

Policy Recommendations:

1 Illegal Wildlife Trade

- 1 **Deterrence from poaching** via coverage of traps and snares under national laws to allow for effective enforcement action against poaching through these
- 2 **Closure of open markets** selling snow leopard parts and derivatives
- 3 **Capacity building for law enforcement** agencies in the following themes:
 - a. Increasing law enforcement capacity against illegal Snow Leopard trade needs to be prioritized. Enhanced capacity can be addressed across multiple agencies, through implementation of training modules to improve prevention of poaching and trafficking through efficient patrolling and intelligence gathering, effective wildlife crime investigation, and identification of parts for Customs and relevant government agencies.
 - b. Initiate an institutionalised system for delivering regular training to frontline enforcement officials in range states.
 - c. Intelligence gathering by law enforcement agencies may include collation of nominal information on known and suspected traders, with profiles of how these individuals operate and connect to herders as well as their international counterparts.
 - d. In all range countries there is the need for greater information sharing between provincial and national agencies responsible for enforcing wildlife laws and other branches of government, including protected areas, wildlife divisions, Customs, Border, Police, and the Judiciary. Multi-agency teams can be incentivized for performance and anti-corruption, and be provided with the latest technical tools (SMART, Zero Poaching). Mobile response teams can respond quickly to remote enforcement needs identified by informants.
 - e. Creation of national databases of spot-pattern profiles based on camera trapped images which can be cross-referenced against seized skins, and DNA profiles which can help in forensic identification of Snow Leopard parts and derivatives.
- 4 **Fulfill CITES recommendations** (Res. Conf. 12.5, Rev. CoP17) **on demand reduction** by working with traditional medicine communities and industries to develop strategies for gradually reducing, and eventually eliminating the use of snow leopard parts and derivatives. The strategies could include education and awareness campaigns.
- 5 **Creation of national crime databases and sharing of information** about wildlife crime in snow leopard and related species. Additional databases to include nominal information on known and suspected traders, along with profiles of their operations and connections with local and international counterparts.
- 6 **Increase trans-boundary law enforcement cooperation**
 - a. Bilateral and multi-lateral cooperation (through bilateral and multi-lateral agreements) and effective use of existing networks to improve sharing of intelligence and

coordination of law-enforcement efforts is suggested to implement greater control over illegal wildlife trade between Snow Leopard range countries.

- b. Illegal trade in Snow Leopards is largely international, with poached Snow Leopards being moved across borders. More support should be given to the newly created Central Asian Snow Leopard and Wildlife Enforcement Network (SLAWEN) (GSLEP, 2015), as well as the operationalization of the South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN), to focus the attention of all range countries on illegal Snow Leopard trade, and increase the professional capacity of participating governments to conduct intelligence-led anti-poaching and trade seizures (Beale and Botezatu, 2016). Regular trans-boundary meetings between environment enforcement, Customs and border officials are essential.
- c. International law enforcement networks such as INTERPOL and the World Customs Organizations may be used to enhance transnational collaboration and cooperation on investigations, particularly with countries outside the range states.
- d. Encourage the training and use of wildlife detection dogs for Customs and Border control to facilitate detection of illegally traded Snow Leopards and their parts.

7 Prioritization of legislative shortcomings to amend legislation as envisioned in the NSLEP elements of the GSLEP, and harmonize legislation amongst range states to ensure similar stringency in laws for effective trans-national impact

- a. National and provincial laws, as the basis for enforcement to clearly assign administrative responsibility for illegal taking, storage, transportation, collection, ownership, acquisition, and the sale or consignment of Snow Leopards and their products, parts, or derivatives (as has recently been accomplished in Russia).
- b. Legislation needs to be amended to remove the exemption allowing the killing or capture of snow leopards in defence of human life and property.
- c. Adopt China's "Zero Tolerance" approach to online advertising for protected species products, working closely with major e-commerce trading site companies and nongovernmental organizations. China's ban on auctions (without permission) of pre-Convention/pre-national trade ban items derived from protected species (SFA, 2012) and India's practice of absolutely no sale and no acquisition of any snow leopard parts and derivatives except through inheritance are also recommended as best practice law enforcement.
- d. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Russia, as members of the Eurasian Customs Union (ECU), to ensure that their legal protections for Snow Leopards are harmonized under the (ECU) to ensure that illegal trade cannot be facilitated by open borders.

