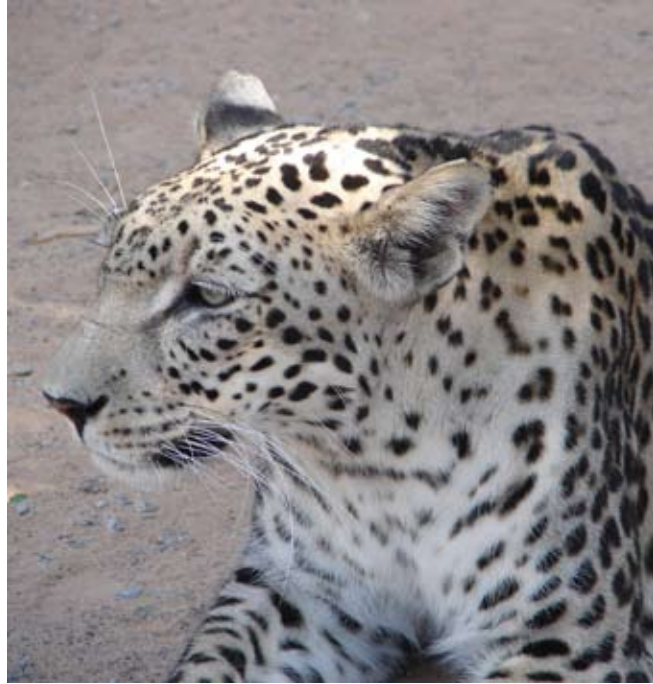


# IUCN/SSC Cat Specialist Group Activity Report 2006/2007



Cover photo: Cheetah in Nairobi National Park (Photo Ch. Breitenmoser)



Arabian leopard (Photo Ch. Breitenmoser)

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## In-house Activities and Fundraising



Distribution of Cat Specialist Group Members

In the quadrennium 2005-2008, the group size has slightly increased to 215. The Cat SG includes many new faces, mainly from South America and Africa under-represented in the past. The members represent 57 countries. For the website, we have developed a membership di-

rectory, where all members are presented with a photo and a short CV focusing on their cat conservation activities. It will help to enhance communication among the members and with other people interested in cat conservation.

Fundraising. The Specialist Groups must secure their own operational and project funding. Over the years, the Cat SG has received support from many organizations and individuals who share

its mission to conserve wild cats. In 2006, we have developed the Cat Specialist Group Portfolio, presenting the Cat SG and its activities. It will hopefully facilitate fundraising in the future.

### Portfolio Index

- 🐾 The IUCN/SSC Cat Specialist Group – In a Nutshell
- 🐾 Site map of Cat Specialist Group activities and products
- 🐾 Cat Manifesto
- 🐾 Who we are and what we do
- 🐾 Digital Cat Library
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- 🐾 Annual Budget of the Cat Specialist Group
- 🐾 Annual Report
- 🐾 Financial Report
- 🐾 Curriculum vitae Co-Chairs



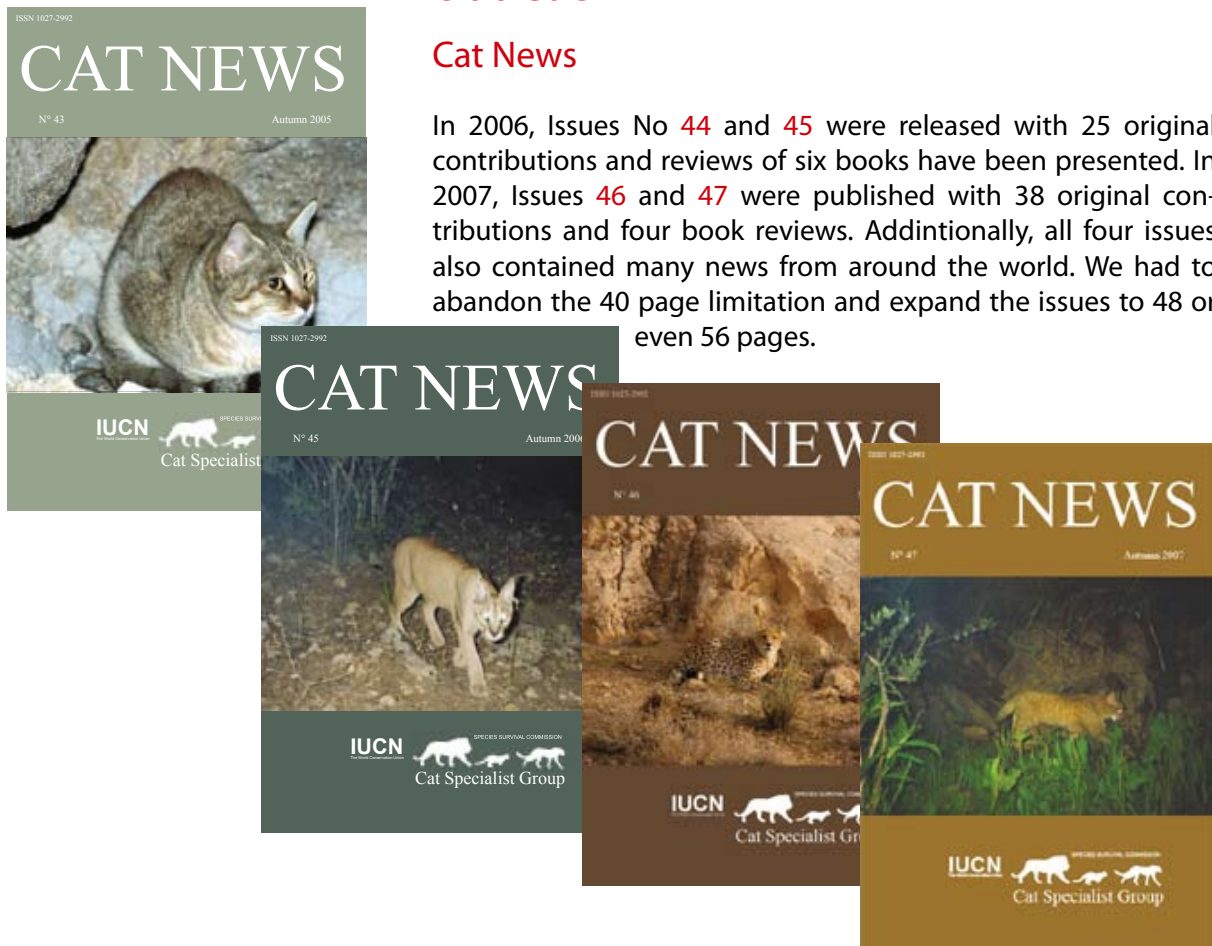
Cover of the Cat Specialist Group Portfolio



## Outreach

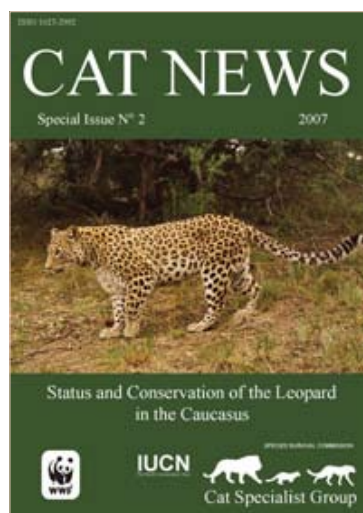
### Cat News

In 2006, Issues No 44 and 45 were released with 25 original contributions and reviews of six books have been presented. In 2007, Issues 46 and 47 were published with 38 original contributions and four book reviews. Additionally, all four issues also contained many news from around the world. We had to abandon the 40 page limitation and expand the issues to 48 or even 56 pages.



