



Annual Report 2024



A wide-angle photograph of a lush green valley. In the foreground, two horses, one white and one brown, stand on a grassy slope. A small stream flows through the middle ground. In the background, several houses are visible on a hillside, including a prominent one with a green roof. The sky is not visible, as the landscape fills the frame.

“The problems facing the world today—they challenge all of us equally. And the solutions to these challenges must come from a real sense of concern and care for others, for all sentient beings and, for future generations. We must care about what happens to this Earth.”

His Majesty the King



Table of Content

Message from the Chairperson	2
Message from the Executive Director	3
Bhutan for Life Landscape	4-5
Advancing Renewable Energy for Remote Communities	6-7
Habitat Management for Ecological Stability	8-11
Supporting Infrastructure for Conservation Initiatives	12-13
Promoting Sustainable Livelihoods	14-15
Mitigating Humans Wildlife Conflict	16-17
Enhancing Conservation Through SMART Patrolling	19
Strengthening Conservation Education and Advocacy	20-21
Board Meetings	22
Visit by Executives of Project Partners	23
Supervision Mission	24-25
Financial Highlights	26-29
BFL Impact Snapshot 2024	30-31

Message from the Chairperson

Bhutan's unwavering commitment to preserving its rich biodiversity and expansive forest cover is crucial in mitigating climate change and advancing environmental sustainability. This dedication is deeply intertwined with the nation's socio-economic development goals. Central to Bhutan's progress is the Bhutan For Life (BFL) Program, which plays a pivotal role in safeguarding the long-term viability of the country's protected areas.

Building on the impressive achievements of 2024 through the program, the strategic direction for the upcoming year will focus on scaling up successful initiatives, deepening community engagement, and advancing sustainable practices.

As we look to the future, strengthening infrastructure to support climate resilience and biodiversity conservation will remain a priority, along with bolstering ecotourism and financial mechanisms to drive local economies.

Through this program, Bhutan is not only ensuring the resilience of its natural ecosystems but also reinforcing its vision of a sustainable future where conservation and development go hand in hand. The year 2024 marked significant progress in Bhutan's core mission of establishing a strong and secure network of protected areas (PAs).

Our unwavering commitment in driving innovation through sustainable practices will be



the cornerstone of our journey towards lasting success. By forging resilient partnerships and transformative solutions, we will create a lasting positive impact, building a future where both people and nature can thrive together for years to come.

Tashi Delek!

Dasho Karma Tshering
Chairperson, Board of Trustees
Bhutan for Life Fund

Message from the Executive Director

In the past 12 months, the Bhutan For Life (BFL) Program has achieved significant milestones, and it is with great pride that I present the 2024 Annual Report. This progress has been driven by the continued dedication of our implementing partners.

The BFL Program remains dedicated to providing efficient and transparent management of resources. We strive to ensure that every resource contributed is maximized for impact on Bhutan's Protected Areas (PAs).

Our recent initiatives saw remarkable success in 2024. From alternative energy projects benefiting nearly hundreds of households to extensive habitat restoration efforts, the program has made notable accomplishments in sustainability. Key infrastructure, including the Flood Warning and Cryosphere Research Facility, was completed, alongside eco-friendly initiatives and preservation of traditional crafts.

In addition, efforts to reduce human-wildlife conflict and raise environmental awareness continued to support Bhutan's balanced approach to environmental preservation and community empowerment.

We acknowledge the critical role of BFL in combating climate change and express our gratitude to both local and international partners for their support in ensuring the long-term financial sustainability of Bhutan's protected areas.



