

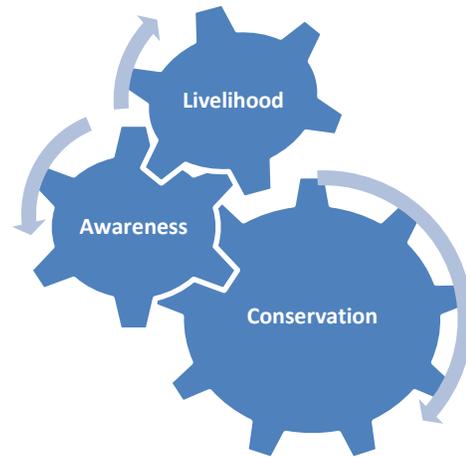


Sahyadri's vulture conservation work has now been extended to cover entire Konkan region. This gave an opportunity to know the exact status of vultures and prepare conservation plan for the region. In addition to in-situ conservation efforts in the region, Sahyadri has also undertaken focused awareness drives for stakeholders.

This year, Sahyadri's a decade long of turtle conservation work has now been taken over by Forest Department of Maharashtra. Turtle Conservation budget of the department and network built by Sahyadri shall make this program sustainable. Support of people of Velas and Gram Panchayat ensured smooth operation of Turtle Festival.

This year's one of the important and long lasting impactful achievements is formation of Homestay policy by MTDC. This will enable individuals and Self Help Groups to take advantage of local tourism.

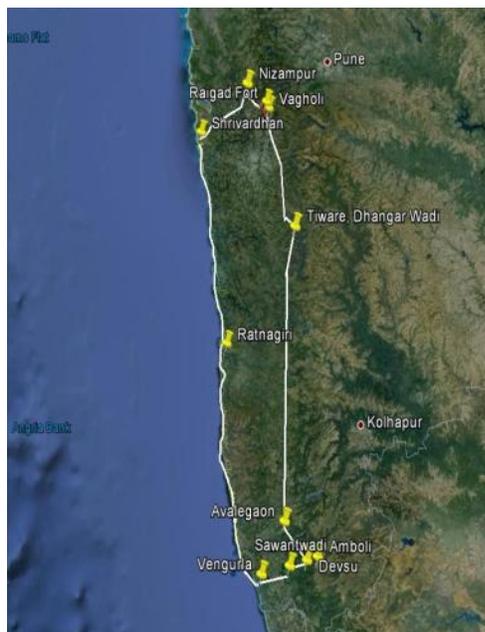
Capacity building training like Home Stay, Gum collection has been planned for locals. My Forest concept has also been well received.



## **Our Mission**

**Nature Conservation through Field Protection, Awareness, Education and Scientific based Act**

## Vulture Conservation



Sahyadri's vulture conservation work since 2003 has been extended to cover Sindhudurga, Ratnagiri and Raigad districts of Konkan with assistance from Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF). The program titled "The Konkan Vulture Project: Participatory vulture conservation in Western Ghats and Konkan Region" shall be executed from June 2013 – May 2015. Sahyadri has prepared vulture conservation plan for this program which highlights the following impacts within next 1-3 years:

- Decrease in usage of veterinary diclofenac medicines
- Public-private mechanisms providing incentives for vulture nest protection in the Konkan Region
- Sensitization and awareness on vulture conservation in the villages in Konkan region, in particular villages wherein vulture activity is reported

Following are the specific components of this program

Nesting Site	White Rumped	Indian Long billed
Shrivardhan	40	-
Chirgaon	20	-
Nanemachi	-	1

**Vulture Nesting data - March 2014**

### In-Situ Conservation

**Current Population Status Survey:** Sahyadri undertook road transect survey of entire Konkan region and collected data about vulture sightings, nesting, dead cattle disposal practices and medical shops. No vulture nesting has been reported in Sindhudurga and Ratnagiri district.

**In-Situ protection of vultures:** Survey has shown that White rumped vulture nesting exist at Shrivardhan and Chirgaon and Indian Long billed vulture nesting at Nanemachi.

**Protection through Compensation:** Acidic nature of vulture droppings reduces the coconut produce which prompts the coconut growers to drive away the nesting birds. To increase participation of coconut growers, Sahyadri compensated the coconut growers having vulture nests.