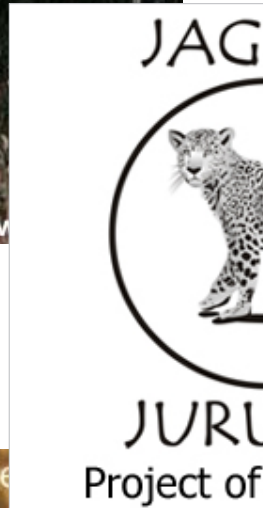
### Special Issues of Cat News Launched

In 2006, we have published the first **Special Issue of Cat News** on the Status and Conservation of the Leopard on the Arabian Peninsula. Besides the two regular issues sponsored by the Friends of the Cat Group, we have started this special series to be able to publish entire issues of the newsletter on specific topics. In 2007, two more special issues have been published on the leopard in the Caucasus and the cheetah in southern Africa. For each special issue, we need a sponsor. The first one has been financially supported by the Breeding Centre for Endangered Arabian Wildlife - Government of Sharjah, UAE, the second one by the WWF Caucasus Programme Office and the third one by the Cheetah Conservation Fund.



## Website

The front-page feature of the website is the **Project of the Month**, a promotional window that gives recognition to exemplary cat conservation projects of our members and Friends of the Cat Group. In 2006, we have presented six and in 2007 five Projects of the Month from South America, Europe and Africa. All Project of the Month are available as PDF on [www.catsg.org](http://www.catsg.org).



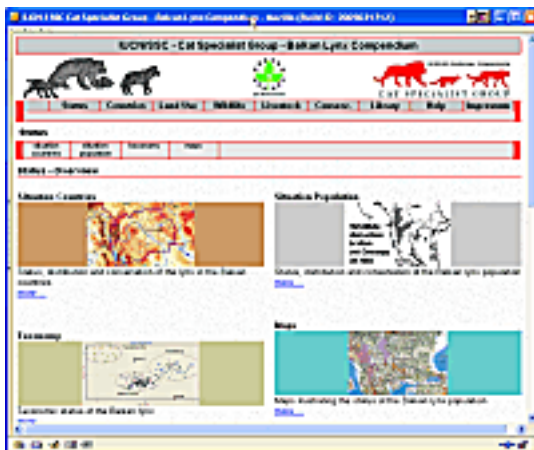


## Species Conservation Compendia

In 2004 the Cat Specialist Group together with national and international partners started the development of a series of specialized compendia containing all available information on conservation of endangered cat species. This series will be continued and enlarged over time. In 2007, we have added the **Cheetah Conservation Compendium**. The menu is in English, French and Kiswahili.



The Iberian Lynx Conservation Compendium is a library and forum providing a collection of information, data, documents, maps and other material relevant for the conservation of the Iberian lynx. It provides all relevant scientific baseline information, but also popular material, news and public political documents. It is a tool to share knowledge and experience and to manage the wealth of information. The compendium presented had been developed for the workshop in Córdoba in December 2004.



The Balkan Lynx Conservation Compendium has been developed for an initial workshop in Macedonia in April 2005 for the recovery of the Balkan lynx. The menu is in Albanian, Macedonian and English. The website is used to share information and results of the projects currently running in Macedonia and Albania, particularly the Balkan Lynx Recovery Programme.



The IUCN/SSC Cat Specialist Group has co-facilitated regional conservation strategies in East and southern Africa to provide baseline input information. The Cheetah Conservation Compendium has been developed and presented in Botswana in December 2007. The website serves now as a platform to follow the implementation of the regional strategies and national action plans, and to share information and experience between institutions and individuals involved in cheetah conservation and research.

## Digital Cat Library

The Cat Specialist Group with its worldwide network of members, friends, and partners is the appropriate institution to maintain a comprehensive collection of documents relevant for the conservation of the 36 wild living cat species. The collection includes presently some 6,000 documents and is likely to grow by several hundred documents for the years to come, depending on our capacity to integrate old documents. The Digital Cat Library is a service to the members of the Cat Specialist Group and to the Friends of the Cat Group and is accessible through the Cat Specialist Group's web portal [www.catsg.org](http://www.catsg.org).

The Digital Cat Library is widely used, and we have received encouraging feedback from members and Friends of the Cat Group.

In 2006, we have performed uploads in March, August and December, and in 2007 in May, September and December. Due to a grant from Taiwan Council of Agriculture's Forestry Bureau we have been able to integrate a search tool into the Digital Cat Library. In December 2007, the new version went online. The programming has been done by Guillaume Chapron.

The screenshot displays the website interface for the Digital Cat Library. At the top, it features the IUCN logo, the SSC (Species Survival Commission) logo, and the Cat Specialist Group logo. A navigation menu includes links for Highlights, Updates, Reference Search, Keyword Search, Browse Library, DVD, About, and Library Home.

The search interface includes a text input field with the instruction "only 1 word (or exact phrase) by search field, please use boolean operators". Below this are search criteria for Author, Title, Abstract, and Source, each with a dropdown menu set to "AND". There are also fields for "from" (1950) and "to" (2008) years, and a "Search" button.

Below the search form, there is a list of search results. Each entry includes a small icon, the author's name (e.g., Jackson, P.), the year, the title (e.g., "The Forms of the Tiger"), and the source (e.g., "Manuscript").

At the bottom of the page, there is a section for browsing the library by author in alphabetical order. It lists the letters A through Z, with "A" through "Z" being clickable links. Below this list, it says "You can browse the library by author alphabetical order:".

The library is fully searchable for authors, title, abstract, keywords, source and date, but also still offers the opportunity to browse according to authors in the alphabetical order.



## Library Highlights

With each upload we highlight a selection of publications on a specific topic. In 2006 these papers were related to the tiger, the European wildcat, and the bobcat, in 2007 to clouded leopard, Strategies and Action Plans for the Conservation of Cats and cheetah, respectively.



Tiger (Photo A. Sliwa)

**April 2006.** The recent tiger crisis in India has been extensively covered in Cat News, and on the Cat SG website. We have included relevant documents into the Cat Library. All together, the Library covers more than 1000 articles on tigers!

**October 2006.** IUCN-The World Conservation Union has been coordinating a Regional Red List assessment of all mammal species in Europe. Therefore, we dedicated this highlight to the European wildcat. We chose literature from different parts of its European distribution range.



Wildcat (Photo A. Sliwa)

**May 2007.** Two recent papers, using morphological and molecular techniques, demonstrated that the clouded leopards from Borneo and Sumatra are a distinct species different from those on the mainland.



**December 2006.** At the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties CoP13 of CITES in Bangkok 2004, the United States submitted a proposal to delete *Lynx rufus* (bobcat) from Appendix II ([www.cites.org](http://www.cites.org)). During that meeting, the United States consulted with other Parties on the proposal. Some Parties, especially the Member States of the European Union, expressed concerns about potential problems with control of trade in other *Lynx* spp. and similar small cats owing to similarity of appearance to *Lynx rufus*. Recently, a lot of new information on the bobcat has become available in publications and reports that are included into the Digital Cat Library.



Bobcat (Feline Research Prg, Cesar Kleberg WRI)

**December 2007.** With the Cheetah Conservation Compendium going online on the Cat SG website ([www.catsg.org/cheetah](http://www.catsg.org/cheetah)) and the publication of the Special Issue No. 3 of Cat News on Cheetahs we have dedicated the last highlight of 2007 to cheetah conservation.



Cheetah (Photo A. Sliwa)

# Species Assessments and Conservation Activities

## African Lion Conservation Strategies

The SSC Cat Specialist Group recently cooperated with African regional offices of IUCN and the Wildlife Conservation Society to hold a series of workshops to assess the status of the lion and develop conservation strategies. The West and Central African Lion Conservation Workshop was held in Douala, Cameroon, in October 2005. The Eastern and Southern African Lion Conservation Workshop was held in Johannesburg, South Africa in January 2006. Each workshop consisted of two sessions. During the first 3-day technical session, biologists used the RangeWide Priority Setting process developed by WCS to map current lion range, identify Lion Conservation Units (LCU's, in three classes of viability), and assess threats to the population and limits to range.



Lion (Photo A. Sliwa)

The second 3-day strategic planning session brought together stakeholder participants – including high-level officials representing range state governments, as well as lion specialists and representatives of non-governmental organizations and industries working at the lion-human interface. Conservation strategies were developed through a participatory process following a logical framework. The regional strategies set out specific objectives, targets to aim for, and numerous activities that should be carried out

to achieve effective lion conservation over the next decade.

