



Annual Report 2020





**BHUTAN
FOR LIFE**

**Annual Report
2020**



Bhutan for Life was created under the auspices of the Royal Charter granted by His Majesty The Druk Gyalpo on 27th July 2018.



“Bhutan for Life Initiative was officially launched by Her Majesty Gyaltshen Jetsun Pema Wangchuck on 11 November 2017 coinciding with the Birth Anniversary of His Majesty The Fourth King”





Blue Poppy The National Flower of Bhutan
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ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS

AE	Accredited Entity
BC	Biological Corridors
BFL	Bhutan For Life
BTFEC	Bhutan Trust Fund for Environmental Conservation
BoT	Board of Trustees
CMU	Central Management Unit
ESS	Environmental and Social Safeguards Standards
ESMP	Environment and Social Management Plans
FIC	Finance and Investment Committee
FS	Fund Secretariat
GCF	Green Climate Fund
Ha	Hectare
NCD	Nature Conservation Division
PAs	Protected Areas
PCU	Project Coordination Unit
PD	Private Donors
PES	Payment for Environmental Services
PFP	Project Finance for Permanence
PSC	Program Steering Committee
RGoB	Royal Government of Bhutan
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
SMART	Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool
UNDP-GEF	United Nations Development Program-Global Environmental Facility
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



the crisis. Despite the current circumstances, we remain steadfast in our commitment for conservation mission and BFL overall goals. BFL project has made significant achievements during the two years of its implementation. The achievements ranged from biodiversity conservation to developing infrastructure across the parks and biological corridors contributing to the achievement and climate change goals. As we look ahead to 2021 and plan for some exciting events, the momentum is bolstering our efforts to engage even more of you than what we have done in the past.

I on behalf of the Board of Trustees, would like to thank the Donors (Royal Government of Bhutan (RGoB), Green Climate Fund (GCF), Private Donors, Bhutan Trust Fund for Environmental Conservation (BTFEC), United Nations Development Program- Global Environmental Facility (UNDP-GEF), DT Foundation , Bhutan for Life (BFL), BFL-Project Coordination Unit (PCU) and Implementing Agencies (PAs) for your sincere commitment and effort towards BFL project and wish everyone Tashi Delek..

I am pleased to inform that the Bhutan For Life is bringing out its first annual report for the year 2020 since its implementation in 2019. Bhutan For Life is a unique multi-donor funded project instituted with the blessing of the Royal Charter granted by His Majesty The King on July 27, 2018.

As 2020 winds down, I write to share my gratitude for your steadfast efforts displayed over the past year of the pandemic. We have had successes but we also faced challenges while implementing the project. We set out goals that were simple to describe yet quite challenging to achieve in such an uncertain and constantly changing environment due to the pandemic. Bhutan has been blessed with visionary leaders and with support and guidance from the golden throne, we have been nestled safely against

Take Care and Stay Safe.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rinzin Dorji', written over a white background.

Mr. Rinzin Dorji
Chair, Board of Trustees
Bhutan For Life
Secretary
Ministry of Agriculture and Forest (MoAF)



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



On behalf of the BFL family, I would like to take this opportunity to offer our deepest prayers for the wellbeing of His Majesty The King who takes extra mile leading the frontline in combatting invisible CoVID 19 pandemic. Thank you, Your Majesty.

Now, as we welcome Female Iron Ox Year 2021, we at the Secretariat would like to once again reach out to our donors, supporters, beneficiaries and well-wishers to wish you all a very wonderful Bhutanese Lunar New Year (Losar). With the beginning of BFL's Year 3, we would like to update you on our achievements, progress and activities carried out in 2019 and 2020.

As we reflect and celebrate our achievements for the year, we are also reminded of the visionary leadership of our Kings in the field of conservation, a vision that enables Bhutan for Life to achieve greater conservation goals. We are happy to report that 2020 witnessed another successful year for BFL's conservation programs under the wisdom of our Board of Trustees and donors despite the current circumstances due

to pandemic. We are pleased to report on the progress of the Bhutan For Life conservation journey and impacts it has made till date. Thanks to Finance and Investment Committee, we are happy to share the achievements of investments and innovative measures. I must say it has been an overwhelming collective effort of implementing partners. With significant first year of BFL implementation, we are confident to maintain the momentum way forward. I would like to thank our Chair and Board of Trustees for providing strategic guidance which helped in successfully executing BFL plans and programs efficiently and effectively. BFL will continue offering far-sighted solution for the permanent protection of the country's entire 2-million-hectare network of protected areas. It is an approach designed to deliver measurable and long-term benefits. We hope everyone will join us - all the more willing to fight for nature at this pivotal tipping point for the planet. We look to the future with hope. And remain resolved to work together towards a more sustainable planet.

I would like to share that Earth for Life is gaining momentum globally and BFL is part of a global strategy to strategically increase the number and accelerate the pace of PFP initiatives.

I would also like to convey my sincere gratitude to our Accredited Entity (AE) for their technical supervision and guidance.

Thank you for your continued support.

Tashi Delek!

Dr Pema Wangda
Executive Director
Bhutan For Life Fund Secretariat

BACKGROUND



Bhutan For Life - Asia's First Project Finance for Permanence

BFL stems from the Bhutan's long-standing commitment to conservation, which is enshrined in the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan. BFL operates on a PFP or Project Finance for Permanence (PFP) model, which is an innovative approach to sustainably finance the long-term protection of important ecosystems around the world.

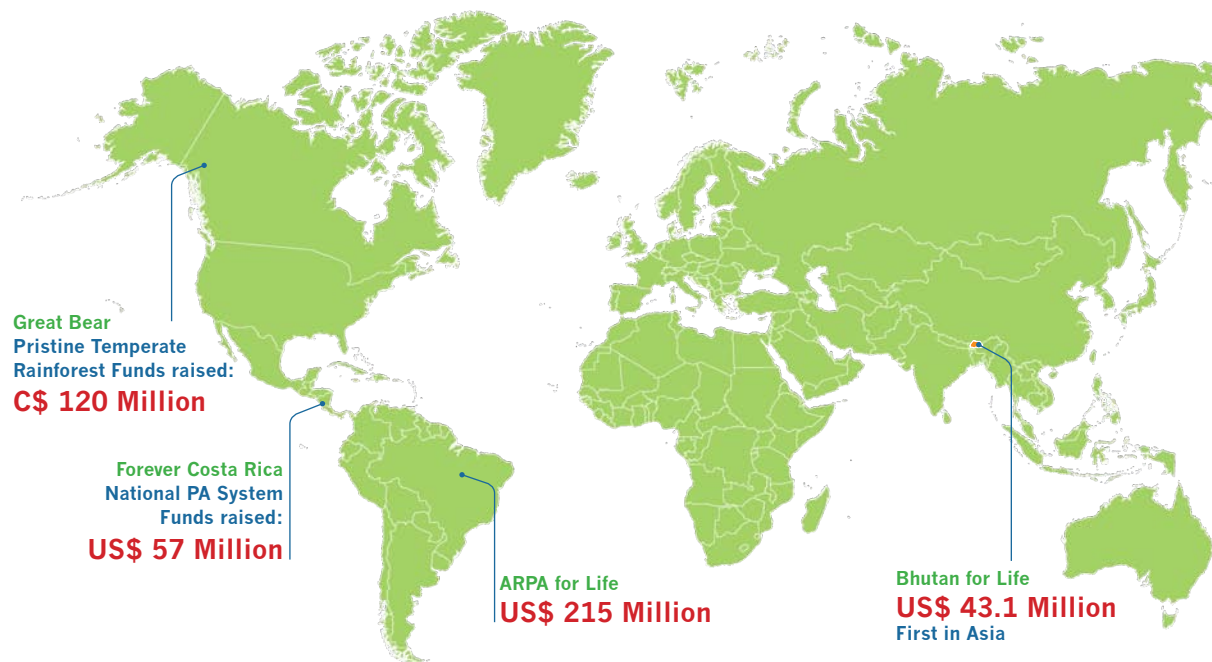
It celebrates Bhutan's bold commitment and asks others around the world to invest in making it a reality. For all that it has done so far, and achieved so far, Bhutan reaches out to the global community to help create a system of permanent protection, together.

Bhutan for Life initiative was launched by Her Majesty The Gyaltsuen Jetsun Pema Wangchuck on 11th November, 2017 and the BFL Fund Secretariat was established through the Royal Charter granted by His Majesty The King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck on 27th July, 2018.

BFL holds tremendous significance for the environmental future of the entire country and planet as a whole. It holds USD \$43.1 million fund—the first of its kind in Asia—to permanently protect Bhutan's network of protected areas, which constitute 51.4 % percent of the country, the highest percentage of land designated as protected in Asia.

This funding will be combined with USD \$75 million from the Royal Government of Bhutan, which will be contributed over a 14-year period, to sustainably manage Bhutan's protected areas.

Project Finance for Permanence models across the world



VISION MISSION & GOALS



People of Bhutan preserve and enhance their natural heritage to benefit the country and the planet for posterity.



Ensure a robust network of protected areas and biological corridors in Bhutan (representing more than 51.4% of the country) that contributes to human well-being and biodiversity conservation, and increases Bhutan's resilience to the effects of climate change.

