

A photograph of a snow leopard cub climbing a steep, rocky cliff. The cub is positioned vertically, with its front paws gripping a ledge and its hind legs pushing off from the rock face. The cub's fur is a mix of light tan and white, covered in dark, irregular spots and stripes. The background consists of dark, jagged rock formations and some sparse, dry vegetation.

2013

Snow Leopard Trust
Annual Report



In a truly global effort, in 2013 more than 3,000 people around the world helped us sort through and identify wild snow leopards through an online program called CatCam.

Dear Friends,

It still shocks me to look back on a year in which the 12 snow leopard Range Countries, led by the President of Kyrgyzstan, came together to save snow leopards and their habitat. It is something that has never happened in snow leopard conservation before, and I'm not sure we'll ever see it again. But it came about at the perfect time.

Until recently, much of snow leopard habitat was too remote and isolated for large-scale development. The greatest threats the cats faced came from rural herders and intrepid hunters.

Today, that has changed. Industrial development sits poised to have the greatest effect on snow leopards in the coming decades. Hydropower dams, road construction, mining, tourism, military movement, international trade—these are just a few of the 'modern challenges' redefining life across snow leopard range.

Working with rural herder communities hasn't become any less important, and we remain committed to helping people and wildlife coexist. Indeed, we think the best way forward is to work both locally and globally, and to find ways to build greater collaboration between the two.

The problems snow leopards face are too large for a single person, group or government to solve alone. In the race to save snow leopards, we all have a part to play.

In the pages of this report, I wanted to share some of the success stories you made possible on a local and global level. There are just too many to include them all!

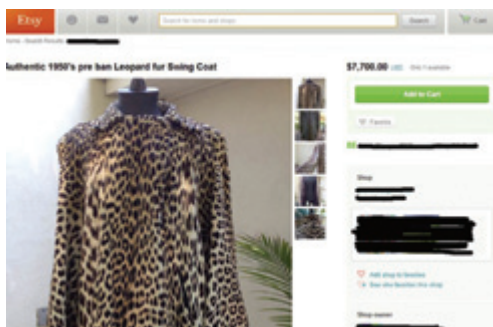
You gave children in snow leopard habitat a fresh perspective on the wonders of their natural environment. You enabled local communities to better protect their livestock from snow leopard predation. You convinced an online giant to change their policies and close off avenues for illegal wildlife trade. And you brought together world leaders to make concrete plans for saving more than half the planet's snow leopard population.

As the world gets smaller, I love seeing our community—a community of snow leopard supporters worldwide—get larger, stronger, and more mobilized. Thank you for standing with us to fund, educate, and advocate for the protection of snow leopards and their mountain homes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brad Rutherford". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "B" and "R".

Brad Rutherford
Executive Director



In 2013, two of our partner villages in Kyrgyzstan took a stand against illegal poaching. They agreed that, as part of their conservation contracts, they would not provide room or board to illegal hunters.

Shopaholics and snow leopard supporters rejoice!

By Matt Feichter, Communications Director

It's not every day you and I get to be snow leopard activists.

But in 2013, we all scored a big win when the popular arts and crafts marketplace, Etsy.com, announced new policies to help stop the trade in products made with endangered animal parts, including snow leopard.

Millions of people worldwide shop on sites like eBay, Amazon and Etsy annually. eBay and Amazon have clear and strong stances explicitly banning products made with parts of endangered animals—regardless of age or provenance. But up until last year Etsy lacked similar barriers, which left open loopholes for illegal trade.

Snow leopard trade is prohibited in the United States under the Endangered Species Act, and banned throughout most of the world thanks to an international agreement called CITES that is upheld by 180 countries. However, governments including the U.S. make certain limited allowances for trade of 'pre-ban' items that were made before these laws went into effect.

In this age of global online markets, these restrictions and rules can be hard to enforce and monitor, allowing black market dealers to pass fresh furs off as, for example, their grandma's 'vintage' snow leopard coat. Even

sellers and buyers interested in legal trade can fall victim to illegal activities and unwittingly fuel demand for new animal parts.

In summer 2013 we reached out to our members to sign a petition asking Etsy to explicitly ban endangered animal products from their site. More than 33,000 people raised their voices and signed a petition to Etsy's management—and Etsy listened.

On July 22, 2013 the company stepped up for wildlife and announced new policies, effective immediately, to stop the trade in products made with parts of endangered animals in their marketplace. The wording of their new policies reflects the petition you made possible and today Etsy's trend-setting site stands as another mighty pillar in the great fight to close off illegal trade.

