and 2) to enlist the white bellied heron under protected species list of the Forest and Nature Conservation Act. Scientific research on the study of habitat and migratory route of the Black necked cranes also progressed. While some habitats in Bumthang are reported to be degrading, Bhutan continues to be an attractive winter habitat with a total of 462 Black necked cranes in the winter of 2006-2007.

Under Environmental Education (EE) program, the nature clubs network continues to expand and efforts are underway to institutionalize nature clubs in schools. Meanwhile, the EE component of the four year Wang Watershed Management Program concluded. The Watershed Action Through Education and Research (WATER) module developed during the project was tested in

several participating schools by the curriculum division. The Education Ministry found the module appropriate for integration in the national school curriculum. RSPN also continued its work in the religious sector to impart environmental education and train monastic institutions in basic flower gardening skills. Education workshops were conducted for monastic's institutions in eastern and southern Bhutan.

The conservation and development program continues to assist the community of Phobjikha in establishing the area's natural beauty and pristine environment as the foundation for its long term economic welfare. RSPN has continuously endeavored to strengthen the management of Phobjikha with the support of the Royal Government especially the Forest Department. For this, pure conservation efforts such as biodiversity surveys, research, and environmental education have enabled increased environmental information and awareness about the areas. Further, sustainable livelihoods programs such as health and environment project, pilot organic farming, alternative energy, and ecotourism continue to explore program approaches that strengthen community involvement in environmentally friendly livelihood practices.

As an institution, RSPN has grown manifold with increased staff capacity that has resulted in extended cooperation and support from the public, partners, international organizations, funding agencies and the Royal Government. The Financial Support from the Bhutan Trust Fund for Environmental Conservation (BT FEC) and required matching grants received from The Philanthropic Collaborative, the Swiss Development Corporation, the Government of Finland, and many individuals that I am unable to list here have made it possible for RSPN to establish its one million dollar endowment fund. This one million dollar is currently being invested with the BT-FEC investments and generating annual interests that are being allocated by the Board of Directors for RSPN's operational costs. We thank our donors, supporters, RGoB, members and other individuals for their support and we look forward to their continued support.

**Dr. Lam Dorji,**  
Executive Director

As we prepare ourselves to shoulder the responsibilities associated with our Monarchy's gift of parliamentary democracy, RSPN is committed to preparing generations of individual voters that will promote environment conservation as one of the foundations of sustainable development and Gross National Happiness in Bhutan.



## Programs - making a difference

RSPN's programs are designed and updated to meet the challenges of changing times and contexts. Existing programs are implemented on the basis of five year strategic plan, a living document that is revised every five years.



## INTRODUCTION

RSPN was founded in 1987 by DASHO PALJOR J. DORJI. With the initial purpose to monitor the endangered Black Necked Cranes, RSPN's institutional growth has resulted in widely diversified conservation programs. The organization now engages extensively in promoting sustainable livelihoods, ecosystem and endangered species conservation, environmental education and advocacy. RSPN also maintains flexibility in responding to emerging environmental issues in Bhutan.

Being a pioneer environmental NGO in the country, RSPN is preparing to position itself to meet the challenges of upcoming political changes. RSPN has now the added responsibility to act as an environmental watchdog. For this, it looks forward to active participation and engagement of its members and Bhutanese citizens in the conservation and protection of environment.

"To inspire personal responsibility and actively involve the people of Bhutan in the conservation of the Kingdom's environment through education, applied research and information dissemination, in collaboration with concerned agencies and indigenous institutions."

### Program Goals

RSPN programs are formulated through a five year strategic plan. The program goals are:

1. Conserve endangered species outside the protected area system.
2. Develop ecosystem based approaches to management in areas outside the protected areas system.
3. Support management of emerging urban environmental issues.
4. Enhance institutional capacity for environmental education, ecological research, and community-based natural resource management.



## Research and Conservation

Conserving biological diversity is essential to survival and sustainability of life on earth. Genetic, species and ecosystem diversity and integrity are constantly undergoing threats of degradation and extinction due to human exploitation for economic benefits. The ever plundering nature of humans has undermined the ability of ecosystem to function naturally and has led species to extinction. Realizing the need to channelize efforts in this direction, RSPN has engaged itself in the protection of two of the globally threatened bird species, viz. the Black-necked Cranes and the White-bellied Herons. These two of the threatened birds are flagship species for conservation efforts for birds in Bhutan.

## White-bellied Heron

The White-bellied Heron (WBH) is an endangered species. In 2007, owing to its limited number, the IUCN designated it as critically threatened species. The WBH mostly dwell in southeast Asia region. However, only singular number has been recorded or witnessed in these countries. Bhutan presumably holds the largest number of White bellied herons concentrated mostly in along the Punatshgchhu basin in western Bhutan. At least 20 of them has been estimated in Bhutan.

RSPN took the initiative to study the WBHs in 2003 after the historic sighting of the first heron nest in Zawa. The last record of WBH nest sighting is reported to have been in in 1929 in Myanmar . Since then, numerous conservation parameters like population surveys, socio-economic surveys and biodiversity surveys have been conducted. RSPN fielded a person in the project to monitor the life cycle of the WBHs during their nesting period since 2003. RSPN is proud to be one the few organizations worldwide to pioneer conservation of WBHs.

The year saw significant progress in the conservation of the WBHs in Bhutan. Following an advocacy and public support for protection of WBH habitat, the Royal Government instructed the National Environment Commission and the Nature Conservation Division, Department of Forest to work towards: 1) enlisting WBHs under the Schedule I of

## Research and Conservation

## White-bellied Heron

protected avian species under the Forest and Nature conservation Act in Bhutan, 2) delineation of prime feeding and habitat areas along the Phochu (in Punakha) for consideration to be declared as protected habitat of the WBHs. Although, the population and monitoring survey was extended to cover the eastern Bhutan, not a single heron was sighted in the region.