The West and Central African Lion Conservation Strategy focuses on three primary objectives to address threats that directly impact lions: to reduce lion-human conflict, and to conserve and increase lion habitat and wild prey base. For example, one objective is: “to ensure the availability of wild prey in lion habitats.” The objectives of the Eastern and Southern African Lion Conservation Strategy are articulated around the root issues in lion conservation, including policy and land use, socio-economics, trade, and conservation politics. For example, the policy and land-use objective is “to develop and implement harmonious and comprehensive legal and institutional frameworks that provide for the expansion of wildlife-integrated land-use, lion conservation and associated socio-economic benefits in current and potential lion range.” The trade objective is “To prevent illegal trade in lions and lion products while promoting and safeguarding sustainable legal trade.” Both regional strategies share common priorities of conserving and restoring lion populations, improving management capacity, and increasing the flow of benefits to communities living with lions.

These strategies are now used by governments to guide national lion action plans, policies and programs, and by the conservation community to guide their project development. By defining common priorities to guide action on both national, community and landscape levels, the regional conservation strategies have the potential for broad and significant improvement of lion status and management.

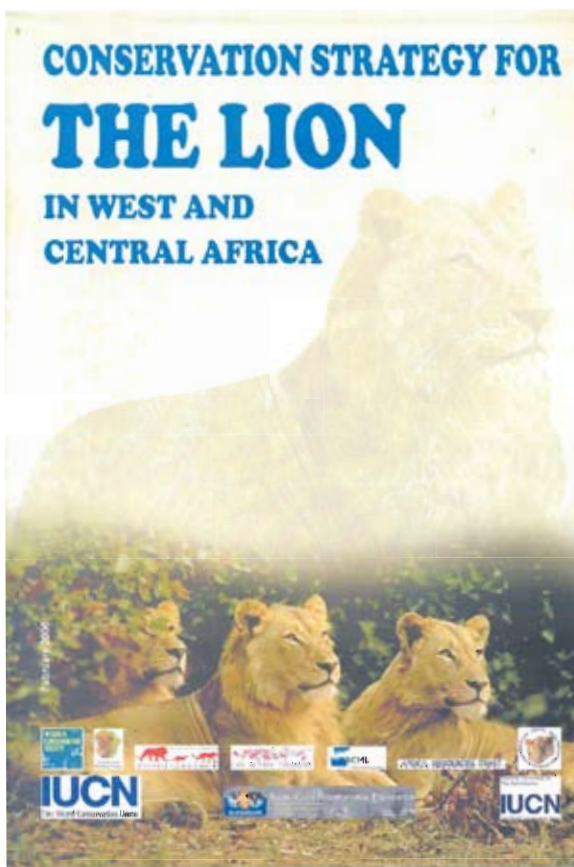
The regional conservation strategies were published by the IUCN Regional Offices and are available on the web at [www.felidae.org](http://www.felidae.org) and [www.catsg.org](http://www.catsg.org).



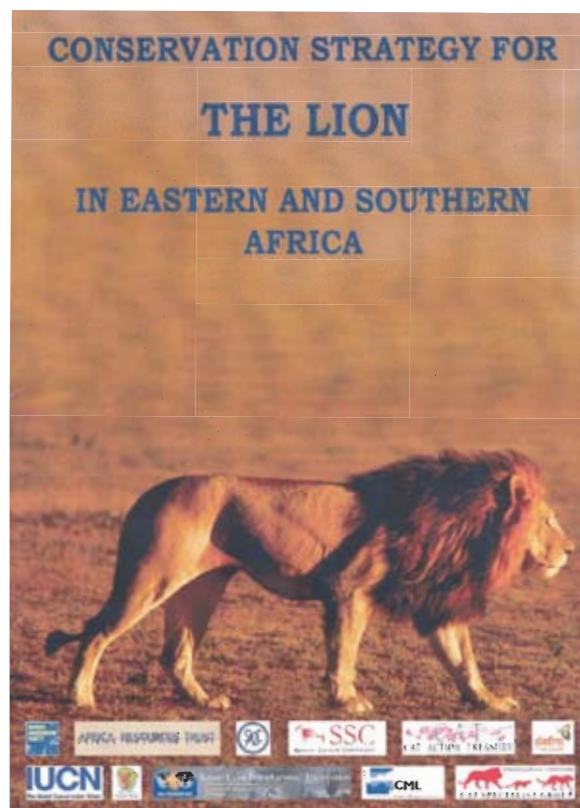
The Cat SG, along with its partners in lion conservation, the African Lion Working Group (ALWG) and West and Central African Lion Conservation Network (ROCAL), should use the strategies to guide their work in lion conservation, and also encourage and support governments and the private and NGO sectors to adopt and implement strategy recommendations. More SSC Specialist Groups are expanding their action planning and priority setting approach to work with governments, partners and stakeholders to develop regional conservation strategies for species of concern.

The Lion Conservation Strategy initiative was generously supported by the Safari Club International Foundation; the UK's Department of Environment, Food Resources and Agriculture; WCS; and IUCN. The initiative was launched by the Southern African Development Community and Africa Resources Trust, following consultation among the lion range states attending the 13th CITES COP in October 2004. WCS partnered with the Cat SG and the lion strategy initiative in an approach that linked the planning process to expert knowledge of lion status and distribution.

adapted from  
Kristin Nowell, Luke Hunter and Hans Bauer  
Cat News 44, 2006



The Lion Conservation Strategies have been published for West and Central Africa in French and English and Eastern and Southern Africa in English. All three documents are available at [www.felidae.org](http://www.felidae.org) and [www.catsg.org](http://www.catsg.org)





## Leopard

7th Conservation Workshop for the Fauna of Arabia  
Breeding Centre for Endangered Arabian Wildlife, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates  
19–22 February 2006

Since 2000, the Breeding Centre for Endangered Arabian Wildlife has organised workshops for the conservation of the fauna of Arabia, generously supported by H. H. Dr. Sheikh Sultan bin Mohammed al Qassimi, ruler of Sharjah. The yearly meeting has grown to be a widely recognised forum for nature conservation on the Arabian Peninsula. The workshop tent in the desert sand



Arabian leopard at the Breeding Centre for Endangered Arabian Wildlife in Sharjah. *Panthera pardus nimr* is listed as Critically Endangered in the IUCN Red List (Photo U. Breitenmoser).

in front of the Breeding Centre has become the place where conservationists of all Arab countries and international experts meet each February.

Several IUCN/SSC specialist groups are involved in the process, including the Cat Specialist Group, which has been permanently represented since the first meeting.

The status of all cats inhabiting the peninsula was assessed in recent years, but the main focus has always been the Arabian leopard (*Panthera pardus nimr*), listed as Critically Endangered in the IUCN Red

List. In 2003, the Arabian Leopard Working Group – with 21 participants in the 2006 meeting – decided to compile the available knowledge in country-based status reports. The update at the 2006 workshop has confirmed that the situation of the Arabian leopard is not encouraging. Once roaming through all mountain ranges and forested areas of the Arabian Peninsula from the Hajar mountains in the east to the Sabar mountains in the south to the Jordan valley and the Negev desert in the north-west, the distribution area is nowadays extremely fragmented. Only three confirmed nuclei remain: a very small occurrence in the Negev desert, a nuclei of unknown size in the Wa'ada mountains north of Sana'a, and the largest and best-preserved population in the Dhofar mountains in south Oman, probably stretching into eastern Yemen. Several spots in the Al-Hijaz mountains of Saudi Arabia and in Yemen with known occurrence in the 1980s and early 1990s, but no recent observations remain to be sur-



Abdulaziz Al Midfa, Director of Sharjah's Environment & Protected Area Authority, opening the 2006 Conservation Workshop for the Arabian Fauna at the Conservation Breeding Centre for Endangered Arabian Wildlife (Photo U. Breitenmoser).

yed. All available information indicates that less than 200 leopards remain in the wild. A conservation breeding programme co-ordinated by the Breeding Centre for Endangered Arabian Wildlife in Sharjah secures the survival of the Arabian leopard in captivity and provides stock for possible re-stocking or reintroduction.

