

Regional Workshop on Developing Birdwatching Tourism, Baihualing, Yunnan, China



About ICIMOD

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) is a regional knowledge development and learning centre serving the eight regional member countries of the Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan – based in Kathmandu, Nepal. Globalization and climate change have an increasing influence on the stability of fragile mountain ecosystems and the livelihoods of mountain people. ICIMOD aims to assist mountain people to understand these changes, adapt to them, and make the most of new opportunities, while addressing upstream and downstream issues. ICIMOD supports regional transboundary programmes through partnerships with regional partner institutions, facilitates the exchange of experiences, and serves as a regional knowledge hub. We strengthen networking among regional and global centres of excellence. Overall, we are working to develop economically and environmentally-sound mountain ecosystems to improve the living standards of mountain populations and to sustain vital ecosystem services for the billions of people living downstream – now and in the future.



ICIMOD gratefully acknowledges the support of its core donors:

The governments of Afghanistan, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Norway, Pakistan, Sweden, and Switzerland.

Workshop Report 2019/1

Regional Workshop on
Developing Birdwatching Tourism,
Baihualing, Yunnan, China

5–12 November 2017

Deepa Basnet
Ravi Pathak
Yang Jianmei
Wu Ning
Kamala Gurung
K. S. Kanwal
Yi Shaoliang

Copyright © 2019

International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial, No Derivatives 4.0 International License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>)

Published by

International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
GPO Box 3226, Kathmandu, Nepal

ISBN 978 92 9115 648 1 (electronic)

Production team

Samuel Thomas (Senior editor)

Rachana Chettri (Editor)

Kundan Shrestha (Editor)

Shanuj VC (Consultant editor)

Punam Pradhan (Graphic designer)

Photos: GNNR, China – 3, 9; Jitendra Bajracharya – Cover, vi, 5, 6, 9, 10, 13, 14, 16, 18, 22, 23;
Wu Ning, Chengdu Institute of Biology (CIB) – 8, 10

Note

This publication may be reproduced in whole or in part and in any form for educational or nonprofit purposes without special permission from the copyright holder, provided acknowledgement of the source is made. ICIMOD would appreciate receiving a copy of any publication that uses this publication as a source. No use of this publication may be made for resale or for any other commercial purpose whatsoever without prior permission in writing from ICIMOD.

The views and interpretations in this publication are those of the author(s). They are not attributable to ICIMOD and do not imply the expression of any opinion concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries, or the endorsement of any product.

This publication is available in electronic form at www.icimod.org/himaldoc

Citation: ICIMOD (2018). *Regional workshop on developing birdwatching tourism, Baihualing, Yunnan, China*. ICIMOD Workshop Report 2019/1. Kathmandu: ICIMOD

Contents

Acronyms and Abbreviations	iv
Acknowledgements	v
1. Introduction	1
2. Objectives	3
3. Workshop Approaches	4
4. Activities and Key Learnings	5
5. Discussions on Learnings and Areas of Improvements for Promotion of Birdwatching/ Photography Tourism at the Regional Level	11
6. Discussions on Criteria for Sustainable Birdwatching/Photography Tourism	12
7. The Way Forward: Participants' Take	13
8. Concluding Remarks	14
Annexes	15
Annex I: Agenda of the workshop	15
Annex II: Name of the participants	17
Annex III: Impressions of the workshop	19
Annex IV: Glimpses from the visits	22

Acronyms and Abbreviations

BAV	Baihualing Administrative Village
BCA	Biodiversity Conservation Association
FHL	Far-Eastern Himalayan Landscape
GBCA	Gaoligongshan Farmers' Biodiversity and Conservation Association
GBPNIHESD	Govind Ballabh Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment and Sustainable Development
GNNR	Gaoligongshan National Nature Reserve
HI-LIFE	Landscape Initiative for Far-Eastern Himalayas
HKH	Hindu Kush Himalayan
IBA	Important Bird and Biodiversity Area
ICIMOD	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
KIB	Kunming Institute of Botany
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
RFA	Rapid Feasibility Assessment
RMB	Renminbi
SWFU	Southwest Forestry University
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
USD	United States Dollar
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

Acknowledgement

This workshop was carried out under the Landscape Initiative for Far-Eastern Himalayas (HI-LIFE). It was jointly organized by the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), the Kunming Institute of Botany (KIB), the Baoshan and Nujiang Management Bureaus of the Gaoligongshan National Nature Reserve (GNNR), and Southwest Forestry University (SWFU).

We would like to express our sincere thanks to Li Zhengbo, Director, Baoshan, GNNR; Wang Bin, Nujiang, GNNR; and all the other officials for their strong support and guidance during this workshop. We are also grateful to the local villagers, entrepreneurs, and the students of SWFU for their cooperation and support. They are Li Lingzhi, Ye Xuelin, Teng Guozhou, Tang Zhanbin, Yang Fuxiang, Song Guohua, Zheng Zaiqi, Fu Shideng, Li Zhengbo, Zhang Dalun, Huang Chengyue, Qiao Xinghua, Wang Bin, Liu Huizi, Liu Yalan, Xiao Qianli, Yao Fenggui, Zhou Xiongfeng, Yang Chengwu, Dong Jianqiang, Wei Yantao, Li Rujun, Xiao Qianli, Liu Huizi, Yue Maowei, Yao Fenggui, Zhou Xiongfeng, and Liu Yalan.

In total, 35 participants from government departments, park managers, academicians, practitioners and local stakeholders attended this workshop.