**Tourism centric conservation partnership model:** "Sahyadri Festival" was hosted at Shrivardhan to generation awareness about local biodiversity including vultures and marine turtles. Sahyadri conducted rallies of students, various competitions to promote the cause. Sahyadri also hosted vulture information exhibition at Shrivardhan and Chirgaon.

### Conducive Environment for Vulture Protection

**Vulture Awareness Survey:** Sahyadri conducted a pre project awareness survey which shows that people are aware about declined vulture population but very low awareness about the reasons behind

the decline. There is also low awareness about existing vulture colonies. This survey helped Sahyadri to formulate awareness campaigning program in the Konkan region.

**Awareness Campaigns:** Workshops for veterinarians, para veterinarians and chemists have been conducted on regular basis to generate awareness about ban on veterinary usage of diclofenac. Similar workshops have also been conducted along with Forest Department. Sahyadri has also used mobile exhibition to attract villagers and provide detailed information about vultures. Sahyadri has also been working closely with State Biodiversity Board.

### Anti Diclofenac Drive

**Diclofenac Free Village:** Sahyadri distributed “Cattle health cards” to cattle keepers to collect treatment data. Such regular record keeping shall help to assess usage of diclofenac, if any. Sahyadri has also conducted “Cattle health check up camps” for villagers along with Animal Husbandry Department (AHD). Sahyadri also plans to conduct “Village Competition for vulture conservation”.

### Marine Turtle Protection and Conservation

**Handover to Forest Department:** Sahyadri has handedover the turtle conservation activities to Forest Department along with the network of people built along the coast. Sahyadri has monitored the conservation work by undertaking regular visits to various sites. Funding from Forest Department shall bring the necessary sustainability to Turtle Conservation program.

**Turtle Festival:** Since 2013, Sahyadri has handed over the turtle festival activity to villagers of Velas. During this season, villagers through the support of Gram Panchayat have handled activities like managing accommodation, delivering information about the program, film shows, releasing turtle hatchlings. Sahyadri has monitored these activities through a fortnightly visit at Velas.

**Maintaining Turtle Breeding Habitat:** Sahyadri has ensured that there is no direct human-turtle conflict in Konkan region. With this background Sahyadri has decided to focus on one of the major ecological threats of unhygienic beaches to marine turtle nests. Irresponsible garbage disposal is one of the major reasons of beach pollution. Sahyadri plans to set up a pilot program through local participation for maintaining the identified beaches as “Turtle Friendly” through proper garbage disposal mechanism. Direct action and awareness generation will bring the necessary change in the local governing bodies to take up such initiative on long term basis.

### Home Stay – Approval by MTDC

Sahyadri started ‘Home Stay’ to host metro tourists at Velas in 2006 as a part of ‘Turtle Festival’ through UNDP support. Over the last 8 years, ‘Home Stay’ has received excellent support and guidance by locals, Gram Panchayat and the Forest Department. Keeping with the Indian tradition of treating guest as God, home stay owners host tourists in the same house instead of separate rooms. This no investment option helps the participants to earn their livelihood, helps tourists to know more about rural life and creates bonding with the village and the conservation activities.



This year, Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) has formalized Home Stay scheme after due diligence with Sahyadri and other stakeholders as an alternate to their existing “Bed and Breakfast” scheme. The policy has been formulated in such a fashion that even an individual or Self Help Group can participate and take advantage of local tourism. Sahyadri has identified Veer in district Ratnagiri and empowered villagers to initiate home stay.

## My Forest

Our connection with forests has reduced to mere tourism. Large scale plantation of exotic plant species is harmful to our forests. ‘Devrais’ (sacred groves), which are reserved forests for local deities in mythology, are vanishing too. Privately owned forests are falling prey to the greed of trade and profit. We have almost left behind the tradition and will to nurture, conserve forests and maintain our bond with them.

