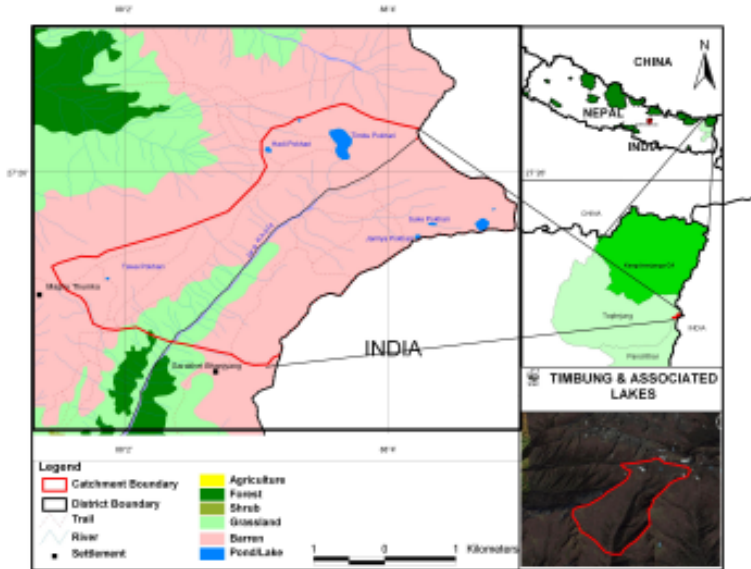




FACTSHEET

Timbung and Associated Lakes



Coordinates: 27° 26.25' N
88° 03.44' E

Area: 26.73 ha

Elevation: 4,343 m

OVERVIEW:

Timbung Pokhari lake system in Taplejung district is a unique and rare example of natural wetland type in the high Himalayan biogeographic region. It lies in the central Himalaya towards the northeast part of Nepal adjoining Sikkim, India at an altitude of about 4343 m. It provides water to the Kabele River that drains ultimately to Koshi River, one of the four major rivers of the country in Nepal.

Timbung Pokhari is naturally originated lake. The lake is surrounded with steep rock cliffs along the eastern and northern sides. The drian is in the south and worshipping sites in the west. Most of the area is rock and alpine rangeland.

There are six irrigation canals downstream of the lake and drinking water for grazing animals from Iwa river. Temperature may range up to -20 °C. The lake gets frozen for about 3-4 winter months and melts slowly by the end of Feb and early March. The summer is mild with pronounced rain from June to September. The rest of the months are mild cold and are optimum for tourism purpose.

HYDROLOGICAL VALUE:

Water discharge of Timbung Pokhari in monthly basis ranges from 8.77 l/s (April) to 219.23 l/s (August).

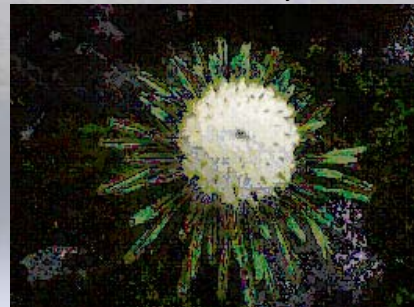
The depth of the Timbung Lake is said to be 70 m as per local people and their information is based on a foreign technical team. Water level of Timbung Pokhari rises during snow melting time (April-May), during rainy season (July-August) and decreases from mid September to March.

BIODIVERSITY VALUE:

Flora: About nineteen common species of plants have been recorded in the core area of Timbung Pokhari: *Rheum australe* (VU), *Saussurea tridactyla*, *Androscia spp.*, *Bergenia ligulata*, *Heraclium spp.*, *Rhododendron lepidotum*, *Primula spp.*, *Rhodiola spp.*, *Potentilla spp.*, *Meconopsis regia*, *Meconopsis grandis*, *Neopicorrhiza scrophulariiflora* (VU), *Dactylorhiza hatagirea* (EN), *Lichens*, *Lobelia pyramidalis*, *Laggera alata*, *Aconitum bisma*, *Aconitum spicatum*.

Among them *Rheum australe* and *Neopicorrhiza scrophulariiflora* are vulnerable species and *Dactylorhiza hatagirea* is endangered species.

Saussurea tridactyla



Khokkim (*Rheum australe*)



Padamchal (Rheum nobile)



Heraclium lallii





Fauna: Timbung Pokhari area is the resting site of wetland birds, Common pochard (*Aythya ferina*) and globally threatened Wood snipe (*Gallinago nemoricola*-Vu-IUCN) and many other species.

Twenty seven species of wetland birds excluding Ruddy Shelduck have been suspected to occur from the catchment of Timbung Pokhari. Since 5-6 years, Ruddy Shelduck is not observed in this lake.

Rare and vulnerable species Snow leopard (*Uncia uncia*), Musk Deer (*Moschus chrysogaster*) and Red Panda (*Ailurus fulgens*) are also found. Snow leopard occasionally passes through the upper part of the catchment area. The Musk Deer and Red Panda use the catchment area.

■ SOCIO-CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS VALUES:

Timbung Pokhari is the sign of hope of people. People are closely tied up with Timbung Pokhari to reduce the unwanted problems and protect from the evils. Similarly, this area provides large amount of water to the people of lower belts including drinking water, irrigation facilities, fishes and material (sand and stone etc).

According to the Hindu ancient religion, Timbung Pokhari is considered as an emblem of Sakshat Bishnu, the god of savior. Normally the purpose of people to visit and worship of Timbung Pokhari is to fulfill their own internal desires that are not easily achievable. People are not allowed to take bath at Timbung pokhari. Pilgrims have to take bath at Kanchhi Dhara, nearby to Timbung Pokhari.

At Timbung Pokhari, normally, pilgrims visits four times in a year at 15 Shraavan (~July 30), Nag Panchami (~18 August), Janai Purnima (~28 August) and at Krishna Astami (~4 September) festivals in a year ranging from 740- 875 pilgrims.

■ THREATS:

- Overgrazing
- Unsustainable harvesting of NTFPs
- Killing of wildlife
- Solid waste pollution
- Unsustainable firewood collection

■ CONSERVATION MEASURES:

Different user groups and committees have been formed for the conservation and management of the Timbung Pokhari area.

The Mountain Institute (TMI) has established Pastureland management committee to regulate the pastures and management of rangeland. TMI has planned to build an incinerator. A notice board is also erected by an NGO funded by TMI that to aware people not to leave rubbishes elsewhere. Kangchenjunga Users Committee (KUC) is working actively at Yamphudin and its territory. It mobilizes people to control poaching regularly and aware people for the conservation and sustainable utilization of natural resources. At Yamphudin, newly established Timbung Pokhari Community Forestry users group has started to patrol over its area to avoid the illegal collection of NTFPs by outsiders. To reduce the pollution, Pastureland Management Committee (PMC) is trying to manage the cattle's and rangeland. At core area of Timbung Pokhari, about 4 years ago, a people from Surumkhim, named Kishor Rai has started to manage the rubbish of the surrounding area of Timbung pokhari. After his innovative initiation, nowadays 2 herders are managing the rubbishes of core area of Timbung Pokhari, in co-ordination with Kangchenjunga Landscape Concern Group (KCG). KCG has started to raise awareness about Rhododendron and improved cattle farming at their own home for better livelihood option and to protect the fragile Himalayan forest and environment.