

Forward plan for Ethnobotanical Society of Nepal (ESON): 2015 - 2010.

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Aim of plan:

The aim of this plan is to set a new direction for ESON. After 16 years of operation, ESON has reached a point where new opportunities and challenges require a longer term plan to be put in place to provide stability for the organisation, resilience to change and a clear direction of development. The review of ESON activities from 1998 to 2014 has provided an assessment of successes and highlighted potential areas of development that build on ESON's strengths and place the organisation in a strong position for consolidation. This plan identifies current strengths and builds upon those strengths through five main areas of work and identifies opportunities to develop over the next 6 years.

It also aims to embed ESON into the conservation field in Nepal as a key partner in delivering biological conservation through the application of ethnic traditional knowledge. This plan highlights the contribution ESON can make to delivery of Nepal's commitments under the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation and the Nagoya protocol.

In the period 2015 - 2020, ESON should:

1. Build on its strengths: its expertise and experience to date, its strong and varied partnerships, its successful coordination role, its capacity to raise awareness and providing a mechanism to champion local communities
2. Build a sustainable future for the organisation by: gaining appropriate project funding, increasing its membership; reactivating its executive committee & sharing the work load; marketing its achievements & its contributions to local, regional & national issues and staying focussed on key areas of work.

Vision:

A country where the rich ethnic diversity and the traditional knowledge held within those communities is valued and underpins the conservation of its rich biological diversity. A country where the benefits arising from the application of traditional knowledge belong to those local communities whose intellectual property it remains.

Strapline:

Building a future on plant traditions

Resources & staffing:

In 2014, ESON is run by a voluntary staff with 12 hour a week financial support. Its progress and success to date has largely been driven by the President of ESON with support from 3 members of the Executive Committee.

Competitive unique selling point (USP):

Nepal's rich biological and ethnic diversity results in a very rich depository of ethnobotanical knowledge. This traditional knowledge, accumulated over decades is a very valuable, but as yet largely untapped, source of information and techniques that can usefully underpin sustainable development meeting the economic, social and cultural needs of Nepal's people, particularly those living in remote areas. ESON has been working to document this knowledge and to use it in local projects as a basis for local community development as well as to conserve native plants and their habitats. Its experience to date and the partnerships it has built place it in a very strong position to guide Nepal towards meeting some

of the objectives of the Nepal Biodiversity Strategy, the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation and the Nagoya Protocol.

ESON's key role and USP therefore is to provide a conduit to get information on what local communities are doing to government resulting in realistic policy realistic that delivers what plants and communities need. The focus should be on finding and promoting case studies that work. This was supported by a participant at the workshop on 17 November, who commented: *There is a need in Nepal for realistic case studies, showing how local communities use and depend on local plant resources, to implement across the country and to inform policy. ESON is plugged into local community actions - what are they planting / using, what are the local issues. By communicating these case studies through blogs, policy statements and position statements, ESON can add value and realism to policy decisions.*

ESON should in future concentrate on key areas where it can make a clear impact. These are:

- Developing and delivering practical case studies on the ground with local communities
- Facilitating the building and delivery of effective Intellectual Property Rights agreements for local communities and ensuring these are in place for bio prospecting projects
- Promoting the value of wild plants and the indigenous knowledge associated with them to the wider public
- Promoting these case studies to government to guide appropriate policy making and implementation.

ESON needs to draw and maintain a clear distinction between its activities and those at the University. There is confusion between ESON and the Department of Botany, Tribhuvan University and this confusion needs to be cleared up both within ESON and with partners. ESON therefore should not be leading on student projects at PhD or MSc level where students are not directly delivering progress towards ESON's key objectives (above). It should also not get drawn into general ethnobotany student education programmes. It should instead focus on the areas above and use these criteria to prioritise activities to prevent dilution of its very limited resources.

Membership

ESON's membership currently numbers 69. While it is unrealistic to expect ESON to attain large membership numbers, some growth in membership would be useful. The role of members is varied yet vital to organisations like ESON. See governance and operational issues below. Table 1 suggests target numbers for ESON membership over the period 2015 - 2020 and estimates the 'unrestricted' income that would be derived from the membership.