Group photo inside the birdwatching trail

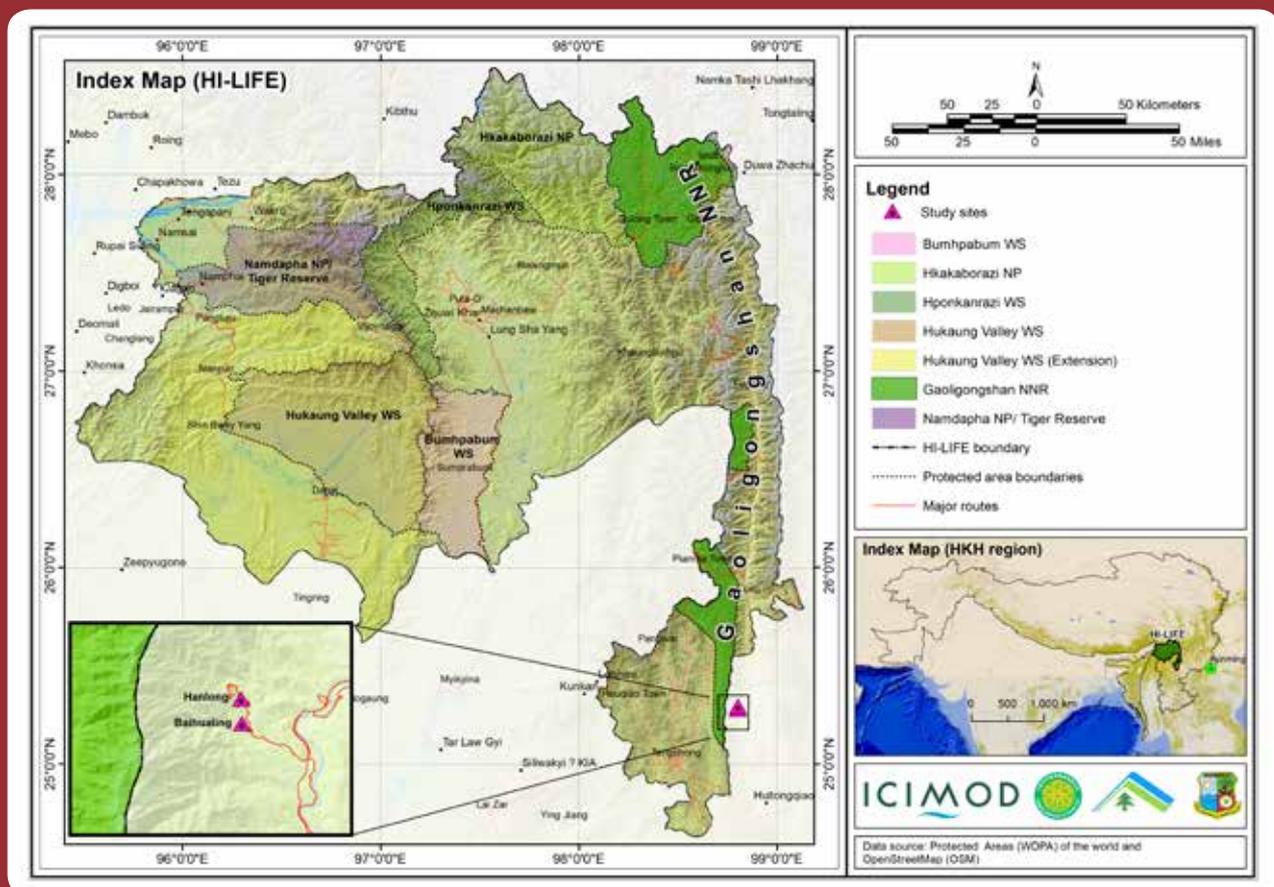


1. Introduction

The Far-Eastern Himalayan Landscape (FHL) is known for its extremely rich diversity of bird life. The landscape has eight ecoregions (WWF and ICIMOD 2001) and nine Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs—BirdLife International 2007; Basnet et al. 2019). And, according to the Red List of Threatened Species prepared by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), it is also home to a wide variety of globally endangered species (Paul et al. 2005). The landscape hosts nearly 1,400 species of birds: 430 in the Gaoligongshan National Nature Reserve (GNNR) of China; 490 in the Namdapha National Park of India; and 442 in the Northern Mountain Forest Complex of Myanmar. Some of the rare and endangered bird species found in the landscape are the black stork, golden eagle, Sclater’s monal, Mrs Hume’s pheasant, green peafowl, buff-barred warbler, Yunnan fulvetta, fire-tailed sunbird, red-tailed laughing thrush, and Himalayan bluetail (Shaoliang 2017; ICIMOD 2018). Naturally, such a rich diversity in avifauna makes the landscape a favourite destination for ornithologists and bird lovers from across the world. This prolific variety plays a significant cultural, aesthetic, and economic role in the lives of the people and sets the stage for socially responsible ecotourism.

In recent years, birdwatching has integrated both conservation and development in the area; it has also gained momentum as a niche nature-based tourism product for birders, conservationists, and photographers (Connell 2009). Birdwatching tourism is now experiencing a paradigm shift – from being a localized activity to becoming a global market as more and more people can afford to travel (Steven et al. 2015). As the Chinese government continues with its nationwide anti-poverty campaign, the arena of birdwatching ecotourism has a great role to play

Figure 1: The Far Eastern Himalayan Landscape and its protected areas



in terms of poverty alleviation, ecological conservation, and socio-economic sustainability. This context thus calls for in-depth and wide-ranging research. There is a need to establish location-specific linkages among birdwatching ecotourism, environmental conservation, and economic benefits. Such linkages are critical for developing a sustainable avi-tourism plan—one that can create direct and indirect economic benefits to the local communities and motivate them to engage in conservation efforts.

Avifaunal diversity is not only ecologically important but also provides cultural and recreational services. As things stand, local governments and communities in China, India, and Myanmar are all pinning their hopes on using birdwatching tourism as a tool for local development. This has provided a very good opportunity for learning and offers great scope for regional collaboration in participatory monitoring and information-sharing regarding the diversity and conservation of bird species.

The Hanlong villagers to the south-east of the GNNR have been experimenting with bird photography tourism to cater to the special interests of photographers, mostly from China. Meanwhile, development of bird hides and establishment of feeding and watering spots in 18 bird ponds have provided the easiest way of viewing and photographing a remarkably wide range of forest birds. The communities are engaged in offering multiple services such as tour guiding, accommodation, and transportation. In 2017, a HI-LIFE case study conducted by the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) and a team from Southwest Forestry University (SWFU) found that half of the households in Hanlong village (a part of the Baihualing Administrative Village-BAV), earned up to RMB 20,000 (approx. USD 2,900), 16 per cent earned between RMB 20,000 and 40,000 (approx. USD 2,900–5,800), and 10 percent earned between RMB 40,000–60,000 (approx. USD 5,800–8,700) from homestays, renting of ponds and hides, transportation, and guide services. Using the Internet as a tool, they have maintained a very good network of regular customers. The economic returns have motivated them to engage in long-term monitoring and conservation of the birds, leading to an efficient conservation strategy. They have also participated in innovative birdwatching techniques, updating bird conservation information, and in activities protecting the local environment.

ICIMOD has been working in the transboundary landscape and has contributed towards this still evolving innovative model of birdwatching. This has led to improvement in terms of conservation and development efforts, while also increasing public awareness as well as the income of the local communities. Meanwhile, birdwatching is thriving in other Himalayan regions as well. The 2017 HI-LIFE case study attempted to assess the potential of birdwatching/photography tourism in Hanlong village by looking at aspects such as economic benefits, social equity, ecological conservation, public awareness, and governance. So, in recognition of the potential of the FHL for birdwatching tourism activities, ICIMOD, in collaboration with the Kunming Institute of Botany (KIB) and GNNR (South), organized a regional workshop on “Developing Birdwatching Tourism” from 5–12 November 2017 at the Baihualing Administrative Village of Baoshan prefecture, Yunnan, China. The workshop demonstrated the fact that many concepts and skills can be learnt through practical observation and exchange of knowledge and experiences. Thus, ICIMOD provided an opportunity and platform for understanding the details of the GNNR birdwatching tourism model, whereby conservation and development objectives could be achieved by the member countries.

2. Objectives

The main objective of the workshop was to build the capacity of all the stakeholders involved in birdwatching tourism and other conservation-friendly development activities. The specific objectives were as follows:

- Share the results of the Hanlong case study with the local policymakers, relevant departments, and communities.
- Share knowledge and experiences on birdwatching tourism among the member countries.
- Define and frame the best practices in birdwatching tourism in the HI-LIFE landscape and document them.
- Identify the areas for setting up sustainable and value-added birdwatching/photography tourism models in the transboundary landscapes and in the protected areas/national parks of the regional member countries.

Picture 1: Photography near a bird pond from inside a hide



3. Workshop Approaches

The workshop was designed in such a way that the participants could have a hands-on experience in birdwatching and photography; they could observe the local practices, interact with the local people and government departments, visit local entrepreneurs, and carry out critical internal discussions and daily reflections on the local practices. Drawing lessons and experiences from these activities, the participants discussed the criteria or the key principles that could help achieve “sustainable birdwatching/photography tourism.” The following dimensions and key questions were used to guide the daily programmes and discussions of the workshop:

Dimensions	Key Questions
Economic	Has birdwatching tourism increased the local people’s incomes?
Ecological	Has birdwatching tourism led to better biodiversity and environmental conservation? Do the practices comply with the principles of biodiversity and environmental conservation?
Socio-cultural	Has birdwatching tourism promoted social harmony? Has it promoted traditional culture? Has it created more jobs? Has it increased the people’s adaptive capacity and decreased vulnerability?
Governance	Do the households have equal opportunities to participate? Do female members and marginalized groups participate equally? How has birdwatching tourism increased the capacity of women and poor families? What kind of governmental support has the communities got or can get? How are the decisions in the villages/cooperatives made?
Institutional	What are the self-organizing and regulatory mechanisms that are in place among the communities regarding birdwatching tourism?
Education/Awareness	Has birdwatching tourism increased the awareness/knowledge of the participating households? Has it increased the awareness and knowledge of the visitors? Have educational purposes and awareness-building been built into the tourism activities? How have local communities supported conservation actions?
Technology Innovation/ Adoption of New Technologies	Have the local communities been able to use new technologies to promote tourism? What innovations have the villagers developed in terms of birdwatching?

4. Activities and Key Learnings

SN	Activities	Key Messages/Lessons
1	Visited the historic Shuanghong Bridge and Nujiang River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic sites and showcasing of cultural heritage can add to the attractions of birdwatching tourism • Cultural heritage tourism and homestay
2	Watched birds at the buffer zone of the GNNR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local communities have to learn more about bird types, habitats, habits, and preferences; determine whether the birds are rare/endemic/endangered; and understand the importance of nature conservation • There's a need for official reserve brochures and other publications; as also proper signages in English • Immediate measures have to be taken to restrict the entry of vehicles in bird habitats and near bird ponds
3	Interacted with bird guides of Hanlong village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local people need to grow economically and logically, ensuring future networking and promotion for their tourism business • Visitors support the local economy by buying local crafts and other products (coffee, walnuts, honey, etc.) • When visitors try local cuisines, it boosts the income of the farmers • There has been an increase in the number of recreational tourists in the GNNR • Economic returns have motivated the local community to engage in birdwatching tourism • The expectations of bird guides from the local government are high; there is a need for more formal trainings (such as learning several languages) to ensure smooth delivery of tourism services • The guides need to be well versed in routes, handling equipment, and should have deep knowledge about birds and the local environment. Understanding the role of tourism in the lives of the local people can help raise awareness about biodiversity conservation • An overall qualitative change is required in tourism services

Picture 2: Photographing birds from inside a hide



4	Visited the office of BAV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learnt about the governance structure of BAV • The local people need to form a tourism management committee to ensure equal opportunities and sustainable management
5	Visited local organizations like the Gaoligongshan Farmers' Biodiversity and Conservation Association (GBCA), Baoshan (GNNR) Management Station, Baihualing Nature Education Centre (see Picture 7), and Baihualing Administrative Village Committee Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helped the villagers to understand and promote the linkages between nature protection and employment • Found out about governmental contributions to the conservation of biodiversity and to the upkeep of the bird ponds in GNNR • Tourism in Hanlong raised awareness about protecting birds; provided deeper knowledge about local birds; and motivated more people to support and participate in bird and nature conservation • Promoted environmental and social awareness among Hanlong villagers • Modern technology has to be used to provide information about birds and to showcase wildlife specimens and historic relics for conservation purposes and awareness of tourists

