The Snow Leopard

Saving the Snow Leopard is not possible without the Snow of the Himalaya
- Dr. Tirtha Bahadur Shrestha

DNPWC is consistently moving in a strategic way
- Dr. Prem Narayan Kandel

The first responsibility to conserve wildlife falls on the community
- Dr. George Schaller

How one woman beat mining giants and saved snow leopard's habitat
- Bayarjargal Agvaantseren
COVID-19: An Unprecedented Challenge and Outstanding Opportunity for Snow Leopard Conservation

The year 2020 has brought unprecedented challenges with the COVID-19 pandemic affecting daily lives globally. This crisis has forced us all to adapt how we interact with the environment at all levels with public health, safety and food security prioritized to the highest degree. The global economy remains in flux as sectors like tourism have come to a screeching halt. Ecotourism and other community-based livelihood programs, snow leopard research and conservation programs in all snow leopard range countries have been significantly interrupted.

With the pandemic taking center stage, other threats such as wildlife poaching, increasing human-wildlife conflict, infrastructure development, mining, climate change and new possible zoonotic diseases are still looming in the shadows – all affecting snow leopards, their mountainous habitats and importantly, the people sharing the same landscape as this “Ghost of the Mountains.”

While we must all navigate through uncertain times, we have a unique opportunity to reflect, re-envision and strategize for a more sustainable future. Hopefully, new opportunities will emerge from this pandemic.

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Himalayan Tahr (adult female) at Sagarmatha National Park

Tibetan Wild Ass/Kiang in Limi Valley, Humla
The Snow Leopard

Received as a Gift

They kept five sheep tied up in different places across the high pasturelands for ten days, yet, not one was killed by snow leopard. Instead, a brown bear and a wolf ate a sheep each on the 11th and 12th day. The sheep were used to lure snow leopard so that their photos were taken by the hidden camera.

A team of Nepali experts from Kathmandu had gone to the Limi Valley of Humla to make an awareness-raising documentary about the snow leopard. The team was led by Bhaju Acharya and comprised of Aadav Ghimire, Om GC, Khemraj Poudel, Naushal Yadav, Bhuwan Aryal, Kramesh Khadka and Professor Baran Shah. This was their third expedition to Limi. Earlier, they had conducted a detailed study of the biodiversity of the region. This time, though, their objective was to capture the snow leopard in their cameras and make a documentary about it and promote it nationally and internationally.

While in the area, they discussed about the snow leopard with the local villagers. In various places of Limi Valley they recorded the snow leopard’s footprints, droppings, scrapes and marks of urine on stones and rocks as well as the skull and skeletons of animals the leopard had killed like Blue sheep, Tibetan argali and Kiang in their movie cameras. Even when sheep were used as bait or when automatic cameras were placed in snow leopard trails, they caught footage of other animals found in the area but not the snow leopard itself, commonly known there as Sabu.

Snow leopards are found in other high mountain areas of Nepal too. But the study team specifically went to Limi for a third time because no other place has such an easy environment for study and research. But despite all their hard work, the animal known as ‘Ghost of the Mountains’ was nowhere to be found.

Although the villagers largely helped with the research, they objected to the use of sheep as live bait. “Those protesting must be the ones who did not get any direct benefits before and now,” Bhaju said. “The villagers are saying that if the sheep are used as bait then snow leopards and other predators will get used to their taste and start actively looking for and hunting the locals’ domesticated animals and livestock.”
On the one hand, they were not finding a snow leopard and on the other, the perception was slowly turning negative. This upset them, and they now wanted to finish the work as soon as possible and return to Kathmandu.

Seeing the bitterness, the team was facing, Professor Shah came up with a wonderful plan. To make a fake snow leopard and film it from a distance. “But how to show a snow leopard in such a remote place? How to make it, paint it and everything?” team member Naushal expressed his concerns.

“You don’t worry about that. Leave it all to the master. I’ll take care of everything,” Professor Shah said in a tone of admonishment. “One of us will wear a snow leopard pelt and we will shoot it from a distance,” Professor said, “There. Done. Finished. Then the documentary goes viral!” Everyone let out a hearty laugh. “But how to bring the pelt sir?” Bhaju asked.

“Ok, everyone listen carefully,” Professor said, “The Buddhists of this area usually skin the animal carcasses they find in the forests and offer it to the monasteries. They also offer skulls and horns. Of the three villages in Limi Valley, Til, Halji and Zhong, the oldest monastery of the area is in Halji where the pelt of a large male snow leopard that recently died has been removed and hung.” Saying that, Professor Shah took everyone to the Halji monastery.

The professor requested the monastery Lama to let them have the snow leopard pelt for a few days. In return, he
promised to give the monastery Rs. 5,000. The Lama said that he would talk with the committee and send the pelt to Zhong village the next morning. The team members had a look at the belt from a distance and praised the old professor’s trick in their hearts.

“Even though we didn’t find a real snow leopard, we will at least not lose our dignity this way guys!” The team leader Bhaju told everyone who responded with a loud laugh.

Early next morning, the snow leopard pelt arrived at their camp. They used the village technique of rubbing salt, oil and hot water on the pelt with their feet to soften it. They had it sown to make it wearable and give it a clear appearance of a snow leopard.

“Sonam will be the fake snow leopard,” Aadav said, covering the young man who had been working with the team as a daily-wage helper for the past few days with the leopard pelt. Sonam hesitated for a while. “You’ll get cash dude. Why are you hesitating?” Aadav reproached.

The team gained a separate energy now that they had a snow leopard with themselves. Taking all their belongings, they walked for five hours along a winding inclined path from Zhong to a place called Chyakpalung with alpine meadows in Buki Patan at an altitude of 5,200 metres and set up camp for the night.

The next morning, after breakfast, everyone went to the Sake stream to film the fake snow leopard as planned. After walking for about an hour, they reached above the stream and decided to have Sonam, in the form of a snow leopard, walk on the other side and film it.

The stream was about 400 metres below the place where they were halting. From there, the stream was only slightly visible but the slightly elevated grass-covered land on the other side could be seen very clearly. The discussion was for Sonam to cross the stream and then wear the pelt and walk up like a snow leopard. After walking for about 200 metres, the team on the other side of the stream would yell “Cut! We’re done Sonam” and then Sonam would come back. The whole activity would be captured on camera.

Sonam descended to the bank of the stream with the leopard pelt. The people on this side prepared the camera and sat around joking. Sonam should have crossed the stream and started walking up like a snow leopard in half an hour at most. But 40 minutes passed, and he didn’t come, leaving the team annoyed. Finally, after approximately 45 minutes, the snow leopard appeared walking slowly upwards and the team started filming. The snow leopard was walking a little faster than they thought. After 200 metres it walked, Bhaju let out two loud cries, “Cut! We’re done Sonam.” But his shouting had no impact and the snow leopard began walking faster. Seeing this, everyone started shouting in unison, “Stop Sonam. We’re done. Cut! Cut!” But the snow leopard just kept walking and soon disappeared from their sight.

This was an unexpected behaviour on the part of Sonam and this became of a topic of discussion.

“Sonam has made off with the snow leopard pelt and is heading to Taklakot via Mansarovar trail. will now sell the skin and earn Rs. 400,000 to Rs. 500,000,” Professor Shah said.

“The young boy from Limi had the chance to wear the warm pelt of a snow leopard during this cold winter and didn’t even realise where he went,” Kramesh put forth his opinion.

“He had covered his whole body with the pelt,” Bhaju said, “Maybe he didn’t hear us!”

They had only just started drinking the coffee they had brought with them in a thermos when Sonam suddenly appeared in front of them. Before anyone could open their mouths, he himself said, “I could not cross the stream, so I came back.” They were shocked to see his remorseful face. They just stared at each other in confusion. It was clear what had happened. The snow leopard they had filmed was the real animal which came up after seeing Sonam.

Everyone realised the unexpected success they had, and their happiness now knew no bounds. After that, they all left back for Zhong village. A man named Ubjan Shahi had a hotel on the road back to Zhong. They all decided to celebrate their last night in Limi there.

After a while, a campfire was lit. The hotel owner served alcohol and beer to everyone.

The team leader Bhaju said a few words, “Congratulations and thank you everyone for the success of this programme. Today’s snow leopard was a gift to the team from Baran sir. His plan to use a fake snow leopard allowed us to find a real one. On behalf of all of us, many thanks to you Professor sir.” After that, everyone ‘cheered’ their glasses of local alcohol and beer. Even Aadav, who never drank alcohol, drank a Chinese beer on everyone’s insistence, calling it his ‘first and last’ drink.

As the alcohol began taking effect, songs and music started to erupt. Empty bottles of alcohol, empty jars of water and plates became musical instruments being played by hand and spoons and songs started echoing. Suddenly, a snow leopard began to dance to the rhythm of music, dragging its legs, body and long tail on the ground. This time, instead of Sonam, it was the old professor inside the pelt, intoxicated on the local liquor. The fake snow leopard dancing in front of them made everyone recall the scene of the real snow leopard they had seen that afternoon.
উপায়াম্ব পালকে হিউঁ চিতুবাও

পীপল গ্রহণ দেশের দিনসংক্রান্ত লেকেক বিশাল তারাইলে উদীকলে বাঁধারে ধাপে দিচ্ছিলাম। অতএব মেঘালাই যাতায়াত হিউঁ চিতুবাও নেই। ভাস খাচার হাতে লিখিত লোটা মেলালাই পাড়া ভালুকের বামকালাই দেখালাম। হিউঁ চিতুবাও ক্ষয়ামুখী কেন্দ্র জোড়া কেন্দ্র লক্ষালাই চিরাগ্নী পোষ্টকাল।

হুলা পিঙ্গাল দিনি উপযুক্ত লিখি পিঙ্গাল সমাবেশ পেতাসুক্তং দৃষ্টিপত্র বহন কারণ দুর্নীতিতে উত্তর দিয়ে পিঙ্গাল তেলে সু কারণ আলোক চিতুবাও দিয়ে। হিউঁ চিতুবাও মেলালাই লেখার ডিন বিষয় কেন্দ্র জোড়া কেন্দ্র কল:কেন্দ্র লক্ষালাই চিরাগ্নী পোষ্টকাল।

সে ক্ষয় রান্না উদীকলে হিউঁ চিতুবাও বারেক স্থায়ী গজ্জনে হরসেরা চজ্জন করজ জানে। লিখি উপযুক্তকাল লেখালো হিউঁ চিতুবাও পাল্লালাই ছবিয়া, ছিটা বিষয় কোনো মূল্য এবং ছলালাই মূল্যগুলো করে। লিখি উপযুক্তকাল দিয়ে জোড়া কেন্দ্র জোড়া কেন্দ্র লক্ষালাই চিরাগ্নী পোষ্টকাল। হিউঁ চিতুবাও ডাঁড়ালাই লেখাকে মেনে রাখা বা গজ্জনে স্থায়ীত্ব রাখা ছজ্জন লেখাকে প্রচলন করি।

তার চিত্তে পরিবর্তন চায় পা পরিসংখ্যান সম্পর্কে পঞ্চ অশ্বিনিতালো অনুপাত চিতুবাও জোড়া কেন্দ্র জোড়া কেন্দ্র লক্ষালাই চিরাগ্নী পোষ্টকাল।

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লেখার ক্ষেত্রে বাঁধারে ধাপে দিচ্ছিলাম। হিউঁ চিতুবাও নেই।

কথা

- করণ বাহাদুর শাহ

- চিতুবাও

প্রতিযোগিতায় চিতুবাও নেই। হিউঁ চিতুবাও নেই।

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Sustaining Snow Leopard Conservation

Darwin Initiative project “Sustaining Snow Leopard Conservation through Strengthening Local Institutions and Enterprises” has been implemented in the Nar and Phu villages of Annapurna Conservation Area and Khumbu Valley of Sagarmatha National Park and Buffer Zone area. The followings are the project outputs:

1. Capacities Building of Local Government and Stakeholder

The project developed and reviewed 3 training manuals entitled ‘APPA: Conservation Governance and Environmental Safeguards”. The manuals were also field tested in Nar and Phu villages and Khumbu valley.

Similarly, eight training sessions were delivered targeting 164 participants in the field whereas 23 people received Training of Trainer trainings in Kathmandu. Among these, 4 trainings were conducted in the field whereas 4 were given in Kathmandu.

2. Biological Monitoring

The project has completed three biological monitoring activities. First, the blue sheep population dynamic survey which found that the Nar Phu valley has enough prey base to support 15 or more snow leopards.

The second livestock depredation pattern monitoring in the Sagarmatha National Park found that since 2017 wolves have overtaken snow leopards as the main livestock predator in the area.

The third monitoring report focusing on human-wildlife conflict found that in an average a household in Nar and Phu villages annually loses US$ 489 and US$ 766, respectively, to the snow leopard depredation. This is a very significant loss given the poor economic base of the region. More biological monitoring is now planned for the third year.

3. Snow Leopard Based Enterprises and Private Sector Engagement

Despite rapid early progress and keen private sector interests in designing and promoting a high value snow leopard-based tourism product, the progress on this has stalled in the last 8 months. There were personnel changes within Ennovent, the partner organization, and finding qualified persons for the replacement has proved difficult. Trail Angels/Fair Trails remains continue to remain Ennovent’s key international partner, but development of critical marketing and branding materials has been delayed due to Covid 19.

As many as 22 women from Nar and Phu villages were trained in food preparation and baking. Most of the trainees were tea-shop and hotel owners and this training is expected to increase their incomes, once tourism resumes in the Nar-Phu valley in the post COVID period.
हिंदू चितवाको दिगो संरक्षण

“स्थानीय संस्था तथा उद्योजको सुदृढ़करण आफ्नो हिंदू चितवाको दिगो संरक्षण” लागभग बार्षिक इवॉर्स्टड राष्ट्रिय परियोजना अनलूप्त संरक्षण क्षेत्रको लागि र पुढी जागृत तथा सरकारशास्त्र राष्ट्रीय निर्देशक कार्यालयाले निम्नलिखित दिनियम प्रदान गर्नुहोस्। यस परियोजनालाई लागि तिलकित दिनियम संरक्षण गर्नुहोस्।

१. साधनालाई संस्कार तथा तर्कवादशास्त्रको क्षेत्रमा अनुकूल

यस परियोजनालाई ‘आपोः संस्कार साधन तथा वातावरणको सुरक्षा’ नात्रको तीणवट लागि दृष्टिकोन पुरूर्व प्रभाव र सफल गर्नुहोस्। तीणवटकारको उपाधि र साक्षात्कार कार्यरत र हिंदू चितवाको लागि संरक्षण प्राप्त गरे़। जसलाई चार तालिका सम्बन्धको विवेचना र साक्षात्कार राष्ट्रीय निर्देशक निम्नलिखित कार्यालयलाई आयोजन गरेनुहोस्।

२. जैविक अनुपमा

परियोजनालाई तीणवट जैविक अनुपमा लिखाकलापको पुरूर्व गरे़। भविष्यमध्ये, नाजुकको संस्करण सरकारी विभाग संरक्षण गर्ने जसबाट जन्म न्यू पुरूर्वकालालाई वस्तु जमात आफ्नो प्रभावलाई आयोजन गरे़।

दोस्रो, सरकारिका राष्ट्रीय निर्देशक तथा साक्षात्कार आफ्नो द्वारा सम्बन्धको विवेचना र साक्षात्कार को प्राप्त आफ्नो जवाब त्यसैलाई बृहद राष्ट्रिय पुरूर्वकाल बाट पश्चिमोत्तरी तालिका भए।
The night sky’s image

By Carol Parks

blazoned in reverse—
black stars against golden-white,
dark Milky Way flowing down the center,
terrestrial yang to celestial yin—
walking the Earth
mostly unseen
but present.