Table 1: ESON membership

Membership type	2014 price	2014 number	2014 annual income	2015 proposed price	2020 target number	2020 target income	Recommendation
Ordinary member	Rs 100 registration fee Rs 100 annual fee	43	Rs 4,300	Rs 200	115	Rs 23,000	Drop registration fee. Admin burden too high.
Life member	Rs 2,000 Single payment	12	Rs 0	Rs 3,000 single payment	20	Rs 24,000	
Associate member	Students / researchers:			Rs 100	50	RS	rename Supporter & restrict to individuals. Move all institutions to

	\$50 Professionals: \$100	14	Rs 1,400	0	0	5,000	corporate members. Move professionals into ordinary member
Corporate member	Rs 2,000	0	Rs 0	Rs 5,000	5	Rs 25,000	Institutions
Community member		0	Rs 0	Rs 300 single payment	10	Rs 3,000	New category for village groups. A nominal fee. Objective is to build political weight.
ANNUAL TOTAL		69	Rs 5,700		200	Rs 53,000	
Single payment totals						Rs 27,000	

Main areas of delivery for 2015 - 2020:

The review of ESON activities 1998 - 2014 (Long 2014) has indicated where ESON's strengths lie and how activities can be prioritised to best meet ESON's aims and objectives. Details on these areas of work are given in Table 4.

Documenting traditional knowledge

- Ensuring Intellectual Property Rights from bioprospecting are established and belong to local communities & ESON

Building capacity

- Training the next generation of traditional healers, farmers & foresters and govt officials
- Providing mechanisms to build local community control over resources & access to cash income

Raising awareness

- Increasing ESON's membership,
- Promoting ESON and its work
- Promoting ethnobotany and the contributions it can make to conservation of natural resources, science and sustainable development

Demonstrating local sustainable development based on sustainable plant use

- Providing local community access to information
- Supporting sustainable, effective, long term local healthcare

Priority areas for ESON

ESON should continue to focus its efforts in the geographic areas where it has already built up a strong reputation and has established strong partnerships on the ground. These areas, in my view, are:

- Rasuwa District and Langtang National Park
- Dhading District and Manaslu Conservation Area
- Kachenjunga Conservation Area

Criteria to assess project priorities, in order of importance:

1. Does the project deliver at least one of ESON's aims?
2. Does the project provide a case study that can be promoted widely and would be applicable to other sites in Nepal?
3. Are the local partnerships already in place?
4. Does the project build on established projects to meet local expectations and needs?
5. Does the project occur in one of ESON's geographic priority areas?
6. Is the project fully funded and includes full overhead recovery?

If the answers to the all above questions are yes, the project should be considered a priority for ESON to deliver.

Operational issues:

ESON needs to increase its funding both through fully funded projects and through the generation of unrestricted funding to provide it with some independence and with capacity to continue to deliver between projects. With income largely derived from project delivery, ESON risks a stop / start delivery model that cannot build momentum and presence.

Financial opportunities:

ESON has built very effective partnerships with some national funding organisations and ESON should work hard to maintain these relationships. Projects for roll out over the next 6 years must be allocated to named project leads from within ESON's Executive Committee. Full responsibility for project funding and delivery will sit with these leads. Projects should not go ahead unless the project lead has gained full project funding to the satisfaction of the ESON Treasurer and President. Potential funding falls into two broad areas: international and national (Tables 2 and 3). Neither will be easy to attract.

My recommendation is that ESON needs to cover its overheads to build future security for the organisation and should do this in two ways (below). Responsibility for organisations development funding will sit with the identified persons on the Executive Committee.

1. Increase ESON membership and consider increasing the current subscriptions rates as well as introduce two new categories for membership: corporate memberships (for organisations and businesses) and community membership for local community organisations. The latter would be as a one off fee and would not contribute significantly to ESON's income but would be significant in building ESON's supporter base in future policy work. Membership fees should be collected annually and should be part of the role of the ESON Finance Support Officer. See Table 1.
2. Build overhead costs into all project funding so that the minimum costs of rent, office costs and finance support are covered.