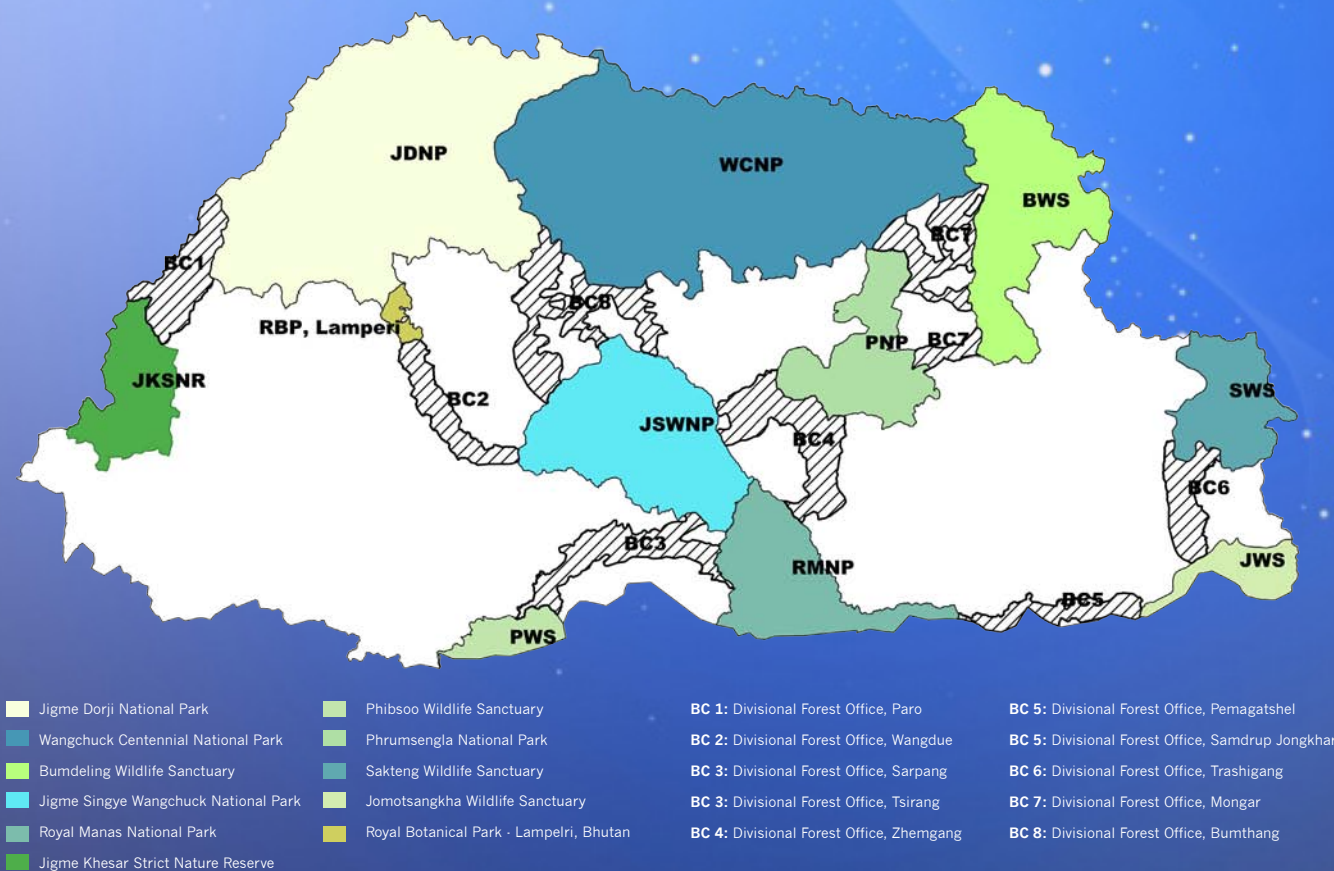


- GOAL I:** Forest and vegetative cover within the Protected Area System help Bhutan remain carbon neutral
- GOAL II:** Socio-economic wellbeing of communities in and in the vicinity of the PA network enhanced by climate-informed natural resources management
- GOAL III:** Maintain stable and thriving populations of key species contributing toward national and global biodiversity goals. Maintain habitat and ecosystem diversity and contiguity. Protected area network provides sustained ecosystem services for socioeconomic and ecological wellbeing.
- GOAL IV:** Organizational, institutional and resource capacity strengthened for effective management of the protected area network. Support the Government of Bhutan to develop new sources of financing for Bhutan's protected area network.

GOALS, MILESTONES & ACTIVITIES



BFL's project Landscape: Network of PAs



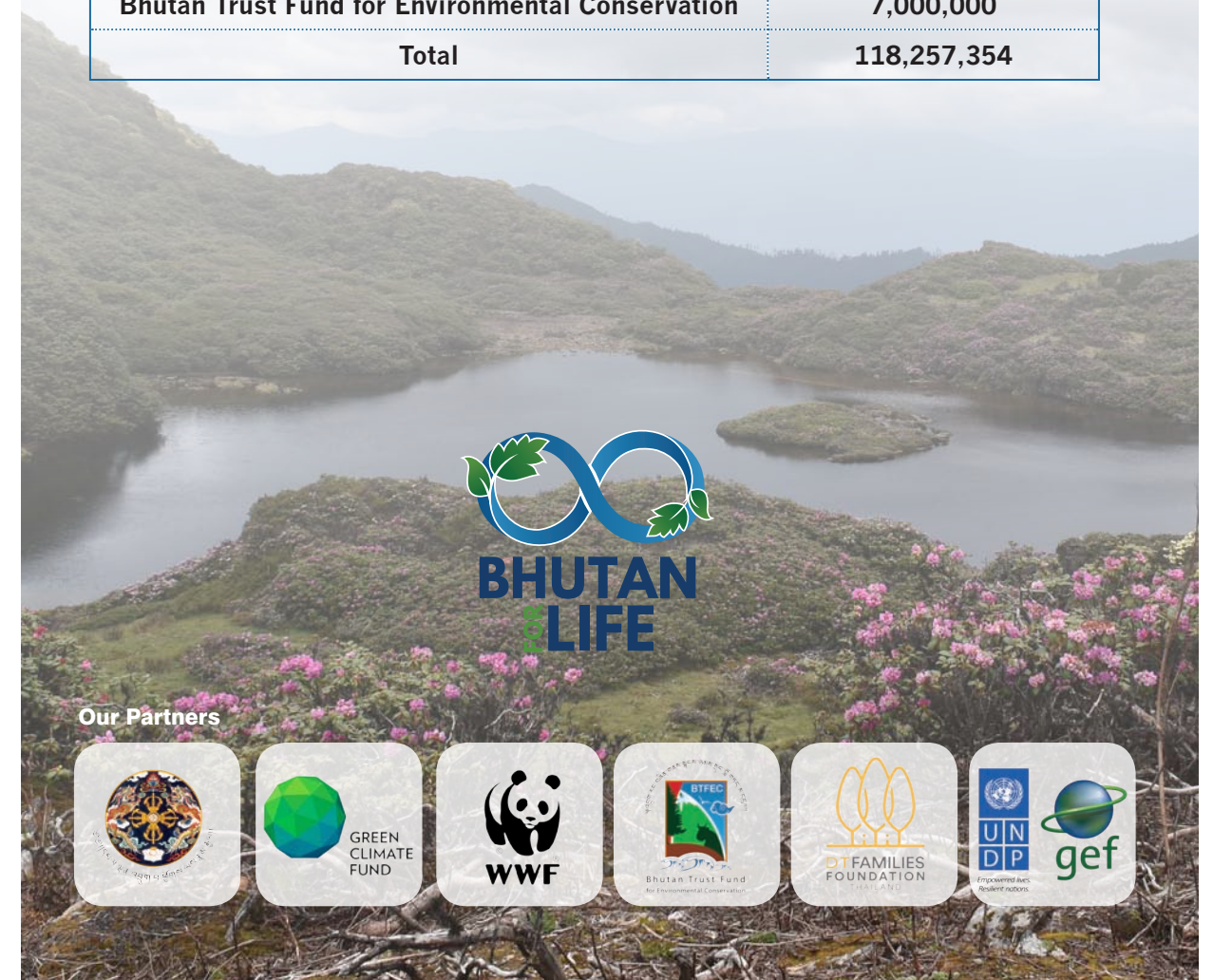
Our partners in the conservation journey



The BFL Program brings together as financing partners the Royal Government of Bhutan, the Green Climate Fund (GCF), International private donors through WWF, Bhutan Trust Fund for Environmental Conservation (BTFC), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)/ Global Environment Facility (GEF) over the period of 14 years.

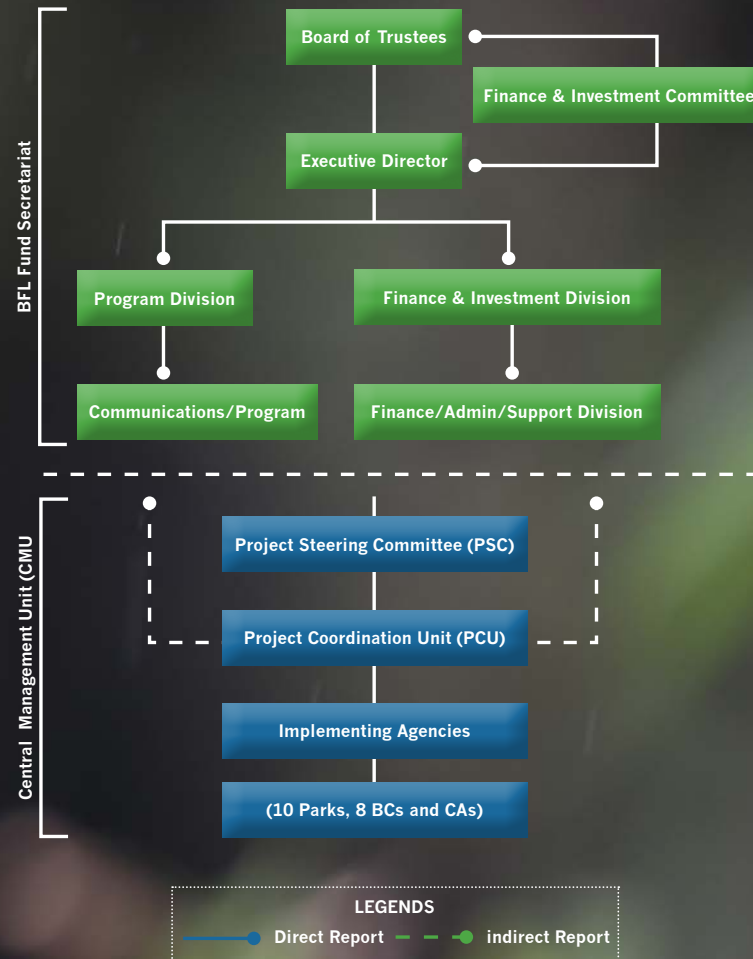
Table 1. Funding Source

Funding Source	Contribution (USD)
Green Climate Fund	26,557,354
Private donors (via WWF)	14,400,000
UNDP/GEF	2,200,000
RGoB budget baseline	40,100,000
RGoB budget increase	28,000,000
Bhutan Trust Fund for Environmental Conservation	7,000,000
Total	118,257,354



ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

BFL functions at two levels, the BFL fund secretariat and the central management unit. The BFL fund secretariat led by the Executive Director reports to the BFL Board of Trustees (BoT). The BFL Board of Trustees is the highest decision-making body for the project and exercises an oversight function intended to support efficient and effective implementation of the BFL program. A total of 5 BoT meetings have been conducted during the last two years. Finance and Investment Committee (FIC) advises and supports in overseeing the management of the BFL Fund's financial assets held in the Transition Fund and assists with overall financial planning. Five FIC meetings have been conducted in year 1 and 2.



