CONSIDERATIONS FOR NEW ANIMAL SANCTUARY

REPORT TO THE KOPAN BOARD AND COMMITTEE OF THE NEW LAND FOR ANIMALS

From the Coordinators of the original Kopan Animal Sanctuary
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PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

The purpose of this report is to be of assistance in making the new sanctuary a success by providing information and recommendations to the Kopan Gompa Board and the Management Committee of the new land. It is also a background summary on what has occurred at the animal sanctuary in the last 20 years. We offer this based on our knowledge and experience in animal welfare and care.

We ask you to please consider the information with an open heart and mind.

WHO WE ARE & WHAT WE HAVE DONE

For over 20 years, as the Coordinators of the animal sanctuary and even prior to being appointed by Rinpoche, we have been helping Kopan's animals. Tania (see bio at end of report) has been rescuing and caring for animals in varied roles for most of her life and has worked for government and non-government organisations in roles helping animals, providing advice on animal welfare, training people in this field and speaking at conferences nationally & internationally on this subject. Phil has also been involved in the rescue and care of animals for many years, including at the earthquake time in 2015.

One of the key roles that we have had with the sanctuary is bringing individual care to the animals. Taking a standard veterinary approach, we documented each animal, ensured medical histories were recorded, gave them Dharma names and designed systems so every individual would get the best care available.

Following the advice of Kyabje Zopa Rinpoche in how to benefit animals, we sought to make the sanctuary not only a showcase in how to help animals through Dharma activities but also through excellent animal welfare.

We trained staff and veterinarians in improved medical and management techniques, brought veterinary specialists from Australia, and regularly funded and brought medications and equipment to support locally available supplies. We did fundraising and publicity for the sanctuary internationally. We would spend lengthy periods each year volunteering at the sanctuary, visiting the animals daily and being actively involved in their health and welfare, from cutting their hooves, giving medications, directing their health care, requesting improvements in facilities and raising funds for specific projects (see financial section below).

It could be said that we spent more time with the animals at Kopan than with our families in Australia. We continually looked for solutions to problems and issues. In essence, we have extensive and intimate knowledge about the sanctuary, about animal sanctuaries, about animal management and about the difficulties and opportunities of rescuing and caring for animals in Nepal in a Dharma setting. It has been disappointing to have this knowledge and expertise ignored in the planning of the new sanctuary where we believe it could have led to better facilities, cost savings and fundraising opportunities.

HISTORY OF CURRENT SANCTUARY

Kopan has kept animals for many years. The goats Rinpoche rescued would live alongside the cows Kopan already had. The cows continued to breed because they were not sterilised. The

Coordinators arranged for the cows to be sterilised allowing more space for animals being rescued from death by Rinpoche.

The Coordinators carried out extensive research before building the sanctuary - travelling around US, UK, Australia & having meetings with owners of sanctuaries to discuss the best design and requirements, researching university papers and so on. We designed the sanctuary to be world class and it has received much praise from experts and other visitors.

Animal welfare standards needed to be continually checked and improved to ensure the animals were well and that Rinpoche's project was not subject to criticisms from visitors. There is increasing expectation, even in Nepal, that animals should be treated well and negative stories can spread far and last a long time.

Much of the medication and specialist equipment was brought from Australia. The Coordinators organised and funded a specialist veterinarian for several urgent operations, as well as lectures to students at Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu.

As the number of animals at the sanctuary quickly reached capacity, Rinpoche sought more land to allow more animals to be rescued. Ven. Tenpa Choden spent many years looking for something suitable.

As well as overseeing animal care, it was envisaged that the Coordinators would be responsible for promotion and fundraising internationally. However, this became increasingly difficult as news with which to promote the sanctuary was only available when the Coordinators were in Nepal. No one was found to pass on updates. Without current information, it is difficult to promote relevant news and people will not readily donate.

INTRODUCTION

> *The animal realm has terrible suffering, and the best thing is to think of something that benefits them. The best thing one can do to benefit animals is to circumambulate them around a stupa or statue as many times as possible. This means they have a chance to purify negative karma, and have a cause for enlightenment and liberation from samsara. That is what they need.*
>
> Lama Zopa Rinpoche

The original objective of the Sanctuary was to provide a safe environment for animals that were to be killed for human consumption or ritual slaughter, so that they may live out the natural course of their lives in peace and to be exposed to Dharma to create the causes for higher rebirth and enlightenment.

To achieve its aims, the Sanctuary needs to:

- hold as many animals as comfortably as possible without degrading the land or negatively impacting the animals.
- ensure animals are circumambulated around and can see holy objects and are exposed to Dharma regularly.
- Keep animal welfare for individual animals as a core tenet
- be a best-practice model for other centres and organisations both in Nepal and overseas to follow.
- help people generate compassion towards animals.

Regardless of whether an animal sanctuary is in Nepal or overseas, the ongoing care of the animals is critical. Simply rescuing a goat from a butcher and giving it some land to live on is not enough. That's the easy part anyone can do. Reducing the suffering of each individual animal is important, and as Buddhists, we are taught that every life matters.

When people donate to an animal sanctuary, they expect animals are well looked after and animal welfare is of a high standard. They expect the welfare of each individual animal is taken care of.

The following information highlights the key considerations in running an animal sanctuary in Nepal. It explains what has been done so far and what is understood by the Coordinators to be the case for the new land. Recommendations are made where applicable.

UNDERSTANDING THEIR REQUIREMENTS

Goats, sheep, cows, and buffalo are all different species and all have different requirements. For example, goats are browsers whereas cows and sheep are grazers. This means goats eat shrubs and prefer to not eat off the ground (unless there's nothing else for them) whereas cows and sheep graze on the ground so prefer grass.

Understanding the needs of each species of animals (as well as individuals, eg, if they are weaker or injured) leads to healthier and happier animals, and reduces their suffering. Healthier animals equals less work for caretakers because animals are not sick. It also means you can report to donors that the animals are well looked after.

A sanctuary is for life. Therefore, animals will get old and their needs will change. This is different to a farm. For most keepers of animals in Nepal their primary objective is financial. Animals are seen as commodities for the person's benefit. The welfare of the animal is not usually the primary concern. This means shelters and nutrition are often inadequate. Animals do not live long and are usually sold to be killed for human consumption.

