



## **ANNUAL REPORT 2013**

### **Snow Leopard Network – Mission and Vision**

The Snow Leopard Network is a worldwide organization dedicated to facilitating the exchange of information between individuals around the world for the purpose of snow leopard conservation.

### **Office bearers**

#### **SLN Steering Committee**

Chair Dr David Mallon

#### **Members –**

Dr Yash Veer Bhatnagar

Dr Ahmad Khan

Dr Chalise Mukesh

Ms Sibylle Noras

Ms Jennifer Snell Rullman

Dr Dajun Wang

#### **SLN Administration**

Executive Director Dr Charudutt Mishra

Program Co-ordinator Ms Rakhee Karumbaya

#### **Communications team**

Rakhee Karumbaya

Sibylle Noras

Heather Hemmingmoore

Rana Bayrakci-Smith

Seamus Smith

#### **Member acknowledgement**

The Steering Committee wishes to acknowledge the role of several SLN members who contributed their time towards SLN's objectives.

Dr. Rodney Jackson led the extensive effort to update the Snow Leopard Survival Strategy (SLSS), which is nearing completion. The effort was ably assisted by Kulbhushansingh Suryawanshi and Rishi Sharma. We are also grateful to the several member experts who have contributed by writing sections of the SLSS. Anush Shetty created the web platform for hosting the new version of SLSS.

Rodney Jackson and Darla Hillard are thanked for their inputs that helped improve the grants program. We also thank Rana Bayrakci-Smith, Heather Hemmingmoore and Sean Smith for their efforts in the Communications team.

### **Membership numbers**

SLN membership is made up of leading snow leopard experts in the public, private, and non-profit sectors. In 2013 SLN membership was 550 from over 41 countries.

## **Meetings**

During 2013 the Steering Committee held 2 Skype meetings and worked together by email communication.

## **2013 Activities**

SLN continued to serve as a hub of information exchange regarding snow leopards. In 2013, SLN also played an important role in the Global Snow Leopard Ecosystem Protection Program, an initiative of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic. SLN continued to respond to critical new issues affecting snow leopards. The SC also proactively engaged in a number of new activities outlined below.

### **Snow Leopard Conservation Grants (SLCG)**

The SLN has continued to maintain a high quality Grants Program. In 2013, the Snow Leopard Conservation Grants Program supported 5 projects to people in India, Nepal, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Mongolia (2) with \$55,215.

During 2013 a Review of Grant processes was undertaken by the Steering Committee, together with the Executive Director and Program Co-ordinator, resulting in revised formats, and further streamlining of the selection processes.

The Steering Committee would like to formally thank the following for their generous support which makes these Grants possible. (Include logos).

The Whitley Fund

Snow Leopard Trust

Snow Leopard Conservancy

Dynafit

WWF US / USAID

During 2013, for the first time, the Snow Leopard Conservation Grants Program received specific support from WWF- USAID for projects focused on climate change. As snow leopard habitats of Central Asia are considered especially vulnerable to changes in climate, this valuable and timely funding allows research projects to better understand the impacts of climate change on snow leopards, and conservation projects that aim to ameliorate them.

The Steering Committee continues to explore additional sources of support for the Grants going forward.

## **SLN Bibliography**

The Bibliography comprises an up to date database of research papers and reports on snow leopards and related aspects from around the world. SLN has compiled 1393 references and more than 1000 full text documents, primarily of scientific nature, concerning the snow leopard and its habitat. This information has been compiled for the sole purpose of sharing and making the information more easily available to SLN members. The articles are searchable by author, keyword, country, date and language. During 2013 twelve new articles were added.

## **Communications**

During 2013 the Communications team, along with the Steering Committee, developed a strategic approach to communications with SLN members.

Communications covered -

**SLN Website.** A review of the SLN website was undertaken and resulted in the following activities - The creation of a new web page on the Global Snow Leopard Forum (GSLF) held in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic in October 2013.

The creation of a new web page on the Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Program (GSLEPP)

A review of web site usage and the establishment of a Google Analytics tool were undertaken. The Google Analytics tool enables the tracking of ongoing website visitors and usage. As a result of this review the Steering Committee decided to actively “push” information to members to encourage them to use the website through the promotion in a bi-monthly email News Alert (see below).

A review of webpage currency and relevance was also undertaken which lead to the identification of pages which require new and more recent content. This activity has been added to the SLN Work Plan to go forward.