Present as a heartbeat in the stillness.
Present as a warm touch in the cold.
Present as a body enclosing the limitless.
Present as complement and completeness.

At the interface of earth and heaven
snow leopard treads.
and the world continues to be.
Sharing their range with snow leopards, Pallas’s cats (Otocolobus manul) are native to the northern latitudes of Central Asia, living on the open steppes and rocky outcrops typical of this temperate region. Pallas’s cats, also known as manul, weigh between 2.7 - 6 Kg as adults, and prey mainly upon pika and marmot. As like their big cat neighbors, Pallas’s cats’ thick coat is perfectly adapted to this habitat, including elevations up to 4,200m. In the context of Nepal, Pallas’s Cat’s image was recaptured in the camera trap in Manang in December 2013 while carrying out snow leopard monitoring and was officially recognized. The monitoring was conducted by wildlife biologist Bikram Shrestha along with Tashi R. Ghale of Snow Leopard Conservancy (SLC) and Sudip Adhikari, Former Office In-charge of Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP). Manang based Field Biologist, Citizen Scientist and Photographer Tashi had installed the camera where the image had been recorded.

In 2016, Pallas’s cats were listed as Near Threatened on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, acknowledging there were major gaps in knowledge of abundance, behavior, ecology, distribution, and threats to the species. To address this, the Pallas’s Cat International Conservation Alliance (PICA) project was formed by Nordens Ark, the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland, and the Snow Leopard Trust, with support from Foundation Segré. Together with the Pallas’s Cat Working Group, IUCN SSC Cat Specialist Group, EAZA and AZA regional zoological partners PICA aimed to use a global collaborative effort to help conserve this important small iconic wild cat.

PICA’s goals are to increase knowledge about threats and conservation status of Pallas’s cats, improve knowledge about distribution and ecology, raise awareness within range countries and globally, provide in situ field work support, and bring specialists together to develop the first-ever conservation strategy for Pallas’s cats. PICA uses a One Plan Approach, meaning it includes both in situ and ex situ scientists, conservationists and zoologists working with the species.

In November 2018, the first Global Action Plan workshop for Pallas’s cats was hosted by PICA and Nordens Ark in Sweden. The workshop, facilitated by the IUCN SSC Cat Specialist Group, included 28 wild cat conservationists representing 14 countries, including 8 Central Asian Pallas’s cat range countries. The participants, primarily working with big cat species such as snow leopards, tigers, and Persian leopards, helped assess abundance, distribution and threats of the lesser-known Pallas’s cat. After identifying threats and the lack of knowledge about elusive Pallas’s cats, a comprehensive conservation strategy was developed over the course of three days using IUCN’s Strategic Planning Cycle. The resulting Global Action Plan and updated Status Review was published in the IUCN Cat News Special Issue Nr. 13 dedicated to Pallas’s Cats.

This collaboration is a big step forward for Pallas’s cat conservation, and overall, a significant measure for small cat conservation as it was a first for a small cat species, usually overshadowed by the more well-known big cats.

(Ashleigh serves as Vice President at Snow Leopard Conservancy)
पल्लासको बिरालोको 
लागि प्रथम विश्व संरक्षण रणनीति

- प्रस्तीत लुढ़ज-जेलसन

हिँदी विचित्रको वास्तवात्मक विचरण गर्ने पल्लासको बिरालो (अवतोकोलोकबन जनजाति) लागि देशियको उदार आश्रय दिनेको राखाँने प्राय हो। जो बिरालो जसलाई सचिव उद्देश्य मुला अन्तर्विद्याधिक संरक्षण तथा बढीलिङ्गीय संरक्षणसः प्राय नै। पल्लासको बिरालो त्वरतयुक्त संरक्षण चलन पूरा चिह्नित र व्यवस्था अद्वितीय प्रक्षको पूर्व तथा पशुपतित विस्मृतित सम्बन्धमा आवश्यकता पृथ्वी मा बसेको गर्दा।

2007 सालमा आइपूर्यनकारको चालको प्रदुषण, आवासिक, जैविकता, फैक्टर पत्रकाल र प्राकृतिक विकासको संरक्षणको सतर्क कर्ता बालको साखाली पुल्लासको बिरालोको विचरण गर्ने भूमिका गरे।

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यूनेस्को का प्राकृतिक विवरणीकरण अभियानमा किसिम जीवनको अगुवाय शाक्तिक रुपमा व्यवस्था अद्वितीय प्रक्षको पूर्व तथा पशुपतित विस्मृतित सम्बन्धमा आवश्यकता पृथ्वी मा बसेको गर्दा।

2004 कार्तिकको नवम्बर र डिसेम्बर आउँस को पल्लासको बिरालोको प्राणिप्रणालीले सतर्क र आकृतिक प्राप्ति र आपसी संरक्षण प्रमाणीक गर्ने प्रयास गरी गर्दा।

हिंदी विचित्रको देखीभएको त्वरतयुक्त संरक्षणको गर्दा मध्ये प्रमुख पक्षका गर्दा पान प्राप्त हो। यो पक्ष विचित्रको वास्तवात्मक विचरण गर्दा भनेको हो।

फोटो: Pallas’s Cat International Conservation Alliance

Photo: Pallas’s Cat International Conservation Alliance
The first responsibility to conserve wildlife falls on the community: Dr. George Schaller

Dr. George Schaller is among the greatest conservationists of our time. He has not only studied important fauna in Africa, Asia and South America, but he has been equally active in their conservation, including helping to establish protected areas in many countries.

Born in Berlin, Germany in 1933, Schaller moved to the USA in his youth where he completed his higher education and settled down to a distinguished career.

Schaller’s first observation of a snow leopard in the wild happened in 1970 in the Chitral Gol (Valley) of Pakistan. The cat had a small cub, and by supplying the pair with a steady supply of meat. Schaller had observed them for a week. He was able to take the world’s first photograph of a snow leopard in the wild (Hillard.D. “Vanishing Tracks”, Mandala Book Point, Kathmandu, 1989). Other Conservationists also believe that Schaller is the first person to take a picture of a snow leopard in the wild. However, Schaller mentions that he never claimed this work. “I had taken some pictures of snow leopards in the Hindu Kush mountains of Pakistan 5 decades,”, he replies of a question via email and says, “But I do not say that I am the person to take the first shot of the snow leopard.”

Schaller’s passion for studying wild animals established him as a gifted biologist credited with many first time studies of endangered animals, including definitive work on the African Lion and the first detailed study of the Tiger, completed in India in the late 1960’s. He was the first to survey gorillas, debunking the then prevalent myth that Gorillas were aggressive and dangerous toward human. Along with his wife Kay, he spent years studying Gorilla in Uganda, Congo and Rwanda. Likewise, Schaller was the first biologist to carry out an intensive ecological survey of the Giant Panda. He has worked on the big cats, including Cheetah, Tiger, Snow leopard and their prey species. In China, Schaller focused on the Chiru but also studied Tibetan mammals such as; snow leopards and wild yaks.

In 1972, Schaller visited Nepal, and studied snow leopard and its prey species Blue sheep in Gaurishankar Conservation Area, and where he reported at least three snow leopards roamed the valley. Recently, photos of two snow leopards were captured on camera traps in Gaurishankar's Rolwaling and Lapchi valleys.

In 1973, Schaller travelled to Shey Gompa, Dolpa district to study the Blue Sheep, key prey species for snow leopard. It is very remote area inhabited by people of Tibetan ancestry.

The American writer Peter Matthiessen accompanied him, and after a difficult five-week trek, they reached Shey-Gompa. Both men were hoping to see the snow leopard, which is so rarely sighted in its natural habitat. They spotted a pack of wolves hunting bluesheep around Shey-Gompa. But Peter had to leave in the middle of the trip, with his dream of seeing a snow leopard unfulfilled. A few years later, Peter wrote the entitled ‘The Snow Leopard’ which became world famous essay of their journey. Despite repeated sightings of...
bluesheep, snow leopard's many footprints, scrapings and faeces, Peter never saw a snow leopard throughout his trip; but Schaller did, near Dolpa’s Phoksundo Lake on his way out. Schaller wrote about this encounter in his book ‘Stones of Silence’. Both writings provided insight into trekking in Nepal.

In 1981, following the first radio-tracking study of 5 snow leopards by Dr. Rodney Jackson’s team (see snow leopard magazine volume 3), and study done by Schaller, Government declared the area Shey-Phoksundo to National Park. To date, Schaller has helped to establish more than 20 protected areas around the world.

For his global level outstanding contributions to the field of wildlife, Schaller has been felicitated with the ‘National Geographic Lifetime Achievement Award’, the ‘World Wildlife Fund Gold Medal’, ‘National Book Award’ and the ‘Indianapolis Prize’ along other distinguished awards or recognitions.

“Schaller is the only biologist in the world who has influenced so many other biologists,” Dr. William G. Convey, former head of the Wildlife Conservation Network, USA noted，“He is also an exceptional living biologist who has contributed greatly to the conservation of many important species.”

“Cat species are really beautiful,” Schaller says,”They play an important role in the ecosystem.”

“If I were to study snow leopards”, says Schaller,”The blue sheep and the plants they depend on will also be the focus of my study. This is to say, while studying any animal, the entire ecosystem needs to be studied. I am interested in analysing the interrelationship between living beings in the nature.”

“The best thing is,” he adds,”when we conserve one snow leopard, we’re also conserving the alpine pastures and the entire habitat of the high mountains of the South and central Asia.”

Schaller, who is now 87, still travels across the world spreading the message of conservation. He wants his contributions to play some role in conserving this planet for future generations. For this to take hold, Dr. Schaller knows that local communities have a crucial role to play as committed stewards of their immediate landscape.

(Note: George’s wife Kay has been a partner in his work for over 60 years. With their two sons they lived in Tanzania, India, and other countries while George did his work.)
دانشجویان به‌طور گروهی در حال اجرای آزمون می‌باشند. مهم‌ترین نکته در اینجا، ممکن است که باشد که هر کسی شامل این آزمون می‌باشد.
Saving the Snow Leopard is not possible without the Snow of the Himalaya

A leading authority on Nepal’s biodiversity especially on the plant resources, Dr. Tirtha Bahadur Shrestha has devoted his entire life to the conservation of Nepal’s flora, fauna and ecosystems. The foremost botanist and a hero of environmental conservation of endemic plant species in Nepal, Dr. Shrestha served as the study team leader for the creation of Makalu-Barun National Park and has helped to classify major forests in the country throughout his career. As the author of Nepal’s Country Report on Biodiversity, Dr. Shrestha has conducted the classification of rare and endangered plant taxa across the country. Not only that, he has authored more than 20 books, and hundreds of articles, containing new discoveries, concepts and ideas. Life member of Nepal Academy Dr. Shrestha shared his experiences on biodiversity through editorial team of Snow Leopard Magazine.
Dr. T.B. Shrestha (Left) with Dr. M.L. Banerjee (Middle) and Mr. J.D.A. Stainton (Right), the most famous botanists regarding the flora and forests of Nepal, sitting in Daman Herbal Farm in Feb 1967.

Are you happy with present scenario of biodiversity conservation in the country?

-Almost a quarter of Nepal’s total area has been assigned for protected area system as National Parks, Conservation Areas, Hunting Reserves, Wildlife Reserves and Ramsar Sites. Similarly, about twenty thousand Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs) comprising 35% of total populations are engaged to manage their forests in a sustainably way. Level of public awareness as regards to biodiversity conservation has been raised considerably. One can afford to be happy with present scenarios of biodiversity conservation in Nepal. However, new challenges are emerging especially on the face of infrastructure development.

Do you think most of the threats related to the flora and fauna of the country are emerged as new or they were there even in the old time?

-Human encroachments into natural ecosystem (forests, wetlands, grasslands, and water-bodies) continue to be a serious threat to biodiversity. Currently Nepal is facing a serious threat of unplanned road construction as highways, feeder roads along with village roads. The Madan Bhandari east-west highway along the fragile Siwallik (Chure) hills and the east-west mid-hill highway are damaging slope stability all along Nepal. That would result into serious damages to agro-ecosystems as well as forest ecosystems. The so called Nijgadh International Airport planned to convert dense tropical jungles of Terai to concrete jungles is facing serious opposition from biodiversity experts and conservationists.

International demand of some wildlife products such as pangolin scales, musk pods, tiger bones and herbal products like Yarsagombu the caterpillar fungus, Kutki herbs and wild orchids post various threats to conservation. Besides, current threats of climate change impacts and encroachments of alien species are surfacing in the conservation arena.

What are main causes of increased wildlife/plant related illegal trade in the country? What could be better solution to curb this problem?

The illegal trade in fauna and flora is associated with the lustful will of the rich and the compulsion of the poor. The lust of lavish wealthy ranges from possessing rarest of the rare commodities like the Rhino horns, elephant tusks, tiger skins and so on to experiencing superstition power for their physique. Corruption along the chain of trade adds further problems to arrive at effective conservation of the species.

Do you think people of this country have correctly understood the importance of conserving biodiversity for future progeny?

-Biodiversity conservation is not meant to create isolated islands or enclosed zoos of endangered species of animals or plants. It should have a broader meaning to make this planet habitable to all creatures including humans through
a process of co-existence. Biodiversity conservation outside the protected areas should be viewed as an important component to ensure a safe journey to the future. Protected areas as such are not enough if rest of the country is to deteriorate.

You are a botanist but once you had said "Snow leopard was your passion", how you were filled with passion for this mountain ghost?

- Traveling along the high Himalayan terrain as a plant hunter, the mystique aura of mountains after led me to an imagination of encountering either snow-man, the “Yeti” or snow leopard, the ‘sabbu/samu’ somewhere near my tent. I know snow leopard is more real than Yeti although stories on both the creatures sounded equally elusive and ghostly. Karan Shah, one of early wildlife experts, who encountered with the snow leopard in Nepal described the animal as the ghost ‘Pret’.

My fascination and passion of the snow leopard was heightened when I learnt that George Schaller spotted the elusive animal during the December of 1973 in the same area of Dolpo where I spent my June and July of 1966 with Adam Stainton.

