**Appendix S1**

Please see below for additional information about our methods, analyses, and results.

**S1. Sample**

The groups from which our sample of participants was derived included the Department of Forests and Park Services (DoFPS) in the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources; The Ugyen Wangchuck Institute for Conservation and Environment Research (UWICE) and Sakten Wildlife Sanctuary (SWS), both of which are housed in DoFPS; the Bhutan Trust Fund for Environmental Conservation (BTFEC); and rural communities living with SWS who had been involved in conservation programs. We included these groups in our sample to capture variation in perceptions of what constitutes conservation success. For instance, whereas forest guards might focus on wildlife populations or forest health, rural communities may focus on community empowerment and economic benefits and conservation planners may consider the integration of social, economic, and environmental outcomes.

The functional divisions within the DoFPS are the Nature Conservation Division, Forest Monitoring and Information Division, and Forest Resources Planning and Management Division. UWICE also exists as a separate division within DoFPS (DoFPS n.d.). Individuals trained at UWICE work in other sections of DoFPS.

Each division within DoFPS contains multiple sections, which are listed below. We did not record the division or section in which participants in our study were housed.

**Nature Conservation Division**

* **Protected Areas Planning and Implementation Section**
* **Integrated Conservation and Development Section**
* **Species Conservation Section**
* **Bhutan Tiger Center**

**Forest Monitoring and Information Division**

* **Forest Resources Inventory Section**
* **Forest Clearance and Service Section**
* **National Forest Information and GIS Section**
* **Forest Monitoring and Evaluation Section**

**Forest Resources Planning and Management Division**

* **Forest Resources Planning and Implementation Section**
* **Forest Resources Utilization Section**
* **Plantation and Agroforestry Section**
* **Forest Fire and Pest Management Section**

**UWICE**

* Centre for Forest Science and Technology
* Centre for Conservation
* Centre for Education and Capacity Building

Established in 1991, BTFEC is the key national conservation funding organization that has provided over US$25 million in support for over 239 environmental projects in Bhutan (BTFEC n.d.).

Sakteng Wildlife Sanctuaryis one of 10 protected areas in Bhutan and is the largest in far eastern Bhutan. It is also home to Brokpa communities in Sakten *geog*. Given its ecological and cultural importance, it has received support from major international conservation NGOs and funds, notably the World Wildlife Fund WWF and MacArthur Foundation, who have invested in conservation and capacity development.

We also included residents of Sakteng *geog* who had been involved in an Integrated Conservation and Development Project (ICDP) in SWS. We ultimately referred to participants in our sample as Sakteng residents throughout the manuscript to clarify that our sample includes individual from this location and not Brokpa communities from Merak *Geog*, which is also adjacent to SWS

Including local perspectives in our study is important because such an approach is more inclusive, and local residents may have different priorities for capacity development that conservation planners, practitioners, or funders (Vallejo & Wehn 2016, Hagelsteen et al. 2021, Eklund et al. 2022). Local involvement and collaboration in conservation has been important in Bhutan because human communities remain in most of Bhutan’s protected areas, and community-based natural resource management became common through policy changes in the 1990s (Wangchuk et al. 2018).

**S2. Data collection**

*Questionnaire*

The full set of questions for each stakeholder group is included at the end of this supplemental information section.

*Workshops*

Conservation practitioners often work in the field in remote locations. As such, travel difficulties and costs associated with transportation and accommodation limited us to hosting nine practitioners in two separate workshops. In addition, COVID-19 restrictions in Bhutan also prevented us from organizing a workshop for Sakteng residents.

The set of cards that was used in the Qsort activity is provided in Table S1 and the distribution that was used for the Qsort activity depicted in Figure S1. The content of the cards was derived from a systematic literature review (Sterling et al. 2022), coded analysis of primary documents like project reports from The MacArthur Foundation, expert elicitation (Eklund et al. 2022), and preliminary analysis of responses from the questionnaires. Five members of the research team reduced this larger set to a number that would be reasonable for participants to sort while still capturing variation in levels and types of capacity development. The text on the cards was designed to be general as the cards were developed for use in more than one national context.

