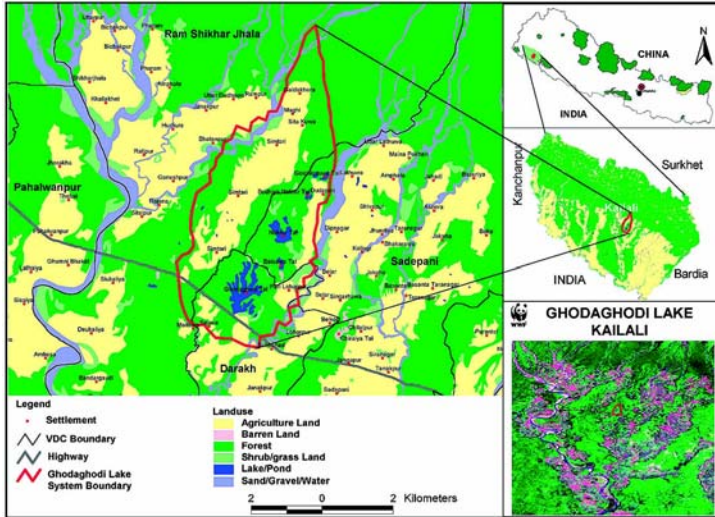


FACTSHEET

Ghodaghodi Lake Area

Kailali



■ HYDROLOGICAL VALUE:

The lake is fed by direct precipitation during the monsoon season and by surface flows from the watershed area, ground water springs and small streams. Water depth varies from 1-4 m. Secchi depth transparency and high phosphorus level indicates the lake as hypertrophic, the nitrogen level as eutrophic, and low Chlorophyll "A" level (due to rich growth of macrophytes) as oligo to mesotrophic. Dissolved oxygen is low with a minimum of 3-5 mg/l.

■ BIODIVERSITY VALUES:

Flora: More than 450 plant species have been recorded. Aquatic plants with unique physiological adaptation are Water Primrose (*Ludwigia alsceandens*) and Bladderwort (*Utricularia australis*). Biogeographically important as representatives of the Indo Malayan realm are Sal (*Shorea robusta*) and Myrobalan (*Terminalia alata*). Threatened plant species include the endangered Orchid (*Aerides odorata*), religiously important and threatened Lotus (*Nelumbo nucifera*), and rare wild rice (*Hygrohiza aristata*).

Fauna: The fauna comprises lower risk species on the IUCN Red List like Ferruginous Duck (*Aythya nyroca*), Grey-headed fish eagle (*Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus*), and Asiatic Rock Python (*Python molurus*). Further rare species include the lizard (*Varanus flavescens*). In total 29 fish species have been recorded including the

Ramsar Designation Date: 13-08-2003
Coordinates: 28°41'03" N
 80° 56'43" E
Area: 2,563 hectares
Elevation: 205 meters

■ OVERVIEW:

Ghodaghodi is a natural freshwater oxbow lake on the lower slopes of Siwalik. It is a large and shallow lake, having finger-like projections, with associated marshes and meadows surrounded by tropical deciduous forest on the lower slopes of Siwalik range. There are thirteen associated lakes and ponds, and some streams separated by hillocks situated on the periphery of Ghodaghodi. The forest and wetlands are wildlife corridor between the low land (Terai) and the Siwaliks.

