



Government of Sikkim
Office of the PCCF-cum-Secretary
Department of Forest, Environment and Wildlife Management
Forest Secretariat, Deorali, Gangtok –737102, Sikkim

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Dated: 10th Feb, 2006

Lampokhri Medicinal Plants Conservation Zone

In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (8) of section 35 of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 (53 of 1972) the State Government hereby makes the following notification:-

1. Background and Need

It is impractical to have large National Parks with no zonation, where essentially the entire area is considered as a 'core zone'. Protected Areas should be zoned according to values in smaller pockets not necessarily as large cores, but a mosaic of smaller, manageable cores, spread in an area with tempered human use. Most of the valuable medicinal plants have restricted populations and are now showing signs of recovery. This *insitu* germplasm could be used as a source of planting material for *exsitu* cultivation of these valuable medicinal plants to sustain livelihoods in future.



Sharmaguru (Lomantogonium sp.) at U. Chonrigang *Pakhanbhed (Bergenia purpurea)* in Sano Taar

2. Aims and Objectives

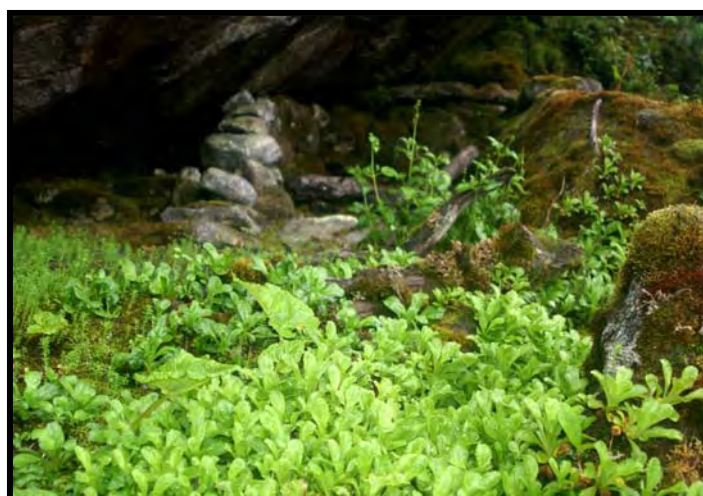
Conserving the wild germplasm and the habitat of valuable and endangered medicinal plants along with other high altitude flora, fauna and wetlands at Lampokhri (near Thangsing) in West Sikkim by the declaration of 15 square kilometer of the Khangchendzonga National Park (0.84% of the total area of KNP) as the Lampokhri Medicinal Plants Conservation Area (LMPCZ). It envisages the creation of *insitu* field gene banks of inter and intra specific diversity of medicinal plants across the alpine zone of the Greater Himalayas in the Eastern Himalayas.

3. Conservation Importance and Values

The Lampokhri area is in the south eastern corner of the Onglaktang valley having a western aspect. This area around Lampokhri (near Thangsing), Chonrigang, Sano Taar, Dalle Pokhri, Chamrey, Khola Urar, Khola Jhareni, Thulo Jhareni, Danra Jhareni and Pairey Jhareni is extremely rich in insitu germplasm of valuable medicinal plants like *Kurki*, *Jatamanshi*, *Panchamla*, *Bikh*, *Bikhma*, *Bhutkesh*, *Pakhanbhed*, *Rambu*, *Dandu* and others. A few plants of *Bikhma* were found only here. Pellets of musk deer were found near the *urars* (caverns) at Upper Chonrigang and Sano Taar.

4. Baseline Habitat Survey during summer of 2005

Jhareni is a ridge between Aralungchok and Lampokhri, with abundant water availability since it is criss-crossed by three streams namely Khola Jhareni, Thulo Jhareni and Pairo Jhareni. It is covered with rich Silver Fir forests and Rhododendron thickets. This ridge is specially a treasure-house of valuable medicinal plants. The most profuse regeneration of *Kurki* was inside the yak sheds and in the *urars* nearby. Local resource persons inform that the *gothala* collect *Kurki* and store it in the yak shed and the nearby *urars* are used to dry it in



Profuse *Kurki* regeneration in yak sheds and *Bhattis* makeshift *Bhattis*. The seeds that got scattered in the process, are now germinating.

There is also abundant growth of valuable medicinal plants like *Bikh*, *Panchamla*, *Pakhanbhed*, *Dandu*, *Jatamanshi* and *Bhutkesh* also many other endangered plants were also found here.

5. Existing legal status and threats

The Lampokhri Medicinal Plants Conservation Area (LMPCZ) falls within the Khangchendzonga National Park which is notified under the Wildlife Protection Act -1972. The biggest threat to the medicinal plant population is from illegal collection and smuggling by the yak herders. Also grazing on the vegetative and sexual parts of these herbs by yaks during summer adversely impacts the reproduction cycle of these plants. As they are not able to complete their life cycle and consequently natural regeneration is hampered. During the habitat survey conducted in the summer of 2005, the yak herder with yak sheds at Chonripaley and Jhareni had just been evicted. However there is grazing pressure from dzos and horses especially at Chongripaley, Lampokhri and Chamrey.

