

Monthly Activities Report for January

Date: 7th Feb 2021

Village: Wan Ngo Village

Country: Myanmar

Wan Ngoa village is 2 hours' drive by car or bike from Loikaw city. That village is located in Shan and Kayah state border and mostly Shan, Kayah and Pao ethnic groups are living there. In the Wan Ngoa village has a beautiful waterfall and a lot of people are used to visiting there with their family and friends. And also, there is an angling called Nan Ta Bad and the government had the hydroelectricity project plan in there. But the communities' people are against that project plan and observing it there with the cooperation from the CSOs. Because the villagers are only depending on farming and agriculture for their livelihood. If that project plan is achieved, the villagers are worried about losing their farmyard and also will have to immigrate to other places. Recently, the project has been temporarily postponed by the government. That village is under the KNPP control areas and will break and ceasefire agreement if that project happens.

The KEG's staff went to the Wan Ngoa village and conducted a wildlife survey in their Nat Naut community forest areas. Before the survey, we had the meeting with the village head, village elderly, villagers and KNPP township authorities. During the meeting we had been explaining to them how we would be going to do a camera track in their forest areas. According to the villagers, they have been seeing often the boar, leopard and bear in their forest areas and the villagers are very willing to participate in this survey.

The next day, the KEG's staff went to the community forest areas with the local hunter and authorities. However, our objective had failed because of illegal logging, there is not much forest left as we expected. So, we tried to give the warning to those who are doing logging in the forest. According to the villagers, "in the beginning there is no people are doing logging because they knew that they have to maintain the community forest but started from one or two people are doing it and no one want to speak out because the villagers are afraid that will cause the problem and finally there are lot of people are starting doing logging as others. Now, I am very happy that the KEG and authorities' people are coming to our village and giving the awareness for not to cut the

trees because if we tell each other no one will listen to us. Please make the rule and regulation for this community forest too”.

According to one of the village elderly said, “when we were young, we were not dear to go in this Htay No Saw” forest because the forest was very deep and had many wildlife. If we went in the forest some people were not able to come out for many days. Before, this forest was very beneficial for the KNPP because when they have battle with the military, if the KNPP soldier ran into this forest no one dear to follow from the military. However, currently the situation is totally opposite because there is no more forest as before. Because of the increasing population day by day, the community forest areas are getting reduced because they are expanding cultivation lands and doing illegal logging for their livelihood. During this day, there are no more big trees and no more wildlife too.”

Nat Naut community forest areas have 358 acre according to the KEG record. The KEG staff and authorities tried to arrest 3 people who are doing illegal logging within those forest areas. So, the KNPP’s authorities made them pay the penalties in the villages meeting as an example for the other villagers. The community forest and the shatter for the wildlife places had been disturb because of the illegal logging by the villagers. Due to those reasons, we were not able to leave the camera track in those areas.

After that we came back to the village and had the meeting with the villagers and KNPP authority. During the Meeting one of the KNPP’s leaders said to the villagers that “we are maintaining the forest for our future generation not for our personal benefit. Please try to follow our rules and regulations for the community forest. In the future, if you cut one tree, you will have to pay 10 lakhs for the mulct.” The villagers agreed on this point and they agreed to follow the regulations too.

Within this month, the KNPP’s soldiers are doing stand guard for this community forest to prevent the illegal logging. And we started our wildlife survey and we were able to leave the camera track in those community forest areas. We had achieved our plan with the help of local hunters and KNPP’s soldiers because they had shown the wildlife hunting-ground. If our wildlife survey has been achieved, we can make the transfer from community forest to nature reserve areas in the future.