This establishes the Punatsangchu and its tributaries as the most popular habitats of the WBHs. There is the need to enhance the protection of Punatshagchhu basin for WBH conservation.

The annual monitoring in the herons habitats has revealed an extraordinary finding. This year alone, three nests were discovered in Nangshinang, Basochhu and Hararongchhu which are along the tributaries and mainstream of Punatshangchhu in Wangdiphodrang. An old nest was also discovered in Hararongchhu. Sadly, the new nest in Haraongchhu was destroyed by the forest fire which claimed a large part of the forest cover in the region. In

Zawa, the nest was attacked by predators. Two eggs were observed in the nest prior to the attack.

Table 1: Count of WBH observed until June 2007

Habitat	2007 Population
Zawa	2
Tshekathang	6
Harangrongchu	2
Punatsangchu	2
Burichu	1
Kamichu	1
Berti Chu	4
Ada	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>



Photo: Yeshey Dorji

For the last two years, RSPN, with cooperation and support from the Department of Forest, has embarked on the study of migratory habits of the WBHs. The use of satellite telemetry is crucial to the study of the WBH migration patterns. Methods to safely capture WBHs and mount the Platform Telemetry Transmitter (PTT) were tried under expert guidance of Professor Peter Frederick from University of Florida. The research team was trained on procedures for mounting satellite telemetry.

In December 2006, with the help of Professor Peter Frederic from University of Florida, the method using mist net to capture the WBH was tested. The method was used taking into account the successful attempts on other heron species and Cranes. Although lessons and experiences in PTT banding of other heron species were shared, the elusive and sensitive nature of WBH, the rare and solitary sightings, and the cautious approach in a limited time period made the PTT banding impossible. The exercise is expected to develop a modified method of capturing WBH. For this, RSPN plans to continue work with the Department of Forest and experts in the coming year.

As a part of the awareness building and to sensitize the local communities, scientific community and the general public on the importance of WBHs, RSPN's visual documentation of the WBH nesting and observations were finally utilized to produce a 15 minute documentary video, which fills in the missing visual information on the species.

The project is being implemented under financial support from the US based Felburn Foundation and facilitated by International Crane Foundation, Wisconsin USA.



## Black-necked Crane



The Black-necked Cranes (BNCs) are the last of crane species to be discovered. From an estimated global population of 6000 BNCs, about 500 of them migrate to Bhutan every winter. BNCs have been a pioneering beneficiary of RSPN's work in environmental conservation. RSPN's efforts in crane conservation has been consistent since its establishment. Although, the initial efforts to conserve BNCs were limited to mere annual counts and monitoring, recent efforts include advanced and integrated approach to the conservation of the species and their habitat.

With financial support from MacArthur Foundation and technical assistance of JICA, RSPN initiated the use of satellite telemetry to study the migration patterns of BNCs. In the winter of 2006, RSPN invited Dr. Kunikazu Momose under JICA assistance to carry out and simultaneously train RSPN staff in capturing BNCs and mounting of Platform Telemetry Transmitter (PTT). Three cranes were captured and mounted with PTT. They were first located in lake Bamtsho located some miles north of Phari, an ancient trading centre in Tibetan Autonomous Region of China. Under MacArthur Foundation's project support, RSPN is using the Argos Satellite System to receive detailed whereabouts of the banded cranes. This year, two of the PTT mounted cranes returned to Phobjikha. A similar exercise carried out in Bumdeling in 1998 revealed Bumdeling-Shanza-Xigatse migrational routes. Such information are vital for transboundary biodiversity conservation.

As an ongoing research activity, initiated with financial support from MacArthur Foundation and technical assistant from ICF (International Crane Foundation), study on the crane habitat has been carried out. The study will serve as a basis for continuing long term research on interaction between human land use and habitat use by the cranes in the valley. It is expected that the result of the study would also serve as a basis for zoning the crane habitat/the critical wetland area.

The annual BNC census was carried out as usual. It has revealed a decrease in the annual count. In Bumdeling, the flash floods of the Kulong chhu have displaced the roosting areas despite the rehabilitation program

by the park staff. In areas like Bumthang, increasing development activities are limiting the feeding grounds to Uruk and Gyetsa (Chumey) and Thangbi. Even in these places, increased road accessibility and developmental activities may further constrain the already limited habitat.

Table 2: Black necked crane population for winter of 2006-2007

Winter of:	Khotokha	Phobjikha	Bumdeling	Bumthang	Lhuntse	Total
1990-1991	10	111	152	12		285
1991-1992	6	102	139	8		255
1992-1993	16	175	175	8		374
1993-1994	7	195	203	0		405
1994-1995	16	208	177	23		424
1995-1996	13	212	144	16		385
1996-1997	7	223	136	14		380
1997-1998	8	219	181	15		423
1998-1999	7	240	146	18		411
1999-2000	6	244	155	10		415
2000-2001	4	248	151	6		409
2001-2002	4	262	169	7		442
2002-2003	8	269	155	9		443
2003-2004	6	270	150	5		431
2004-2005	4	352	149	12		517
2005-2006	7	353	141	9		510
2006-2007	7	317	123	12	3	462

**Increase in Crane Population in Phobjikha Conservation Area**

The annual population of Black-necked Cranes in Phobjikha, with some minor fluctuation in certain years, has increased by nearly three-fold from 120 in the winter of 1986/87 to 317 in the winter of 2006/07. Peak years were recent – 2004/05 and 2005/06 – when annual counts recorded 352 and 353 cranes respectively (Tabel:2).