Picture 3: Traditional birdwatching at Hanlong village



6	Interacted with national and international visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The visitors expressed satisfaction at the birdwatching experience in the GNNR • They said the villagers were entrepreneurial • They experienced the hospitality of the locals in different homestays • They said the food was tasty and the service was quick • Hospitality skills can be enhanced by formal trainings and exposure visits to other Hindu Kush Himalayan (HKH) areas • Sincere visitors ready to pay for the services offered were a sign of responsible tourism • Both domestic and foreign tourists found the pricing of the facilities and services to be reasonable • The local bird guides and pond owners are self-trained, so there is a limited understanding of the English language • Alternatives to artificial bread worms are required for feeding the birds • Attention has to be paid to understand the impacts of birdwatching tourism on the bird population and habitat • The local people need to improve hospitality skills and other capacities to manage tourism activities effortlessly • The local people need to branch out to other kinds of tourism (for example, agro-tourism) and improve their hospitality skills
7	Experienced birdwatching and photography at bird ponds built by the villagers (see Picture 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovative methods devised to cater the visitors/photographers by setting up small water ponds to attract birds, artificial feeding for birds, and hidden sheds to take photos in a sedentary way • There is a symbiotic relationship between birdwatching tourism and nature conservation • This kind of tourism can provide economic benefits and alternative means of livelihood • Most of the villagers seemed to be self-motivated in promoting tourism – this was reflected in how they managed homestays; the guides displayed sound knowledge about birds • Observed the repairing of a bird pond and the reconstruction of a cemented pavement (see Picture 5)
8	Interacted with Hanlong villagers involved in the birdwatching tourism business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The villagers cited the importance of developing infrastructure in order to gain economic benefits and find innovative means of livelihoods • An increase in the number of tourists translates into improved living standards for the local people • There is a need for the local community to work together to harness the full potential of tourism • Lao Hou’s family in Hanlong is a great example of how to make good use of the online social networking services for marketing purposes; they even maintain a WeChat public account to provide basic information to tourists

9	<p>Visited Baihualing Smile Coffee Factory; households (like La Hou's) earning a good income from birdwatching tourism; households with low income; and the Baihualing Birdwatching Cooperative Hotel (Tengyue Hotel) to know about income-generation and value chain development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been a shift from food crops to cash crops (orange/maize/coffee) in Baihualing village • There is an international demand (for example, from Starbucks Coffee) for Baihualing Smile Coffee • There has been enterprise development because of the coffee value chain • There is a sense of ownership in the maintenance of the bird ponds inside the reserve • The community has an important role to play in branding and marketing • Remarkable economic benefits have improved the degree of social harmony • The Tengyue Hotel is being promoted as an indigenous, community-based ecotourism microenterprise • Through the cooperative system, there has been a sharing of benefits among the villagers
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The participation is inclusive because of the cooperative system • Since 2016, a networking framework has been in place, via www.birdnet.cn • Cooperative promotes awareness about the value of protecting biodiversity, with people receiving the dividends

Picture 4: Participants at the Shuanghong Bridge, Tengchong, Baoshan, Yunnan



10	Interacted with Baihualing villagers (guides/porters/drivers) to get first-hand information about alternative livelihood opportunities and to gauge their interest in birdwatching tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The villagers stressed the importance of developing infrastructure to pave way for innovative livelihoods • Because of poor access to good roads and also due to financial insecurity, several people are unable to execute this new model • As agricultural income is unstable, tourism can be the best alternative • The villagers understand the fact that a bright future lies ahead if they embrace tourism; but they are also wary of the risks involved in the absence of dynamic mechanisms and governmental support • Improve local destinations for cultural heritage tourism and homestay • Traditional homestays will be a huge attraction where local architecture is beautifully integrated with local delicacies. There is a need to utilize, in a sustainable manner, both natural and man-made assets • Needs of using natural and man-made assets for ecotourism and maximizing economic benefits
11	Met officials from the Baoshan Tourism Administration and the Baoshan Forestry Bureau; and also the village heads of Hanlong and Baihualing (see Picture 6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learnt about the governance mechanism and institutional hierarchy, as well as about the issues and challenges inside the management area in terms of the sustainability of tourism • Among the villagers, there is a difference in socio-economic status, and also with regard to environmental awareness and in the adoption of new technology • The existing support from the government for Hanlong's tourism development is RMB 3,000 (USD 475) in the form of China's rural pension scheme to each low-income family • There is a provision of free Wi-Fi for the local tourism service providers in order to market their products and communicate with their customers; this provision is extended to the tourists as well • More than 50 media outlets released news on the International Photography Festival held during the Gaoligongshan Mountain Birdwatching Festival; this was organized by the Baoshan municipal government • Promotional news (both in Chinese and English) brought forth a wide range of publicity, pitching BAV as a potential five-star birdwatching hotspot
12	Cultural programme by Lisu women in Hanlong village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learnt about the dynamics of conservation as followed by the indigenous people • The rich traditional culture of the place, if publicized well, can attract more tourists



Picture 5: The older plastic hide was replaced with a military camouflage net by the local government in 2018



Picture 6: Meeting with officials and local tourism stakeholders



Picture 7: Baihualing Nature Education Centre, Baihualing, GNNR

5. Discussions on Learnings and Areas of Improvements for Promotion of Birdwatching/Photography Tourism at the Regional Level