Organogram- Institutional Arrangement of BFL

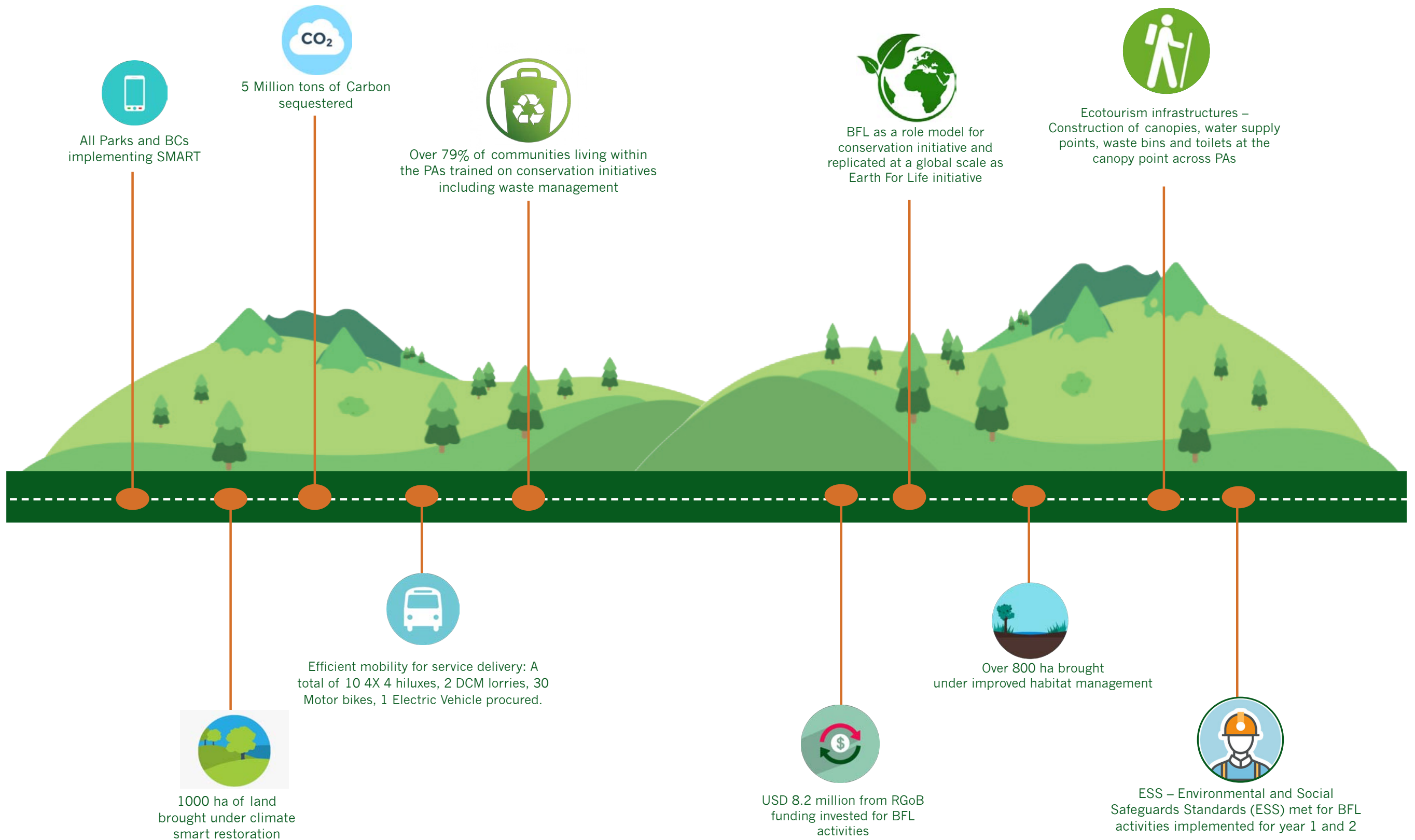
At the central management unit, the implementing agencies consisting of parks, biological corridors and central agencies report to the project coordination unit. The project coordination unit (PCU) is housed at the Nature Conservation Division within the Department of Forest and Park Services. The PCU provides planning, coordination and implementation support for the BFL Program and is the key interlocutor of the BFL Fund Secretariat. The PCU seeks strategic guidance from Program Steering Committee (PSC). The PSC provides high level guidance and oversight to the Program as well as support to achieve coordination among various BFL program implementing agencies.

BFL ACTIVITIES CONTRIBUTING TO DIFFERENT SDGs



Figure 1. BFL activities contributing to different SDGs

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS





AWBP 2020 HIGHLIGHTS

The BFL Program brings together as financing partners the Royal Government of Bhutan, the Green Climate Fund (GCF), International private donors through WWF, Bhutan Trust Fund for Environmental Conservation (BTfec) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)/ Global Environment Facility (GEF).

This section details the contribution and funding source by each donors for Bhutan For Life AWBP for the year 2020 (USD).

Table 2. Contribution by donor to BFL Annual Workplan and Budget 2020 (USD)

Components	Funding Source				
	GCF	Private Donor	BTfec	UNDP/GEF	RGoB
Annual Budget for 2020	1,556,755	763,972	309,435	305,124	4,212,128

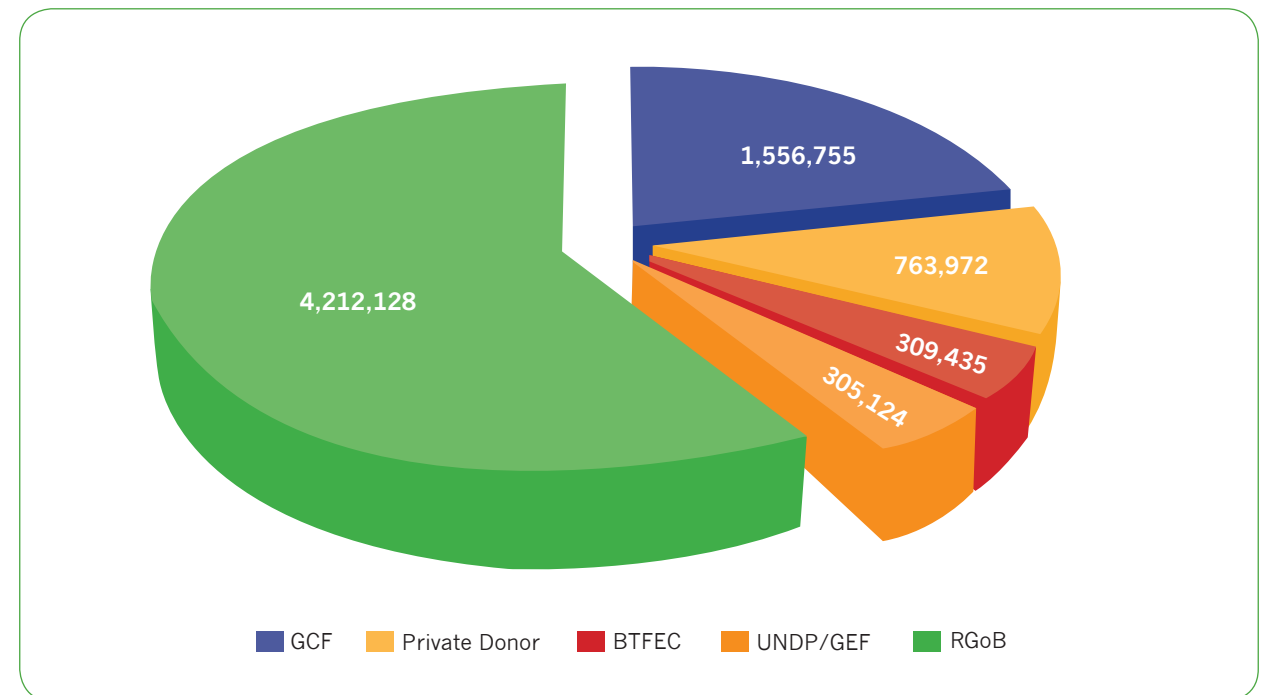


Figure 2. Contribution by donor to BFL Annual Workplan and Budget 2020 (USD)

SMART in all PAs/BCs



Successfully achieved the target under milestone 9 of instituting SMART/effective patrolling in all PAs/BCs to prevent, combat, and monitor poaching, wildlife trade, and other illegal activities. Over the year SMART implementation expanded through co-financing of GEF-LDCF, WWF and BFL. Appropriate skills and equipment were provided to protect species against threats from poaching and other illegal activities to conduct effective law enforcement



Field staff undergoing SMART training

5 Million tons of Carbon sequestered in the last two years of BFL project implementation



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Black Mountain Range, Jigme Singye Wangchuck National Park

Protected area network (PAN) sequesters 2.5 million tons of Carbon equivalent annually. BFL project in the last two years of its implementation has ensured habitat conservation within the PAN and contributed towards ensuring biodiversity conservation and maintenance of total area under protected area network system. With no net loss in area of PAN reported for the last two years of implementation, BFL activities contributes towards up-holding the constitutional mandate of maintaining 60% forest cover for perpetuity. BFL project has contributed towards sequestering 5 million tons of carbon equivalent from the PAN in the last two years.

Over 1000 hectares of land brought under climate smart restoration



Under BFL project, more than 1000 ha of land have been brought under climate smart restoration. A total of 1095.7 ha of land were brought under climate smart restoration in year 1 and 2 of project implementation spread across the country. These Sustainable Land Management (SLM) and bioengineering activities implemented contributes towards the overall goal of bringing 3000 ha of deforested or degraded land under climate smart restoration initiatives.



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Communities participating in SLM practices

Promoting Gender Equity



Capacity building of the communities

BFL project has taken concerted and consistent efforts towards promoting gender equity and women empowerment through mainstreaming gender in PA management planning and implementation and through creating enabling conditions to encourage women participation in trainings and awareness campaigns. Women participation have been encouraged in year 2 and in the re-reporting period, 1295 people (519 female and 776 male) have been trained in conservation awareness programs while 2536 (1084 female and 1395 male) have been engaged in the waste management programs.

Around 57 community youths (15 female and 42 male) have been engaged in development of employability skills such as electrical and culinary skills in two parks.