CARRYING CAPACITY OF THE LAND

No matter the size of a piece of land, it can only support a finite number of animals. More land does not necessarily equal better conditions. Land has to be suitable for the resident species. More animals means more parasites and more fighting leading to injuries. Worming animals becomes even more important as well as separating smaller, weaker animals from larger and stronger animals (separate shelters, separate feeding etc).

One goat requires one ropani of land. This is not just for the amount of feed and regarding interaction (fighting etc) with other goats. It is also important to keep deadly parasite loads down.

A pair of caretakers (such as a husband & wife team) can only manage to look after a maximum of 50 animals. Once numbers get over this, animal welfare declines as the caretakers cannot manage to monitor each individual animal. This results in animals suffering and usually increased deaths.

If you have over 50 animals, you will need to employ more caretakers. This is similar to any situation such as a school teacher having a maximum number of students per class or a nurse looking after a certain number of patients. Once numbers increase, so too the need for supervision. There is also more need for maintenance as more animals put pressure on facilities.

PREVENTION

The best medicine is providing conditions that prevent illness and injury. Shelter design, access to water and good nutritious food, good fencing and field layout and good supervision are key.

The current Sanctuary has had many goats live beyond 7 years, up to 13 years. When problems arise and things are neglected, goats have died very young, often in great pain and suffering.

Cows have lived for around 20 years but could live longer with better care.

SHELTER

Requirements:

Shelters need to be warm for cold nights (not just in winter), with enough ventilation for all seasons. Goats are particularly susceptible to respiratory conditions so the right shelter is crucial. Solid, full height walls, with small higher windows that can open or close depending on the season & ensuring there is no draft.

A rammed earth floor with a deep bedding of straw on top is the best flooring for goats, sheep, pigs, cows & buffalos. Not only does it provide material to soak up urine & faeces, but it provides warmth, comfort & actually reduces parasite loads. It only needs to be spot cleaned daily & a full clean weekly depending on animal numbers. The straw bedding can easily be gathered up weekly and used for compost. It is also gentle on their joints which is particularly important for large heavy animals like buffalo and cows.

Goats also benefit from having tables or some other structures inside and outside that they can climb up onto and sit. This is particularly important to have outside as it allows the goats to get off the wet grass in monsoon (they are susceptible to foot rot and also leeches).

The roof of the shelter should extend some distance so that it provides a covered outdoor space for animals to gather during the rain or hot sun. The outside should have hay racks for food.

The main doors to the shelter should be open all the time during the day (except once a week during the time the floor is totally cleaned out and changed) so the animals can come in and out as they wish.

Troughs or racks are required for feeding to keep feed off the ground.

As cows and buffalo are heavy animals, they are susceptible to lameness. The likelihood of this increases as they age, just as it does for humans. Sleeping on concrete makes this problem worse and it becomes quite uncomfortable and painful for them.

Current:

The goat shed is purpose built and ideal. Illnesses from cold are rare. It is made of full brick with windows about 1.6 metres off the ground so drafts do not directly blow on the animals. There is a rammed earth floor with straw bedding providing warmth and comfort. It has stalls inside for separating some animals. There are feeding troughs so food is kept clean and off the ground and easily accessible. One half has a large space upstairs where the straw is stored. Storing hay above also provides insulation to the animals below. A door in the floor allows the straw to be dropped downstairs to the goat area below without needing to carry it down.

The roof extends about 5 metres from the shelter and has feeding troughs against the wall. The goats can shelter outside during the rain. In winter, they often stay here longer too (see photos under “Nutrition”).

The cow shed was built before the Coordinators were involved. It has since been improved, with the concrete floor removed from where the animals slept to create the rammed earth floor described above. This has greatly improved the lives of the resident cows and buffalo. They also have some separation areas so they do not have to be tied. Unfortunately, as this was retrofitted and not in the original design years ago, some buffalo are still tied up at night to prevent fighting. Tying animals is not a good welfare outcome. It can be dangerous to the animal as well as uncomfortable because they cannot turn around properly. It is used at Kopan since the buffalo are new and young and otherwise push each other and the cows around.

The cows/buffalo also have an extended roof outside and feeding troughs for them to gather and feed.



Goat shed; warm, comfortable, ventilated



Hay stored above; dry and it insulates the shed below



Extended roofing outside main goat shelter with feed racks along the walls allowing animals to shelter outside particularly when cold or wet



Pens allow weak /sick animals to be separated



Cow shed with earth sleeping areas

New land:

The goat shed is raised off the ground. It has a wooden floor with gaps, which creates drafts and cold and is not so comfortable to sleep on, particularly as the animals age. We understand that this was to allow their faeces to drop below for collection. However, it is likely that over time, these slats will get clogged with faeces promoting the build up of bacteria unless they are cleaned out daily which creates more work for caretakers. An earth floor with straw bedding does not require as much cleaning. Additionally, over time, the timber floor will likely rot and break in places which can lead to injuries such as goats getting their feet stuck. Placing mats on the floor to prevent drafts is a lot of work and cost too as it requires the mats to be taken out daily to be washed and dried (we tried this at Kopan) and they soon get damaged and break down and need replacing.

We understand the walls are of wood or another material to about one metre and then wire mesh. If this is the case, this is inadequate and will also mean it is drafty and allow too much cold air, particularly in winter. Wrapping a tarp around the wire will not prevent the problem and the tarp will deteriorate very rapidly, leaving non-biodegradable strands on the floor and outside which the goats could ingest resulting in blockages in their stomachs and a painful death (unless they are urgently operated on and few vets in Nepal have the skills and experience to perform such a tricky operation and the land does not have a sterile operating room to perform it).

We understand that the cow / buffalo shed has a concrete floor. This is very bad for farm animals particularly large animals.

Recommendation:

The shelter should be changed to be similar to what is at the original sanctuary as soon as possible with full walls and earth flooring. This is essential for their health.

Goats are very susceptible to colds and suffer respiratory diseases, like pneumonia. Before 2014 at the temporary facilities behind Kopan Monastery many goats had illnesses from the cold. This was fixed with the new shelter.