**Table S1.** Capacities that were used in the Qsort activity. Each capacity appeared on a separate card for participants to sort. Participants who sorted cards in the workshop were able to ask workshop facilitators questions if there was uncertainty about what a card referred to.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Funding for equipment and infrastructure for better enforcement of environmental laws  |  | Adequate equipment for scientific research and biodiversity monitoring  |
| Sufficient funding available for conservation.  |  | Leadership skills for conservation practitioners |
| Infrastructure for tourism (e.g., roads, hotels, and amenities) |  | Reliable funding for conservation over the long-term  |
| Outreach, engagement, and communication skills for conservation practitioners |  | Grant writing and fundraising skills for conservation practitioners |
| Monitoring and evaluation skills for conservation |  | Political support for conservation  |
| Knowledge and research skills in law and social sciences for conservation |  | Strengthened graduate and under-graduate programs in conservation |
| Women and underrepresented groups empowered to contribute to conservation knowledge and decision-making |  | Indigenous and local communities empowered to participate in conservation-relevant decision- making processes |
| Indigenous people and local communities know their rights and have the skills, legal support, and partnerships to protect them |  | Networks to facilitate learning and collaboration within and across government, private sector, NGO, and community actors  |
| Knowledge and financing to create and implement community management plans |  | Knowledge and technical skills to plan for climate impacts on biodiversity |
| Environmental laws and policies enforced and judicial system holds violators accountable |  | Strong laws and policies supporting conservation are in place |
| Trust and social capital between communities and NGOs |  | Trust and social capital between communities and government |
| Coordination across government agencies on conservation-relevant issues |  | Coordination on conservation action across governmental levels and political boundaries |
| Fair and just mechanisms in place to resolve conflict |  | Knowledge and research skills in natural sciences for conservation |
| Scientific research results are accessible to decision makers and media |  | Democratic processes enable participation in conservation decision-making |
| Resources and technical skills for national governments to effectively engage in conservation |  | Resources and technical skills for sub-national governments to effectively engage in conservation |
| Biodiversity status and threats well documented and understood |  | Platforms for sharing data, research, and best practices in conservation |
| Basic living needs are met (enough food, clean water, safe and nutritious food, and healthcare) |  | General public aware of importance of biodiversity and threats to it |
| Knowledge, technical skills, and incentives available for alternative livelihoods |  | Safety nets like government programs or insurance to reduce pressure on natural resources in face of shock |
| A network for scientific collaboration on biodiversity conservation |  |

**Figure S1.** The normal distribution for 37 spaces that was used for the Qsort activity. Participants placed one card (Table S1) into each space.



**S3. Analysis**

**S3a. Qualitative data coding protocol:** Responses to the questions listed in Table 3 were coded and categorized based on the type and scale of capacity described in the response. These categories were derived from capacities commonly found in the literature (e.g. Appleton 2015, Elliott et al. 2018, O’Connell & Carter 2022, O’Connell et al. 2019, Porzecanski et al. 2022, Sterling et al. 2022) and through preliminary analyses of the data. The scales and categories of capacity development in analyses are outlined below. See Table 1 for descriptions of each scale.

1. **Individual Capacities**
	* 1. Skills:
			+ - Species identification and monitoring
				- Research, data collection, and evaluation methods
				- Use of software, technology and tools for monitoring and data collection
				- Leadership and motivational skills
				- Monitoring of resource use activity
				- Law enforcement and sanctioning
				- Outreach, engagement, written, and oral communication
				- Conservation planning and management
				- Grant writing
				- Knowledge and skills that contribute to alternative livelihoods
2. Knowledge and awareness
	* + - * Technical and scientific knowledge
				* Awareness of general rights and responsibilities
				* Awareness of environmental policies and regulations
3. **Institutional, organizational, and community capacities**
4. Scientific research
	* + - * Tools, equipment available for research
				* Centralized data storage
				* Accessibility of scientific research results
				* Translation and dissemination of scientific research
				* Networks, outlets, or venues for sharing scientific information

2. Networks to facilitate communication and coordination among agencies/ stakeholder groups

1. Conflict resolution mechanisms
2. Programs and infrastructure for formal and informal education
3. Community/ group empowerment
4. Community user groups, cooperatives, or other institutions
5. Community engagement and participation
6. Improvements and training in human resources / organizational management
7. Reduced staff turnover and maintenance of institutional memory
8. Community-level social capital (trust, reciprocity, cooperation, and shared values) that facilitates local conservation action
9. **Societal Capacities**
	* 1. Political will/support
		2. Public awareness and understanding of conservation policies and regulations
		3. Public awareness and understanding of status of and threats to biodiversity
		4. Legal and policy frameworks to support conservation
		5. Judicial system holds violators accountable
		6. Basic needs of citizens are met
		7. Trust in government and other organizations responsible for conservation activity
		8. Adequate, reliable, and sustainable funding and mechanisms for funding
		9. Enforcement of laws and policies for conservation
		10. Government safety net programs
		11. Democratic processes for public participation in conservation
		12. National-level Infrastructure (e.g. tourism, enterprise development)
		13. Existence of data on status of biodiversity and threats

