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SUPPORTING A STRONGER GLOBAL SNOW LEOPARD AND ECOSYSTEM PROTECTION PROGRAM



In October 2013, all 12 snow leopard range countries met in Bishkek and unanimously adopted the Bishek Declaration on the Conservation of Snow Leopards. © WWF

The snow leopard is an elusive big cat that inhabits Asia's High Mountains and can be found at elevations of up to 6000 meters. The apex predator of high mountain ecosystems in 12 countries across Asia, the snow leopard roams across vast areas of alpine terrain, frequently crossing international borders. Given the transboundary nature of its existence, the snow leopard requires a unified conservation effort by all 12 snow leopard range countries to ensure its survival.

A GLOBAL INITIATIVE

In October 2013, the 12 snow leopard range countries came together and signed the historic Bishkek Declaration, endorsing the need to go beyond protected areas, and conduct snow leopard conservation efforts at the landscape level. This historic agreement was the culmination of discussions that began in the summer of 2012 and were actively supported by WWF and its Conservation and Adaptation in Asia's High Mountains (AHM) Project, funded by USAID.

To secure at least 20 landscapes with viable snow leopard populations by 2020.

A STRONGER GSLEP

The WWF AHM Project has worked closely with the Snow Leopard Trust (SLT), World Bank Global Tiger Initiative, UNDP, GEF and other partners to support the GSLEP process since its inception, helping strengthen member states' capacity and ability to deliver on their national snow leopard protection programs. This support has included funding GLSEP activities, such as numerous GSLEP planning, technical training, and steering committee meetings held since 2012 as well as both the October 2013 and August 2017 GSLEP Snow Leopard Forums held in Bishkek. The WWF AHM Project has also provided technical support for the GSLEP Process, including by providing support and expertise for development of future climate and water availability scenarios as well as climate-smart snow leopard landscape management plans for selected GSLEP Priority Landscapes. Notably, the WWF AHM Project has designed and implemented a variety of conservation field activities in GSLEP Priority Landscapes in six GSLEP member states. In addition, AHM Project has also provided salaries and office equipment for GLSEP Secretariat staff based in Bishkek.

CREATING CLIMATE-SMART SNOW LEOPARD LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PLANS

The goal of the GSLEP program is to secure 20 snow leopard landscapes by 2020. The primary vehicle for securing these landscapes is the development and implementation of robust, climate-smart snow leopard landscape management plans for GSLEP Priority Landscapes. The WWF AHM Project has a field presence in 6 of the 12 GSLEP member states, and is contributing to achieving the GSLEP goal in various ways.

Given our commitment to present and future generations, we must act now with resolution and authority to protect and recover snow leopard populations and their fragile habitats for all people to enjoy. – Bishkek Declaration



A high level meeting in Kathmandu in January 2017 assessed progress on the landscape management planning process, and garnered high-level support garnered for implementation of the GSLEP process. © WWF



At a national focal points workshop in Issyk Kul in June 2014, 23 GSLEP priority landscapes were finalized and guidelines for management planning of these landscapes presented. © WWF

Building National Capacity

The WWF AHM Project has supported training workshops for national teams in charge of developing climate-smart snow leopard landscape management plans. At these workshops, national focal points have been trained on the conservation landscape management planning process, incorporating climate change concepts into management plans, and GIS mapping and available data sets for landscape management planning. Climate change and conservation planning experts from WWF and Columbia University's Center for Climate Systems Research have guided GSLEP country teams through the process of incorporating climate change impacts and future climate scenarios into their landscape management plans to make them climate-smart, thus building national capacity for climate adaptation in high mountain areas.

Catalyst Grant Program

In 2015, the WWF AHM Project and SLT launched a catalyst grant program to support GSLEP member countries in developing snow leopard landscape management plans for their respective GSLEP Priority Landscapes. Under this program, grants of up to USD 5000 were provided to national teams to help start the process of developing their snow leopard landscape management plans.

Model Landscape Management Plans

The WWF AHM project supported collaboration between WWF, SLT, the governments of Nepal and Kyrgyzstan, and other partners to develop two model climate-smart snow leopard landscape management plan for the Eastern Nepal and Central Tian Shan GSLEP Priority Landscapes. Completion of these two plans is a major milestone in achieving the GSLEP goal of securing 20 snow leopard landscapes, and the process and plans developed will serve as models for replication by the other 10 GSLEP member states.

WWF AHM Project Demonstration Sites

Since 2012, the WWF AHM Project has been working to implement a series of conservation field activities at project demonstration sites in Bhutan, India, the Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia, Nepal, and Pakistan. Notably, these project demonstration sites are all located in GSLEP Priority Landscapes and include activities on snow leopard research, community conservation, livelihood security, water security, and climate adaptation. This work has helped guide selection of national GSLEP Priority Landscapes and serve as trials for snow leopard landscape management activities that can be scaled up in the future.

A TIMELINE OF SUPPORT FOR GSLEP ACTIVITIES BY THE WWF AHM PROJECT AND PARTNERS

SUMMER 2012

Launch of planning for what would become the GSLEP Process.

DECEMBER 4-6, 2012

Global Snow Leopard Conservation Workshop
Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic

MARCH 9, 2013

Working Meeting on National Preparations of the 2013 International Forum on Snow Leopard Conservation (held on the sidelines of CITES COP 16)
Bangkok, Thailand

MAY 29-30, 2013

Drafting Meeting of the Global Snow Leopard Forum
Moscow, Russian Federation

OCTOBER 22-23, 2013

Global Snow Leopard Forum
Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic

JUNE 5-11, 2014

Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Program National Focal Points Action Planning, Leadership, and Capacity Development Workshop
Issyk Kul, Kyrgyz Republic

MARCH 19-20, 2015

Steering Committee Meeting of the Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Program
Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic

DECEMBER 7, 2015

2015 Briefing Meeting of the Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Program (held on the sidelines of UNFCCC COP 21)
Paris, France

APRIL 20-27, 2016

Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Program Capacity Building Workshop for Snow Leopard Landscape Management Planning and Mapping
Kathmandu, Nepal

JANUARY 17-18, 2017

Snow Leopard Landscape Management Planning and Mapping Stocktaking Workshop
Kathmandu, Nepal

JANUARY 19-20, 2017

Second GSLEP Steering Committee Meeting
Kathmandu, Nepal

AUGUST 2-3, 2017

Senior Officials' Meeting to Prepare the Final Documentation of the Upcoming International Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Forum
Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic

AUGUST 23, 2017

International Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Forum Science Symposium and Exposition
Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic

AUGUST 24-25, 2017

International Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Forum
Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic