



NATIONAL SPEARHEAD TRAINING WORKSHOP FOR GANGA TASK FORCE & ECO TASK FORCE ON CONSERVATION & MANAGEMENT OF GANGETIC DOLPHINS & OTHER AQUATIC MACRO FAUNA OF THE GANGA BASIN

Date: 21st – 26th September, 2022

Under the Wildlife Institute of India - National Mission for Clean Ganga project 'Planning and management for aquatic species conservation and maintenance of ecosystem services in the Ganga River basin for Clean Ganga', National Spearhead Training Workshop for Ganga Task Force & Eco Task Force on Conservation & Management of Gangetic Dolphin & Other Aquatic Macro Fauna of the Ganga Basin was conducted from 21st to 26th September, 2022 at the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun. The Ganga Task Force (GTF) is a unit of the territorial army, a volunteer force of ex-servicemen deployed in the services to keep the Ganga River clean and spread awareness to stop people and industry from polluting the river. The Eco Task Force (ETF) is a unit undertaking afforestation and other ecological tasks to improve the ecosystem in Uttarakhand.

The purpose of this training was to develop the capacity of the Ganga Task Force & Eco Task Force about the ecological profile of the Gangetic Dolphin and other Aquatic Macro Fauna of the Ganga River and its tributaries, to understand the significance of their conservation, and how to rescue and rehabilitate the aquatic species of the Ganga River and its tributaries and to engage local communities and trained them for the conservation of the aquatic species found in the river. The training comprises interactive sessions, hands-on sessions, field visits, and pre- and post-training evaluation through a Questionnaire.

Team Members

WII-NMCG team:

Dr. Sangeeta Angom, Scientist & Training Coordinator; Dr. Aakash Mohan Rawat, Project Assistant (Technical) Grade-II; Ms. Sana Shaikh, Assistant Training Coordinator; Mr. Rahul Gupta, Training Assistant; Ms. Simren Dogra, Project Assistant; Ms. Ashmika Aggarwal, Project Assistant; Ms. Aarti Chauhan, Project Assistant; Mr. Sheetal Kumar Pal, Project Assistant; Ms. Simran Aggarwal, Project Assistant; Ms. Diksha Dangwal, Project Intern; Ms. Shalini, Project Intern.

Resource Persons: Dr. Sandeep Kumar Gupta, Scientist—E, WII; Dr. Shivani Barthwal, Project Scientist, NMCG-WII Project; Mr. Zeeshan Ali, Spatial Analyst, NMCG-WII Project; Dr. Ajit Kumar, Project Associate, NMCG-WII Project; Dr. Deepika Dogra, Project Associate, NMCG-WII Project; Ms. Richika Sah, Project Associate, NMCG-WII Project; Ms. Aishwarya Ramachandran, Project Fellow, NMCG-WII Project; Ms. Shatakshi Sharma, Project Assistant, NMCG-WII Project; Mr. Saurav Gawan, Conservation Biologist, NMCG-WII Project; Mr. Zayed Khan, Project Fellow, NMCG-WII Project; Mr. Nariman Vazifdar, Reptile Conservationist.

Dignitaries and Guests

The inaugural session was graced by Chief Guest Lt. Col. Naveen Panwar; Col. Lalit Chamola (Retd.), SENA MEDAL, Dr. Ruchi Badola, Scientist G, Principal Investigator and Nodal Officer WII-NMCG Project, Dr. S. A. Hussain, Former Scientist G, WII and Project Manager, NMCG-WII Project; Dr. Sangeeta Angom, Training Coordinator, NMCG-WII Project.

Participants:

The training workshop was attended by 20 Ganga Task Force from Uttarakhand & Eco Task Force from Uttar Pradesh, 6 Forest Officials from Uttar Pradesh, 3 Junior Engineers and 2 Executive Engineer from irrigation department Bijnor, Uttar Pradesh, 15 Ganga Praharis from Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh. A total of 46 participants were present in the training.

Day 1: 21st September 2022

Inaugural Session

The session was initiated by Ms. Aarti Chauhan, where she welcomed all the dignitaries, participants and WII team and invited the guests and dignitaries to the stage. Dr. Sangeeta Angom, Scientist and Training Coordinator delivered the welcome address where she once again welcomed all dignitaries and participants of the training programme, and asked the participants to introduce themselves. Following that, Dr. Ruchi Badola, Scientist G, Registrar and Nodal Officer gave an address where she talked about the introduction of the training programme as part of the WII-NMCG initiative and highlighted the role and objective of the workshop and spearhead training. Next, an inaugural address was given by our Chief Guest Lt. Col. Naveen Panwar where he highlighted the historical origin and achievements of the Eco Task Force since the 1970s and how they have always been at the frontline in providing protection and improving the environment, especially in the case of Uttarakhand. Following that, the keynote address was delivered by Col. Lalit Chamola (Retd.), SENA MEDAL, where he shared his experience with the Ganga River and talked about the current scenarios and threats to the Ganga River and its biodiversity. He showed appreciation to the WII and the participants for the fruitful collaborative activities and encouraged them to continue and even scale up such collaborative actions in the future. The Vote of thanks was presented by Dr. Aakash Mohan Rawat. The session concluded with a group photograph outside the auditorium.

Technical Session I

The session was initiated by Dr. Shivani Barthwal where she gave an overview of the WII-NMCG Phase II-"Planning and Management for Aquatic Species Conservation and Maintenance of Ecosystem Services in the Ganga River Basin" where she informed about activities and progress conducted under the project. The session was followed by Mr. Saurav Gawan, a Conservation Biologist, who gave a lecture on the ecology of crocodiles and turtles where he discussed their biological features and habits. He also informed the participants about the different species of crocodiles and turtles that are found in the Ganga River Basin. He also highlighted the importance of turtles in an ecosystem and explained the techniques of identification, handling, and monitoring of crocodiles and turtles of the Ganga basin and also discussed the threats and solutions. Post Lunch, the session was continued by Mr. Saurav Gawan, where he talked on the ecology of dolphins and Otters and discussed their biological features, threats and conservation status. The Lecture ended with an interactive session where participants cleared their doubts. The last programme of the day was the walk through the nature trail in the campus backyard. The session was conducted in two parts. They were then taken to the trail, since it was raining it could not be completed but then through a video, they were introduced to the various common flora and fauna of the campus through interesting facts and anecdotes. The participants actively shared their knowledge while clarifying their doubts.

Day 2: 22nd September 2022

Field visit to Asan Conservation Reserve

On 2nd day, the participants visited the Asan Conservation Reserve where Mr. P. Gangai Amaran briefed the participants about the wetlands, its importance, inter geographical importance of Migratory birds, water conservation and ecosystem services. Post lunch, the participants visited HESCO, where Padma Bhushan Dr. Anil Joshi highlighted and appreciated the emerging role of Defence Forces i.e., the Ganga Task Force and Eco Task Force, in the field of biodiversity and natural resources conservation, the participants were introduced to the concept of how they can engage the local communities in their areas in river rejuvenation and restoration through conventional methods such as water and spring recharge, organic compost etc. as well as livelihood enhancement through skill development programmes. Dr. Kiran Negi (HESCO official staff) introduced the participants to the aims and objectives of HESCO and showed the case studies of their work in Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh where the springs and streams have been recharged through simple techniques of trench building in the vicinity of the affected stream or springs. She also discussed how the Himalayan community in the past times used similar techniques of Chal-Khal for water recharge of springs and small streams thus maintaining harmony with nature. After reaching back to the WII, the participants visited the Forensic lab where Dr. Sandeep Kumar Gupta, Scientist—E, and Dr. Ajit Kumar, guided them on the identification and differentiation of poaching samples and fake samples of different species.

DAY 3: 23rd September 2022

TECHNICAL SESSION III

On 3rd Day, the session was initiated by Mr. Zayed Khan where he gave a lecture on environmental laws where he discussed the Wildlife Protection Act in detail. He also highlighted

the schedules under which the aquatic species of the Ganga River Basin comes. Following that, a Session on Community mobilization and the role of Ganga Praharis in River Conservation by taken by Dr. Deepika Dogra, Project Associate where she explained how to engage local communities and trained them for the conservation of the aquatic species found in the river. She highlighted the various activities that have been conducted by the Ganga Praharis at their respective sites and showed the related videos. Following that, Dr. Pariva Dobriyal conducted the team-building exercises for the participants where she also narrated the concept of team-building and its importance and significance in community-based conservation. At the end of the session, Dr. Sangeeta Angom presented the concept of the Bal Ganga Prahari Programme and also conducted various outdoor games related to the Ganga River and its Biodiversity.

Day 4: 24th September, 2022

Visit to Haiderpur Wetland, Bijnaur

In the morning, the participants took to the Haiderpur Wetland where a Hands-on session on Water Quality Monitoring was taken by Ms. Richika Shah and WII Team where she instructed how to use YSI multi-parameter equipment to assess water quality parameters. Water quality monitoring data sheets were given to each participant and were given technical guidance on the necessity of documenting the data on the data sheets. Subsequently, Mr. Saurav Gawan talked about bird identification and population estimation techniques to the participants.

Handling of wildlife species in Distress-I

Post Lunch, the session was taken by Mr. Nariman Vazifdar, a Reptile Conservationist where he talked in detail about the reptiles of the Ganga River Basin where discussed the biological characteristics of Crocodilians and Snakes and explained the principles and rules of rescue & rehabilitation of aquatic fauna of Ganga basin. He also told the participant about first aid treatment at the time of the snake bite and steps to be followed during the rescue of the snake and was also demonstrated using basic necessary tools and equipment.

The Session was continued by Mr. Saurav Gawan, who talked about the ecology of turtles and discussed the techniques of handling turtles in distress. The lecture continued with a demonstration of restraining turtles using a dummy turtle. Further, the session was concluded by Dr Ajit Kumar, who gave a lecture on the Ecology of Swamp Deer where he discussed the research and findings during his study. He discussed in detail the behaviour and ecology of different species of deer.

Day 5, 25th September, 2022

Handling of aquatic species in distress-II

The session was taken by Mr. Nariman Vazifdar, he talked in detail about the behavior and ecology of crocodiles. He showed videos related to the same. He discussed in detail the rescue

techniques of crocodiles, also how to handle them in distress and also demonstrated using basic necessary tools and equipment while using a dummy crocodile.

Valedictory

The day was concluded with the Valedictory session where Ms. Sana Shaikh welcomed our chief guest, Mr. P.P. Gautam, Executive Engineer, Irrigation Department, Bijnor, and all the participants once again. Mr. Aakash Mohan Rawat presented the training report of the Spearhead Training Workshop where he gave an overview of the sessions conducted during the last 5 days. After that, participants shared their experiences and also gave suggestions, where also they asked their queries and cleared their doubts. Following that, the distribution of certificates to the participants was done by our dignitaries, Mr. P.P. Gautam, Chief Guest, Dr. Sangeeta Angom, Training Coordinator, Dr. Deepika Dogra, Project Associate. Later, Mr. P.P. Gautam, shared their inspiring and motivating words. The session was concluded with the post training assessment.

Dolphin Jalaj Safari

Post Lunch, participants with the WII-NMCG Team went for Dolphin Jalaj Safari, where Dr. Akash Mohan Rawat explained about the role of Dolphin Jalaj Safari in promoting ecotourism in the area as a part of involving local communities in biodiversity conservation through livelihood enhancement.

Day 6, 26th September, 2022

Visit to Ganga Avlokan, Chandi Ghat, Haridwar

On the last day of training the participants with NMCG Team visited the Ganga Avlokan, an Interpretation Centre, there also they got to know about Ganga riverscape and its biodiversity through the panels and interacted with the Ganga Praharis, Mr. Manoj Nishad and Mr. Vikas Kumar. After lunch, all the participants and NMCG team headed back to WII.

Programme Schedule

Day 1 (21st September 2022) INAUGURAL SESSION		
TIME	SESSIONS	NMCG-WII & RESOURCE PERSON
1000-1030	Registration and Pre-training Assessment	Mr. Rahul Gupta, Ms. Simren Dogra, Ms. Ashmika Aggarwal, Ms. Simran Aggarwal, Ms. Shalini Chhetri
1030-1040	Welcome Address	Dr. Sangeeta Angom, Training Coordinator, NMCG-WII Project