Reading through Peter Matthiessen’s The Snow Leopard (1978), George Schaller’s Stones of Silence (1980), Darla Hillard’s Vanishing Tracks (1989) and subsequent articles and books of Rodney Jackson, Karan Shah and Hem Sagar Baral I continue to cultivate passion on snow leopard as the son of snow in the abode of snow, the Himalaya.

How you see saving snow leopards in the Nepalese Himalaya?

-Poaching of snow leopards for furs and bones continues to be lucrative. Highland dwellers need to be adequately educated to stop the business. Retaliatory killing of the predator should also be discouraged through compensatory mechanism and eco-tourism development. One can not save the snow leopard if we can not save the snow of the Himalaya. Global efforts to curb global warming need to be supported seriously by all the nations of the world.

Do you think the snow leopard habitats have been deteriorating due to the climate change impacts? If it is so what are the indicators or evidences?

-The impact of climate change on cryosphere is more obvious than any other impacts perceived so far. The Hindu-Kush Himalayan Monitoring and Assessment Program of ICIMOD (2019) projected the decline of glacier volumes up to 90% though the 21st century. Decreased snowfall, increased snow-line elevations and longer snowmelt season are already visible in the Hindukush-Himalaya. Besides the grassland ecosystems are also subjected to drastic changes following the thawing of permafrost. Alien species of plant especially unpalatable thorny shrubs are showing signs of encroachment in highland pastures. This would be a direct impact on the prey population of snow leopard.

As per a short introductory video you mentioned that you have been searching a new enlightenment in biodiversity conservation. What did you achieve?

-Nature with its five main elements, namely the water, the air, the land, the sun and the space can live without man, but man can not live without nature. Therefore, man should develop an ethics to co-exist not only with the living world of biological species but also with the non-living elements of the nature. Biodiversity conservation needs careful coupling with safeguarding the pollution of the water, the air, the land, the sun and the sky (space).

Leopards have also caught in the cameras in above 4,500 meters in Nepal’s protected areas. This means two large cat predators sharing the habitats and have competition on their food?

-Common leopards appearing at 4500 m is an abnormal phenomenon. I would never imagine the common leopard leaping over the rugged terrain and topography of snowy mountains chasing the blue sheep as its prey. Anyway, of the global warming and the climate change set the rule of game both the cats will surely lose.

What is your message for young biologists of Nepal?

-Biology as a science is not just meant for describing the living world and prescribing for a better living for them but also a science meant for understanding the nature of living as well as non-living things. We must understand the nature of water while studying the nature of a fish. Biologist are better equipped to-day with new technologies and new scientific knowledges. The use of science and technology should not be limited to the study of biological body but should extend itself to understand the mental state of their mind. Young biologists should develop a sense of compassion for all living beings.
हिमालको हिउं बिना बचाउन असम्भव छ

नेपालको जैविक विविधता संरक्षणको वर्तमान अवस्था सुसानी इत्यादि?

राख्याङ्ग दिक्कुट, संरक्षण क्षेत्र, शिक्षार आर्थिक, कवचजनु आर्थिक तथा राजस्विता क्षेत्रमा रूपमा नेपालको कूल जीवजन्तुको तनावका एक पारम्परित भाषा जी संरक्षित क्षेत्र भनी लोकचरित्रको ४। व्यवस्थागती, कूल जनसंख्याको अनुसार प्रतिनिधि सर्वेक्षण पारि करिए २०,००० सामन्तामैयूक वस उन्नतत्व झन्नता अर्थात आफिस बलामुखी को दियो व्यवस्थापन गरिरहेको छ। इतिहासिक विविधता संरक्षणका सम्बन्धमा जनाने तथा सहयोग उन्नत वृद्धि भएको ४। नेपाललो जैविक विविधता संरक्षणको वर्तमान अवस्था हरेक सुरुवात हुन सकिन्छ। यद्यपि, पुरातात्त्विक संरक्षण जस्ता कार्यरत गर्दछ जनालो जैविक विविधता क्षेत्रमा पूर्णरु विस्तार गर्न सक्नुहोस्।

तालाको वार्ता, नेपालमा वस्तिति र जीवजन्तु विविध देखिएका अधिकारोंको खतराहरू भए नन्कु र ती हितोको समयमा पनि निर्णय पर्ने छ?

प्राकृतिक परिप्रेक्ष्यका प्रणालीहरू (वन, शिलाङ्ग, पाँगो नौदान तथा जल समस्याहरू) भए अहरको गाउँ अग्रिमण जैविक विविधताका लागि जुगाडौ नस्ताको समयमा रहित गर्ने ४। वर्तमान अवस्थामा नेपालको जीवजन्तु बाग बाबोर बाबरहरूको राज्याधिकारीहरूले हुनालाई आफिस तथा प्राकृतिक संरक्षणको कारण पनि जैविक विविधता भएको परेको ४। इतिहासिक जानकारी (पुर्ख) पाइने राज्याधिकारीहरूले ढाका भएको राज्याधिकारी र जोखीम लोकका अनुभवहरूले मान्छे खाद्य महत्त्वपूर्णको रूपमा मान्नहरूले देखिएको भएको हो। यसले वृद्धि र वजनात धुनौ बाटी पुनरारोज तथ्याकाबिज अवलग्निहरूको विवासलाई तराईको घरापुरा परेको छ। यसले वृद्धि र वजनात धुनौ बाटी पुनरारोज तथ्याकाबिज अवलग्निहरूको विवासलाई तराईको घरापुरा परेको छ। यसले वृद्धि र वजनात धुनौ बाटी पुनरारोज तथ्याकाबिज अवलग्निहरूको विवासलाई तराईको घरापुरा परेको छ। यसले वृद्धि र वजनात धुनौ बाटी पुनरारोज तथ्याकाबिज अवलग्निहरूको विवासलाई तराईको घरापुरा परेको छ। यसले वृद्धि र वजनात धुनौ बाटी पुनरारोज तथ्याकाबिज अवलग्निहरूको विवासलाई तराईको घरापुरा परेको छ। यसले वृद्धि र वजनात धुनौ बाटी पुनरारोज तथ्याकाबिज अवलग्निहरूको विवासलाई तराईको घरापुरा परेको छ। यसले वृद्धि र वजनात धुनौ बाटी पुनरारोज तथ्याकाबिज अवलग्निहरूको विवासलाई तराईको घरापुरा परेको छ। यसले वृद्धि र वजनात धुनौ बाटी पुनरारोज तथ्याकाबिज अवलग्निहरूको विवासलाई तराईको घरापुरा परेको छ। यसले वृद्धि र वजनात धुनौ बाटी पुनरारोज तथ्याकाबिज अवलग्निहरूको विवासलाई तराईको घरापुरा परेको छ। यसले वृद्धि र वजनात धुनौ बाटी पुनरारोज तथ्याकाबिज अवलग्निहरूको विवासलाई तराईको घरापुरा परेको छ। यसले वृद्धि र वजनात धुनौ बाटी पुनरारोज तथ्याकाबिज अवलग्निहरूको विवासलाई तराईको घरापुरा परेको छ। यसले वृद्धि र वजनात धुनौ बाटी पुनरारोज तथ्याकाबिज अवलग्निहरूको विवासलाई तराईको घरापुरा परेको ।
Local students of Mustang active in snow leopard monitoring

Pramesh Gurung, who is studying in grade 10 at Janahit Secondary School, is the president of the Green Force Club. He holds experience in going above an altitude of 4,400 metres in Mustang and observing snow leopard scats, finding its scrape and finding the elevation of the leopard’s habitat with the help of GPS and recording the habitat in pictures.

Former student of Janahit Secondary School Ramesh Sunar was a member of the Snow Leopard Scout. He used to install camera traps above an altitude of 4,000 metre and used to train students for the same.

Known as the district of trans-Himalaya region, Mustang is adorned with rich geographic diversity, natural beauty and biodiversity. Conservation education has been taught in local schools here for the past two decades. In this sense, the level of awareness about conservation among the students here can be considered satisfactory, but it is still important to continue with various awareness raising activities.

Through this article, I want to share my experience of teaching for 20 years at Janahit Secondary School located in Jomsom, the district headquarters of Mustang. I also want to share my experiences about snow leopard conservation in Mustang and the role of students in it. During my tenure at Janahit School, wherein I was the teacher for Environment, Science and Conservation Education, first aid trainer, district coordinator for the Snow Leopard Scout Committee and the network facilitator for the Green Force Club, I feel that the students and I learnt a lot about biodiversity conservation and especially snow leopard conservation.

I have had the noteworthy opportunity to repeatedly participate in the snow leopard monitoring camp, organised by the Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP) and the Snow Leopard Conservancy, and learn about the leopard, its habitat and the nature of its prey. I have also had the chance to participate in various meetings, seminars, camps and workshops organised by Hariyo Ban programme, Modification Jomsom and WWF and pass on the knowledge I gained to the students, members of the community, security forces and conservation committee officials. Of all the children I have trained in the field of biodiversity conservation and especially in snow leopard conservation, Ramesh Sunar and Pramesh Gurung are two young men who hold great potential in the district of Mustang. In my experience, the following changes have come about in the field of snow leopard conservation due to increased awareness and promotion:

- Spreading of awareness in local schools about the biological importance of snow leopards and its role in the Himalayan food cycle.
- Awareness about conservation has spread through the students to the communities in Mustang.
- Students have had the opportunity of directly observing the habitat of the snow leopard. From this, they have gained extensive knowledge about its food, sign markings and natural habitat.
- Students have had the chance to develop and showcase their talents through drawing and essay competitions.
organised during snow leopard camps and Environment Day programmes.
- The formation and mobilisation of environmental groups like Green Force Club and Snow Leopard Scout Committee have led to the personality development and capacity building of the students.
- By participating in environmental groups, students have acquired skills related to leadership and its transfer.
- Through the Snow Leopard Monitoring camp, students have learnt about scientific equipment such as camera traps, GPS, spotting scope and binoculars as well as the process of monitoring snow leopards.
- Students have gained practical knowledge about the study, research and importance of snow leopards.
- Students have been able to learn about the conflict between snow leopards and local villagers and the use and effect of equipment like Fox lights to minimise this conflict.
- By staging street dramas on snow leopards, students have been able to raise public awareness, as well as display their talents.
- Precisely because of the various conservation efforts, snow leopards have been able to roam in various parts of Mustang and this geographical perimeter has proved a suitable habitat for the animal.
- Snow leopards have not been killed by the local community and there have been no instances of retaliation against it.
- One has also not heard about any poaching incident of snow leopards in this region.

I also find it appropriate to put forward a few recommendations based on my work experience:
- There should be proper coordination between Rural Municipalities, ACAP and the schools to take the Snow Leopard Scout forward more effectively.
- There should be an annual and regular program of the Snow Leopard Scout.
- The snow leopard Scout should identify and collect resources from the local level to conduct Environment Day programmes. Its activities should also be regularly monitored by ACAP and the Snow Leopard Conservancy.
- Activities like field visits and organizing camps should be organised at the school level itself in coordination with the rural municipality and ACAP.
- In order to run the environmental groups in a sustainable manner, teaching of school level text books should be continued.

(Bastola works as Teacher at Janahit Higher Secondary School, Jomsom, Mustang)
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अनुभव

हिउँ विचुताको अनुगमनमा सचिब्र
मुस्ताकेको स्थानीय विद्यार्थीहरू

अंग्रेजी वातावरण विद्वानो ओकोसोजमा आयोजित वृक्षारोपण अनुगमनमा विभिन्न विषयक विचार विमानको विख्याति तर्कित्र: यहाँ गुरुङ-पच्चाप -ज्ञात नामुक्त ५० कक्षामा पहिले गरेका लेखा गुरुङ घिर फोर्स वियवस्थाको अभ्यास हुनु । उनले मुस्ताकको ४,८०० विद्वान लगायत अन्नात्मक कुलपति दिव्या आदर्शक उपाध्याय गरिएको हुने दिइ विचुताको दिःप्रमाणण गर्यो उनले नेकोंको दिलाम लगाउने र वास्तवको ध्वनि जीवितम्बाट पता लगाउने र सो वास्तविकतालाई तार्किक आक्रमण गर्नु प्रयास गर्नु अनुभव संगमेर्ले हुनु ।

ज्ञात नामुक्त का पूर्व विद्यार्थी रोशनी सुझार स्टो लेखाको स्थापना दिइ । उनले ८,००० विद्वान लगायत अन्नात्मक कुलपति दिव्या आदर्शक उपाध्याय गरिएको हुने दिइ विचुताको दिःप्रमाणण गर्यो उनले नेकोंको दिलाम लगाउने र सो वास्तवको ध्वनि जीवितम्बाट पता लगाउने र सो वास्तविकतालाई तार्किक आक्रमण गर्नु प्रयास गर्नु अनुभव संगमेर्ले हुनु ।

हिउँ विचुताको डिप्लोमा अन्नात्मक विचार व्यक्ति विपूलकालिक स्वदेशी तथा विद्वान अन्नात्मक विचार लगाउने अनुभव

यहाँका स्थानीय विद्यालयहरूका विज्ञात २ दशक जलवायु संरक्षण शिक्षाको पहाडी बाहेरेको । यस अर्थमा यहाँका विद्यार्थीहरूको संरक्षण साहित्यीय चेतनाको स्तर समाजको बाह्य समस्या तराइ-तलामा अभिव्यक्तिका गरिचिति जो लिखकी सुचालनको अवघि जरूरी हुनु ।

मुस्ताको सदस्यक्रम ओकोसोजमा आयोजित नामुक्त नामुक्त २० वर्षको अनुगमनको अनुभवहरूको मुस्ताकको स्थापना दिइ विचुताको नामुक्त बाह्य हुने जरूरी । नामुक्त २० वर्षको अनुगमनको अनुभवहरूले मुस्ताकको स्थापना दिइ विचुताको नामुक्त बाह्य हुने जरूरी । नामुक्त २० वर्षको अनुगमनको अनुभवहरूले मुस्ताकको नामुक्त बाह्य हुने जरूरी ।

लेखक/समिति: अंग्रेजी वातावरण विद्वान ओकोसोज पनि ओकोसोज
पृष्ठ 22 | हिंदी विद्या
In 2019, Tenzing Gurung lost his 2 yak calves and 2 young yaks to a snow leopard. Gurung is a local Inhabitant of Ngisyang Rural Municipality Ward No 4 of Manang. The incident took place at nearby Yak-kharka.

In 2018, snow leopard and wolf killed Chhangdu Gurung’s 4 Yaks. The incident occurred at Tarkeng pastureland in Upper Manang while grazing and sheltering. Gurung had lost about 300,000 rupees from the loss.

These are the common phenomenon in Manang that the local livestock owners have been suffering from the predators. Not only Tenzing and Chhangdu having this problem however thousands of livestock herders/owners lose their livestock from the predators every year throughout Nepal’s Himalaya.

When Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP) Unit Conservation Office (UCO) Manang probed the incident, the finding was different. The natural prey species such as blue sheep were replaced by the livestock. Thus, predators probably had no option except to prey upon the livestock.

