WWF

REPORT

MM

2018

2017 ANNUAL REPORT

THE DAWNA TENASSERIM LANDSCAPE

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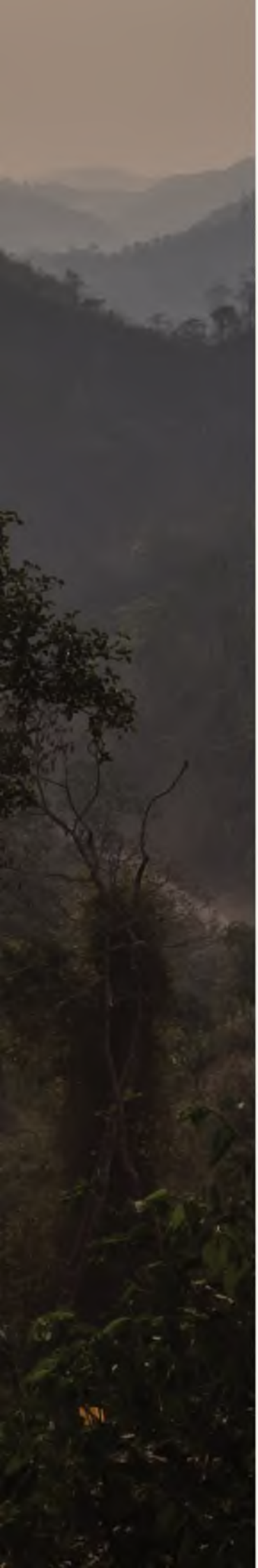


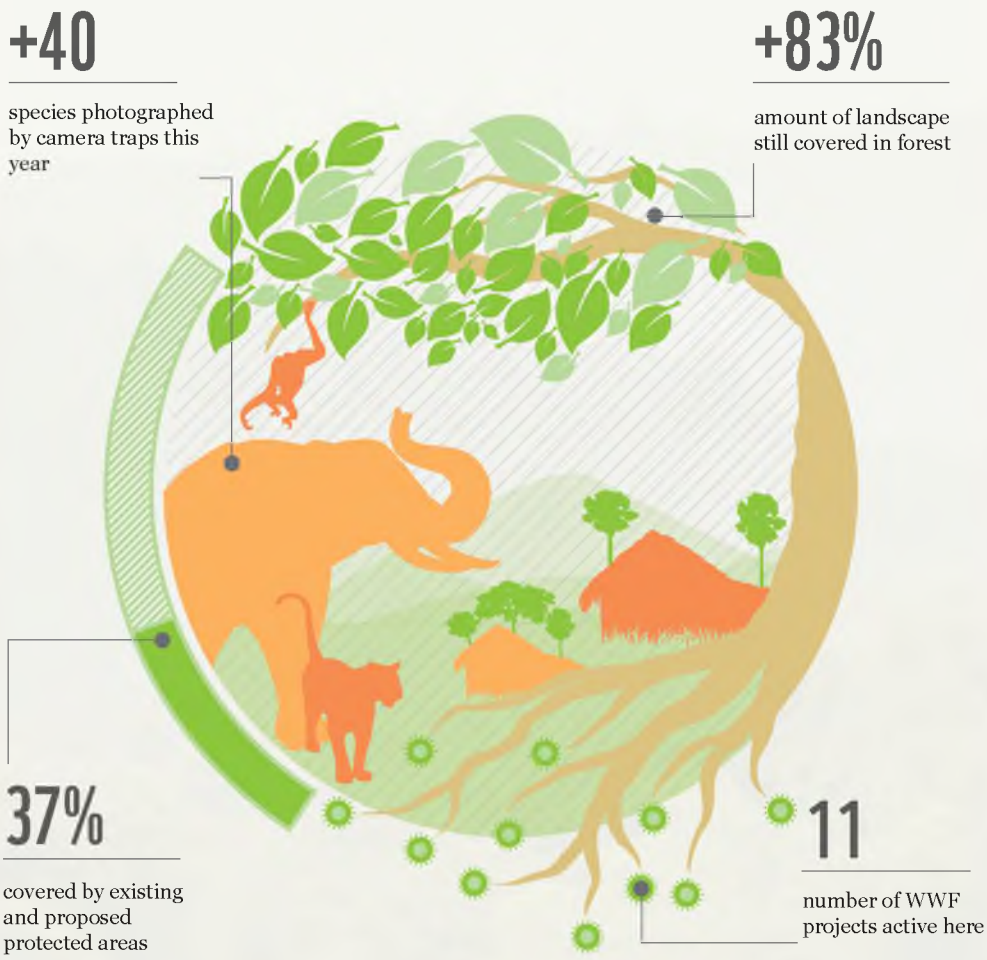
SUMMARY

2017 has been a year of considerable progress in the Dawna Tenasserim Landscape (DTL). This report highlights WWF's successes on the Myanmar side of the landscape, and demonstrates how donor support is helping us to setup and develop projects that are and will continue to contribute to the overall goals for this vast and ecologically rich landscape.

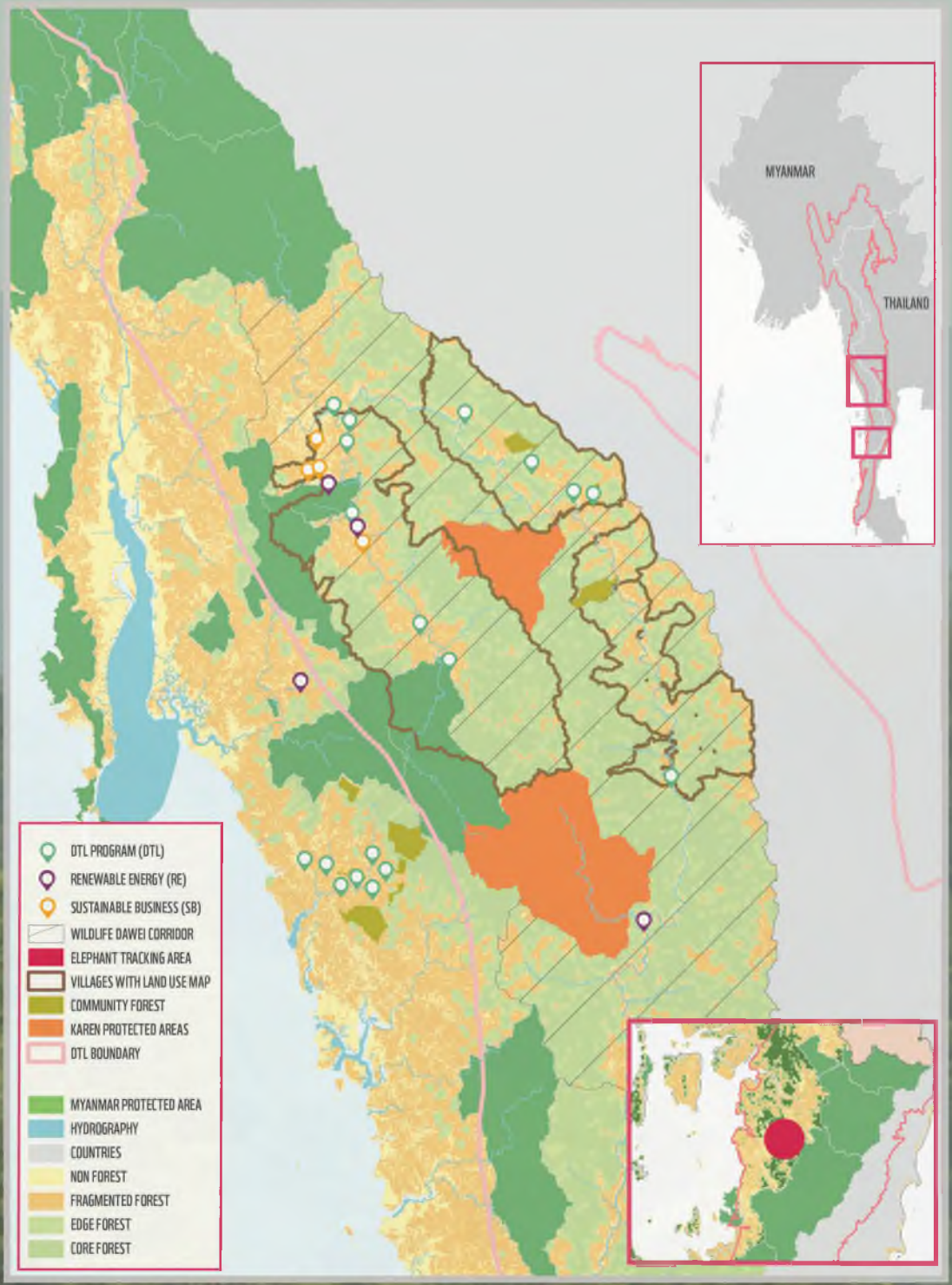
Across the board, WWF is working to show the significance of the DTL and to protect it. Biodiversity surveys have shown that key species including tiger and Asian elephant roam the DTL's critical corridors, demonstrating to partners this landscape's biodiversity values. Four Wildlife Protection Units (WPUs) have been established to enhance the protection of these animals and the areas in which they live. Together with partner organisations, a project collaboration has been established, leading to the development of a land use and management plan for the Tanintharyi Landscape Corridor which will secure its vital long-term protection. As funding for the landscape programme has also increased, WWF has now secured crucial support for the protection and effective management of the proposed Tanintharyi National Park. WWF's signing of an MoU with the Karen National Union exemplifies the strong partnerships that are being developed in the DTL, and our growing credibility has enabled us to secure funding to begin rubber-focussed conservation work.

The DTL is an inherently transboundary landscape, straddling the Myanmar-Thailand border. Critical corridors enable the free movement of key populations of terrestrial species. For example, where Thailand has lost its forested corridor connecting Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex (KKFC) to the Western Forest Complex (WEFCOM), connectivity between these two significant forested areas is preserved by the Tanintharyi Landscape Corridor on Myanmar's side of the DTL. Species moving between the two forest complexes have no choice but to move back and forth over the border.

This is a critical moment for progress in this spectacular landscape. Though we are at an early stage of engagement, funding has enabled us to embrace this key time frame, initiating and scaling up engagement whilst allowing us the flexibility to move on opportunities and deliver concrete support to local partners.



DAWNA TENASSERIM WILDERNESS



PROJECTS

WHERE WE WORK

BACKGROUND
WHAT IS THE DTL?

The 178,896 km2 Dawna Tenasserim Landscape straddles the Dawna and Tenasserim mountain ranges that define the international boundary between Myanmar and Thailand. It represents the Kayah Karen and Tenasserim Moist Forests Global 200 ecoregion – a suite of ecoregions that consist of the Earth's most biologically important areas to conserve representative biodiversity.

The DTL has some of the largest remaining areas of contiguous tropical moist and deciduous forests in Southeast Asia. Over 83% of the landscape is still forested, supporting a rich biodiversity. Embedded within the DTL is one of Southeast Asia's most extensive protected area networks. This network is anchored by the Western Forest Complex (WEFCOM) and the Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex (KKFC) in Thailand, and linked via transboundary ecological corridors with proposed protected areas in Myanmar.

Together, these existing and proposed protected areas in Thailand and Myanmar cover 36% of the landscape. But the vast expanses of montane forests that form the unprotected landscape matrix offer tremendous opportunities to conserve the biodiversity of the region through landscape and ecosystem approaches, and to secure intervening habitat linkages between the protected areas.

The flagship biodiversity in this landscape include globally important populations of endangered species including tiger *(Panthera tigris)*, Asian elephant *(Elephas maximus)*, gaur *(Bos gaurus)*, banteng *(Bos javanicus)*, clouded leopard *(Pardofelis nebulosa)*, Malayan tapir *(Tapirus indicus)*, wild dog *(Cuon alpinus)*, fishing cat *(Prionailurus viverrinus)* and Siamese crocodile *(Crocodylus siamensis)*. Endemic species that represent the region's irreplaceable biodiversity include the Fea's Muntjac *(Muntiacus feae)*, Gurney's Pitta *(Hydrornis gurneyi)*, Burmese Yuhina *(Yuhina humilis)*, and Kitti's hog-nosed bat *(Craseonycteris thonglongyai)*, one of the smallest mammals in the world.

The intact ecosystems of the Dawna and Tenasserim Mountain ranges also provide an array of ecosystem services that support both natural and human communities. These include sustained and regulated water supplies to mountain and downstream communities, forest products that support subsistence and livelihoods of local communities, nutrient cycling, crop pollination, natural disaster mitigation (especially floods and landslides), and climate change mitigation. The forests also provide recreational and aesthetic experiences, and have spiritual values to many indigenous tribal groups.

