

Statement of Concern Regarding the Status of the Snow Leopard on the IUCN Red List

August 24-25, 2017, Bishkek

We, the representatives of the Governments of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the Kingdom of Bhutan, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of India, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia, the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan, custodians of the world's wild snow leopard population and the most valuable high-mountain ecosystems where they live, have gathered in Bishkek, the Kyrgyz Republic, on August 24-25, 2017, to attend the Second International Forum on Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Conservation and a Green Investment Forum.

Snow Leopard is the icon and flagship of conservation in our mountains and we the range countries have accorded it the highest protection status.

We hereby:

Note with serious concern, the ever-increasing threats to the endangered snow leopard and its habitat posed by the loss of prey, habitat degradation, poaching, illegal trafficking and climate change

Emphasize that due to the challenges of conducting research on a species as elusive as the snow leopard, the scientific community has been able to assess populations in less than 2% of the global snow leopard range with scientifically reliable methods. This too has not been sampled randomly, but is biased towards the best habitats, thus rendering any extrapolations inaccurate.

Highlight that the most recent data that have become available, for instance from Pakistan, points towards significant declines in Snow Leopard populations

Given these sobering facts, we the custodians of the world's wild Snow Leopards:

Strongly appeal to the IUCN to maintain the '**Endangered**' Red List status of snow leopards until scientifically sound data on Snow Leopard populations and its trends become available, for which we are launching a new collaborative initiative PAWS (Population Assessment of the World's Snow Leopards)

Reject categorically any change in the conservation status of snow leopard until PAWS generates scientific reliable population estimates and trends of the global Snow Leopard.

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