The cow / buffalo shed has a concrete floor. This will lead to lameness, chills and chronic joint problems (as happened at Kopan) as well as pain and suffering. The concrete can be removed where the animals sleep, as was done at Kopan. Putting straw on top of the concrete will still not be enough given the heaviness of these animals. Concrete flooring also requires daily hosing down so is a lot more work and results in sewerage run off.

Animal should never be tied up for any length of time. If they must be tied, they must be allowed to safely turn around, sit and lie down comfortably and not become entangled. Never put rings or rope through the nose of an animal. It is still common in Nepal for cows and buffalo but this area of the nose is extremely sensitive so it is painful. It is an outdated practice as it controls the animal through pain.

The shelter design plays a huge part in the health and welfare of the animals just as it does for people. Perhaps these could be viewed as temporary shelters and over time, they get changed to be better for the animals. Keeping the standard we currently have at the original sanctuary is better for the animals and for donors. Not changing them means reducing the standard and therefore increasing the suffering of the animals. It is less likely people will want to donate.

QUARANTINE

Requirements:

Any farm or sanctuary for animals needs a separate area where new animals can be quarantined. Often when farm animals are rescued, they are not in the best of health. They mix with animals from many different areas of Nepal and India so can carry a range of microbes. They are stressed and so their immunity is down. Disease can rapidly transfer from one animal to the next.

New animals need to be housed separately for a minimum of 4-6 weeks. It protects the resident animals and allows any disease to be identified and dealt with. The area should be housed some distance away from the resident animals since some disease are airborne (newly arrived animals and residents should not be able to come close to one another).

The quarantine shelter should be the same as the main shelter with earth floor and solid walls and windows. It also needs a separate fenced outdoor area for the animals.

It is useful to have the clinic/treatment room close to the quarantine area.

A separate quarantine area can also be used (when there are no new animals present) for weaker or injured or sick animals.

Keep in mind that animals like goats, sheep, cows and buffalo should never be housed alone. They will always need another of their species with them. This is important for their mental wellbeing and their physical health.

When animals that have been separated (including new animals) are re/introduced to the main heard, this needs to be done gradually and with close supervision. Goats will bully newcomers and smaller animals. This can lead to wounds and broken limbs from being pushed around. Weak animals can be bullied and prevented from eating properly. This means that in their already weakened condition, even with medication, they aren’t getting access to enough nutrition to heal.



Current:
Quarantine procedures were only introduced at Kopan when the original Sanctuary Coordinators got involved after an outbreak of Peste de Petite Ruminants (PPR) disease in 2007 which lead to the miserable deaths of half the goats. The current sanctuary has quarantine facilities and procedures.

Quarantine area on a separate terrace at current land

New land:
We are not quite sure what has been set up at the new land in this regard but we believe that there is a quarantine area for new animals.
It is understood that many more animals are going to be rescued and put on the new land.

Recommendation:
Quarantine procedures and facilities are essential to prevent suffering and death of many and increased work and cost. We recommend providing facilities as we currently have but on a larger scale. As there is an expected increase in numbers, one can assume an increase in injuries and sickness and therefore it would be better to have two facilities, one for new animals being quarantined and one area for old, sick or injured animals.

CLINIC
Requirements:
Sanctuaries generally have a clinic or treatment room where animals can be treated or even operated on, depending on the facility. There needs to be a separate room where medications, veterinary supplies and records can be stored and readily accessed and animals can be treated in a clean space. Where veterinary hospitals are not nearby, this is even more important.

Current
Before the current sanctuary was built, animals had to be transported to a hospital in central Kathmandu for treatment. This was not only difficult to arrange, it was very stressful for the animal. Plus, the hospital did not generally have the right supplies or medication or expertise.

At the current sanctuary, we built a separate treatment area and stocked it with medical supplies (mostly from Australia). We have performed operations in that room as well as countless procedures. Animals can be monitored closely following the procedure as the clinic is on site.

We prepare medication in that room, for example, the worming which requires a lot of calculation in terms of the individual weight of the animal and corresponding individual doses for each animal.

We keep records of the animals and their treatments in that room. Each time the veterinarian visits, he writes in the log book we have established. This means there is less risk of an animal being double dosed with medication (which happened in the past) and we can follow the progress of the animals' treatment and, hopefully, recovery.

We also have information on dose rates for certain medications for certain situations clearly visible for the treating veterinarian/nurse and useful images such as how to spot a healthy goat versus and anaemic goat (a deadly situation) or injection sites on a goat.

We do not have a separate treatment room for the cows as this is not practical. We do have a cupboard stocked with medical supplies and also a veterinary log book and records.




Dose rates of medication including sedation on the cupboard walls along with images of signs of anaemia and picture with names of the individual goats. Second photo is of some medical supplies from Australia in one of the cupboards.

We have packed up most of the goat treatment room since 90% of what is in there was brought by us from medications, dressings, surgical lights, hoof trimmers, to towels, soap and even the garbage bins. We have donated much of it for the personal use of Dr Umesh Mandal.

New land:
We are not sure what the situation with the new land is but we believe that a treatment room is currently being built. We also understand that some of our medical supplies we brought have been taken to the new land by Dr Umesh Mandal. We have left other items for him to take over.

Recommendation:
We recommend a treatment room be built and appropriately stocked on the new land. It is important that such a room has surfaces that are easily cleaned so that bacteria does not accumulate and it has cupboards and drawers that are easy to open where medical supplies can be kept without gathering dust.

<u>NUTRITION</u>
Requirements:
Sheep and cows are “grazers” and live on grass, as long as it is good pasture.
Goats are “browsers”, and it is leaves from bushes and trees that they need.



Buffalo feed on vegetation found in wetland areas, such as aquatic plants, and grass.

Good quality hay and dried grass are required throughout the year.
Minerals (loose or as blocks) & ‘salt licks’ are also important to have.

Ammonium chloride is important to give to prevent urinary blockages (which Kopan has had numerous times - it is an agonising condition and usually leads to death in goats).

Good nutrition is important for general animal health and their wellbeing. If they are well nourished, they are able to better deal with parasites, illnesses and injuries.

