

GSLEP Program Update: Nepal

Conserving Snow Leopards blending Traditional Knowledge & Modern Sciences



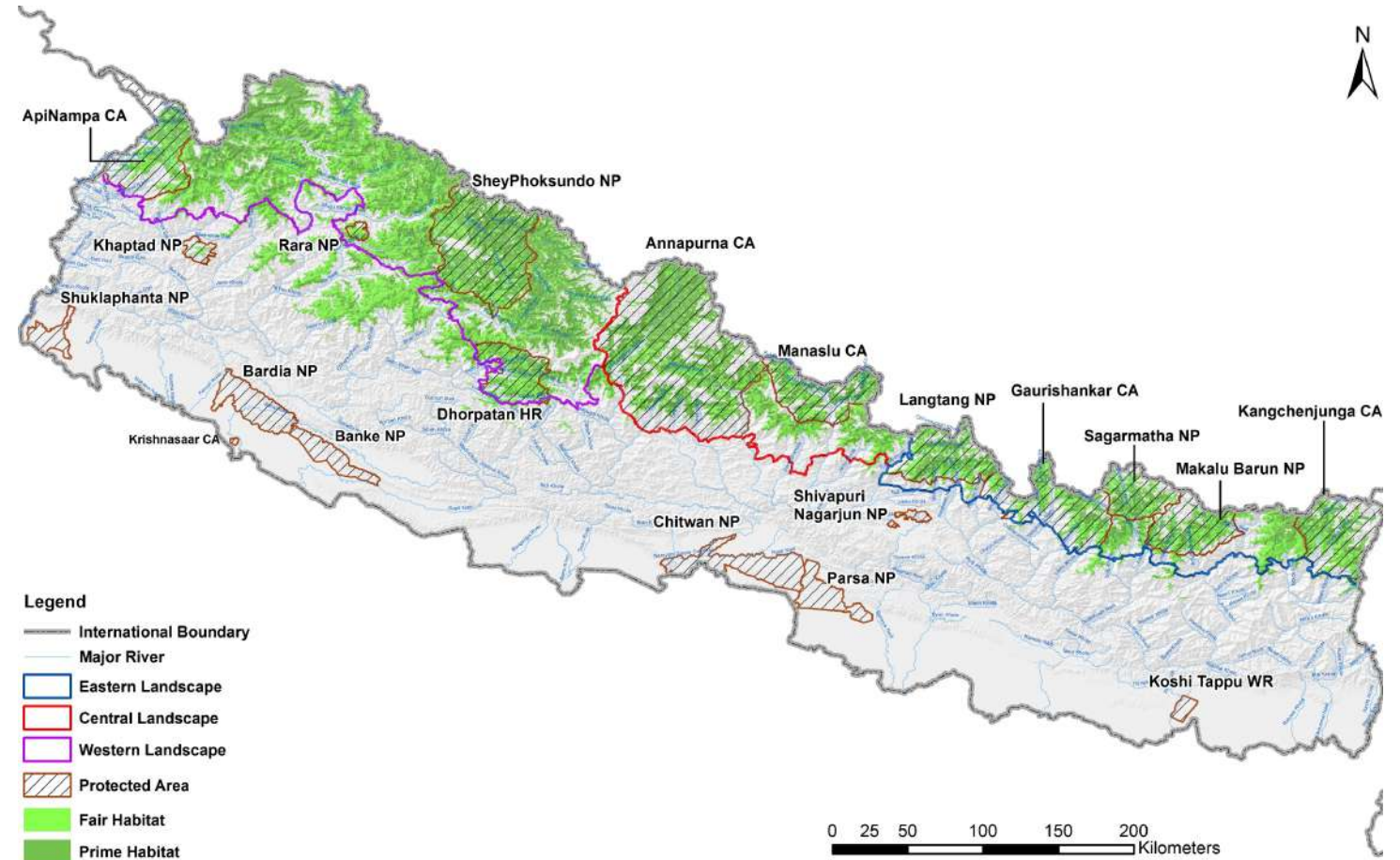
Steering Committee Meeting, 2024

Samarkand

Dr. Sindhu Dhungana, DG - DNPWC
Dr. Ghana S Gurung, CR - WWF Nepal

Implementation status of NSLEP - Overview

- Conservation efforts in **all three landscapes**
- **Highest research** among SL range countries
- **Population estimates** in priority sites
- **Climate-smart** landscape plan
- **Community knowledge & faith integration**
- **Zero retaliatory killing assured** in one site
- **Holistic integrated conservation** in one highest SL density PA
- **Community institutions capacitated**
- Foundation laid for **One Health approach** to snow leopard conservation