Participants from China	Participants from India	Participants from Myanmar
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism has increased the income of the villagers • Tourism has increased awareness among the local communities about environmental protection • Birdwatching tourism has improved hosting facilities • For a better regulatory mechanism, the tourism cooperative needs to be strengthened • The role of the government in the tourism value chain needs to be clearly spelt out • The government can provide support in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Monitoring and supervising tourism development activities ○ Technical assistance for raising awareness and conducting training programmes ○ Holding promotional activities like bird festival strengthening of social networking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need to take up other tourism activities besides birdwatching for sustainability • Natural bird feeds ought to be used • Biodiversity conservation should be accorded priority • National and international guidelines ought to be followed in tourism activities • Environmental assessment and social impact assessment should be carried out in consultation with the local communities • There is a need to conduct a SWOT analysis of birdwatching tourism in the FHL • A regulatory body has to be formed to ensure equality in benefit-sharing among the communities • There is a need to integrate traditional knowledge into birdwatching tourism • Joint birdwatching expeditions should be organized for HI-LIFE partners and even for those from the entire HKH region • Traditional houses can be turned into homestays as they have more aesthetic value for tourists • More focus should be paid on developing assets for tourism (such as identifying sites for birdwatching) and its agents – bird guides, homestay owners, and the tourists themselves • The local people should be involved at every step of development and planning in birdwatching tourism • Signages and information boards should be in English too; there is also a need for more communication and information materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be innovative, eco-friendly birdwatching towers • Hotspots for birdwatchers have to be identified • Flyers, posters, and even handicrafts could carry a list of important, rare, and endemic birds of the area • Bird-feeding needs to be monitored • Local guides need to be trained in the various aspects of flora and fauna • There should be a clearer and more defined role for women • The information centre should use both local language and English • More attention must be paid to rare/endangered/keystone bird species in the tourism chain • A code of conduct should be formulated for birdwatching tourism • A benefit-sharing mechanism among the communities has to be developed • The entry of personal vehicles should be restricted inside the reserve • The use of pesticide should be limited inside the village • The tourism package could include excursions to hot springs and locations with exotic fauna

In their discussions with management officials, the participants also touched upon the issue of “carrying capacity” and those of assessment of the forest, and solid waste management.

6. Discussions on Criteria for Sustainable Birdwatching/Photography Tourism

The following criteria/principles/norms were proposed by the participants for “sustainable birdwatching/photography tourism”:

At the policy level:

- Formulation of a birdwatching tourism policy
- Development of a code of conduct for birdwatching and photography along the lines of international and national rules and regulations
- A comprehensive master plan for conflict-resolution mechanism in the sphere of human–bird interaction
- Clear guidelines in agricultural policy for pesticide utilization
- Erecting signages at the nesting sites of endangered birds
- Protection of bird habitats: Strict control should be exercised over entry into the forest during the breeding period so as to reduce disturbance to birds; recorders must be banned; a good distance has to be maintained between the visitors and the birds; and personal vehicles should be prohibited near bird ponds
- Benefit-sharing with the community (at least 20–30 percent of the returns) for the improvement of birdwatching spots

At the research level:

- Identification of potential birdwatching sites and hotspots
- Identification/documentation of culturally important bird species and their linkages with birdwatching tourism
- Conducting a behavioural study of birds through observation, documentation, and integration
- Carrying out a rapid feasibility assessment (RFA)
- Setting in place scientific rules and regulations for bird-feeding
- Preparing lists of flyways and birds

At the local level:

- Formulation of birdwatching packages
- Strengthening of eco-friendly infrastructure
- Community orientation programmes for purposes of governance
- Carrying out various trainings and educational activities
- Arriving at a consensus with the local people about the traditional value of birds, and being alert to any activity that threatens bird life
- Capacity-building of local guides, ensuring gender balance, and preparing annual records

7. The Way Forward: Participants' Take

Countries	Action areas
China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of bird lists for each pond in Hanlong village • Development of a mobile app for identification of birds • Training of guides, staff, and local people • Exposure trip to India and Myanmar • Workshops on bird conservation
India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A national-level consultation/sensitization programme for the local community on birdwatching tourism • Exposure of the local community to some successful sites • Formation of an ecotourism development committee • Financial arrangements for infrastructure development with the help of the forest and tourism department • Skill development programme for bird guides • Research and development • Knowledge sharing • Monitoring of forest fire and illegal trade of wildlife • Learnings/exposure
Myanmar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizing meetings of central and provincial governments and related organizations (NGO/INGO) • Identification of potential birdwatching sites • Preparation of lists of rare and flagship bird species for the purpose of tourism • Infrastructure development • Support of livelihood improvement facilities
Regional Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening regional cooperation along the flyway and bird corridor • Long-term monitoring of endangered and rare birds and their habitats • Regional tourism cooperation • Regional exposure trips • Developing field manuals for sustainable birdwatching and for rural ecotourism/homestay services



Li Zhengbo of the GNNR sharing the action plan for China to develop sustainable birdwatching tourism.



K.S. Kanwal of the Govind Ballabh Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment and Sustainable Development (GBPNIHESD) sharing the action plan for India to develop sustainable birdwatching tourism.



Representatives from Myanmar sharing the action plan for their country to develop sustainable birdwatching tourism.

8. Concluding Remarks

This workshop provided opportunities for participants from China, India, and Myanmar to observe closely the practice of birdwatching tourism in Hanlong. It helped them to critically assess the process from the perspectives of income generation, conservation, institutions and governance, governmental support, and technological innovation. The workshop saw in-depth discussions between the local stakeholders and the participants, as well as among the participants themselves. Since the FHL is extremely rich in terms of the variety of birds, birdwatching tourism can definitely go a long way in increasing the incomes of the local communities. While learning about the experiences of the Hanlong villagers, the participants also discussed in detail about the improvements that have to be made if this practice is to be replicated in other places. The participants have recommended a list of criteria/principles for “sustainable birdwatching tourism”; this involves policies, developing a scientific outlook, and practical operations. It was also decided that HI-LIFE will work with national partners to develop a regional guideline to promote sustainable birdwatching/photography tourism in its pilot areas.