8 Improving detection and conviction rates by using appropriate measures such as:

- a. Creation of specialized enforcement units for wildlife crime
- b. Appointment of dedicated prosecutors for wildlife crime
- c. Designation of special courts for wildlife crime at local and national levels

9 Prioritize funding for snow leopard conservation in range countries, in particular to assist the implementation of GSLEP as well as effectively implement CITES Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP17).

2 Research and Monitoring

- 1 **Resources (~\$10 million) raised to support snow leopard surveys**, equipment, data managers, lab technicians and research associates to manage and implement the surveys in the next 5 years.
- 2 **Government support for capacity building**, coordination and field data collection to improve the understanding about the status of the snow leopard.
- 3 **Detailed resource materials are prepared** based on latest scientific advancements in population ecology and identifying future climate refugia, including Spatial Capture Recapture modeling, Site Occupancy analysis, Bayesian methods for estimating populations, and habitat suitability analyses, from multiple sources.
- 4 **A multilingual field-training training** module is developed and adopted across range countries to conduct snow leopard surveys.
- 5 **A dynamic panel with international snow leopard experts**, climate change and biodiversity experts, and population ecologists is formed to provide technical support to global snow leopard population assessments, and update the guidelines and training module every 5 years.

3 Community-based conservation

- 1 **Develop and institutionalize an applied training program** in community-based conservation with broad, inter-disciplinary collaborations between conservationists and development practitioners, social scientists, and community partners – to share foundational principles while also providing opportunity to develop locally relevant and viable solutions for conservation.
- 2 **Develop local institutions within and around snow leopard habitats** (e.g. formation of user committee and user groups in Nepal that receive 50% of the protected area revenue)
- 3 **Insurance of livestock, relief fund for crops depredation by wildlife, and promotion of ecotourism activities** could be the alternative options to attract the local communities to snow leopard conservation
- 4 **Develop new avenues to enhance engagement and interaction between selected industries, business sectors, government and local communities** – to provide new opportunities for alternate livelihoods.
- 5 **Enable cross-sectoral communication and engagement** for operationalizing the conservation strategies developed as part of the management plans of the 23 snow leopard landscapes.
- 6 **Train at least 500 leaders and field staff from protected areas and NGOs**, and community champions in conservation practices such as the PARTNERS Principles¹ for community-based conservation (Figure 1, above).

¹ <https://www.snowleopard.org/our-work/conservation-programs/partners-principles/>

- 7 **Initiate comprehensive education and awareness programs** to foster awareness about key conservation issues, socio-ecological interactions, conservation values and benefits among mountain communities.
- 8 **Raise resources to support travel and training for protection staff and local communities**, including exposure and learning trips to successful initiatives within and between range countries.

4 Business and Industry

1. **Institutionalize wildlife business councils** in each range country, consisting of industry leaders, conservation agencies, and international financial institutions (IFIs)
2. **Setting up a private sector trust fund for conservation of snow leopard** and its habitat to provide sustenance to national, regional and global conservation efforts
3. **Align conservation financing to market based instruments**, such as green equity and green/climate bonds
4. **Provide state of the art, research and development facilities** support technical enhancement of the frontline staff as well as other stakeholders
5. **Connecting corporates and communities** - Enhance support to forest communities through innovative business models, that increase profitability, provide quality assurance and create an effective marketing mechanism for products derived from sustainable forestry practices
6. **Provide financial and tax incentives for private sector investment in green growth**, climate adaptation and biodiversity conservation.

5 Resource Mobilization

1. **Range countries commit to at least double the allocation of National resources to snow leopard conservation** through government budget appropriations and other means (e.g. Nepal allocated \$3.15 million USD to implement climate smart management plans for up to 300 snow leopards in Nepal)
2. **Secure support to access global environmental finance (GEF 7, GCF etc.) for snow leopard and ecosystem conservation projects** across range countries building on past initiatives and lessons (e.g. under GEF 6 at least US\$ 40 million of GEF funding was mobilized)
3. **Range countries should explore the establishment of a Regional Snow Leopard Ecosystem Trust Fund** to mobilize resources from multiple sources including donors, private companies, national governments, revolving sources of funding such as mining

or water revenues, other payments for ecosystem services, and more. Such multi-country Conservation Trust Funds (CTF) have been implemented previously in the Caribbean, Central Africa, and the Pacific and can bring together shared interests to create the scale and experience needed to create significant interest and impact.

4. **Range countries should also explore the establishment of a sustainable development investment fund or funds to complement the CTFs.** Sustainable business investment in areas such as ecotourism, sustainable animal husbandry, agriculture, forestry, micro-hydro, solar power, etc. can support the ecosystem management plans by providing ecologically and economically viable livelihoods for people living and working in the target ecosystems. One concept for such a fund is that it would act as a revolving fund, making concessional loans to sustainable companies and using the reimbursements to finance future loans. The fund can be established as an impact investment venture providing investors with both a financial and environmental return on investment.

