



## GEF-Satoyama Subgrantee Highlights Report

Organization Name:	TERI
Country:	India
Reporting Quarter:	FY19 Q1 (July to September 2018)
Person submitting Report:	Dr. Pia Sethi

### <Highlight 1>: Updation of Kivikhu People's Biodiversity Register

The Kivikhu PBR was updated with incorporation of the latest bird and butterfly lists. Five updated copies have been submitted to the local communities.

### <Highlight 2 HCL team visit

The HCL team visited the project sites for the 2019 HCL Foundation Grant. The project was included in the top ten shortlist.

### <Highlight 3>: Article on community conservation in project villages was published in Sanctuary Asia.

Based on this article we have been approached to write two more pieces for an influential e magazine in India (Conservation India) and Terragreen. Moreover, AirBnB has approached us to include our homestays on their website. The link of the article is <http://www.sanctuaryasia.com/conservation/field-reports/10859-the-call-of-the-chengu.html>

### <Highlight 4>: Participation in the wrap up workshop of the GEF Satoyama project in Mauritius

Yatish Lele and Pia Sethi participated in the wrap up workshop of the GEF-Satoyama project and gave a presentation on 'Mainstreaming Community-Conserved Areas for Biodiversity Conservation in Nagaland.

[Photos](#)

November 2017  
Project Code: 2014SF07

# A People's Biodiversity Register (PBR) of Kivikhu Village, Zünheboto, Nagaland



CONSERVATION  
INTERNATIONAL  
Japan



An updated Kivikhu PBR (Pic Siddharth Edake, TERI)



Yatish Lele and Pia Sethi attend the wrap up workshop of the GEF-Satoyama project in Mauritius (Pictures by Y. Natori)





# The call of the Chengu

An odyssey into the heart of community conservation

By Pia Sethi

A blue-grey silhouette of mountains shrouded in clouds in a dimming sky forms a surreal backdrop for a folk-dance performance in Nakhia, a remote village in Nagaland. In the far distance, the Great Barchi wall, laughter mingles with the mellifluous voices of the women and the haunting wails of a hornbill. I look around and see the lined but gleaming faces of 16 youngsters who braved Nagaland's uncertain roads and perilous downpours to support a small community conservation and biodiversity-based education initiative. The enthusiasm is palpable. Despite

heaps, the last four days have brought many physical ailments, and a shiver of butterflies and moths. The list includes over 100 species of butterflies

including the stately newah. Charaxes dohri and the great newah. Charaxes eudemios. But for me, the most wondrous part of this journey is the unwavering support of the local people who, despite incursions, who have heroically embraced this conservation adventure. And I am overjoyed to learn that the Tizu Biodiversity Conservation and Livelihood Network of three villages in Zokhima district has just been recognised for their contribution to the sustainable use of biological resources under the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) 2018 Biodiversity Awards.

We first wandered back four years to the start of our journey into the same tribal homeland of Zokhima district. We had heard about the many little patches of protected forests dotting the Nagaland landscape, an informal network of community-conserved areas. We were keen to understand what motivated their creation, and how to best manage these forests. Luckily, the Nagaland Forest Department funded The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) our organisation, to document Nagaland's community-conserved areas, and to prepare the state's first People's Biodiversity Register for a village. I often wonder what prompted my colleague Siddharth Ghose to travel so far from Kolkata and Dimpur over years of mud that sank off his heels, to assist Zokhima, a tiny remote village. Although I have earned him many times for his choice as a respondent, I believe

I find myself immersed in a Sema ritual world rich in folklore, biodiversity and traditional wisdom. A sense of the origins of myths and folklore in Aizawl/Nagapet where individuals believe their souls are transmigrated into those of the tiger.

It was late. The immediate reasons, however, were probably a combination of hunger pangs, a suspicious meal prepared by kind strangers and, of course, the stunning forests.

Nagaland presents a vista of spectacular hill forests and deep-flowing rivers. Unlike the security-lined land and minimal sightings along the way and few and far between. On the roadside, however, are stalls selling pineapples, the world's hottest chili, blue Akhalika plus an assortment of birds, frogs and mammals like spotted rare forest badgers, common palm civets, porcupines and Oriental honey buzzards, all spot and ready for the pot.

Hunting is a deep-rooted cultural practice intimately linked with regional traditions of shifting (jhum) cultivation. Unfortunately, sustainable hunting with traps and snares has made way for guns, while electric batteries replaced traditional practices to take a toll not only on fish but other aquatic life too. Sadly, the long 20-year fallow period that allowed fields to regenerate back to forest have been replaced by shorter and shorter cycles of five to seven years.

**PROBLEMS IN PARADISE**  
About one-third of Nagaland's villages have created community-conserved areas (CCAs) in response to forest degradation, water scarcity and hunting wildlife. Our questionnaire surveys suggest that 54 per cent were initiated to prevent forest degradation and 45 per cent to address loss of wildlife. These steps were only possible because of prevailing local wisdom that forests in Nagaland, where large tracts of forests are community or privately owned, and customary rights are protected under Article 271A of the Indian Constitution. Moreover, the Nagaland Villages and Area Council



AKHIE & IOW: the author along with her colleagues at Tizu village working with the Sema tribe of Nagaland to document and conserve Community-Conserved Areas (CCAs). Here, one of the state's villages have established CCAs. **SHIMEL NAGE:** The Great Barchi (Chakpang) views of the village is a gem of the heritage, traditional ethnicity for weeks.

Act (1998) grants Village Councils, clans and tribes to supervise proper maintenance of forests and individuals, clans or village councils own almost 53 per cent of natural habitats.

While this sounds good, the ground reality is worrisome. Each CCA tends to be small, on average 300 ha, and isolated. Few CCAs are networked across the landscape to form viable corridors for wildlife movement. Conservation measures reported in these CCAs vary from restriction on logging to seasonal, species-specific or complete bans on hunting. But these are not always effectively implemented. Moreover, while such bans tend to be restricted to the CCAs, across the landscape hunting remains rampant and largely unregulated. Understandably, this places Nagaland's biodiversity at jeopardy in the long run. CCAs and individuals own 72 per cent and 53 per cent of the land owned by CCAs respectively and the plans long-term sustainability of conservation initiatives, or risk because of agriculture, associated

Article on community-conservation by the Tizu Valley Biodiversity Network published in Sanctuary Asia.



Visit of the HCL evaluation team. Pic community representative