There are a few nature lovers like you wanting to reverse the trend of destruction. It’s extremely important for such people to come together to reduce the pace of destruction. Towards this, ‘Sahyadri Nisarg Mitra’ (SNM) has initiated a chain of concerned organizations and citizens under the concept “My Jungle”. SNM proposes to implement this concept across various sites to instill the sense of conservation among the people at large & to develop such self-motivated pockets of forest, both in quality and number. Such forests will be open to all nature lovers. People will be expected to shoulder the responsibility of conservation, monitoring and documentation. This would attach us back to the forests. Think these forests as living laboratories to connect people to the nature. Local people will also be engaged in conservation activities through SNM’s principle of ‘Livelihood Through Nature Conservation’.

SNM looks forward to conserve forest on 50 acres of land in a year which would be extended to 100 acres in the next 3 years. We appeal to nature lovers deeply interested in forest conservation to join us and contribute to ‘My Jungle’.

## Develop Alternate Livelihood Options

- **Home stay training** – This year Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) has recognized Home Stay as one of their schemes in addition to the existing Bed and Breakfast (B&B). MTDC has released policy based on the series of workshops and meetings with various stakeholders. Sahyadri plans to conduct training for local villagers to start Home Stay and get MTDC recognition.
- **Gum Collection** – Gum collection from Gum Karaya Tree (*Saldod* – Marathi name, *Sterculia Urens* – Scientific name) which is treated as minor forest produce has been established in parts of Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh. Sahyadri’s team has visited such centers and plans scientific training for people to collect gum from this tree.

## What’s New

- ❖ Empowering Konkan villagers to initiate Home Stay and get MTDC recognition
- ❖ Scientific training and marketing support for villagers to collect gum from Gum Karaya tree (*Saldod* - Marathi name, *Sterculia Urens* - scientific name)
- ❖ Finalize places for “My Forest” along the Northern Western Ghats covering Konkan region shall be taken up with high priority.
- ❖ Increase individual donor base to cover administrative expenses

## Appeal

Volunteering, donations for specific activities and donations through online purchase of products like books, CDs helps Sahyadri to carry out various activities and also plan for future. Sahyadri appeals donors to check the details on the website and contribute generously towards the cause.

### Foreign Donations

Name of account: Sahyadri Nisarga Mitra,  
Chiplun

Name of Bank: Bank of India

Address: Centre I complex, Karad Road,  
Bahaddur Sheikh Naka, Chiplun

Account Number: 148010110000226

SWIFT Code: BKIDINBBBOS

FCRA Registration number: 083950039

### Donations within India

Name of account: Sahyadri Nisarga Mitra,  
Chiplun

Name of Bank: Bank of India, Chiplun

Account Number: 141110110000077

NEFT: BKID0001411

Name of Bank: Bank of Maharashtra, Chiplun

Account Number: 20061344941

NEFT: MAHB0000296

**Donations will be entitled for IT exemption under 80G**

## Acknowledgements

Sahyadri is thankful to Forest Department, Maharashtra for extending support in all programs.

Sahyadri also acknowledges efforts put by MTDC to formulate and recognize Home Stay scheme.

The Konkan Vulture project has been supported by Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF). Sahyadri is thankful to Animal Husbandry Department, Maharashtra State Biodiversity department for continuous support in vulture conservation program.

MCBT sponsored generation of content for marine turtle education.

“Shri Shankarlal Pokarna Charitable Trust” provided funds that assisted in improving awareness and promoting education at the local level.

“N M Wadia Charities, Mumbai” supported to cover part of the operational cost.

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has expanded their support beyond Turtle Conservation. TCS has supported “Maintenance of turtle breeding habitat” in six villages and also supported outreach activities of vulture conservation like compensation for coconut growers, village level competition to protect vultures.

In addition, the local Gram Panchayats in each village and Kasav Mitra Mandals, chemists and druggist associations and their members, villagers and all the volunteers have worked to ensure the large-scale success of conservation programs.

The support of individual donors has always been the back bone of our activities.

## Sahyadri Nisarga Mitra, Chiplun

11, United Park, Markandi, At Post Tal. Chiplun, Dist. Ratnagiri, Maharashtra - 415605.

Tel. (02355)253030

Bhau Katdare : 9423831700

Jayant Kanade : (02355)237105

Uday Pandit : 9423047700

Vishwas Joshi : 9422430933

Ramashish Joshi : 9924399347

E-mail : sahyadricpn@gmail.com

Website: www.snmcpn.org