6 Infrastructure

1. **Identify environmentally-sensitive and vulnerable areas**, especially those essential for snow leopard habitat, ecosystem services, and climate change resilience - building on existing data and globally established priorities, such as 'Key Biodiversity Areas'.
2. **Collate data and information on the movement dynamics of snow leopards and other threatened wildlife**, particularly species most likely cause road accidents and loss of human life.
3. **Agree on and officially map, through cross-ministerial coordination, Priority Areas** for snow leopard habitat, resilience and ecosystem services, including those outside GSLEP landscapes.
4. **Undertake participatory integrated Strategic Environmental Assessments of Priority Areas** utilizing all available data on wildlife movements to delineate areas to 'avoid' or 'go with care'.
5. To best ensure resilience and sustainability, **undertake integrated planning** at the system, not project level at landscape, watershed, national and transboundary scales.
6. **Optimize future productivity of the nation's natural assets** by respecting agreed 'avoid' or 'go-with-care' zones in development planning and sector masterplans.
7. **Promote evidence-based, integrated decision making** by requiring use of spatial data on natural capital and biodiversity, particularly in and around agreed Priority Areas.
8. **Enact regulations requiring Priority Area restrictions to be reflected** in the tendering, planning, design, environmental impact assessments (EIA) and construction of all infrastructure projects.

9. **Require transparency and accountability** in project development, approval and project cycles through multi-stakeholder (e.g. finance sector and communities) consultation processes.
10. **Require free prior informed consent of local and indigenous communities** in infrastructure plans.
11. **Develop evidence-based policies** supported by decision support tools and mitigation guidelines.
12. **Follow and enforce international standards for sustainable infrastructure** and publish clear local guidelines in user-friendly language.
13. Update, enforce and build capacity for delivering strong, clear and transparent **Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA)** laws.
14. **Consider the full scope of impacts** from infrastructure projects across the whole project lifecycle, undertaking comprehensive risk analysis (climate, disaster, and other finance related risks) using the widest range of tools and methods (EIA, SEA etc.),
15. Develop mechanisms to **quantify environmental risks and highlight the full environmental cost of proposed infrastructure projects** to help bridge the science and finance worlds, working closely with the insurance sector on risk determination.
16. **Plan a bankable pipeline of sustainability-certified projects** with completed environmental and social de-risking assessments to attract green infrastructure bonds and public-private partnerships (PPP)
17. **Develop a public-private partnership (PPP) checklist** for the sustainable development goals (SDGs).
18. **Apply best practice principles in design** to ensure that that it has (i) avoided important snow leopard and prey habitats or significant natural areas; (ii) where unavoidable, minimized the amount of habitat to be cleared or degraded; (iii) installed sufficient and adequately-sized wildlife crossing structures and fencing; (iv) installed measures to reduce noise and light pollution into adjacent habitats; (v) implemented comprehensive maintenance programs; and (vi) undertaken monitoring and evaluation to test effectiveness.
19. **Take into account ecosystem services** that will enhance the viability of the infrastructure through natural/green infrastructure or bioengineering approaches.
20. **Draw on local knowledge and conditions** for design solutions and use local materials and local labor wherever possible.
21. **Integrate infrastructure planning with disaster risk management** and environmental planning and include awareness raising on disaster preparedness for communities in the process.

7 Climate Change

1. **Enhance data collection, monitoring, and scientific research** across the range on climate change and its impacts on people and wildlife through new funds for capacity building and training programs, hydrometeorological data networks, and scientific research, relying on existing regional institutions and platforms where appropriate and creating new ones where necessary;
2. **Support and promote integrated approaches to landscape management that addresses climate change risks and conserve ecosystem services** as part of all sustainable development and conservation planning, policies, and implementation;
3. **Develop new programs and projects to harness the power of ecosystems to help species and people adapt to climate change**, increase resilience to current shocks and stressors and reduce disaster risks, and plan for longer term change through ecosystem-based adaptation (EBA) as well as ecosystem-centered adaptation
4. **Develop and enhance mechanisms for formal community consultation to prioritize adaptation** actions that are mutually beneficial for local and regional sustainable economic development and snow leopard conservation
5. **Incorporate snow leopard protected areas and their management in strategies for meeting country Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and adaptation commitments** under the 2015 Paris Agreement
6. **Develop and promote new financial mechanisms that provide incentives to build climate resilience** through ecosystem-based adaptation approaches, e.g. payments for ecosystem services (PES) between hydropower developers to incentivize upstream best management practices, green bonds to incentivize nature-based approaches to infrastructure development, or other examples.

