

Agenda of the Inception Workshop and Minutes



Inception workshop of the UNDP-GEF regional project «Transboundary cooperation for snow leopard and its ecosystems conservation»

Venue: «Shayr Ballroom» Hyatt Regency, Bishkek

Date: 8 December 2017

Time: 9:00 – 13:30

State Agency for Environment Protection and Forestry under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, Global Environment Facility (GEF), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Snow Leopard Trust (SLT), *Global Snow Leopard and Its Ecosystems Protection Program* (GSLEP)

Working language: English and Russian. Simultaneous translation will be provided.

AGENDA

Time	Events
08.45 – 09.00	Registration
09.00 – 09.30	<p>Opening and welcome remarks</p> <p>Mr. Abdykalyk Rustamov, Director of the State Agency of Environment Protection and Forestry under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, GEF Focal Point</p> <p>Ms. Aliona Niculita, UNDP Resident Representative a.i. in the Kyrgyz Republic</p> <p>Dr. Koustubh Sharma, Senior Ecologist, SLT & International Coordinator, GSLEP</p> <p><u>Moderator:</u> Mr. Daniyar Ibragimov, Team Leader, Environment and DRM, UNDP in the Kyrgyz Republic.</p>
09.30 – 9:45	<p>SL Country opening remarks (tbc)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Republic of Kazakhstan - Republic of Tajikistan - Republic of Uzbekistan

Time	Events
9:45 – 10:05	<p>Presentation of the regional project «Trans-boundary cooperation for snow leopard conservation»</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Aims, Tasks, components and main indicators – Budget, main partners and further events – Management arrangements <p>Dr. Koustubh Sharma, Senior Ecologist, SLT & International Coordinator, GSLEP</p>
10:05 – 10:30	<p>Presentation on “UNDP and GEF Oversight, Monitoring and Reporting Requirements”</p> <p>Ms. Gulsah Isik, Programme Associate, IRH UNDP, Turkey</p>
10:30 – 11:00	<p>Presentation about management planning Implementation models to achieve the GSLEP goal “Secure 20 landscapes by 2020”.</p> <p>Dr. Yash Veer Bhatnagar, International Management Planning Expert, GSLEP & SLT</p>
11:00-11:30	<p>Coffee break</p>
11:30 - 11:40	<p>Formation of groups to undertake work in the sections and group coordinator identification</p>
11:40 - 12:40	<p>Discussions in groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Snow leopard population estimation and ecosystem monitoring - Management planning - Wildlife Crime Database: needs and processes
12:40- 13:00	<p>Presentation of discussion results. Group coordinators</p>
13:00- 13:30	<p>Closing – Mr. Daniyar Ibragimov, Team Leader, Environment and DRM, UNDP in the Kyrgyz Republic.</p>
13:30	<p>Lunch</p>

MINUTES OF INCEPTION SEMINAR

Opening Session

The inaugural speech was made by Mr. Nurlan Jumaev of the State Agency for Environment Protection and Forestry (SAEPF). He emphasized the need to conserve the species through trans-boundary efforts. He mentioned how all range countries are developing national plans for the conservation of select high-mountain landscapes in alignment with the goal of the GSLEP program (Secure 20 snow leopard landscapes by 2020). He mentioned the importance of effective cross-border cooperation. Finally, Mr. Jumaev proposed to scale up the role of the GSLEP Secretariat, suggesting that it should actively oversee work in all snow leopard range countries as well as coordinate with donors and other project partners.

Mr. Daniar Ibragimov from UNDP spoke about the importance of the project in light of several national snow leopard related projects being implemented by UNDP in the Central Asian countries. He emphasized on the need for better coordination between different projects and to plan effective measures to ensure sustainability of activities beyond projects' tenures.