The increase in the population of Black-necked Cranes in Phobjikha can be to some extent attributed to deterioration of other habitats as a result of increased human activities. On the other hand, increasing number of cranes in Phobjikha is an indication of healthy and intact habitat for the cranes in the valley. The conservation credit goes to the local communities who have borne the cost of conservation in the valley and various other conservation partners and donors who have contributed to the conservation of the cranes

and biodiversity in the valley.

**Biodiversity survey, Ada**

As an initiative to manage Phobjikha at the landscape level, Ada in the southern part of Phobjikha was included as a part of Phobjikha conservation area. In order to plan appropriate interventions specific to Ada and to develop comprehensive database for future use, biodiversity survey was carried out in October 2006.

Total 12 transect plots were surveyed. During the survey, 241 individual trees were measured in terms of diameter, height and 28 tree species were identified. Over 30 species of seedlings were recorded. Within the surveyed plots, Quercus griffithii dominated the seedling coverage on ground. Numerous other shrubs/herbs were also encountered during the survey. Among others, 36 numbers of birds were also recorded during the survey

**Enhancement of Phobjikha Conservation Area**

In an effort to enhance the management of Phobjikha as conservation area, preliminary ground-truthing was carried to help delineate the boundary for Phobjikha conservation area. The demarcation was carried out jointly with the government stakeholders like the Wangdue Forest Division and in consultations with local communities. Based on the survey, a report was produced to guide the finalization of the boundary.



Preliminary boundary for PLCA

Through dialogue and consultations, a common understanding was reached with the concerned authorities like the Nature Conservation Division and Jigme Singye Wangchuck National Park (which shares the southern boundary of Phobjikha conservation area) on the area boundary. Collaborative physical ground-truthing of the area was recommended by the authorities. Such effort towards enhancement of Phobjikha conservation area has been consistently supported by MacArthur Foundation, USA for the last six years.

## Education for Sustainability

The program is one of the main components of RSPN conservation efforts. Through various educational programs, RSPN seeks to enhance the environmental awareness and attitude of the Bhutanese society, and promote actions for improved environmental conditions at the local level.

With the support of the Department of Education, RSPN primarily works with schools and institutions to support and expand nature club network, and train teacher coordinators in managing their local environment. Further, the program also advocates policy changes such as integration of Environmental Education into the formal and non-formal curriculum through various programs.

RSPN believes in the importance of community involvement to achieve wholesome environmental awareness. In this regard there has been number of projects where communities were involved in the implementation of project activities either directly or indirectly.



## School Based Nature Club Network

School based nature club network was initiated by RSPN in 1987. Nature club activities complement the conservation efforts of Bhutan. It provides varieties to school activities and adds values to their curricular learning. Further, it enables both teachers and students to find new models and approaches from which to build while retaining continuity with existing good practices. It also enables them to investigate local issues in depth and generate information and data that can be used to make positive changes in the locality. Thus enabling them to learn themselves and develop strong values and attitudes on social and environmental concerns. Nature club activities also enable schools to involve students in meaningful and socially useful activities and enhance the esteem of students and teachers.

The initiative of this network of nature clubs has been especially successful at grass roots level, contributing to increased environmental awareness and more sustainable lifestyles in schools and their immediate environs. It has been generally recognized that environmental education has to be maintained in schools to generate awareness among the future youths. Some of the outcomes of the nature club activities in schools are:

- greener school environment.
- eco-friendly waste management systems.
- cleaner school surrounding.
- higher level of environmental awareness, understanding and positive attitude among students.
- students equipped with skills in planning, implementing and advocating environmental concerns to wider audience.
- school and community have capacity to develop their own initiatives/ actions for the local environmental problems/challenges.

RSPN has 102 affiliated nature clubs spread across the country and still receives lots of requests from schools for affiliation. The Ministry of Education endorsed and ensured support to RSPN's plan to expand nature clubs program in all schools and at the same time institutionalize the nature club activity in order to sustain environmental education in the school. Institutionalization in this context means making nature clubs a regular part of school activity through out the country. RSPN's role then would be to equip schools with appropriate materials and provide capacity development for teachers.

Keidanren Nature Conservation Fund (KNCF), Japan has been long time supporter to this program.

## Watershed Education

With the financial support from the European Commission (EC), the Wang Watershed Management Project, of Ministry of Agriculture, offered the watershed education component of the project to RSPN. Since 2002, RSPN in close collaboration with Ministry of Education conducted the watershed education in both the formal and non-formal education.

### WATERSHED EDUCATION IN FORMAL EDUCATION

RSPN in collaboration with Ministry of Education have piloted an education program that involves students in local community development and environmental care using an innovative learning approach based on action research. The program was focused on watershed management and has been termed as WATER (watershed action through education & research) program. The action research involves two steps:

- Step 1 – Broad assessment of the school's water catchment based on fieldwork, water quality tests and land use mapping in order to highlight some of the main environmental, social or economic issues that the school and community could agree to resolve together.
- Step 2 – Preparing and implementing a participatory action-research plan to investigate the main issue with the local community. When a fresh understanding of the issue's underlying causes and effects has been reached, solutions are generated and an action plan made with the community.

During the pilot phase, the program has been implemented as a co-curricular activity in eleven selected Middle and Higher Secondary schools in the Wang Watershed region of Paro, Thimphu, Haa and Chukha. The WATER program that was successfully piloted by RSPN and MoE has been acknowledged as useful for integration into science curriculum. For this, the MoE and RSPN agreed to undertake collaborative project over a period of three years under two different parts:

- Part 1: Expand WATER program to all MSS and HSS during the interim period.
- Part 2: Integrate the program into formal science curriculum at the time of science curriculum revision.