Current:
It has been difficult to get the best nutrition for the animals at Kopan. Grazing/browsing areas are very limited. The cow/buffalo area is full of plants that are toxic to cows so they generally don't eat them. There were some areas of grass but trees were planted so shaded out these areas and weeds grew. We have tried various means of getting some pasture planted but received no support.

The goats land originally had quite a variety of plants but these were quickly eaten so now more food has to be brought in, especially in winter.

Both the cows/buffalo and goats get rice straw. This is used for their bedding but also as food. But it is of poor nutritional value. They are also fed bran. This is not beneficial for these animals and should not be a daily food source but it has been difficult to break this habit. It has led to urinary blockages in goats, causing painful prolonged deaths.

Good hay and fresh fodder, such as leaves and grass, requires some effort which has been difficult to enforce. We have managed to have the cow caretaker cut and dry grass he collects around Kopan and feed to the cows/buffalo during the warmer season when it is available. In winter, it is not.

The goat caretakers do cut leaves from time to time to feed to the goats. This should be done daily. The goats do not get any dried grass but should.

The minerals are generally only given to the animals when we are there. This has meant that many of the animals, the goats in particular, are malnourished or deficient in some way. They may not all look that way to the untrained eye. It also contributes to urinary blockages.

New land:
The new land has potential for improving the diet. Initially when the animals arrive, they will be happy to eat what is growing. However, this will not last. Within a year, it is likely this will be eaten away and there will be no variety of plant species unless fields are rotated. It is important that there are trees and shrubs for the goats to feed on. Grass is not entirely suitable plus increases the risk of parasites.

There is also the danger that in the first few weeks that animals arrive, they will eat too much fresh fodder. This can be a deadly situation. Cows, buffalo, goats and sheep are susceptible to bloat (too much gas in the abdomen) caused by too much fresh grass too quickly, especially wet grass.

Cows, buffaloes, sheep and goats all have different needs. They can feed on the same land but will be looking for different things which is a good thing.




Covered areas for outside feed racks so food is off the ground

We understand that the feeding troughs in the goat shed require the goats to put their head through metal bars. This can be deadly so needs to be carefully monitored. Goats can easily get their horns stuck and if another goat rams them (which is often the case), it may cause them to break their neck. However, there can be benefits too as it allows individual feeding and keeps the feed clean. These troughs will need daily cleaning since they are not racks otherwise there is a risk of disease.

Recommendation:
Carefully monitor animals for bloat and diarrhoea in the first two months in particular. Always provide dry fodder (dry grass/hay and rice straw) to offset this.

Do not allow animals to eat wet grass. In the morning, feed dry grass or hay first. Then allow them out to graze/browse.

Planning: plant some trees and shrubs for the animals to eat but also in places that the animals can't access for later harvesting. Plan for winter food shortages. Cut and dry fresh grass. Goats can be fed corn leaves & stalks too if this is grown & even some corn.

Provide minerals and/or salt blocks that animals can lick. Rotate the land animals graze on and have access to. Leave some areas free from animals for a few months (see "Parasites" for more on this) so the land can rest and vegetation can grow. Goats can also be provided with baking soda in their mineral feeders. (This helps prevent stomach problems).

Feed animals off the ground - build feeding racks or troughs, hang leaves and fodder for goats from rope. Provide a supply of minerals so goats can access whenever they need it. Monitor the current feeding method closely and feed larger animals away from smaller animals to reduce the risk of fighting and accidents.

For thin and/or malnourished goats, feed separately. Give multivitamins. Anaemic animals will require iron supplements for 5-10 days depending on condition.



Goats fed using ropes to hang leaves



Iron bolus for anaemic goats/sheep/cattle



A mineral feeder can be made with a PVC pipe



Cows& buffalo inside in evening feeding from trough

WATER

Requirements:

Water is essential for life and prevents many short and long term illnesses and suffering. Clean accessible clean water must be provided, ideally off the ground (in water troughs or in large bowls placed on stands off the ground) so the animals cannot soil it (with urine or faeces).

Water buffaloes, as their name suggests, need access to water to wallow in. They need 'wallows' to cool their bodies and control pests. Wallowing allows buffaloes to cope with high levels of heat and humidity. This is particularly crucial due to their limited sweat glands and heat-absorbing black skin.

Current:

We had large concrete water troughs built for the cows/buffalo at Kopan. One close to the cow shed and another much further away so they can access when they are out during the day. The water is changed regularly.

When Bodhicitta, the first buffalo at Kopan, arrived, we had a wallow dug for him. Before that, he was trying to fit into the water troughs but of course, could not.

New land:
We are not sure what is available but understand there is a freshwater stream running through the land.

Recommendations:
We recommend concrete or stone troughs be built at various locations on the land. Even though there is a stream, animals will quickly muddy this up along the edges and some may fall in or get stuck. The buffalo in particular very quickly impact these areas. Herding animals may not go to water if they are thirsty if it means separating from the herd. Multiple water sources is best.



Water trough for cows, buffaloes



Large bowl for goats (however, these they soil as low so need regular changing)

Several wallows need to be built for the buffalo. These should not be deep but large enough for several buffalo to wallow in at a time. The water will need to be monitored and changed regularly (muddy is okay but not green with algae).



Small wallow built at Kopan



Bodhicitta enjoys some mud

PARASITES
A parasite control program is essential. Parasites are responsible for a large percentage of illness and death. Stressors such as weather changes, travelling or new goats in the herd can trigger an outbreak of parasites that have been dormant. Warm, moist conditions are the prime setting for parasite problems to develop.

Internal - The most common internal parasites in goats are roundworms and coccidia, in cows and buffalo it is gastrointestinal helminth parasites - liver flukes (Fasciola species) and lungworm. All of these parasites can be deadly & have been many times at Kopan. Liver fluke can also infect humans.

External - lice, mites, fleas can all make an animal uncomfortable, damage skin and hair coat and in large numbers, can cause anaemia which can lead to death.

Leeches can also cause problems but usually only when in large numbers or when an animal is weak (eg, malnourished, already anaemic).




