

# STATE OF THE SNOW LEOPARD



## SNOW LEOPARD THREAT LEVEL

NEAR-THREATENED VULNERABLE ENDANGERED

*Snow leopards are one of the most mysterious and least known species on the planet. They are listed as Endangered as a result of conflicts with livestock owners and their demand on the illegal wildlife market.*

## POPULATION

- There are believed to be between 3,500 and 7,000 snow leopards living in the wild today; the exact number is unknown as they are extremely elusive and challenging to survey.
- The snow leopard is listed as “Endangered” on the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species.

## HABITAT

- Snow leopards inhabit extreme landscapes approximately 3,000 – 5,400 meters above sea level.
- Nearly 15 percent of the snow leopards’ presumed historic range is no longer inhabited by these cats.
  - 60 percent of snow leopard habitat is found in China alone.

## THREATS

- The capture and killing of snow leopards for the illegal wildlife trade market is a primary threat to the species’ survival. Snow leopard body parts can sell for thousands of US dollars. Their distinctive fur is highly coveted, as are their bones, for traditional Asian medicine.
- Snow leopards are also hunted due to conflict with herders who live in fear of losing livestock.
- Land conversion for agricultural purposes, primarily livestock grazing, is causing snow leopards to lose their habitat.

## SAVING THE SNOW LEOPARD

- Panthera’s Vice President, George Schaller, captured the first known photograph of this species in the early 1970’s.



Camera trap images of wild snow leopards, Ladakh, India.


Steve Winter/National Geographic

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- Panthera partnered with the Snow Leopard Trust in 2008 to launch the first ever long-term ecological study of snow leopards in Mongolia. The Mongolian research project is the most comprehensive effort to study the animals to date.
- Panthera also works in many other snow leopard countries conducting surveys, training national biologists, assessing threats, securing habitat, mitigating human-cat conflict by working with local communities, and assisting governments establish and implement National Snow Leopard Action Plans.

**For more information visit [Panthera.org](http://Panthera.org)**



 Current Snow Leopard Range

 Possible Historic Range



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