OUR VISION

To conserve the Dawna Tenasserim Landscape as an intact ecosystem that provides protected and connected habitats for wildlife, and safeguards ecosystem values and services for local communities and the nations.

THE GOAL

The overall goal of the DTL programme is to conserve the representative ecosystems of the Kayah Karen and Tenasserim Moist Forests Global 200 ecoregion along the Dawna and Tenasserim mountain ranges to ensure ecological integrity of the ecosystems, and support economic and socio-cultural integrity of human communities through sustained provision of ecosystem services and natural resources.

La Aw
Sinphyutai Wa Taw
Ka Maw Haw
Ah Moe
Kaw Ta Ra Khee
Htee khee
Htee Hta
Ah Ma La
RIVER
99°E
WWF
SEZ Road_Forest Cover

WWF'S LANDSCAPE APPROACH

WWF envisions a landscape as a socio-ecological system that consists of natural and/or human-modified ecosystems, and which is influenced by distinct ecological, historical, economic and socio-cultural processes and activities. The Dawna Tenasserim Landscape comprises its unique wildlife with tigers and elephants, its pristine rainforest, its diverse ethnic and indigenous communities with Karen, Bamar and other minorities. At present, challenges for people and nature in the landscape are the current and future agro-forest industries activities with oil palm and rubber plantations, as well as a tumultuous history of conflicts with internationally displaced people looking for a peaceful environment to thrive.

WWF's landscape approach and management leverage on building collaboration among multiple stakeholders in the landscape with the aim to reconcile competing social, economic and environmental objectives. This approach concretizes ensuring that local communities maintain their identity while economic activity is growing, and that wildlife and biodiversity are safe while land is available for all the actors.

Although the geographical boundaries of the landscape may be well-defined, the processes influencing the landscape go beyond them. International, national and regional decisions often affect the landscape profoundly. For this reason WWF engages actors at national and regional governments, for example in order to ensure that the Government of Myanmar's infrastructure plan takes into account the landscape values. WWF also engages international corporations and finance institutions, for example to create a supply chain for commodities that does not result in deforestation.

THEMES

LANDSCAPE AND CORRIDORS LAND USE PLANNING

Strategic land use planning can balance the demands of a growing economy with the needs of native wildlife, giving both the opportunity to prosper. This year WWF identified three critical corridors in the DTL all facing immediate threat by infrastructural activities and farm expansion. Working with partners WWF has set up important initiatives which aim to facilitate nature-friendly land use planning. WWF is hosting workshops and facilitating stakeholder discussions on shared landscape management to promote a zero deforestation supply chain for key natural commodities like rubber and palm oil, and key players included so far agree on the need for a shared management approach. Landscape planning is also key to maintain the connectivity between habitats so that wildlife can keep on thriving; this includes the work for a green Dawei-Thee Hkee road.

ZERO DEFORESTATION SUPPLY CHAIN AND SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT

Rubber plantations in the Tanintharyi account for 20% of Myanmar's production of this key agricultural commodity. Thorough research conducted by WWF has shown that this useful product presents a huge opportunity for economic development in this rural and largely impoverished area. As these plantations are responsible for deforestation and forest degradation, WWF is working to promote a zero deforestation approach and develop a sustainable rubber supply chain to replace the existing inefficient and destructive industry.

COMMUNITY BASED NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Rural communities depend upon the DTL's fertile landscape for food, water and income. WWF is helping to put power and responsibility back into the hands of indigenous communities living here through the establishment of community forestry projects and through working with other organisations to promote better understanding of the role of indigenous peoples and local communities in governing and managing the country's forest. WWF is also supporting rubber smallholders and developing key non-timber forest products to ensure that sustainable livelihoods are viable for these communities whilst reducing deforestation of the landscape.

WILDLIFE CRIME AND TRADE REDUCTION

Myanmar's wildlife is facing threats from multiple angles; directly from wildlife hunting, poaching and trafficking as well as indirectly from habitat loss. WWF is collaborating with the Karen Wildlife Conservation Initiative (KWCI) and the KNU Forest Department (KFD) to improve law enforcement to reduce poaching and trafficking of wildlife with high market value. WWF is also working to reduce the hunting pressures for bushmeat with initiatives for alternative livelihoods. Mitigation of human-elephant conflict in areas where the two have been pushed into living in close proximity is another pillar of WWF's approach to wildlife conservation.

BIODIVERSITY RESEARCH

The DTL is home to some of Southeast Asia's most astonishing wildlife. The presence of these species is integral to conservation efforts as by protecting them, we protect the area in which they live. Camera trapping surveys are helping us to prove that rare and endangered species still call the DTL home, and collaring wild elephants so we can track their movements will help to mitigate human-elephant-conflict, reducing the risk of villages losing their crop to elephants and improving their perception of this species in urgent need of protection.

CONSERVATION AREAS MANAGEMENT

National parks and other conservation areas in the DTL host pristine ecosystems, levels of biodiversity and local communities. Supporting Government authorities with the management of these areas is essential to protect them in their current status. WWF has started supporting three tiger heartlands - Tanintharyi-Leh Mur Lah National Park, Kaser Doh-Ler Nuh Htee wildlife sanctuaries and Kweekoh-Mulayit wildlife sanctuary to improve their management.

HYDROPOWER FREE RIVERS

Rivers are important elements of the DTL's ecosystems and the maintenance of their healthy ecology is fundamental to maintain balance with other elements. Dams for hydropower generation are harmful as they disconnect rivers. The Tenasserim river is currently free flowing and healthy and WWF is advocating for energy development alternatives that do not alter its status.

OFF-GRID RENEWABLE POWER DEVELOPMENT

Regions and States in the landscape are looking at options to develop their capacity for electricity development. Nowadays, renewable energies such as wind and solar are optimal choices for providing clean energy and often they do not require the installation of an electricity grid which disrupt habitats and wildlife. WWF is advising the Regional and State Governments in their decisions, providing technical assistance and on the ground demonstrations.

GREEN ECONOMY AND POLICY WORK

All of the above themes are underpinned by our ongoing policy work. This involves advocating a green economy approach to be implemented across the DTL and the whole of Myanmar so that government and industries recognise the need to protect the country's natural resources for the benefit of both nature and humans, whilst supporting the critical need for economic development.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2017

The inclusion of a natural capital account for forests in the national accounting system is underway and will be completed in 2018. One technical training for the planning department has been completed and one more is planned.