1040-1050	Address	Dr. S. A. Hussain, Former Scientist G, WII and Project Manager, NMCG-WII Project
1050-1100	Role and objective of the workshop and spearhead training	Dr. Ruchi Badola, Scientist G & PI, NMCG-WII Project
1100-1120	Inaugural Address	COL. Lalit Chamola (RETD.) SENA MEDAL
1120-1130	Vote of Thanks	Dr. Aakash Mohan Rawat
1130-1200	GROUP PHOTOGRAPH AND HIGH TEA	
TECHNICAL SESSION I		
1200-1300	WII-NMCG Project Phase II: An Overview	Dr. Shivani Barthwal
1300-1400	Lunch	
1400-1500	Ecology of Gangetic dolphin	Mr. Goura Chandra Das

1500-1530	TEA	
1530-1630	Ecology of Crocodiles and Turtles	Mr. Saurav Gawan
1630-1730	Monitoring of water birds	Mr. Neeraj Mahar
DAY 2 (22nd September 2022) TECHNICAL SESSION II		
0700-1130	Field visit to Asan Conservation Reserve	Mr. Gangaimaran, Mr. Ajay Rawat, Dr. Aakash Mohan Rawat, Mr. SK Pal, Ms. Simren Dogra, Ms. Simran Aggarwal, Ms. Shalini Chhetri, Ms. Diksha Dangwal
1300-1400	Lunch at HESCO	
1400-1530	Visit at HESCO: River and streams recharge	Padma Bhusan Dr. Anil Joshi, Founder & Director, HESCO
1500-1530	Tea	
1530-1630	Forensic Lab visit	Dr. S.K. Gupta, Scientist E, WII

1630-1730	Visit to WII Nature Trail	Mr. Zeeshan, Ms. Aishwarya Ramachandran, Ms. Shatakshi Sharma, Ms. Sakshi Rana, Ms. Priti Kumari
DAY 3 (23 rd September 2022) TECHNICAL SESSION III		
1000-1045	Environmental Laws	Mr. Zayed Khan
1045-1130	Community Mobilization: Role of Ganga Praharis in river Conservation	Dr. Deepika Dogra
1130-1215	Community mobilization: Team Building exercise	Dr. Pariva Dobriyal and team
1215-1300	Bal Ganga Prahari Programme: Concept and Activities	Dr. Sangeeta Angom and team
1300-1400	Lunch	
TECHNICAL SESSION IV Haiderpur Wetland Bijnor, UP		
1430-1830	Visit to Haiderpur Wetland, Bijnor, UP	Mr. Rahul Gupta & WII– NMCG Training team
1830-1930	Check in at Hotel	
1930-2100	Collection and analysis techniques of Ecotoxicological samples	Ms. Richika Sah and team
2100 onwards	DINNER	
	DAY 4 (24 th September 2022)	
	TECHNICAL SESSION V	
0600-0800	Hands on Session: Water quality monitoring	Ms. Richika Sah and team
0800-1200	Identification of Birds/ Reptiles/Mammals	Mr. Saurav Gawan & Mr. Gangaimaran & training team
1300-1400	LUNCH	
	TECHNICAL SESSION VI RESCUE & REHABILITATION TECHNIQUES	
1430-1530	Ecology of Swamp Deer	Dr. Ajit Kumar
1530-1630	Handling of wildlife species in distress I	Mr. Nariman Vazifdar

1630-1730	Handling of turtles in distress	Mr. Saurav Gawan
DAY 5 TECHNICAL SESSION VII (25 th September 2022)		
1000-1100	Handling of wildlife species in distress II	Mr. Nariman Vazifdar
Valedictory Function		
1100-1110	Welcome Address	Dr. Sangeeta Angom
1110-1120	Training Report	Dr. Aakash Mohan Rawat
1120-1130	Interaction and Experience	Selected participants from GTF
1130-1230	Certificate Distribution	Dr. Ruchi Badola & Dr. S.A. Hussain
1230-1250	Post Training assessment	Mr. SK Pal
1250-1300	Vote of Thanks	Ms. Neha Negi
1300-1400	Lunch	
1500 onwards	Boat transect on Dolphin Jalaj Safari	Mr. Rahul Gupta and Training team
DAY 6 (26 th September 2022 Ganga Avlokan, Chandi Ghat, Haridwar		
1000-1300	Visit to Ganga Avlokan, Chandi Ghat, Haridwar	Dr. Aakash Mohan Rawat, Mr. Rahul Gupta and team
	Interaction with Ganga Praharis	
1330-1430	LUNCH AT GANGA AVLOKAN	
1530 onwards	Back to WII	