Conflict management, Community livelihood



- **Policy improved for conflict relief**
- **Community institutions capacitated/equipped (BZ/SLCC/LIS) for improved Park-People coordination**
- **Community-run Livestock Insurance Schemes (LIS) strengthened**
- **Government relief access improved for remote communities through innovative integration with LIS**

- **Piloted predator-proof corrals showcase zero mass killing of livestock**
- **Mass community awareness – faith leaders**
- **Income generation diversification (including tourism)**

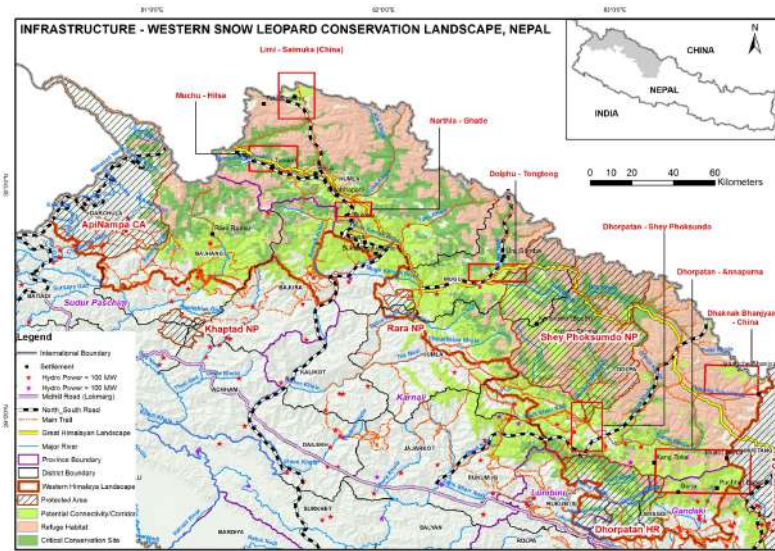
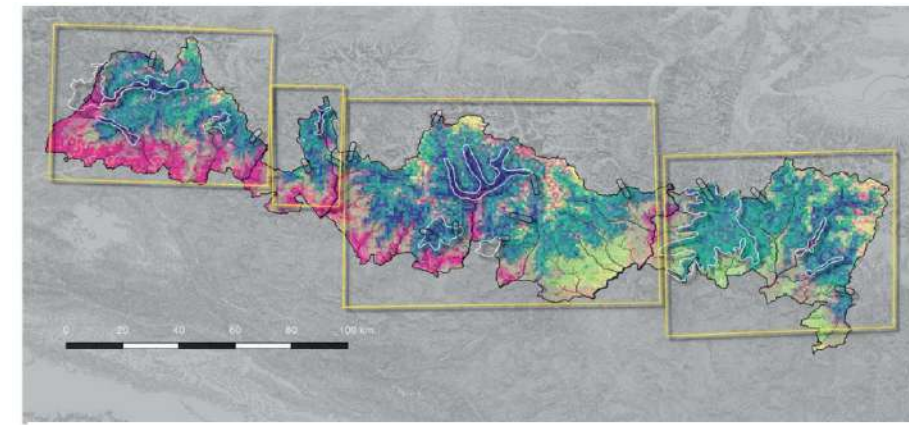




Managing Habitats and Prey



- **Critical conservation sites, corridors, climate refugia** identified in western and eastern landscapes
- **Frontline staff and citizen scientists** capacitated, equipped & mobilized for research and monitoring
- **Periodic monitoring** of prey and habitat
- Foundation laid for **tradition-integrated rangeland co-management** (pilot)
- **Solid waste management** from rangelands
- Research for **sustainable harvest of valuable NTFPs**