We know this won't end snow leopard poaching overnight, but it's a major step and one in which we can all take pride. Etsy is a major online force and their new policy means one less loophole for poachers to exploit. We are glad for this opportunity to bring the Etsy community and the conservation community together to protect snow leopards, and we hope it will help hundreds of other endangered species as well.



In 2013, we helped Snow Leopard Network provide over \$50,000 in grant monies to special conservation and research projects in 6 snow leopard range countries, including Russia and Kazakhstan.

Snow Leopards on the World Stage

By Brad Rutherford, Executive Director

When the President of Kyrgyzstan calls, you jump to attention.

In 2012, Mr. Almazbek Atambayev, President of the Kyrgyz Republic, took it upon himself to convene a Global Snow Leopard Conservation Forum. His vision: to mobilize all snow leopard range countries towards greater conservation and sustainable development across Central Asia's high mountain ecosystems.

He asked the World Bank's Global Tiger Initiative for help, and they recruited us as their top technical consultant. By February 2013, I was in weekly conference calls with dignitaries and World Bank leaders trying to do what had never been done before: get top government officials from all 12 snow leopard countries in the same room, at the same time, to talk snow leopards.

Although President Atambayev sent personal invitations to each head of state, I had nightmares that if any of the key delegations pulled out the entire forum would crumble. At times I felt like a politically besieged wedding planner!

Leading up to the forum, our teams worked tirelessly to help range countries complete National Snow Leopard Action Plans, and from there to develop a unified set of conservation priorities to bring before the forum's delegates. It was incredible to see countries, like Mongolia, which developed a National Strategy years ago, reenergized. They worked with our Mongolia staff and other experts to update their strategy and finalized it in time for the forum.

On October 23, 2013, the big day arrived. The Global Snow Leopard Conservation Forum was held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan and every range country was in attendance. Snow leopards emerged on the world stage as a priority for conservation in Central Asia.

The delegates signed a declaration to focus on snow leopard conservation and adopted a global plan to meet the unified conservation priorities agreed upon by each state.

To ensure these plans are not just 'paper promises', the Trust is helping oversee a strong Global Forum Secretariat. With support from UNDP and Whitley Fund for Nature, the Secretariat is guiding countries to translate pledges into concrete action.

One of the biggest goals: to identify and secure 20 snow leopard landscapes across the cat's range by 2020, or "secure 20 by 2020." If achieved, this goal will mean more protected areas, more transboundary cooperation, and greater conservation for more than 2,000 snow leopards—up to half of the total wild population. That is an incredible dream to work towards.

Looking back, the Global Forum is truly beyond what I ever dreamed possible. It was a giant first step in the greatest vision for snow leopard conservation ever conceived. And now, if we can meet our goals, even larger, greater milestones lay ahead.



In 2013, in the Indian state of Himachal Pradesh, the village of Losar expanded their grazing-free reserve to protect over 25 sq km (almost 10 sq miles) of delicate mountain grasslands.

Surprises for snow leopards

By Dr. Yash Veer Bhatnagar

Even after 20 years of community-based conservation, people can still surprise me.

Throughout northern India, livestock depredation by snow leopards is a major driver of economic hardship and contention with the cats. We work hard with local communities to come up with conservation solutions that have financial benefits for people and protection benefits for wildlife. I've personally overseen program launches in dozens of villages. But nothing quite compares to what I saw take place last year in the village of Miru.

Miru is a remote community in the Ladakh region of Jammu Kashmir state. More than 3,000 meters (9,800 feet) in elevation, it's prime snow leopard country.

The community was interested in snow leopard conservation and we were pleased to describe various ideas. After months of discussions they decided to launch a livestock insurance program. This in itself was not terribly surprising. Like many villages in India, they agreed they could tolerate predators if they could receive compensation for losses.

We provided seed funding to jumpstart the insurance corpus, then 38 families signed up for the program and paid premiums to insure their animals. A community-elected council will investigate claims and pay families for livestock lost to snow leopard attacks.

Then, in addition to the insurance program, the village of Miru decided to also form a grazing-free reserve. This we didn't expect.

Grazing-free reserves are much more involved conservation solutions than insurance programs. Communities have to select land they are willing to leave free of use—which in a low-productive mountain zone like the Himalayas is not an easy or light decision. We often work with a community for years before making such a heavy decision.