8 Management Planning

1. **Support applied research:** With barely 3% of the snow leopard range covered by research there are huge gaps in understanding basic ecology and threats, which in turn are serious limitations to effective management. There is thus a strong need to support research, especially related to establishing snow leopard and prey abundance baselines and subsequent monitoring using robust methods, understanding snow leopard and prey ecology, competition with livestock, and understanding other extant and potential threats to conservation, its trends and impacts.

Recommendation: While all countries may allow research, the suggestion here is for governments to engage with academia and NGOs to actively set priorities and to ensure that quality research takes place on these priority areas.

- 2. Provide appropriate legal status to core landscape units (CLUs):** The GSLEP management planning guidelines suggests establishment of a network of core landscape units (or 'quiet zones' or 'core zones' or 'priority areas') that are afforded better protection and that can act as 'source' populations for the landscape. These landscape units needn't always be large areas and can be even as small as a valley of 20 km². These are also areas that need to be established with consent from community and ideally co-managed with them. Without any clear legal protection however, these areas can be vulnerable to damaging large infrastructure projects.

Recommendation: Some existing legal categories (such as national parks or other legal inviolate zones) can be included in this zonation but it will be useful to explore new categories that regulate local use but prohibit larger exploitation including mining and large roads, dams or other infrastructure projects.

- 3. Integrated management and governance:** Management at the scales GSLEP expects (mostly greater than 10,000 km²) essentially goes far beyond managing wildlife on land owned by the forestry department or any other agency responsible for conservation in most countries. With numerous stakeholders apart from local community, implementation works under the plan will need to be multi-dimensional and multi-sectoral. This will require *coordination, cooperation, convergence* and *partnership* between stakeholders and the lead implementing agency. It will also need sourcing funds from various, government, non-government sources, national and international donors or other revenue generating mechanisms, while utilising these funds through various departmental works and through approved works by partners.

Recommendation: It will be important to explore setting up new structures under the country's laws to allow for such integrated governance and fund management. This may require some policy interventions, especially in case such provisions are not possible at present. Ideally an inter-sectoral, participatory, Foundation or Society may need to be created and will need to have the authority to receive and disburse funds from diverse national and international sources. This aspect can be key to the success of any management plan and needs due care and importance in each country.

- 4. Capacity enhancement:** Conservation of species over such large landscapes is mostly unprecedented in the snow leopard range countries. For its effective implementation it will require constant training of numerous staff and partners in aspects such as wildlife monitoring, participatory conservation planning and implementation and cooperative cross-sectoral functioning. These skills are often lacking but there is some expertise and experience available in certain countries.

Recommendation: It may be useful to thus establish a new national institution to impart

such training or include such curricula in existing ones. Such institutions may be national or regional, which may require policy approval in the country.

9 Capacity Building

1. **Need to engage with local universities** and provide a framework to be able to systematically estimate and monetize ecosystem services
2. Limited **capacity to monitor and understand climate change and its specific regional and local impacts**, including deteriorated or insufficient hydrometeorological networks and other ageing infrastructure
3. **Build capacity to support data collection** on climate change by local stakeholders
4. **Increasing law enforcement capacity** against illegal Snow Leopard trade. May include institutionalized system for delivering regular training to frontline enforcement officials in range states on:
 - a. Intelligence gathering by law enforcement agencies
 - b. Intelligence Networking & Forensics
 - c. Wildlife Crime Investigation
 - d. Identification of parts for customs and relevant government agencies
 - e. Knowledge of local and international laws
5. **Build capacity to conduct field surveys** across large landscapes, data preparation and analyses
6. **Comprehensive training programs in community-based conservation** with broad, interdisciplinary collaborations between conservationists and development practitioners, social scientists, and community partners – to share foundational principles while also providing opportunity to develop locally relevant and viable solutions for conservation
7. Need for multiple agencies to have **joint training in adopting participatory approaches** for conservation and sustainable development, and for enforcement.
8. The **private sector**, with its research and development facilities and institutions can support, accelerate and improve technical skills of the frontline staff as well as other stakeholders to enable professionalization and imparting multi-dimensional knowledge of management, protection and land use planning for landscape conservation.
9. Update, enforce and build capacity for delivering strong, clear and transparent **Environmental and Social Impact Assessments**.