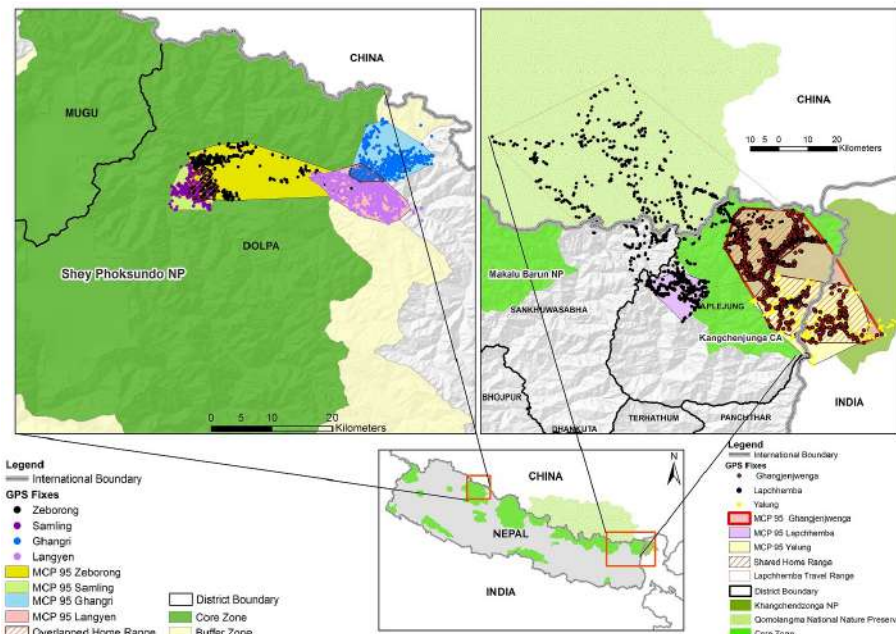
Research & Monitoring



- **Cutting-edge research** technologies including satellite telemetry
- **Community engagement** as citizen scientists/SLCC
- **Snow leopard population assessments using PAWS** in priority PAs and outside PAs
- Monitoring **climate impacts**
- **Infrastructure assessments** for sustainable development
- **Socio-economic assessments** to guide conservation
- **Traditional Ecological Knowledge documentation** for co-management



