HUMAN NATURE PROJECTS

9 MONTHS IN...
PROGRESS SUMMARY AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

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FROM THE FOUNDER

This January I took leave to spend six weeks filming for WildEarth TV in South Africa. What I saw in this company reminded me of the power of community to bring about conservation greatness. Their viewers were a family, their presenters trusted teachers, and throughout it all an open conversation.

Starting Human Nature Projects 9 months ago, I could never have imagined the staggering progress so little time could achieve. This is testament to the power each and every one of us holds in the HNP network, and for that I thank you all. The months to come will be hard for the all countries globally to reconcile with, but we will continue moving forward- cheers to our future successes!
ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

Human Nature Projects (HNP) is an international environmental NGO pioneering an innovative model of community management for inclusive conservation actions and design. Initiated in June 2019 by its founder and CEO Elliot Connor, it was formally recognized as a charity under the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission effective as of 30th August 2019. Altogether the network encompasses over 1200 volunteers across 102 countries globally.

HNP can be considered a semi-decentralized network of passionate environmentalists, each volunteer taking part in local activities through their respective National Team and via any one of ten international working groups, sorted by interest.

The overarching objective of HNP is to heighten public interest and engagement in environmental management as a prerequisite for reframing our human relationship with the natural world.

The organization’s philosophy seeks to tackle the root cause of environmental challenges by shifting perspectives towards mutual respect, appreciation and compassion for animals.
UPDATES FROM THE TEAM

The HNP National Teams are thriving, so what follows is a selection of their activities. In Lesotho, a dedicated team has been rewarded with government backing, establishing office space, an internship programme and a school debating competition on environmental topics. HNP Uganda has made similar progress, forging ahead with tree-planting events and forming key partnerships for biodiversity monitoring and research. In the Congo, the team are directing efforts towards Kahuzi-Biega National Park, advocating for stronger protection and building relationships with stakeholders for further education and awareness-raising programmes.

HNP Canada occupied themselves with litter-picking and a highly successful eco-friendly fundraiser, whilst in the UK activities have included bird-banding sessions and fungi forays. HNP Nigeria is training its expertise into policy matters, and the special accreditation of HNP Intl to the UN Oceans Conference has allowed two of its members to register to attend (though the conference itself has been postponed indefinitely due to COVID).
Recognizing the importance of building connection at an early age, most of our teams have engaged in school workshops. HNP Nepal have conducted a highly successful event along these lines, and HNP Morocco likewise, incorporating some highly creative eco craft sessions into the mix.

The Djibouti team selected marine plastics as a topic of interest, using brochure materials and online campaigning in lieu of physical events. HNP Benin conducted a capacity building event on this and other issues, sensitizing locals to the local flora and fauna.

In Australia, a bushfire awareness campaign is taking form, leading on from success with a national bird-watching competition. HNP Cameroon is initiating a series of school workshops with a view towards establishing long-running clubs in these institutions.

Due to popular request, an educational activity template is being created for national teams, with an online teacher training seminar series to follow. Many national teams are planning events for intl. otter days through our partner IOSF, likewise for Earth Day and the Africa Climate Week.
GLOBAL NEWS & INTENTIONS

With its national teams in a frenzy of activity, the intl. executive board has been kept occupied itself. Staff meetings are held fortnightly, and there is much to discuss. HNP has gained recognition by such parties as the UN, providing access to major events, and had planned to liaise at the World Wilderness Congress in Jaipur, India prior to COVID intervention.

A micro-grant scheme has permitted half a dozen national teams to receive funds for their chosen initiatives, and if the means can be secured, we expect this high-impact support system to scale and continue.

Strategic partnerships with other international organizations has also freed our chapters to conduct activities along a much broader range of activities, providing further expertise to their actions.

Materials and lesson guides are being prepared alongside useful graphics to help with school and community workshops. Also complementing the widespread education activities of our teams, a survey to gauge awareness of key issues has been formulated and will be distributed through our community over the coming weeks.

Initial discussions with WildEarth TV with regard to an outsourced management agreement worth $500,000 USD annually have proved promising, though the virus outbreak forestalled the contract’s signing. This arrangement will see 200 young environmentalists contracted to film local animals for an hour a day, their footage streamed on a 24-hr, on-demand platform of nature worldwide.

In the past six months, HNP activities have involved over 10,000 people, and we hope to double this number in the coming half a year. The great benefit of a community such as ours lies in its ability to support its members through the hardest of times, so we seek to promote solidarity in our circles whilst engaging all of our branches in expanding our vision online and in person where situations over the coming weeks and months allow.
Yannick Mutambo describes himself as a “citizen of the world,” living in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Boasting the second largest forest in the world and some of Africa’s most charismatic megafauna, his country sadly faces major threats from poor environmental management and the exploitation of ecosystem. He says “My passion for conservation projects from an early age cannot be overestimated,” and the skill with which he leads his national team certainly shows it.

From coordinating a climate change conference to conceptualizing chimpanzee education programmes for the local community, there is little Yannick cannot do. With the academic background he brings, the complexity of local issues experienced is reduced into solvable milestones that he guides his team to accomplishing. Yannick sees himself as a teacher to his people, raising awareness about the loss of biodiversity locally, and through this creating tangible change in communities. There are many obstacles to overcome, but through his resilience and the support of HNP, Yannick is making extraordinary progress.
Rituraj Phukan is an environmental writer and nature conservation guru based in Assam, India. Having quit his government job to begin a lifelong engagement with nature, he has spent years travelling, writing and engaging with students about the environment, wildlife and climate change.

As one of the first member of Human Nature Projects, Rituraj has since proven himself adept at the complicated coordination tasks required of his senior role. Always quick with a smile and on-hand to advise, he is widely respected amongst our entire executive committee for his experience and devotion to the cause. His pet passion is mitigating water-related issues for people and biodiversity alike, though he also works with fringe forest communities towards harmonious human-wildlife coexistence.

He is passionate at engaging with Human Nature communities for a holistic approach to conservation of the life support systems on our planet. Combining indigenous wisdom with modern understanding, Rituraj always strives to generate sustainable impact through HNP "for the continuity of all life on Earth."
This year, the doomsday clock was moved to 100s from midnight: the closest it has ever been. 2/3 of wild animals have been lost since the moon landing, whilst the human population has more than doubled.

It's clear to any observer we have met a crisis, a tipping point. What remains to be found is the theory of change that will remedy it. At HNP, we believe conservation's greatest asset lies in volunteers.

So we are employing a model of mass individualism: empowering emerging leaders, connecting the connectors and generating grassroots impact on a global scale.

Our journey has only just started. We've proven the model works, recruited over a thousand individuals to share our messages worldwide, and backed that up with a fine portfolio of national teams. With the right support, sufficient patience and the passion of our team, we will take this to ever greater heights.

The Human Nature worldview seeks to reframe our human relationship with the natural world. And by providing an entrypoint to environmentalism, democratizing conservation discussions and scaling success we are doing just that. Thank you.