

USAID Biodiversity (Jal Jangal)

YEAR I AT A GLANCE



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Overview

USAID Biodiversity (Jal Jangal) is building on past successes in conserving Nepal's forestry and freshwater resources to support local communities, governments, and conservation practitioners to strengthen biodiversity conservation and adapt to climate change, protecting the country's precious natural resources.

Fostering Partnerships and Collaboration

USAID Biodiversity (Jal Jangal) ensures a collaborative approach by working closely with community stakeholders, conservation partners, government entities, academic institutions, private sector, civil society, and media. This collective effort aims to achieve the activity's objectives and promote positive changes in attitude, behavior, and practices. The key partners and stakeholders of the activity represent marginalized groups, such as women and individuals from various ethnic backgrounds, including Dalit, Madhesi, Janajati, Muslim, Brahmin/Kshetri, Newar, people with disabilities, and LGBTQI+ representatives.



Local Level : Multistakeholder Dialogues

The activity fosters inclusive multistakeholder dialogues across priority landscapes to address issues related to Biodiversity and Natural Resources Management (NRM). Diverse stakeholders, including those from the private sector, local government, Community Forest User Groups, and Community Forest Coordination Committees, participated. Through ongoing stakeholder consultations, the team continues to actively engage with diverse voices and perspectives.



Provincial Level : Co-Design Workshops

We brought together diverse stakeholders in Co-design Workshops across Kathmandu and the Sudurpaschim, Karnali, and Gandaki Provinces. These workshops have transformed ideas into an actionable Year 2 Work Plan, reflecting the commitment of everyone involved, including the Government of Nepal, Community Stakeholders, and Conservation Partners.



Federal Level: USAID Biodiversity (Jal Jangal) Project Steering Committee and Working Group

In June 2023, the USAID Biodiversity (Jal Jangal) Steering Committee (PSC) and Project Working Group (PWG) were formed following a secretary-level decision by the Ministry of Forests and Environment. The PSC oversees activity objectives, and the PWG facilitates planning and stakeholder coordination. The PWG successfully convened three meetings, providing crucial inputs for the Year 2 Annual Work Plan (AWP) of USAID Biodiversity (Jal Jangal), which was endorsed and presented at the first PSC meeting held in September 2023. Mr. Travis Guymon, the USAID Contracting Officer's Representative for USAID Biodiversity (Jal Jangal), highlighted USAID's commitment to biodiversity conservation. Dr. Deepak Kumar Kharal, Secretary of MoFE, concluded the meeting by expressing gratitude and emphasizing the efficient implementation of activities. The PSC agreed to proceed with Year 2 AWP implementation.





Engaging Conservation Champions for Sustainability

In July 2023, USAID Biodiversity (Jal Jangal) released its first Annual Program Statement (APS), inviting stakeholders from across Nepal to apply for grants. We hosted workshops in Pokhara, Chitwan, Dhangadhi, and Surkhet landscapes and offered a virtual session for stakeholders unable to attend in person. We utilized online web portals, 16 local FM stations, one national, and three local daily newspapers, and targeted emails to reach a wider audience. The response was overwhelming with 237 organizations expressing their interest and intent to apply. A total of 223 organizations applied for grants.

Inclusive Policy Making For Aquatic Biodiversity Conservation

Over the past two decades, unregulated fishing practices have had adverse effects on fish diversity in and around the Karnali River and Bheri River. USAID Biodiversity (Jal Jangal) supported in drafting Aquatic Animal and Biodiversity Conservation (AABC) Bill after a series of consultation meetings with community stakeholders residing along the riverbanks and nearby areas. The Bill is taken as a positive step by the community, hoping the new law aligns with federal laws to end destructive fishing practices. To ensure the effective implementation of the AABC Act by Chhayanath Rara Municipality and Chaukune RM, USAID Biodiversity (Jal Jangal) plans to organize training sessions for elected representatives, members of Community Aquatic Animal Conservation Group, and selected NGOs.



Active Surveillance To Prevent Zoonotic Diseases

Zoonotic diseases are emerging as a major threat to both wildlife conservation and human well-being and transmittable to one another. USAID Biodiversity (Jal Jangal) conducted zoonotic disease surveillance in the buffer zone of Bardia National Park. Thakurdwara village was selected due to its proximity to the national park. The local government appreciated the decision and agreed to co-invest in further surveillance and collaborate on its mitigation. The initiative provides information to affected households, raising community awareness for immediate and long-term disease prevention. The activity is exploring expansion to the buffer zones of Langtang National Park and Chitwan National Park buffer zones.



Strengthening Sustainable Trade of Nature-Based Products



USAID Biodiversity (Jal Jangal) co-financed the Market Access Workshop organized by Nepal Herbs and Herbal Products Association (NEHHPA) and Asia Network for Sustainable Agriculture and Bioresources (ANSAB). The event provided a platform to build connections between Nepali and international buyers. 63 participants from Nepal, India, China, Hungary, Belgium, Bhutan, Germany, Slovenia, and France took part. The activity will conduct a remunerative market study for selected nature-based products in Year 2.

Promoting Environmental Sustainability

USAID Biodiversity (Jal Jangal), in partnership with Bardia National Park, the Nepali Army, and local stakeholders, observed World Environment Day to make Bardia National Park plastic-free by cleaning up areas of East-West Highway and installing bins.



"YOUTHS LEADING THE WAY: COMBATING BIODIVERSITY LOSS, CLIMATE CHANGE AND PLASTIC POLLUTION"



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Director General
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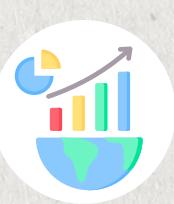
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Additionally, we organized a virtual dialogue titled "Youths Leading the Way," in collaboration with Nepalese Youth for Climate Action. Experts discussed biodiversity loss, climate change, and plastic pollution, providing valuable insights into national policies and exploring conservation opportunities.

Looking Ahead Into Year 2



800,000+
hectares: formulating management plans for biologically significant areas

150,000
people benefitting from improved water resource management

90,000
people using climate information or implementing risk-reducing actions

100,000+
people with improved economic benefits from sustainable NRM

85,000
people trained in natural resource management and biodiversity conservation

100+
Private Sector Engagement and infrastructure projects integrating sustainable practices or safeguards

Note of Thanks

We extend our sincere gratitude to everyone associated with USAID Biodiversity (Jal Jangal), and for being a part of the conservation journey so far. We eagerly look forward to collaborating with you and others to further support the conservation of Nepal's freshwater sources and forest areas (Jal and Jangal).

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