

Terms of Reference for PAWS Technical Oversight and Support Panel

Population size of snow leopards in the wild is poorly understood. Population abundance studies using scientifically valid techniques and sampling cover a mere 2% of their entire distribution range, with the majority of studies being biased towards best habitats. Projections of the global snow leopard population based on these data are not reliable. Governments of all snow leopard range countries have therefore strongly emphasized the need for more robust and expansive monitoring of the world's snow leopard populations, and stated this need in the [Bishkek Declaration 2017](#).

Population assessment of the world's snow leopards (PAWS) is an ambitious initiative that will foster collaborations between governments, ecologists, statisticians, programmers and data scientists. To facilitate such collaborations, select panels and committees will be formed. The exercise will be conducted under the overall oversight of the GSLEP Steering Committee comprised of Environment Ministers of all 12 snow leopard range countries, and coordinated by the GSLEP Secretariat.

An expert panel, comprising of leading snow leopard scientists, statisticians, and a representative of the GSLEP National Focal Points will supervise and provide scientific guidance to PAWS. A separate coordination and delivery committee will include organizations and institutions and will work closely with the range countries to deliver on the specific goals of executing surveys and helping with subsequent data analyses.

The expert panel will be responsible for providing scientific oversight and guidance. This includes development and approval of methods and sampling strategy standards for PAWS, providing support and guidance to implementing partners, and supervising data analyses and interpretations. Additionally, the panel will ensure generation of periodic reports and provide a brief progress update every 6 months. The panel will meet at least once a year, preferably on the sidelines of the GSLEP Steering Committee Meeting. The panel's term will be for a period of 2 years following which the panel's membership will be reviewed and reconstituted.

Members may be re-invited or replaced depending on their other time commitments and feasibility to contribute to the PAWS process.

A tentative list of first members of the panel are:

- 1 Prof. David Borchers, Head-Statistics, Centre for Research in Ecological and Environmental Monitoring, University of St. Andrews, Scotland, UK (Co-Chair)
- 2 Prof. Lu Zhi, Centre for Nature and Society, Peking University and Steering Committee Chairperson, Snow Leopard Network (Co-Chair)
- 3 Mr. Ashiq Ahmad Khan, former Steering Committee Chairperson, Snow Leopard Network
- 4 Dr. Charudutt Mishra, Scientific and Conservation Director, Snow Leopard Trust, Senior Scientist, Nature Conservation Foundation, and Executive Director, Snow Leopard Network
- 5 Dr. Chris Sutherland, Assistant Professor, Department of Environmental Conservation, University of Massachusetts-Amherst, USA
- 6 Dr. James Nichols, Scientist Emeritus, United States Geological Survey, USA
- 7 Prof. Sandro Lovari, University of Sienna, Italy and Steering Committee Member, Snow Leopard Network
- 8 Dr. Som Ale, Clinical Assistant Professor, Biological Sciences, University of Illinois and member, Snow Leopard Network
- 9 Dr. Thomas McCarthy, Head, Snow Leopard Program, Panthera
- 10 Mr. Wali Modaqiq, Deputy Director General, National Environment Protection Agency and GSLEP National Focal Point, Afghanistan