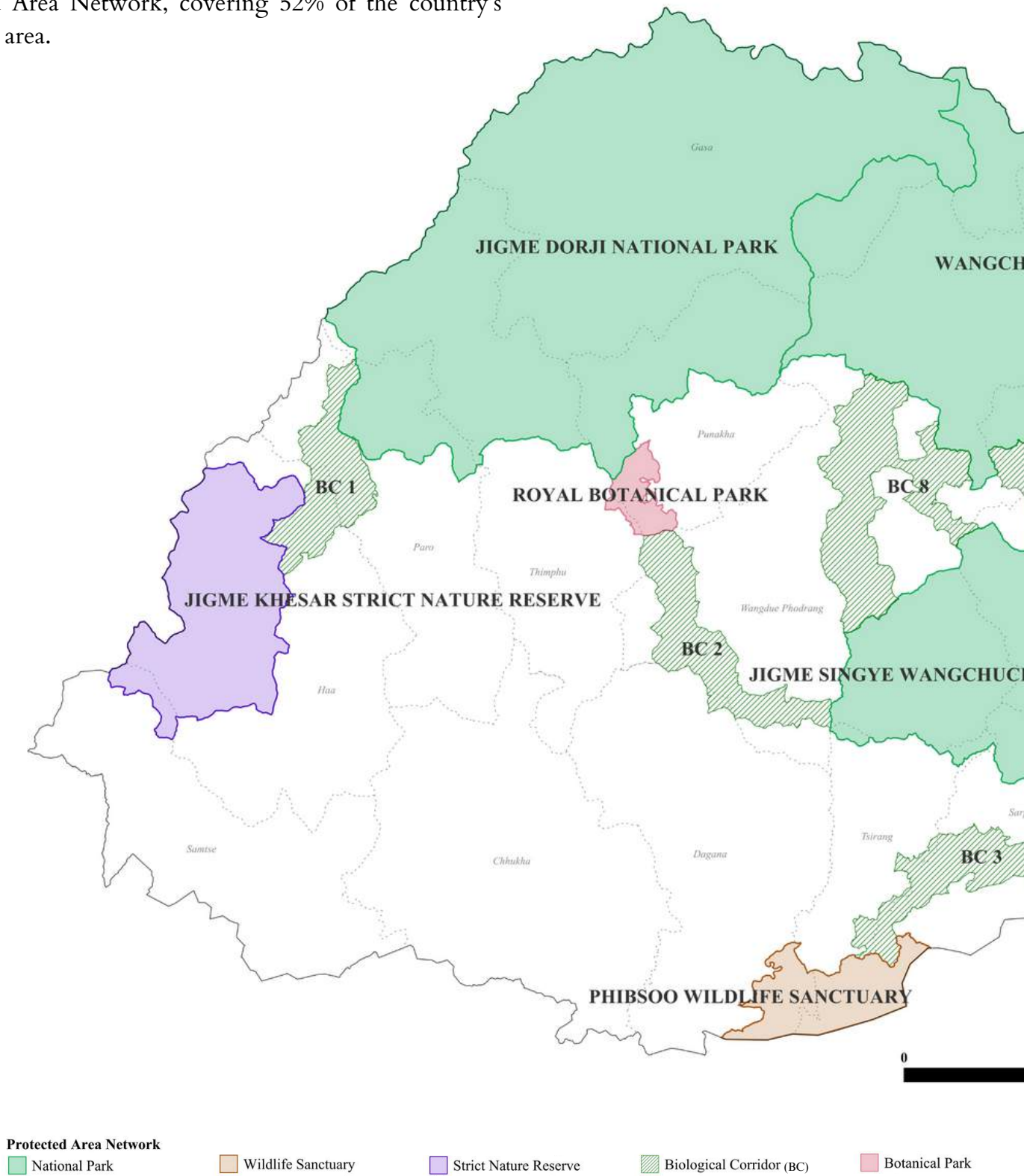
Together, we are committed to safeguarding Bhutan's expansive forest cover, which serves as a vital carbon sink for the planet.

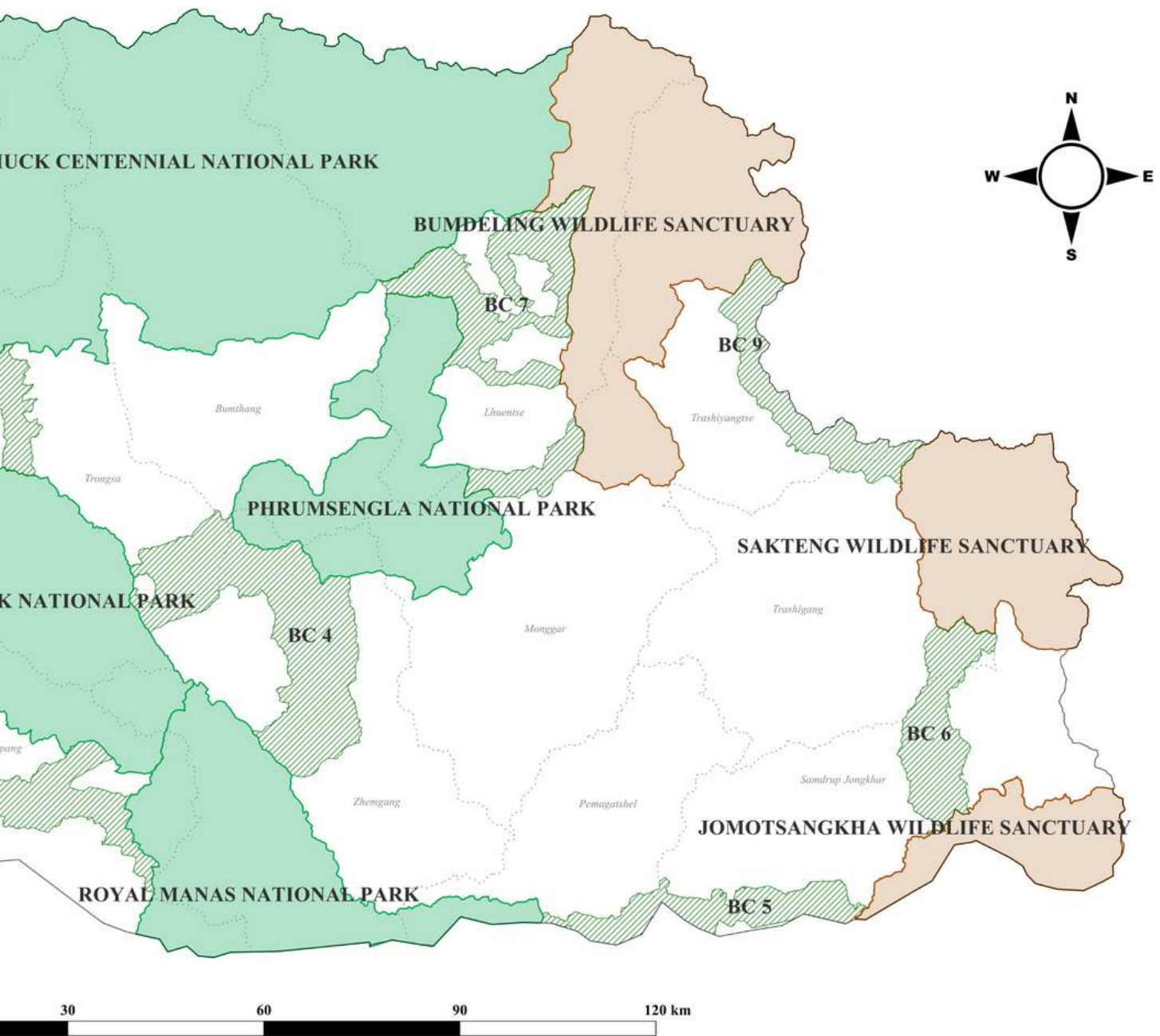
Tashi Delek!

