

## **Tutor's evaluation of the PhD studies and of the thesis of Prakash Kumar Paudel**

Prakash Kumar Paudel was born in 1977 in Nepal. He completed his undergraduate degree in biology at the Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal and his master degree in science at the Pokhara University in Pokhara, Nepal. He studied trans-boundary corridor restoration potential between Nepal and India as a part of his master thesis. Prior to enrolling the doctoral studies at the University of South Bohemia, he worked for the World Wildlife Fund Nepal Program, Care Nepal, Nepal office of HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation and the Friends of Bagmati. This provided him with a very good theoretical and practical background. His main interests involve modelling species distribution, wildlife conservation in disturbed environments, conservation biology and mountain environments.

Starting from 2011, he is working with me at the Biodiversity Research Center and at the Global Change Research Centre on various research projects. His involvement in my team has been essential for carrying out conservation research in the Himalaya.

In 2007, Prakash enrolled PhD studies at the University of South Bohemia under my supervision. The topic of his thesis is *Understanding wildlife distribution in the human-dominated landscape of Nepal: implications for conservation*. Here he got the opportunity to use his past experience with research of wildlife conservation in disturbed environments. Furthermore, he was actively involved in international collaboration of the Biodiversity Research Centre with Nepalese partners, which resulted in publication of a book on Himalayan biodiversity in Springer, where Prakash contributed four chapters. Thanks to this international collaboration, he is able to critically assess wildlife conservation in the Himalayan region and his results are exceptionally rich for a PhD student.

Prakash gave an oral presentation during the 2nd European Congress of Conservation Biology (Prague, Czech Republic, 2009). The results of his research were also presented during the 24<sup>th</sup> International Congress for Conservation Biology (Alberta, Canada, 2009). He also participated in two international conferences as a member of local organizing committee: the 4<sup>th</sup> International Congress on Orchid Conservation (Hluboka, Czech Republic, 2011), and the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the IOBC/WPRS Working Group (Hluboka, Czech Republic, 2011).

His Thesis consists of seven papers, five of which were already published: two of them in internationally acknowledged journals (*Anim. Conserv.*, *J. Nat. Conserv.*), three as chapters in the above-mentioned book published in Springer. The sole fact that these papers successfully passed the strict reviews now usual in such journals and books, speaks volumes. Apart from these papers, he published one paper, which is not included in the Thesis. Several other papers are in the pipeline. I feel that his findings published in all these papers represent a really good contribution to science and put forward a lot of new ideas.

During his studies he has shown enormous skills in empirical research (both in the field and in the laboratory), based on his previous experience from Nepal, and an exceptional patience and consistence in data mining. He has successfully demonstrated dedication and passion for research by working in extremely remote areas of Nepal. I can confirm that Prakash Kumar Paudel has performed the ability to work independently in science and publish his empirical results. The amount and quality of the papers he has published vastly

exceeds that of a PhD student. As the tutor, I appreciate above all his enthusiasm for scientific work and skills in the laboratory and field work. He has fulfilled all the requirements of the PhD studies. I am unequivocally recommending his thesis for defense and feel he should be awarded the title "PhD".

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