Sempa was a healthy goat but due to parasites not being managed, became emaciated and anaemic which resulted in his death after much suffering (June 2026)

Requirements:
Deaths from parasites is preventable. A parasite program is essential. Parasites can be minimised and controlled by:

- Rotation of grazing areas [resting land for a minimum of 6 weeks breaks the parasite cycle from egg to adult]
- Checking animals for clinical signs: rough hair, coat, diarrhoea or soft faces, swelling under the jaw, pale inner eyelid (anaemia) and the veterinarian testing worm load in faeces
- Deworming the animals who need it with the appropriate medication at the correct dose for the weight of the individual. Do not feed for 12 hours before administering oral worming medications.
- Cleaning of sheds and fields with heavy soiling
- Good nutrition (malnourished animals have little resistance to parasites)
- Avoiding contamination of the animals' drinking water (no faeces)
- Maintain low stocking rates - no more than 6-8 goats per 8 ropanis (1 acre or ½ hectare) so one goat per ropani of land

Deworming - globally, many internal parasites are resistant to medications including in Nepal. Hence, only worm those animals who need worming, not the whole herd. Oral medication is better than injectable as recent evidence has shown injectable lead to more resistance.

Correct doses should be used. Weights for EACH individual animal should be recorded and the correct dose per weight administered. Giving blanket doses to goats only increases resistance. Use the same medication until it proves resistant. Changing dewormers increases resistance. Give wormers from two different classes at the same time (not in the same mix), one after the other to provide broad spectrum treatment.



Current:
Parasite management has been an issue at Kopan for some time. Whilst the goats are dewormed, the regimen is not consistent and anaemia and death is prevalent due to lack of supervision and implementation. Faecal samples are collected and tested. However, as this is randomly collected, it is not apparent from which goat the faeces was collected and therefore this method only gives an indication of the herd rather than the worm load of the individual and therefore who needs to be dewormed.

When the Coordinators are on site, the program is implemented better. A list is made of each goat with their name and estimated weight.

Each goat is checked for clinical signs of anaemia in accordance with the FAMACHA & other signs.

Image in current clinic/treatment room with images to show caretakers what to look for



Those who are borderline are noted as well as those who are not showing any signs. A decision is then made about which goats will be dewormed (this will include all goats showing signs of anaemia and often those who are borderline).

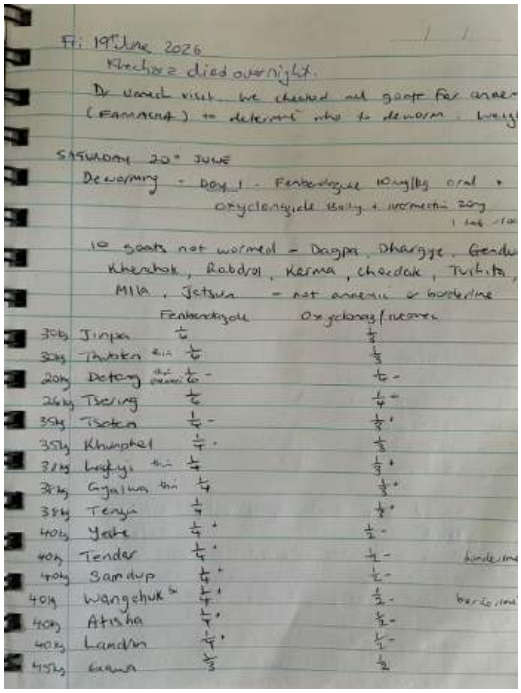
Currently we use oral fenbendazole at a dose rate of 10mg/kg administered for 3 days in a row and an oral ivermectin on day 1 only.

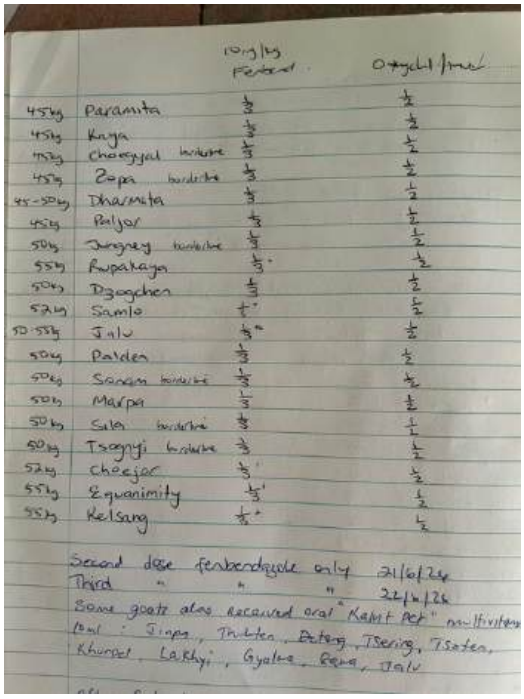
Goats should then be checked again in 2 weeks and reassessed & the ones with high worm load again dewormed but this usually doesn't happen.

Anaemic goats are given iron boluses and when the Coordinators are around, extra nutrition which is vital.

The dogs and cat are given topical worm and flea/tick/mite treatment on a monthly basis with medication brought from Australia when then Coordinators are present. We do leave this medication with instructions on applying when we are away but it often does not get done unfortunately.

Cows/buffalo - these are wormed whenever the veterinarian decides but is not a regular program.





Extract from veterinary log book showing how worming doses are calculated for individuals



Checking for parasites in faeces



Preparing doses in accordance with weight





Mixing medicine per kg for each individual goat into bananas

New land:

We do not know what the parasite load on the new land is, whether it had animals on it before or what the intended parasite regimen will be on the new land. However, animals coming from Kopan will bring parasites with them. We were not informed of the moving date for the animals so were unable to complete deworming hence there will be a number of goats in the herd who will have high parasite loads that will be shed on the new land.

As it is monsoon, the parasites will breed quickly. If the land is clean, it may not impact the animals immediately.

Recommendation:
The land should not be overstocked with animals. One goat per ropani. The local veterinarian does regular faecal checks of the animals. Animals are checked for signs of parasites regularly. Caretakers should be on the lookout for signs of anaemia daily as it needs to be treated urgently.

Caretakers follow the points for minimising parasite overload mentioned above (eg, rotating fields, feeding animals off the ground, keeping water clean etc).