Dr. Pema Wangda
Executive Director
Bhutan for Life Fund Secretariat

Bhutan for Life Landscape

The Bhutan for Life Program supports Bhutan's extensive Protected Area Network, covering 52% of the country's total land area.







Lunana Community, Jigme Dorji National Park

Advancing Renewable Energy for Remote Communities

Bhutan for Life (BFL) continues to advance renewable energy solutions for remote communities within Bhutan's Protected Area Network. By introducing alternative energy sources such as solar power and biogas, BFL is meeting the immediate energy needs of communities while contributing to Bhutan's broader vision of maintaining its carbon neutrality.

Building upon previous installations, a new 30 kW Solar PV system in Shangsa, Lunana Gewog, under Jigme Dorji National Park was commissioned on August 20, 2024. It provides reliable electricity to 100% of households under Shangsa Community.



Solar PV System at Shangsa, Lunana, JDNP



Biogas installation at Ney, Lhuentse, WCNP

Additionally, a 12 kW solar PV system now powers the Flood Warning and Cryosphere Research Facility in Thanza.

In Ney, Lhuentse, under the Wangchuck Centennial National Park, BFL has launched a pilot biogas plant serving five households. The plant aims to reduce deforestation and greenhouse gas emissions while assessing biogas technology's potential for broader community use.

Through these initiatives, BFL demonstrates its commitment to ecological preservation, community well-being, and Bhutan's carbon-neutrality. The success of these projects reinforces Bhutan's position as a global leader in sustainable development and climate action.



Grassland Management at Nunai, Jomotsangkha Wildlife Sanctuary

Habitat Management for ecological stability

Significant progress has been made in restoring and enhancing ecologically important habitats, particularly lowland grasslands and alpine meadows, as a part of BFL's long-term climate resilience and biodiversity conservation goals. Restoration activities were carried out by managing invasive plant species, promoting the growth of native grasses, and establishing essential water sources.

These efforts improved the overall quality of grassland ecosystems, sustainable grazing, and a critical habitats for native wildlife.