A training on gender data compilation, analysis and reporting of progress was deemed necessary to build the capacity of IAs to be able to implement, compile, analyze and understand gender data and to understand the ground issues faced by the respective IAs in implementing the gender activities. The training was completed successfully in October 2020 remotely (due to CoVID-19 situation) and the officials from the central offices were trained at NCD in person. A total of around 94 registered attendees (20 female and 74 male) with some more officials on screen-sharing attended the training. Additionally, based on the gender action plan, activities such as establishing women's groups, ensuring active participation of women in consultation and decision-making during project planning and implementation, conduct training on gender mainstreaming for PA staff and mainstreaming gender in PA management plans were carried out.



Women participating in the basic electrical home wiring training

Enhancing monitoring and evaluation of project progress



BFL Fund Secretariat team conducting field monitoring

BFL team visited the project sites in June 2020 covering three parks and 2 BCs in the western region of the country. In November 2020, the BFLFS visited 4 parks and 1 BC in the east and east central region. The purpose of field visits was mainly to sensitize on the Environment and Social Safeguards standards requirements, review activities implemented in year 1, take stock of status of activities implemented in year 2 and discuss issues and challenges in implementing BFL activities. The Secretariat informed the IAs on the significance of duly meeting the ESS standards for BFL project for timely release of funds. The sequence of ESS process was presented and shortfalls for year 1 discussed for adaptive management for following years.

BFL-FS will create platforms (conferences, dialogues, panel discussions, annual or mid-year review workshops) for IAs to showcase and share best practices and lessons learnt

among other co-implementers. Increased cross learning among IAs will be explored and encouraged for further strengthening knowledge management system. The team emphasized on the need to bring local communities and relevant stakeholders on board and to engage them in the implementation of BFL activities.

The team also emphasized on the need to propose activities based on the requirement and relevancy to concerned Parks or BCs and shared the examples of activities carried out from year one and two which needs further scrutiny. The team recommended Parks and BCs to document the traditional practices during the consultations especially related to management of alpine meadow, grass land, salt lick and waterholes and recommend to Nature Conservation Division to include in the habitat management guideline.



Jigme Khesar Strict Nature Reserve Head Office

BFL has made sure all our construction activities in all PAs and BCs are contributing to goodness of green and smart design infrastructure. *Green and smart infrastructure will yield multiple benefits in an environmental-friendly way.* In line with the BFL's vision, it encompasses technologies and practices that use natural processes (or artificial systems that simulate natural processes) in order to improve the overall quality of the environment and provide social, ecological, and economic benefits.

The fund support from Bhutan for Life (BFL) was timely in constructing the much awaited *Green and Smart office building* for Jigme Khesar Strict Nature Reserve. The goal was to have an independent Reserve head office was to strengthen and enhance the management effectiveness of Jigme Khesar Strict Nature Reserve (JKSNR), Bhutan's only a strict nature reserve and one of the most diverse protected

areas containing globally significant biodiversity.

Nearly 75% of the materials for office structure are built using woods like paneling, flooring, roofing, doors, windows and Rabsay, (Bhutanese architecture) aimed for long-term storage of carbon molecules captured as CO₂ from atmosphere. Timber structures act as carbon storages and timber construction is claimed as a solution to mitigate climate change. Study also revealed that the new wooden buildings have almost indistinguishable mitigative influence on annual CO₂ emissions. However, timber construction is an important factor in a strategy towards more climate smart future, and substitution effects multiply the effects of physical carbon storages.

Likewise several PAs and BCs initiated green and smart design infrastructure (2 head office, 5 range office and 10 on-going projects).

To enhance efficient mobility for service delivery following vehicles (4X4 car, motorbikes, DCM truck and electric vehicles) were procured in Year 1 (2019) and Year 2 (2020). The details are as follows;

In BFL year 1 (2019), a total of 35 vehicles were procured for the implementing partners (Tab 3, Fig 3) for efficient service delivery mainly patrolling activities in the PAs. The types of vehicles distributed includes 4 X 4 Hilux, DCM Truck and motor bikes. This activity contributes to achieving milestone 15 of BFL program which aims towards strengthening organizational, institutional and resource capacity for effective management of the protected areas network system in the country.

Table 3: Vehicles distributed to the Implementing agencies

2019				
Types	BCs	PAs	CMU	Total
Motor Bike	12	13	0	25
4X4 Car	4	3	1	8
DCM Truck	0	2	0	2
EV Car	0	0	0	0
Total	16	16	1	35

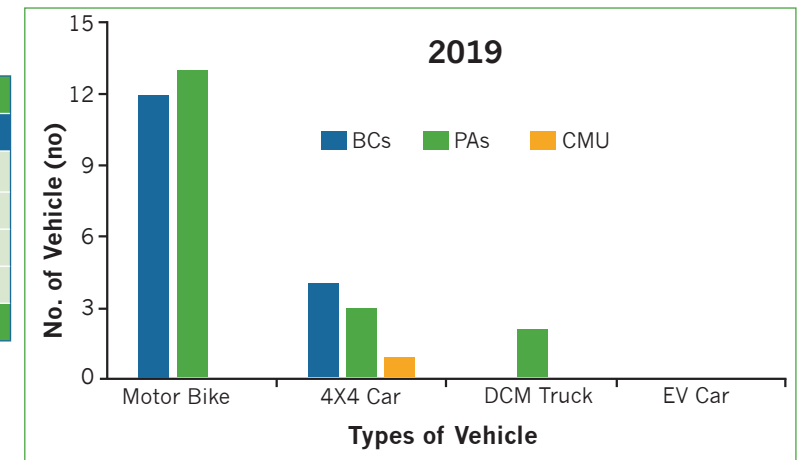


Figure 3: Vehicle distribution to IAs

In BFL year 2 (2020), the number of vehicles procured is less than the number of vehicles procured in Year 1. In 2020, only 8 vehicles were procured and distributed to the implementing partners (Tab 4, Fig 4)

Table 4: Vehicles procured and distributed to the implementing partners in 2020 (Year 2)

2020				
Types	BCs	PAs	CMU	Total
Motor Bike	2	3	0	5
4X4 Car	0	2	0	2
DCM Truck	0	0	0	0
EV Car	0	0	1	1
Total	2	5	1	8

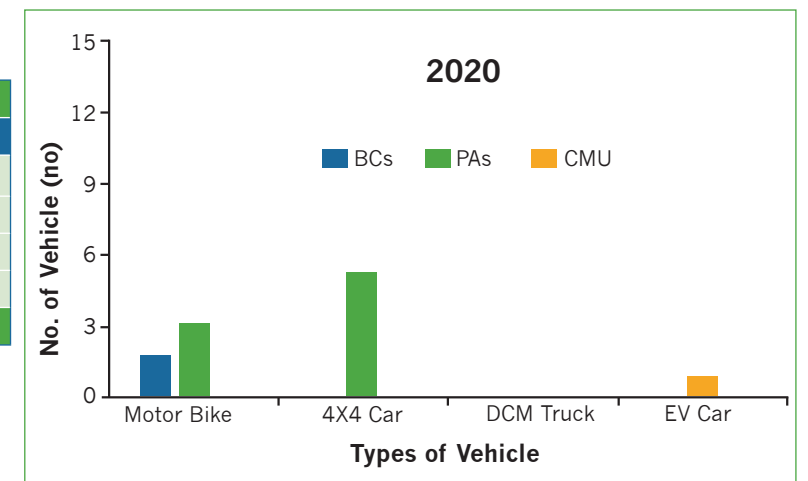


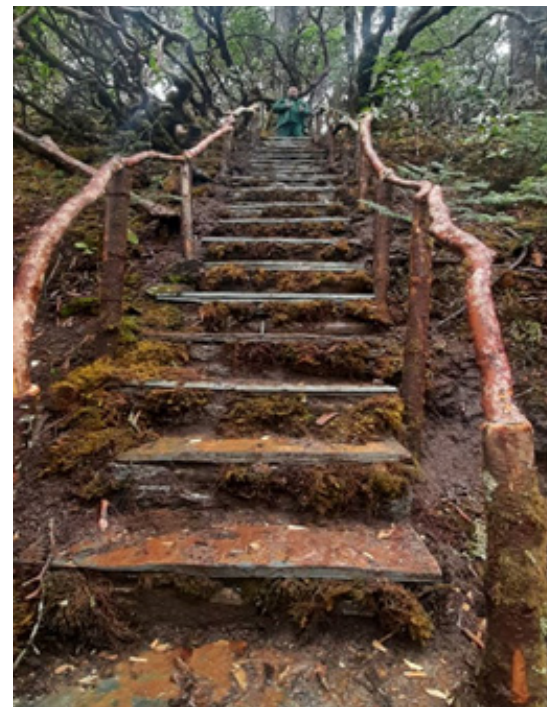
Figure 4: Vehicles distributed to implementing partners



Resting point along the Zhapang – Rigsum Gonpa – Dungzam Trail

Activities such as ecotourism infrastructure development activities in JDNP, JKSNR WCNP and BWS involved mainly construction of canopies (covered shelter), water supply points, putting up waste bins and construction of toilets at the canopy (covered shelter) points. Due process of meeting the Environmental and Social Safeguard standards were carried out through ESS screening of these activities and developing Environment and Social Management Plan (ESMP) for mitigating any potential impacts. Having ecotourism infrastructures in place contributes towards engaging communities and enhancing community livelihoods.

In addition, activities such as development of Ecotourism infrastructures in three national parks will also contribute towards achieving SDG 1 by engaging communities in rendering ecotourism services to potential ecotourists and help in diversifying their income sources.



In-situ Rhododendron garden at Phrumsengla National Park (PNP)



Community consultation for ESS screening

BFL activities implemented for year 1 and 2 which needs ESS screening have been screened and all the ESS standards of WWF SIPP have been ensured. Accordingly, Environmental and Social Safeguards Management Plans for all 10 Parks and 8 BCs and WMD have been developed, approved and disclosed by September 2020. Detailed trainings on the ESS Screening, ESMP and Grievances Redressal Mechanism have been provided to all the BFL focal officials from September-October 2020. Due to the COVID-19 restrictions on travel and movements, all training were conducted virtually except for the central implementing agencies located in Thimphu.