4

Elephants collared in areas at risk of Human Elephants Conflict, for studying their movements and eventually mitigate interactions

First confirmed evidence of tigers using the Tanintharyi landscape Corridor

170ha

Size of first Community Forestry area set up in the corridor demonstrating an initial reconciliation between Union Government standards and Karen National Union standards. More than 7,000 ha to be officially designated during 2018

40

Number of rangers in 4 Wildlife Protection Units (WPUs) now patrolling 3 key Karen Wildlife Sanctuaries populated with tigers and elephants

WWF's knowledge, research and inputs have been included in the Hydropower Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process

Land use mapping at village level has started in the corridor with around 100, 500 ha mapped. This is a milestone for ensuring connectivity both between TNP (Tanintharyi National Park) and TNR (Tanintharyi Nature Reserve) as well as Leh Nu Thee and Kaser Doh Wildlife sanctuary

100,000ha

Landscape level participatory planning with Government, CSOs and KNU incepted with workshops on Landscape approach, Corridors land use planning and High Conservation Value area mapping

A civil society ICCA (Indigenous Peoples' and Local Communities Conserved Territories and Areas) working group has been set up to promote ICCAs in Myanmar

Governments of Tanintharyi and Kayin States have initiated anti-coal and pro renewable power plans, with technical assistance provided by WWF

235

Number of households electrified in first pilot of sustainable off-grid solutions. 225 households ongoing

5

Number of women trained in solar panel maintenance in first pilot of sustainable off-grid solutions completed.

The Government of Myanmar and Tanintharyi Rubber Planters and Producers Association have committed to a zero deforestation sustainable rubber supply chain. Since year 2000, over 100,000 hectare of primary forest has been converted to rubber plantations

Environmental and Social safeguards for the mining sector are under discussion

OUR WORK IN ACTION

MYANMAR'S UNSUNG HEROES

In response to an unprecedented increase in elephant skinning in Myanmar, we are collaborating with the government and other NGOs to provide funding for elephant anti-poaching teams to patrol the poaching hotspots.

Say hello to Myanmar's wildlife heroes.

Just outside the hectic city of Yangon, Myanmar's Forestry department sits in the middle of a lush teak plantation. Within the walls of its grand but aged colonial building, 45 men are strategizing an ambush on suspected poachers.

Today it's just a trial run. This week the men are on an intensive training programme to learn about law enforcement, intelligence gathering, and how to use surveillance equipment. When they're ready, the newly formed teams will return to the forest with an important purpose: to protect the country's most iconic and culturally revered species, elephants.

These men represent the first in a long line of Myanmar nationals who will dedicate themselves to the protection of the country's amazing natural heritage. Taking inspiration from the Southern Africa Wildlife College set up by WWF 20 years ago, the Myanmar government, supported by WWF and other partners, plan to establish a Myanmar wildlife ranger college where hundreds more men will receive all the tools they need to become safe, effective, and empowered wildlife conservation heroes.

SEARCHING FOR MYANMAR'S TIGERS

Somewhere under the dense forest canopy is Paing Soe. He's a WWF biologist whose job it is to find evidence of one of Myanmar's most iconic and elusive species - tigers.

The Dawna Tenasserim Landscape is one of Southeast Asia's last remaining wildernesses, spanning the Myanmar-Thailand border. Paing Soe is working with local partners to survey the wildlife of the region.

"We don't know how many tigers live in this forest, but if they are here we need evidence so that we can protect them, their prey, and their habitat."

A couple of weeks later and the results are in. There are tigers still roaming the Dawna Tenasserim Landscape. And it's not just tigers.

"Through these camera trapping surveys, we now have proof that all of Myanmar's iconic species live in this area. Now that's exciting!"

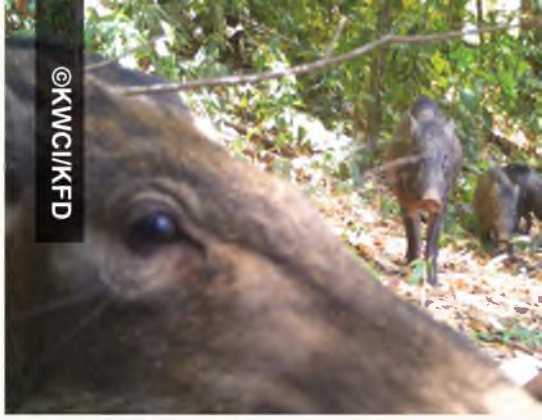
From tigers to elephants and gibbons to langurs, the biodiversity here is extraordinary. But their future hangs in the balance as the region faces large-scale deforestation, infrastructure development, mining, and increased poaching.

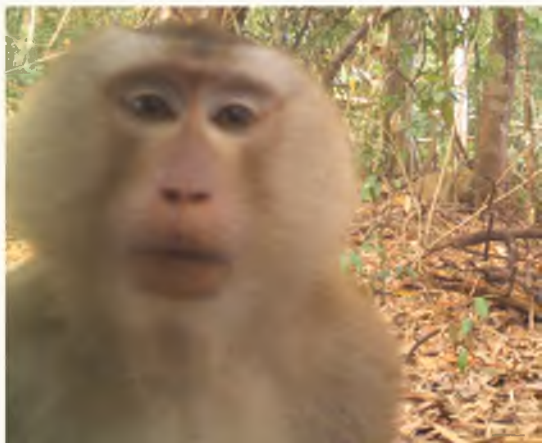
"The conservation world is working to double the wild tiger population and Myanmar is still a tiger range country, but for how long will depend on whether we protect them. If we don't, Myanmar could lose tigers in a matter of years." Ashley Brooks, WWF Tigers Alive Initiative.

We are working with the government and partners to develop a National Tiger Action Plan, a critical component of which is these baseline studies.

Tigers are an umbrella species, meaning that by protecting them, the forest is protected too – along with all the other species that call that habitat home. This is why tigers are one of our priority species, but ask Paing Soe why they need safeguarding, and his eyes narrow as if the answer is obvious:

"Because who would want to live in a world without them?"





OUR WORK IN ACTION

OUR WORK IN ACTION

FROM FARMER TO FOREST MANAGER

Cardamom seeds grow best at a 50-degree angle. The slope isn't much of a problem for Saw Demo, but it's the rainy season and WWF staff aren't quite as nimble on the slippery terrain.