The inventory work is now in its final state; at the meeting, the Group discussed final adjustments to the status report. The country reports and two general chapters are published as a special issue of *Cat News* as a common product of Sharjah's Environment and Protected Area Authority and the Cat Specialist Group, printed and distributed by the Breeding Centre for Endangered Arabian Wildlife. The status reports provide

baseline information for the development of on-the-ground conservation activities. The plan is to first draft a range-wide conservation strategy to be submitted to the national authorities for endorsement, and then, based on the general strategy, to develop specific action plans for each country. The conservation strategy should be developed in a participative approach including the experts, the institutions of the range countries responsible for wildlife conservation and protected areas, and representatives of interest groups. The Arabian Leopard Working Group concluded that the best opportunity for such a workshop would be the 2007 Sharjah meeting and has submitted a respective proposal to the ruler of Sharjah.



Arabian Leopard working group facilitated by Dr. David Mallon during the 7th Conservation Workshop for the Fauna of Arabia (Photo U. Breitenmoser).

## Leopard

### Strategic Planning - A Framework for the Conservation of the Arabian leopard Sharjah, January 2007

The Arabian leopard is critically endangered and has been listed as such on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species since 1996. One of the criteria for this classification is that there are less than 250 animals remaining in the wild, a figure that is widely agreed upon by experts from the region. Annual conservation workshops held at the Breeding Centre for Endangered Arabian Wildlife (BCEAW) in Sharjah since 2000 have repeatedly focused on assessing the plight of the leopard in Arabia. Recommendations from the 2003 workshop culminated in the publication of a range-wide status report (Cat News Special Issue No. 1, see p. 5) in 2006, bringing together regional knowledge into a single document. The reports indicated that the range of the Arabian leopard is extremely fragmented with only a few remaining population nuclei along the mountains in the south and west. Of the three confirmed nuclei still remaining, even the largest population in southwest Oman cannot be considered viable in the long term. As the IUCN Red



Workshop facility at the Breeding Centre for Endangered Arabian Wildlife. Since the beginning in 2001, the workshops always took place in this tent (Photo Ch. Breitenmoser).

List classification states, the situation of the Arabian leopard is critical and urgent conservation action is required. However, the initiation of conservation efforts to preserve the Arabian leopard requires considered and careful planning to be successful. The annual workshops have until now provided an avenue for international and regional experts to jointly assess what is known, what knowledge is lacking and what steps are required to enable successful conservation of the Arabian leopard.

The next step in the conservation process was now to recommend “on-the-ground conservation actions” that are endorsed by national authorities. This step was achieved during an intensive three day workshop from the 27th to the 29th of January 2007. The goal of the workshop was to develop a comprehensive Conservation Strategy for the Arabian leopard, its prey and habitats, in a participative process involving experts, wildlife conservation agencies, and representatives of special interest groups. The aim of the Conservation Strategy was to define common goals



Workshop participants during group work developing targets for the conservation of the Arabian leopard (Photo Ch. Breitenmoser).



and objectives, identify priority conservation activities on the range level, and provide guidance for the development and implementation of National Action Plans.

The workshop was hosted by the Environment and Protected Areas Authority and facilitated under the banner of the IUCN CatSG by Urs Breitenmoser, Christine Breitenmoser-Würsten and David Mallon. In achieving the objectives of the workshop, the facilitators led the participants through the concept of a logistic framework pyramid in a participative process. The LogFrame approach is a widely used methodology that defines visions and goals, analyses problems and develops solutions (objectives, targets and activities) as a group.

- The long-term vision (top of the pyramid) for the conservation of the Arabian leopard is "to have viable and sustainably managed populations of the Arabian leopard, its wild prey and natural habitats in co-existence with local communities across its range in the Arabian Peninsula".

- To achieve the vision, the mid-term goal (10 years) has been defined as "to ensure the survival of all known wild populations of Arabian leopard and develop conservation programmes for the leopard, its prey and natural habitat in all range states".



During the workshop, the results have been presented to Prince Bandar bin Saud, Secretary-General of the National Commission for Wildlife Conservation and Development (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; left). His visit ended with an exchange of gifts, here with Abdulaziz al Midfa (Director of EEPA; centre; Photo Ch. Breitenmoser)



Reception at the palace of HH Dr. Sheik Sultan bin Mohammed al Qassimi (Photo K. Budd).

- To achieve the mid-term goal, eleven objectives were identified each with 1-4 targets and 1-5 activities selected to direct the achievement of each objective. Targets and activities should be achieved within 1-5 years of the endorsement and implementation of the Conservation Strategy Plan for the Arabian leopard.

Highlighting the need for urgent conservation action was the alarming discovery that two Arabian leopards were poisoned and killed in An Namas/Al Nams in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia during February this year, only two weeks after the conclusion of the Strategy Planning Workshop in Sharjah. Previous reports have suggested the presence of leopards in this region of the Kingdom, but there have been no recent confirmed reports that leopards still exist here. This unfortunate incident has presented an opportunity to raise public awareness for the Arabian leopard, one of the rarest species in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (and on the Arabian Peninsula), and prompt action for rapid assessment surveys to be conducted in the region. Surveys are urgently required in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Republic of Yemen to provide data on leopard presence.

Adapted from Jane-Ashley Edmonds  
Cat News 46, 2007

## Leopard

### Strategic Planning Workshop for the Conservation of the Leopard in the Caucasus

The leopard in the Caucasus is under threat; only some small and isolated population nuclei remain in the whole eco-region. To save the species in the Caucasus, urgent conservation actions are needed. Significant investment into the conservation of the leopard is justified as this charismatic large cat is both an umbrella species – its conservation will also include the preservation of the prey species and their habitats – and a flagship species – the leopard is the ideal carrier of the conservation idea to the local population, between the range states, and to the international conservation community.



Workshop participants from the six Caucasus range countries in Tbilisi (Photo: WWF Caucasus Programme Office).

Over the past years, WWF has undertaken considerable efforts to assess the status of the leopard in the Caucasus and developed approaches for its conservation. Considering the high ecological, cultural, and political diversity of the region, the poor economic situation in certain countries, and the fact that the leopard as a large carnivore is a conflicting species, it is obvious that the successful conservation of the species will not only depend on the knowledge and understanding of the experts, but rather on the favourable reception and implementation of a conservation strategy and action plans.

On the other hand, the Caucasus leopard project could also become a model case of cooperation for a joint conservation of the natural heritage.

WWF has together with the IUCN/SSC Cat Specialist Group proposed a three-step approach regarding the further development of a Caucasus leopard conservation programme:

1. Compiling the present knowledge in a baseline information report (Status Report);
2. Developing a Conservation Strategy for the leopard in the entire Caucasus eco-region;
3. Implementing the Conservation Strategy through the development of National Action Plans.

The present situation of the leopard and its conservation in the Caucasus were summarised in six original papers, compiled as Status and Conservation of the Leopard in the Caucasus (Cat News Special Issue No. 2, 2007). This issue was distributed at the workshop to provide background information.

The next step was to develop a regional conservation strategy in a participatory workshop. The aim of the Conservation Strategy is to define common goals and objectives, identify priority conservation actions at the range level, and provide guidance for the development and implementation of National Action Plans.

The workshop was organised by WWF Caucasus Programme Office and was held in Tbilisi, Georgia, 31 May – 2 June 2008. During the three day workshop, the participants agreed on a long-term vision for the conservation of the leopard in the Caucasus eco-region as: "Leopards and all wildlife prosper in natural habitats across the Caucasus eco-region in harmony with people".



To achieve the vision, the mid-term goal has been defined as: "Ensure the conservation and sustainable management of viable meta-populations of leopard and wild prey and their habitats and build sustainable co-existence mechanisms with local communities across the Caucasus eco-region".