Spotted Deer, PWS

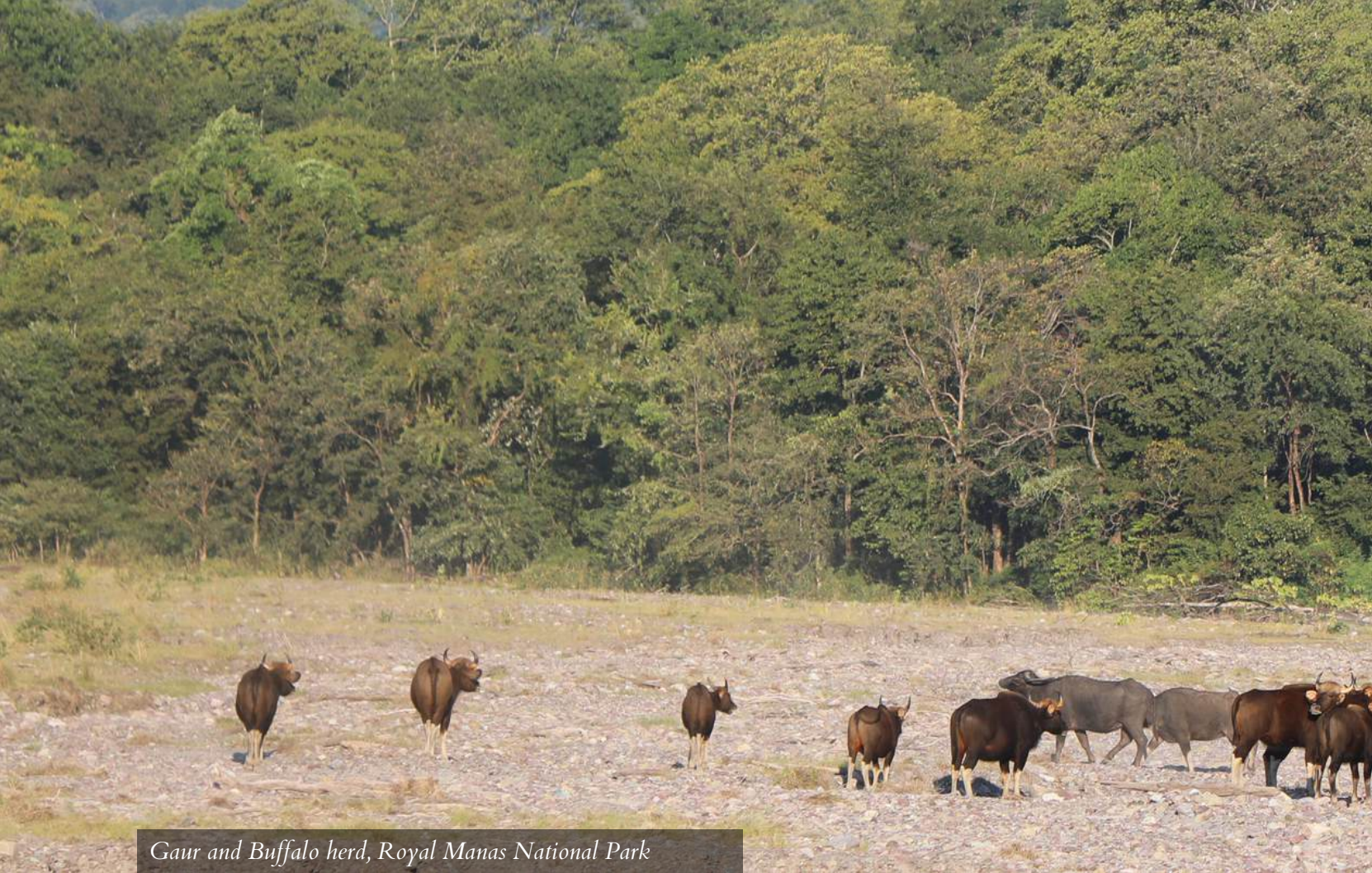


At Jomotsangkha Wildlife Sanctuary, 0.4 hectares of grassland were developed at Nunai, where native grass species like *Brachiaria ruziziensis*, *Paspalum atratum*, and *Themeda* were sown. Similar activities were also carried out in the 100 hectares of grassland at Wangchulinka outpost, under Phibsoo Wildlife Sanctuary.

The Royal Manas National Park saw the largest restoration effort, maintaining 221 hectares at Specialthang and Kanamakura.



Nunai Grassland Management, JWS



Gaur and Buffalo herd, Royal Manas National Park

Jomotsangkha Wildlife Sanctuary maintained two waterholes at Rongchuthang, while Bumdeling Wildlife Sanctuary carried out Tsadi Latsho management in Khoma, involving debris removal, and lake expansion.

The Royal Manas National Park revived important waterholes, and Sakteng Wildlife Sanctuary identified and enhanced two mineral licks and a waterhole at Khashateng, benefiting diverse wildlife in the area.



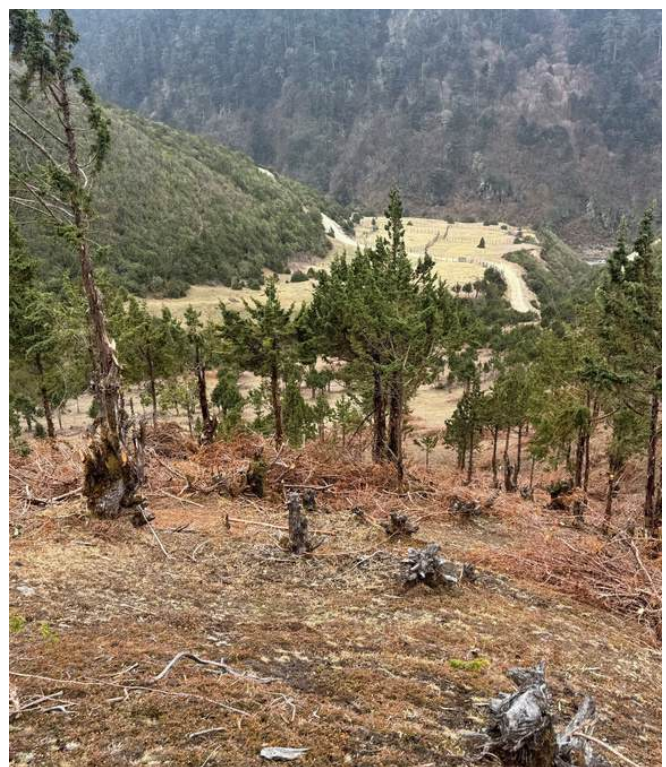
Snow Leopard (Predator) and Blue sheep (Prey) using the same waterhole, JDNP



In alpine regions, meadows previously encroached by dense shrubbery were cleared to allow the regeneration of palatable grasses vital for yaks and wild ungulates.