Saw Demo (which literally translates as Mr Democracy) is head of the Kyeik Pi Lan Village in the Banchuang region of Myanmar. He wears a warm grin and a Manchester United t-shirt.

Today, Saw's out with the group of people who form the village's new Community Forestry Committee. They're en route to plant a batch of cardamom seedlings. Where once the men wielded snares and crossbows for hunting, the small lush trees balanced atop their shoulders symbolise a positive new path for both the village and its homeland. The tone of the day is light and humorous, mostly at the expense of the visiting WWF team.

As we patrol the perimeter of the land newly designated for agroforestry, Saw and the gang move with such ease – feet rooted, fingers trailing across the thick trunks of century-old teak trees. It's a poignant reminder of the age-old dependence rural communities like this have had on the ancient forest. For years, nature has provided them with food, shelter and a means of income. But in recent decades, the consequences of over-exploitation have hit close to home, urging locals into a new way of thinking.

"Worrying about losing their forests and wildlife, the villagers around this area became interested in conserving their forests. They requested support from WWF and we are collaborating to establish community forests and wildlife sanctuaries," says Saw Wah Htue, WWF Awareness Officer.

This community forestry project has been in action since 2016, and the committee has been occupied trimming, fireproofing, and planting their way to a sustainable future.

The fruits of their labour will be more predictable yields and the promise of an income generated by the export of products like these cardamom seeds to neighbouring countries. We have set up links with a host of traders so the committee can travel into town at harvesting time to negotiate prices – with the bargaining power firmly in their hands.

Where once the rich biodiversity of the forest surrounding the village was disappearing at an alarming rate, now lies the hope for a symbiosis where agroforestry promises prosperity, while allowing nature to regenerate and thrive.

Kyeik Pi Lan have set the precedent with their enthusiasm and dedication to this project. They are playing their part in the global goal of restoring and protecting our planet's forests, but this is just the first to be set up in the Banchuang area. We are eager to enable more projects like this – to guide and build capacity where we can, but most importantly to put the future of the landscape back into the hands of the people who depend upon its survival.

THE QUEST FOR SUSTAINABLE RUBBER

We're in a southern region of Thailand, standing amongst a sea of neatly aligned, white-spotted tree trunks. This is a rubber plantation, and just one of many in Southeast Asia - the largest producer and exporter of natural rubber in the world.

With us is Zaw Htun Myint, Deputy Director General of the Myanmar Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Irrigation. He is here with WWF to learn about the rubber production and supply chain in this area.

Thailand is the perfect classroom for learning about the do's and don'ts of rubber production. As it stands, there is no official standard in the world for sustainable rubber production, but with this research and opportunity to create a rubber market from scratch, Myanmar is in the running to become one of the world's first sustainable rubber producers.

Rubber is important to Myanmar's growing economy, and a warm, wet climate means this is prime rubber territory. Plantations can be seen cropping up more and more along some of the DTL's critical corridors, however with no existing market built around rubber, farmers are working independently and are faced with losing their livelihoods when the fluctuating market price drops suddenly. The resulting monocultures leave large chunks of forest unable to support the wildlife that once lived there, as well as the farmers who depend on the forest's natural resources.

The purpose of this trip to Thailand is to evaluate the types of markets that can be formed around rubber. We visit a plantation, a cooperative where latex is processed into sheets of rubber, a market where they are sold, an industrial complex where the sheets are converted into products, and a university conducting rubber research.

U Zaw Htun will return from the trip armed with the knowledge he needs to consider the next steps in creating a sustainable rubber industry in Myanmar, such as researching how to improve the technology available here to make tires and other products, and inspiration to produce furniture made from the wood of rubber trees. He will also return with ideas for how to improve rubber yields from trees instead of expanding acreage – growing the industry up, rather than out - one of his ministry's high priorities.

Our main aim is to prevent further deforestation.

OUR WORK IN ACTION

OUR WORK IN ACTION

PROTECTING THE VALUE OF NATURE: WHAT DOES IT COST?

Written by Hanna Helsingen, who leads WWF-Myanmar's work on the Dawei road and has been advocating for better infrastructure planning and design in Myanmar in order to keep forests, wildlife and people protected.

From the 15th floor of a high rise building in Bangkok, the view of the city ripples under a smog of heat and car fumes. I'm sitting across the table from a financier involved in a road project and am showing him photos of the incredible landscape in the southern part of Myanmar. Spread over the table are designs for wildlife crossings and maps showing how landslide risks can be reduced by protecting forests.

The financier turns to me and asks, "how much will it cost? How much more will a better and more sustainable road cost and how can I justify it?"

I knew this question would come. We often have to justify from an economic point of view why ecologically valuable places should be protected, why we should still have places where wild tigers roam free. I wish it would be enough to say that these places are invaluable and irreplaceable, but I have learned too many times that it is not enough. It all comes down to the numbers.

Humans have been building roads for ages. Often when the cost of a road is assessed, it is only about the economic cost of its construction: acquiring the land, purchasing the material, hiring the workers etc. The social and environmental costs – for example people having to leave their land where they have lived for generations, or losing valuable habitat – remain invisible. Today we know more. We know that ignoring the environmental cost upfront is far more costly than addressing it from the very beginning. We know that there is economic value in conserving nature, but we must improve in finding ways to assess it and communicate it.

For the past three and a half years, I have been thinking a lot about roads. Learning a lot, and grappling with how and why these important investments are also such threats to the species and places we care about. Slicing through landscapes, roads break up habitats and invite both planned and unplanned development and infrastructure. Roads create easy access to areas previously undisturbed – putting places and species at risk.

Nowhere are these implications more real than on the Dawei Road connecting Southern Myanmar with Thailand and beyond. Together with partners, WWF is promoting solutions to mitigate the negative social and environmental impacts that are likely to occur unless fully addressed in the planning and design of the road. Though an important investment, the road will cut through an essential ecological corridor or 'wild highway', used by tigers, elephants and others species to move across the landscape to feed, mate or disperse. People who live here depend on the ecosystems for their livelihoods and well-being. The corridor connects critical forest areas in Thailand with those in Myanmar, creating one of the largest and most significant areas for biodiversity in Southeast Asia - The Dawna Tenasserim Landscape.

Whenever I travel along the access road existing in place of the pending Dawei Road, I think about what this landscape will look like in ten years. Will the forests still be there? Will hornbills still fly high? Will tigers roam?