The veterinarian implements a parasite program for all animals.

VACCINATIONS

Requirements:
Vaccinations are based on diseases/conditions prevalent locally. PPR vaccine should be given annually to all goats. Dogs need rabies vaccine.

Current:
All goats are vaccinated for PPR annually. Other vaccinations are administered to all animals as required.

New land:
The local veterinarian should be up to date with this but if not, can seek advice.

Recommendation:
Seek veterinary advice on what vaccinations are necessary. Keep records. Caretakers should remind the veterinarian when vaccination are due. Caretakers should be vaccinated for tetanus.

OTHER ISSUES FOR THE ANIMALS

Hoofs
Hoofs continuously grow. This is not much of an issue in cows and buffalo but it is in goats and to a degree, sheep. Goats hooves get overgrown quickly, particularly when on soft ground during the monsoon. This can be painful and affects their legs and hips because of the way they walk. Overgrown hooves also accumulate faeces and other debris and can lead to hoof rot. Wet ground also leads to hoof rot (see below “Off the ground”).

Goat hooves need to be trimmed regularly with appropriate tools. The Coordinators trim the hooves of all the goats when they are at Kopan with tools they have brought over specifically for this job. They have trained the caretakers to do this also but not for very overgrown hooves. Care must be taken to avoid cutting too much where it bleeds and also in a way that unbalances the foot.



Overgrown hoofs are uncomfortable & cause problems



Regular hoof cutting is essential

Fracture & Wound Management

Goats are very playful, curious animals and also fight to establish dominancy. This can lead to broken bones and wounds. Managing injuries early is important to prevent more problems and suffering. Having 3 people is always better to make any procedure easier. Sedation / anaesthetic is important to reduce stress and pain in the animal and less pain/stress promotes healing. Providing pain relief is both humane and necessary for healing. We have used Tramadol mostly in goats, also children's liquid paracetamol (not as strong as tramadol).

Unfortunately, we have found that wounds and fractures are often not correctly dealt with in Nepal and have often led to infection, amputation, bent legs and even death. We have tried to train staff in what is necessary and brought over various medical supplies but these will not go to the new land as we have not been asked for any handover of materials or knowledge.

We will not describe how to treat wounds & fractures here other than to say that there should be a supply of the following on site:

- Povidine iodine 10% (Betadine) solution (dilute with clean water to tend to wounds)
- Betadine ointment to apply to wounds
- Non-stick dressings
- Sterile gauze
- Bandaging: gauze bandages, roll of cotton bandaging for padding, outer layer of Vetwrap or Coban (we have left some for Dr Umesh Mandal's use)
- Splinting material (the splinting material we use we will leave for Dr Umesh Mandal's use)
- Sedatives - ketamine & diazepam (oral and injectable)
- Anaesthetic - local (Lignocaine 1% or equivalent), Propofol
- Antibiotics - long acting oxytetracycline, amoxycillin etc
- Analgesia (pain relief) - Tramadol (oral & injectable) at 1-2mg per kg 2-3 times daily, paracetamol - children's formula works well at 10mg/kg 6 - 12 hourly
- Injectable sodium chloride with IV cannula etc
- Saline for flushing




Managing injuries with the right materials and help

Urinary blockages

Male goats in particular are prone to urinary calculi (stones). It is a very painful & life threatening condition. Providing minerals is important & providing ammonium chloride to their daily feed at a rate of about 1 teaspoon per 20kg of body weight prevents the stones from forming. Many goats from Kopan have died in agony from this due to their poor diet and nutrition.

Diarrhoea

As with people, animals get diarrhoea when something is wrong. This can be stress (eg from transport), parasites, illness etc. It is important to treat the cause but also replace fluids & electrolytes lost. There are specific electrolytes for animals (we have some very good products from Australia but these will not go to the new land). Nepal has some local products which are not very palatable to the animals. If nothing else is available, the caretakers can mix 2 litres of clean warm water with 1 teaspoon of salt, ½ teaspoon of baking soda, ¼ cup of honey or molasses. The goat should drink this over the course of the day.

Off the ground

Goats like to climb on things or stay on dirt to keep away from leeches and other insects. They also do not like to stand on wet ground. This is sensible as they are prone to foot rot. At Kopan, we provided low tables for them both inside their shelter and outside.




Goats always climb on anything available, especially in cold weather or wet ground



Look at ways to provide cheap climbing infrastructure

OLDER ANIMALS

Older animals have special needs. Their teeth wear down or fall out & they may require supplements. Arthritis and stiff joints or lameness cause pain which prevents them from eating or drinking enough. If they are housed with younger animals, competition is fierce.

In a sanctuary, when properly looked after, animals will get to old age requiring extra care. Every day that they live and receive Dharma is important.

Healthy strong goats will push older and weaker goats and sheep out of the way. Most goats show signs of aging at 8 years. The current sanctuary has had many animals age beyond 8 years and as much as 14.

Cows and buffalo often become lame. The ground they sleep on should be earth with straw for bedding. Concrete is very detrimental for these heavy animals especially as they age. Cows can live more than 20 years.

DOGS, CAT, DUCK

Kali/Khadro - **dog** -(previously Detong) was a Kopan Monastery dog (mother of the black dogs at Kopan) who has bitten people at Kopan. She was taken to the sanctuary and tied up on a chain because she attacked the goats when let loose. Keeping a dog chained up all day is not humane and is not appropriate for an animal sanctuary. Kopan would not provide funds to build a proper shelter for her, so the Coordinators raised money to build a compound so that she had space to move during the day. She is let out during the night when the goats are locked in the shed.

She is a very friendly dog and enjoys pats and company with people she knows & trusts. She just needs people to take time to interact with her. This can be done with using gentle voices around her, giving her pats and treats.

If she is to go to the new land, a suitable enclosure would need to be provided and she will need people to interact with her so she is less unpredictable and frightened. But it would be better if she was found a family to live with elsewhere who would take the time to gain her trust and show her affection.




Khadro/Kali and her daytime enclosure



Poppy - dog - has been a sanctuary dog for many years. She is now old and developing cataracts in her eyes. She gets on well with people and goats. She needs regular brushing as her hair gets matted (we have provided several dog brushes for her which are at the current sanctuary caretakers house). However, the change to the new land may be unsettling for her.