BFL activities under four major components

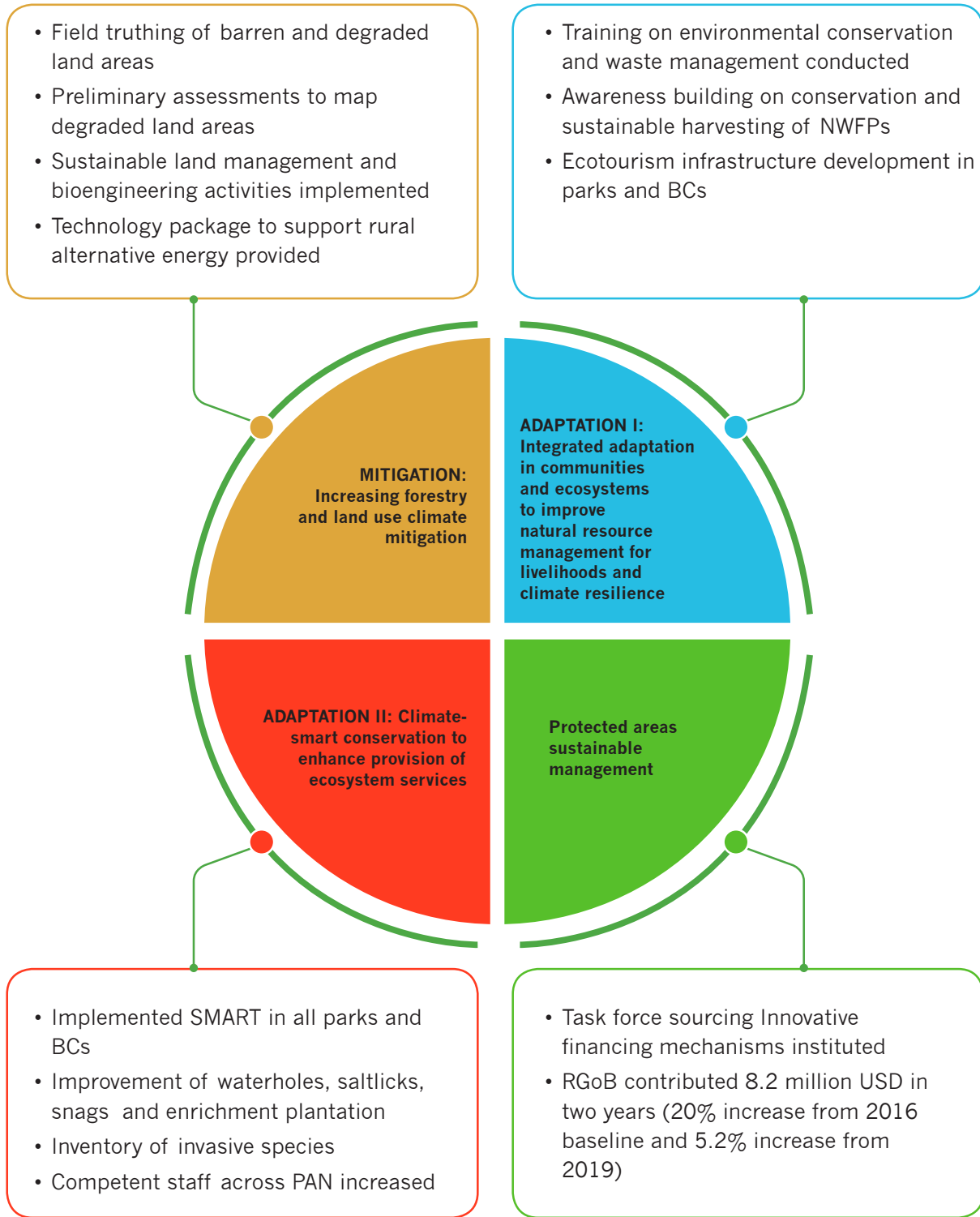


Figure 5. BFL activities under four major components

MITIGATION: Increasing forestry and land use climate mitigation



Restoration of degraded land

The activities implemented in 2020 helped deliver major national and international mitigation impacts through improved management of land and forest areas and dissemination of renewable energy solutions among rural households. Field truthing of barren and degraded land areas within the PAN area based on nationwide maps were conducted to help identify areas to bring under climate smart restoration under BFL program. Preliminary assessment of the groundworks is on-going and it is estimated that potentially 2000 ha of barren and degraded areas will be mapped. Revalidation of the assessments is being planned in 2021. 738 ha of land was brought under climate smart restoration in 2019 and an additional 357.7 ha in 2020 with a cumulative total of 1095.7 ha for year 1 and 2. These SLM and bioengineering activities implemented in year 2020 contributes towards the overall goal of bringing 3000 ha of deforested or degraded land under climate smart restoration initiatives. It also contributes towards forest carbon stock enhancement and meeting mitigation goals of BFL project and country at large.

These activities contributed to achieving SDG

15 by bringing the degraded lands within the Protected area network under climate smart reforestation mechanisms to enhance carbon stock and increase climate resiliency.

Providing technology package to support rural alternative energy such as installation of biogas in 12 households under 2 gewogs (3 hh in Khamoed, Gasa and 9 hh in Goenshari, Punakha) in JDNP helps achieve mitigation goal through distribution of renewable energy solutions. This activity contributes towards achieving the BFL target of benefitting 10% of the population living within the PAN through use of alternative energy technologies such as biogas. Dependency on natural resources is one of the major factors for people's vulnerability to climate change and biogas reduces the dependency on forest resources. Studies shows that biogas has effective role in climate change mitigation by reducing the demand of fuelwood, conservation of forest resulting in the reduction of the greenhouse gas emission. Providing technology package to support rural alternative energy such as installation of biogas helps in alleviating poverty among rural communities and achieving SDG 1.

COMPONENT 2



ADAPTATION I: Integrated adaptation in communities and ecosystems to improve natural resource management for livelihoods and climate resilience



Communities trained on waste management

A series of activities were implemented in 2020 to enhance resilience and adaptation to climate change impacts for the population living both inside and in the vicinity of the PAs. This also includes capacity development, education and advocacy, building ecotourism facilities, training local populations to create new income generating opportunities related to ecotourism in PAs to diversify livelihoods and build community resilience.

79% of the population (5936 out of 7500) living within the protected areas have been trained in environmental conservation and waste management activities in year 1 and 2. In the

reporting period, 1295 people (519 female and 776 male) have been trained in conservation awareness programs while 2536 (1084 female and 1395 male) have been engaged in the waste management programs. Conservation awareness and education programs were conducted in several parks (Bumdeling Wildlife Sanctuary, Jigme Dorji National Park, Jigme Khesar Strict Nature Reserve, Jomotsangkha Wildlife Sanctuary, Phrumshingla National Park, Phibsoo Wildlife Sanctuary, Royal Manas National Park, Sakten Wildlife Sanctuary and Royal Botanical Park) and biological corridor areas (Paro Territorial Division, Pemagatshel Territorial Division, Wangdi Territorial Division).

COMPONENT 2



Awareness on significance of conservation for sustained flow of *Ecosystem goods and services from Forest ecosystem* encourages communities to engage in joint/co/community-based forest management initiatives to address impacts of climate change. The activities raised awareness on sustainable harvesting practices of lucrative non wood forest product *Ophiocordyceps sinensis*, a major source of income for community livelihoods in higher altitude areas of the project landscape. Communities were also informed on importance of conserving wildlife habitat for reducing human-wildlife conflicts and co-existing in the forest landscapes. Building community awareness and knowledge base of the communities strengthens human capital of the communities and increases their ability to organize and act collectively to the adverse impacts of climate and other disasters thereby building their resilience to change.

Activities such as ecotourism infrastructure development activities in JDNP, JKSNR and WCNP involved mainly construction of canopies (covered shelter), water supply points, putting up waste bins and construction of toilets at the canopy (covered shelter) points. Due process of meeting the Environmental and Social

Safeguard standards were carried out through ESS screening of these activities and developing Environment and Social Management Plan (ESMP) for mitigating any potential impacts. Having ecotourism infrastructures in place contributes towards engaging communities and enhancing community livelihoods. The ability to access alternative livelihood activities is a key factor in fostering adaptation and therefore resilience to climate variability and change in rural households. Diversified income sources for rural communities increases the adaptive capacity of the communities and helps switch between various income sources in the event of climate disasters. Diversified livelihood sources build the financial capital of the communities and builds resilience towards addressing impacts of climate change. In addition, renewal of Payment for Environmental Services (PES) in Yakpugang, Mongar has been done and one in Paro is being planned. Forest-dependent communities are also at the centre of climate change adaptation efforts, which must focus on strengthening people's adaptive capacity and resilience. Payments for ecosystem services may be useful in preserving, acknowledging and rewarding good community forest management practices.



Engaging communities and enhancing community livelihoods

COMPONENT 3



ADAPTATION II: Climate-smart conservation to enhance provision of ecosystem services



Snow Leopard (Predator) visiting the water hole

To protect species against threats from poaching and other illegal activities, protected area staff were provided with the appropriate skills and equipment to conduct effective law enforcement. This enforcement includes SMART patrolling, crime detection, anti-poaching operations, and crime scene investigation. Improved law enforcement in the protected areas will limit illegal activities, such as illegal logging and extraction of forest resources,

and directly contribute to BFL goals related to mitigation and adaptation.

In two years of BFL implementation, creation or improvement of more than 100 waterholes, 80 salt licks, 20 snags and around 200 hectares of habitat enrichment plantation works have been carried out in all PAs and BCs in 2020. Enrichment plantation helps in forest rehabilitation and control deforestation. These

COMPONENT 3



activities help bring those high biodiversity and climate resilient value habitats under improved management in the project landscape area.

The inventory and data collections of major invasive plant species were conducted. Invasive species are the second largest threat to biodiversity after habitat loss and are major global change drivers and many studies have shown that they can alter biodiversity and ecosystem functioning. The inventory of the

invasive species helps identify the invasive species and develop measures to control them to significantly reduce the impact of invasive alien species on our biodiversity.

RGOB has increased the number of competent full-time PA network staff in year 1 and 2. In year 1, the number was increased by 132 and in year 2 by 48 achieving the cumulative 560 from the baseline of 380. Fifty two percent (52%) of the target (722 by Year 5) has been achieved.