In fact predators got huge quantity of food mainly from Yak and Cows which developed different taste than natural prey species. It is easy to kill in compare to wild prey as well. While talking to the victim owners they didn’t claim the compensation because they thought the procedure takes time.

In 2019, a local inhabitant of Tanki Manang Village Lama Gurung aggressively summoned ACAP officials to investigate crop damage caused by blue sheep.

We investigated the crop depredation of that area which was heavily damaged but there is no any legal provision to compensate or recommend to any government agencies for compensation if prey species like Blue sheep, Himalayan goral, Himalayan Tahr and Deer damage the cultivated crop.

These are some examples of livestock depredation and crop damaged caused by wildlife in Manang. Every year, such incidents are increasing rapidly in the area which causes heavy loss of property of local people and it demotivate them towards animal husbandry and agriculture. Nowadays people abandon the crop cultivation in that area. And this is the real situation in Manang which has raised the human wildlife conflict.

Human wildlife conflict is not only the problem of just of today. It has been noticed since decades. However the circumstance has been changing according to time and way of life of local people in Manang. If we go back and compare the present and past scenario we achieved many transitions. In the early days, the snow leopard was the main predator and Himalayan wolf was the second predator in Manang. Similarly, blue sheep and Ghoral were the major wild prey
species along with livestock like yak, horse, goat and sheep etc.

According to Tenzing Gurung, local livestock owner and hotel owner of Manang village, many years ago when Annapurna Conservation Area was not established, people used to keep their livestock in pastureland where predator, wild and domestic prey species shared same terrain for shelter and food. During that era, the wild prey population was abundant. Especially in upper Manang, when there was food shortage, the blue sheep came to the cropping land for grazing and sometimes, local people would hunt them.

Animal husbandry and agriculture were the prominent occupation for local people. The predators were not so much dependable on the domestic livestock for their food necessity. Mostly they killed the wild prey species even very rarely killed the livestock too. Generally, predators hunted the juvenile livestock. When the predators killed the livestock then local also killed the predator in rage of revenge because there was neither any conservation organization nor legal provision implementing bodies for compensation to discourage and halt the illegal hunting of wildlife among local people. Human wildlife conflict was prevalent at the time but the scenario was not so out of hand. It was under control.

At present, mode of animal husbandry, attitude of local people in sharing habitat and grazing with predators and prey species have drastically changed. Similarly, predators like snow leopard and wolf occur in this area as key predators. Common leopard also exists as top predator, it has been found in 3000 m.

Nowadays most of the people are busy in their tourism enterprises, animal husbandry occupation has declined day by day, and they barely care their livestock themselves but prefer to keep herders for taking care of their livestock, people perceived animal husbandry is the optional occupation for their income generation and livelihoods. The herders who have been given job have lack of ownership in livestock and do not look after the livestock carefully while grazing in the pastureland and this causes conflict between human and wildlife.

During the winter when the food is scarce wildlife and livestock move down to hill together. Predators target livestock even in down hills. Wild ungulates graze in the local farms. The frequency of wild prey’s in the cultivated lands make them familiar with humans. This trend is also cause of human wildlife conflict in Manang.

Based on the Wildlife Conservation Act, ACAP has banned killing the protected wildlife whether they are predators or wild prey species. On the other hand, the local people practice Buddhism and strictly abandon killing of the wildlife. These two initiatives play vital role in minimizing poaching along with human wildlife conflict in the area.

Annually hundreds of yaks, horses, goats, sheep and cows are killed by the predators in Manang which means heavy losses incurred on privative properties of local people every year. This demotivates locals towards animal husbandry and agriculture too. The government of Nepal has relief directives to compensate wildlife losses by the predators however that is limited. However this doesn’t address losses of crops caused by the wild prey species.

Furthermore, there is no livestock insurance scheme that actually compensates livestock loss according to the market value. ACAP provides immediate relief funds to the livestock losses however it is nominal which doesn’t satisfy livestock owners although it makes positive attitude to local livestock owners towards wildlife conservation.

Ecosystem is the natural phenomena which keeps nature in balanced. The various scientific researches and articles reveal that human and wildlife coexistence is very crucial for balance and hygienic environment and ecosystem. This is the major contribution of wildlife to conserve nature.

In my opinion, predators, prey species and human beings must share the common habitats in scientific ways. Scientific researches should carry out to update data of predators, prey species both natural and domestic prey, habitat lands mainly pasturelands, number of cow sheds and its grazing capacities. To maintain the grassland, grazing cycle should be regulated, and grazing site should divide into the blocks that balances the coexistence of all predator, prey species and human beings for their mutual benefit.

This is one of the most acceptable rigid ways of reducing human wildlife conflicts and locals should promote animal husbandry. Similarly, we should make aware the both herder and livestock owner about nature, natural prey species, predators and its significance. We should find out the other tools for keeping livestock safe such as predator proof corrals, fox lights which could ultimately assist in minimizing the conflicts.

ACAP has already constructed predators proof corrals, and distributed fox lights and solar lights in Manang targeting local herders. Some conservation partners like Snow Leopard Conservancy (SLC) have joint hands together in this mission. The conservation should look to address all related parameters, how HWC happens in the high Himalayas, how it is experienced, and how could livestock owners get better involved in livestock insurance scheme and compensated for livestock loss from the predators as per the market price value. The livestock insurance is the best option to mitigate human wildlife conflict and motivate livestock owner toward animal husbandry and cropping too.

Finally, wildlife is the precious indicators of healthy and balanced ecosystem. Thus we must conserve them for present and future generation in such way that we get maximum benefit without harming nature and nature and our fellow species.

(Tiruwa works as an Office Incharge at ACAP-UCO, Manang)
मनाड़मा मानव २ वन्यजन्तुबीचको

- बाबुनाथ तिरुवा

2066 सालमा तेजीमा गुरुकोटे आफ्नो २ वटा जागीले बाईङ्गहरू र २ वटा अर्धवर्त्तक जागीले हिँदी विद्युबाट गुरुमा। गुरुकोटे मनाड़मा
हिस्बाह जागीलाई काड़ भने ५ का स्वागती हुनु। घटना याच रक्षा
लाई अन्याय गर्ने बालबेटमा विधान गर्नुहुनै हुनु।

2067 सालमा हिँदी विद्युबाट तथा बालबेटमा हित्रुपुदु गुरुकोटे अन्याय गर्नुहुनै
बालबेटमा बैलुनीति दशा भने स्वागती हुनु। घटना र बालबेटमा हित्रुपु
हित्रुपु हुनैले बालबेट गर्ने बालबेटमा बैलुनीति दशा भने स्वागती हुनु।

स्वागतीले स्वागती र प्रतिक्रियाले प्राकृतिक अहाराले स्वागती लाई।

जब अल्पपूर्व संस्कृत क्षेत्र आयोजना (अवधारणा) इलाकाका संस्कृत
कार्यक्रम (गुरुमो) गुरुकोटे मा गटबाटमा मा गटकारी गटबाटमा गटकारी
बालबेटमा बैलुनी दशा भने स्वागती हुनु। तबस कारण शास्त्री प्रभावित हुनु
अहाराले स्वागती हुनु। स्वागतीले स्वागती र प्रतिक्रियाले प्राकृतिक
अहाराले स्वागती लाई।

हालीले बालबेटमा स्वागतीले स्वागती लाई। तबस कारण शास्त्री प्रभावित हुनु
अहाराले स्वागती लाई। स्वागतीले स्वागती र प्रतिक्रियाले प्राकृतिक
अहाराले स्वागती लाई।

2066 सालमा बालबेटमा स्वागतीले स्वागती लाई।

जब अल्पपूर्व संस्कृत क्षेत्र आयोजना (अवधारणा) इलाकाका संस्कृत
कार्यक्रम (गुरुमो) गुरुकोटे मा गटबाटमा मा गटकारी गटबाटमा गटकारी
बालबेटमा बैलुनी दशा भने स्वागती हुनु। तबस कारण शास्त्री प्रभावित हुनु
अहाराले स्वागती हुनु। स्वागतीले स्वागती र प्रतिक्रियाले प्राकृतिक
अहाराले स्वागती लाई।
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This story is about a brave woman from Mongolia who successfully campaigned to stop mining firms that had been destroying a critical habitat for snow leopards and succeeded. Thirty seven mining companies were working in Mongolia’s Tost Mountains which is the prime snow leopard habitat in the country’s South Gobi province.

Bayarjargal Agvaantseren persuaded her government to create a huge nature reserve in the South Gobi Province and cancel all mining contracts in the area. “When I learned about this cat it seemed to me quite amazing you know, so secretive and beautiful animal and I also learned that these animals faced so many threats”, says Bayarjargal.

Bayarjargal devoted her life to protecting up to 1,000 rare snow leopards living in Southern Mongolia. “The Country’s Tost Mountain range is home to some of them”, she says, “Tost is unique in the way that it has really good prey species”, says Bayarjargal.

Local herders used to kill the big cats to protect their livestock. So Bayarjargal started a clever initiative to win their support. “We conducted livestock insurance. The local herders agreed to insure their livestock, one goat let’s say, 50 cents and that creates a fund for them”, she says. Once local people’s loss was compensated their attitude changed. They didn’t see the snow leopard as an enemy any more.

But Mongolia’s blooming mining industry created a new threat. “When we found out about the emerging threat of mining, we just had to inform local people that your land is being given away to mining licenses, and the snow leopard’s habitat is going to be disrupted. And because we have created all this trust with local people they immediately got on board”, she says.

In 2009 she started a campaign to establish a huge nature reserve to prevent mining and protect the snow leopard’s habitat. “It was challenging”, says Bayarjargal, “Because the Mongolian’s economy was in difficult condition, who cares about the snow leopard?!”.

But with local people’s support, pressure mounted on politicians. “It was a time when politician was all very active and preparing for the next election. So, for those politicians it was probably very important to support something to attract their voters.

In 2016 the Tost Tosonbumba Nature Reserve was approved and two years later all mining licenses there were cancelled. “When we heard the news that Tost Mountain was declared as a Nature Reserve, I was thinking, we reached out goal but it was just the start”, says Bayarjargal. She really wished to see this area develop under the National Park system that could be run by the local people.

For her extra ordinary work, Bayarjargal was honored with the 2019 Goldman Environmental Prize.

From Trystan Young and Ly Huong/BBC.
कसरी छउटी महिलाले खानी व्यापारीहरूलाई धपापर। हिउँ चितुवाको वास्स्थान जोगाइन।

यो कथा जाणोल्याबो घटजन शाहजी महिलाल्याले हो जसलेऽ हिउँ चितुवको कहालभूषण वास्तवाल विभिन्नरूप विवरण खानी उद्योजन कार्यालीहरू विद्युत सफलतापूर्वक अभिव्यक्त खानलि र अन्तत: सफलता हासिल गरिँदै।

जाणोल्याबो दक्षिण गोंबी प्राकृतिक तोट पर्वतीय खुसलहरू 30 वटा खानी उद्योजन कल्पितले काजा गरिएको थिए जुन हिउँ चितुवको मुख्य वास्तवाल हो।

बेदका जाँगल अनुवाद-सृजनले सबै उद्योजन कल्पितले सकलको र जनवर लगाया खानलि सफलतापूर्वक दक्षिण गोंबी प्राकृतिक खुसलहरू तुलना चेकमको ओगोको प्राकृतिक अवसरण स्थापना गर्न सफल बनाउँछ।

‘जब जैसे हिउँ चितुवाको थाला पार्न, क्षरको लाभ त चाहियो परँ, कसरी पर्वतीय खुसल र गुन्दा जनाउँछ,’ बेदका जाँगल आफिखूँ, ‘अर्को को पनि थाला पार्न, जो वट्योजनले सो क्षेत्राको छूने सतर्कहरू केन्द्रिकता देखाउँछ।’

बेदका जाँगलले आफिलो जीवन हे दक्षिण जाणोल्याबो रहने कार्य ९ हजार दूरभाष हिउँ चितुवाको जोगाइन सफल गरिँदै। ‘जाणोल्याबो उद्योजन पर्वतीय खुसल कृतिका सो निर्देशन गर्ने कसरीले वास्तवाल हो, उनी आफिखूँ, ‘टोट तेजस्वि विशेष झने थाली प्राकृतिक आधार प्राकृतिकले उपलब्धि राखो हुनु हो।’

स्थानीय जोगोल्याले वास्तवाल गरियो वर्स्क्याण जोगाइन हिउँ चितुवाको लाग्नेस २२। आफि: बेदका जाँगलले उनीले विवरण विद्युत विद्युत कार्यको सुनिधान गरिँदै।

‘जब जैसे हिउँ चितुवाको थाला पार्न, क्षरको लाभ त चाहियो परँ, कसरी पर्वतीय खुसल र गुन्दा जनाउँछ,’ बेदका जाँगल आफिखूँ।

‘जब जैसे हिउँ चितुवाको थाला पार्न, क्षरको लाभ त चाहियो परँ, कसरी पर्वतीय खुसल र गुन्दा जनाउँछ,’ बेदका जाँगल आफिखूँ।
1. Although I wander the high mountains, I do come down too. Can’t tell if I am a wild sheep or a goat, but I live in a herd. I have a two-word name and the first one is “blue”. My mom has horns that are small and thin but my dad has big and attractive. I am one of the main preys of snow leopard, now tell me who am I?

2. I also live in the mountains, but I like the forests there. People often call me a wild goat because of the way I appear. The males have bigger horns than females, although they look the same. Foreigners always mispronounce me because they misspelt my name. I am the main food of snow leopard in Sagarmatha National Park, now tell me who am I?

3. From the Siwalik of Terai to the hills and mountain, there isn’t a place where I’ve not been. If you look, you see many houses that keep my dried skin. My horns match the Himalayan Serow but my body is colored differently. Neither a sheep nor a goat but an ‘antelope’ is what my family is called actually. I also am the food of snow leopard in many parts of Nepal, now tell me who am I?

4. Neither males nor females, we do not have horns on our head. Because of a sweet-smelling sack we have, we have our throats slit. Not only is our flesh eaten but our teeth are made into necklaces. We are killed and poached to sell our fragrant sacks for money. Snow leopards also love to eat me, now tell me who am I?

5. I live inside burrows but I’m not a rat and I always eat grass but I’m not a rabbit. No matter the storms and snowfall in the Himalaya, I have never been scared. I don’t have a tail and every time I see my enemy, I run inside my burrow. I eat my own pellets and store grass for the winter. I may be small, but snow leopard still eats me at times, now tell me who am I?

