

# Reaching Out Through Community Radio: Information and knowledge sharing about linear infrastructure development and natural resource safeguarding

## Background:

With the objective of reaching out to a wide number of people to inform and provide information related to natural resources safeguarding in linear infrastructure (LI) development, the ALIGN project in Nepal with support from the USAID, collaborated with a reputed community radio station, Radio Sagarmatha to produce four episodes of radio talk program.

The need for natural resource safeguards in LI development is a novel concept in Nepal, and most project stakeholders and members of the public have limited knowledge in this area. The radio program series was produced to raise awareness, provide correct and relevant information to a wide audience. The program was titled "*Digo Bikash ra Prakritik Shrot ko Samrakshyan*" (Sustainable Development and Natural Resource safeguarding) and provided information on Nepal's wildlife-friendly infrastructure directives to the audiences.

Though produced centrally by Radio Sagarmatha, the four episodes that were each curated and developed on a specific topic related to the issue, were broadcast widely throughout all the seven provinces of Nepal through provincial radio stations.

## Episodes:

Each episode explored and discussed in detail a specific topic and the related experts from government, non-government, and development sectors were invited to share their expertise in the talk series. The following themes were explored and experts were invited in the program:

**Episode 1:** Understanding Natural Resources Safeguarding: Key Stakeholders, Opportunities and Challenges

**Episode 2:** Linear Infrastructure and its Impact on Natural Resources and the Mitigation Measures

**Episode 3:** Importance of wildlife-friendly Mitigation and Safeguards Measures in LI Development: Current Practices and Challenges

**Episode 4:** Sharing of Provisions for Natural Resource (NR) Safeguards in Wildlife-Friendly Infrastructure Construction Directive

## Episode Summaries:

## Episode 1: Understanding Natural Resources Safeguarding: Key Stakeholders, Opportunities and Challenges

### Experts:

Mr. **Haribhadra Acharya**, Senior Planning Officer, Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation

Mr. **Sandesh Singh Hamal**, Chief of Party, ALIGN Project, WWF-Nepal



The first episode featured Mr. **Haribhadra Acharya**, Senior Planning Officer at the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC), discussing Nepal's biodiversity, highlighting its importance for eco-tourism and the need for community involvement in conservation. He emphasized that stakeholders and communities should play a significant role in maintaining biodiversity, their institutional protection and tourism enhancement. Likewise, Mr. **Sandesh Singh Hamal** elaborated on the challenges posed by linear infrastructure (LI) development, such as roads and power lines, stressing their impact on wildlife and local communities. He also provided information about the measures to be carried out to reduce the impacts of LI on wildlife and natural resources. Overall, the episode underscored the necessity of balancing development with biodiversity preservation and community resilience to climate change.

## Episode 2: Linear Infrastructure and its Impact on Natural Resources and the Mitigation Measures

### Experts:

Mr. **Padam Bahadur Chand**, Deputy Chief of Party, ALIGN Project, WWF-Nepal

Ms. **Shobha Giri**, Deputy Project Director, Asian Development Bank



The episode highlights the necessity of linear infrastructure projects for modern development, providing essential services like transportation and electricity. However, due to their linear structure, they pose significant threats to biodiversity and ecosystems. The episode featured interviews with experts, such as Deputy Chief of Party of the ALIGN Project Mr. **Padam Bahadur Chand**, and Deputy Project Director of Asian Development Bank Project Directorate, Department of Roads, Ms. **Shobha Giree**.

They highlighted the importance of implementing measures to mitigate the impact of linear infrastructure on natural resources in Nepal. The discussion emphasized the need for sustainable development practices that preserve biodiversity and protect wildlife habitats. The program concludes with a focus on preventing damage to natural resources during infrastructure construction and supporting development while maintaining environmental sustainability.



### Episode 3: Importance of wildlife-friendly Mitigation and Safeguards Measures in LI Development: Current Practices and Challenges

#### Experts:

Dr. **Jhamak B. Karki**, Biodiversity Expert/Principal- Kathmandu Forestry College

Mr. **Shusil Babu Dhakal**, Director General, Department of Roads



The episode delves into the current practices as well as challenges related to wildlife friendly infrastructure construction and mitigation measures. It featured an interview with biodiversity expert and lecturer Dr. **Jhamak B. Karki** and Director General, Department of Roads Mr. **Shusil Babu Dhakal**. The experts highlight the challenges and importance of adopting wildlife-friendly measures to mitigate threats to biodiversity and natural resources posed by linear infrastructure development. Despite some progress, there is a need to prioritize wildlife-friendly infrastructure to preserve biodiversity and cultural diversity.

### Episode 4: Sharing of Provisions for Natural Resource (NR) Safeguards in Wildlife-Friendly Infrastructure Construction Directive

#### Experts:

Mr. **Bed Dhakal**, Deputy Director General of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Department

Mr. **Deepak Gyawali**, Director General, Department of Forests and Soil Conservation

Ms. **Shobha KC**, Sustainable Infrastructure Expert, WWF-Nepal



The episode consisted of insights of experts such as Mr. **Bed Dhakal**, Deputy Director General of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Department, Mr. **Deepak Gyawali**, Director General, Department of Forests and Soil Conservation, and Ms. **Shobha KC**, Sustainable Infrastructure Expert, WWF-Nepal. It highlighted the importance of implementing wildlife-friendly safety measures during LI construction to have a minimum adverse impact on wildlife and their habitat. Information on the Wildlife-Friendly Infrastructure Construction Directives 2022 issued by the government of Nepal was also provided in the episode. It was shared that the directives aim to reduce wildlife accidents and conflicts by ensuring the construction of wildlife-friendly infrastructure, contributing significantly to wildlife protection.





### Audience Reach:

The talk program episodes were broadcast through seven different radio stations from the seven provinces of the country. Each station was selected on the basis of their reach

and popularity among the target audiences. The segregated data of the tentative reach of the people of each radio station, as shared by Radio Sagarmatha, is presented below:

FM Station	Location	Audience Reach
Saptakoshi FM	Biratnagar, Koshi Province	3.5 MM
Janaki FM	Janakpur, Madhesh Province	1.2 MM
Radio Sagarmatha	Lalitpur, Bagmati Province	125 K
Pokhara FM	Pokhara, Gandaki Province	150 K
Karnali FM	Jumla, Karnali Province	400 K
Radio Swargdwari	Dang, Lumbini Province	100 K
Dinesh FM	Dhangadhi, Sudur Paschim Province	250 K
<b>Total reach:</b>		<b>5.5 million</b>

### Conclusion:

The talk program episodes on natural resource safeguarding in linear infrastructure development have garnered significant success, both in terms of audience reception and stakeholder feedback. The positive response indicates a clear resonance with the audience, highlighting the importance of the subject matter. Building upon this success, plans are in progress to continue with the second round of episodes of the series with incorporation of a broader array of perspectives.

This upcoming series will feature voices from academia and the private sector, enriching the dialogue and fostering deeper insights into wildlife-friendly infrastructure development. By embracing a collaborative approach and diverse viewpoints, the program aims to continue its role to initiate informed discussion and knowledge sharing in the realm of biodiversity conservation and infrastructure development. ■ *To learn more about the ALIGN Project, visit [alignproject.org](https://alignproject.org).*

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