My hope is that this project will become a success story. That it will show how a realignment of road sections can avoid further deforestation. That it will show how wildlife crossings and monitoring helps species to safely cross roads. How vegetation on slopes and protection of forests will keep sediment in place and secure water sources for humans.

While we need to address design solutions, roads change landscapes. This is why land use planning is critical. Without this approach, and fast action, the spectacular Dawna Tenasserim Landscape could be forever transformed into a web of roads and development – leaving nothing but small islands of empty forests.

At WWF we believe there is a way to allow infrastructure to develop, without destroying the places we value and rely on.

Now more than ever are we better placed to plan, design and build roads that meet socio-economic needs, while keeping landscapes connected and protected.

It starts with finding the answers to the question: how much more will it cost to build a better road, and how can the higher cost be justified?

BIG WINS IN THE DTL FOR 2018

ELEPHANTS

Zero elephants poached thanks to strengthened law enforcement and training of Wildlife Protection Units

TIGERS

Evidence of tiger breeding demonstrates the presence of a healthy tiger population

ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE

Restaurants along the Dawei road stop selling dishes containing wild animals

RUBBER

MoU signed between WWF and major rubber producers in the region to develop a zero deforestation sustainable rubber supply chain with 100% traceability by 2022

FORESTS

90% of core/ primary forest in the Tanintharyi and Lenya corridors protected with Protected areas, Community Forestry or ICCAs, with connectivity maintained

PROTECTION

Stakeholders agree on High Conservation Value Areas and landscape land use plans, with natural capital and ecosystem services included in the planning

RIVERS

The Tenasserim river is maintained free flowing with no hydropower dams planned as agreed in the national level Hydropower Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

RESTORATION

Critical watersheds for ecosystem services are agreed by key stakeholders to be restored via forest restoration activities

ROADS

Agreement on sustainable design principles for the Dawei road is reached among local communities, CSOs, Myanmar and Thai governments and the road developer

MINING

Environment and sustainability mining sector safeguards for investments are approved at national level, with satisfactory levels of standards

ENERGY

The Governments of Tanintharyi Region and Kayin State publicly endorse a renewable energy plan and start to implement it

BUILDING THE DTL TEAM

Over the past two years, WWF has been continuously building the DTL team.

In Myanmar a new Landscape Manager and Forest Manager arrived this year, increasing the team to 10 members. The intention is to grow this number in 2018 with the recruitment of a law enforcement technical adviser and additional project officers on forest and livelihood development, as well as a sustainable rubber project manager.

The team also completed the Transboundary DTL Strategy, and country specific landscape strategy in Myanmar is being developed. Conservation targets, threats and the theory of change are now also complete. We aim to complete the first draft of the strategy plan by early next year.

WWF WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

Partnership with CSOs

Setting up a field office in Dawei and having key staff such as a Landscape Manager, Forest Manager and field staff based in the landscape has helped a lot in strengthening the presence of WWF on the ground. It has also improved the collaboration with the local civil society groups in Karen State and Tanintharyi Region. This growing acceptance is indicated by the participation of WWF in several informal groups/ initiatives that are implementing projects and joint events in the landscapes.

Salween peace park coalition

WWF is one of the supporting partners of the newly formed Salween Peace Park (SPP) Coalition. This group supports the development and promotion of the SPP as one of the first Indigenous People's Parks in Myanmar. The Salween Peace Park initiative is to promote a people-centered approach to conservation, placing land rights and indigenous management systems at the core of this approach. Members of the coalition include WWF, KESAN (Karen Environmental and Social Action Network), Rainforest Alliance, and Forest Trends.

Banchaung project coordination committee

WWF is now part of a committee that serves as a coordinating and monitoring body to different projects being implemented along the Banchaung (also known as Pawklo among Karen people) Valley. The group is composed of representatives from KNU (Karen National Union), WWF, KESAN, Takapaw, and WCS (Wildlife Conservation Society). A project sub-committee is responsible for implementing project activities and ensuring that activities on the ground are well coordinated among project partners to avoid confusing and burdening community members with too many meetings.

Environmental education working group

WWF also partnered with other CSOs to conduct outreach activities to raise the profile of the DTL and the importance of a healthy environment. A workshop jointly organized by WWF and DDA (Dawei Development Association) on environmental education in November 2016 paved the way for the establishment of an environmental education working group in Tanintharyi Region, composed of WWF, Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) , Environmental Conservation Department (ECD), Flora and Fauna International (FFI), DDA and Dawei University. The ground has subsequently implemented joint outreach events.

PROJECTS

A number of projects started in 2017 across the DTL funded by the WWF Network and in partnership with other NGOs. 2018 sees some these projects moving into new phases, whilst other new projects are being launched.

FROM CONFLICT TO COLLABORATION BIODIVERSITY AS A BRIDGE

Having already established the presence of astonishing biodiversity on the Myanmar side of the DTL through the use of camera traps, this follow up project will consist of further biodiversity surveys to identify key areas needing ground support and advocacy. It will also be used to determine where Wildlife Protection Units should be established in partnership with Karen civil society organisations, and to commence the process of landscape planning to identify and agree on management plans for the essential conservation corridors. Projects like this are critical in forming the argument to protect this landscape, as protecting the rare and iconic species that live here means their habitat will also be safeguarded.

This phase will also allow WWF to expand its work in the northern part of the DTL – into Mon and Karen States. Key project components include: biodiversity surveys, law enforcement and community participation in forest and wildlife protection, developing a landscape conservation vision and integrated landscape plans in key corridors of the landscape.

THE NEXT STEPS

- Facilitate consultation on landscape approach in Kayin and Tanintharyi Region
- Train local experts on HCVA (High Conservation Value Area) mapping
- Conduct HCVA mapping in critical corridors
- Continue biodiversity monitoring in Ler Nur Htee – Kaser Doh Wildlife Corridor
- Continue supporting wildlife protection units in patrolling wildlife and timber poaching

THE GOAL OF THIS PROJECT

To define, develop, and pilot the landscape approach in DTL.

CRITICAL CROSSROAD: THE LER MU LAH PROJECT

This project focuses on securing effective management of the 2,2000 km2 proposed Tanintharyi National Park, locally known as Ler Mu Lah. It also aims to secure sustainable, forest-based livelihood opportunities for local communities using a combination of approaches including political advocacy, participatory land use planning, on-ground enforcement and capacity building. It will also involve close cooperation with the Kaeng Krachan National Park on the Thai side of the border, with the total Tanintharyi - Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex totalling just under 5,000km2.