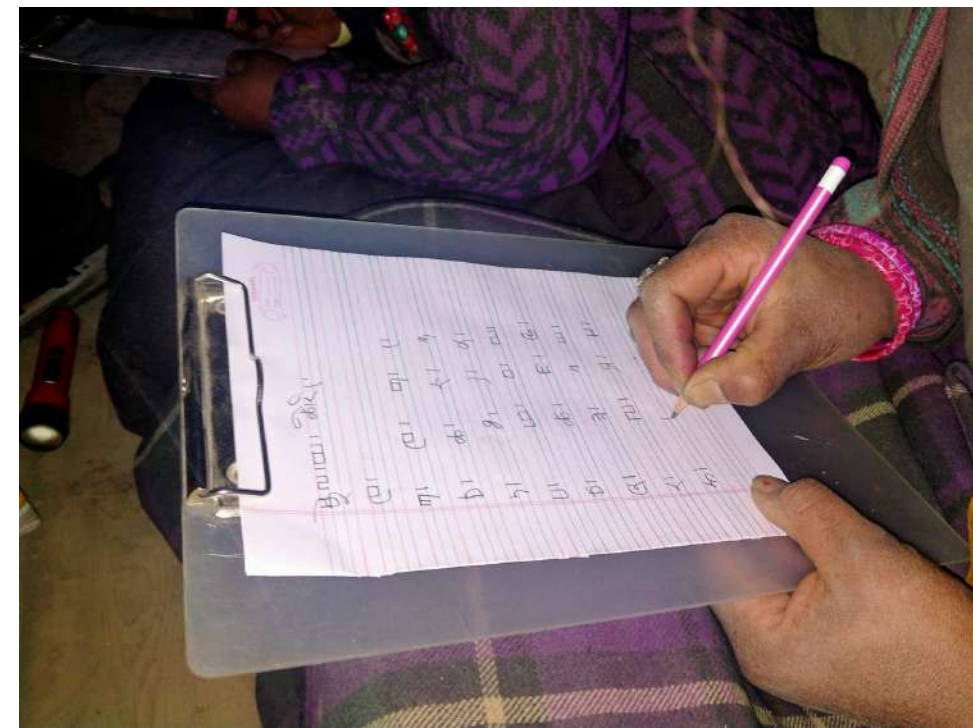
POPULATION ASSESSMENT OF SHEY - PHOKSUNDO NATIONAL PARK'S SNOW LEOPARD AND PREY



Awareness & Communication



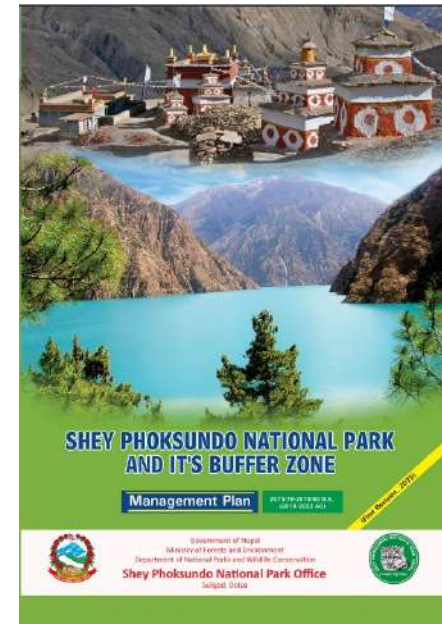
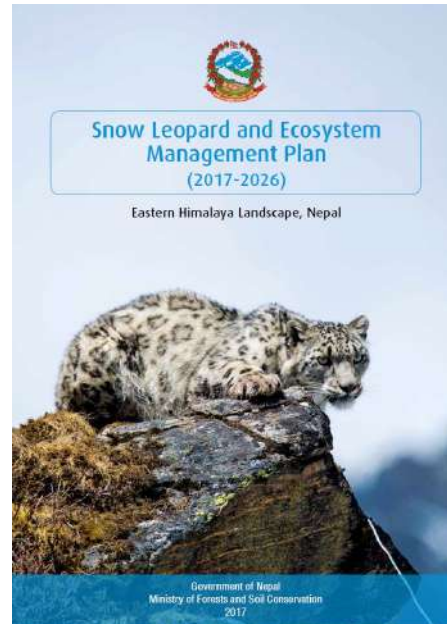
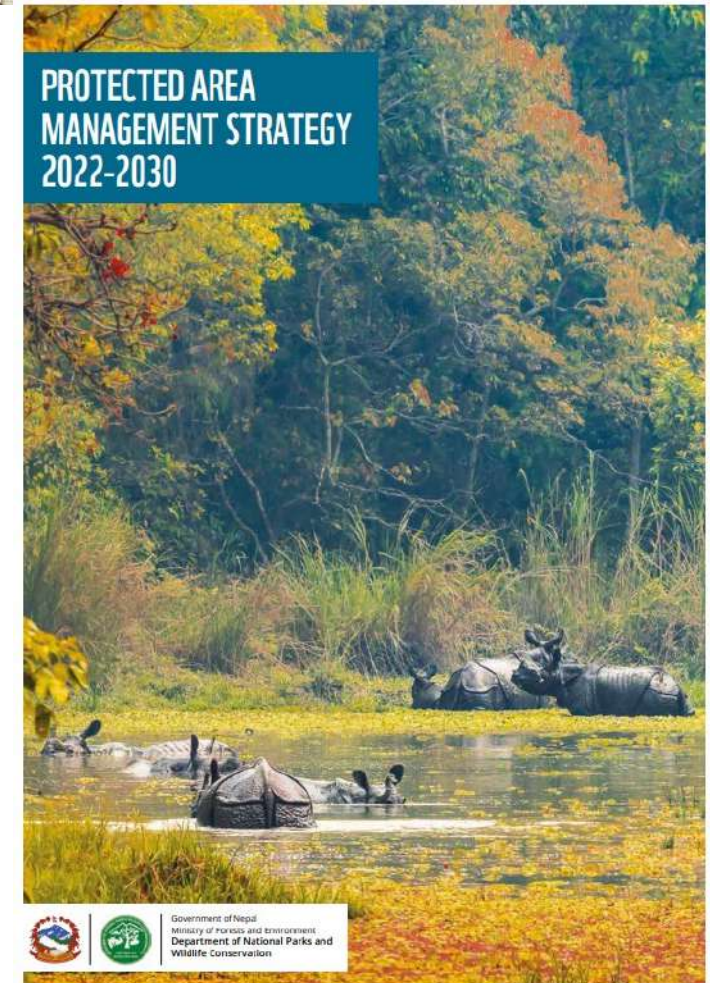
- **Awareness materials** (posters, pamphlets, documentaries etc) on snow leopard conservation, and specific issues such as conflict management, waste management, etc
- **Strengthening eco-clubs** in mountain regions
- Inclusion of environmental issues and snow leopards in **school curricula** (including Bhot/Nepali languages)
- **Faith-based outreach** on snow leopard conservation
- **Non-formal education** for indigenous communities
- Engagement of **mass media** for outreach
- **Scholarships** for students from indigenous communities