The most obvious problem for the leopard in the Caucasus eco-region is the alarming reduction in its distribution area, resulting in a strongly fragmented population with an unknown, but without any doubt severely reduced number of animals left in the wild. The workshop participants have analysed the threats to the survival of the leopard, the knowledge or capacities lacking for its

conservation (gaps), and the factors favouring conservation measures (enabling conditions).

To achieve the mid-term goal, 11 objectives were identified each with 1-4 targets and 1-5 activities selected to direct the achievement of each objective.

The Strategy has been finalized in the months following the workshop. To date, already four countries have endorsed the document: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey. The strategy will become available through the Cat SG website ([www.catsg.org](http://www.catsg.org)).



Working Group 1, dealing with questions regarding species and populations (all photos U.Breitenmoser).



Working Group 2, discussing important places, habitats and corridors.



Working Group 3 in a dispute about human dimensions and socio-economic circumstances.



Working Group 4, concentrating on policy, legislation, and international cooperation.



## Iberian lynx

### Iberian Lynx Ex-Situ Conservation - Seminar Series 2006

The Iberian lynx *Lynx pardinus* is considered the most endangered felid in the world. In December 2003, the Spanish Ministry of the Environment and the Andalusian Government initiated a collaborative Conservation Breeding Programme for the Iberian lynx. In 2006/2007, nine cubs have been born at El Acebuche Breeding Centre, in Doñana's National Park. As of November 2007, 50 lynx are in captivity. Soon, the Andalusian Government has



opened a new Breeding Centre in La Aliseda, in the province of Jaén. The Iberian lynx ex-situ conservation breeding program is closely linked to in-situ conservation efforts. Its main goals are to preserve genetic diversity in captivity and, in the near future, to help re-establish Iberian lynx populations in areas of recent historical occupancy. Additionally, the program has a strong communication/outreach component.

In order to take advantage of the unique opportunity of closely studying the behaviour and physiology of this magnificent cat, Iberian lynx ex-situ conservation is a learning-oriented program. In this regard, the program collaborates with more than 30 national and international institutions and is presently carrying out collaborative projects in the areas of husbandry, behaviour, nutrition, health issues, reproductive physiology and genetics. In addition, one of the program goals is to gather and integrate as much information as possible to help with the design of future reintroduction strategies in collaboration with the ex-situ conservation program. In 2006, the Spanish Biodiversity Foundation, has funded the initiative of gathering more than 60 national and international experts on felid biology, to discuss their work and experiences at the Iberian Lynx Seminar Series. These

Seminars have taken place throughout the fall of 2006, with the purpose of gathering present knowledge regarding Iberian lynx biology as it relates to conservation breeding efforts and to share knowledge and experiences with experts from other related projects. The opening session counted with introductory speeches from representatives of international (IUCN/SSC CatSG), national (Ministry of the Environment of Spain and Fundación Biodiversidad), and regional (Andalusian Environmental Council) administrations, followed by overview presentations on Iberian lynx in-situ and ex-situ conservation efforts. The Seminar was structured in four sessions, each lasting for two days. They addressed the following subjects:

- Veterinary aspects applied to Iberian lynx conservation efforts;
- Husbandry and genetic management of captive populations;
- Reproductive physiology and Biological Resources Banks;
- Reintroduction of carnivores: applicable experiences to the Iberian lynx.

We have participated in three of the four seminars with presentations summarizing our experience of the reintroduction of the Eurasian lynx in Europe.



The proceedings are available at the Iberian Lynx Compendium of the Cat Specialist Group Website and at the Iberian Lynx Ex-situ Programme webpage ([www.lynxexsitu.es](http://www.lynxexsitu.es)).

## El Pacto Ibérico por el Lince – Iberian Lynx Agreement Signed

On 5 November 2007, the ministers of environment of Spain and Portugal and of the Spanish provinces of Andalucía, Castilla-La Mancha and Extremadura met in Sevilla to agree on a memorandum of understanding regarding the **Critically Endangered** Iberian lynx *Lynx pardinus*.

The ministers met in the frame of a seminar on an emergency plan for the conservation of the Iberian lynx, organised by the Spanish Fundación Biodiversidad. The seminar was opened by Maria Artola Goncáles, director of Fundación Biodiversidad. Urs Breitenmoser, IUCN/SSC Cat Specialist Group, suggested 3 x 3 recommendations for the recovery of the Iberian lynx. Francisco Palomares, Biological Station Doñana and CSIC, discussed the critical situation of the Doñana population and called for a more rigorous scientific approach in lynx conservation. Antonio Rivas from the Iberian Lynx Conservation Breeding Programme presented strategy and recent advances in the cap-

tive breeding programme. These talks were followed by the statement of the politicians regarding the national and international cooperation for the conservation of the Iberian lynx. Spain and Portugal had already signed an agreement on 31 August 2007



A historic picture: Ministers of Environment from Spain and Portugal meeting for the conservation of the Iberian lynx. From left: José Luis Navarro Ribera, Extremadura; Francisco Nunes Correia, Portugal; Cristina Narbona Ruiz, Spain; Fuensanta Coves Botella, Andalucía; José Luis Martínez Guijarro, Castilla La Mancha.

regarding the integration of Portugal into the Spanish conservation breeding programme. Now, Portuguese Minister of Environment Francisco Nunes Correia attended the seminar in Sevilla where his Spanish colleague Cristina Narbona Ruiz signed a MoU with her colleagues from the three southern Spanish Provinces. The five ministers at one table – a picture that would not have been possible only a few years ago, as stated Fuensanta Coves Botella, Ministry of Environment of Andalucía. The political will to save the Iberian lynx has indeed considerably grown in recent years, paving the way for more effective conservation actions.

For more information on the conservation of the Iberian lynx see the Iberian Lynx Compendium at [www.catsg.org/iberianlynx](http://www.catsg.org/iberianlynx) and under [www.mma.es](http://www.mma.es).



© Iberian Lynx Conservation Breeding Program

Lynx female Saliega with her two cubs. Up to 2007 xx lynx have been brought to captivity and xx cubs have been born. The captive population is developing according to the plans.

Fundación Biodiversidad



## Balkan Lynx Recovery Programme

### 873 interviews with local people

The baseline survey was carried out from August 2006 to July 2007 and resulted in 553 interviews of local inhabitants in Macedonia and 320 in Albania. According to these people, the presence of lynx is confined to western Macedonia (Mavrovo-Bистра, Shar Planina and Stogovo-Karaorman), with the highest concentration of observations and signs in and around Mavrovo National Park. In Albania lynx seems to be scarcely distributed with only a few nuclei of good presence in the eastern part of the Albanian Alps (north-eastern Albania) and in central-east Albania (Shebenik-Jabllanica and Martanesh).

The majority of the information available bases on observations and signs of which the reliability can hardly be proved. However, the survey also revealed some hard fact data: At least 6 lynx have been illegally kil-

led in Albania and 3 in Macedonia since 2000. Three photographs of living lynx (dating back to 1999) have been found from interviewees in Macedonia and four times lynx tracks were encountered in the field since 2006. In the meantime the number of lynx pictures has increased thanks to the use of camera-traps (see below).