Mountain Goat (Prey) visiting the same water hole

COMPONENT 4



Sustainable Management of Protected Areas



Protected area landscape

Considering the importance of having the innovative financing mechanisms in place to source long-term sustainable financing for Protected Area Network after Bhutan for Life Fund project phases out at the end of 14th year, Bhutan for Life Fund Secretariat organized a meeting on (11 December 2020) among relevant stakeholders. The meeting was attended by officials from Gross National Happiness Commission, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture and Forest, Tourism Council of Bhutan. The meeting discussed on the lead agency and formed a task force from all the relevant agencies to spearhead in operationalizing the milestone sixteen on development and implementation of new sustainable financing mechanisms for Protected Area Network. The next meeting will explore innovative financing mechanisms to discuss possibilities of ploughing back certain percentage of revenue generated from their respective sectors for conservation of biodiversity and enhancing community livelihoods within the BFL project landscape areas.

A significant ownership of the project has been demonstrated by meeting the 20% increase in Royal Government of Bhutan funding in year 1 (2019) from 2016 baseline. In year 1 (2019), RGoB contributed 4.1 million USD (consisting of the 3.9 million USD that represented the 20% increase, plus 0.2 million USD to make up for the BTFEC shortfall) for implementation of BFL activities consisting mainly of SMART patrolling, plantation, waste management, research on high profile species, salary, capacity building, purchase of vehicle and infrastructure and recurrent expenditure (utilities, office supplies, equipment). In year 2, RGoB again contributed 4.1 million USD meeting the 5.2% increase in RGOB funding from the 2019 baseline (before making up for the BTFEC shortfall) of 3.9 million USD. These increases clearly show strong ownership from the RGOB for BFL project. The year 2 fund was mainly used to finance plantations, waste management, salary, capacity building, genetic studies of Tiger, SMART, infrastructure and purchase of vehicle.

COMPONENT



Total Budget and Expenditure by Component in 2020 (USD)

This section details the total allotment of fund and the highlights of the total expenditure for BFL component wise for the year 2020. The total budget allocated for the five components was USD 7,147,414.00 (Seven Million One Hundred Forty Seven Thousand Four Hundred Fourteen only) and the total expenditure was USD 6,132,511.00 (Six Million One Hundred Thirty Two Thousand Five Hundred Eleven only).

Table 5. Total Budget and Expenditure by Component in 2020 (USD)

Components	Total Budget	Total Expenditure
1	140,170	105,479
2	507,771	338,890
3	1,283,174	943,380
4	4,840,557	4,465,401
5	375,742	279,361
Total	7,147,414	6,132,511

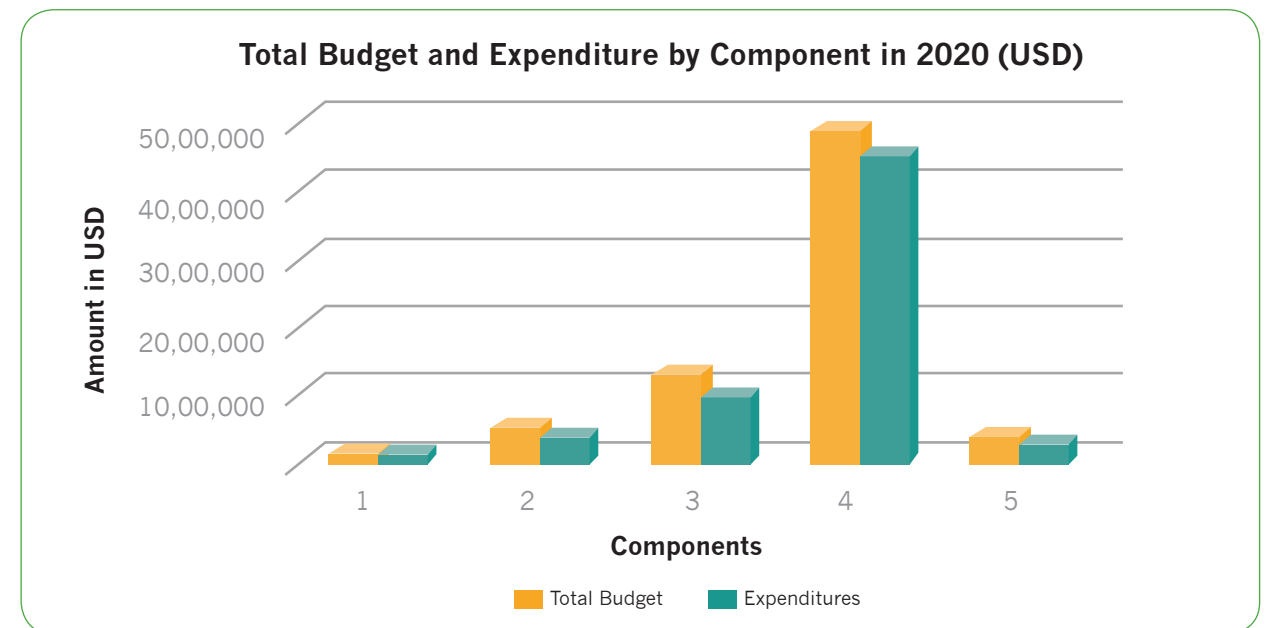


Figure 6. Total Budget and Expenditure by Component in 2020 (USD)

Tiger spotted in Jigme Khesar Strict Nature Reserve (JKSNR): A success story in the field of Conservation – Milestone 7



Tiger spotted in Jigme Khesar Strict Nature Reserve (JKSNR)

Jigme Khesar Strict Nature Reserve, Haa serves as an important, promising area for global conservation of not only the Snow leopard but the Tiger too. The presence of tigers in JKSNR, the only strict nature reserve in Bhutan after a likely absence of 15 years was definitely the best highlight for Bhutan For Life. The officials of JKSNR worked tirelessly for almost 6 years for confirmation of its presence validated its presence with camera images at N27°13'13.05" and E89°03'41.11" at 3370m. Spotting of the Tiger is a great win for conservation in JKSNR, and it gives JKSNR all the reason to monitor and ensure that these species are protected. With

the images captured, the presence of tigers at JKSNR is validated, "It truly marks the dawn of the Tiger Conservation Efforts in JKSNR".

The encouraging results validate Bhutan's impressive investment in tiger conservation. In a fragile world, these are clear signs that conservation efforts are working. This majestic mammal are very much on the rise. The effort JKSNR team undertook to derive the tiger population estimate are nothing short of phenomenal. This achievement was possible through fund support from Bhutan for Life.

Capturing Red Panda through JKSNR installed cameras funded by BFL – Milestone 10



Red Panda captured through JKSNR installed cameras

The Red panda is a highly protected mammal species which is listed under the Schedule - I of Forest and Nature Conservation Act of Bhutan (FNCA) 1995 and FNCRR 2017. With the funding support from Bhutan for Life, JKSNR installed cameras since October 2019 along different locations from c. 2000 to 4000 m.a.s.l. Based on the potential areas and accessibility, a total of 48 grids each measuring 4 km x 4 km were selected for camera installation. Based on the analysis of camera traps, the presence of Red Panda was confirmed in 6 grids measuring 4 km x 4 km (Photo 1). A total of 161 trap nights, 79 images and 8 videos of Red panda were captured mostly from the cool broadleaved

forest with thick undergrowth of bamboos. JKSNR has identified 10 individuals from 6 grids. The presence of Red Panda in the Strict Nature Reserve clearly indicates the site as an important habitat and its pristine environment. The study recommended periodic monitoring of its population and habitat for evaluating the effectiveness of conservation investments. The habitat site can serve as an area for future Red Panda conservation research sites. Further the site could also serve as a conservation refugia for the species in addressing the impacts of climate change.

Pheasant-tailed Jacana and Rosy Starling, a first record for JDNP and the country



Pheasant-tailed Jacana and Rosy Starling, a first record for JDNP and the country. Bhutan has a wealth of bird diversity and as of today, 748 species have been recorded for the country. JDNP has recorded a total of 371 species (49.6% of Bhutan's total birds) belonging to 70 families until February 2020. Two species of birds namely Pheasant-tailed Jacana (*Hydrophasianus chirurgus*) and Rosy Starling (*Pastor roseus*) has been recently added as new record for Bhutan from JDNP.

Many field guidebooks on birds have been published before but the photographic field guidebook by JDNP, is one of the first of its kind as it guides and provides park visitors with the general glimpse of the trekking routes, campsites and the possible chances of sighting different bird species along different trails. This guidebook is significantly important not only to conserve the avifaunal diversity of the park but also to serve as the valuable source of reference and information to the people from all walks of life.



Red Collared Dove *Streptopelia tranquebarica* (Photo: Leki Wangdi, Forest Ranger I, Jigme Dorji National Park. Alt: 3587 m)



Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* (Photo: Sonam Dorji, Forest Ranger I, Jigme Dorji National Park. Alt: 4410 m)

SMART Patrolling –A Wildlife Monitoring and Patrolling data system to improve conservation effectiveness



Implementing partners using SMART equipments

Bhutan For Life's main focus was to learn how Park Management can use the collected data to improve the efficiency of limited resources (Forest Rangers) to manage a park. BFL implemented SMART patrolling in all PAs and BCs. Implementing partners successfully underwent training on SMART patrolling, purchase of SMART equipment and patrolling duties. During the implementation of SMART patrolling, biodiversity monitoring and data collection are the key activities implemented by the patrolling team which is analyzed after reaching to the work station. Thus, for effective data collection, the management has procured 17 numbers of Android Samsung mobile phone M30 for field data collection using SMART data module and two Dell Inspiron 3480 laptops for data analysis.

The SMART is used exclusively for the anti-poaching patrolling and other conservation activities. RMNP is the pilot Park in Bhutan to implement SMART patrolling technology, the various SMART patrolling is being carried out annually. Initially Park staff were trained on SMART software and data module to familiarize in field data collection. The patrolling was implemented with real time field data collection and recorded in data module instantly in the field by using SMART tools. To institutionalize SMART in the PAs and BCs - smart phones were procured and supplied to the field staff for SMART data collection, patrolling and monitoring.

Facing CoVID-19 TOGETHER



The world is grappling with possibly the worst public health crisis seen in more than a century. The CoVID-19 pandemic has gripped nations, compelling governments to impose countrywide lockdowns to contain the spread of the deadly virus. Fortunately, in Bhutan it has not experienced what other nations are going through at the moment. But that does not mean we need to stay unprepared.