**S3b. Thematic analysis:** After multiple iterations of reading and annotating, the first author organized similar responses into themes. These themes represented patterns in responses that were related to our core research objectives of examining whycapacities are described as important for conservation, (ii) the factors associated with why capacity needs have changed, (iii) which capacities are identified as foundational and why, and (iv) how capacities within and across levels relate to each other. The themes and associated responses were shared with members of the research team to check for consistent and accurate interpretation. Discussions about different interpretations and culturally specific insights provided by Bhutanese members of the research teams were used to finalize decisions about themes.

We also reviewed the qualitative data to infer how respondents conceptualized conservation success based on responses to questions about the factors important for building a foundation for conservation success, which capacities have been and will be important, and the perceived obstacles to conservation (Table 3). Open ended responses provided insights into whether participants focused on environmental outcomes, socio-economic outcomes, or some combination.

**S3c. Qsort analysis:**

Q methodology entails systematic investigation of the perspectives of people who may have different opinions, facilitating a quantitative output through qualitative data (Zabala et al. 2018). A Qsort can reveal how different but related topics are interconnected by forcing respondents to consider many topics simultaneously. Data from a Qsort can be analyzed using a multivariate data-reduction technique, such as principal component analysis or factor analysis (Zabala et al. 2018).Based on the level of correlation of the ranked cards, this analysis produces a number of clusters of value positions or perspectives, grouping participants with similar priorities and revealing the diversity of values/perspectives.

In our study, Qsort rankings were analyzed using the QMethod software. We used Spearman correlation, centroid factor analysis, and varimax rotation to identify patterns in thinking across participants. To determine the optimal number of factors to extract, we applied the Kaiser-Guttman criterion by selecting the factors with Eigenvalues > 1 (Watts & Stenner 2012) and those factors with two or more significant factor loadings (Watts & Stenner 2012). In addition to describing trends across all participants, we describe the three factors and the items that were ranked highest in raw counts with our qualitative data.

The Qsort rankings are provided in Table S2. From the factor analysis, fifteen Q-sorts (75%) loaded significantly at the p <0.05 level. The three extracted factors together explain 30% of the study variance, which is lower than the recommended threshold of 35% (Watts & Stenner 2012) and may be attributable to the range of respondents’ perspectives in addition to the small sample size. Still, there was some alignment about what capacities will be most important across factors. For instance, ‘Political support for conservation’ is in the highest tier (+4) for two factors and ‘Leadership’ is in the second highest tier (+3) in two factors. However, there are also differences across factors. ‘Reliable funding’and ‘Ensuring that Indigenous and local communities are knowledgeable about their rights…’ are both in the top tier in one factor, but near the bottom (-3 and -2, respectively) in another factor. Interestingly, there were no discernable demographic patterns represented by the factors. That is, each factor represents responses from a mix of stakeholders, genders, levels of educational attainment, and years of conservation service.

However, the factor analysis and raw counts of the Qsort rankings tell a similar story about what participants felt will be the most important types of capacity for the future of conservation in Bhutan. These similarities are illustrated in Table S2.