Answers:
DNPWC is
Consistently Moving in a
Strategic Way

Dr. Pem Narayan Kandel is the Director General at Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC), Nepal. He has served the Government of Nepal in various capacities; Member Secretary at President Chure-Terai and Madesh Conservation Development Board, Provincial Secretary at Ministry of Industry, Tourism, Forests and Environment in Province 2, Chairman at Herbs/Aromatic plant Production and Processing Company Limited, Joint Secretary at Ministry of Forest and Environment. Dr. Kandel has contributed to formulate forest related various National level policies and plans such as; five years (2016-2020) forestry sector financial plan, National Forest Policy 2018 and so on. Within a month as he has taken over his position at DNPWC, Dr. Kandel has come up with the vital department reform plan. He would like to share some of his thoughts to Anil Adhikari, Editor of Snow Leopard Magazine through interview.
Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) has got recently you as the leadership. What are your highest priorities for the coming days?

- As the dynamic and adaptive organization, the DNPWC has been continuously reforming and shifting its paradigm in many ways to accept changing contexts. After joining the department, I carried out situation analysis to determine key reform agenda and formulated strategic reform plan. The crucial reform agenda identified are: i) policy and legal reform ii) human wildlife conflict iii) role of local and provincial governments in Buffer Zone (BZ) management iv) balancing between conservation and development v) tourism promotion and livelihoods vi) wildlife crime and illegal activities vii) habitat management viii) species and ecosystem conservation and management ix) Research and development x) climate change and biodiversity conservation. The agenda have been transformed into action outline and prioritized to implement and achieve within time frame. Thus, the department commences to move in strategic away.

Does the reform plan include the snow leopard census?

- Yes it does.

Nepal has achieved international acclaim for the protection and recovery of tiger and rhino populations. Besides these what do you consider to be the most significant accomplishments of the DNPWC?

- Nepal is on course to be one of the first tiger range countries to fulfill its commitment and achieve the target of doubling tiger numbers by 2022 set during the Global Tiger Summit in 2010. Rhino population has been significantly increasing. Moreover, population of Elephant, Snow leopard, Black buck, Swamp deer, Wild buffalo have been gradually increasing owing to the implementation of effective protection and management measures. Due to the establishment BZ around Protected Areas (PAs) and executing active management of program conflicts between PAs system and people have been substantially decreased. Thus, the department has achieved number of milestones in species conservation, ecosystem and landscape management, and livelihood supports for the impacted communities.

What significant Covid-19 impacts has the DNPWC been facing this year?

- Impacts of COVID-19 pandemic are multiples affecting all social, economic, and environmental sectors. The Covid-19 pandemic has largely impacted on global tourism sector and Nepal as well. Out of total overseas tourists arrive in Nepal more than 60% go to visit National Parks, Conservation Areas and other PAs of Nepal. Total revenue collection from tourism in PAs, 30-50% goes back to the buffer zone communities of the same PAs. However, due to COVID-19 revenue of PAs has been declined. As a result, negative impacts have been seen in BZ management and livelihood of communities which has huge implications in biodiversity conservation inside the PAs. In collaboration of partners, conservationists and researchers we are planning to conduct quick assessment on overall impact of COVID-19 in biodiversity conservation and wildlife management.

Given this uncertainty, how does the DNPWC plan to execute its field activities and adaptation measures?

- To date it seems that international and national levels funding for conservation programs is likely to diminish which affect budget deficit in implementing biodiversity conservation and PAs management programe and budget which have been previously set in the plan. This calls for formulating situational plan and new strategy by the Departments and conservation partners to cope the COVID-19 situation.

What is the largest threat in your opinion to the wildlife conservation in Nepal?

- In general, wildlife conservation is facing enormous threats due to poaching, illegal wildlife trade, habitat destruction, invasive species, pollution, and climate change. Human wildlife conflict has become an emerging threat in the conservation landscape of Nepal. More specifically, significant challenges remain ahead, particularly ensuring sufficient secured interconnected habitats for tiger to conserve over the long term, along with minimal human-tiger conflict. In case of rhino, natural death and decimation due to flood is becoming main issue in its conservation. Snow leopard and human conflict has become key risk in high mountain ecosystem management.

Local people are not satisfactory with the current relief scheme for livestock loss due to the predators. In Snow Leopard Conservation Action Plan for Nepal (2017-2021), the department aims to review
and improve the scheme. Do you have any updates on what should be done to improve this program?

- We are trying to find the best way to make the relief amount release process easier and quicker to respond the wildlife damage cases. On the basis of learning the department is ready to reform such relief policy.

The Snow Leopard Conservation Action Plan also aimed to review and improve the existing community-based insurance scheme. Could you please tell us how many protected areas are currently implementing the insurance scheme in Nepal? Given that livestock is an important source of livelihood for thousands of local farmers in the Himalaya, how can we best protect the top predator of the area as well?

- We have initiated to practice the livestock insurance schemes in few protected areas such as Kanchanjunga Conservation Area, Annapurna Conservation Area and Manaslu Conservation Area. As Himalayan communities are transhumance in nature, it is difficult to construct permanent structures of farm house with predator proof corrals. Therefore, human-snow leopard conflict is an inescapable phenomenon yet in the high altitude thus requiring focusing more on comprehensive relief fund mechanism and promotion of livestock insurance policies.

Wildlife are also killing same as livestock in the Himalaya due to the natural disasters such as snow storm and avalanches and sometimes unseasonal natural circumstances. However, there is no record of killing wildlife from the natural disaster in the department's report. Is there any plan to incorporate this record in upcoming days?

- Yes, we don’t have reporting of wildlife killing by snow storms and avalanches as it is difficult to collect such information from the rugged and harsh topography. In future, we will try to explore the possibility of using cutting-edge technologies such as unmanned vehicles (UAV), satellite techniques in identifying the carcasses in high altitudes. Likewise, we will inform our field staff to attempt to collect such losses as much as possible while periodically reporting.

The high Himalayan pasturelands are commonly used by both wildlife, humans and their livestock. In many places, one can see livestock grazing relatively close with blue sheep and Himalayan Tahr. Recently, a few blue sheep have been found dead due to the skin and eye related diseases in Annapurna Conservation Area. A few years back in Kanchanjunga Conservation Area, many blue sheep were found dead with evidence of mange. Please share how the department is thinking to tackle the current incident? As we all know these species are snow leopard’s main food item in the nature.

- Blue sheep and Himalayan Tahr are the main prey species of Snow leopards. The pastureland habitats of these wildlife species are shared by the livestock as well. There is a high possibility of transmission of diseases from livestock to wildlife species. However, research on wildlife diseases is lacking in our case and planning to conduct such research. In the cases of blue sheep death, you put from Annapurna Conservation Area, the samples from dead blue sheep were tested in lab to identify the causes of possible diseases but there was no specific disease reported. However, need to conduct more researches to assess the possibility of diseases on wildlife that can be transmittable from the livestock.

Our parks have already lost one tourism season and most likely there will be no tourists in this autumn and next spring due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The loss of tourism revenue means reduced funds for the buffer zone programs. What plan the department has to meet the funding shortfalls?

- Covid-19 pandemic has significantly impacted on the number of tourists visiting in the Parks. The income generated from the tourism activities in the Park tend to cease thus the revenue recycled back to the BZ community automatically will be reduced. Whatever we can we will mobilize the funds available from Conservation Partners, Province, and Local governments as well.

The natural resources and fiscal commission has a provision to split the natural resource revenues, giving 50% to the federal government, 25% to the provincial government, and 25% to the local government. Does this provision apply to revenues generated by national parks? If it applies, how will be buffer zone programs in the future will be funded?

- The Natural Resources and Fiscal Commission has made a provision of revenue allocation with a revenue sharing mechanism of 50% to Federal Government, 25% to Province Government, and 25% to the Local Government. As Protected Area offices are under the Federal Government, we will receive 50% of the total revenue from which the government allocates 30-50% of this revenue for the Buffer Zone. But we have requested to the Commission to make a special provision of allocating budget from the revenue earned by the parks to the respective BZs under the province and local governments.

What plans does the department have for developing and promoting nature-based tourism, for example snow leopard treks and snow leopard homestays?

- As per the newly developed department reform plan, we will support to develop the trekking trails in the Snow leopard range areas. We will collaborate with province and local governments for tapping budgets to promote homestays inside the BZs. Also, the department will facilitate to develop such programs from our Conservation Partner’s budgetary support.
ಆಧಿಪತ್ಯ ನಿಕುಳಕಂ ತರವಿರುವ ಭಾಷೆಯ ಬಳಾಳಾಗಿ ವಿಧ್ವಾಳ ವಿಶ್ವಾಳ ಎನ್ನಿಸಿದ್ದುದ್ದು. ಅಲ್ಲದೇ, ಒಂದು ವಿಷ್ಣುವಿನ ಬಳಾಳಾಗಿ ಶ್ರೀಮಾನ್ ಬರಾಟುವ ಬಳಾಳಾಗಿ ವಿಶ್ವಾಳ ಎನ್ನಿಸಿದ್ದುದ್ದು.

ಭಾರತೀಯ ನಿಕುಳಕಂ ತರವಿರುವ ಭಾಷೆಯ ಬಳಾಳಾಗಿ ವಿಧ್ವಾಳ ವಿಶ್ವಾಳ ಎನ್ನಿಸಿದ್ದು. ಅಲ್ಲದೇ, ಒಂದು ವಿಷ್ಣುವಿನ ಬಳಾಳಾಗಿ ಶ್ರೀಮಾನ್ ಬರಾಟುವ ಬಳಾಳಾಗಿ ವಿಶ್ವಾಳ ಎನ್ನಿಸಿದ್ದು.
हामल गर्न भाप खाइने राद्धारकारे एक हुने रजता ४ ।

जैको संरचनाका उपलब्ध जनीयता तथा ग्रामीण कारण हरी, हिंदू वित्त, व्यवसाय, बाध्यक्षेत्र र अर्थको संरचना पाइ, जस्तै जानको ४ । संरचित क्षेत्र परिपाटी कार्यरतै क्षेत्र स्थानीय र संरचित कार्यरता कार्यवाचनका कारणले संरचित क्षेत्र प्राणी र साथीमा ताबको दो प्रकार गर्ने जस्तै आफ्नो ४ । जसमा प्रकार विविध अवसर, संरचना, व्यवस्था र प्राणी, तथा दृष्टिकोणी तथा संरचनाले संरचित अनुसन्धानको जीविका पार्थिव प्रमाणको योग्य प्रमाणको योग्य नजर दिने गर्ने जस्तै तथा कार्यरतको संरचना बाह्य निर्माण प्रमाणको योग्य नजर दिने गर्ने ४ ।

यस वर्र साधुभ क्रियाकलाप तथा वन्यजन्तु संरचना विवरण भनिर्देखा कोभिद महामार्गको उल्लेखनीय निर्माणको ढूँढ ?

कोभिद नगरपालिका संरचनामा सार्वजनिक आर्थिक र व्यवसायीय क्षेत्रहरूलाई प्रभावित गर्ने ४ । निर्माण विश्व र नेपाली परिसरका हक्कलाई विविध प्रदर्शनका जीवनको चित्रित र नेपाली आर्थिक विषयको प्रतिचित्रणको अर्थको ४ । नेपालको नगरपालिका प्रदूषण ६० प्रतिशत विपक्षी जवाबदेही ४ । नेपालको ६० प्रतिशत तपाईंको वातावरण र विद्युत क्षेत्र कार्यरत ६० प्रतिशत बुढ़ाबाट ६० प्रतिशत क्षेत्रको, नेपालको बुढाको भनिर्देखा, नेपालको संरचन बुढाको भनिर्देखा, नेपालको नेपाली प्रदूषण ६० प्रतिशत विविध तपाईंको वातावरण ६० प्रतिशत क्षेत्र र विद्युत क्षेत्र बुढाको भनिर्देखा, नेपालको नेपाली प्रदूषण ६० प्रतिशत विविध तपाईंको वातावरण ६० प्रतिशत क्षेत्र र विद्युत क्षेत्र ६० प्रतिशत बुढाको भनिर्देखा ६० प्रतिशत बुढाको भनिर्देखा ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत बुढाको भनिर्देखा ६० प्रतिशत बुढाको भनिर्देखा ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रतिशत ६० प्रति
The Snow Leopard | Page 35
Upper Dolpa is an area with high snow leopard density and low human population density in Nepal. This travelogue is related to the satellite collaring study conducted on snow leopards that roam the upper parts of Dolpa from October 21 to November 25, 2019 in the Bhijer region inside the Shey-Phoksundo National Park. The study was conducted by the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) in collaboration with the conservation partners such as World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and the National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC). A team of 30 people, including technicians, citizen scientists and staffers from the Shey-Phoksundo National Park, NTNC and WWF Nepal, set off from Suligad on October 21, 2019, with the destination being Bhijer, Upper Dolpa.

I am working in Dolpa under WWF’s mountain program. My main responsibility in the study team was to provide communication, coordination and technical assistance in the field as directed by the senior technicians. I had to work on the frontlines of the study with the national park staff and citizen scientists. I was also responsible for managing the research and other necessary equipment.

Chholing Monastery located on the shore of the Phoksundo lake at an altitude of 3,640 m. The Lama at the monastery told us that it was established in 1574 AD to conserve local wildlife. In the name of the monastery, ‘Sung’ means security and ‘Chholing’ means the shores of the lake. According to the Lama, in the past, musk deer would come to the lake near the monastery for drinking water and safety. The nearby coniferous forest is considered a good habitat for musk deer. The Lama also said that the snow leopard was the guardian of the mountains if we harm the snow leopard and spoil its habitat, the mountain gods get angry and harm our livestock. This shows the role of Buddhism in protecting snow leopards.

Our team proceeded through a place called Chholphu in the upper part of the Phoksundo lake. Seeing Mt. Kanjiroba shine brightly truly pleased the heart. Even though I was wearing a warm jacket, it felt as if my body was frozen from the cold. The 5,360m-high Ngangala pass that lay ahead would be quite the challenge. Those trying to reach Upper Dolpa have to cross the pass. There were 30 people in our team, including the helpers provided by the trekking agency. We also had 87 mules and 17 yak/chauriejhopas/ to carry our research materials. As our team and animals walked up to the pass, I was reminded of the famous movie ‘Caravan’. However, all the exhaustion from crossing the difficult Ngangala Pass vanished in an instant when we rested at a place called Deurali and saw tall white majestic mountains all around. The road down from the pass was white with snow. Some friends started sliding on the fresh snow. Some mules also started slipping which looked funny at first but quickly became worrying because they were carrying many essential goods. However, the mules found their footing and fortunately, no accident occurred.

The traffic saying ‘Go slow and you will definitely reach your destination; go fast and you might not’ seems to apply when...
trekking on high mountain passes as well. The journey is safest when travelling slowly. This was a learning for me.

Nine days after leaving Suligad, the team saw the small village Bhijer situated at the base of Zeborong and Pangseru (on the Tibetan side) mountains. Located at an altitude of 3,867m on the banks of a river, the village appeared very beautiful with its 35 traditional-style houses made of mud and stone. We used to stop in the village for snacks and lunch every time we came out on field work. Established in 1183 AD and situated at an elevation of 4150m, the Samling Monastery, where we stayed at, was about two hours away from the village. On the day of Bhai Tika during Tihar festival, we reached the monastery. There, we pitched 15 tents and our team stayed there for 23 days. Our plan was to conduct the satellite collaring study within a four kilometer area around the monastery.

