



UF Center for
Latin American Studies
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA



Join us for Tropilunch!!

Conservation for whom? Parks, people and tourism in Bardia National Park, Nepal

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12:45 - 1:45pm

Grinter 376

Content: The community based conservation programs in Nepal are applauded for its success in terms of achieving conservation outcomes in the developing world. However, the socioeconomic impacts of these programs are highly debated. Integrated conservation and development programs (ICDP) have been integrated within the protected area management system in Nepal as an effort to link three important aspects of sustainable development: biodiversity conservation, public participation and economic development. Using sustainable livelihood framework informed by empowerment theory we assess the relationship between participation in ICDP and sustainable livelihood outcomes in the context of buffer zone program in Bardia National Park. We found that meaningful participation of local communities in buffer zone program is still a challenge given the hierarchical social context of Nepal and lack of inclusive buffer zone policy. Local communities highly depend on natural resources for daily subsistence and value forest conservation. However, human-wildlife conflict poses an increasing threat to conservation of endangered wildlife species in the park and buffer zone area. Preliminary findings suggest that community based ecotourism could be a viable strategy to strengthen the linkage between local stewardship of biodiversity and human welfare in Nepal.

Biography: Smrittee Panta is a PhD candidate in the Department of Tourism, Recreation and Sport management in University of Florida. She is the recipient of the graduate school fellowship and TCD field research grant award. Her research interests revolve around tourism, conservation and sustainable development issues in developing countries. Her concentration is in Recreation, Parks and Tourism and she holds a master's degree in gender and development studies. She has more than five years of experience in gender and Natural Resources Management sector.

Tropilunch is a weekly seminar run by graduate students from the Tropical Conservation and Development (TCD) Program. It provides a forum for a range of discussions and presentations related to TCD work and research. Students are provided with an opportunity to present and discuss their research projects with peers and faculty. In addition, discussion sessions on issues of current interest are also held. Visiting scholars and conservation practitioners also participate when available. It is held every Tuesday at 12:45 p.m. in Grinter 376.