A very comprehensive manual containing both step 1 and 2 has been developed and used by the schools during the pilot phase.

The resulting achievements at the local level reveal the importance of linking learning to action. For example, Chapcha Middle Secondary School had conducted water test at the school's water source and found some level of contamination. The main issue at Chapcha was contamination of the stream due to presence of toilets along the stream. Because of the project, now the Gup had taken the responsibility and had delegated the responsibility to the community health worker to discuss with the community for the removal of the toilets that are affecting the stream. The gup had also imposed strict instructions for compliance.

Similarly, Lango Lower Secondary School in Paro researched that their drinking water was contaminated with faecal coli form from the toilets built over the stream above the point where the drinking water was being taken. This was reported to the Dzongkhag and a new clean water supply was found. When the WATER program was introduced the school began to work more closely with the local community. The Gup was very supportive and as a result of the fieldwork that highlighted the waste problem, a Stream Protection Committee comprising members of the local community was formed.

To deal with the waste in the stream in the market area, the committee proposed a waste container. With financial support from WWMP, a waste pit was built that would burn waste and at the same time can separate the recyclable waste. The waste pit is now being managed by the local community.

### WATERSHED PROGRAM IN NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

WATER program has also been introduced in the adult literacy of the non-formal education of Ministry of Education. The program was designed to develop the capacity of the local community in the management of their local watershed using action research methodology.

A manual "Community Watershed Management" has been developed and pilot tested in some of the adult literacy centers. The rural communities were expected to identify problems and develop locally appropriate solutions for managing water resources important for their health and livelihoods. Watershed education has also been successfully piloted in some adult literacy centers and has been acknowledge for expansion and to be integrated in some of the topics on water already existed in the curriculum. For this, the Department of Adult & Higher Education and RSPN agree to undertake collaborative project to expand the program to all adult literacy centers and as well build the capacity of the non-formal instructors.

## Environment Education for Monastic Institutions

With support from Finland Government, RSPN expanded its environmental education programs to involve the monastic body. The objective of the program was to involve monastic bodies to implement sustainable good environmental conducts in monasteries and nunneries through environmental education based on Buddhism. The program aims to:

- increase environmental awareness among the population of religious institutions
- convert this awareness into positive environmental action.
- foster environment friendly conducts by the monastic population
- improve the living environment in and around the monastic institutions
- promote the role of religion and monks in fostering conservation

In order to achieve the above targets, a series of training workshops were conducted for monks and nuns of various Dratshang, Shedras, Lobdras, Gomdays and nunneries covering all 20 Dzongkhags. The participants were imparted with knowledge on the environment, health, waste management and also trained them in gardening skills. Gardening tools and flower seeds were provided to institutions to improve beautify their environment.

The project was successful in a way that it brought number of changes in the monastic institutions. Waste pits were seen around and waste managed properly. Lots of trees were planted and flower gardens developed. Water sources were cleaned periodically and sanitation of the monks improved drastically.



## Sustainable Livelihoods

RSPN believes that to promote effective conservation efforts, it is necessary to have a realistic perception of people's livelihoods. Supporting development that are built on the strengths and aspirations of the local populace and creating avenues to improve their livelihoods are critical factors contributing towards sustainable livelihoods. Considering these, RSPN has wisely committed a bulk of its effort in this direction.



## Sustainable Tourism

In an effort to encourage environmentally viable tourism and also to help people benefit from conservation, RSPN has been promoting community based sustainable tourism (CBST) in Phobjikha since 2003 with assistance from UNESCO.

During the last few years, RSPN has helped set up basic ecotourism facilities like the Black-necked Crane information centre/visitor centre and nature trails etc and also trained local people in various aspects of tourism. RSPN also has been working with the communities to develop tourism products like handicrafts, information/marketing materials and service related activities like farm stay, home visit, cultural shows, horse riding, pack animal etc. The Black-necked Crane festival which has been organised for the last 7 years on 12th November forms an important part of the CBST program.

This year also the event attracted huge crowd of estimated 2000 people ranging from tourists, national visitors to local people. The local people witnessed the festival with great interest and joy which is extremely important for sustaining the festival in the long run. Apart from raising awareness on importance of cranes, it is one of the biggest local events for the community which brings together their friends and family.

Other recent developments (during this reporting period) focused on enhancement of Black-necked Crane Information centre with development of informative displays like the 3-D model of Phobjikha, and an illustrative ecotourism map. These displays gives a visual overview of the important ecotourism features and facilities available in the valley.

Among others, emphasis was given on enhancement of nature trails in the valley. A new nature trail from Phobjikha to Khelaykha covering approximately six hours of walk was developed and opened for use by the visitors. In a similar effort, a small bridge was built along the existing nature trail (Gangtey nature trail) to help enhance the trail and to facilitate daily commuters of the nearby villages like Kewang, Hall, Gopu, and Dangsa.



The erstwhile PCAPC which has been renamed as Phobjikha Environment Management Committee (PEMC) has been very instrumental in implementing the conservation activities in the valley. The members are formed from government sectors like the health, agriculture, local leaders and locals. However, the previous members have been changed as they have been transferred or not elected during the local election. New members have been elected in the group and since they were not very much aware of the goals and objectives of the project, RSPN conducted a meeting familiarize them. The meeting stressed on the following:

- Ecotourism as a Community Based Sustainable Tourism
- Activities implemented and achieved till now
- New activity plans
- Annual Black-necked Crane Festival



## Environment and Health

Addressing the basic health requirements of the residents of Phobjikha is important to enable meaningful participation of the communities in conservation.