Strengthening
Policies &
Institutions



- Policy makers – communities' interactions
- National policies, acts, regulations prepared/updated
 - National Wildlife Health Action Plan
 - Protected Area Management Strategy
 - Wildlife Damage Relief Guidelines
 - Wildlife friendly linear infrastructure directives
- Snow Leopard conservation plans
 - National Snow Leopard Conservation Action Plan update ongoing
 - Climate-smart landscape plan - eastern landscape; western landscape (ongoing)
 - Protected Area management plans

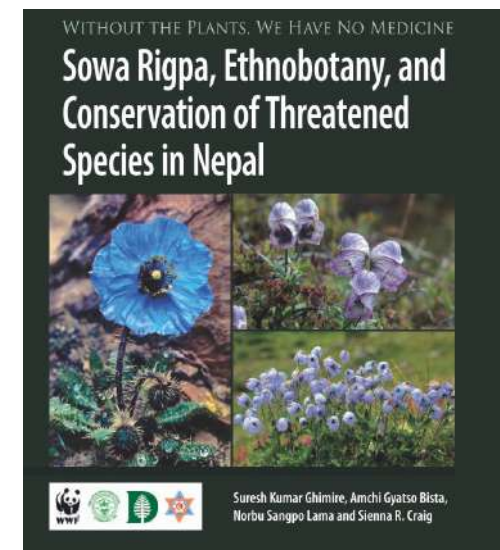




Disrupting illegal wildlife trade



- Capacitating/mobilizing frontline staff & CBAPUs
- Real Time SMART patrolling
- Informant mobilization
- Strengthening anti-poaching networks at PA/District/Province/National levels (CIB, JIC, etc)
- Strengthening enforcement agencies (WCCBs and border/customs security)
- Equipment and Field gear support
- Mass awareness against wildlife crimes
- Sensitization of non-conventional stakeholders to reduce wildlife trade
- Work with traditional medicine practitioners





Climate Adaptations & Nature-based Solutions

- Engaging with provincial & local governments on Natural Resource/Climate adaptation/Infrastructure policies
- Capacitating stakeholders
- Clean energy access in remotest villages (pathway for **100% renewable energy by 2050**)

Management & monitoring of disease systems

- National Wildlife Health Strategy
- Foundation for One Health (pilot):
 - Disease investigation guidelines
 - Local youth trained as veterinary technicians

- Disease monitoring mechanism being worked out in view of remoteness and access
- Sample collection and storage training
- Equipment support
- Coordination with NAST





