

Solar energy for wildlife conservation



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Subhamoy Bhattacharjee 20 January 2014 9770 views

Mayodia model Village popularly known as Tiwari Gaon which is far away from regular power connectivity is empowered with solar energy equipments by Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) in collaboration with the Department of Environment & Forest, Arunachal Pradesh with support from Europaeische Tierschutzstftung (ETS) on Sunday. This facility will reduce the long term power and electricity crisis faced by the villagers. This is for the first time that an NGO like WTI is providing the solar equipments to a model village in the vicinity of Mehao Wildlife Sanctuary (Mehao WLS) in Arunachal Pradesh in India.

The beneficiaries received the solar equipment which was a total solar energy based lighting system consisting of one solar panel, one chargeable multipurpose battery unit, one table lamp and an emergency light. The facility was provided to the villagers during “Interaction for Conservation Awareness & Distribution of Solar Equipment” an event organized by Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) in collaboration with Department of Environment & Forest, Arunachal Pradesh with support from Europaeische Tierschutzstftung (ETS) on Sunday afternoon, 19 January 2014.

“The community living around any protected area is the first layer of the protection shield. In order to consolidate the shield, we need to understand the psychology and the needs of the people. The distribution of solar sets will further bridge the conservation support and confidence for the ongoing Asiatic Black bear rehabilitation project and Hoolock Gibbon Translocation Project in Mehao Wildlife Sanctuary.” –said Sunil Kyarong, Deputy Director and Regional Head of Wildlife Trust of India.

Tiwari gaon is a fringe village adjacent to Mehao Wildlife Sanctuary (Mehao WLS), where people are supporting the bear conservation and rehabilitation project and Hoolock Gibbon Translocation Project for the safety of the wildlife.

The confidence building effort in Tiwari gaon was initiated by Ipra Mekola, member, Wildlife Advisory Board, Arunachal Pradesh through this Rapid Action Project of WTI. All together twenty five (25) households are receiving the solar equipment under this programme as a token of gratitude for their assistance in wildlife conservation in the area.

“We do not have power supply since the inception of this village in the Mishmi hill ranges of Arunachal Pradesh. It is a great help to our villagers who has been suffering due to the power crisis. Despite such limitations they are actively supporting the wildlife conservation in Mehao Wildlife Sanctuary.”-said Napi Umpo, the village headman of Tiwari Gaon.

The distribution and awareness function was attended by Obian Jonkey, Range Officer Mehao Wildlife Sanctuary (MehaoWLS) and Soumya Dasgupta, Assistant Manager of WTI along with wildlife activists of the village, the beneficiaries and field staff of WTI.

According to Keijum Rina, the Divisional Forest Officer of Mehao Wildlife Sanctuary (Mehao WLS), “The initiative of such type will strengthen the relation between the forest department, NGOs like WTI and the villagers of the fringe areas which is a need of the hour for all round conservation efforts.”

Asha Meme, a beneficiary and worker of the local Anganwadi Centre specifically said that the solar lamps will encourage the primary school students of the locality, who earlier did not have a suitable light source to study in the evening.

WTI along with Department of Environment & Forest, Arunachal Pradesh is trying to focus the conservation issues among the fringe villagers through this confidence building approach for the safety and wellbeing of nature and wildlife in the state.

from: Tiwari gaon, Lower Debang Valley (Arunachal Pradesh)

Subhamoy Bhattacharjee

BY SUBHAMOY BHATTACHARJEE

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