But, no sooner had Miru signed the livestock insurance program contract with us, they also signed a grazing-free reserve contract agreeing to refrain from grazing their livestock or collecting fodder from within three valleys adjacent to their village.

The contract is in place for the next five years, which will help restore local grasslands and aid in the recovery of Ladakh urial and blue sheep—key snow leopard prey species.

In return for giving up this prime grazing land, the village council didn't ask for financial compensation, which has been the norm with most other communities. What did they request instead? Over next five years, we will provide them with cooking ware and mattresses. That was the biggest surprise of all. I never thought I'd see the day a mattress would save snow leopards.



Since the start of our long-term study, we have collected almost 10,000 snow leopard photographs and identified 35 individual cats using the Tost Mountains in southern Mongolia.

The mystery of the missing men

By Dr. Koustubh Sharma, Senior Regional Biologist

In 2013, we began looking into the mystery of Tost's missing male snow leopards.

We have been studying snow leopards in the Tost Mountains of Mongolia for over five years. There is no other snow leopard population in the wild that has been monitored for such a long period of time, which gives us the unique ability to look at population changes over time.

While preliminary data showed an adult population of 10-14 cats in our study site, in 2013 we started to see some vigorous underlying dynamics about how this population functions. On the good side, the population has remained relatively stable over the past four years indicating that the rate of immigration of new cats into the area, along with births, continues to offset the rates of mortality and snow leopard emigration out of our study site.

But digging deeper, there is something else brewing. Over the last few years, the adult sex ratio appears to have changed considerably in favor of females. That means our big strong male snow leopards have been disappearing. Is that normal or natural? Can this population survive with fewer males than females? Where do all the males go—and will they come back?

We had a tantalizing clue in fall 2013. Thanks to your support, we were able to expand our study outwards and set out cameras in neighboring mountains to the north. Who

did we see but Agylach, a young male snow leopard that we had previously seen in Tost. Apparently, he felt the need to relocate, at least temporarily. Could these northern mountains be a piece of the 'lost male' puzzle?

It could be that males just don't live as long as females due to high rates of competition and fighting. Or, like males of other big carnivores, they could be naturally more inclined to move and wander than females. It could also be the case that males are more likely to attack livestock, making them more of a target for retribution killing by herders.

Right now these are all conjecture, but finding answers is paramount. There could be threats facing males in particular, or wandering males could need greater protection of connected habitats. What's certain is that we need to continue to monitor these snow leopards closely—and with your help we're exploring even more nearby mountain chains.

Considering that throughout most of snow leopard range, even basic population estimates are still lacking, I have to admit I feel a little giddy (and spoiled) being able to learn so much, delve so deep, and make such truly incredible progress towards better understanding Mongolia's cats. Thank you for not only making this long-term study a reality, but enabling it to grow. In science, 'surprises' are usually the start of great achievement, and we are excited to see what answers we unlock next.

2013 Snapshot

In 2013, you enabled us to work with herder communities across the five most important snow leopard countries--China, India, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Pakistan--to build greater tolerance and understanding for snow leopards. Your support expanded economic development programs to help herders weather livestock losses to snow leopard predation, and increased appreciation for the cats and their role in the ecosystem. These are just a few of the highlights you accomplished.

Snow Leopard Enterprises

\$50,000

Earned by herders through
handicraft sales, including over
\$10,000 in bonus monies for
upholding Conservation Contracts.

Livestock Insurance

11

Communities ran livestock insurance
programs; in Mongolia alone the
program compensated for 80 animals
lost to snow leopard predation.

Bricks & Mortar

22

Corrals were predator-proofed to
keep snow leopards and wolves
from taking goats and sheep.



- قدرتی مسکن مارخور، آبی گھاس اور پھل مال کو چارہ میلا کرتی ہیں۔
- چارہ سے کی بنیاد سے مارخور اور آبی گھاس کی تعداد میں اضافہ ہوتا ہے جس سے برفائی چیتے کے پانا مال پر
- حملوں میں خاطر خواہ کمی آتی ہے۔
- جڑی بوٹیوں اور درختوں کی جڑیں کھود نکالنے سے مٹی کا کنارہ ہوتا ہے اور اچانک برفائی کا خطرہ بڑھ جاتا ہے۔

1,000

Posters conveying a message of
peaceful co-existence printed for
schoolchildren in northern
Pakistan.



20 Kids ushered in Mongolia's first eco-camp

Outreach & Education

1,300

Children took part in Nature Clubs, skits, events, poster competitions, and camps aimed at giving them hands-on learning about snow leopards and their environment.