### Population strongly decreasing

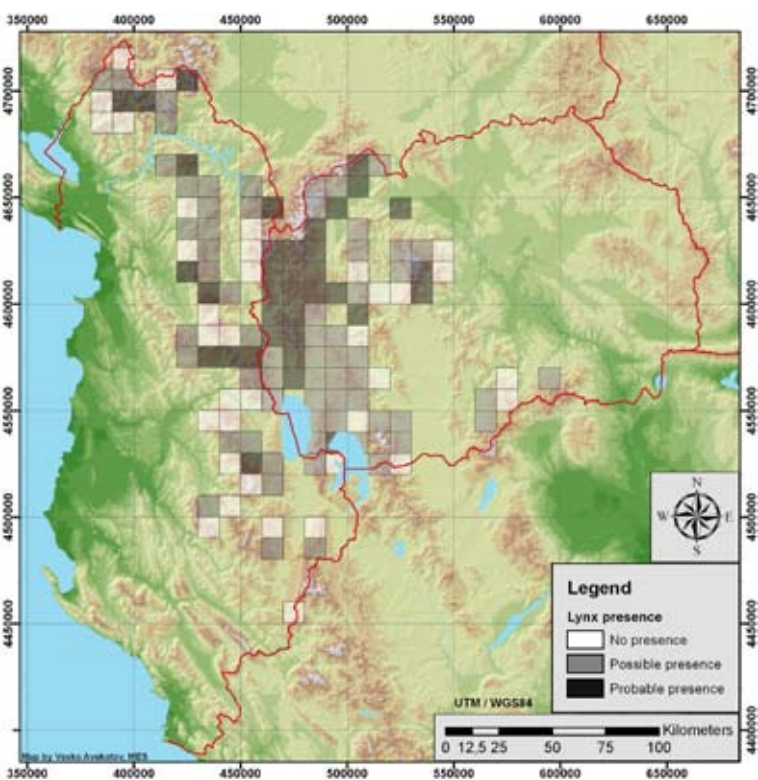
The lynx population was generally considered to be strongly decreasing by people interviewed in the „Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia“ while in Albania, the trend could not be assessed as people’s opinion differed strongly. In both countries potential lynx prey like roe deer, hare or chamois were considered to be fairly abundant; however, trends indicated for these species are negative. This might be a constraint for the recovery of the lynx population.

We conclude from the results of this baseline survey that the Balkan lynx still exists but that its population has a critical status. We assume the main threats to be direct persecution, habitat degradation and decreasing prey populations. To fully understand the needs of the Balkan lynx, further research to assess the population number, feeding ecology and land tenure system is however required.

In regard to incidences of illegal killing, the analysis of potential conflicts with animal husbandry were of special interest. Both in Albania and Macedonia, livestock numbers have remarkably decreased during the past years. Sheep are the most abundant livestock in the study area, followed by goats and cattle. Traditional husbandry methods (e.g. shepherding with dogs) are still applied and losses due to large carnivores are low to moderate.

### Little damage on livestock

Depredation is caused mainly by wolves and to a much smaller extent by bears. Lynx



Presence of the Balkan lynx in Albania and Macedonia according to the results of the baseline survey.



is hardly causing any damage on livestock. The level of fear of the local people of large carnivores is low, especially of lynx. According to these results, we therefore assume that livestock-large carnivore conflicts are not likely to limit the lynx recovery in the region and that illegal killing is more a form of traditional hunting and lack of awareness than a consequence of conflicts. Currently, human dimension research is going on, inquiring the knowledge and beliefs of the local people in regard to large carnivores and trying to find out the underlying reasons for the illegal killing of lynx.

### Camera trapping results in a first lynx picture in December 2007

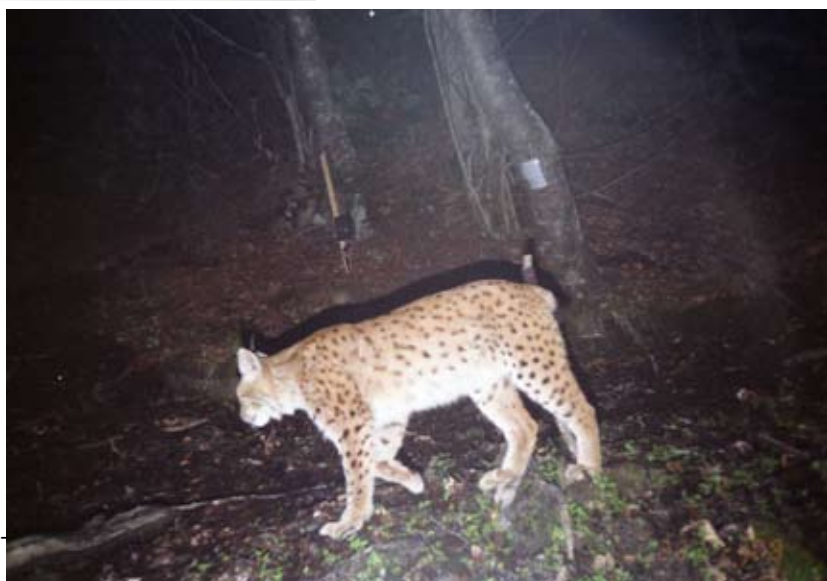
From autumn 2007 on, camera-traps were set opportunistically to test different sites and material. On December 31, our Macedonian colleagues happily informed us about the first picture of an entire lynx. There was a shot of parts of a lynx earlier. According to the results of the baseline survey (see above), the Mavrovo National Park was selected as study area for an intensive 2 month camera-trapping session from the end of February to the end of April 2008 where 32 sites were equipped with two camera-traps each. The results will soon be available on [www.catsg.org/balkanlynx](http://www.catsg.org/balkanlynx).

Manuela von Arx



First picture of a Balkan lynx taken by a camera-trap near the village Sence, Mavrovo National Park, Macedonia (Photo BLRP/MES).

A camera-trap picture taken in the Mavrovo National Park, Macedonia (Photo BLRP/MES).



## Cheetah - North Africa

### 2nd Meeting of the „Observatoire du Guépard en Région d’Afrique du Nord“ OGRAN in Tamanrasset, Algeria, 19 - 25 November 2006

As announced at the end of the first meeting in Paris in February 2005, the second OGRAN meeting took place in Tamanrasset, Algeria from 20 to 25 November 2006, following the invitation of the Ministère de l’Agriculture et du Développement Rural (MADR) of Algeria. This second meeting followed the OGRAN objectives, namely the increase of knowledge on cheetah in the North African Region for its conservation and the carrying out of conservation actions through the reinforcement of the relationship between the partners involved in ex-situ and in-situ cheetah conservation within a coordinated network.

Some big cat specialists and experts, members of the OGRAN, managers of the Algerian MADR Direction Générale des Forêts (DGF), and representatives of several other governmental and non governmental Algerian institutions came to share their knowledge and interest in the North African cheetahs and to propose, together, some conservation actions.



Meeting participants from Algeria, England, Namibia, France, Djibouti and Switzerland.

The first day was dedicated to oral communications about the activities carried out by the OGRAN since 2005, the current data on the cheetah in Western and Northern Africa and on the status and conservation of the cheetah in Algeria. The two following days were devoted to workshops on

1. data collection standardisation,
2. environmental education and sensitization, and
3. OGRAN functioning and perspectives.



Workshop on data collection standardisation

An observation filing-card was created and made to be usable in all North African regions. It will be tested during the year 2007 and will be improved according to users comments.

In regard to training programmes, it has been decided to train some trainers. Laurie Marker proposed to organise a training session in Algeria for specialists and non specialists, after determining the needs of the participants. A writing support, based on the model created by the KORA for the field agents working on the lynx conservation, will be created for the cheetah conservation agents with the help of the CCF and CCB experience. Many ideas about the public support have been proposed to sensitize the local population to cheetah conservation. It



is agreed to carry out these ideas with the help of the governmental and non governmental organizations by adapting them to the realities of each country.

To better coordinate the OGRAN activities and actions, the group, currently composed of 13 countries, needs active representatives in the member countries. Consequently, the creation of OGRAN sub-groups was proposed and the Algerian one was created. It was also decided that the next OGRAN meetings will take place in a different country each time to focus on the cheetah situation locally and organise a big meeting all five years.

The Paris 2005 OGRAN member declaration was modified as the Tamanrasset 2006 OGRAN member declaration with the insertion of the following paragraph "Define and communicate a regional strategic framework for the cheetah conservation on which the member countries would be based on to elaborate their national action plan". Eventually, it was proposed that the next meeting will take place in Benin, where the SZP-OGRAN has already carried out some cheetah conservation activities.



Meeting with local people in the village of Terhenânet (Photo R. Berzins)

At the end of the meeting, the group was invited by the Director of the Ahaggar National Park, Farid Ighilahriz, for a short meeting at the head quarter of OPNA to discuss potential future cooperation.