**Table S2.** List of capacity development types that were identified as being most important for the future of conservation development in Bhutan. Left-hand columns show the rankings (-4 to +4) for the three groups identified by the factor analysis. Right-hand columns show the raw counts from the Qsort activity and represent the number of individuals who placed the card in the first (+4) or second (+3) column. Only cards that had a score of +3 or above by any one factor grouping *and* were listed in one of the top two columns by at least two participants are presented.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Factor analysis (-4 to 4)** | **Q-sort raw data** |
| **Type of capacity development** | **Factor 1 rank** | **Factor 2 rank** | **Factor 3 rank** | **First column (4)** | **Second column (3)** |
| Political support for conservation | **4** | **4** | -1 | 7 | 3 |
| Reliable funding for conservation over the long-term | **4** | -3 | 2 | 7 | 1 |
| Leadership skills for conservation professionals | 3 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 3 |
| General public is aware of importance of biodiversity and threats to it | -1 | 2 | **4** | 2 | 3 |
| Indigenous people and local communities know their rights and have the skills, legal support, and partnerships to protect them | -2 | **4** | -1 | 3 | 1 |
| Sufficient funding available for conservation | 3 | -1 | 0 | 2 | 3 |
| Basic living needs are met | -3 | 3 | -2 | 3 | 1 |
| Strong laws and policies supporting conservation in place  | -1 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Networks to facilitate learning and collaboration within and across government, private sector, NGO, and community actors | 3 | -2 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Knowledge and financing to create and implement community management plans | -1 | 1 | **4** | 0 | 2 |
| Knowledge and research skills in natural sciences for conservation | 2 | -1 | 3 | 0 | 3 |

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**S4. Questionnaires for each stakeholder group**

**1. Questions for Conservation Funders**

**Consent:**Thank you taking the time to share your knowledge and experience of environmental conservation and conservation funding in Bhutan. **We want you to know that your participation is voluntary and that you can stop at any time. All of your answers will be anonymous and kept confidential.** Please let us know if you have any questions. Once again, we very much appreciate the time that you are giving us. Would you like to proceed with the questions?  *[If yes, then proceed. If not, then thank you for your time. Can you recommend anyone else at BTFEC that would be interested in being interviewed for our study?]*

Great – thank you.

|  |
| --- |
| **We would like to start by asking about your background at BTFEC, and some general questions about conservation in Bhutan. We’ll then move to questions about conservation funding in general, and then about funding through BTFEC. If time permits, we will finish with questions about capacity building in the context of conservation.** |

1. How many years have you worked at BTFEC? Can you tell us briefly about a particular project or program that you enjoyed working on?
2. What do you think are the biggest challenges for biodiversity conservation in Bhutan? Have they changed throughout time?
3. Sometimes conservation interventions are affected by conditions outside of the scope of the project. For instance, local or external contexts or conditions can be obstacles that shape conservation outcomes. What do you think are the most important obstacles that can prevent or limit the success of conservation interventions in Bhutan? Can you provide a ranking of between 5 and 10 obstacles that serve as affect conservation success?
4. Conservation interventions often have short-term goals that are meant to provide a foundation for achieving a broader, long-term conservation goal. For instance, the short-term goal of teaching community members how to monitor a species could contribute to the long-term goal of increasing the population of that species. Can you please rate how important the following short-term goals are for achieving longer-term conservation success

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Short-term goal** | **Not at all important** | **Slightly important** | **Moderately important** | **Important** | **Very important** |
| Equipment for science |  |  |  |  |  |
| Equipment for management |  |  |  |  |  |
| Technical skills (science/monitoring) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Business/accounting/ financial skills |  |  |  |  |  |
| Leadership skills |  |  |  |  |  |
| Knowledge / awareness of community members |  |  |  |  |  |
| Knowledge / awareness of practitioners |  |  |  |  |  |
| Developing or strengthening local institutions |  |  |  |  |  |
| Developing or strengthening regional or national institutions |  |  |  |  |  |
| Generating trust between communities, practitioners, and decision makers |  |  |  |  |  |
| Financial support for alternative livelihoods |  |  |  |  |  |
| Technical support for alternative livelihoods |  |  |  |  |  |
| Monitoring and enforcement of community members |  |  |  |  |  |
| Increasing involvement of women in conservation |  |  |  |  |  |

1. Can you think of any additional short-term factors that you think are critical for building a foundation for overall conservation success?
2. Some conservation interventions also have goals that may not be directly related to conservation, but are meant to provide a foundation for achieving long-term conservation success. Can you please rate how important the following activities or actions are for achieving longer-term conservation success?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Longer-term goal** | **Not at all important** | **Slightly important** | **Moderately important** | **Important** | **Very important** |
| Establish a system for adequate funding for conservation |  |  |  |  |  |
| Improve production and dissemination of scientific knowledge |  |  |  |  |  |
| Increase engagement with local communities |  |  |  |  |  |
| Empower local communities and increase their role in management and decision making  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Increase the economic value of conservation to reduce dependence on local resources  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Improve the well-being of communities  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Change local social norms around conservation |  |  |  |  |  |
| Develop and implement stronger policies and regulations to support conservation |  |  |  |  |  |
| Increase networks and collaboration across government agencies and between government and civil society organizations |  |  |  |  |  |
| Increase political support for conservation |  |  |  |  |  |
| Change power relationships between communities and government |  |  |  |  |  |