Participants enjoying the digital signage at Baihualing Nature Education Center



Annexes

Annex I: Agenda of the Workshop

Date	Activities	Objectives
5 November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrival at Kunming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To take rest
6 November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kunming–Baoshan (flight) Baoshan–Baihualing (bus) Visiting Shuanghong Bridge and Nujiang River Arriving at Baihualing and settling down Briefing on the daily programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants to stay in different homestays/hotels Three or four groups to stay in different homestays and try the local cuisine
7 November (Morning)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experiencing natural/traditional birdwatching at the buffer zone of the GNNR with local guides Meeting with guides (upon return) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To learn about the selection of birdwatching routes and their development To learn from birdwatching guides
(Afternoon)	Visiting local organizations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biodiversity Conservation Association (BCA) Village committees GNNR Management Station Baihualing Nature Education Centre of GNNR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fact-finding about institutions and governance; and to learn about information gathering and interpretation
(Evening)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interactions with visitors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To learn about visitors' expectations from the GNNR management stations and the local community
8 November (Morning)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Birdwatching and photography at several sites/ponds established by the villagers Meeting with related households 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To learn about innovations to cater to photographers To learn about local institutions, governance, marketing, and hospitality regarding birdwatching
(Afternoon)	Income generation and value chain development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visiting typical households that earn a good income from birdwatching tourism Visiting some low-income households Visiting the village-based coffee-processing factory Visit Tengyue Hotel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fact-finding about economic benefits, inclusive participation, value chain development, conservation, adaptation and transformation, and gender balance
(Evening)	Interaction/meeting with visitors on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visitors' comfort Information/interpretation Guide skills Hospitality requirements Improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To understand the demands of the visitors
9 November (Morning)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visiting Baihualing village (which does not engage in birdwatching tourism) Observing innovative alternative livelihood activities nearby Meeting the recipients of the Poverty Reduction Fund (2016–2020) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To observe differences To find out about livelihood opportunities

13:40–16:30	<p>Meeting with the staff of GNNR management, forestry and tourism department and township government, village heads, and others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village head: Listening to the origins of birdwatching tourism in Baihualing • Baoshan Tourism Administration: Introduction to tourism development in the Baihualing area: management, marketing, and governmental support • Baoshan Forestry Bureau (GNNR Management Bureau): Contribution of the Gaoligongshan Management Bureau and the local community to conservation • Prof. Yang Jianmei: A brief introduction to the case study conducted by ICIMOD and SWFU • Discussions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To share case study results with the local management • To gather information on governmental support to local communities in tourism development • To gather information on GNNR management • To interact with local departments of management • To gather information on governance, marketing, and institutions, and on issues and challenges regarding sustainability <p>Facilitated by <i>Prof. Wu Ning</i></p>
(Evening)	Watching an ethnic dance performance by Lisu women	
10 November (Morning)	<p>Discussion on principles/criteria for sustainable birdwatching tourism, using learnings from the previous days</p> <p>Plan for future actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding out opportunities in each country, and identifying country-wise action areas (if any) for 2018 • Suggesting regional activities for 2018 • Trip Summary Session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To discuss and summarize the principles of sustainable birdwatching tourism • To identify regional action areas for 2018 • To identify possible country-wise actions for 2018 <p>Presented by <i>Deepa Basnet</i></p>
(Afternoon)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel back to Baoshan • Visiting Xinzhai Coffee Community Cooperative • Check-in at hotel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To learn about typical high-value coffee products and alternative livelihood approaches
11 November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baoshan–Kunming (flight) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To take rest
12 November	Departure	

Participants enjoying local ethnic folk dance with local community



Annex II: Name List of Participants

SN	Name and Details	SN	Name and Details
China			
1	Yang Jianmei Associate Professor, Department of Ecotourism Southwest Forestry University (SWFU), Kunming, China Tel: 86-15368094151 Email: 181603@qq.com	2	Xiao Qianli Student Southwest Forestry University (SWFU) Email: 997584752@qq.com
3	Yao Fenggui	4	Huang Chengyue, Nujian State
5	Liu Huizi Department of Ecotourism	6	Zhou Xiongfeng Department of Ecotourism
7	Liu Yalan Department of Ecotourism	8	Wang Bin Nuijiang Management Bureau Gaoligongshan National Nature Reserve (GNNR), Yunnan, China
9	Li Zhengbo Director, Baoshan Management Bureau Gaoligongshan National Nature Reserve (GNNR), Yunnan, China lizhengbo1964@sina.com	10	Fu Lian Deng
11.	Zhong Dalun	12	Yang Fuxiang
12.	Qiuo Xinghua	13	Homestay (Tour Guide, Group 1)
14.	Homestay (Tour Guide, Group 2)	15	Homestay (Tour Guide, Group 3)
16.	Homestay (Tour Guide, Group 4)		
India			
17	Dr K.S. Kanwal Scientist-C, GBPNIHESD North-East Unit Vivek Vihar, Itanagar - 791113 Tel: 0360-2211773 Mob: +918731979943 Email: kskanwal03@gmail.com	18	Jhony Lepcha GBPNIHESD Sikkim Unit Pangthang, PO Penlog (East) Sikkim - 737101, India Ph: (03592) 237328, +91- 8348419069 E-Mail: jhony.lepcha@gmail.com
19	Ravi Pathak GBPNIHESD Kosi-Katarmal, Almora - 263643 Uttarakhand, India Phone: +91-9410121296 E-Mail: ravi0pathak@gmail.com		
Myanmar			
20	Zaw Min Thant Staff Officer Nature and Wildlife Conservation Division Forest Department, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation (MONREC), Myanmar Phone: +959400035321 E-mail: zawminthant2004@gmail.com	21	Than Htike Aung Ranger, Nature and Wildlife Conservation Division, Forest Department, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation (MONREC), Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar E-mail: mghtike2014@gmail.com