Livestock Vaccination

50%

Reduction in livestock mortality to disease thanks to the Livestock Vaccination Program in Pakistan, which helps families raise healthier herds, tolerate predation, and protect wild prey from disease.

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This list recognizes donors who gave at least \$1,000 in 2013 and/or included snow leopards in their planned giving.

**Dedicated funds for WWF*

Baataarkhairkhan Mountain Snow Leopard project in Mongolia

Team Snow Leopard

Thank you to the 461 people who took part in our Team Snow Leopard monthly donor program in 2013. You raised over \$87,000 for snow leopard conservation!

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**Save Our Species is a joint initiative of the Global Environment Facility, IUCN and the World Bank. A fundamental goal is to ensure the long-term survival and well being of threatened species and their critical habitats for biodiversity conservation.*

Special projects in this report were also supported by People's Trust for Endangered Species and Rufford Small Grants Foundation through our collaborating NGOs.

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Bold-over 50 hours of service in 2013

*over 3 years of service

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Thank you to all the federal and state employees—from Washington State to the US Capital, to employees stationed overseas. In 2013, more than \$40,000 was raised through 120 Combined Federal Campaigns, the Washington State Combined Fund Drive, California State Employees Charitable Campaign, Idaho State Employee Charitable Campaign, and King County Employee Giving campaign.

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* Selling SLT products

There are 160 zoos worldwide with snow leopards. If you would like to know more about how your zoo can be part of our Natural Partnerships Program, please contact Marissa Niranjan at Marissa@snowleopard.org.

Special Thanks

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A special moment you made possible for our India team

One day in the heart of winter, we spotted two snow leopards walking parallel to each other about twenty feet apart. One was clearly older than the other. It had to be a snow leopard named Sunshine and her cub...they were the only mother-cub pair in the area. All of a sudden both went still and alert. There was tension in the air. A third snow leopard came into view and appeared to be a large male. He stayed about 100 meters away, hidden in a rock crevasse. The tension persisted but Sunshine basked on the sunny slope with a close watch on the new male. The sun set and the temperature started to drop. I could barely hold my binoculars up; it was time to leave. At first light the next day I went back to the site, but the snow leopards were gone. The wind had cleaned their footprints. There was no evidence of their presence, just white snow all across.

By Rishi Sharma, Research Scholar, Nature Conservation Foundation

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Ministry of Environmental Protection
Institute of Biology
Sarychat-Ertash State Nature Reserve

Pakistan
Snow Leopard Foundation, Pakistan
Directorate of Khunjerab National Park
Gilgit-Baltistan Forest & Wildlife
Department
Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Wildlife
Department

Climate-Change & Water Security Initiative
WWF-US
USAID*

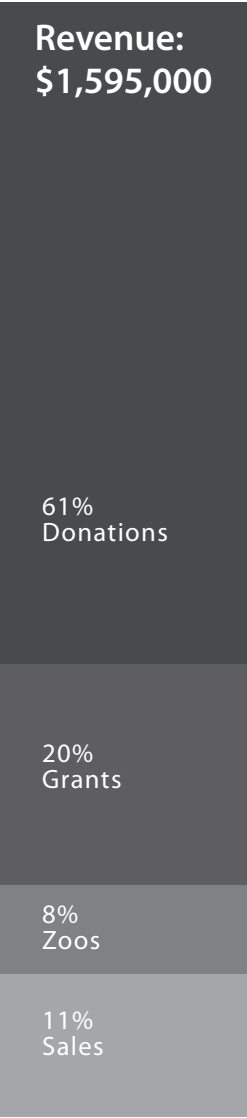
Global Forum
World Bank Global Tiger Initiative
WWF-US
USAID*
UNDP
Office of the President of Kyrgyzstan
NABU
Snow Leopard Conservancy
GEF
Snow Leopard Network

Snow Leopard Network
Snow Leopard Conservancy

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Financial Summary

In 2013, thanks to our growing group of supporters around the world, the Snow Leopard Trust was able to increase the amount of funding directly protecting snow leopards in the wild. It is a high priority for us to ensure we manage your donations wisely and we are pleased to have Charity Navigator's highest 4-star rating.



Our finances are audited annually by an independent third-party following national standards. The financials of our partner NGOs are also audited annually using standard third-party practices for their respective countries.





Together we are protecting the endangered snow leopard and its mountain ecosystem through a balanced approach that addresses the needs of local people and the environment.

Thank You.



**Snow
Leopard
Trust**

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