PHOTO GALLERY

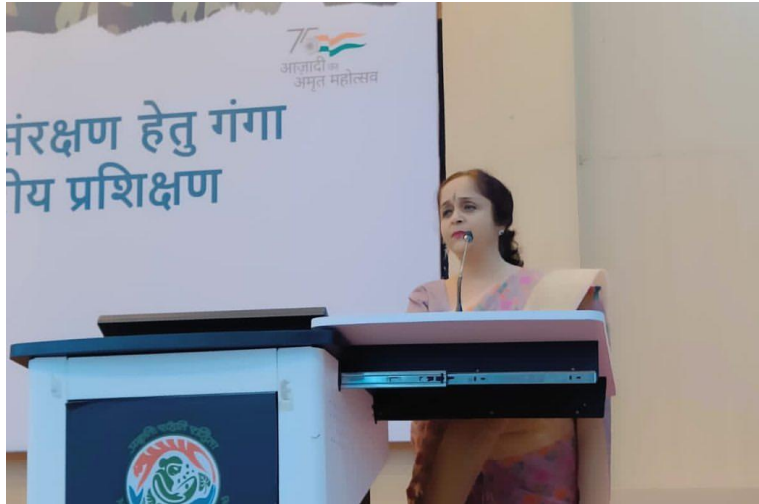
Day 1, 21st September, 2022



Registration of Participants



Welcome Address: Dr. Sangeeta Angom, Training Coordinator



Address: By Dr. Ruchi Badola, Scientist G, Registrar WII, Nodal Officer, WII-NMCG



Address: By Dr. S.A. Hussain, Former Scientist G, Project Manager, WII-NMCG



Inaugural Address: By Chief Guest Lt. Col. Naveen Panwar



Keynote Address: Col. Lalit Chamola (Retd.), SENA MEDAL



Vote of Thanks: By Dr. Aakash Mohan Rawat, WII-NMCG



Group Photograph



Overview of NMCG Project-Phase-II: By Dr. Shivani Barthwal, WII-NMCG



Session on Ecology of Crocodiles and Turtles and Dolphin: By Mr. Saurav Gawan, WII-NMCG

DAY 2, 22nd September, 2022



Field visit to Asan Conservation Reserve: Session on Bird Watching by Mr. Gangaiamaran





HESCO Visit: Talk by Padma Bhushan, Dr. Anil Joshi



Forensic Lab Visit: By Dr. S.K. Gupta, WII & Dr Ajit Kumar, WII-NMCG



GIS Lab Visit



WII Nature Trail, Ms. Aishwarya & Ms. Satakshi, WII-NMCG

Day 3, 23rd September, 2022



Session on Environmental Laws: By Mr. Zayed Khan, WII-NMCG



Session on Community Mobilization: Role of Ganga Praharis in Conservation: By Dr. Deepika Dogra, WII-NMCG



Community Mobilization: Team Building Exercise Dr. Pariva Dobriyal WII-NMCG



Bal Ganga Prahari Concept and Outdoor Activities: By Dr. Sangeeta Angom, WII-NMCG

DAY 4, 24th September, 2022



Visit to Haiderpur Wetland, Bijnor, UP, Session on Identification of Birds, By Saurav Gawan



Collection and analysis techniques of Ecotoxicological samples, Hands on Session: Water quality monitoring By Ms. Richika Sah and team, WII-NMCG



Session on Handling of wildlife species in distress I: Taken by Mr. Nariman Vazifdar



Session on Ecology of Swamp Deer: Taken by Dr. Ajit Kumar, WII-NMCG



Session on Handling of turtles in distress: Taken by Mr. Saurav Gawan



Handling of wildlife species in distress II Mr. Nariman Vazifdar



Welcome Address by Sana Shaikh, WII-NMCG



Training Report by Dr. Aakash Mohan Rawat, WII-NMCG



Certificate Distribution by Chief Guest, Mr. P.P. Gautam, Sangeeta Angom, WII-NMCG, & Dr Deepika Dogra, WII-NMCG



Chief Guest, Mr. P.P. Gautam, Executive Engineer: Sharing his thoughts



Vote of Thanks by Ms. Neha Negi, WII-NMCG



Post Training Assessment



Dolphin Jalaj Safari

Day 6, 26th September, 2022



Ganga Avlokan, Chandi Ghat, Haridwar