Bhutan For Life was very much concerned about the current situation in Bhutan and beyond. Considering the nationwide implications, the virus may have on conservation, it was in BFL's best interest to display collective solution to cope up with CoVID-19 and its effects it will have to climate change actions and BFL conservation plans. Our implementing partners are all stationed at Protected Area Network to carry out its activities and pro-grams. Within that PA networks we have communities living in and adjacent to PAs aligned with the mission of BFL.

As a response to address impacts of CoVID-19 on BFL activities, a tripartite meeting was held between BFLFS, PCU and the AE coordinator in Bhutan to take stock of activities that could not be implemented due to CoVID-19 and were deferred to quarter 3 and 4 of 2020. A plan of action was developed for BFL activities implementation for year 2 and all the evidence (executive orders on border closure, list of staff deployed for border monitoring and patrolling in higher altitude areas for Cordyceps collection etc.) were gathered. For Year 2, the BFL-FS along with PCU prepared the Plan of Action for deferred activities for year 2. Fund proposed was reduced from 9.26M USD to 6.95M USD

to make it more conservative and realistic for implementation. For Year 3, AWPB 2021 was revised considering the looming Covid-19 situation. Activities involving community engagements and procurements were deferred to Q3 and Q 4 of year 3 and few to Year 4. Fund proposed was reduced by 1.41 m USD from 10.79 m USD to 9.38 m USD. The plan of action was shared with Board of Trustees and the AE for information and record. The secretariat also advised PCU in implementing GCF funded activities as far as possible in order to achieve 70% fund utilization target outlined in the disbursement condition. We want to share with you the actions that BFL took/is taking in light of this global crisis of CoVID-19 pandemic. BFL, first and foremost, is a community. As a network, relationship with our implementors at the field are at the very heart of what we do. BFL came across so many heartwarming stories that showed how communities are coming together right now. These examples of generosity and goodness during the coronavirus pandemic will have your spirit soaring. Thankfully, this shared sense of responsibility has seen BFL partners and supporters come together in ways that we have not seen before.

BFL took immediate action that had long-term impact. For year 2021 BFL prepared Plan of Action for deferred activities. Activities fund was reduced from 9.26 m USD to 6.95 m USD. BFL revised AWPB for 2021 in light of looming CoVID-19 situation. Most activities involving community engagements and procurements was deferred as well.

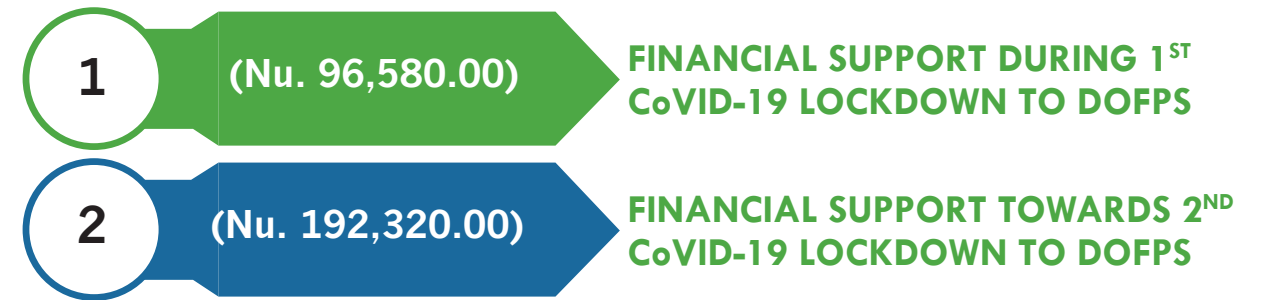
Certainly there will be many lessons learned once CoVID-19 has passed for BFL.

CoVID-19: BFL Helping The Community Together



The year 2020 unlike any year it was quite a task to apprehend due to outbreak of CoVID-19 in the country. It was a challenging time for all but it was also an opportunity for all of us to share in the pastoral care of our community and deepen our connection, drawing strength from the divine. We have had the opportunity to reflect on the values and lessons that were experienced during the CoVID-19 pandemic. Under the wise leadership of His Majesty the King, Bhutan is in a safe situation and had no major impacts in the country. As we draw inspiration and motivation by His Majesty, Bhutan For Life also offered modest support to our frontline heroes who were helping the country day and night to keep people safe and healthy.

Forest officials were engaged in supply of essential items and fire wood during 1st and 2nd lockdown. BFL provided logistic support to the Department of Forest and Park Services (DoFPS).



Forest officials engaged in delivering essential during first lockdown.

FOUR Environmental organization contributes to CoVID-19 funds

BFL Fund Secretariat coordinated with WWF Bhutan, Royal Society for Protection of Nature (RSPN), Bhutan Trust Fund for Environmental Conservation (BT FEC) to make financial contribution towards the fight against CoVID-19 pandemic. The consortium jointly contributed Nu. 4,500,000.00 (Ngultrum four million five hundred thousand only) to CoVID-19 Response Fund of the Royal Government of Bhutan.

3

(Nu. 4,500,000.00)

CoVID-19 RESPONSE FUND OF THE ROYAL GOVERNMENT OF BHUTAN



Timeline of Board of Trustees Meeting		
2018	2019	2020
2 nd BoT Meeting: December 11	3 rd BoT Meeting: May 23 (Virtual)	5 th BoT Meeting: June 26
	4 th BoT Meeting: October 14-15	

Timeline of Finance and Investment Committee Meetings			
2020			
2 nd FIC meeting: June 5	3 rd FIC meeting: August 28	4 th FIC meeting: October 26	5 th FIC meeting: November 27

Other important meetings coordinated by BFL-FS

1. Innovative Financing Mechanism for Bhutan For Life: 11.12.2020
2. Mainstreaming Biodiversity Conservation into Tourism Sector: 22.10.2020
3. BFL Environment and Social Safeguard and Gender Mainstreaming Trainings: 20-22 Nov 2019

Meetings and workshops attended (International and National)

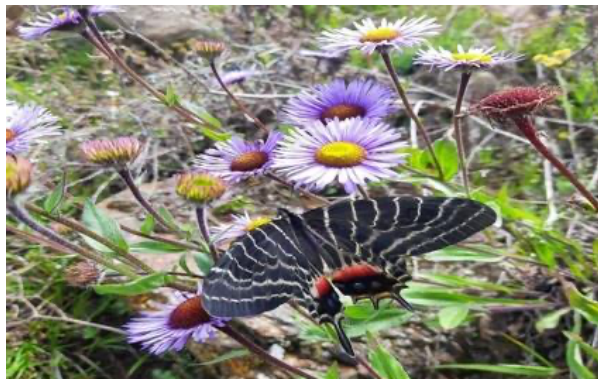
1. South-South Learning Exchange Towards Accessing the Green Climate Fund 2019: Lessons from Bhutan, Mongolia, Vietnam and the Philippines: 20-21.03.2019
2. Bhutan: Bio-democracy and Resilience: 19.07.2019
3. Regeneration 20/30: Climate-Economy-Happiness; Parma, Italy: 16.10.2020 (Virtual)

In The Media

1. Featured in Conservation Finance; EUROMONEY: 10.10.2019. "How Bhutan built conservation finance into its DNA"

PUBLICATIONS PRODUCED BY PARKS

**BHUTAN
FOR
LIFE**



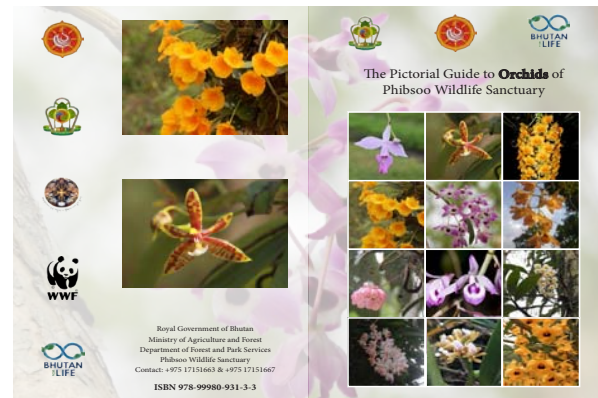
The park management printed photo guide to butterflies of JDNP. The photo guide is published by front line foresters of the Park.



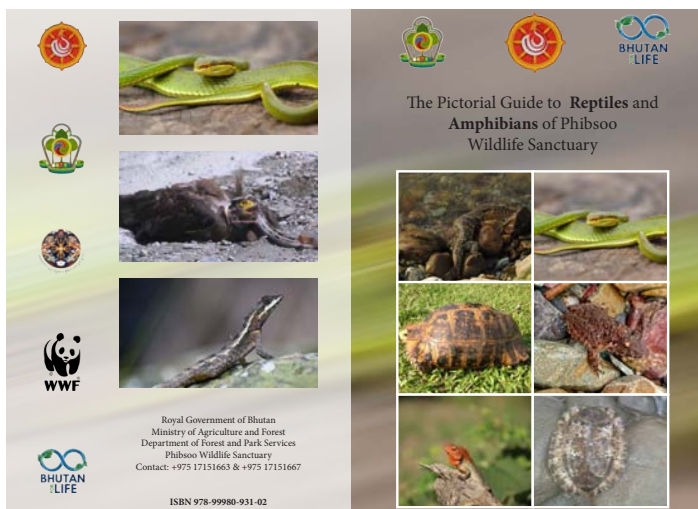
Butterfly Book published by Sakteng Wildlife Sanctuary.



The Reserve management published technical papers on mammals in the JKSNR.



The books of Herpetofauna, orchid, mammals and posters were also published by Phibsoo Wildlife Sanctuary.



The Pictorial Guide to Reptiles and Amphibians of Phibsoo Wildlife Sanctuary.

Iconic maps and feature map of PWS have also been printed.

FINANCIAL REPORT SUMMARY 2019-2020

Fund Transfers



1. WWF-US to Bhutan for Life Fund Secretariat

The Bhutan for Life fund Secretariat received the following funds from WWF-US towards implementing the Bhutan for Life Program.

Year	Green Climate Fund (USD)	International Private Donors (USD)
2019	2,425,029	191,495
2020	1,899,739	7,917,866
Total	4,324,768	8,109,361

The funds released for the GCF was mainly to finance the planned BFL activities for year one and two. The Private Donor Funds was released by the WWF US to the Secretariat based on the agreed disbursement schedule. From the overall Private Donor funds received in 2020, USD 6.5 million will be invested in the Term Deposit with banks in Bhutan.