22	Myint Kyaw Ranger Hkakabo Razi National Park Management Office Putao, Kachin State, Myanmar Email: uaungmaung1@gmail.com	23	Moe Min Thein Putao Operation Manager Travel Expert Tourism Company Putao, Kachin State, Myanmar E-mail: moeminthein.putao@gmail.com
24	La Htang Zaw Naw, Village Leader Awadam Village Putao Township Kachin State, Myanmar Email: uaungmaung1@gmail.com	25	Ma Phan Dee Sar, Village Leader Wasadam Village, Putao Township Kachin State, Myanmar Email: uaungmaung1@gmail.com ; zawminthant2004@gmail.com
26	Gu Shin Dee Zi Senior Field Assistant Nature and Wildlife Conservation Division Biological Monitoring Team, Hkakabo Razi Landscape C/o WCS Myanmar, Yangon, Myanmar Email: wildernessmm@gmail.com	27	Thazin Phyo Research Assistant, Community Engagement Team, Hkakabo Razi Landscape Biological Monitoring Team Hkakabo Razi Landscape C/o WCS Myanmar, Yangon, Myanmar Email: thazinphyo.uof@gmail.com
ICIMOD			
28	Dr Wu Ning Theme Leader, Ecosystem Services Email: wu.ning@icimod.org	29	Dr Kamala Gurung Gender and NRM Specialist Email: kamala.gurung@icimod.org
30	Deepa Basnet Research Associate, Ecosystem Email: deepa.basnet@icimod.org	31	Jitendra Raj Bajracharya Photographer/Photo Editor Email: jitendra.bajracharya@icimod.org
32	Himaa Rai Programme Associate, HI-LIFE Email: himaa.ra@icimod.org		

Participants from Myanmar



Annex III: Impressions of the Workshop

a) Article by K.S. Kanwal, GBPNIHESD

(<https://arunachaltimes.in/index.php/2017/12/31/opportunity-of-community-based-bird-watching-ecotourism-in-arunachal/>)

The Arunachal Times Published from Itanagar Vol. 29 No. 201
www.arunachaltimes.in RNI NO 10909/89

The Arunachal Times, Sunday, December 31, 2017 LOCAL / NORTH EAST / 5

Opportunity of community-based bird-watching ecotourism in Arunachal

Dr KS Kanwal

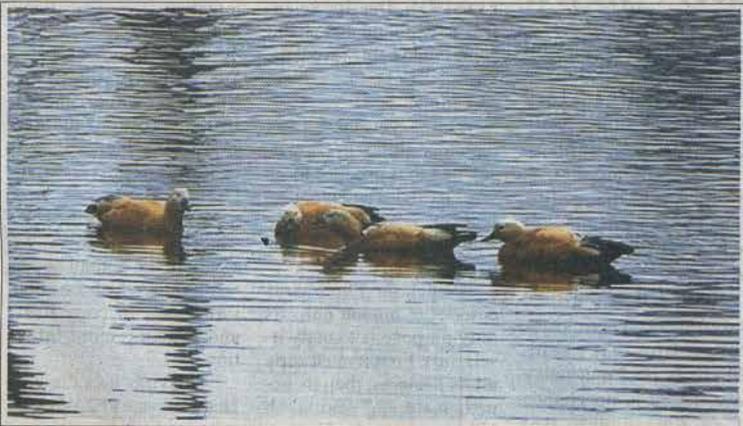
Bird watching or avitourism is a form of nature-based ecotourism that mainly focuses on observing and identifying birds in their natural habitats. It is one of the fastest growing outdoor activities around the world and gaining popularity in developing countries.

Birdwatchers are mostly conservation-minded responsible eco-tourists, who have respect for wildlife and natural habitats.

According to a study, the annual economic value of bird-watching tourism industry in the United States is around \$107 billion; and United Kingdom bird-watching expenditures are estimated at \$500 million per year.

Arunachal Pradesh is recognized as one of the 25 mega biodiversity hotspots of the world with the second highest breeding bird diversity in the world. It is the largest hill state (83,743 kms) in the Northeastern region of the country, having an 80% forest cover and a considerable area (around 11.82% of the geographical area of the state) under protected area network (PAN). There are two national parks, 11 wildlife sanctuaries, one orchid sanctuary, two tiger reserves, two elephant reserves, and one biosphere reserve.

The state is exceptionally rich in avian diversity. Around 750 birds species have been recorded from the state (57% of the total



avian species of the country), making the state the second highest avian diversity state in the country.

There are 25 notified Important Bird Areas (IBA) in the state. Arunachal Pradesh is not fully explored in ornithological perspective and holds great potential for new bird species discoveries.

Some new bird species such as the Himalayan Forest Thrush, the Bugun Liocichla, and new subspecies of the Sclater's monal (*Lophophorus sclateri arunachalensis*) have recently been recorded from the state. Diverse landscapes and varied climatic conditions also offer suitable habitats of various migratory birds, viz, the Black-necked crane, the Ruddy Shelduck, and the Spot-billed pelican.

Arunachal Pradesh has the highest diversity of hornbills in the country, as it is home to five different species (out of 9 species recorded from India), namely, the Great Hornbill, the Rufous-necked Hornbill, the Wreathed Hornbill, the White-throated Brown Hornbill, and the Oriental Pied Hornbill.

The rich and unique bird diversity of state makes it a very ideal destination of birdwatchers.

The Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary (454 avifauna), the Namdapha National Parks (491 avifauna), the Pakke Tiger Reserve (282 avifauna), the Mouling National Park (114 avifauna), the Dehang Dibang Biosphere Reserve (153 avifauna), the Tawang area (113 avifauna), and the Talle Valley Wildlife Sanctuary (130 avifauna) are some of the potential bird-watching areas in the state.

The author recently participated in a regional workshop on harnessing the potential on bird-watching ecotourism under the Landscape Initiative for the Far-Eastern Himalayas (HILIFE) - a project organized by the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), Nepal, in Baihualing village of Yunnan, China, and observed that the villagers of Baihualing have successfully promoted bird-watching tourism. Now this village has become a popular destination for international and national birdwatchers due to its close proximity to the Gaoligongshan National Nature Reserve (GNNR) and the rich diversity of bird species.

The local communities are directly getting livelihood benefits from homestay operation, local cuisine, transport, bird-watching ponds and hides, bird guide services, selling of local products and souvenir and cultural programs performance. They are also actively involved in various bird and nature conservation activities.