1. Can you think of any additional long-term factors that you think are critical for building a foundation for overall conservation success:
2. Is there a source of funding for conservation in Bhutan that is most sustainable? What is it?
3. Are there any ways that future funding could be better designed, managed, or implemented to meet conservation objectives?

|  |
| --- |
| **Thank you for your thoughts on those questions. Now, I’m going to shift now to asking you some questions that are more specific to BTFEC.**  |

1. What are the benefits of having conservation funding come from the BTFEC?
2. Can you think of any drawbacks to having funding come from BTFEC? Please explain.
3. Compared to other sources of funding for conservation, is there anything unique about BTFEC funding or funding processes?
4. In your experience, what shapes BTFEC’s decisions about what to fund? Are BTFEC’s decisions shaped by global trends in conservation, the priorities of particular donors, or any other factors?
5. In what ways, if any, has BTFEC funding improved conservation in Bhutan?
6. Are there any ways that BTFEC funding has hindered conservation in Bhutan, even if it was unanticipated?
7. In your experience, is there anything that you or BTFEC can do to help ensure that conservation funding is translated into successful conservation outcomes – such as, for instance, providing additional support or improved capacities and/or resources.
8. Are there certain types of conservation projects, or projects with particular components or strategies that have been particularly successful in Bhutan? What kinds of projects or which components/strategies? Why do you think these have these resulted in successful conservation outcomes?
9. Similarly, are there types of projects or components of projects that were not as successful as you would have expected? Which projects/components and why were they not as successful?
10. What do you think is the future for conservation trust funds a) in Bhutan, b) in general or elsewhere?
11. Do you have anything you want to share with funders about how they can better improve funding for biodiversity in the future?

|  |
| --- |
| **Before we end, I would like to ask you a few questions about capacity building. For the purposes of this study, we are defining capacity building, “The process of strengthening the abilities of individuals, organizations and societies to make effective use of resources, in order to achieve their own goals on a sustainable basis”** |

1. Are funding decisions at BTFEC impacted by whether a proposed project has a capacity building component?
2. In your opinion what types of capacity building programs/activities have had the most impact on conservation in Bhutan? How have they been impactful and why?
3. What types of capacity building are needed first at the local/community level?
4. What types of capacity building are needed first within the NGO community?
5. What types of capacity building are needed first within the national government?
6. What types of capacities at the local, NGO, or national scale still need more attention in Bhutan?
7. What role do you see capacity building playing in conservation in Bhutan in the future?

**2. Questions for Conservation Practitioners**

**Consent:**Thank you taking the time to consider sharing your knowledge and experience of environmental conservation and conservation funding in Bhutan. **We want you to know that your participation is voluntary and that you can stop at any time. All of your answers will be anonymous and kept confidential.** Please let us know if you have any questions. Once again, we very much appreciate the time that you are giving us. Would you like to proceed with the questions? *[If yes, then proceed. If not, then thank you for your time. Can you recommend anyone else at BTFEC that would be interested in being interviewed for our study?]*

Great – thank you.

|  |
| --- |
| **We would like to start by asking you some general questions about UWICE** |

1. As you understand it, what were the goals of UWICE? what was it intended to achieve?
2. Which of these goals have been achieved?
3. What are the major reasons why UWICE succeeded in achieving these goals?
4. Which goals were ***not*** achieved?
5. What are the major reasons why UWICE ***did not*** succeed in achieving these goals?
6. Were there any other benefits that UWICE produced that were not intended as part of the original goals? (in other words, unintended beneficial side-effects?)
7. What, if any, are the most important ways that UWICE has contributed to ***short-term or immediate*** conservation outcomes in Bhutan?
8. What, if any, are the most important ways that UWICE has contributed to ***long-term*** conservation outcomes in Bhutan? In other words, has UWICE been important in laying a foundation for conservation success in Bhutan and, if so, in what way?
9. Were you personally impacted by your experience with UWICE, either positively or negatively? If so, how?
10. Many people think that capacity building is an important part of conservation projects. For this study, we define capacity building as “***“The process of strengthening the abilities of individuals, organizations and societies to make effective use of resources, in order to achieve their own goals on a sustainable basis”***
11. What are some of the ***direct*** ways that UWICE has improved the capacity of people working in conservation – or impacted by conservation projects?
12. Are there any ***indirect, or unexpected,*** ways that UWICE has improved the capacity of people working in conservation – or impacted by conservation projects?
13. To your knowledge, do people who have been trained at UWICE also help build capacity in Bhutanese communities? If so, how? Can you give any examples?
14. To your knowledge, have scientific studies conducted by researchers at UWICE, or by people who have been trained or educated at UWICE, had any impacts on environmental policies in Bhutan? If so, can you think of any examples?
15. What role do you see UWICE playing in future conservation efforts in Bhutan?
16. Is there anything that you think that could be changed at UWICE that would help improve conservation efforts in Bhutan either in the long term or the short term?