2. Fund released to Ministry of Finance

The Bhutan for Life Fund Secretariat released a sum of USD. 3,628,651 to Ministry of Finance in 2019 and 2020 for the implementation of BFL program:

Year	Green Climate Fund (USD)	International Private Donors (USD)
2019	1,531,346	574,284
2020	1,015,333	507,688
Total	2,546,579	1,081,972

Interest earned on deposits

A total of USD. 35,323 and USD 29,769 was earned as interest on the different Corporate Saving Deposits maintained with Bank of Bhutan and Bhutan National Bank in 2019 and 2020.

AUDITED FINANCIAL REPORTS

Bhutan For Life Fund Secretariat

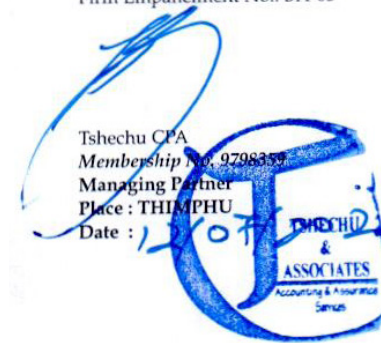


Bhutan For Life Fund Secretariat Statement of Comprehensive Income and Retained Fund For the Year Ended 31 December 2020

	Notes	GCF	PVT.	2020	2019
<i>(Amount in USD)</i>					
Income From:					
Grants	1	1,899,739	7,917,866	9,817,605	2,616,524
Interest	2	22,493	7,275	29,768	35,323
Total Income		1,922,232	7,925,141	9,847,373	2,651,847
Expenditure on:					
Program Activity	3	(749,087)	(417,946)	(1,167,033)	(1,452,228)
Program PCU	4	(71,921)	(46,768)	(118,689)	(45,843)
Employee Benefits	5	(75,617)	(17,949)	(93,566)	(82,784)
Other Administration Cost	6	(61,535)	(5,577)	(67,112)	(191,436)
Total Expenditure		(958,160)	(488,240)	(1,446,400)	(1,772,291)
Exchange difference on translating from BTN to USD	7	(10,184)	42,134	31,950	-
Net Income (Expenditure)		953,888	7,479,035	8,432,924	879,556
Surplus/(Deficit) Funds in the Beginning of Year		1,136,975	(257,419)	879,556	-
Transfer between GCF and PVT Fund		(438,031)	438,031	-	-
Foreign Currency Exchange Reserve		-	-	-	-
Surplus/(Deficit) Fund at the End of Year		1,652,832	7,659,647	9,312,480	879,556

Notes on Financial Statements forms integral part of Accounts.

For Tshechu & Associates
Firm Empanelment No.: BH-05



For Bhutan For Life Fund Secretariat

Dr. Pema Wangda
Executive Director

Mr. Tobgay
Manager, Finance & Administration



AUDITED FINANCIAL REPORTS

Bhutan For Life Fund Secretariat



Bhutan For Life Fund Secretariat
Statement of Financial Position at 31 December 2020

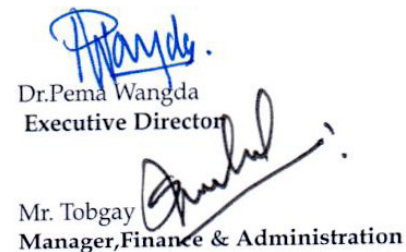
	Notes	GCF	PVT.	2020	2019
<i>(Amount in USD)</i>					
ASSETS					
Current Assets					
Cash and Cash Equivalents	9	1,110,933	7,393,750	8,504,683	269,655
Trade and Other Receivables	7	1,226	925	2,151	2,221
Fund Balances with Executing Partners	8	540,673	264,973	805,646	607,680
		-	-	-	-
Sub-total Current Assets		1,652,832	7,659,648	9,312,480	879,556
Non-Current Assets					
Gratuity Fund Scheme	10	6,054	2,019	8,073	2,981
		6,054	2,019	8,073	2,981
Sub-total Non-Current Assets		6,054	2,019	8,073	2,981
Total Assets		1,658,886	7,661,667	9,320,553	882,537
Current Liabilities					
Trade & Other Payables		-	-	-	-
Statutory Liabilities	11	-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	-
Sub-total Current Liabilities		-	-	-	-
Non-Current Liabilities					
Provision For Gratuity	10	6,054	2,019	8,073	2,981
		6,054	2,019	8,073	2,981
Sub-total Non-Current Liabilities		6,054	2,019	8,073	2,981
Total Liabilities		6,054	2,019	8,073	2,981
Total Net Assets or Liabilities		1,652,832	7,659,648	9,312,480	879,556
Surplus/(Deficit) Funds					
Accumulated Surplus/(Deficit) Fund		1,136,975	(257,419)	879,556	-
Surplus/(Deficit) Fund From Current Year		964,072	7,436,901	8,400,974	879,556
Foreign Currency Exchange Reserve		(10,184)	42,134	31,950	-
Transfer between GCF and PVT Fund		(438,031)	438,031	-	-
		1,652,832	7,659,647	9,312,480	879,556

Notes to Financial Statements forms integral part of Accounts.

For Tshechu & Associates
Firm Empanelment No.: BH-05


Tshechu CPA
Membership No. 9798359
Managing Partner
Place : THIMPHU
Date : 12/17

For Bhutan For Life Fund Secretariat


Dr. Pema Wangda
Executive Director

Mr. Tobgay
Manager, Finance & Administration



AUDITED FINANCIAL REPORTS

Bhutan For Life Fund Secretariat



Bhutan For Life Fund Secretariat
Statement of Cash Flows for the Year Ended 31 December 2020

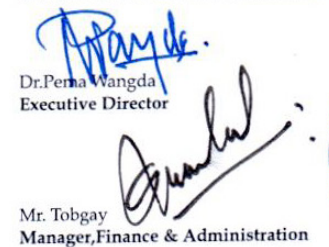
	Notes	GCF	PVT.	2020	2019
<i>(Amount in USD)</i>					
Cash Flows from Operating Activities					
Payment for Program Activities		(894,728)	(454,251)	(1,349,898)	(2,016,983)
Payment for PCU Management		(79,174)	(52,618)	(131,918)	(88,768)
Payment of Secretariat Expenses		(138,179)	(24,302)	(162,481)	(166,973)
Payment of Security Deposit		-	-	-	(2,221)
				(1,644,296)	(2,274,945)
Cash Generated from Operations					
Interest Received		22,493	7,275	29,768	35,323
				(1,614,528)	(2,239,622)
Net Cash from Operating Activities					
Cash Flows from Investing Activities					
Purchases of Property, Plant & Equipment		-	-	-	(107,247)
Proceeds from sale of Assets		-	-	-	-
				-	(107,247)
Net Cash used in Investing Activities					
Cash Flows from Financing Activities					
Proceeds from Grants		1,899,739	7,917,866	9,817,605	2,616,524
Proceeds from Donations		-	-	-	-
				9,817,605	2,616,524
Net Cash from Financing Activities					
Net Increase / (Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents				8,203,077	269,655
Cash and Cash Equivalents as at Beginning of Year				269,655	-
Change in cash and cash Equivalents due to exchange rate movements				31,950	-
				8,504,682	269,655
Cash and Cash Equivalents as at End of Year	9				

Notes on Financial Statements forms integral part of Accounts.

For Tshechu & Associates
Firm Empanelment No. BH-05


Tshechu CPA
Membership No. 9798359
Managing Partner
Place : THIMPHU
Date : 12/17

For Bhutan For Life Fund Secretariat


Dr. Pema Wangda
Executive Director

Mr. Tobgay
Manager, Finance & Administration



BHUTAN FOR LIFE GRIEVANCE REDRESS MECHANISM



About the Bhutan for Life Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM)

The GRM for **Bhutan for Life** seeks to address any grievances arising from the implementation of BFL activities, on issues such as loss of community resources, wildlife poaching, illegal activities, human-wildlife conflict, natural resources utilization/access/allotment, labor-related issues and incidents, gender related issues and others.

STEP 1: YOU CAN FILE YOUR COMPLAINTS THROUGH THE BFL PROJECT COORDINATION UNIT IN THIMPHU:

- **NAME:** Ms. Norbu Yangdon
- **PHONE:** (02) 325042/ 324131
- **E-MAIL:** norbuyangdon@moaf.gov.bt
- **MAILING ADDRESS:** Nature Conservation Division, Department of Forests and Park Services, Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, Taba, Thimphu



COMPLAINTS MAY ALSO BE FILED WITH BHUTAN FOR LIFE FUND SECRETARIAT:

- **NAME:** Ms. Sonam Tshomo
- **PHONE:** (02) 330978
- **E-MAIL:** sonamt@bfl.org.bt
- **MAILING ADDRESS:** Bhutan For Life Fund Secretariat, Royal Textile Academy, Suite 202, Thimphu.

CHECKLISTS FOR COMPLAINTS:

- Provide full details of your complaint, including dates, times, locations and other relevant information.
- Indicate whether the complaint has been filed to any other agencies.
- Include any documents or records that can assist the investigation of your complaint.
- You can either include your name and contact details or report your complaint anonymously.

WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR COMPLAINT?

The complaint will be investigated by responsible authorities within 10 working days from its receipt. If further investigation is required, the complainant will be informed accordingly and a final response will be provided after an additional period of 10 working days.

If you did not prefer to remain anonymous, you will be notified regarding the complaint resolution once the investigation is completed.

STEP 2: If you are unsatisfied with the complaint resolution process, you can appeal to: GRM Appeal Committee, Bhutan For Life Project, DoFPS, Thimphu, Bhutan.

Phone: (02) 323055 / 321185

STEP 3: IF THE NATIONAL PROCESS OF GRM IS UNABLE TO RESOLVE THE GRIEVANCE, COMPLAINTS MAY ALSO BE FILED WITH WORLD WILDLIFE FUND (WWF):

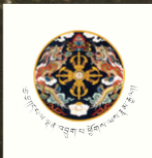
EMAIL in USA: SafeguardsComplaint@wwfus.org

<https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/59041/index.html>






MAIL in USA: Project Complaints Officer Safeguards Complaints, World Wildlife Fund, 1250 24th Street NW, Washington, DC, 20007, USA



Our Partners



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PO Box: 1140, Chubachu; Thimphu
Phone: +975-02-330978
Email: bhutanforlife@bfl.org.bt

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-  <https://www.youtube.com/Bhutan for Life>
-  www.bfl.org.bt