

NEWS FROM THE FIELD (Khumbu Alpine Conservation)

MESSAGE FROM CHAIRMAN

I take this opportunity to wish you a Happy New Year 2010. 2009 was a successful year for Khumbu Alpine Conservation and Restoration Program in the Khumbu region, and a time of new beginnings for Khumbu Alpine Conservation Council (KACC). The KACC has continued its commitment to conserving and restoring the fragile mountain ecosystems of the Sagarmatha National Park and Buffer Zone with financial support from The Mountain Institute and the United Nation Development Program/GEF/Small Grant Program. To this end, KACC wishes to share news from the field about our programs, activities and accomplishments from April to December 2009. Namaste and Tashidelek

Ang Nima Sherpa
Chairman



Ang Nima Sherpa (Baru)

KHUMBU ALPINE CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION

Alpine ecosystems throughout the world have been heavily impacted by human activities, especially during the past 20 years, with the exponential growth of mountaineering, trekking, and adventure tourism to remote mountain regions. In response, The Mountain Institute (TMI) has implemented projects to protect and restore the world's alpine ecosystems through the dissemination conservation and tourism-related livelihood improvement projects developed in the Mt. Everest region since 2004.

KHUMBU ALPINE CONSERVATION COUNCIL

In 2004, The Mountain Institute (TMI) launched a project entitled "Community-based Alpine Conservation and Restoration of Mt. Everest Alpine Zone" with the goal of protecting and restoring the fragile alpine ecosystems of Sagarmatha National Park and Buffer Zone (SNPBZ). As part of the project, the region's first local NGO, the Khumbu Alpine Conservation Council (KACC), was formed with financial support from UNDP/SGP. KACC works to conserve and restore fragile alpine ecosystems by strengthening local management and conservation capacities. It has implemented this project in partnership with local Sherpa communities, government agencies, non-government organizations (NGOs), international NGOs, donor agencies, and the trekking and climbing communities.

KACC'S ORGANIZED THIRD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

With the objective to make the committee stronger and capable to manage the Khumbu Alpine Conservation and Restoration Program in the Khumbu region, the local people of the area have selected numbers in the executive committees in the KACC. There are nine executive members for the periods of two years. The Name lists of executive committee are as follows:

1. Mr. Ang Nima Sherpa (Baru)	Chairman
2. Mr. Ram Bahadur Tamang	Vice Chairman
3. Mr. Lopsang Sherpa	Secretary
4. Mr. Bheem Raj Rai	Treasurer
5. Mr. Mingma Sherpa	Co-treasurer
6. Mr. Hari Kumar Shrestha	Member
7. Mr. Nima Sherpa	Member
8. Ms. Pemba Yanji Sherpa	Member
9. Mrs. Pasang Phuti Sherpa	Member
Sona Yishi Sherpa	Advisor



New Executive Members



Seedlings ready for distributions

DISTRIBUTION OF SEEDLINGS

KACC distributed a total of 5000 seedlings of multipurpose alpine species such as the Juniper, birch to the local farmers of Dingboche, Pheriche and Shomare. These seedlings were produced from the nursery established at Shomare at 4000m. This has become one of the highest nurseries established in Nepal and the first of its kind in the Khumbu region. Seedling distribution to individual farmers will encourage them to plant in their private lands as well as the area where the land has been denuded due to over-grazing and/or over-harvesting of alpine shrubs for fuel wood use.



Seedlings in the nursery bed



Seedlings collected from bed



Planting in the denuded areas

ESTABLISHMENT OF REFUSE DISPOSAL PIT

With the objective to manage waste generated by tourists and the local communities, dumping pits have been constructed with partitions for biodegradable and non-biodegradable wastes.

With help of local people, KACC has collected an approximately 20000 Kgs of waste. Non-biodegradable refuse has been disposed of in the refuse pit, and all the biodegradable refuse has been burnt. The local people including the lodge operators stressed the need for continuity of this kind of program in the future. KACC is also coordinating with other line agencies to ban the cans and the bottles in the coming year in inside the project area.



Refuse Disposal Pit in Dingboche



Newly constructed helipad in Dingboche

HELIPAD CONSTRUCTION

In order to provide comfortable landing spots for private helicopters in the area, the KACC has constructed helipads at three strategic locations within the project area with close cooperation from other line agencies including the member of buffer zone. Previously, helicopters have landed on any available empty space, with major impacts on ground vegetation. The local communities of the project area contributed the land for the helipad construction and other construction costs were borne by the project. For use of the helipads, KACC will charge NRs 1000, as source of income for future maintenance of the helipads.

PORTER REST HOUSE

The porter rest house in Lobuche is running very well despite the constraints and limitations. KACC has been strengthening this program to continue providing a comfortable and safe place for porters to stay while trekking in the Mt. Everest region. This rest house provides shelter, blankets, and cooking facilities to porters, so that they are not forced to burn fragile alpine shrubs for warmth and cooking, or to sleep in caves in Lobuche.



Porter rest house in Lobuche



Illegal harvested juniper by local herders

JUNIPER MONITORING

With active local people's participation and SNP and Buffer Zone's support, KACC has continued enforcing and monitoring the impact of anti-poaching of the wildlife, especially the snow cock and the harvesting of juniper shrubs for incense and fuel wood use by expeditions. KACC staff has caught local people collecting fresh juniper harvesting from the area and fined Rs.500. The fined money has been deposited into KACC account in Dingboche.

CONTINUE SUPPORTING OF KEROSENE DEPOT

KACC, with support from The Mountain Institute and UNDP/SGP, has provided kerosene to local people, hotel and lodge owners, and trekkers since 2004, with the objective of reducing pressure on the alpine forest and vegetation through the use of kerosene as an alternative to firewood. At present, Dingboche Kerosene depot is operating with 4000 litre of kerosene in stock. The local people, trekking groups, and lodge owners operating above Shomare benefits from this kerosene depot. The depot is also a potential source of operational support for KACC.



Kerosene stock at KACC Office



CLIMATE CHANGE WORKSHOP

KACC, with local line agencies, has conducted a one-day workshop on climate change issues with local people, including lodge operators. The kinds of threats presented by climate change, and the mitigation strategies adapted by the national and international groups were discussed. This workshop was conducted before the Government planned to hold the highest cabinet meeting at Everest Base Camp on 4th December 2009.

A. Byers (TMI) 2007

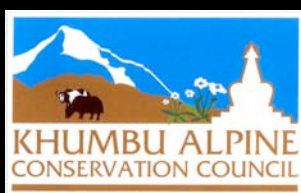


KACC HELPED TO ORGANIZE THE HIGHEST CABINET MEETING

KACC helped organize the historic cabinet meeting held at Kalapatthar plateau near Everest Base Camp (5,242 meters) on 4th December 2009. At the meeting, the cabinet issued a 10-point "Everest declaration" which calls for concerted actions to minimize adverse effects of climate change in the Himalayan region. In the 10-point declaration, Nepal expressed commitment to working with the international community to mitigate threats presented by climate change, including the preservation of bio-diversity and natural heritage, and to work towards sustainable socio-economic and cultural development of mankind.



Executive Members of KACC welcome the cabinet meeting held at Kalapathar on 4th December 09



KHUMBU ALPINE CONSERVATION COUNCIL

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