Deyki the Duck - There is also a duck at the current sanctuary. The duck has been there for maybe 8 years. The duck needs a tub or bath or equivalent of water to bath in.



Yangsi - cat. Yangsi is now three years old. He is a healthy very friendly cat but not yet desexed (neutered) and needs to be. He needs to find a suitable home. We regularly provide him with cat food (usually from Australia) and flea/worm treatment. Cats are carnivores so must eat meat. We have left money at Kopan to buy cat & dog food for Yangsi, Poppy & Khadro but this rarely happens after we leave Nepal. So Yangsi loses weight and condition and the dogs grow fat on rice & dahl but have poor nutrition. Whilst Yangsi may enjoy living on the new land, a 4-5 hour road journey would not be humane. Cats become stressed very easily with change & confinement in a cage. He needs to be found a home nearby.

VETERINARY SUPPORT

An animal sanctuary cannot exist without appropriate veterinary support. We have had a couple of veterinarians and technicians over the years at Kopan and the longest-serving being Dr Umesh Mandal.

The knowledge and skill of veterinarians in Nepal is generally less compared with the west. Many vets often do not properly examine animals, their diagnosis skills can be inadequate, sedation and pain relief are not given to animals (particularly farm animals), unsterile needles and syringes are used, conditions such as fractures are not managed properly and so on. This leads to poor welfare outcomes for animals.

The Coordinators have worked closely with Dr Umesh Mandal and shown him medications and veterinary supplies to use. Some of these items are available in Nepal but not widely used through lack of knowledge. Others are not available. Dr Mandal also communicates with us in Australia for certain cases (patients).

We have also brought over a highly experienced veterinary surgeon (who is also a human doctor) on several occasion to Nepal to operate on sanctuary animals and train Dr Umesh Mandal and also provide lectures at the University.

The situation on the new land will likely be worse as veterinary support will be less and knowledge and access to medical supplies will not be the same. We strongly advise that the caretakers on the new land stay in contact with Dr Umesh Mandal (who can communicate with us if need be for advice).

FINANCIAL

The Coordinators donated around a third of the funds for the purchase of the current land. In order to ensure the success of Rinpoche's idea, the Coordinators also started fundraising and promoting the sanctuary. For many years we did a range of fundraising activities, and took advice from others, such as Hup Cheng Tan, Director of Amitabha Buddhist Centre in Singapore.

We created brochures, flyers, posters, attended events and held stalls, used blessed items from Rinpoche and other Lamas to raise money and awareness and much more. As mentioned above, the lack of communication from Kopan about the animals once we had left Nepal made regular promotion extremely difficult. International fundraising requires FPMT support and FPMT requires express permission from Kopan and this was sometimes also difficult to get, especially in recent years. Donors expect up to date information and it looks very poor to talk about a particular animal only to find it had died months before. Despite this, we still promoted the sanctuary as much as possible, such as the flyer we produced for the CPMT meeting at Kopan.


HELP THE ANIMALS

Animal Liberation Sanctuary
Kopan Monastery, Nepal

Donate, spread the word!
The animals need your help!

We directly funded a number of things at the sanctuary through our charity in Australia, Tree of Compassion, such as fencing and the dog enclosure. Some specialist medications are extremely expensive, such as Pentosan for lameness for the cows (exacerbated by the concrete floor and aging animals) and some goats (US$750 a bottle), which we brought over every year.

The cost of flying to Nepal once or twice a year and missing work at home incurred a financial cost to us which we were happy to cover in order to help the animals and serve Rinpoche. We mention this merely to point out our loyalty and commitment to Rinpoche, Kopan and the animals. When volunteers are so hard to find, it seems odd to not take advantage of people willing to help.

We are assuming, as has been the case for some years, that people donating and supporting the new land will come from outside Nepal. As such, they will expect the animals to be looked after well and live in the best possible conditions. This is possible in Nepal as has been mostly demonstrated at Kopan. The new shelters that have just been built unfortunately appear to be a step backward. This can be rectified and most donations for further work are likely to be from overseas donors.

CONCLUSION

We are very pleased that Rinpoche's wishes for having larger land for the animals is realised. We hope it is successful and wish the new Committee well. We hope our friends, the goats and buffaloes, enjoy the new environs and the sanctuary becomes the special place that Rinpoche envisaged. May all who see it, hear about it, visit it, think about it or even just hear its name be purified of all negative karma and attain the highest happiness of enlightenment.

It is our understanding that Rinpoche's wishes were not just to buy animals and put them on spacious land, but to actually care for them properly and consider their short and long term needs. There has been tremendous thought and effort to getting new land, getting the animals moved, and getting basic infrastructure in place, but it seems less to whether this is to the standard expected and possible, and whether the care of the animals will not only be similar but better.

We urge you to upgrade the animals' shelters. Kopan has the power to create better shelters and reduce the animals' suffering. The animals are unlikely to thrive with the current facilities. Each extra day the animals live and receive Dharma is precious.

At the moment, promotional emails from Kopan have been saying that the animal welfare on this new land will be improved. This has not been established. We consider this to be misleading as the change in shelter design is extremely likely to lead to health problems. There will also be less veterinary support.

Despite our years of involvement, we were not approached to help in any way with the current land and design of the facilities or even informed of when the animals were to be moved to allow us to prepare them. Had we been able to work together on designing the facilities on the new land, we believe it would have resulted in better animal welfare and we could therefore promote it as such. We were not even told when the animals were moving despite being at Kopan at the time. This resulted in the animals not being dewormed or having their hoofs trimmed before they were moved which leads to health issues.

As we have not actually been invited to view the new sanctuary or had any involvement in its development, we are not 100% sure of what it is like. From what we understand and have seen in images, in its current state, we cannot support or endorse it at this time as an animal *sanctuary* with acceptable animal welfare standards. Nor do we believe it to be in accordance with what we understand Rinpoche would have wanted in terms of best care. Regrettably, we will have to inform our networks and supporters of this situation.