Alpine meadow conservation activities covering 116.69 hectares across various sites, featuring removal of unwanted shrubs, invasive species management, and grazing land restoration. Complementing these efforts, an alpine meadow shrinkage assessment was conducted, meticulously surveying 33 grids, 149 transect lines, and 930 plots to inform future restoration and management strategies.

Management initiatives at Ramsar sites included mapping recharge areas and regular monitoring of water quality and stream flows, enhancing ecological resilience.



Alpine Meadow Management, SWS



Flood warning and Cryosphere Research Facility at Thanza, Lunana, Jigme Dorji National Park

A significant step towards strengthening Protected Area Networks were construction of Mendrelgang Forestry Range Office, under BC-3 (Tsirang), Flood Warning and Cryosphere Research Facility in Thanza, Lunana, within Jigme Dorji National Park and Gharial Ponds under BC-3 (Sarpang).

The new forest range office constructed in Tsirang Dzongkhag under BC-3 provides important services, including timber permits for housing and commercial purposes, Non-Wood Forest Products (NWFP) permits, compliance monitoring for forestry clearances, and general conservation support.



Mendrelgang Forestry Range Office, BC-3 (Tsirang)

Supporting Infrastructure for Conservation Initiatives



Further, the addition of specialized equipment to the Flood Warning and Research Facility improves the reliability and accuracy of Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF) monitoring and glacier observation. The on-site equipment storage capability further reduces transportation costs and streamlines early warning system operations.

To enhance wildlife conservation efforts, BFL constructed a dedicated Gharial Ponds at the Wildlife Rescue Center under BC-3 (Sarpang). This facility provides a sanctuary for six adult Gharials, recognized as critically endangered by the IUCN Red List.



Gharial Pond at Wildlife Rescue Center, BC-3 (Sarpang)



Visitors camping at the Gangtey-Phobji Eco Camp, BC-2

Promoting Sustainable Livelihoods

Sustainable ecotourism activities are initiated and promoted through infrastructure development, capacity building, training, preservation of traditions, and support for local livelihoods, all aimed at building community resilience to climate change through diversified and sustainable livelihood options.

A new suspension bridge and other amenities were constructed by the Jigme Dorji National Park in collaboration with the Punakha Dzongkhag Administration, local officials and communities at Koma Tshachu (hot springs). The bridge replaces a deteriorating wooden structure, enhancing safety and accessibility for visitors.

Two eco-trails featuring a watchtower and resting areas were developed at the Royal Manas National Park, benefiting more than 31 households. These facilities are designed to blend naturally with the environment, enriching visitor experiences.



New suspension bridge at Koma Tsachhu, JDNP



Wangchuklingka Park Gate, PWS



Non-Wood Forest Product (NWFP) Management Groups in Bumdeling Gewog under Bumdeling Wildlife Sanctuary and Phrumsengla National Park initiated bamboo product diversification projects to preserve traditional skills, promote sustainable use of local resources, and provide alternative income opportunities for communities.

The Yak Hair Weaving Revival program in Naro Gewog trained 12 women in traditional Bja (tent) weaving and yak hair products such as Bja, Pheysey (sack), Zham, Zha Chu, Ropes, and Jola (bag), preserving nomadic heritage and creating new economic opportunities. Moreover, these valuable skills will be passed on to the younger generation, ensuring the preservation of yak hair weaving for generations to come.

These initiatives demonstrate BFL's integrated approach to conservation, which combines environmental sustainability with community empowerment.



Community consultation, JDNP



Yak Hair tent stitching, JDNP



Mitigating Human Wildlife Conflict

Significant initiatives were undertaken to address human-wildlife conflict (HWC), promoting and protecting community livelihoods through a range of strategies, including corral fencing, portable electric fencing, Quick Response Teams (QRTs), and public awareness programs, benefiting 7,486 households.

The installation of corral fencing in Naro, Laya, and Ramina within Jigme Dorji National Park supported yak herders in protecting their herds from wildlife. These protective enclosures shield livestock from predation, reducing conflicts between local communities and wildlife.



Corral fencing protecting the cattle, JDNP



Wooden fence used by the community



Electric fencing installation at Taskaling, BC-3

Portable electric fencing has been introduced across 11 districts, benefiting 132 households and securing approximately 500 acres of agricultural land. These electric fences, extending over 33.47 kilometres, serve as critical barriers, protecting crops from incursions and substantially reducing crop loss, while minimizing retaliatory actions against wildlife.

BFL has also enhanced awareness efforts by installing cautionary signages at BC-3 (Tsirang) and BC-5 (Pemagatshel), which are instrumental in raising awareness about conservation, alerting travelers to potential wildlife conflict zones, and encouraging precautionary behaviours.