We officially began the study on October 31 by worshipping at the monastery. We offered two Rupees 50 notes (they have the image of snow leopards on them) and prayed for the success of our work. We may be dedicated to science and technology in our work but that does not affect our faith in gods and goddesses. That is why all the technicians and scientists in our team joined in the worship and prayed that a snow leopard could be found and collared.

Traps were set in various places to capture and collar a snow leopard. Even though the traps were set in places with snow leopard activity, actually trapping a snow leopard was far from guaranteed. Snow leopards may never walk through the trap or even if they do, their feet may not be caught.

Snowfall occurred three times in the month of November. It got colder but we didn’t feel cold when we were playing with the snow. Because of the snowfall, the traps collapsed many times and needed to be repaired. Seeing leopard pugmarks on the snow made us feel like the snow leopard was close by.

For the first time in 15/16 years, Samling Monastery was going to hold a huge worship ceremony ‘Walchhu’. Hundreds of devotees from Bhijer, Saldang and Phoksundo had come to the monastery to participate in the worship. The Lamas were performing various dances and or tricks. During the worship, I once again offered two Rs. 50 notes with the image of the snow leopard. After the worship, the head Lama of Samling Monastery made a strange prediction regarding the expedition. He said, “Your traps will trap snow leopards.” Not only that; while we were drinking Tibetan tea in the monastery’s kitchen, the Lama’s son claimed, “You guys are lucky. In the next three days, you will trap snow leopards.”

On the morning of November 16, at around 6 o’clock, news came from the Talagatop tower that the signal at the Chakarbo Trap Station was positive. We decided to first send citizen scientists of Bhijer village to monitor the trap station. At 7:30 in the morning, the chairman of the Zeborong Snow Leopard Conservation Committee reported to the tower, saying, “A snow leopard has been trapped.” No sooner had his call rung out from our walkie-talkies that our excitement went through the roof. We hugged each other and exchanged our joy. I was happy but I was also slightly worried. What if the snow leopard freed itself from the trap and escaped!

Our technical team quickly left for Chakarbo. We saw a magnificent snow leopard with its front leg in the trap. It appeared as though the leopard was panicking. The technical team tranquilized it and it fell asleep within 10 minutes. The members of the study team then put a satellite collar around its neck. They also measured various parts of its body and collected vitals samples. I noted down all the information. The citizen scientists and other members were enthusiastically observing every activity and capturing them in their cameras. In this way, with everybody’s collective support and teamwork, the operation was completed in an hour and after the snow leopard was given the antidote, we all moved away from the operation site. After a while, the snow leopard slowly got up and moved away, disappearing into a ravine 100 m away. This hour-long technical work was full of haste, enthusiasm and curiosity.

On November 18, news came from Ngoyong Trap Station that another snow leopard had been trapped. We were all stunned that we had trapped another snow leopard just one day after the first one. Our technical team reached Ngoyong at around 8 in the morning and successfully collared the trapped leopard.

This is how we successfully fitted two snow leopards with satellite GPS collars for the first time in Dolpa. This study was important in the field of conservation because it was the first time that research was being done by fitting snow leopards, that too two snow leopards, with satellite GPS collars in the western landscape of Nepal. The local snow leopard conservation committee proposed that the first collared snow leopard be named after the Zeborong mountain and the second be named after the Samling monastery. The satellite GPS collared snow leopards were named accordingly.

The support of the local people, dedication and participation of the local youth citizen scientists of various snow leopard conservation sub-committees and the leadership role played by the national park authorities were all very important.

After our 23-days stay at Samling monastery, we extended our heartfelt thanks to the people of Bhijer and the officials of Samling, Nasar and Lang monasteries and left for Suligad. After a five-day walk, we arrived at the headquarters of the Shey-Phoksundo National Park, Suligad on November 26, on the 36th day of our study expedition.

I was very excited to see a snow leopard for the first time in my life. Those moments of lovingly stroking Zeborong’s whiskers is imprinted as fond memories in my mind, never to be forgotten.

(The author is affiliated with WWF’s Mountain Program in Dolpa.) Courtesy: Himal Khabar Patrika
हिमालको राजको खोजीमा

- चन्द्र जुङ हिमाल

ज्ञातिलो होल्ला नेपाल ती हिन्दी विद्युतको धारण बढी र नातीकी जन धारण कर चीजको ज्ञात हो। यो विज्ञान ज्ञातिलो होल्लाको प्रबन्धको स्थानलाई निर्देशक बनाउँदै अवलोकनका सम्बन्धमा हुनेछ, जुङ सन् 2005 को अवसरसँग र 27 देश जोखिमबाट 25 सल्ला विद्युतसम्पर्कले रावर्षिक विकासको निजी शोध भएका थिन। उक्त अवलोकन वाणिज्य विकास र वनजलीको संरचना विभागले संरचनाको सारवराड़को दलदलुक्रुण र रावर्षिक प्रकृति संरचना को नतीजो सङ्क्षार र सारांश उपलब्ध भएको थियो।

अवलोकन वाणिज्यको लागि सन् 2005 को अवसरसँग 27 वा विद्युतसम्पर्कले विकासको वाणिज्यको प्रकृति, वनजलीको संरचना एवं रावर्षिक वाणिज्यको सारांशको बारेमा सारांश र सारांशको नतीजो सङ्क्षार उपलब्ध भएको थियो।

हिमालको राज विद्युत सम्पर्कको पद्धतिलाई अन्तिम अवलोकन विवरण हुने। अवलोकन वाणिज्यको तौली अन्तिम रावर्षिक सीमा र नयाँ वित्तीय विकासको विश्वसनीय प्रकार कार्यान्वयन विवरण प्रदान गर्ने चाहियो। अवलोकन वाणिज्यको अन्तिम दलदलुक्रुण र वाणिज्यको वित्तीय विकासको विवरण र अन्तिम दलदलुक्रुण र वाणिज्यको वित्तीय विकासको विवरण प्रदान गर्ने चाहियो।

भारतीय हिमालको पद्धतिको निर्देशालय जैन्दा कागज, डरका, पैरो र धृश्यको दिन 3,880 ली.अपराधिक र कोरप्सको होल्लो स्थानीय वाणिज्यको धारण बढी हो। अवलोकन वाणिज्यको लागि सन् 1986 को वाणिज्यको सारांश उपलब्ध भएको हुने।

विद्युतसम्पर्कको अन्तिम अवलोकनका निर्देशालय जैन्दा कागज, डरका, पैरो र धृश्यको दिन 3,880 ली.अपराधिक र कोरप्सको होल्लो स्थानीय वाणिज्यको धारण बढी हो। अवलोकन वाणिज्यको लागि सन् 1986 को वाणिज्यको सारांश उपलब्ध भएको हुने।
The elusive big cat was captured on two camera traps in the Black Mountain Range under the Jigme Singye Wangchuck National Park (JSWNP) along with a Tiger! This makes JSWNP the second park in Bhutan where snow leopard and tiger habitats overlap.

Dorji Duba a senior forester along with Tshering Wangchuk also a forester set camera traps at about 4600 meters above sea level.

“I have dreamt of setting camera traps in the Black Mountain range since I joined the park seven years ago”, said Dorji Duba, “This was my fourth attempt. Nature has always fascinated me and I want to do everything to protect it. I am happy that my perseverance has paid off. Now we know for sure that there are snow leopards in JSWNP as well.”

The camera traps had captured pictures of gorals, musk deer, Himalayan Serow, Golden Cat and Yellow throated martins as well.

So Far Jigme Dorji National Park was the only national park in Bhutan where snow leopard and tiger habitats overlap but with the recent finding of such similar overlaps in JSWNP, it is a great moment of pride for the team at Jigme Singye Wangchuck National Park, the Department of Forests and Park Services and WWF Bhutan as well.

“This is exciting news. It is a testament to the connectivity that the biological corridors provide to all animals. The presence of both of these big cats is a sign that the ecology in this area is healthy. The entire team has received a boost and are motivated to continue the great work that we are fortunate to do under wise and farsighted leaders such as His Majesty the King,” said Phento Tshering, Director of the Department of Forests and Park Services of Bhutan.

The park is being surrounded by the other protected areas of Bhutan, there is probability of movement of snow leopards from the northern protected area such as the Wangchuck Centennial National Park and Jigme Dorji National Park where snow leopards are abundantly found.

Discovering an additional home range for both snow leopards and tigers is a great win for conservation in Bhutan. This would most likely increase the number of snow leopard and tiger in the country.

“Such findings are a big conservation win and it gives us more reasons to invest more to ensure that these species are protected. WWF is happy to be a part of the great conservation vision of Bhutan and its far-sighted leaders,” said Dechen Dorji, Country Representative of WWF Bhutan.

According to Dorji Duba, it is yet to be ascertained whether the footage captured on the two camera traps are of the same snow leopard or of two different snow leopards. “The park is also yet to confirm whether the animals are among the list of 96 snow leopards already recorded by the 2016 National Snow Leopard Survey”, he further adds.

Blue sheep is known to be the main prey species for snow leopards. But JSWNP has no record of blue sheep presence. Therefore, its presence in the park despite the lack of its main prey species is thought to be an indication of snow leopards embracing new habitat and prey base for its survival. Park officials speculate musk deer and goral to be the main prey base for the snow leopards in the park.

Snow leopards are regarded as indicator species of the health of mountain ecosystem. Its presence across the country perhaps is a sign that much of Bhutan’s high-mountain ecosystem is healthy.

(Tenzin is a Communications Officer at WWF Bhutan)
जिखो सिङ्गो वाद्धुक राष्ट्रिय निकुञ्जलाई भुटानको दोस्रो राष्ट्रिय निकुञ्ज बनाउँछ जहाँ हिंदी वितुवा र बाइ एकै वास्तवाच्छनमा पाइन्छन्।

“जो उद्योगकर्ता संबांधम छौ,” भुटानको वज तथा विक्रय सेवा विकासका विषयमा मानिक हिंदी निर्देशन दिइन्। क्योंकि जीवनहरुले सबै जल्दीकृत विकासका अवसरको एक प्रताप रहेको छौ। जो दुई रूला विकासका जाती हुनेले वो स्नातक प्रवेशमा दुरुस्तिकराउने स्वरुप छौ जल्दीकृत । यसको दोहराउने स्नातकौतुक लागि प्रोत्साहित गर्ने हो। भुटान कर्त्ता को मेलुवामा हातीले जानमा पाछै त्यसको यस्तो आबादीका कालालाई विरुद्ध रहने स्फोटक उद्देशीय गर्ने हिंदी वितुवा बनाउँछ।

भुटानको अन्य संरक्षित क्षेत्रहरु अर्थात् वाद्धुक राष्ट्रिय विकुञ्जलाई अर्थात् भुटानको दोस्रो राष्ट्रिय निकुञ्ज विकुञ्जलाई जोड्नुको उद्देशीय गर्ने हो। भुटानको पत्रिका वस्तुको बारे विकासका अर्थो साँचित गर्ने हिंदी वितुवा बनाउँछ।

हिंदी वितुवा र बाइको बारे वास्तवाच्छन वेदना वितुवा पक्रेको भुटानको संरक्षणको जो दुवै जाती हुनेछ। यसको फलस्वरूप भाषाओ र विकासका संरक्षण तथा विकासको महत्त्व दुई हिंदी वितुवा बनाउँछ।

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The snow leopard is no longer an endangered species, but its population in the wild is still at risk because of poaching and habitat loss, conservationists said this week. IUCN said on Thursday that new data taken through 2016 prompted the reclassification of the snow leopard from the endangered list to the vulnerable category. The difference means, simply, that the animals have gone from “very high risk” to “high risk” of extinction in the wild. The team’s lowest estimate was that about 4,000 live in the wild. But the snow leopard could still face a population decline of 10 percent or more over the next three generations in its habitats. It “still faces a high risk of extinction,” the conservation group said, from habitat loss and degradation, declines in prey populations and poaching for illegal wildlife trade, among other reasons.

“It is essential to continue and expand conservation efforts to reverse its declining trend and prevent this iconic cat from moving even closer to extinction,” the group said. Conservationists warned that the risks are not over for the snow leopards, whose distinctive appearances make them attractive to poachers. Their tails are longer than most cats’ to help them balance on steep slopes. Their skins are thick and whitish, patterned with dark rosettes and spots. Their bones and other body parts are used in traditional Asian medicine.

Emerging potential threats include mining and other infrastructure development that would affect their habitats. The I.U.C.N. Red List of Threatened Species is the world’s most comprehensive inventory of plant and animal species. In its full report on the snow leopard, it is noted that the population numbers could be partly speculative, given the difficulties in collecting hard data on the elusive and secretive species across all regions.

Snow leopards range across 12 countries in Central Asia in remote and rugged terrain. Their elusive qualities have inspired travelogues and surveys over the years as naturalists tried to track down the animals in the wild.

After the conservation group’s report was issued, the Snow Leopard Trust said the “vulnerable” classification still meant there was a high risk of extinction. It took issue with the lack of reliable techniques such as camera traps or genetic analysis, saying the assessment relied in part on “asking people how many snow leopards they think exist in any area,” the trust said.

“We are most concerned about how the lower status may weaken conservation efforts in range countries and the ability of local governments to stop these threats,” it said.

Peter Zahler, coordinator of the Wildlife Conservation Society’s Snow Leopard Program and a member of the assessment team, said the team followed “strict and rigorous” scientific protocols. “The assessment used the lowest acceptable population figure – 4,000 – in its calculations, and still came up with vulnerable status for the snow leopard,” he said in an emailed statement.

Tom McCarthy, an executive director of Panthera, a conservation group that focuses on the world’s wild cats, said that to be considered endangered there must be fewer than 2,500 mature snow leopards, with a high rate of decline.