We do appreciate the limitations that Kopan is working with. Again, we do not understand why we were not consulted at all as we could have helped create a better place. However, we hope that the advice we have provided in this report will be considered and used and that Kopan will strive to achieve at least the same standards we have at the original sanctuary and then improve on them so that this becomes a project where all animals thrive and something Rinpoche would be even more proud of.

BRIEF BIO OF COORDINATORS

Tania is a fauna ecologist and qualified veterinary nurse and has helped Kopan's animals for over 20 years. She worked for 30 years for the NSW Department of Planning & Environment on threatened species and animal research ethics. She has also worked with Dr Howard Ralph, one of Australia's most knowledgeable and experienced veterinarians, for over 30 years rescuing and treating animal victims of natural disasters such as bushfires, floods, cyclones and earthquakes and man-made disasters such as oil spills both in Australia and overseas, providing training to wildlife carers around Australia and on animal rescue and treatment overseas. She works at the Southern Cross Wildlife Hospital. Over the years, she has cared for many species of animals both in Australia and overseas and provided advice to Government and non-government agencies. She has also spoken at animal rehabilitation and veterinary conference in Australia and internationally. Tania's work featured as the cover story for the October 2017 issue of Vet Practice magazine. Tania is Director of the charity, Tree of Compassion. Tania has published two books on specialist care of animals: "Introductory to Fluid Management in Wildlife" and "Bushfires, Burns & Their Management in Animals".



Phil is an archaeologist working with Aboriginal people in the management of Aboriginal cultural heritage. He has been involved with cultural and natural heritage conservation for many years, with participation in such diverse projects as mapping areas of cultural heritage in Peru and Russia and surveying endangered snow leopards in Mongolia. He has been involved with animal care for decades, such as organising animal rescue teams during the 2015 Nepal earthquake time, caring for rescued animals, providing palliative care to dying pets, and as Coordinator for the Animal Liberation Sanctuary in Nepal.

APPENDIX

Some Key Events

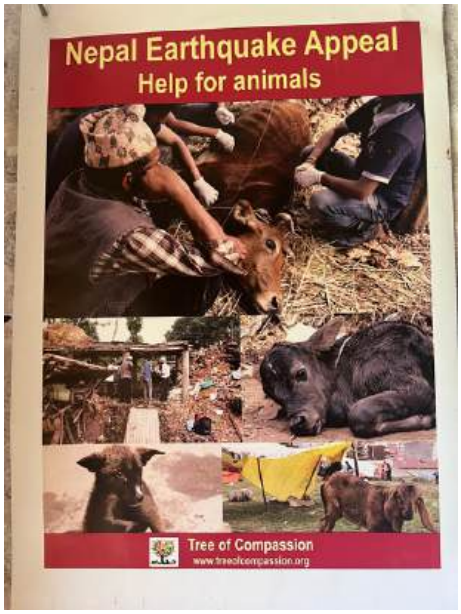
- The land purchase was completed in 2006. US$60,000 raised between Brigette Bardot Foundation (France), benefactors (Australians, Tania Duratovic and Phil Hunt) and Kopan.
- 2006 Tania and Phil organised fundraiser with Lama Zopa Rinpoche in Sydney; organised Rinpoche's first 'Animal Blessing' event
- Costs for the construction of fences, buildings and other essential infrastructure was originally estimated at US$100,000 and was raised from generous benefactor/s
- Coordinators for the project were appointed (Tania Duratovic and Phil Hunt).
- Coordinators carried out research for best building designs for animal sanctuary. Visits to best sanctuaries internationally. Ongoing discussions with sanctuary experts to develop final ALS design.
- Boundary fence completed 2008
- 2006-2019 organised fundraising and awareness stalls, and organised Animal Blessings around the world (eg HHDL events in Australia, USA, UK).
- Fundraising auctions at events and online.
- Adverts taken out in Buddhist magazines (Mandala, Tricycle)
- Construction delayed many times as no permanent road access and competition for labour.
- Temporary facilities improved and adapted at Kopan, with 'overflow' area at Ani Gompa.
- New protocols introduced to prevent breeding and reproduction of rescued animals.
- New protocols introduced to prevent overcrowding through non-authorised people 'dumping' animals at Kopan.

- 2011, 2013, 2017 brought Dr Howard Ralph, leading Australian veterinarian, to do major surgeries on sanctuary patients and give talks to Nepali university students
- 2012 Dzambala was the first goat in Nepal with an artificial leg
- Final construction and facilities completed in 2014.
- Careful planning for moving two groups of goats to new land (from Kopan and Ani Gompa).
- Multi stage move of animals to the official Animal Liberation Sanctuary, 2014.
- ALS staff trained in hoof cutting, giving injections etc
- 2015 Earthquake time; minor damage to buildings. Outreach animal rescue team assembled with coordinators and ALS veterinarian.
- Difficulties getting repairs and new work done.
- 2017 Asia for Animals conference in Kathmandu. ALS was selected to have a stall and poster. Coordinator attended conference & promoted ALS with others. Pema, Ven Mukhia & Ven Bijay manned the stall.
- Concrete in cow shed finally removed, Dec 2019
- Students continued to go on tours to the sanctuary; Coordinators lead many group visits
- Covid prevented Coordinators from visiting Nepal. Rinpoche rescued more animals with up to 75 at one time however 1/3 of them died bringing the numbers back down to around 50.
- Dog enclosure built for Khadro (Kopan dog) - 2025
- New flyer produced for CPMT available at Kopan reception and distributed for centres during CPMT to take home
- 2025 Some CPMT participants (FPMT Directors and others) visited the sanctuary





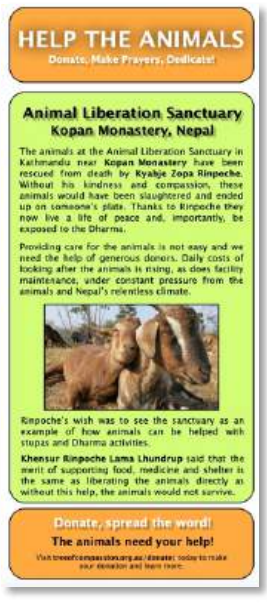
First brochure, produced by the coordinators in 2006



2015 Earthquake poster



2017 Asia for Animals poster



2025 flyer