Forestry officials conducting SMART patrolling under BC-1 (Paro)

Enhancing conservation through SMART Patrolling



Forestry Officials during the SMART Patrolling (BC-1)

SMART (Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool) patrolling was carried out reaffirming BFL's ongoing commitment to biodiversity conservation.

Over the past monitoring period, dedicated patrol teams covered 1,311,541.71 kilometres during 30,152 days and 16,081 nights, showcasing extraordinary diligence in safeguarding the country's invaluable wildlife and habitats.

SMART patrolling is critical in enforcing conservation laws by recording and responding to illegal activities such as poaching, logging, and encroachments. It also enhances habitat protection, providing real-time data crucial for informed management decisions to preserve Bhutan's rich biodiversity. It also involves local communities, empowering residents by creating opportunities for them to participate directly in conservation efforts.



Strengthening Conservation Education and Advocacy

Trainings and advocacy programs on Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS), Grievance Redressal Mechanisms (GRM), and Gender Mainstreaming were provided to all the implementing partners, empowering them to integrate responsible environmental practices and inclusivity into their programs.

Further, extensive capacity-building activities were carried out to familiarize communities, implementing partners, and other relevant stakeholders with the updated Forest and Nature Conservation Act (FNCA) and the Forest and Nature Conservation Rules and Regulations (FNCRR) 2023.



Interaction with the Community, BWS



Awareness program on FNC and FNCRR attended by the communities of Tang and Chokhor Gewog, Bhutmthang.



Participants engaged in a group work, RMNP

The Awareness and advocacy programs reached a diverse audience of 5,801 participants (3,415 males and 2,386 females).

Through ongoing community engagement, BFL ensures that people remain informed about the latest forestry frameworks and regulations, thereby enhancing compliance and nurturing a collective sense of responsibility toward forest conservation.

The initiatives ensure sustainable resource use while contributing significantly to Bhutan's broader vision of environmental stewardship and inclusive, sustainable development, ensuring that conservation efforts are both eco-conscious and socially responsible



The 15th Board of Trustees Meeting held in Thimphu

Board Meetings

A total of three Board Meeting were held in 2024. The 13th and 14th BoT meetings were held virtually, and the 15th BoT in-person, reflecting its active engagement and strong stewardship in guiding the program forward.

The 15th Board of Trustees meeting of the Bhutan for Life Fund was successfully convened in-person in Thimphu. The Board deliberated on key program achievements, implementation challenges, and strategic recommendations to strengthen the program's delivery and long-term impact.

As part of the 15th meeting, the Board also undertook a field visit to project sites, providing an opportunity to observe progress on the ground, engage with local stakeholders, and gain deeper insights into the conservation outcomes and community impacts being achieved.



BoT Field Visit to Phibsoo Wildlife Sanctuary



The 14th Virtual Board of Trustees Meeting



Delegates from WWF US and GEF at the Gangtey-Phobji Eco Camp

Visit by Executives of Project Partners

A high-level delegation led by Carter Roberts, President and CEO of WWF US, and Carlos Manuel Rodriguez, CEO of Global Environment Facility (GEF), visited Portable Electric Fence sites at Damji, Gasa under the Jigme Dorji National Park.

The project was initiated by the National Plant Protection Centre (NPPC) and Jigme Dorji National Park, with a aim of reducing wildlife conflict in the communities.

Ms. Mafalda Duarte, Executive Director of the Green Climate Fund (GCF), along with her delegation, visited the Bhutan for Life Fund Secretariat. The visit highlighted Bhutan for Life as one of the largest nature conservation programs in Bhutan, covering 52% of the country's forest area. As a principal donor, GCF continues to play a vital role in the program's long-term success.



Carlos Manuel Rodriguez and Carter Roberts at the Electric fencing site, JDNP



Ms. Mafalda Duarte meets BFL Fund Secretariat team

Supervision Mission



Supervision Mission Field Visit to Phibsoo Wildlife Sanctuary



Mission team at the Mendrelgang Forest Range Office, BC-3 (Tsirang)

A supervision mission led by WWF US, Accredited Entity to Green Climate Fund for Bhutan for Life Program, was conducted from November 7-15, 2024, to assess Bhutan for Life's Year 6 implementation and preparations for project restructuring. Regular supervision missions are critical to ensure transparent project implementation, accountability, timely achievement of milestones, and alignment with Bhutan for Life's long-term conservation and sustainability goals.

The mission team evaluated technical and financial progress, reviewed safeguards and gender action plan implementation, and undertook field visits to Phibsoo Wildlife Sanctuary (PWS), Biological Corridor 3 (BC3), and Royal Botanical Park.