Dr. McCarthy, who was on the I.U.C.N. assessment team, said in a statement that the reclassification did not mean “that snow leopards are ‘safe’ or that now is a time to celebrate. The species still faces a ‘high risk of extinction in the wild’ and is likely still declining — just not at the rate previously thought.”
हिंदी चित्रका अब संकटपन्न त छैन, तर खतरामुक पनि छैन

- फ्रांसिस हाउसर

हिंदी चित्रु अब संकटपन्न प्राजी त छैन तर संरणविद्वाग्नका अनुसार, रिकर र वास्तवमय विवाह हुने जागी जाङ्गलमा अको संसूचक अभिलेख छ।

आईव्यूँसयोल्ले सन् 2016 अघि संघको तथाकाळमा आदर्शप्रति हिंदी विद्वाग्नको संकटपन्नको विवाहटूट हदाई अघि संरणविद्वाग्नको विवाहटूटको वृद्धि गर्नु। यस पुरुषविद्वाग्नको राजक अर्थातै बुझेका पदमा, हिंदी विद्वाग्नको प्रकृतिक लोप हुने 'अति उद्ध रोशन'मा विवाह हुने आउ उद्ध रोशनका लागि अहिलेहरू बीतै अद्यावधिक व्यापारको लागि रिकर गरिहरू आउने हिंदी विद्वाग्नको अनुसार अन्तरराष्ट्रिय व्यापारमा 5,000 हिंदी विद्वाग्नको विवाह विवाह गरिनेछ र एउटा धुराहरू र अन्यकारण गर्ने वाँछिने ।

तर हिंदी विद्वाग्नको जो संयुक्त अन्तरराष्ट्रीय स्थान पृथक ५० प्रतिशत वा अगि बढीएका धन क्षेत्र । संरणविद्वाग्नको जो जलाशय अघि पलित उद्ध विद्वाग्नको रहेको जुतायी प्रूफिटको वास्तवमय तराई र दृष्टि हुदै बैठ्त । अपनाएका अथवा अद्यावधिक व्यापारको धुराहरू गरिनेछ जसले हिंदी विद्वाग्नको अनुसार अन्तरराष्ट्रिय व्यापारमा 5,000 हिंदी विद्वाग्नको विवाह गरिनेछ र एउटा धुराहरू र अन्यकारण गर्ने वाँछिने ।

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प्रवेश तथा अन्य व्यवसाय विद्वाग्नको जो जलाशय अघि पलित उद्ध विद्वाग्नको रहेको जुतायी प्रूफिटको वास्तवमय तराई र दृष्टि हुदै बैठ्त । अपनाएका अथवा अद्यावधिक व्यापारको धुराहरू गरिनेछ जसले हिंदी विद्वाग्नको अनुसार अन्तरराष्ट्रिय व्यापारमा 5,000 हिंदी विद्वाग्नको विवाह गरिनेछ र एउटा धुराहरू र अन्यकारण गर्ने वाँछिने ।

प्राप्ती तथा अन्य राज्य कर्मचारी कार्यालयले जो जलाशयको वास्तवमय तयारी बांध तथा जलाशयको सबै रामको वित्तीय अभिलेख हो। आईस्योल्ले हिंदी विद्वाग्नको अभिलेख प्राप्ती जलाशय र जलाशयको जल तब्बल: प्रमाणित तथा संरणको जल काठिन बाबोले अको संसूचक अनुज्ञात रहेको नै उपलब्ध जेबको च।
Facts about **SNOW LEOPARD**

- Snow Leopards are found only in twelve countries in the world, they are; Nepal, China, India, Bhutan, Mongolia, Russia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.

- It is believed that 4500 to 7500 Snow Leopards exist in the wild. However, some believe even less than that.

- In Nepal, the estimated population of Snow Leopard is between 301 and 400 (Source: Snow Leopard Conservation Action Plan of Nepal 2017-2021).

- The Langu valley of Shey-Phoksundo National Park supports the highest density of Snow Leopard (10 to 12 Snow Leopards per 100 square km) in Nepal.

- Snow leopard is listed as Vulnerable species in the IUCN's Red Data Book and also included in the Appendix-1 of the CITES.

- Nepal’s National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1973 has listed Snow Leopard as a protected priority species. As per this Act’s 5th amendment 2016., it is illegal to hunt the protected priority species including snow leopard. Any effort of poaching, smuggling snow leopard's body parts, or hurting them is not tolerated by law and, if anyone found guilty of poaching, hurting snow leopard and trading of its body parts will be punished with penalty of Rs. 5,00,000 to Rs. 10,00,000 or 5-15 years of imprisonment or both.
Snow Leopard Killed in Pakistan
Poachers got Punished

By Zara Khan

Five men were sentenced to prison for killing a snow leopard in Peshawar in Northern Pakistan, wildlife officials confirmed.

Four poachers and their facilitator were arrested by the Gilgit-Baltistan Wildlife Department on charges of killing a female snow leopard. The incident was taken place near the Hoper glacier in the region’s Nagar district in late July 2020. The poachers uploaded their photos with the body of the endangered cat to social media, after which they were traced by the authorities.

“Informers told us that in the Hopar Nagar area someone shot the precious snow leopard”, Gilgit-Baltistan Wildlife Department spokesman Tariq Husain told Arab News, “The concerned wildlife officials alerted local police and we arrested the illegal hunters and seized the leopard’s dead body.”

“Divisional Forest Officer Jibran Haider, who has magistrate powers, convicted the accused in an expedited trial. “Two have been sentenced to two years in jail, two to one year’s imprisonment and their facilitator to one month behind bars”, says Haider.

Jaffarudin, Deputy Director at Snow Leopard Foundation informs that there are about 300 to 400 snow leopards remained in Pakistan’s Himalayan, Hindukush and Karakoram regions in the wild.

The foundation has been working on improving the socio-economic conditions of mountain communities in Gilgit Baltistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Azad Jammu and Kashmir which share the ecosystem with the endangered species.

In these areas, snow leopards often attack livestock and local people sometimes kill them in defense.

“Leopards sometimes attack our kids and women too”, says Husain,“that’s why they kill this precious animal.” As per him, when it comes to actual poachers the department is on alert and several arrests have taken place in the recent past.

Wildlife Activists lauded the recent arrest but say that law enforcement is still insufficient as local authorities do not have proper surveillance tools.

“No doubt the wildlife department is facing problems as they can’t cover the whole area,” wildlife activist Mumtaz Gohar said,“If the hunter had not posted the photos on social media, the incident would definitely have gone unreported like many others.”

Content credits to Arab News; Source:#AsianWildAidFoundation
India’s Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Mr. Prakash Javadekar has launched the country’s first National protocol on October 2019, for censusing the population of snow leopard.

“Censusing of tiger was a difficult task 20 years ago but we made it possible. India now has 77% of the world’s tiger population”, Javadekar told at the fourth steering committee meeting of the Global Snow Leopard & Ecosystem Protection (GSLEP) Program, “I am sure, with the cooperation of the range countries, the population of snow leopard will also be doubled in the coming decade.”

Although no census of this endangered big cat has been conducted, estimates provided by various organisations working on snow leopard conservation suggest that there could be around 400-700 of the snow leopards spread across Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir.

An official at the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change says on condition of anonymity that around 500 of these cats could be in the Ladakh region alone.

India is extremely keen on snow leopard conservation but better ecosystem (management) and more intervention in creating a better habitat for the snow leopard is what we should strive for. It is extremely important to conserve the pristine habitat of the snow leopard because these mountain ranges are also the source of water for us,” said CK Mishra, Secretary of Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change.

According to Minister Javadekar, India is now home to around 512 lions, 30,000 elephants and 2,500 one-horned rhinoceros. The number of tiger in the country has also shot up to 2,967 from 2226.

Experts have welcomed the protocol

“This is an excellent initiative. Till date we hardly have any concrete data on their population. Only recently, some scientific studies have started for the conservation of this vulnerable species,” said Raman Sukumar, a member of the National Board for Wildlife.

According to the IUCN, the population of snow leopard is decreasing and only an estimated 2,700-3300 adults are left in the wild. Climate change, shrinking habitat because of human activity and poaching are cited as some of the reasons for the decline.

According to the protocol, India will follow a two-step procedure to census this elusive cat–systematically assessing the spatial distribution of snow leopard and estimating their numbers through camera trapping and genetic evidence. According to senior officials of the ministry, this protocol could also be later used by other range countries.
भारतद्वारा हिंदू चितुवा गणना जर्न पहलो प्रोटोकल जारी

- जोधीप ठाकुर

भारतद्वारा हिंदू चितुवा गणना जर्न पहलो प्रोटोकल जारी करा। इस प्रकारवा जारी जर्न धारण करता हो, ज्याचे जातीयचे मार्ग अंतराल असल्यास तरीही त्याच्या संख्येत अनुसार भारत अधिकारीहून सहमती देऊन पाहिला जारी जर्न होय।

"हिंदू चितुवा परिवर्तनात जनजातीय प्रमाणपत्राचे संख्येत अनुसार असल्यास तरीही, त्याच्या संख्येत अनुसार भारत अधिकारीहून सहमती देऊन पाहिला जारी होय। ज्याचे जातीयचे मार्ग अंतराल असल्यास तरीही त्याच्या संख्येत अनुसार भारत अधिकारीहून सहमती देऊन पाहिला जारी होय। ज्याचे जातीयचे मार्ग अंतराल असल्यास तरीही त्याच्या संख्येत अनुसार भारत अधिकारीहून सहमती देऊन पाहिला जारी होय।

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To generate awareness on snow leopard ecology, an initiative entitled “Run for Snow Leopard 24” has been carried out in Sept 12-13, 2020 in various part of Nepal including Shep Phoksundo National Park and Annapurna Conservation Area Project.

Dr. Charu Mishra, Executive Director of Snow Leopard Trust initiated 24 hrs which has been followed by snow leopard habitat countries along with like-minded conservation stakeholders in different countries. This include running, walking, hiking, cycling and any kind of wheelchair activities.

In Nepal, Shey Phoksundo National Park and ACAP expressed solidarity on snow leopard conservation by organizing the race and hike.

Assistant Warden of Shey-Phoksundo National Park Gopal Khanal had lead the group of 10 people for racing including two game scouts along with members of the Phoksundo Snow Leopard Conservation Committee. The race held from the National Park Headquarter Suligadh (2,100 m.) to Phoksundo lake (3,650 m.) that passes through the deadly cliff along with difficult and narrow trail.

Similarly, a group from ACAP, including, Rishi Baral, Shailendra Yadav, Ashok Subedi and Lekhnath Baral accomplished the hike in Pokhara. They hiked from Archalbot to Chisapani-Garjati-Bhibhuti Park-Silingabot-Deurali-Gharelu-Lamagau to Bindabasini and came back to Archalbot.

ACAP’s conservation officer Baral informs that the race intended to give message to protect the Himalaya region which is the source of water reservoir of over 1.5 billion.
हिउँ चितुवाको लागि दौड २४

हिउँ चितुवाको पर्यावरण सङ्गठन जममेपुरा अधिवृद्धि गर्दै देखाउदै 'हिउँ चितुवाको लागि दौड २४' कार्यक्रम २०७७ आद २६ र २८ जारेका दिन लेपालक विशेषज्ञ स्थानहरूमा सफल भएको छ ।

स्थल नेपालका कार्यकारी वितैवर्तक दा. चारु धिङ्खले प्रवर्तक गर्दै २४ घण्टाँ दौडको हिउँ चितुवा वासस्थान सङ्गठन सहित संरक्षण समूहकार्यकर्ता विशेषज्ञ मुन्नुकलेखले चाराको यस अभियानलाई पत्रकारहरू आयोजनाका छन । यस अवलोकन दौड, पैदल जात्रा, पदयात्रा, साइकल जात्रा र व्हीलचेयरको चित्रहरूको लागि सफल भएको छ ।

लेपालका उक्त दिन शी-फोटोसूचना राष्ट्रिय विक्रम अवधारणा र अवधारणा संरक्षण श्रेणी आयोजना भएको त्यसै पर्यावरण अभियानलाई विशेषतया जनाइएका छ ।

शी-फोटोसूचना राष्ट्रिय विक्रम वल्पको सहायता बढीबाट जीवन जनाले दौडका १० जारको सङ्कुचलाई लेखा जनाला दूराको दृश्यकाटहरू र फोटोसूचना हिउँ चितुवा संरक्षण सामग्रीको सदस्यहरू मुन्नुकलेखले विवरण र सङ्केतको लेखनलाई लेखा जनाला दूराको दृश्यकाटहरूको लेखनलाई चलाउनुभएको छ ।

त्यसै, जममेपुरा राष्ट्रिय राज्यको अधीक, रूडाल्का प्रासाद, आशोक सुबै, लेखनको सङ्कुचलाई पैदल जात्रा गरेको छ । उनीहरूले पोस्टको अर्थविभागको पत्रिका गर्दै विवरण दियो । त्यसैले पोस्टको अर्थविभागको पत्रिकामा पत्रिकामा गर्दै विवरण दियो । उनीहरूले पोस्टको अर्थविभागको पत्रिकामा पत्रिकामा गर्दै विवरण दियो ।
Seven protected priority wild species, including snow leopard, found in the Rolwaling valley within Gaurishankar Conservation Area.

The snow leopard was sighted for a second time in Gaurishankar Conservation Area, Dolakha. The snow leopard was re-observed in Gaurishankar Conservation Area during a study conducted in June to August 2019 by the Gaurishankar Conservation Area Project (GCAP).

Along with the Snow Leopard, Himalayan Wolf, Red Panda, Musk Deer, Asamese Macaque, Himalayan Monal and Satyr Tragopan were found in the camera trapping survey carried out by GCAP at ward no 9 in Rolwaling valley of Gaurishanker Conservation Area.

“Among these, wolf and Red Panda were recorded for the first time in the Rolwaling area”, says GCAP Office In-charge Mr. Satya Narayan Shah.

“Wolf was recorded at Cho-Rolpa, Dudhkunda and Yellung area”, says Shah, “Musk deer was spotted at Na village area whereas Red Panda was recorded at Beding-Go Takura area, Himalayan Monal was observed at Gaurishanker base camp whereas Asamese Macaque and Satyr Tragopan were recorded in Beding area”.

Bushnell Trophy Cameras were installed in 12 different location in the Rolwaling valley at an altitude of 3,742 m to 5,091 m. The camera captured the roaming snow leopard at an elevation of 4,536 m. The research team was led by GCAP conservation officer Mr. Bishnu Prasad Pandey. GCAP had mobilized its own manpower and resources to accomplish this mission.

Earlier in 2019, three images of snow leopard were captured in the camera in Lapchi valley. “Our findings suggests that the snow leopard found in Lapchi was male whereas the snow leopard whose image was captured in Rolwaling valley was female”, says Shah.

Occurrence of three to five snow leopards has been estimated in the Gauri Shankar Conservation Area.

- Pandey and Thami are associated with GCAP/NTNC)
रोल्वालिङ उपत्यकाका फेला पन्यो हिउँ चितुवा!

