

Resolutions of the Eighth International Snow Leopard Symposium

Realizing the endangered status of the snow leopard and its importance as a flagship species for biodiversity in the mountain ecosystems of Central Asia, the participants in the Eighth Snow Leopard Symposium held in Islamabad, Pakistan, from 12-16 November 1995 resolve that:

1. Effective and do-able programmes must be initiated in the snow leopard range states to address issues of livestock predation by snow leopards through testing of various compensation models involving local herder and pastoral communities and helping them to be aware of the need for better care of their livestock, and to have programmes which indirectly compensate them for loss of livestock through socio-economic development. Such programmes have already been initiated in Pakistan, Mongolia and Nepal and will be replicated in Khazakstan and Tajikistan.

2. Key conservation areas for snow leopards must be identified through mutual agreements, both within the range countries and across their international boundaries, and measures adopted to protect them from degradation and fragmentation, including the development and implementation of management plans. Pakistan has already developed a management plan for the Pakistani part of the transboundary parks of Khunjerab and Central Karakorum in the northern areas, which needs to be implemented and extended to China. Other countries with transboundary reserves, such as Khazakstan (Zailisskiy Alatan National Park), Uzbekistan (Gisserskiy Reserve), Tajikistan (Cooperation Lake), Kyrgyzstan (Peak Pobeda) and China (Tomur Nature Reserve) should follow this example.

3. Much important information regarding the snow leopard and its linkages with its prey and habitat being lacking, scientific studies should be initiated to cover aspects that help in the conservation of snow leopards.

4. Poaching, fur trade and the use of certain parts of snow leopards being direct threats to the existence of the snow leopard, range countries must implement CITES or, if they are not Parties, join the Convention. The symposium also urges the extension of bans on use of tiger products to cover products of other threatened wild species, including snow leopards. Support should be given to efforts to work with the traditional medicine communities to encourage sustainable use of wildlife products, including finding alternatives for products from rare species.

5. Education programmes should be developed for snow leopard areas, and shared between range states, that address the issues of the trade in snow leopard pelts and other products, and cover various target groups, from local communities to the policy makers, in different range states.

6. The International Snow Leopard Trust (ISLT) should determine ways and means to satisfy the feasible needs of range countries in terms of support for training their staffs, helping them identify new key snow leopard areas and in managing the existing critical habitats and corridors.

7. ISLT should monitor the progress made in implementing these resolutions and report successes and failures to the next symposium.

Details of these recommendations, actions and activities are contained in the attached Annexe.

ANNEXE

Participants in the Eighth International Snow Leopard Symposium, held in Islamabad, Pakistan, 12-16 November 1995, present the following resolutions as recommendations to the Board of Directors of the International Snow Leopard Trust, WWF Pakistan and other concerned organizations for approval and implementation.

1. Predation on livestock

- 1.1. encourage local communities to improve the management and protection of their livestock from predation by snow leopards and other large predators.
- 1.2. provide better veterinary services for livestock to improve survival rates.
- 1.3. introduce ways whereby local communities can earn alternative income in order to reduce their dependence on livestock, and thereby reduce the size of livestock herds.

2. Habitat fragmentation and conservation of prey species

- 2.1. identify snow leopard "hotspots" and corridors for immediate conservation action.
- 2.2. encourage the preparation of management plans for conservation of sustainable prey populations.

3. Scientific studies

- 3.1. International collaboration to identify critical transboundary snow leopard areas.
- 3.2. Establish a genetic survey of snow leopard populations, initially using easily available materials from zoo animals and existing scientific collections.
- 3.3. Study snow leopard ranging behavior in both isolated, low-density populations, as well as high density populations.
- 3.4. Study snow leopard prey species population trends and their relationship to on-going changes in pastoralism in the region. Target areas where there is little information for status surveys on snow leopard prey.
- 3.5. Acknowledge the initiative of Mezkhombank (Russia) in sponsoring a study to determine snow leopard status in Russia and the development of measures toward effective conservation of this species.

4. Poaching and fur trade

- 4.1. encourage countries with snow leopards which are not Parties to CITES to join the Convention and implement its provisions.
- 4.2. initialization by the ISLT of dialogues with the World Trade Organization on the problems arising from trade in wildlife products.
- 4.3. train wildlife staff responsible for enforcement of wildlife laws in snow leopard range countries.
- 4.4. encourage snow leopard range governments to enact legislation to give adequate institutional strength to wildlife conservation.
- 4.5. train wildlife staff in presentation of cases before courts.
- 4.6. encourage snow leopard range countries to seek training from CITES in enforcement procedures.
- 4.7. use local cultures and traditional values to prevent trade in snow leopard and other threatened species products by empowering local communities.
- 4.8. explore the value of a system of rewards for information about wildlife offences.
- 4.9. urge China to extend the ban on tiger products in the State Council decree of 29 May 1993 to cover substitutes from other threatened species, including the snow leopard.
- 4.10. support efforts to work with traditional medicine communities and encourage sustainable use of wildlife products, including finding alternatives for rare wildlife species.

5. Capacity building

- 5.1. train local professionals, especially in the Central Asian Republics.
- 5.2. disseminate scientific literature to countries lacking current material.
- 5.3. enhance the capacity and role of local NGOs.

6. Environmental education

6.1. carry out education programmes on the need for conservation of wildlife and natural habitat in snow leopard areas.

6.2. make use of traditional leaders, such as monks, for conservation education.

6.3. develop a mechanism for sharing educational material between snow leopard range countries.

6.4. identify high exposure, cost-effective programs e.g. zoo displays for use in snow leopard range countries.

7. Other issues

7.1. disseminate symposium resolutions to policy and decision makers, including national planning commissions, in snow leopard range countries.

7.2. follow-up by WWF Pakistan of discussions between participants in the symposium with the Chairman of the Environmental Council.