Table 2: Some international funding sources for further investigation.

Funder	Type of project supported	Contact details
UK International Development Dept	Environment: Global Innovation Fund Livelihoods: UK Aid Match Amplify: collaborative challenge fund Global Poverty Action Fund Community Led Infrastructure Finance Facility Programme partnership arrangement	https://www.gov.uk/international-development-funding?keywords=&location%5B%5D=nepal&development_sector%5B%5D=livelihoods&eligible_entities%5B%5D=non-governmental-organisations
DARWIN Initiative	Preservation of biodiversity & local communities through building knowledge &	https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/darwin-initiative-funding-schemes-and-how-to-apply

	capacity, research & implementing international biodiversity agreements. Not suitable for IPR projects because of associated conditions.	
Just Giving	Online fundraising platform. There is a fee to register a charity	www.justgiving.com
Action Aid	Projects on education, food rights & right to health	Enquiry email sent to Action Aid Nepal at mail.nepal@actionaid.org on 5 Nov 2014. No reply received.
UN Environment Programme & Global Environment Facility	Strengthening the enabling environment so that countries can more effectively implement commitments made as Parties to CBD; Environmental information management, environmental assessments, environmental sustainability, environmental conservation, environment pollution, analysis & research; Identification and development of tools and methodologies for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity; Transboundary conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity	http://www.unep.org/dgef/HowtoAccessGEFFinancing/tabid/54349/Default.aspx

Table 3 - some possible national funding sources.

Funder	Type of project supported	Contact details
Dept of Plant Resources, Ministry of Forestry & Soil Conservation	Policy seminars, plant ID training for officials; sustainable harvesting & cultivation training in the field. Staff coordinator?	Yam Bahadur Thapa, Director General, Dept. of Plant Resources, MFSC
ICIMOD	Livelihoods Ecosystem management Traditional knowledge and access to benefits Long term ecological and environmental, socio-economic monitoring, including for eg alpine plants Regional cooperation, scientific exchange, policy exchange, farmer to farmer exchange.	Dr Eklabya Sharma, Director Programme Operations
WWF Nepal	Project that conserve Nepal's natural environment & preserve & support the quality of life of its people through sustainable livelihoods; 'Sustainable villages'; natural resource management to secure local economic benefit in Terai arc landscape; Sacred Himalayan Landscape & Chitwan Annapurna Landscape	Anil Manandhar, CEO WWF Nepal

Governance and delivery issues:

Development of ESON from 2014 depends on the revitalisation of its Executive Committee. Success can be best assured through the involvement of more people in the delivery of funded projects, supported by the current part time Finance Support Officer and ideally by at least one full time additional member of staff, a project coordinator.

The wider membership of the society must also be expanded to increase the capacity of the society to raise awareness of its existence and the importance of its mission. Members are one of the most cost effective ways to market the organisation, its role in wider society, its subject area and the role it can play in the sustainable development of Nepal. Increasing the membership has the additional benefit of

increasing unrestricted income. This income demonstrates commitment from the members, it demonstrates the value people across Nepal place on native plants and traditional knowledge and it provides a limited source of unrestricted funds that the society can draw on as match project funding or to fund elements of work that other funders are able or willing to support.

Immediate high priority activities for 2015:

Appoint a lead to update the website at least once a month. Consider setting up a blog and allocate guest blogs on a monthly basis. Deborah Long and Laxmi Raj Joshi have both volunteered to write one.

Print an annual update aimed at the wider public to raise awareness of ESON and the importance of plants. An example is appended. The printed version should be in Nepali.

Consider producing the newsletter as a pdf, downloadable from the website or emailed to members.

Print a new ESON postcard with membership subscriptions on it

All Executive Committee members should become 'ambassadors' for ESON and host seminars to key organisations with whom they have good relationships. These seminars should aim to increase membership and open up new avenues for partnership working and project funding.

Appoint 3 student ambassadors to give talks to student societies talks about ESON and ethnobotany

Appoint to the Executive committee the following people with the new project roles of the Committee made clear: Sanjeev Kumar Rai, Dharma Raj Dangol and Laxmi Raj Joshi. An induction to the committee from established members would be useful to re confirm ESON's aims and USP.

Allocate clear project responsibilities to each member of the Executive committee

2015 - 2017 high priority activities:

Run a project workshop at Budathum and write a blog for publication on the website with lots of images: Sneha, Bishnu, Yadu have volunteered to do this.

Bioprospecting project: complete phase 2 delivery of this project. Ensure effective Intellectual Property Rights agreements are in place to ensure full benefit sharing with the local communities. If successful, this agreement will act as a case study for implementation of the Nagoya Protocol in Nepal.

Complete Map NET to cover all native flora & embed within it, appropriate safeguards to establish prior art of traditional knowledge. This should be in partnership with ICIMOD, WWF and Laba Karki, US Patent Right lawyer.

Fund and deliver follow up workshops on sustainable harvest and sustainable cultivation in Rasuwa District.

Set up, with partners, a scholarship scheme to provide amchis & traditional healers in 2 areas with active apprentices

Support HAA in its lobbying of government increases government awareness and resolution to address the issue

Run 1 workshop a year for amchis to increase knowledge exchange & to include primary health care in daily work

Lower priority: Provide advice for the DPR's proposed Ethnobotanical museum.

2018 - 2020 high priority activities:

Develop and deliver annual policy seminars for government officials using case studies to illustrate policy needs and gaps.

Fund and provide training and equipment to local communities in Chilime / Gatlang VDC to set up local community owned processing plants to process herbs into essential oils, increasing local income.

Negotiations on the potential for a joint Dhunchne biodiversity visitor centre is properly resourced & promoting plant conservation have been explored and plans are in development.



TABLE 4: ESON ACTIVITIES 2015 - 2020

Outcome	Output	Progress milestones	Dates	Partner	Funder
Documenting traditional knowledge					
Programme lead: To be agreed					
MAPsNET provides 'prior art' for local communities; MAPsNET is used by govt officials to inform local policy making	MAPsNET is fully accessible online to the wider public and to government officials	Database officer appointed Work plan agreed	March 2015 - March 2016	ICIMOD	ICIMOD
Model agreements have been drawn up ready for use in the KREB funded bioprospecting project phase 3	Case study to promote across Nepal on equitable sharing of benefits	Desk study of IPR examples complete Draft agreement discussed		Laba Karki, US Patent Right lawyer	
KREB phase 3	30 species of plants investigated & potential benefits secured for local community	IPR agreement in place Students appointed	April 2015 - December 2015	KRIBB Dept Biotechnology, TU	KRIBB
Building capacity					
Programme lead: To be agreed					
Sustainable harvesting practices are in place & monitored by local communities	2 workshops per year in different communities for local farmers & foresters on sustainable harvesting techniques & monitoring limits	Funding in place Target species agreed Location & partners agreed	2015 - 2017	FECOFUN Manekor Society	Action Aid
Local farmers and foresters are generating cash incomes through cultivation of marketable medicinal plants	2 workshops per year in different communities for local farmers & foresters on cultivation of suitable medicinal plants to generate cash income	Funding in place Target species agreed Location & partners agreed	2015 - 2017	FECOFUN	Action Aid
Community	Skills and equipment to process herbs into	Community partner	2017 - 2020	Practical Action	Action Aid