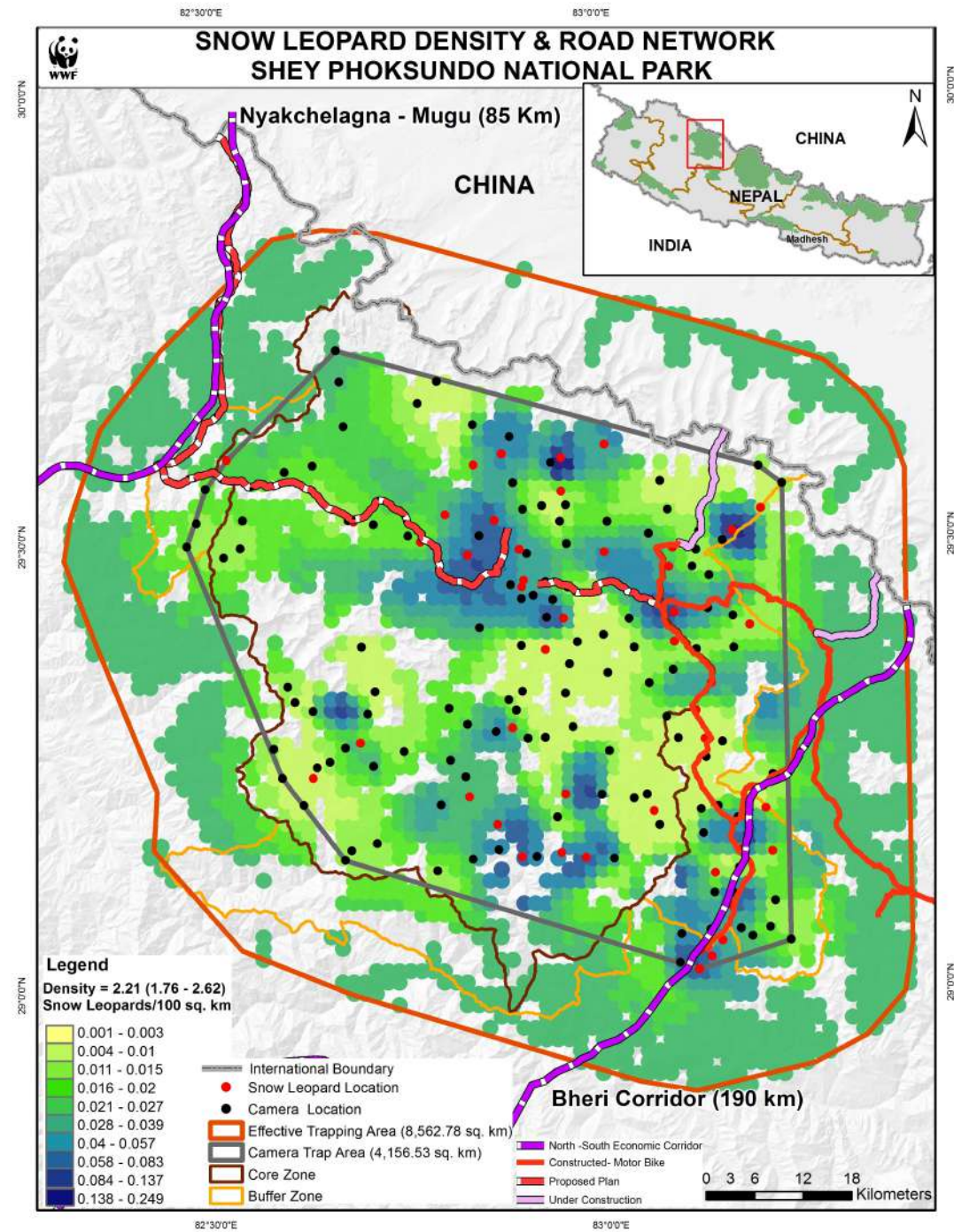
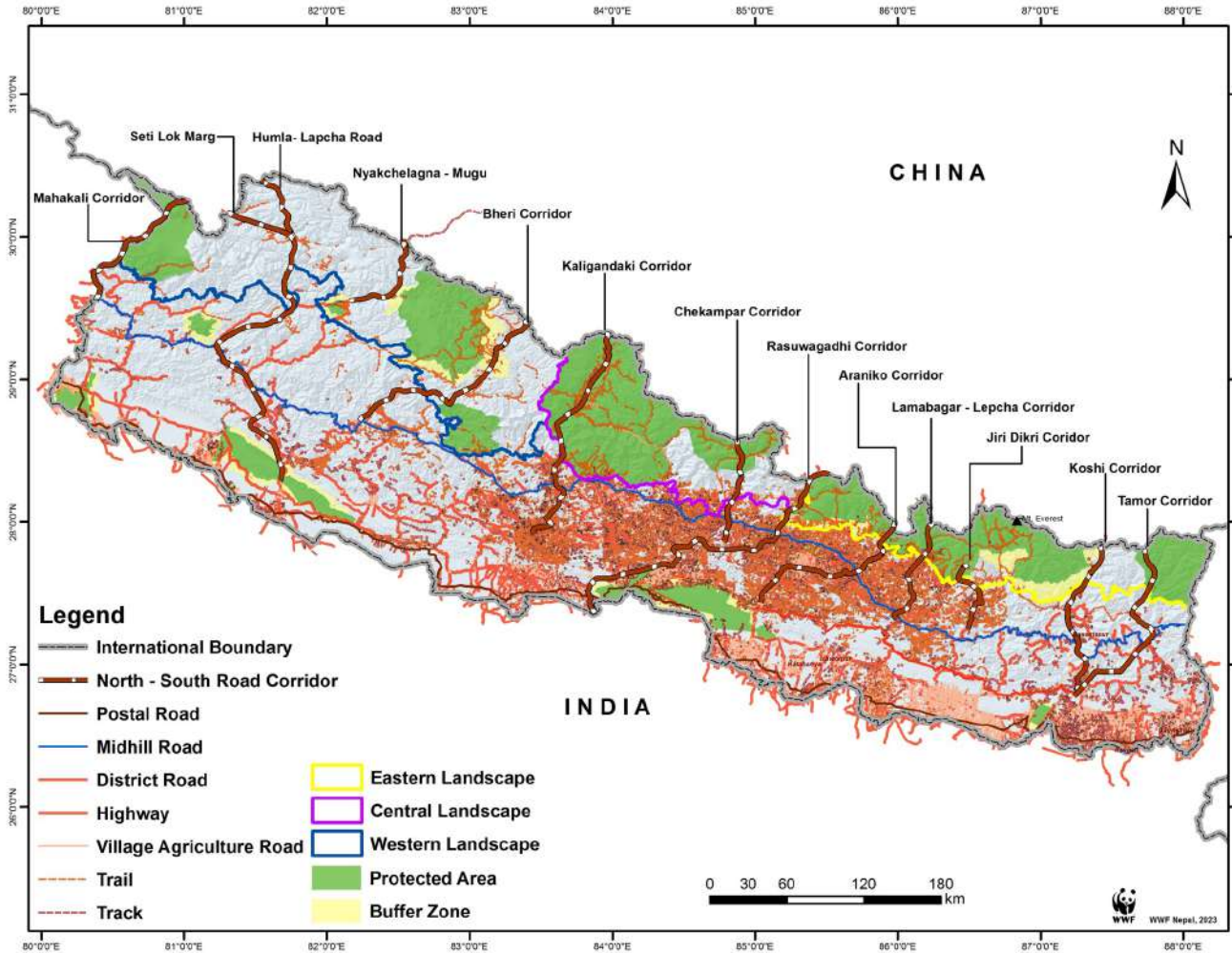
Managing Infrastructure & Developmental initiatives