Presentation by BFL Focal of Phibsoo Wildlife Sanctuary



Mission Team's visit to Gharial Pond, BC-3 (Sarpang)

Financial Highlights

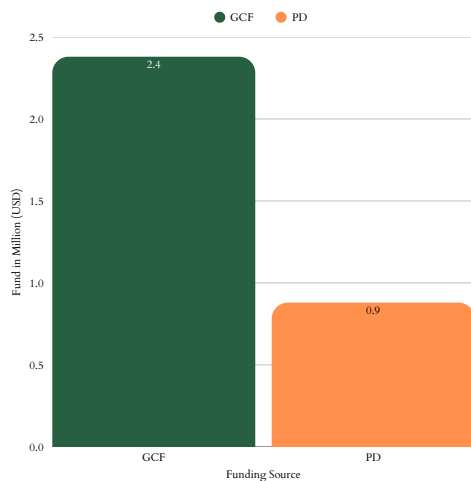
Fund Disbursed from WWF to BFL

WWF US disbursed USD. 2.381 million (USD1.5 million from GCF and USD 0.880 million from International Private Donor) to Bhutan for Life Fund Secretariat in 2024 as per the disbursement schedule.

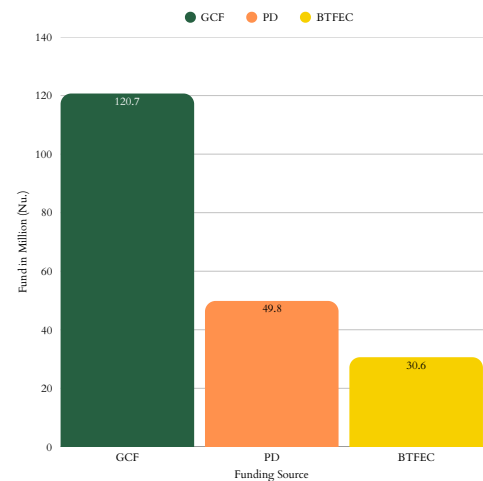
Fund Disbursed from BFL to Ministry of Finance

The BFL Fund Secretariat disbursed a sum of Nu. 170.556 million (Nu. 120.708 million from GCF and Nu. 49.848 million from Private Donor) to the Ministry of Finance in the year 2024 for the implementation of the BFL program.

In addition, Bhutan Trust Fund for Environmental Conservation disbursed Nu. 30.621 million to Ministry of Finance for the BFL program in 2024.



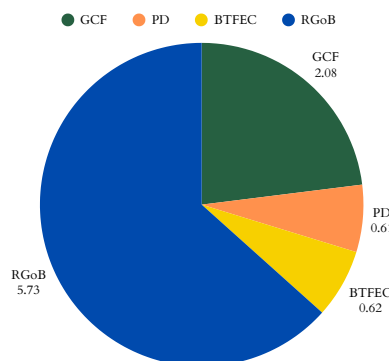
Fund Disbursed by WWF US to BFL (in million USD)



Fund Disbursement by BFL and BT FEC to MoF (in million Nu.)

Total expenditure

In 2024, a sum of USD 9.048 million was invested on Bhutan for Life program, the details of investments by donor in USD are as follows:



Expenditure by Sources (in million USD)

Statement of Comprehensive Income

Statement of Comprehensive Income and Retained Fund

For the Year Ended 31 December 2024

(Amount in USD)

	Notes	GCF	PVT.	2024	2023
Income From:					
Grants	1	1,500,000	880,612	2,380,612	1,000,000.00
Other Income	1	-	224	224	-
Interest	2	12,430	418,651	431,081	425,300.23
Total Income		1,512,430	1,299,488	2,811,917	1,425,300.23
Expenditure on:					
Program Activity	3	1,815,687	443,854	2,259,541	1,842,287
Program PCU	4	92,429	36,174	128,603	85,017.05
Employee Benefits	5	106,151	81,771	187,922	165,959.91
Other administrative cost	6	68,941	45,948	114,889	111,786.66
Total Expenditure		2,083,208	607,747	2,690,955	2,205,051.09
Exchange difference on translating from BTN to USD (Exchange Gain/Loss)	14	179,461	(185,006)	(5,545)	69,819.88
Net Income (Expenditure)		(391,318)	506,735	115,417	(709,930.98)
Accumulated Surplus/(Deficit) Fund		1,234,001	7,353,129	8,587,130	9,297,061.04
Transfer between GCF and PVT Fund		-	-	-	-
Foreign Currency Exchange Reserve		-	-	-	-
Surplus/(Deficit) Fund at the End of Year		842,683	7,859,864	8,702,547	8,587,130.06

Notes on Financial Statements forms integral part of Accounts.

For Rinzing Financial Private Limited:
Firm License 1036380

For Bhutan For Life Fund Secretariat:



Kunzang Pasa Tenzin
Audit Partner
CPA License No. 10534147
Date: April 4, 2025
Place: Thimphu, Bhutan





Dr. Pema Wangda
Executive Director



Mr. Tobgay
Finance & Administration Manager

Statement of Financial Position

Statement of Financial Position at 31 December 2024

(Amount in USD)

	Notes	GCF	PVT.	2024	2023
ASSETS					
Current Assets					
Cash and Cash Equivalents	9	522,080	2,062,131	2,584,212	2,788,753
Fixed Deposits	12	-	5,274,880	5,274,880	5,095,772
Trade and Other Receivables	7	1,832	291,113	292,945	821,693
Fund Balances with Executing Partners	8	318,860	231,808	550,668	548,220
Sub-total Current Assets		842,772	7,859,932	8,702,704	9,254,438
Non-Current Assets					
Deferred Gratuity Receivable from RICB	10A	15,038	11,345	26,383	27,316
Sub-total Non-Current Assets		15,038	11,345	26,383	27,316
Total Assets		857,811	7,871,277	8,729,087	9,281,754
Current Liabilities					
Trade & Other Payables	13	90	68	157	667,308
Statutory Liabilities				-	-
Sub-total Current Liabilities		90	68	157	667,308
Non-Current Liabilities					
Deferred Gratuity Receivable to Staff	10B	15,038	11,345	26,383	27,316
Sub-total Non-Current Liabilities		15,038	11,345	26,383	27,316
Total Liabilities		15,128	11,412	26,540	694,624
Total Net Assets or Liabilities		842,683	7,859,864	8,702,547	8,587,130
Surplus/(Deficit) Funds					
Accumulated Surplus/ (Deficit) Fund		1,234,001	7,353,129	8,587,130	9,297,061
Surplus/ (Deficit) Fund - Current Year		(570,779)	691,741	120,962	(779,751)
Foreign Currency Exchange Reserve	14	179,461	(185,006)	(5,545)	69,820
Transfer between GCF and PVT Fund				-	-
Total Accumulated Funds		842,683	7,859,864	8,702,547	8,587,130

Notes to Financial Statements forms integral part of Accounts.

For Rinzing Financial Private Limited:
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Kunzang Pasa Tenzin

Kunzang Pasa Tenzin
Audit Partner

CPA License No. 10534147

Date: April 4, 2025

Place: Thimphu, Bhutan



6

For Bhutan For Life Fund Secretariat:

Dr. Pema Wangda

Dr. Pema Wangda
Executive Director

Mr. Tobgay

Mr. Tobgay
Finance & Administration Manager

Statement of Cash Flows

Statement of Cash Flows for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

(Amount in USD)

	GCF	PVT.	2024	2023
Cash Flows from Operating Activities				
Surplus/Deficit	(391,318)	506,735	115,417	(709,931)
Adjustment for	-	-	-	-
Depreciation	-	-	-	-
Loss on Sale of PPE	-	-	-	-
Interest Expense	-	-	-	-
Cash Generated from Operations before working capital	(391,318)	506,735	115,417	(709,931)
Decrease in fund balance with partner	165,871	(168,318)	(2,447)	79,763
Decrease in trade and other receivables	(89)	528,838	528,748	(190,939)
Decrease in deferred gratuity receivable from RICB	532	401	933	(6,929)
Increase in deferred gratuity payable to staff	(532)	(401)	(933)	6,929
Increase in trade & other payables	(2,784)	(664,367)	(667,151)	667,308
Cash Generated from Operations	(228,321)	202,888	(25,433)	(153,798)
Cash Flows from Investing Activities	-	-	-	-
Purchases of Property, Plant & Equipment	-	-	-	-
Fixed Deposit	-	(179,108)	(179,108)	(107,997)
Net Cash used in Investing Activities	-	(179,108)	(179,108)	(107,997)
Net Cash from Financing Activities	-	-	-	-
Net Increase / (Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents	(228,321)	23,779	(204,541)	(261,795)
Cash and Cash Equivalents as at Beginning of Year	750,401	2,038,352	2,788,753	3,050,547
Transfer between GCF and PVT Fund			-	-
Cash and Cash Equivalents as at End of Year	522,080	2,062,131	2,584,211	2,788,753

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Kunzang Pasa Tenzin
Audit Partner
CPA License No. 10534147
Date: April 4, 2025
Place: Thimphu, Bhutan



For Bhutan For Life Fund Secretariat:

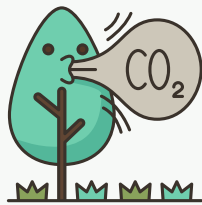


Dr. Pema Wangda
Executive Director



Mr. Tobgay
Finance & Administration Manager

BFL IMPACT SNAPSHOT



12.5

Million tons of Carbon
equivalent sequestered



1669

Households employed in
Nature-based Enterprises



10

Important watershed
management plans developed



731

Competent full time PAN
staff engaged



78.13%

Bhutan METT+ management
effectiveness scores



10899

Households engaged in participatory
conservation Initiatives

HOT 2024



1593.05

Hectares of key biodiversity habitats
brought under improved
management



5

Climate Smart Species
Conservation Plan
Developed



18

Parks and BCs
implementing SMART



2895.76

Hectares of degraded land
brought under Climate Smart
Reforestation

Nu

Nu.884.5

Million disbursed as of
year 2024



6693

Households adopted Human
Wildlife Conflict mitigation
measures





Bhutan for Life Fund Secretariat

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