



FACTSHEET

PAK

2014

Forest

Improving Sub-watershed Management and Environmental Awareness around Ayubia National Park (G200 - Western Himalayas)



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Donor: The Coca-Cola Foundation

Duration: 1997 - Present

The Ayubia National Park (ANP) covers an area of approximately 3,300 hectares and is located within the Western Himalayan ecoregion, a Global 200 Priority ecoregion. The G200 is the scientific ranking of globally significant biodiversity areas selected by WWF and other international conservation organizations. The Western Himalayan ecoregion also includes one of the Endemic Bird Areas of the world (EBA) identified by Bird Life International. The area holds sub-populations of Asian big cats (snow leopards and common leopards) which are priority species under the Global Programme Framework. The area is also the habitat of species listed as *endangered* in Pakistan by the Conservation Assessment and Management Plan (CAMP) conducted by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in 2004 such as the Asian bear, grey wolf and musk deer. The Western Himalayan ecoregion is also the catchment area of the Indus River which provides 70 to 80 per cent water from the melting of snow and glaciers. Erosion in this area is high, thus watershed management is critical its conservation.

This project is now in its fifth phase and includes six hamlets of Kundla, Namli Mera Khurd, Toheedabad, Lundi Mandri, Arifabad and Mora in Nathiagali, and is located at the boundary of the Ayubia National Park.



Project Description

The project contributes to sustainable flow of water for sub-watershed catchment areas through different techniques such as loose stone check damming, construction of gabion check dams in streams at different points along with stabilization of

eroded slides with bio-engineering and engineering techniques. Habitat restoration is carried out using indigenous plant species to reduce landslides, soil erosion and flooding.

To reduce pressure on natural resources, use of solar water heaters and fuel-efficient stoves is promoted in the community. Involvement of women organizations in fuel-efficient stoves distribution is encouraging, and will further strengthen conservation efforts. In order to ensure direct supply of water to communities, rainwater harvesting has also been tested in the project area.

Through proactive mobilization, environmental education and awareness the project has created strong ownership between project interventions, local communities and other stakeholders. Village organizations, women organizations and their clusters are playing an active role in achieving project goals.

Another important aspect of the project is its environmental education and awareness activities. Activities include solid waste management campaigns, plantation drives, and establishing nature clubs. An interesting project activity to reduce plastic waste was developed and cotton cloth bags promoted in Khanispur Bazar. These bags were produced with the help of local women who received training in WWF-Pakistan's vocational training centre.



WWF 2020 Priority Places Goal

By 2020, biodiversity is protected and well managed in the world's most outstanding natural places.



Objectives

To contribute to the overall goal of improving sustained flow of clean water in springs and streams and conservation of biodiversity, the project works to achieve the following specific objectives:

- To ensure support from key stakeholders for sustainable watershed management and conservation of natural resources.
- To introduce suitable land use management practices that contribute to improved quality and quantity of freshwater, improved natural habitats and improved local livelihoods.
- To conduct research to explore best possible solutions of problems faced in watershed management.