- Wildlife friendly infrastructure directives
- Infrastructure assessment across Nepal Himalayas

- Linear infrastructure mapping/impact assessment (pilot)
- Wildlife friendly infrastructures in **forestry and engineering curricula**
- Capacitating stakeholders
- Improving coordination among stakeholders

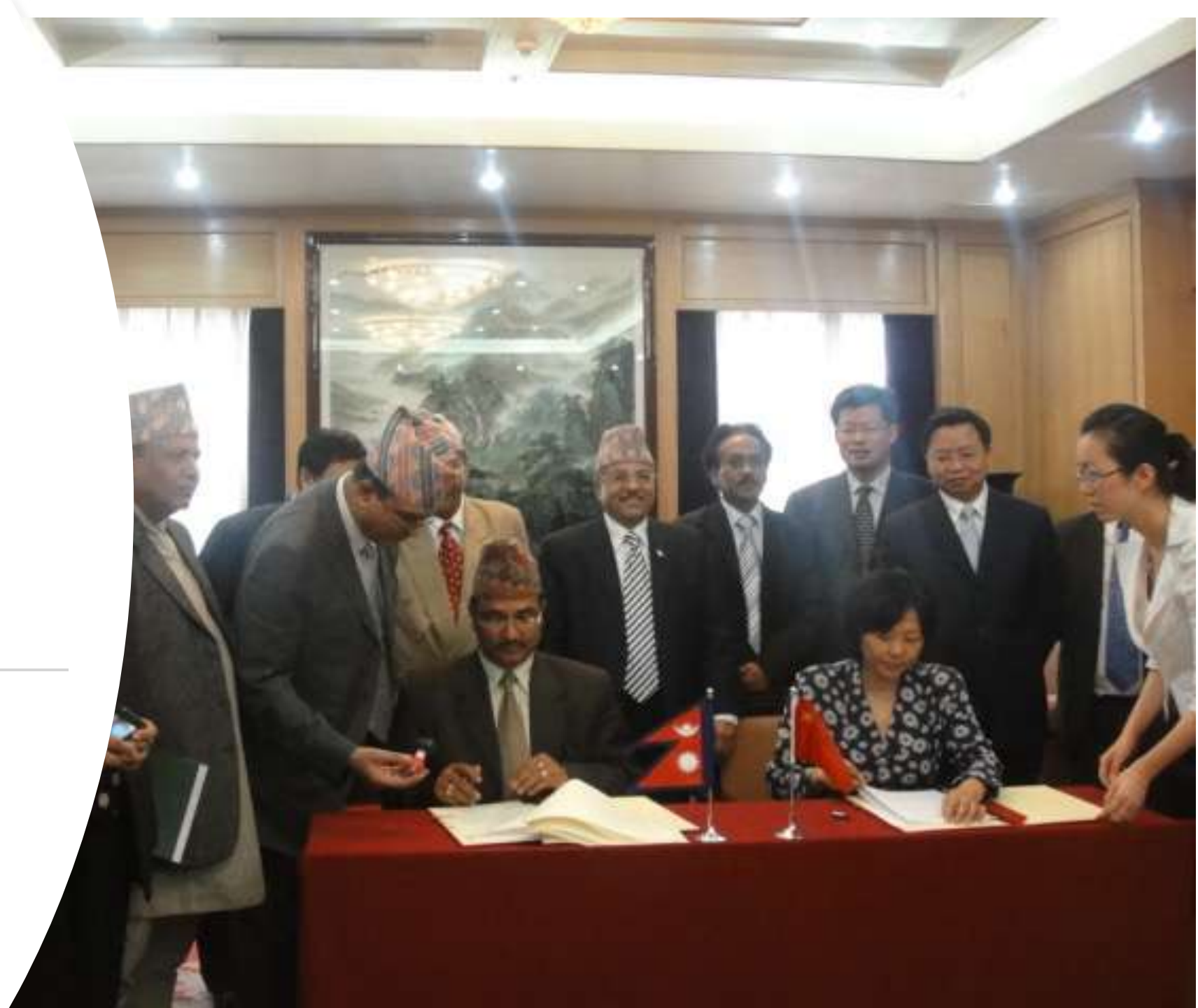


Infrastructures in SL habitat



Transboundary initiatives

- MoU with China
- Resolution with India





Resource mobilization for NSLEP

- Primarily internal [government]
- External [donors]: WWF (~3m USD); Others (~1m USD)





Challenges

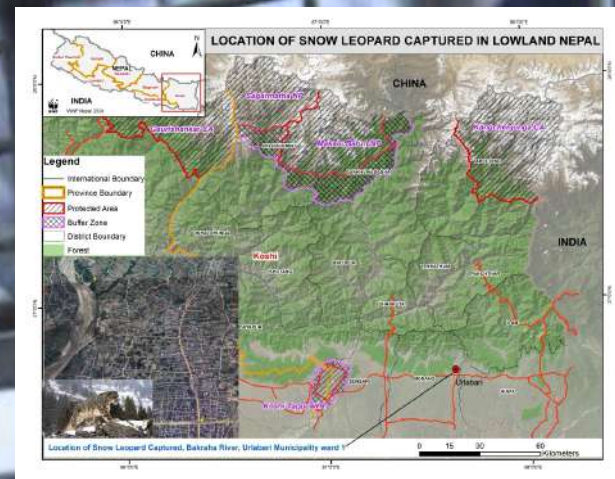
- Extremely difficult landscape
- Highly resource intensive & under-resourced institutions

- Coordination between different agencies
- Increasing conflicts (including with wolves)
- Increasing infrastructures
- Feral dogs
- Increasing climate uncertainties



Reanalyzing threats

- **Existing threats:** some threats mitigated with model solutions (conflict management, crime prevention etc), replication and scaling out needs investments
- **Emerging threats:** Climate change, diseases, feral dogs, infrastructures, etc



Next steps for Nepal

- Better understanding snow leopards including national population estimation – phase-wise/site-wise (resource optimization)
- Continue policy improvements and adaptations
- Scale out best practices in conflict management
- Prepare management plans of all snow leopard bearing PAs
- Snow leopard habitat mapping, including critical conservation sites, corridors and climate refugia
- Showcase rangeland co-management model
- Facilitate wildlife-friendly infrastructures
- OneHealth approach
- Strengthen conservation and wildlife crime control institutions
- Strengthen community institutions & local governments for conservation
- Strengthen faith-based conservation
- Climate-smart plans: Mid-term review of eastern landscape, approval of western landscape and preparation of central landscape

Thank you!



Photo: Ghana Shyam Gurung