

Editorial

I am delighted to introduce the second issue of the 4th volume of Nepalese Journal of Zoology (NJZ), published by Central Department of Zoology, Tribhuvan University. With this new issue, I am also pleased to welcome Prof. Dr Chhatra Mani Sharma, Dr. Hem Sagar Baral, Dr. Chet Prasad Bhatta and Dr. Pradip Gyawali to the NJZ family as the new editorial board members.

Within my tenure as the chief editor, the editorial team has worked hard to bring several reforms to NJZ thanks to which NJZ has now been indexed in NepJOL and has been awarded two stars on the Journal Publishing Practices and Standards Framework! In addition, NJZ now has a Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY) 4.0 License. When an article is published under this license, authors are free to copy, distribute, and adapt the work, even commercially, as long as the original creation is appropriately credited. I am grateful to our authors, reviewers, readers, and our editorial board members for bringing the NJZ to this level.

Through this issue of NJZ, I want to direct our attention to the alarming devastation to our biodiversity. As the biodiversity gets destroyed at an unprecedented rate, it appears as if we are participating in our own demise. According to the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Living Planet Report 2020,¹ global wildlife populations of mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles and fish have declined by an average of 68% in less than half century, largely due to the environmental destruction that is also contributing to virus outbreaks such as COVID-19. This devastating decline of biodiversity is having catastrophic impacts not only on species and genetic diversity but also on human health and wealth.

Contextualizing this global threat for Nepal—there is an array of drivers accelerating this destruction: habitat loss, climate change, pollution, invasive species, and overexploitation. But the problem is exacerbated by the fact that, at the very basic level, there is an unavailability of even the baseline data for many species and there exists a taxonomic uncertainty of many taxa. In addition, the limited ability to assess and tackle the impacts on our biodiversity makes it harder to even gauge and understand the magnitude, scale, and the cause of the problem. Therefore, we need urgent action for credible assessment and conservation of Nepal's biodiversity.

We cannot ignore the current trend of biodiversity loss. Bending the curve of biodiversity trends is thus an urgent priority for preserving the nature for future generation. Echoing this sentiment, a recent study published in *Nature* by Leclère et al.² and WWF Living Planet Report 2020¹ suggested that computer modeling systems have provided a roadmap to tackle this issue. These works showed that integrated action combining bold conservation efforts with transformation of our modern food system can, in fact, intervene to bend the curve of biodiversity loss upwards!

¹WWF. 2020. Living Planet Report 2020- Bending the curve of biodiversity loss. Almond, R. E. A., Grooten M. and Petersen, T. (Eds). WWF, Gland, Switzerland.

²Leclère, D., Obersteiner, M., Barrett, M., Butchart, S. H., Chaudhary, A., De Palma, A., DeClerck, F. A., Di Marco, M., Doelman, J. C., Dürauer, M. and Freeman, R. 2020. Bending the curve of terrestrial biodiversity needs an integrated strategy. *Nature* **585**:551–556

But while there exists a window of opportunity, conservation efforts, ultimately, can only succeed with collective efforts of all stakeholders, policy makers, scientists, educators, communities, and citizens.

Thank you to the authors who chose NJZ to share their work. Thanks are also due to the editorial board members of the NJZ and reviewers who helped in the process of producing this volume. I welcome suggestions, comments, and ideas from the authors and readers for improving the quality of NJZ.

Lastly, on a more somber note– we were deeply saddened to hear about the passing of one of our authors Dr. Man Kumar Dhamala, Assistant Professor of Central Department of Environment Science, Tribhuvan University, who contributed to this volume with the manuscript: “Breeding success of the Himalayan griffon (*Gyps himalayensis*) in Upper Mustang, Nepal”. The brief time we have known him as a reviewer and an author has left an indelible mark upon us. Our heartfelt condolences to his family at his untimely death.

Prof. Kumar Sapkota, PhD

Chief Editor