- बिष्णु प्रसाद पाण्डे/शंकरसागर थाली

जौरिशंकर संस्थात्रण क्षेत्रमा रोल्वालिङ उपत्यकाका हिउँ चितुवा सहित सातारा प्रवासिकालामा परेका संशोधन क्वा जलुङकुटौ फेला परेको छ।

दोलसा को जौरिशंकर संस्थात्रण क्षेत्रमा दोस्रो पटक हिउँ चितुवा देखिएको हो। जौरिशंकर संस्थात्रण क्षेत्र आयोजना (जीववाण्ड) ले २०७६ सालमा असारमा सुमायङ्गण उगरो र हरूका अनुसन्धानको ऊर्जा क्षेत्रमा पूजा हिउँ चितुवा फेला परेको हो।

जीववाण्डले दिलाउँछ्न् जौरिशंकर जाउँछ्न दबा जलबा २ रोल्वालिङ उपत्यकाका उगरो जानेराला रुपासी अनुसन्धान हिउँ चितुवा सहित ब्यासमा, रेड प्रणाली, करुपुरी बुझ, आसामी बौद्ध, बोधी र नुकाल फेला परेको हो।

‘लो नासे ब्यासमा र लामै जस्रो रोल्वालिङ उपत्यकाका पहिलो पटक अनिवार्य भएको हो’, जीववाण्डले काझालिङ प्रसार संचार जानालाई जस्तो बलाई लिनुरेको हो।

‘दोहोलिङ, दुर्दोलिङ र देपौलिङ क्षेत्रमा ब्यासमा अनेकहरु हो’, शाह अनुप्रेषित, ‘लो ग्यान करुपुरी बुझ, बौद्ध-जो दाङ्करी क्षेत्रमा रुपासी तथा जौरिशंकर वेस्कापार र बौद्ध-जो क्षेत्रमा दोस्रो र प्रणाली अनुलोकको ऊर्जा ग्यानलाई आसामी बौद्ध अनेकहरु हो।’

बुम्जेल कुली विज्ञानकार रोल्वालिङ उपत्यकाको ३.७०० डेखि ५.४६५ बिल. बीचका ९० वटा विज्ञान छसक्छन् जस्तो जातार्को थिए। हिउँ चितुवा बाट ८.३३६ बिल. बीच हुन्छ जो अपर्याप्त ग्यानको प्रणाली को ट गरेको थिए। जीववाण्डले आफ्नो जल्पनको र संस्कृतिको उक्त अनुसन्धानको भेद जीववाण्डले संस्थात्रण अधिकृत बिष्णु प्रसाद पाण्डे ले उगरेको थियो।

जौरिशंकर संस्थात्रण क्षेत्रमा लाबै उपत्यकाका २०७४ सालमा उगरेको वाङ्डिया दुर्दोलिङ सल्लाछ बिउँ चितुवाइन्छ ३ वटा तर्कीहरू रेकिन आफ्नो थिए। ‘यो पटक रोल्वालिङ उगरेको टौद आफ्नो हिउँ चितुवा लाबै फेला परेको बाहिर छैर हिउँ चितुवा हो; जीववाण्डले प्रकाशको संचार उपात्मानका शाह अनुप्रेषित, ‘लाबै फेला परेको हिउँ चितुवा बाले र रोल्वालिङ फेला परेको हिउँ चितुवा पोखरी लाबै हातो अनुसन्धान छ।’

जौरिशंकर संस्थात्रण क्षेत्रमा ३ डेखि ५ वटा सामने हिउँ चितुवा रहेको अनुसन्धान छ।

(पाठेर र सारली जीववाण्ड, झाप)
The world currently is suffering from the COVID-19 pandemic. Every continent and almost all countries around the globe have been affected by it, and this public health emergency is showing no sign of slowing down. While some countries have been successful in bringing the COVID-19 infection rate under control, there are already signs that the battle against this deadly virus is far from over. The WHO has already warned that there will be a second wave of coronavirus in this winter, and more waves cannot be ruled out. Despite frantic efforts by many developed countries, effective drugs to treat COVID-19 patients, and vaccines have not been found yet.

Like all other global communities, Nepal is not immune to the COVID-19 pandemic. Nepal imposed a nationwide lockdown from 24 March to 21 July. Apart from some essential services, all economic activities and services were shut down. Hundreds of thousands of Nepali working in India and abroad lost their jobs. As migrant workers, most of them had no social security or protection in foreign lands. After the government allowed migrants to return home, those working in India came overland using various border points, and those abroad returned via chartered flights. With the arrivals of migrant Nepali, the COVID-19 cases climbed up, and by August 6th, Nepal’s tally of COVID-19 cases stood at 22,214 with 70 dead.

The impacts of COVID-19 have been widespread and unprecedented. According to the BBC, due to the COVID-19, the global GDP this year will shrink by 3%, and 170 countries will have negative growth. While COVID-19 has affected all formal and informal economic sectors, the world’s travel and tourism sector has been affected the most. The World Tourism Organization estimates that the Travel and Tourism industry will lose 68% to 78% of its receipts.

Nepal’s tourism has also been a victim of COVID-19. Mountain regions of Nepal provide excellent habitats for snow leopards, and some regions such as the Annapurna Conservation Area and the Sagarmatha National Park are very popular for tourists. The winter is a lean tourism season in Nepal, and this is the time for mountain dwellers travel to urban areas, and they take time off for pilgrimage, shopping, and buying food and other essential stuff for lodges/hotels/shops, etc,. To prepare for the upcoming tourism season, which starts to pick up by the end of March, and get busy in April and May. This routine, however, was disrupted this year. Many local lodge, hotel, shop, tea shop, travel, and transport business owners of the Khumbu and Nar-Phu valleys were stuck in Kathmandu due to the outbreak of COVID-19 and subsequently, the national lockdown.

There are concerns likely impacts the COVID-19 pandemic would have on conservation initiatives in general, and snow leopard conservation in high mountain regions in particular. For the people of Nar and Phu, tourism provided an important supplementary income, but for the Khumbu, tourism is the major source of income and livelihoods for the majority of the people. Tourism also provides a major source of revenue for conservation organizations such as the Annapurna Conservation Area Project and Sagarmatha National Park. With the loss of tourism revenues this year, and most likely for few more years, there is no doubt that it will have major impacts on mobilizing resources to support on-going conservation activities, and particularly for protecting vulnerable species such as snow leopards. The reduced revenue means fewer resources to compensate local victims losing livestock to snow leopards, or fewer resources for field and biological monitoring, implement livestock safeguard measures, conduct wildlife research, and many other activities that are vital to protect mountain environment and snow leopards. If alternative ways of financing conservation activities are not found quickly, risks.

What Conservation Planners and Practitioners Can Learn from the COVID-19 Pandemic?

- Dr. Shailendra Thakali
of increasing human-wildlife conflicts including, poaching, retaliatory killings, and other illegal activities will be very high.

Unlike in the Khumbu valley, the local people of Nar Phu villages have benefited from the yarsagumpa (caterpillar fungus) trade for the past two decades. On an average, a local household earns about US$ 5,000 annually from this trade, and this income has one of the major sources to overcome economic hardships caused primarily by unproductive lands, difficult terrains, remoteness from market centers, and loss of crops and livestock to wildlife such as blue sheep and snow leopards. This year due to the COVID-19, one-third population of Nar and Phu villages was stuck in Kathmandu and they missed the peak yarsagumpa picking season (April and May). Additionally, the Government of Nepal stopped permits for the yarsagumpa collection. The yarsagumpa is mainly sold in the Chinese market. In the wake of the COVID-19, China has restricted cross-border trade, including herbs. This new restriction potential would have made the yarsagumpa trade difficult, even if there had been no ban on the collection of it.

There is no clear answer when the social and economic havoc COVID-19 has created will end, and how the 'new normal' will look. Connected to this, there is also a question of how soon tourists would be confident to embark on international travels, and how early the people would have the confidence to welcome visitors back. Some countries have already taken confidence-building measures to resume travel and tourism by expanding ‘tourism bubble’ or ‘corridors’ to promote regional tourism, exempting quarantine for visitors, making PCR tests mandatory for tourists at the arrival, and allowing chartered flights from countries of origins to destinations with very restrictive programs. These measures to revive tourism are very much urban-centric, and regions such as the Khumbu and Nar-Phu valleys may not benefit much from these measures.

To conclude, while it is difficult to assess the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic on conservation efforts, particularly on snow leopards, due to current restriction on field travels, it is becoming clear that the new 'normal' in the post-COVID-19 pandemic is going to be very different, and this may bring new challenges for tourism and conservation initiatives. It is high time that Nar Phu and Khumbu communities as well as conservation planners and practitioners learn from the COVID-19 pandemic to prepare better for future pandemics.
There are worrying signs that poaching and illegal trade in snow leopard might be on the rise in large parts of the species’ range. Thanks to a new partnership with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and support from their Combating Wildlife Trafficking program, we’re launching a new collaborative initiative that will assist the conservation alliance of all 12 range country governments – to identify trends and target hotspots in the fight to reduce snow leopard-based crimes.

Poaching for their exquisite fur and highly valued bones has been a major threat to snow leopards across their range. The demand for rugs, luxury décor, and taxidermy, is also reported to be on the increase. Snow leopard bones have allegedly been used as substitute for tiger bones in traditional medicine. A 2015 study has established the presence of snow leopard DNA in traditional medicine products.

A report published by TRAFFIC (Wildlife Trade Monitoring Network) estimates that 221–450 snow leopards may have been poached annually since 2008 – at least 4 per week, and perhaps as many as one each day. But the real extent of the problem is unknown. The cases that do come to light may only be the tip of the iceberg, as wildlife crime typically has very low rates of detection.

“Our investigators have recorded at least 106 snow leopard skins, along with claws, bones and teeth for sale in markets in Asia, indicating that demand is still a major factor in driving poaching”, says Debbie Banks from the Environmental Investigation Agency.

Currently, there is little information to prioritize which regions have relatively higher rates of poaching and trafficking than others. “Robust and quantitative information on snow leopard crime is largely missing, information is scattered, and data are often not accessible to enforcement agencies in organized, usable formats.” says Charu Mishra, the Snow Leopard Trust’s Director of Science and Conservation. “Along with other partner organizations, we will be supporting GSLEP through collaborations, compile vital crime data, and share it with relevant agencies.”
To help the governments, law enforcement and NGOs win the fight against wildlife traffickers, the Snow Leopard Trust and the Global Snow Leopard & Ecosystem Protection Program, with support from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, will create a comprehensive range-wide database on poaching and illegal trade involving the snow leopard and related species through collaborations with organizations such as INTERPOL, Environmental Investigation Agency, Wildlife Protection Society of India and others.

The partners will also create new algorithms to compile additional crime data for filling gaps and develop new networks to share information with all major stakeholders.

“Such instruments play a critical role in exposing the extent of poaching and wildlife trade. They can reveal the level of sophistication and organization reached by wildlife criminals and change the perception and knowledge of wildlife crime,” says Belinda Wright of the Wildlife Protection Society of India, who was instrumental in developing that country’s Database on Tiger Poaching.

“Once the Snow Leopard Poaching Database has been developed”, says Koustubh Sharma, International Coordinator for the GSLEP Program, “we will be able to better pinpoint snow leopard crime hotspots and changing trends.”

Alfredo Phoenix, INTERPOL global wildlife enforcement coordinator, says “the database will be an important step forward in filling the current information gap thereby supporting governments and law enforcement agencies to exchange information and, most importantly, contributing to much needed intelligence led enforcement actions on the ground.”

Fighting poaching and illegal wildlife trade takes concerted effort and knowledge by the global community. This project will help overcome barriers, open up communication, and build collaborations that can make a real difference.

This project made possible through a grant from United States Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Division of Management Authority, Combating Wildlife Trafficking Strategy and Partnerships program.
हिउँ चितुवाको
अवैध शिकार तथा व्यापारको सामना गर्दै

अति जोखिममा रहेको हिउँ चितुवाको अवैध शिकार तथा व्यापार दियो छ र हिउँ चितुवाको बसरथान मुलुकहरूको बाहर निकलने लग्दै। यसैले अवैध शिकारको लागि युद्ध गर्दै। हिउँ चितुवाको तरकरिको तलाल अवैधको पुटा नयाँ संघ बन्द्रभ र सुरक्षाको जानकारिको सहित वर्णको नयाँ सहयोग जरूरी हो।

हिउँ चितुवाको विवरण केरेका जस प्रजातिको अवैध शिकार तथा व्यापार बढै राख्नका विचारले संकेतहरू देखि परिवृत्ति छ। अति संयुक्त राष्ट्रीय अभियाचको ध्यान दिनेको गरेका छ छानु चितुवाको क्राहण र उनका व्यवस्थापन तथा संरक्षणका विषयमा काम गर्नुको राख्नुको जरूरी हो। जरूरी छ र गरेको जसै नयाँ प्रकाशन संरक्षण र बढै राख्ने जरूरी हो।

हिउँ चितुवाको विवरण केही स्थापना राष्ट्रीय अभियाचको घराउँ देखि परिवृत्ति छ र गरेको जसै नयाँ प्रकाशन संरक्षण र बढै राख्ने जरूरी हो।

- रनो लेपैर ढूँढ
ECCA has been a leading organization in the sector of social mobilization and community development. It implements various programs to raise the quality of life through wise-use of available local resources and application of alternate and renewable technologies.

ECCA was established in July 1987 as a non-profitable, non-government organization. It pioneered the concept of school based child club (in Nepal) in 1992.

**Mission**

- ECCA shall be a Professional Volunteer Organization dedicated towards securing sound ecological future.
- ECCA shall mobilize youth and school children to lead positive change in environmental and community-based development.
- ECCA shall support the development of conservation related entrepreneurship.

**Activities**

ECCA activities can be broadly categorized as:

- Awareness raising, advocacy & capacity building
- Construction of basic facilities in schools
- Use of alternative, renewable and improved technologies
A few blue sheep were found dead in high pastureland in Mustang at the end of September 2020 due to mange.

Snow leopard’s natural prey Blue sheep and domestic Yak are sharing the same habitat in Manang.

Forest patrolling in Gaurishanker Conservation Area.

Students, teachers and conservation stakeholders celebrating Conservation Education Awareness Campaign in Baltistan, Pakistan

SLC staff at International Snow Leopard Day Celebration at Naibi Zoo, USA.

Members of the Third Pole Conservancy speaking during Snow Leopard Radio Program.
CONSERVATION ACTIONS WE CAN TAKE

• Report poaching to the concerned authorities.
• Protect Snow Leopard habitats and their prey species.
• Take measures to minimize loss of livestock to Snow Leopard: for example, guard livestock CAREFULLY (OR WILL), avoid leaving animals to graze near cliffs or in very broken terrain AND KEEP THEM IN THE PREDATOR-PROOF CORRALS.
• Spread wildlife conservation awareness among local people and tourists.

BECOME A STEWARD FOR NATURE BY ENCOURAGING YOUR COMMUNITY TO CO-EXIST WITH THE ENDANGERED SNOW LEOPARD BY TAKING THE ABOVE ACTIONS.

BY ENSURING SNOW LEOPARDS CAN FIND SUFFICIENT WILD PREY FOR FOOD, AND SO THAT THEY DO NOT HAVE TO RELY UPON DOMESTIC LIVESTOCK FOR THEIR SURVIVAL.

Snow Leopards and other wildlife are like a necklace of jewels around our mountains!

Do you know these facts?

• Snow Leopard is among the endangered species of Nepal and other 12 range countries in South & Central Asia.
• Snow Leopard serves as an indicator for environmental health of the high mountain ecosystem.
• Like humans and all animals, Snow Leopards require food, shelter and security from enemies.
• Snow leopard presence in Nepal and the Himalayas can be compared with the importance of lions to African countries or the White giant Panda to China.
• Snow leopard is part of natural heritage and is unique and valuable to the area.