By 2022, the outcomes are as follows:

The Tanintharyi National Park is effectively managed.

Wildlife populations are known, protected and stable.

Initiatives provide sustainable, forest-based livelihood opportunities as well as tenurial security for local populations. And finally, by 2022, the institutional management capacity of the KNU

Forest Department, and other relevant stakeholders, will be sufficient to safeguard the long-term future of the landscape.

THE NEXT STEPS

- Develop participatory land use and management planning activities with local communities in Le Mu Lah
- Pilot sustainable livelihood projects in selected villages
- Start the process of securing land tenure for selected villages
- Continue to monitor biodiversity in Ler Mu Lah

THE GOAL OF THIS PROJECT

WWF's vision for the Tanintharyi - Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex is of a transboundary World Heritage Area, representing a cornerstone of the DTL mosaic and providing a sustainable model for indigenous management and cross-border conservation.

STEWARDS OF NATURAL RESOURCES

STRENGTHENING LIVELIHOODS FOR COMMUNITIES

This project will target 10 communities in the Banchaung and Tanintharyi watersheds where the majority of villagers have a low income level, with farming as their main source of income. As these communities rely largely on the surrounding forests and rivers for their livelihoods, this project is bringing security and the power of land management to the hands of the people who call it home. It will help communities restore the forest and protect their livelihoods through responsible agroforestry techniques and give communities the capacity to share their knowledge. Community representatives will become a part of decision making processes, participating in multi-stakeholder planning and FPIC processes to make socially, ecologically and economically sound development decisions. As well as building their voice and presence, through this project we are building the resilience of communities which due to their dependence on farming have long been vulnerable to economic and climate related shocks. 25 small-scale producers will receive an additional income through the formation and professionalisation of a producer group, whilst communities will also be connected to markets and microfinance schemes.

Whilst the number of people directly targeted by this project will see clear and immediate benefits of responsible agroforestry and sustainable income, a further 1,200 households will be recognised in land use and sector planning through the participatory landscape vision. Implementation of the forest action plan will see degraded areas important for communities' livelihoods restored, and so livelihood options improved.

THE NEXT STEPS

- Develop a participatory sustainable forest landscape vision for Tanintharyi Landscape Corridor and pilot forest restoration
- Identify and submit land tenure and natural resources use rights of ten communities for official recognition
- Strengthen economic opportunities based on sustainable NRM (Natural Resources Management) for local communities

THE GOAL OF THIS PROJECT

The livelihoods of 10 communities within the Tanintharyi Region are improved through strengthened access and management rights and enhanced capacities in sustainable natural resources management. In the long term, the project envisions the local communities being genuinely recognised by government agencies as stewards of natural resources, and actively managing and maintaining the forest ecosystem and its services for future generations.

VOICES FOR THE MEKONG FOREST

This five-year project aims to empower and connect NSAs (Non State Actors) in three transboundary landscapes so they can assess, monitor and respond appropriately to strengthen forest governance, and effectively engage in policy processes. Recognizing that efforts to address the challenges facing forest governance in the region need to be holistic, the project works on regional, national and landscape levels. The three landscape project areas are:

Dawna Tenasserim Transboundary Landscape (DTL) Northern Thailand and Kayin State and Tanintharyi Region in Myanmar

Northern Thailand - Lao PDR Transboundary Landscape (NTLL) - covering Doi Phu Kha National Park (Thailand) and Bokeo and Xayabury provinces (Lao PDR)

Viet Nam - Lao PDR - Cambodia Transboundary Landscape (VLCL) - covering: a) Eastern Plains Landscape (Cambodia bordering with Viet Nam); b) Quang Nam province, Central Annamites; Kon Tum province, Central Highlands (Vietnam bordering Cambodia and Lao PDR); and c) Xe Pian and Dong Amphan National Biodiversity Conservation Areas (Lao PDR)

THE NEXT STEPS

- Pilot and scale up NSA forest governance monitoring systems (FGMs)
- Strengthen rights of NSAs and enhance their capacity to improve gender equality and socially inclusive forest governance
- Coordinate engagement of NSAs in FLEGT (Forest Law, Enforcement, Governance and Trade) and REDD+ (Reducing Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) processes to develop transparent and accountable FGMs
- Enable regional NSA learning platforms to facilitate coaching,

THE GOAL OF THIS PROJECT

By 2021, empowered and connected NSAs in three transboundary landscapes assess, monitor and respond appropriately to strengthen forest governance, particularly in FLEGT-VPA(Voluntary Partnership Agreement) and REDD+, and effectively engage in policy processes.

STRENGTHENING RESPONSIBLE NATURAL FIBER AND TIMBER PRODUCTION IN THE GREATER MEKONG

Through an integrated landscape approach this project will extend its engagement with the key stakeholders to promote responsible forest management and trade practices as well as sustainable supply chains and standards of timber (acacia, rubber) and natural fiber (rattan and bamboo). This includes business development services providers that have not been fully engaged before.

This regional project covers Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand and Myanmar. The aim is to better understand business operations, land tenure/rights, resource management and related policies within the country. The results will help IKEA to identify potential business opportunities in Myanmar. Rattan, rubber and bamboo were pre-selected as potential commodities, but the project will ultimately focus on two of the aforementioned resources.

THE NEXT STEPS

- Conduct scoping study, risk analysis and map supply chain of key IKEA related commodities in Myanmar
- Map current policy interventions and develop engagement strategy with policy makers
- Organize series of meetings and workshops with policy makers and private sector on results of scoping study, policy analysis, and proposed engagement policy
- Develop policy briefs related to marketing and production of key commodities

THE GOAL OF THIS PROJECT

The market is transformed and using sustainable market demand as a driver for positive change. Forest degradation and deforestation is halted; sustainable economic and social benefits are provided to people and businesses; and incentives for responsible business practices and sustainable investments are improved.

LEADING THE CHANGE: CIVIL SOCIETY, RIGHTS & ENVIRONMENT

Active all across the Greater Mekong Region, this programme aims to bring about a fundamental shift in recognizing the evolving nature and growing influence of civil society. WWF will maximise its convening power and relationship of trust with governments at a national and local level to broker and sustain a dialogue and relationships between civil society, the private sector, local authorities and governments. This two-way dialogue is more necessary than ever as now although natural resources have provided important revenue streams and livelihoods to communities, extractive and exploitative industries are undermining the region's natural assets and it ability to support people.

