

## "Rhino Conservation: Educational Tool Kit" Publishing Project

By Suman Bhattarai, Partnership for Rhino Conservation PARC/Nepal

The Asian Rhino Project has just funded an Educational Tool Kit through PARC/Nepal to the value of \$2,500AUD.

Below is an excerpt from the project proposal outlining the project which is expected to be completed by September 2012.

All five species of Rhinoceros including Asian One Horned Greater (Rhinoceros unicornis) are globally threatened fauna whose populations are in crisis.

Rhinos have been playing a vital role directly and indirectly on ecological balance as well as economic and community development.

The Asian rhino has provided many opportunities in the region i.e. ecosystem, employment, community development and revenue through tourism.

Although the rhino has played a vital role not only in ecological balance but also socio-economic development, people and children here know little about the importance of the rhino and their conservation.

Several institutions publish sound information to educate people about the rhinos through their websites and publications, however many local people and children of rural areas do not have access to these websites and publication.

Many people are not aware about those organizations so there is huge gap between publishers and real readers/target groups in sharing and gaining rhino conservation message.

Additionally, most publications and websites are written in English but local people prefer their own language.

Because of limited information in the local language, local conservationists are also experiencing difficulty conducting rhino conservation education.

Teachers do not have enough information in context of rhino conservation.

They are unable to teach their students about rhinoceros even though the Asian species is the most important fauna and whose population status is on the verge of extinction in Nepal.

It is due to this the Rhino Conservation Tool Kit was developed.

This publication will cover detail information about Rhino in Nepalese language and it will be quite helpful to young children, teachers, conservationists, planners, design makers, rhino lovers etc.

When local people/children get the chance to know about rhino and its importance, it obviously generates motivation for contribution and increases participation for conservation.

This tool kit will also work as a guideline for teachers, conservationists and interested parties who want to conduct rhino conservation education programs with the local children and people.

At least 250 kits will be published and widely distributed to schools in the Buffer-zone of the protected areas where rhino are found.

Kits will also be provided to concerned organizations, eco-clubs/conservation clubs, Buffer-zone User Committees, Parks, Department of Wildlife and National Parks.

### Rhino Conservation Tool Kit objectives

- Document information of ecology, conservation history, lessons learned in context of Rhino conservation
- Publish an educational tool kit to transfer conservation knowledge to strengthen rhino conservation action

The Rhino Conservation Tool Kit is a 6 month duration project which starts in March to be completed in September 2012.