Meeting with the director of the Ahaggar National Parc (Photo R. Berzins).

A 3 days field trip in the Ahaggar National Park, organised by the „Conservation des Forêts de la Wilaya de Tamanrasset“ and the Office of the National Ahaggar (OPNA), allowed the participants to have a look at the cheetah habitat.



View of Pic d'Illamane from the village Terhenânet, 70 km north of Tamanrasset (Photo Ch. Breitenmoser).



A detailed report on the meeting and the field trip by R. Berzins and F. Belbachir is available in the Cheetah Conservation Compendium [www.catsg.org/cheetah](http://www.catsg.org/cheetah).



## Cheetah - Eastern Africa

### Range wide conservation planning for cheetah and wild dogs in Kenya, February 2007

In early February 2007 the first eastern Africa conservation planning workshop for cheetahs and wild dogs was held on Mpala, Kenya. This workshop is part of a series aimed at developing accurate maps of populations of both species and establishing regional conservation strategies to encompass their entire range. This, the first work-

shop in the series, covered Kenya, Tanzania, South Sudan, Ethiopia and Uganda and was funded by the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and the Howard G. Buffett Foundation. Delegates included representatives from the wildlife authorities of each country; species biologists from within the region; and international experts, including chairs of the IUCN Cat and Canid Specialist Groups. The workshop was followed by a national conservation action planning workshop to develop a species conservation action plan for Kenya for both species.

densities of lions, leopards, tigers and jaguars in prime habitat. This means that the areas they need for their conservation are 300-1,000% the size of the areas of these other large cats. We are used to thinking on a big scale for the conservation needs of all big cats, but for cheetah we need to think even bigger. Most existing protected areas are not large enough to ensure the long term survival of cheetah, and instead their conservation will require a landscape approach of protected and unprotected habitat networks. This requires land use planning on a scale that has rarely been seen before in conservation. Wild dogs, occur at similar densities to cheetah, face similar threats and hence have similar conservation requirements, and so the species were paired to increase leverage and hence the likelihood of implementation of conservation measures to protect both species.



Workshop participants on Mpala, Kenya

The workshop meshed together two existing workshop processes – that of the WCS range wide priority setting exercise and that of the IUCN strategic planning process – building on the strengths of both. It had three major outputs:

The workshop meshed together two existing workshop processes – that of the WCS range wide priority setting exercise and that of the IUCN strategic planning process – building on the strengths of both. It had three major outputs:

Cheetah are classified as Vulnerable by IUCN and are thought to be declining across their range. They occur at much lower densities than most of the other large cats, ranging between 10-30% of the



Accommodation for workshop participants.

1. Precise maps of distribution of existing populations, including the classification of resident, possible, connecting and unknown populations and threats to their survival.
2. An eastern African strategic plan for the conservation of cheetah and wild dog.
3. A Kenyan national conservation action plan for cheetah and wild dog.

The strategic plan, which targeted regional objectives, was structured in such a way that it could be easily used in a national plan-



Working group defining tasks and activities to improve education and awareness (Photo Ch. Breitenmoser).

ning framework to develop a country specific national plan. This is important as conservation, including policy, legislation and enforcement, all occur at national levels, and hence, national planning and commitment of government is necessary for implementation of the regional strategic plan.

The maps demonstrated what we suspected was the case, cheetah and wild dog populations are very few in number. More optimistically, these populations appear as if they might cover large areas, however in most of these areas connectivity within and between areas is under serious and urgent threat, and many areas are transboundary, necessitating international co-operation for their conservation. Connectivity, if lost, would lead to a fragmentation of existing populations into small isolated populations that are unlikely to be viable in the long term. The mapping process highlighted the importance of land use planning in the conservation of these species, and this informa-

tion was important in the development of the strategic plan.

The strategic plan was made up of a vision, a goal, a list of objectives (6) to meet the goal, a series of targets to address each objective, and a series of activities to meet each target. The objectives fell under 6 main categories, all of which were deemed to be critically important to cheetah and wild dog conservation by the group of experts gathered at the workshop: Monitoring and surveys; Coexistence; National Planning; Capacity development; Policy and legislation; and Advocacy.

The strategic plan worked well within the Kenyan National Workshop, and translated directly into providing a conservation action plan for both species with specific activities, indicators and actors specified for each objective and target. The Kenyan Wildlife Service were very supportive of the process and pledged strong support to ensure the implementation of the plan. The report from the workshop has been finalised and is available through the Cat SG website.

Adapted from Sarah Durant  
Cat News 46, 2007



Group working on objectives of the regional conservation strategy for cheetahs and wild dogs (Photo Ch. Breitenmoser).

## Cheetah - Southern Africa

### Range wide conservation planning for cheetah and wild dogs in Botswana, December 2007

In the past few decades, the cheetah *Acinonyx jubatus* along with its habitat and prey has experienced dramatic declines throughout Africa due to human encroachment resulting in land use changes. Cheetahs are known to have one of the largest individual ranges of any terrestrial carnivore and are found to be particularly susceptible to land fragmentation. Most protected park networks are too small to conserve viable populations and larger predators (ie. lions and hyenas) are known to displace them which results in higher numbers of cheetahs living outside protected areas, placing them in increased human/wildlife conflict situations.

Cheetah conservation activities outside of protected areas have mostly taken place in the southern African region where a network of researchers and conservationists has developed. Network members met in 2001 and 2002 in South Africa, and in 2005 in Namibia. The 2005 workshop aimed at assessing and evaluating what has been accomplished in the Southern African region and setting new achievable objectives for the future. Issues surrounding the development of methodologies for estimating

cheetah populations, conservation of cheetah outside and within protected areas, human predator conflict issues and extension and education initiatives were discussed in depth. Strategies for improved collaboration and co-operation between the regional cheetah conservation organizations were also addressed. The attendees supported the need for a Cheetah Conservation Compendium, which would combine all known information on cheetahs into a web-based program. It was also agreed to compile current knowledge into country status reports and make a regional assessment.

Parallel to these activities WCS and ZSL initiated a series of strategic planning workshops for cheetahs and wild dogs. Both species have a great overlap in distribution and face very similar problems. The first regional strategic planning workshop took place in Kenya in February 2007 (see p. 26-27). The second workshop addressed the southern African region and was held in Botswana in December 2007. In time for this workshop, the Cheetah Conservation Compendium was uploaded ([www.catsg.org/cheetah](http://www.catsg.org/cheetah)) and the status reports were published as Status and Conservation Needs of Cheetahs in Southern Africa (Cat News Special Issue No. 3, see p. 5).

The organisation of the four and a half day workshop was similar to the one in Kenya: distribution and status were updated in a mapping exercise and a regional strategy was developed in a participatory process.

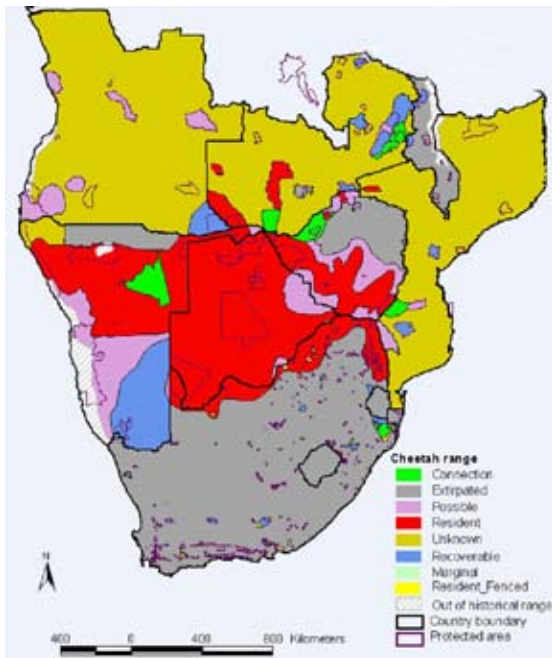
The workshop was officially opened by the Minister of Environment, Wildlife and Tourism Hon. Kitso On-kokame Mokaila.