The region's indigenous and rural communities, especially women, are disproportionately affected by environmental degradation, with decreasing access to agricultural land as well as forest and water resources. Part of the reason why economic benefits derived from natural resources are not distributed equitably is the limited space for Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and Community Based Organisations (CBOs) involvement in public decision making processes and natural resources management. In Myanmar, despite having an active civil society keen to engage, the country has weak technical know-how and organisational capacity. This programme will be targeted towards creating an enabling environment for organisations to express the collective interests of different constituencies, allowing civil society to directly engage with decision-making processes that will influence their future, and that of the land they call home.

THE NEXT STEPS

- Facilitate capacity for self-assessment among partner CSOs and CBOs
- Strengthen capacity of CSOs and communities to influence planning and decision-making
- Build institutional and fund raising capacity of CSOs and CBOs
- Support CSO and CBO engagement in national platforms and dialogues
- Support the formation a Community Forestry Network and build its capacity on natural resource management and enterprise development
- Support the formation of CBOs and initiate integrated water resources management and fisheries management projects

THE GOAL OF THIS PROJECT

Empower people and communities in target areas to effectively exercise their rights, influence decisions and equitably receive benefits from natural resources and contribute to the sustainable management of key ecosystems and habitats. In particular, the proposed programme aims at strengthening CSOs and CBOs to effectively influence planning, decision-making, and good governance of natural resources.

FORGING THE DTL'S SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR PEOPLE, WILDLIFE, AND NATURE

This project aims to move the landscape from a path of unsustainable development to a sustainable, green one - striving toward a desired situation in the DTL; one of peace, enhanced ecological integrity and sustainable equitable growth.

The project is structured in 3 main components, complementary to each other and all necessary to achieve the final desired outcome/ vision. They are:

1. Integrated landscape management

WWF will work with stakeholders to facilitate discussion on land use planning. We will engage and empower communities and CSOs to effectively participate in the discussions with other stakeholders, via trainings and capacity building programmes. WWF will work with local CSOs and international research organizations to support the development of science based evidence to influence policies and decision making that will influence the natural resources local people depend on. This approach aims to achieve an inclusive land use plan and management, guiding the landscape on the path of sustainable development and ensuring ecosystem integrity.

2. Forest habitat conservation avoiding deforestation and degradation

Deforestation and degradation can be halted by enhancing communities' forest management practices, by creating a sustainable rubber market for smallholders, and by fighting illegal logging.

WWF will facilitate the implementation of community managed forests by training villagers in sustainable forest management, providing technical support in land use planning and training local government officers to perform it. WWF will facilitate the development of a shared agreement of the forest management, ensuring communities, especially the underrepresented sector of youth and women, to speak during the consultations.

WWF will train rubber smallholders on rubber production best practices and link to markets for sustainable rubber. A forest monitoring system will be set up that will monitor deforestation in the landscape to ensure that perennial crops plantations do not expand into forest area.

Finally, WWF will support government departments and communities in setting up regular patrols to enforce the regulation developed above.

3. Sustainable energy

WWF will continue the work with Barefoot college and local communities to increase access to energy through village electrification and training of women for maintenance of solar panels. We will also work with CSOs and governments of Kayin State and Tanintharyi Region to develop power development plans that can underpin a path to a sustainable power sector that can reduce the planned implementation of coal power plants.

THE NEXT STEPS

- Continue to support community forestry establishment and enterprise development in Tanintharyi Region
- Expand community forestry work in Kayin State including the promotion and piloting of ICCA
- Establish baseline data on human well being in new project sites

THE GOAL OF THIS PROJECT

The DTL has intact nature with maintained or enhanced ecological integrity. Local communities coexist harmoniously with nature and enjoy its benefits. Wildlife populations are maintained and on a secured path, with keystone species breeding. Harmony and peace is present between different stakeholders and good governance is in place. Overall, the landscape is achieving a vibrant, sustainable and equitable growth.

CHALLENGES

Infrastructure development

Road construction to Dawei has recently been revived after the government suspended it in early 2016. A new EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) study has been submitted and the government wants to fast track its approval. However, there are very weak consultation and processes in place for the review of the EIA, and the affected communities have not been consulted.

Lifting the logging ban in the country

In the absence of a legality and sustainability certification system in the country, and the lack of effective monitoring, there will always be a risk of overharvesting and illegal logging. Left unchecked, this will result in the degradation of intact forest. An inventory of existing forest reserves is necessary to identify how much timber can be harvested sustainably. Multi-sectoral monitoring groups should also be established to serve as internal control to the current timber legality assessment system.

EXCITING NEW OPPORTUNITIES

The new WWF Global Conservation goal, with its vision to stabilise and reverse the loss of nature by 2030, offers a tremendous opportunity for the DTL. Nine global practices (Forest, Water, Ocean, Wildlife, Climate and Energy, Market, Finance, and Governance) have been developed to deliver the global goals. Under these practices, five landscapes have been identified for developing and showcasing sustainable landscape programmes. The Dawna Tenasserim Landscape is one of them. This spotlight will ensure a focus on the DTL from across the network, likely resulting in increased funding and technical support.

Additionally, DTL will also contribute significantly to other areas like the Governance Practice. Under this practice, People Protecting Landscapes was identified as a key strategy. Recently there has been an interest from Karen Indigenous groups to register their indigenous territory as ICCA under the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP). This offers WWF Myanmar the opportunity to contribute to the achievements of this strategy, which aims to increase the number of locally managed and conserved areas.

WAYS FORWARD

A number of measures are being undertaken to concretely move forward the transboundary DTL work. Specific topics and components of planned transboundary work are as follows:

Transboundary Forest Landscape Restoration within the DTL: identification of specific sites as well as identification and seeking of funds for this initiative.

Transboundary Learning Network: long-term, multi-stakeholder learning network designed around building trust and dialogue through field site based capacity development and focused learning program.

Advocacy on Dawei Road and infrastructure development in the DTL: a multi-pronged approach to engaging with investors, financiers, developers, policy makers and local communities on both sides of the border. Visibility of this issue with the broader public will also be a key objective.

An active roll out of an ambitious communications strategy on the Transboundary DTL. This will involve a communications package, website, multimedia products, close engagement with network communicators and a trans-boundary exhibition.

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Why we are here

To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

http://www.wwf.org.mm/en