Dr. Koustubh Sharma provided a detailed overview of the GSLEP program and the project's relevance to achieving the ambitious goal of securing 20 snow leopard landscapes by 2020. He began with a historic timeline from 2013 to present, detailing key events in the process of this project, such as technical workshops, needs assessments, regional projects, establishment of High Level Steering Committee, climate-smart management planning, transboundary project approval, international forums, and project inception. Dr. Sharma then outlined the key project deliverables and action items:

Project Deliverables

- Develop climate-smart management plans
- Develop monitoring frameworks
- Develop Wildlife Enforcement Networks to strengthen trans-boundary cooperation
- Strengthen National Environment Security Taskforce through coordination between various stakeholder line agencies such as police, border security force, military, airlines, border patrol etc.
- Organize regional and global meetings to facilitate regular coordination between GSLEP countries and partner organizations
- Develop manuals and training toolkits focusing on snow leopard populations, climate smart management planning processes, valuation of ecosystem services, and community-based conservation
- Prepare review papers and compilation documents on wildlife laws across snow leopard range countries, financial mechanisms to support and sustain conservation; engage with business and industry sectors to facilitate community based conservation
- Conduct pilots for global snow leopard population estimation, ecosystem services valuation, and consortia of business and industry sectors

Dr. Sharma concluded by explaining the project's primary modality of the implementation: building convergence and alignment between on-going projects, and creating working groups through partnerships with different organizations to develop operational modalities.

GEF Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation

Ms. Gulshah Isik from UNDP-GEF's Istanbul Regional Centre made a detailed presentation about the management of UNDP-GEF projects as per global guidelines. She provided an introduction to the detailed framework for monitoring implementation and evaluating results of GEF-funded projects. Her presentation detailed the specifics of the UNDP-GEF project cycle, reporting requirements, monitoring & evaluation requirements, and tools & tips for results-based management.

GSLEP Management Planning

A detailed presentation was then made by Dr. Yash Veer Bhatnagar who serves as the Conservation Planning Specialist with the GSLEP Program, supporting preparation of management plans in various snow leopard range countries. His presentation provided a detailed outline of the entire process of developing climate smart management plans for the GSLEP landscapes. His presentation outlined the key features of GSLEP landscapes, with specific attention drawn to the Central Tien Shan Landscape. He then demonstrated the need for management planning by outlining 4 primary key threats: pasture degradation due to increasing livestock pressure and climate change, poor livelihood options for local people, poaching for wildlife, and large infrastructure projects. He then outlined the specifics of effective management plan structures: the broad approach includes field work components, literature review, workshops and interviews, climate change assessments, and development of best practices. Dr. Bhatnagar stressed the importance of political support, multidisciplinary, innovation, multi-level planning, implementation structures, and capacity to monitor and adapt in the creation of effective management plans. He stressed the goals and vision of the project: to secure Tien Shan landscapes in a manner such that local communities and other wildlife can coexist. Dr. Bhatnagar then concluded with a discussion about the importance of an integrated model for conservation and sustainable development, and the need for coordination, cooperation, convergence, capacity, and partnerships in all related activities.

Group Discussion

The presentations were followed by detailed open group discussion about the Results Framework proposed in the project (see annex A). Several aspects of the proposal, including baseline figures, methodologies, proposed activities, and background information, were discussed.

There were concerns about the need for snow leopard population estimation, to which a detailed update was provided starting from the Kathmandu Resolution 2017 that was endorsed during the Steering Committee Meeting in Nepal to the Bishkek Declaration 2017. Given the lack of knowledge about snow leopard populations due to biased, limited sampling, the issue has been earmarked as a key deliverable in multiple GSLEP meetings. Since reliable population estimations require sophisticated methods to design, collect, and analyze data, the initiative is being undertaken under direct supervision of the Steering Committee comprised of Ministers of the 12 snow leopard range countries. Expert panels and working committees comprised of various national and international NGOs support its implementation at various levels. Some details about the figures and statistics used in the proposal were briefly discussed for their source and accuracy, and suggestions were accordingly proposed in the results framework. Concerns about false claims of snow leopards killing livestock were raised and discussed in light of successful conservation models across the snow leopard range that focus on addressing perceptions irrespective of which predator (snow leopard or wolf) is the main culprit. Some participants emphasized the need to not reinvent the wheel. There was, however, mutual agreement to focus on quality control, even if it requires overhauling known processes and methods.

Workshop Conclusion

The meeting concluded with the promise of creating an e-group to further discuss best practices, concerns and challenges pertaining to the project's implementation. A translated version of the results framework was shared with all participants and their inputs were received and incorporated in the revision of the document.