6. Boundaries

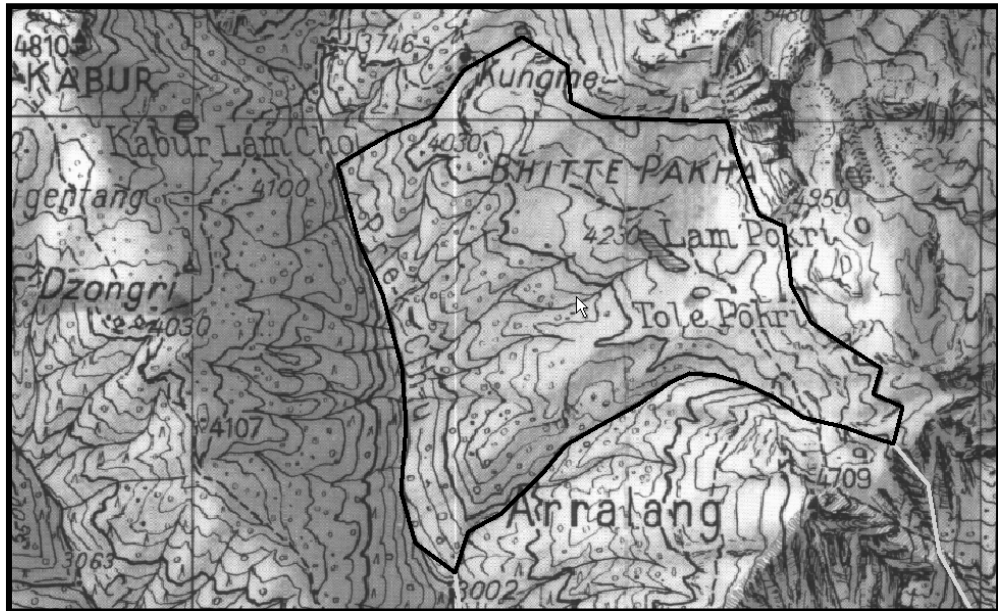
Declaring this area within the KNP, with the following borders as Lampokhri Medicinal Plants Conservation Zone (LMPCZ)

North	Neer pokhri stream
East	6000 meter contour

South	Khola Urar stream (is contiguous with the northern boundary of the Aralungchok Musk Deer Conservation Zone)
West	Prek Chu river
Total Area	15 square kilometers (0.84% of the total area of KNP)

This conservation area includes the areas around Lampokhri (near Thangsing), Chonrigang, Sano Taar, Dalle Pokhri, Chamrey, Khola Urar, Khola Jhareni, Thulo Jhareni, Danra Jhareni and Pairey Jhareni.

7. Map of the conservation Area



8. 3D Satellite Image of the Conservation Zone



9. Conservation Management Plan

(A) Conservation Initiatives

- (1) Ethnobotanical studies in partnership with Bare Foot botanists (BFBs) from local communities. Documentation of all plant taxa occurring in this medicinal plants zone with herbarium records, systematic estimation of plant populations and regeneration, distribution patterns, association, micro habitat and use patterns needs to be carried out.
- (2) Encourage focused conservation and recovery programs for endangered medicinal plants like *Aconitum spicatum* (*Bikhma*) and others.
- (3) Regular patrolling jointly with the local community, trekking service providers, JFMC/EDC and Himal Rakshaks especially during monsoons and winters should be conducted to ascertain instances of illegal collection and smuggling of medicinal plants and the status of other threats.
- (4) Setup a wildlife intelligence network.
- (5) Involvement of reputed NGOs in medicinal plants research, conservation and monitoring.

(B) Conservation Regulations

- (1) Movement of pack animal (horses, dzos and yaks) beyond Thangsing into Chonrigang, Lampokhri, Chamrey, Khola Urar and Aralungchok is prohibited throughout the year.
- (2) Movement of pack animal (horses, dzos and yaks) beyond Labdang into Kasturi Urar, Patey Bhanjyang, Sukey Pokhri, Aralungchok and Khola Urar is prohibited throughout the year.
- (3) For tourists entering from Thangsing, only day trek is permitted from Thangsing to Lampokhri. Movement of tourists and support staff is permitted only up to Lampokhri. No camping by tourists within this conservation zone is permitted.
- (4) For tourists entering from Labdang on the Aralungchok-Dzongri trek, camping is permitted only at Kasturi Urar and Khola Urar. Pack animals (horses, dzos and yaks) are not permitted on this trek. Lighting fire or cooking food is permitted only at the designated campsites.

(C) Legal provisions and penalty

- (1) Pack animal (horse, dzo and yak) operators or yak herders who enter into this conservation zone shall be punishable with a fine which shall not be less than five thousand rupees but may extend to ten thousand rupees apart from the compensation for the damage caused. Provided that in case of a subsequent offence the fine shall not be less than ten thousand rupees and may extend to twenty five thousand rupees apart from the compensation for the damage caused and the concerned pack animal operator or yak herder shall be banned from entering in the forest areas of the state for a period of five years.

- (2) If tourists or support staff violate the conservation regulations then the concerned travel company organizing the trek or in its absence the group leader of the trekking party (hereinafter referred to as “trek manager”) shall be punishable with a fine which shall not be less than five thousand rupees but may extend to ten thousand rupees apart from the compensation for the damage caused. Provided that in case of a subsequent offence the fine shall not be less than ten thousand rupees and may extend to twenty five thousand rupees apart from the compensation for the damage caused and the concerned “trek manager” shall be banned from trekking or organizing trekking in the forest areas of the state for a period of five years.
- (3) The compounding officer shall include all forest officers not below the rank of a block officer. The compounding officer may order reward to be paid to a person who renders assistance in the detection of the offence or apprehending the offender out of the sum of money accepted as fine not exceeding twenty percent of such money. The compounding officer may meet up the expenditure incurred for detecting the offence and apprehending the offender out of the sum of money accepted as fine not exceeding twenty percent of such money.
- (4) These rules shall apply in addition to the laws relating to forests, environment, wildlife and biodiversity.

Sd/-
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Principal CCF cum Forest Secretary
Department of Forest, Environment and Wildlife Management
Government of Sikkim
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