**3. Questions for Conservation Planners**

**Consent:**Thank you taking the time to consider sharing your knowledge and experience of environmental conservation and conservation funding in Bhutan. **We want you to know that your participation is voluntary and that you can stop at any time. All of your answers will be anonymous and kept confidential.** Please let us know if you have any questions. Once again, we very much appreciate the time that you are giving us. Would you like to proceed with the questions? *[If yes, then proceed. If not, then thank you for your time. Can you recommend anyone else at BTFEC that would be interested in being interviewed for our study?]*

Great – thank you.

|  |
| --- |
| **We would like to start by asking about your general background in conservation in Bhutan, before asking questions about specific projects/programs, the capacity building components of those programs, and the relationship between capacity building and long-term conservation outcomes. Please keep in mind that we define capacity building as, *“The process of strengthening the abilities of individuals, organizations and societies to make effective use of resources, in order to achieve their own goals on a sustainable basis”***  |

1. What are the biggest challenges for biodiversity conservation in Bhutan? Have they changed throughout time?
2. Conservation interventions often have short-term goals that are meant to provide a foundation for achieving a broader, long-term conservation goal. For instance, the short-term goal of teaching community members how to monitor a species could contribute to the long-term goal of increasing the population of that species. Can you please rate how important the following short-term goals are for achieving longer-term conservation success

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Short-term goal** | **Not at all important** | **Slightly important** | **Moderately important** | **Important** | **Very important** |
| Equipment for science |  |  |  |  |  |
| Equipment for management |  |  |  |  |  |
| Technical skills (science/monitoring) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Business/accounting/ financial skills |  |  |  |  |  |
| Leadership skills |  |  |  |  |  |
| Knowledge / awareness of community members |  |  |  |  |  |
| Knowledge / awareness of practitioners |  |  |  |  |  |
| Developing or strengthening local institutions |  |  |  |  |  |
| Developing or strengthening regional or national institutions |  |  |  |  |  |
| Generating trust between communities, practitioners, and decision makers |  |  |  |  |  |
| Financial support for alternative livelihoods |  |  |  |  |  |
| Technical support for alternative livelihoods |  |  |  |  |  |
| Monitoring and enforcement of community members |  |  |  |  |  |
| Increasing involvement of women in conservation |  |  |  |  |  |

1. Can you think of any additional short-term factors that you think are critical for building a foundation for overall conservation success?
2. Some conservation interventions also have goals that may not be directly related to conservation, but are meant to provide a foundation for achieving long-term conservation goals. Can you please rate how important the following activities or actions are for achieving longer-term conservation success?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Longer-term goal** | **Not at all important** | **Slightly important** | **Moderately important** | **Important** | **Very important** |
| Establish a system for adequate funding for conservation |  |  |  |  |  |
| Improve production and dissemination of scientific knowledge |  |  |  |  |  |
| Increase engagement with local communities |  |  |  |  |  |
| Empower local communities and increase their role in management and decision making  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Increase the economic value of conservation to reduce dependence on local resources  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Improve the well-being of communities  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Change local social norms around conservation |  |  |  |  |  |
| Develop and implement stronger policies and regulations to support conservation |  |  |  |  |  |
| Increase networks and collaboration across government agencies and between government and civil society organizations |  |  |  |  |  |
| Increase political support for conservation |  |  |  |  |  |
| Change power relationships between communities and government |  |  |  |  |  |

1. Can you think of any additional long-term, or indirect, factors that you think are critical for building a foundation for overall conservation success?
2. Can you tell me about your experience in biodiversity conservation in Bhutan and describe a project that you are particularly proud of?
3. What types of capacity building have been a part of conservation projects in Bhutan? Please list as many as you can think of? Can you describe how these have been incorporated into projects?
4. Can you describe a conservation project you were involved with in which capacity building was the primary goal? Why was there a focus on capacity building in the project?
5. In your opinion what types of capacity building programs/activities have had the most impact on conservation? How have they been impactful and why?