RSPN has been implementing activities that tackle health issues while helping people to understand the benefit of conserving natural environment for health.

This period saw some concrete effort on sanitation and hygiene through development of facilities like toilets for the local community school and drainage system for the community in Gophu village. The toilet is benefiting 142 students in the school. In the past, students were using temporary toilet that was not only unhygienic but aesthetically unappealing. The new toilet is hygienic and has more capacity.

The six unit aqua privy toilet is benefiting 142 students in the school, replacing the temporary makeshift toilets that was not only unhygienic but aesthetically unappealing.

Complementing the past efforts on waste management, awareness and waste survey was carried out in the whole valley and scrape dealers were also iden-



tified.

Results of the survey indicated that out of the 23 villages surveyed, all the villages had households with proper toilets and waste pits, 21 villages had households with separate animal sheds while only 7 villages had households using waste bins (it is to be noted that the number of households using the facilities varied in different villages). However, number of villages practicing general cleaning routine was as low as two villages i.e. Tabading and Gangtey.

The village called Kumbu secured the first position, Damcholakhang second and Simchubara the third position. The village securing first position was awarded a cash prize of Nu 10,000 while the second and third were provided with garbage bins. This kind of activity is intended to instill a sense of proper waste management among the local community.

Chemicals are being used extensively in the valley to produce agricultural products like potatoes, etc to enhance economic growth in the valley. However, in the long run, this is expected to have a major impact on the fertility of the soil, health of the people and as well as to the Black necked Cranes whose main feeding areas are the potato fields. Considering the adverse impact of the chemicals in the future, RSPN is encouraging the farmers in the valley to practice organic farming in the valley. Towards this effort a demonstration plot of about one acre above the RSPN information centre was



identified and cultivated for studying its viability. Selected farmers in the valley were also trained on organic farming with technical assistance from Wangduephodrang Dzongkhag Agriculture Office and renewable resource centre in Phobjikha. They received firsthand knowledge on the impact of chemical fertilizers on the ecosystem, health and economic development. They were also trained in plant protection techniques and using natural plant products for making pesticides / insect repellent sprays. As an encouragement the participants were given gardening tools, plastic for making a greenhouse and varieties of vegetable seeds.

Other aspect of the study included regular soil tests and water quality monitoring.

## Community Participation

RSPN considers community participation as an important aspect of conservation. Phobjikha being a place with fairly large population of about 5000 people, their involvement and support is key to the success and sustainability of conservation efforts in the valley.

With the support of MacArthur foundation RSPN has set up a community group like the Phobjikha Environment Management Committee (PEMC) comprising of representatives from the local community and local government sectors. The committee plays an important role in representing the local interests and acts as a link between the local community and RSPN.

With support from ICIMOD, women's group has also been formed as a subgroup of the PEMC, mainly to ensure women's participation in conservation



## FUEL WOOD EFFICIENT STOVES FOR FAR FLUNG COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

With funding from the GEF-small grants program, RSPN assisted the Department of Education in providing schools with fuel wood efficient cooking stoves for 21 community schools in Bhutan. Due to lack of proper cooking facilities, rural schools largely depend on fuel wood contributed by the parents or guardians of the students thereby engaging time and energy of rural poor in fuel wood collection and degrading the forest resources. The Althaus cooking stove, which is proven save wood consumption and promote cleanliness in the school kitchen was therefore distributed to selected schools.

Each school was provided with a set of three althaus stoves. Installations were monitored and individually supervised in collaboration with respective Dzongkhag Education Officers. During the monitoring visit, environmental awareness programs focused on natural resource management were conducted for the communities living around the school. Discussions on the prevailing global and local environmental issues and their consequences and some of the conservation policies of the government were also shared with them.

Reports from schools indicate that the project had benefitted the schools and communities in-terms of having clean and hygienic kitchen environment and lesser effect of deforestation as the amount of fire wood consumption has been reduced drastically.



# Membership Program

RSPN membership program is based on the premises of the draft constitution which states that protection of the environment is the fundamental duty of every citizen. With political change towards democracy looming around, it has now become imperative for organizations like RSPN to influence and promote environmental conservation at a broader scale. As a non political organization, RSPN aspire to act as an environmental watchdog with support from individuals and organizations that are committed towards protecting the pristine environment. As such, RSPN members are expected to play a pivotal role in realizing the objectives.

Therefore, this year's member activities were targeted towards recruiting more members. The member find member appeal was initiated whereby each member was to recruit three more members. A basketball tournament was also organized to recruit more members. In order to facilitate more member interactions, a discussion forum in the website was also initiated. Each member has been provided an opportunity to access free RSPN emails as a membership incentive. In order to keep our members up to date about RSPN activities, a monthly enews links are provided to members. The opportunities for members and interested individuals to participate in the RSPN activities like the clean Bhutan program have been initiated.

Till now, RSPN individual membership program was mostly confined to Thimphu-based residents. With the establishment of RSPN field offices in conservation areas and other parts of Bhutan, the RSPN support base is expected to increase nationwide. RSPN will soon be receiving grant from Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) which will not only fulfill the mandate of the project to carry out conservation activities in B2C2 areas but also facilitate membership program at 6 Dzongkhags in Bhutan.

At the nature club level, ten more schools were inducted under the nature club network of RSPN. These bring the total number to 110 schools. Under the religion and environment program, a total of 65 nature clubs were also instituted.

Currently, the RSPN member strength stands at around 3060 including donor organizations, guardians, nature clubs, and institutions.

# ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF NATURE THIMPHU : BHUTAN INCOME & EXPENDITURE STATEMENT FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED 30.6.2007

Income	Schedule	For the year ended June 30, 2007				For the year ended June 30, 2006			
		(A) (Nu.)	(US\$)	(B) Equivalent (Nu.)	(A) + (B) TOTAL (Nu.)	(A) Nu.	US\$	(B) Equiv. Nu.	TOTAL (A) + (B)
Endowment Fund									
Reserve Fund		20,683.72	7,979.00	320,755.80	320,755.80	111,561.13	119,983.00	5,485,225.65	5,576,796.78
Gratuity Fund		187,736.00	-	-	187,736.00	1,352,627.03	10,387.12	473,133.32	1,825,760.35
Project Fund	I	8,943,404.91	206,494.10	8,301,052.82	17,244,467.73	23,400,105.64	294,203.35	12,945,462.59	36,345,568.23
Other Income	II	6,855,912.18	4,589.00	184,879.80	6,840,791.98	6,890,778.79	17,038.97	776,125.08	7,666,901.87
Sale Proceeds	IV	10,655.00	-	-	10,655.00	24,350.00	96,805.10	4,409,472.31	24,350.00
Interest on Investment with BTFC/CBNB		-	140,729.00	5,857,305.80	5,857,305.80	52,700.00	96,805.10	4,409,472.31	4,462,172.31
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>15,818,401.81</b>	<b>359,801.10</b>	<b>14,464,004.22</b>	<b>30,074,006.31</b>	<b>32,596,302.95</b>	<b>528,417.54</b>	<b>24,069,418.95</b>	<b>56,665,721.90</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>									
Project Expenditure	I	13,134,337.47	96,207.33	3,827,334.67	16,961,672.14	11,191,061.20	346,095.12	15,763,266.22	28,954,327.42
Other Expenses	II	6,743,301.43	46.63	1,874.53	6,745,175.96	5,119,897.19	66,683.19	3,037,419.30	8,157,416.49
Depreciation		811,314.64	-	-	811,314.64	672,448.12	-	-	672,448.12
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>20,688,953.54</b>	<b>95,253.96</b>	<b>3,829,209.19</b>	<b>24,518,162.73</b>	<b>16,983,506.51</b>	<b>412,748.31</b>	<b>18,800,685.52</b>	<b>35,784,192.03</b>
<b>Surplus of Income over Expenditure</b>									
<b>Total Surplus of Income over Expenditure</b>		<b>(4,870,551.73)</b>	<b>264,547.14</b>	<b>10,634,795.03</b>	<b>5,555,843.58</b>	<b>15,612,796.44</b>	<b>115,669.23</b>	<b>5,268,733.43</b>	<b>20,881,529.87</b>

Note: Dollar equivalent calculated at exchange rate of USD 1= Nu. 40.20 as of June 30, 2007 (Kuensel)

Prepared by:

(Yangchen Dhamo)  
Admin/Finance Coordinator

Verified by:

(Lam Dorji, Ph.D)  
Executive Director

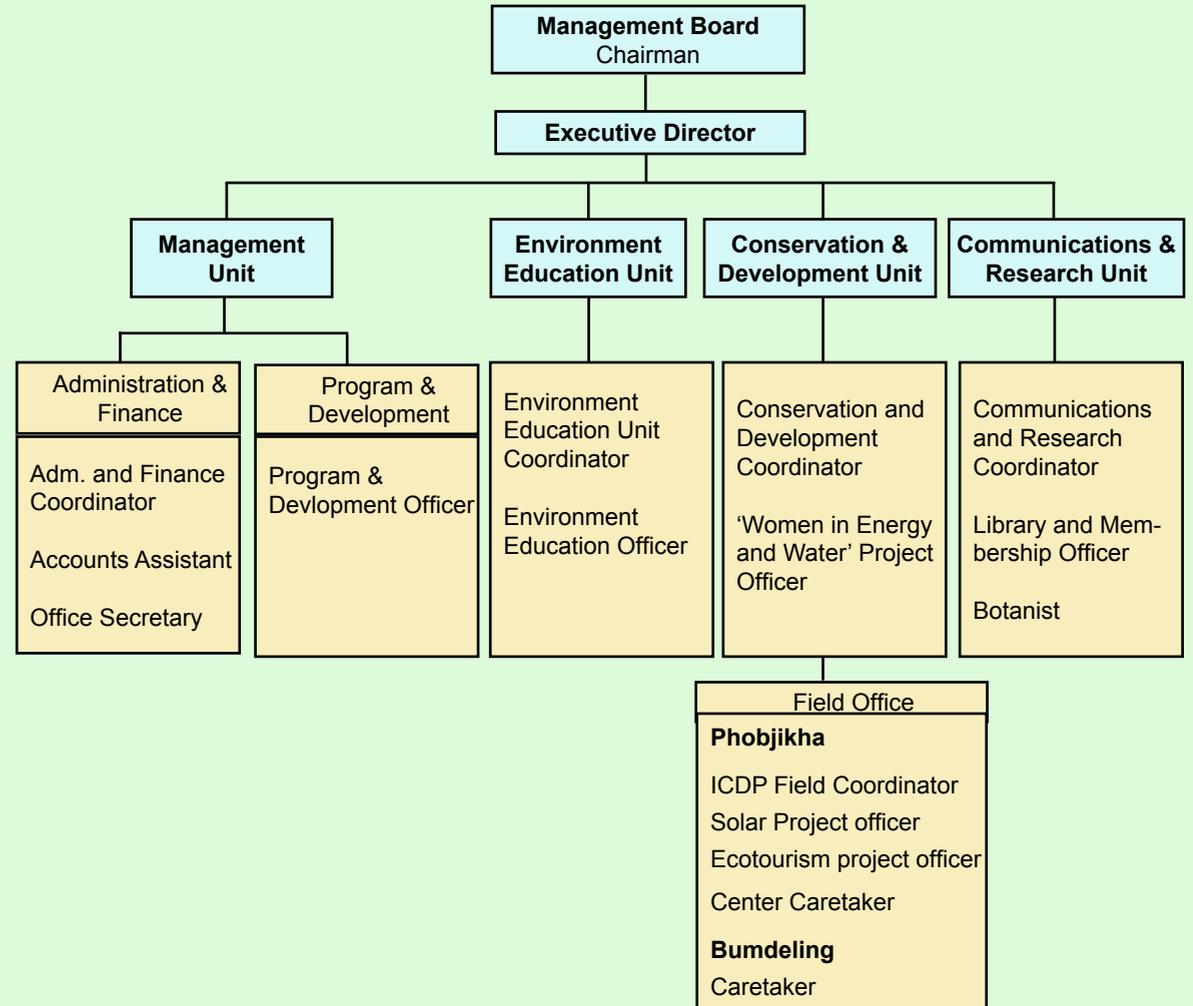
(Dasho Sangay Thinley)  
Chairman



## INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### Management

RSPN enjoys the Patronage of His Majesty the King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck. It is managed on a day to day basis by the Executive Director who reports to a nine member Board of Directors. The Board of Directors meet to approve the workplans, proposals, annual operational budgets and policy matters. The organization has four units each headed by unit Coordinators.



RSPN has nineteen staff employed on renewable contracts that are engaged in operations, management and program implementation. RSPN programs are based on its five year strategic plan.

RSPN Strategic plan outlines institutional development as the foundation for growth. In this respect, three areas were identified as essential for RSPN's growth and sustainability. They are: 1) a million dollar endowment fund; 2) a permanent headquarter office building; 3) strengthening of organizational policies, procedures, and staff capacity.

## ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF NATURE THIMPHU : BHUTAN STATEMENT OF AFFAIRS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED 30.6.2007

	Schedule	For the year ended June 30, 2007			For the year ended June 30, 2006				
		(A) NU.	US\$	(B) Equivalent NU.	(A+B) TOTAL (NU.)	(A) NU.	US\$	(B) Equiv. NU.	TOTAL (A) + (B)
<b>Assets</b>									
<b>Fixed Assets (Net Block)</b>									
Furniture & Fixture		353,450.51	-	-	353,450.51	392,722.79	-	-	392,722.79
Office Equipments		2,142,008.64	-	-	2,142,008.64	2,347,169.79	-	-	2,347,169.79
Trekking Equipments		337,577.39	-	-	337,577.39	270,145.38	-	-	270,145.38
Vehicles		2,461,263.55	-	-	2,461,263.55	1,773,301.38	-	-	1,773,301.38
Communication/Other Equipments		227,597.80	-	-	227,597.80	252,886.44	-	-	252,886.44
Building (Observation Center)		1,580,946.56	-	-	1,580,946.56	1,629,841.82	-	-	1,629,841.82
Investment with BTECC		-	1,247,477.00	50,148,575.40	50,148,575.40	-	1,108,748.00	50,412,371.40	50,412,371.40
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	VI	<b>7,102,844.45</b>	<b>1,247,477.00</b>	<b>50,148,575.40</b>	<b>57,261,419.85</b>	<b>6,666,067.60</b>	<b>1,106,748.00</b>	<b>50,412,371.40</b>	<b>57,078,439.00</b>
<b>Current Assets</b>									
Cash		8,990.74	78.50	3,155.70	12,146.44	(1,409.66)	88.50	4,031.18	2,621.52
Bank		12,703,512.37	254,475.58	10,229,918.32	22,933,430.69	17,744,275.18	128,923.44	5,872,462.69	23,616,737.87
Advances		1,165,387.21	(1,174.00)	(69,304.80)	1,096,082.41	1,423,598.38	1,423,598.38	1,423,598.38	1,423,598.38
Stock Balance	VIII	236,070.00	-	-	236,070.00	254,825.00	-	-	254,825.00
<b>Total Current Assets</b>		<b>14,113,960.32</b>	<b>252,830.08</b>	<b>10,163,769.22</b>	<b>24,277,729.54</b>	<b>19,421,288.90</b>	<b>128,011.94</b>	<b>5,876,493.87</b>	<b>25,297,782.77</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>		<b>21,216,804.77</b>	<b>1,500,307.08</b>	<b>60,312,344.62</b>	<b>81,529,149.39</b>	<b>26,087,356.50</b>	<b>1,235,759.94</b>	<b>56,288,865.27</b>	<b>82,376,221.77</b>
<b>Financed by:</b>									
<b>General Fund</b> (Surplus of Income over Expenditure)		(4,870,551.73)	264,547.14	10,634,795.03	5,794,243.30	15,612,796.44	115,669.23	5,268,733.43	20,881,529.87
<b>Accumulated Fund</b>	III	26,087,356.50	1,235,759.94	49,677,549.59	75,734,906.09	10,474,560.06	1,120,090.71	51,020,131.84	61,494,691.90
<b>Total Accumulated Fund</b>		<b>21,216,804.77</b>	<b>1,500,307.08</b>	<b>60,312,344.62</b>	<b>81,529,149.39</b>	<b>26,087,356.50</b>	<b>1,235,759.94</b>	<b>56,288,865.27</b>	<b>82,376,221.77</b>

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Prepared by:

Verified by:

(Yangchen Lhamo)  
Admin/Finance Coordinator

(Jam Dorji, Ph. D.)  
Executive Director

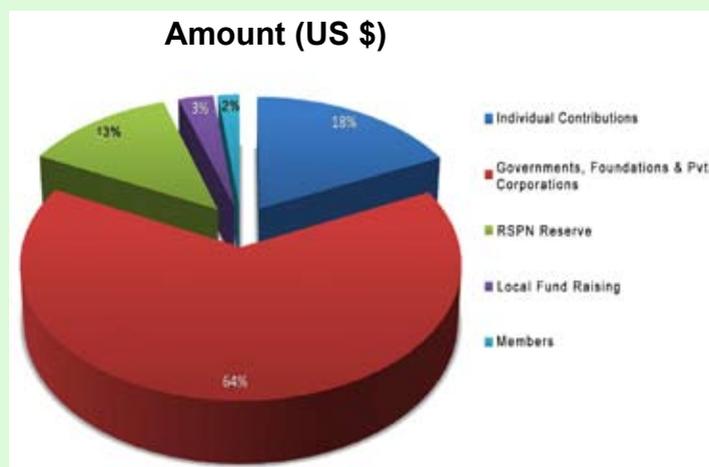
(Dashi Sangay Thinley)  
Chairman



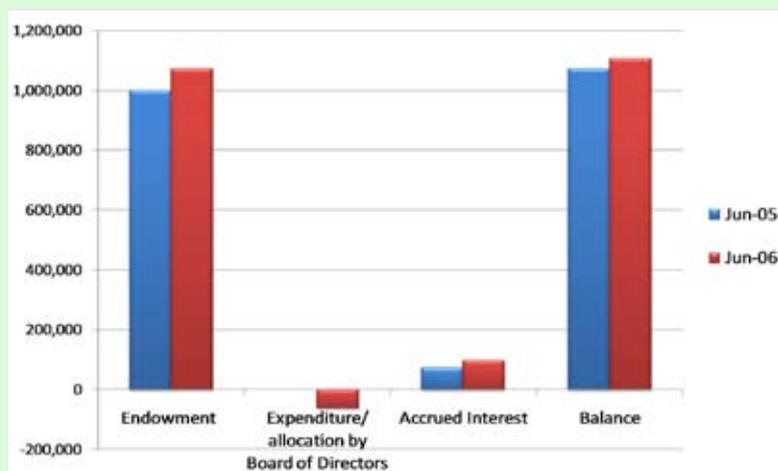
## The RSPN Endowment Fund

Fundraising for RSPN Endowment fund has been a challenge. However, with the help of individuals, organizations, and donors that believed in RSPN's role in sustaining environmental conservation in Bhutan, it was ultimately a success. The Bhutan Trust Fund for Environmental Conservation (BT FEC) played an instrumental role in RSPN's institutional development with institutional support grants followed by an its commitment to establishment of RSPN endowment fund through a matching grant of up to US \$ 450,000. Fundraising for the endowment fund first began in the United States of America with immense support from the International Crane Foundation (ICF) and individuals such as Heidi Wilde who facilitated fundraising lecture tour to fifteen cities. Thereafter, RSPN received contributions from governments, corporations, organizations, associations and individuals both inside and outside Bhutan. Although RSPN had to seek an extension, the BT FEC provided up to US \$ 450,000 dollar to dollar matching to all contributions.

Overview of contributors to the RSPN Endowment Fund as of 30 June 2005:



The RSPN target of raising US \$ 550,000 was met in June 2005. As of June 2005, RSPN endowment fund stood at US \$ 1,072,996 including accrued interest on earlier deposits with BT-FEC. As of June 2007, the endowment fund reached US \$ 1,106,748.



The Board of Directors, for the first time in the history of RSPN, approved RSPN operational budget from the interests generated by the Endowment Fund. The Board is expected to allocate annual budgets for the core operational needs of the organization.

## Information

### Board Members

- Dasho Sangay Thinley, Secretary, MoA, Chairman of the RSPN Board
- Dasho Ugyen Dorji, Secretary to the 5th Druk Gyalpo, Secretariat of the 5th Druk Gyalpo.
- Mr. Tshewang Tandin, Director, School Education, Ministry of Agriculture
- Ms. Kezang Choden, Program Officer, DADM, Ministry of Finance
- Mr. Tobgay S. Namgyal, Director, BT FEC, Taba
- Mr. Tandin Dorji, Communuicaitons Officer, NEC, Thimphu
- Mr. Hishey Tshering, Proprietor, Bhutan Birding and Heritage Travels

### RSPN Staff:

1. Dr. Lam Dorji, Executive Director
2. Ms. Rebecca Pradhan, Ecologist
3. Mr. Ugyen Lhendup, Environment Education Coordinator
4. Ms. Rinchen Wangmo, Conservation and Devlopment Coordinator
5. Ms. Tshering Lham, Program Officer.
6. Ms. Yangchen Lhamo, Adm./Finance Coordinator
7. Ms. Manju Giri, Project Officer,
8. Ms. Tshering Cheki, Eco-tourism Officer, Phobjikha
9. Mr. Kinga Wangdi, Environment Education Officer
10. Mr. Sonam Dorji, Communications Officer
11. Mr. Dago Tshering, Field Coordinator, Phobjikha
12. Mr. Pema Gyamtsho, Asst. Communications Officer
13. Mr. Tsheten Dorji, Project Officer, Phobjikha
14. Mr. Sonam Jamtsho, Asst. Adm./Finance Officer
15. Mr. Tshewang Norbu, Asst. Researcher
16. Ms. Tshewang Choden, Office Assistant
17. Mr. Chenning Dorji, Senior Driver
18. Mr. Cheten Dorji, Driver
19. Ms. Cheki Lhamo, Caretaker

Edited by:  
RSPN Publication Committee

Designed by:  
Communications Unit

Picture courtesy:

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