Considering the rich diversity of birds and the presence of important bird areas in Arunachal Pradesh, there is ample opportunity for development of bird-watching ecotourism in the state. Hence, such community driven bird-watching ecotourism initiative needs to be implemented in the

state. This will provide alternative livelihood opportunity to local community and will also reduce pressure on the forest and natural resources and ultimately help in conservation of biodiversity.

Bird-watching ecotourism will also play key role in discovery of new birds species from the state. It could also be one of the climate change mitigation and adaptation strategy for this climate change sensitive Himalayan state.

At present, the Bugun community is involved in bird-watching ecotourism activity in the Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary, but there is huge potential for development of bird-watching ecotourism sector in the other areas of state too.

Collaborative actions and wider partnership among stakeholders, mainly forest and tourism departments, research institutions, researchers, non-government organizations, tourism sector organizations, and community are urgently need to harness the bird-watching ecotourism potential of the state.

Capacity building and awareness generation among local community are other important priority areas for sustainable development of community based bird-watching ecotourism in Arunachal Pradesh. [The contributor of the article is Scientist of the GB Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment and Sustainable Development, North East Regional Centre, Itanagar]

b) **Article by Deepa Basnet and Wu Ning, ICIMOD**

(<https://www.thethirdpole.net/en/2018/01/19/developing-birdwatching-as-a-sustainable-programme-in-china/>)



UNDERSTANDING ASIA'S WATER CRISIS

Home About > Topics > River Basins > Countries > Explore > Maps & Data > Share a map

English नेपाली हिन्दी বাংলা اردو

Search here...

Developing birdwatching as a sustainable programme in China

A trip to the Gaoligongshan National Nature Reserve reveals how a new paradigm towards birdwatching, conservation, and local profitability is developing in China, report Deepa Basnet and Wu Ning



GNNR is a birdwatcher's paradise [Image by: Jitendra Bajracharya, ICIMOD]

Deepa Basnet and Wu Ning, Friday January 19th, 2018

Categories: [Articles](#) Tags: [biodiversity](#) [China](#) Regions: [China](#) Topics: [Biodiversity](#) [Culture](#)

Share this story

[Like](#) [Share](#) [Tweet](#) [G+](#) [in](#) [Share](#)

The cool fresh breeze touched our skin despite the warm sunlight as we deplaned at the Baoshan Yunrui Airport. With excitement and enthusiasm we set off to our destination for a week of learning.

When we reached Gaoligongshan National Nature Reserve (GNNR), we were welcomed by a rush of gorgeous sounds: birds chirping, a murmuring stream, and the low hum of cicadas. GNNR covers more than 4,000 square kilometres, and is home to more than 200 species of wild animals, 525 species of birds, and 49 species of fish. The immense biodiversity of the reserve is matched only by its astonishing landscape and natural beauty.

The next morning, we set out down a birding trail that starts in the village and runs deep into the forest, and that was part of some important historical trails like the Silk Road. We peered through binoculars to identify the many species which filled the air with song. The first sighting was that of a Yunnan Fulvetta, a small grey-headed bird, foraging in a berry tree, surrounded by its fellows. The trail was dotted with die-hard

- c) **Checklist of bird diversity in the Far-Eastern Himalayan Landscape in the Regional Database System of ICIMOD**
 (http://rds.icimod.org:8080/hkh-bif/resource?r=Bird_diversity)

GBIF INTEGRATED PUBLISHING TOOLKIT (IPT)
free and open access to biodiversity data

Home
About

- Summary
- Data Records
- Downloads
- Versions
- How to cite
- Rights
- GBIF Registration
- Keywords
- Contacts
- Geographic Coverage
- Project Data
- Additional Metadata

Bird diversity in the Far Eastern Himalayan Landscape

Latest version published on Sep 10, 2018

This resource has not been registered with GBIF

The checklist of the bird diversity contains a total of 908 species extracted from the literatures of the landscape. The dataset has been collected from several peer-reviewed journals, books/chapters and published reports within the Far Eastern Himalayan Landscape (China, India, Myanmar).

Home
 DwC-A
 EML
 RTF
 Versions
 Rights
 Cite this

Data Records

The data in this occurrence resource has been published as a Darwin Core Archive (DwC-A), which is a standardized format for sharing biodiversity data as a set of one or more data tables. The core data table contains 910 records.

This IPT archives the data and thus serves as the data repository. The data and resource metadata are available for download in the [downloads](#) section. The [versions](#) table lists other versions of the resource that have been made publicly available and allows tracking changes made to the resource over time.

Downloads

Download the latest version of this resource data as a Darwin Core Archive (DwC-A) or the resource metadata as EML or RTF:

Data as a DwC-A file [download](#) 910 records in English (55 KB) - Update frequency: unknown
 Metadata as an EML file [download](#) in English (7 KB)
 Metadata as an RTF file [download](#) in English (7 KB)

Versions

The table below shows only published versions of the resource that are publicly accessible.

Version	Published on	Records	Change summary	DOI handle	Last modified by
1.1	2018-09-10	910	None provided		Sameer Bajracharya
1.0	2018-09-05	458	None provided		Sameer Bajracharya

Showing 1 to 2 of 2 ◀ previous next ▶

How to cite

Researchers should cite this work as follows:

ICIMOD (2018). Far Eastern Himalayan Landscape. Biodiversity Database.

Rights

Researchers should respect the following rights statement:

This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution \(CC-BY\) 4.0 License](#).

GBIF Registration

This resource has not been registered with GBIF

Keywords

Avifauna; Birds; Biodiversity; Gaoligongshan; Namdapha; Hkakaborazi; Hponkanrazi; Hukaung; Bumphabum; Far Eastern Himalayan Landscape; Metadata

Contacts

Annex IV: Glimpses from the visits



The premises of Baihualing Smile Coffee, Baihualing village



Xinzhai Coffee House, Baoshan



Participants preparing action plans for sustainable birdwatching and photography tourism



Resource persons from ICIMOD, SWFU, and the local facilitator



© ICIMOD 2019

International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development

GPO Box 3226, Kathmandu, Nepal

Tel +977-1-5275222 **Fax** +977-1-5275238

Email info@icimod.org **Web** www.icimod.org