Phase 1 of a review to identify potential for a long term upgrade of the web site. This review identified the potential for the website to be moved onto a more current platform in the near future. A more current platform would enable easier updating of the site and the addition of social media engagement.

#### **SLN Bi Monthly Email News Alert**

The Communication team devised the idea of this News Alert to (1) provide members with news and information of SLN Steering Committee activities and member’s news and (2) to encourage members to more actively use the resources and news available on the SLN website.

#### **ListServe**

The ListServe consists of the email addresses of all members. It continues to provide individual members and member organisations with an efficient platform to share their news with the wider membership.

#### **Snow Leopard Survival Strategy (SLSS)**

The main goal of the SLN is to implement the Snow Leopard Survival Strategy, which offers a comprehensive analysis of the issues facing snow leopard conservation today. The first edition (editors Tom McCarthy and Guillaume Chapron) was published in 2003. A concise and partly updated version was produced in 2007 (editor David Mallon).

2013 marked the completion of 10 years of this important document. The SLSS requires a major update.

A small team from the Steering Committee and other members, led by Dr Rodney Jackson, invested substantial time and effort in 2013 towards this end. A first draft of the revised document was completed.

The Steering Committee also decided to make the updated SLSS document available as a living document on the SLN website, enabling frequent updates as new information comes to hand and is reviewed. The SLSS website structure was designed and built in anticipation of the completed updated document (to be available mid 2014).

#### **Global Snow Leopard Forum (GSLF) and Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Program (GLSEPP)**

In late 2013 President Almazbek Atambayev of the Kyrgyz Republic and officials representing 12 Central and South Asian countries outlined and endorsed an ambitious new global initiative in

Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic, to protect and conserve critical ecosystems in high-mountain landscapes inhabited by the endangered snow leopard. They were joined by conservation experts from around the world and the international donor community. The 12 snow leopard range nations endorsed the Bishkek Declaration on Snow Leopard Conservation and each country submitted a National Snow Leopard protection Plan which consolidated into the Global Snow Leopard Ecosystem Recovery Program (GSLEP). The aim of the GSLEP is to guide snow leopard conservation at the high government level in each range country.

All participants at the Bishkek GSLF worked to set a measurable goal by 2020 that would commit countries to work together to identify and secure, with the support of local communities, at least 20 healthy landscapes of snow leopards across the cat's range by 2020, or 'Secure 20 by 2020.'

SLN was involved in the GSLF and the GSLEP in a number of ways –

Several SLN members, especially Dr David Mallon, Dr Rodney Jackson, and Dr Charudutt Mishra made significant contributions in helping developing documents for the GSLEP and for national background documents (NSLEP).

Dr Charudutt Mishra, representing both Snow Leopard Trust and SLN attended the Global Forum and presented on livelihood programs for local communities to promote snow leopard conservation.

SLN Chair, Dr David Mallon gave formal words of thanks in response to the President's address and stated SLN's willingness to provide technical support for the initiative where possible.

Dr Yash Veer Bhatnagar, SLN Steering Committee member, attended the Global Forum as part of the official India delegation.

Sibylle Noras – representing the SLN Steering Committee attended the Global Forum.

Many other SLN members were also present at the Global Forum, either representing their respective organizations, or forming a part of their respective government delegations.

## **Action on global online marketplace selling snow leopard fur items**

During 2013 SC member, Sibylle Noras, noticed an advertisement of a woman's coat with a real snow leopard fur collar on Etsy.com, a global online marketplace with 20 million monthly visitors and over 800,000 small shops listing and selling items around the world.

The item in question was early identified as not real snow leopard fur but we were concerned that it was advertised as real snow leopard fur and therefore sending a message that it is OK to wear the fur of the endangered cat.

Sibylle alerted the Snow Leopard Trust (SLT), who with their huge network mobilized a Petition urging Etsy to change its policy and not be complicit in this action. In the meantime we also found that Etsy was in fact a global online marketplace for thousands of items of illegal endangered animal products including elephant tusks, rhino horn, tortoise shell and many more.

Thanks to 33,000 signatories to the petition and behind the scenes advocacy by the SLT, Etsy issued a statement about changing their policy to one where they would no longer accept listings on their site for any endangered animal products. This was a wonderful win for all endangered species as there is now one less global online marketplace to sell products and sends a clear message to those looking to use online selling in the illegal trade.