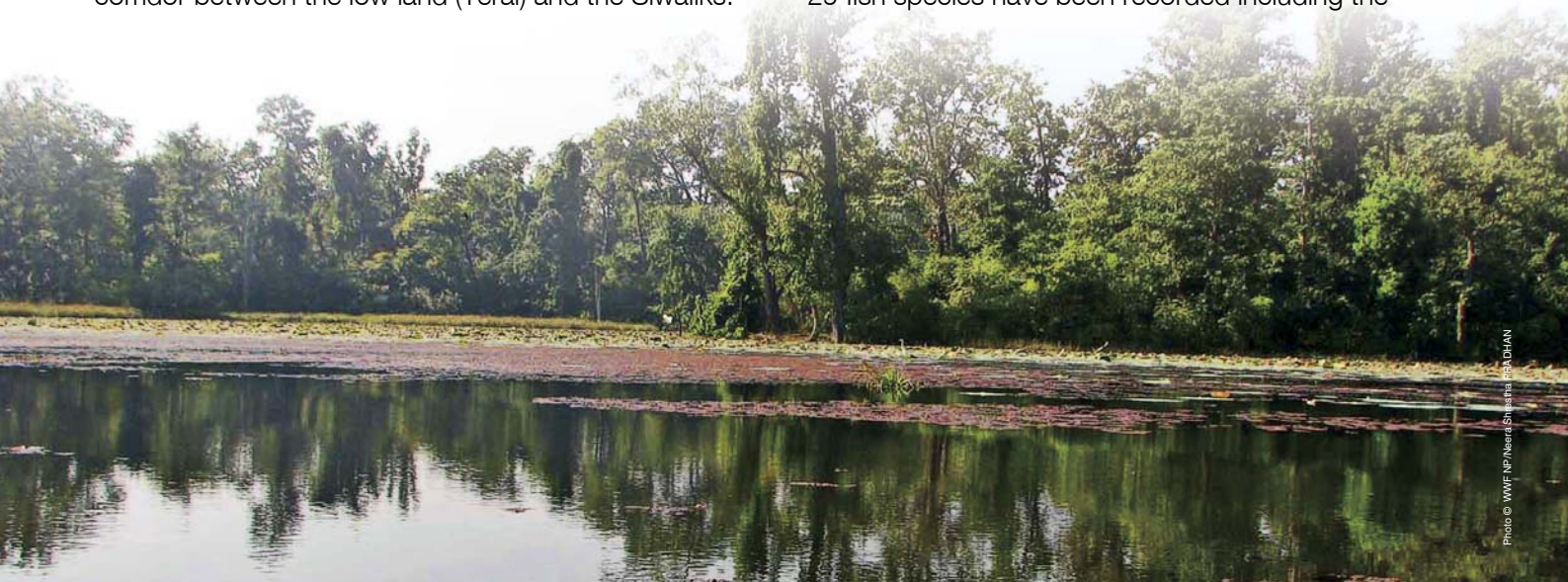




Photo © WWF/Nepal Shrestha PRAADHAN

threatened *Puntius chola* and the endemics *Notopterus notopterus* and *Oxygaster bacaila*. Around 140 partly migrating bird species inhabit the area representing over 16% of the national avifauna. Nearly 1% of the South Asian Cotton Teal (*Nettapus coromandelianus*) population is present. The floating vegetation provides an excellent habitat for waterhen and jacanas; the surrounding forest for birds of prey (e.g. the rare osprey *Pandion haliaetus*) and kingfishers. The area supports many globally threatened species (IUCN, 2002) such as the critically endangered Red-crowned Roofed Turtle (*Kachuga kachuga*), the endangered Tiger (*Panthera tigris*), Leopard (*Panthera pardus*), and Three-striped Roof Turtle (*Kachuga dhongka*), and the vulnerable Smooth-coated Otter (*Lutra perspicillata*), Common Otter (*Lutra lutra*), Lesser Adjutant Stork (*Leptotilos javanicus*) and Marsh Crocodile (*Crocodylus palustris*).

■ SOCIOCULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS VALUES:

The pressure of illegal immigrants from adjoining hill areas result in intensive use of the lake for traditional fishing, and agricultural services. The lake is of a great religious value. There is a shrine to the Ghodaghodi deity where indigenous Tharu (an indigenous ethnic group) celebrate a traditional festival (*Agan Panchami*) by worshipping and offering animals during the month of December. People take holy bath in the lake. There are several legends related to the origin of Ghodaghodi Lake.

The forest is used for grazing, fuel wood and to harvest sal wood for timber. The lake has high potential value for tourism.

■ THREATS:

- High dependency on forest and wetland resources
- Overgrazing by domestic livestock
- Loss of protected species by poaching
- Eutrophication
- Development/expansion of settlements and developmental projects
- Sedimentation/siltation and erosion
- Introduction/invasion of exotic plant species
- Drainage/reclamation for agriculture
- Vegetational succession



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■ CONSERVATION MEASURES:

Department of forest is the management authority of the area and Kailali District Forest Office manages the area. Local communities and NGOs are involved in the conservation process by forming user groups. A participatory community-centered management plan has been prepared for the conservation of the Ghodaghodi lake area. Community based anti poaching operations help reduce poaching in the lake area.

Acknowledgement: DNPWC and WWF acknowledges the support of IUCN for preparation of Ramsar Information Sheet.