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| **Capacity needs may be different at different scales like at the local/community scale, NGO scale, or national scale. Next, I have a series of questions for you at each of these scales.**  |

1. At the ***local and community level***: What are the most important capacity needs for conservation efforts?
2. Which of these need to be addressed first and why?
3. At the ***NGO level*** - What are the most important capacity needs for conservation?
4. Which of these need to be addressed first and why?
5. At the ***National level* -** What are the most important capacity needs for conservation?
6. Which of these need to be addressed first and why?
7. Who often decides that capacity building should be a part of a conservation project and what kinds of capacities need to be improved? Who is often responsible for identifying this need – does it come from communities themselves (or other entities that are targeted by a conservation program), conservation organizations, the government, etc?
8. Often the goal of capacity building projects is to have long-term biodiversity outcomes. Can you explain how capacity building can contribute to long-term biodiversity outcomes with an example from a project that you have been involved in? Are there other examples you can share?
9. Can you describe what you think were some of the reasons that the projects/programs that had a capacity building component succeeded or failed?
10. Are there cases in Bhutan in which capacity building efforts were successful, but the ultimate conservation objectives were not met?
11. Are there cases in which capacity building efforts failed, but the ultimate conservation objective was achieved regardless?
12. What types of capacity building projects are still needed in Bhutan or need more attention?
13. Is there anything that you want funders to be aware of when it comes to capacity building interventions?
14. In your experience, is it easy or difficult to convince funders that capacity building activities should be funded as part of conservation projects? Does this depend on the funder?
15. Sometimes conservation interventions are affected by conditions outside of the scope of the project. For instance, local or external contexts or conditions can be obstacles that shape conservation outcomes. What do you think are the most important obstacles that can prevent or limit the success of conservation interventions in Bhutan? Can you provide a ranking of between 5 and 10 obstacles that serve as affect conservation success?

**4. Questions for Communities**

**Consent:**Thank you taking the time to consider speaking with us about your knowledge and experience of environmental conservation and conservation funding in Bhutan. **We want you to know that your participation is voluntary and that you can stop at any time. All of your answers will be anonymous and kept confidential.** Please let us know if you have any questions. Once again, we very much appreciate the time that you are giving us. Would you like to proceed with the questions?

*[If yes, then proceed. If not, then thank you for your time. Can you recommend anyone else at BTFEC that would be interested in being interviewed for our study?]*

Great – thank you.

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| **We would like to start by asking you some general questions about the project (include project name)** |

1. Do you recall what organizations or individuals were involved in administering the project?
2. As you understand it, what were the goals of Project (insert name of project)?
3. Which of these goals did the project achieve? What are the major reasons why the project succeeded in achieving these goals?
4. Which of these goals were not achieved?
5. What were the main reasons why the project DID NOT succeed in achieving these goals?
6. Based on your experience, what do you think are the most significant obstacles that must be overcome in order to achieve the goals of conservation projects in Bhutan? Can you list some?
7. Were there any benefits from the project that were not intended as part of the original project goals? (in other words, unintended beneficial side-effects?)
8. Was your ***household*** impacted by the project either positively or negatively? If so, what were those impacts?

[***If capacity building is not mentioned in the response, ask:]*** Did you or any other members of your household gain any new skills, knowledge, social connections with people inside or outside of your community, or have access to any other opportunities as a result of the project?

1. Was your ***community*** impacted by the project either positively or negatively? If so, what were those impacts?

*[****If capacity building is not mentioned in the response, ask:]*** Did any community members gain any new skills, knowledge, social connections with people inside or outside of your community, or have access to any other opportunities as a result of the project?

1. Did any groups within your community benefit from the project, and if so, how?

1. Were there any new groups that were formed as part of the project?
2. If so, did these groups have an impact on project outcomes or the community as a whole? Are these groups still functioning?
3. If future projects were to be developed in your community or other communities, is there anything that you think could be done to make them more beneficial? What suggestions do you have for how to improve the design and implementation of conservation projects?