enterprises are processing raw sustainably produced herbs into marketable products	essential oils to add value have been provided in Chilime / Gatlang VDC.	identified Funding partner in place Delivery partners in place Business mentor identified		Nepal	
Community representatives are gaining better prices fro local products as a result of trinaing	Negotiation training enables local District user Groups to negotiate better prices on behalf of the community	Funding in place Training partner identified Training programme agreed	2015 - 2017	FECOFUN	
Community representatives are aware of current trading prices of the herbs they are growing	Provide regular crop price updates via SMS to the local FECOFUN User groups	Funding in place Technical partner in place Pilot trial complete Phased roll out agreed	2015	FECOFUN	Action Aid
Local farmers are sourcing new crops from local nurseries	Provide nursery management training in Gatlang to broaden cultivation of new crops.	Funding in place Delivery partners agreed Business mentor identified	2015 - 2017	FECOFUN Gatlang Himalayan Herb Cooperative Unique Lunch Place nursery, Goljung	
Government officials are better equipped to identify restricted plants and those that can be traded without permits.	1 workshop per year provided on key plant identification, including protected species	Workshop template agreed Project timescale agreed	2015 - 2020	Institute of forestry TU	
Plant ID skills have improved amongst traditional healers & they can share knowledge & support	1 workshop a year for Nepal's ethnic tribes to attend a workshop to learn about plant id & to share knowledge.	Funding in place Workshop template agreed Project timescale agreed	International Indigenous People Day 2015	WWF Nepal	WWF Nepal

Demonstrating local sustainable development based on sustainable plant use					
Programme lead: To be agreed					
Local traditional healers are passing their knowledge onto and without whom the village will be without local healthcare.	Amchis & traditional healers in 2 areas have active apprentices	Partners in place Funding in place Pilot scheme complete Scholarship marketing in place Recruitment scheme in place		HAA Ayurvedic centre for Research & Training	Drokpa Ministry of Local Development Dept of health
Tibetan medicine is recognised by government; certification is in place in Nepal; and amchis have access to regular income support	Support HAA in its lobbying of government increases government awareness and resolution to address the issue	Delivery plan agreed with partners		HAA	
Amchis knowledge is thriving within an active network of practising amchis	1 workshop a year for amchis to increase knowledge exchange & to include primary health care in daily work	Funding in place Delivery partners in place Workshop template agreed Project timescale agreed		HAA	WWF
Training at ARTC and HAA includes primary health care issues for traditional healers to roll out in rural areas	Primary health care modules on child birth and care, community health and eye care are part of regular training delivery	Funding in place Delivery partners in place Workshop template agreed Pilot project complete Project timescale agreed		HAA Ayurvedic Research & Training Centre (ARTC)	Action Aid
Herb & NTFP Committee has access to expertise on medicinal plants	A member of ESON's Executive Committee sits on HNCC	Invitation received & accepted	2015 onwards	HNCC	
Raising awareness					
Programme lead: To be agreed					
ESON and its work	1 annual newsletter available online	Schedule in place	2015	N/A	Relevant corporate

are widely recognised	1 annual summary printed & distributed to members & partners Website updates are applied at least twice a year All project final reports are the subject of press releases to relevant press contacts	Contributions received in time Web master appointed Press release proforma in place	2016 2017 2018 2019 2020		sponsors
Ethnobotany is central to the development of sustainable plant use & its value to Nepal is widely recognised	Ethnobotany is referenced in relevant policy documents ESON Executive Committee Members' expertise is requested on govt committees	Policy contributions marketed Mentoring scheme agreed Briefings available online	2016 2017 2018 2019 2020	WWF Nepal (in kind) Bird Conservation Nepal (in kind)	
Visitors and local schools use a fully resourced joint biodiversity centre in Dhunche	A joint Dhunche biodiversity visitor centre is properly resourced & promoting plant conservation	Partners in negotiation Funding package agreed Centre design improved	Start negotiations in 2015	Manekor Society Langtang Area Conservation Concern Society http://laccos.org.np/	NTNC
Organisational development					
Programme lead: To be agreed					
ESON has a full time Project Coordinator in place to deliver the forward plan	One full time project coordinator	Funding in place Job description agreed Recruitment advert approved	In post by 2017		
ESON's financial requirements are met in a timely & efficient fashion	Part time Financial Support	Funding in place Appraisal & training scheme in place	Ongoing		Membership & project overhead funding
ESON's overheads are covered	Overheads	Overhead cost recovery in all project bids	Ongoing		Membership & project overhead funding

