

Biodiversity Observation in Nepal



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EIA Friendly Highway

Japan made EIA friendly highway in Nepal

The 158 KMs BP Highway is the shortest link between Kathmandu valley and the eastern Terai region in Nepal. Construction on November 1996 and completed and handed over to the Nepalese government on 3 July 2015 by Japanese ambassador to Nepal Mr. Masashi Ogawa. The total cost of the project was ¥ 26 billion. After the promulgation of Environmental Protection Act (EPA), a Complete Environmental Impact Assessment was conducted by extensive discussion on environmental issues and the bio-engineering works.

Biodiversity observation

Nepal's biodiversity will be gravely threatened if the country pushes ahead with a plan to build the 1,792-kilometer (1,113-mile) Hulaki Highway (Postal Road). The route traverses the country's southern lowlands, where around 795 km (494 mi) has already been built. But controversy over the road cutting through protected areas has delayed its completion.

Court's biodiversity concerns

19Jan 2023: The Supreme Court (SC) has issued an interim order not to carry out any of the physical construction projects along the Sikles Annapurna Conservation Area in Kaski. The judge issued the order in response to a writ petition filed by an advocate. The project seeks to construct a 6.416 km long 'Sikles Annapurna Cable Car

26May 2022: Nepal's Supreme Court has ordered the government not to build a controversial \$3.45-billion Nijgadh international airport in the country's south, after activists filed a petition citing environmental concerns. According to the EIA, which the government approved in 2018, 2.4 million trees, both big and small, would have had to be cut to construct the two-runway airport.

biodiversity observation

20Jan2023: When residents of Nandapur village on the western fringes of Nepal's Chitwan National Park rushed to the scene of a rhino death near the Narayani River, they found a heartbreaking sight. In the past five years, 165 rhinos in and around Chitwan have died. Of these, only six were killed by poachers.

In fact, Nepal received international accolades for recording zero poaching of rhinos in 2011, 2014, 2016, 2018, 2019 and 2020. Count rhino 2021 results 752

29Dec2022: Nepal was home to 121 tigers in 2010, the same year that it and 12 other tiger range countries agreed to double the big cat's global population by 2022. Since then, Nepal has nearly tripled that figure, and is now home to 355 tigers.

Observation continues

15Feb 2019: Nepal's Supreme Court has ordered the government not to construct any new roads inside Chitwan National Park without approval from UNESCO, park authorities and other stakeholders.

Chitwan National Park is home the world's second-largest population of greater one-horned rhinos (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) as well as a significant population of Bengal tigers (*Panthera tigris tigris*), 54 other mammal species and more than 550 varieties of birds. Chitwan's extraordinary biodiversity led to its inscription as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1984.

Nepal entered 2022 with encouraging news related to its tiger population. As a census gathered pace census, Bardiya National Park, home to 87 of Nepal's estimated 235 tigers, received the TX2 Award for doubling the population of the endangered species since 2010. At least 4 tigers have died on the country's roads in the past 6 years.

Acknowledgement

- Supreme Court of Nepal
- Ministry of Forest and Environment
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