Post 2020

There are areas of work that could be developed in the lifetime of this plan ready for delivery post 2020. Given the limited capacity of ESON in 2014, it would make sense to put in place a plan to build ESON's capacity to influence policy. This approach was supported by participants at the workshop on 17 November 2014. Getting the right policies in place for plant conservation and the protection of indigenous knowledge has the potential to have wide reaching impacts beyond project areas. This is a relatively new area of work for ESON. Nonetheless, building partnerships with key organisations, with this aim in mind, should continue. Key partners include the Department of Plant Resources and WWF Nepal who are already very active on plant conservation and local community policy development. Bird Conservation Nepal would be a useful partner to approach with regard to providing a mentoring service to project staff who may require training in policy matters. Some initial areas of work to explore in future include:

1. Identify and advise on gaps in plant policy: during the evaluation many people mentioned current gaps in plant policy. These need to be clearly scoped through conversations with officials, local community stakeholders and plant specialists to identify what those gaps are and how they might best be filled. Once a policy gap has been identified, the Bird Conservation Nepal approach should be adopted to construct a time limited project aiming to produce policy advice
2. Facilitate training in different government departments to increase inter department communication and build skill levels amongst officials. This should include key plant identification on CITES species, national priority herbs and plants on HMG protection lists and tax / royalty issues listed below.
3. Advise government on effective implementation of the Herb and NTFP Development Policy using case studies from the field to structure realistic models of locally appropriate implementation. This includes advising on appropriate action to conserve the 30 national priority herbs identified in 2006.
4. Support initiatives to investigate tax incentives for farmers and local community processing plants with low interest loans. Consider other mechanisms in addition / instead of bans. To control excessive harvesting through more effective policing, increasing public awareness and empowering local communities to act for example. Simplify tax collection through a single agency. Ensure royalties accrue to local communities.
5. Embed IPAs in government policy as areas where effective conservation, collection and cultivation should be prioritised.
6. Build a relationship with BCN on a mentoring basis to increase policy skill levels in ESON

Review:

This plan should be reviewed in 2016 and adjusted if necessary. Milestones to assess in 2016:

- Responsibilities and roles of the Executive Committee members
- Membership levels
- Active projects and assessments of progress towards project targets
- Number of active partnerships
- Number of newsletters, website updates
- Project prioritisation criteria - are they still appropriate?

The forward plan has been written by Dr Deborah Long, on sabbatical from her job as Head of Plantlife Scotland. She can be contacted on deborahjlong2014@gmail.com



ETHNOBOTANICAL SOCIETY OF NEPAL

eson.org.np

नेपाल जनजाति बन्नरूपति समाज



The Ethnobotanical Society of Nepal (ESON) is 16 years old. Started in 1998 to coordinate the increasingly important need to include traditional knowledge of the use of Nepal's native plants into sustainable development and natural resource management, ESON is now considering its future.

Look inside to see our progress to date and some of our aspirations for the next few years.

Support our work by becoming a member or making a donation—details on the back page.

UPDATE NOVEMBER 2014

IMAGE: © Eleanor long

[Www.eleanorlong.com](http://www.eleanorlong.com)

ESON AT WORK

Workshops

Talking to our partners

An interview with ...

..., traditional healer in Budathum, Dhading



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ESON 2015—2020

- **Documenting traditional knowledge**

See our database of native plants & traditional knowledge on our website

- **Building capacity**

Enquire about our next workshop on Indigenous People Day 2015

- **Demonstrating local sustainable development based on sustainable plant use**

Join our next amchi networking event

- **Raising awareness**

Have a look at our website

- **Organisational development**

Join us



Find out more about ESON at:

[Www.eson.org.np](http://www.eson.org.np)

Follow some recent activities on
www.valuingwildplants.wordpress.com

Support our work & receive our newsletter, invitations to events & email updates:

Ordinary membership: RS 200

Life membership: Rs 3,000 (single payment)

Student; Rs 100

Institutions: Rs 5,000

Community groups: Rs 500 (single payment)

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