Workshop participants after the opening ceremony (Photo L. Marker).



The mapping exercise showed that Botswana is the stronghold for both species in the region of southern Africa.



Updated distribution map for cheetahs in southern Africa resulting from the mapping exercise during the workshop.

The problem analyses revealed the following topics as objective themes:

1. Coexistence/conflict with livestock and domestic animals - deliberate killing, livestock husbandry, Problem Animal Control PAC, disease
2. Education/sensitisation/increasing awareness - outreach, cultural beliefs, increasing value



Vision and goal drafting team at work (Photo S. Durant).

3. Policy/legislation - land planning, land use change, connectivity, enforcement, resource extraction, bush meat, trade
4. Land use - fences, needs of wild prey, roads, corridors, resource extraction
5. Lack of knowledge/information - information on cheetahs and wild dogs, prey, threats, PAC and Human-Wildlife Conflicts
6. Capacity development - training, personnel, resources, communication.



Working group developing objectives (Photo Ch. Breitenmoser).

Eight objectives have then been developed based on these themes. A lively discussion rose about the implementation of the conservation strategy. Everybody agreed that without a plan, the strategy would remain another piece of paper. The group formulated a target and two activities under objective 8:

Target 8.2: Ensure that human and financial resources are made available to facilitate the implementation of the regional strategy within one year.

8.2.1 Appoint a volunteer interim coordinator within one month.

8.2.2 Identify, appoint and provide an institutional home for the coordinator of the implementation of the regional strategy within one year.

In Summer 2008, Gianetta Purchase from Zimbabwe has started as coordinator for the implementation of the regional strategy in southern Africa. A coordinator for East Africa is currently being recruited.

## Tiger

### International Tiger Symposium in Kathmandu, April 2007

From 16–18 April 2008, the government of Nepal hosted an International Tiger Symposium, under the auspices of the Global Tiger Forum GTF and chaired by Dr S. Lieberman (WWF International). Seven sessions covered the most important topics in tiger conservation.

Experts gave general presentations on each topic that were commented on by the range country representatives and discussed in the plenary. Recommendations were submitted to the 4th General Assembly of the GTF following the symposium. GTF members in attendance were India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Vietnam, Myanmar, United Kingdom,

enforcement of tiger trade controls; and to seek clarification through diplomatic channels from China regarding its policy intentions. The final recommendation was for the IUCN/SSC Cat Specialist Group to convene an international workshop to develop a global tiger conservation strategy.

The dominating agenda point at the Kathmandu symposium was China's intention to reconsider the tiger parts trade ban passed in 1993. China now has some 5000 tigers in captivity, and a large amount of tiger carcasses and parts are being stockpiled. Tiger farm owners want to bring this supply on the domestic market to satisfy the demand for tiger derivatives in traditional Chinese medicine. They claim a loss of US\$ 4 billion in sales since the trade ban has been imposed. The Chinese delegation explained that tiger breeding techniques have considerably improved since the early 1990s, and that the present demand for TCM (which they had examined in a public poll) could be satisfied through the supply of bones from the tiger farms. They argued that the trade ban had not stopped poaching and illegal trade; that however a legal supply would dry out the black market and hence eliminate incentives for poaching. Several NGOs united in the International Tiger Coalition strongly opposed this assumption. They believe that legalising the use of tiger derivatives in China would boost the demand, increase poaching pressure and, as it is impossible to distinguish products from wild and captive born tigers, considerably hamper law enforcement. The Chinese delegation encouraged the tiger range states and other institutions to express their views on this. Participants at the symposium broadly appreciated the frank presentation of the case by the Chinese and their call for comments. The IUCN/SSC Cat Specialist Group has conveyed its view to the Chinese authorities.



From left: Sue Lieberman (WWF International), Urs Breitenmoser (Cat SG) and S. C. Dey (GTF) during the session on distribution and population status of tigers in the range countries (Photo GTF).

IFAW and WWF. Observers included China, Malaysia, Thailand, Laos, TRAFFIC, Save the Tiger Fund, Wildlife Conservation Society, the IUCN/SSC Cat Specialist Group, and other international NGOs. The GTF adopted nearly all the recommendations proposed by the International Tiger Symposium earlier in the week, that pertain to habitat conservation, human-wildlife conflict, tiger trade, etc. On the trade issues, the recommendations are to: establish an information sharing system on poaching and seizure cases; convene a workshop of tiger range countries, international NGOs, and other experts, on

## Strategy for Tiger Conservation and Cat SG Statement on Trade Ban Lift, July 2007

In fall 2006, China announced to reconsider the special order issued by the State Council in 1993 prohibiting all medical use of and trade in tiger bone. There are now 5000 tigers in captive facilities – so called tiger farms – in China, and the breeders and the TCM manufacturers demand legalising the use of derivatives from these animals. The controversial issue was also a prominent topic at the 14th Conference of the Parties to CITES in May 2007 in Den Haag, Netherlands (see p.32/33). The Chinese delegation explained their point of view in a document distributed at CoP 14, whereas the International Tiger Coalition, an alliance of 35 NGOs united under the common aim of stopping trade in tiger parts and products from all sources, campaigning against China to reopen the domestic tiger bone trade. The Chinese invited the international conservation community to comment about the use of captive tigers for TCM and its possible impact on the remnant wild tiger populations, based on scientific

evidence, and to discuss the issue at the International Workshop on Strategy for Tiger Conservation organised by the State Forestry Administration in Harbin, 7-8 July 2007. The IUCN/SSC Cat SG has taken the opportunity to express its view on the use of captive bred tigers and has handed over its position statement at the Harbin conference in July 2007 (see [www.catsg.org](http://www.catsg.org) for the statement). We are grateful to all our Asian big cat expert members who have contributed to the position statement, and we are grateful to the Chinese State Forestry Administration to invite the Cat Specialist Group to participate in the Harbin Symposium and to consider our views. The full workshop report can be downloaded from our website ([www.catsg.org](http://www.catsg.org)).



Tiger farm in Harbin (Photo U. Breitenmoser).

## Kanha Circle, Kanha Tiger Reserve, India, 18-20 November 2007

A small group of respected experts in tiger conservation including Urs Breitenmoser, Co-chair of the Cat SG, framing and campaigning gathered in India's Kanha Tiger Reserve for a "Tiger Emergency Think Tank." The purpose of the gathering was to reframe the way the world talks and thinks about tigers with the aim of catalyzing global concern and action to secure a future for wild tigers. With the last wild tiger populations totaling as few as 3,000, world buy-in is clearly necessary to generate the significant political will, financial investment and public passion needed to change the paradigm that keeps wild tigers in peril.

The mission of what has come to be known as the "Kanha Circle" was to find a "frame" that would prompt the world to act immediately and decisively to increase wild tiger populations by stopping destruction of tiger habitats and prey as well as eliminating tiger poaching, trade and consumption.

The Kanha Circle collectively agreed there are practices already in place that, if broadened and adequately financed and communicated, could increase the wild tiger population to an agreed upon goal of "Ten in Ten," i.e. 10,000 wild tigers in 10 years – if the world declares, once and for all, "Stop killing our tigers!"



Kanha Circle at work in Kipling Camp in Kanha NP (Photo U. Breitenmoser).



## Cats at CITES Cop 14

The 14<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties to CITES met in The Hague, The Netherlands, June 2007

CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) is the UN convention on governing wildlife trade between nations. Most of the world's countries are signatory Parties (=168). All felid species are listed on either Appendices I or II of the Convention, meaning that trade is controlled by permits. Trade for commercial purposes is generally prohibited for Appendix I species with some exceptions, notable for felids the allowance of limited trade in leopard trophies. Implementation of the Convention is guided by Resolutions and Decisions adopted by the Parties. Every three years, CITES convenes with both State Parties (government delegations which can propose and vote on changes and actions) and NGOs (which can't, but can wield considerable influence). In The Hague, several cat issues were on the agenda:

### Tiger and Asian Big Cats

Concern over India's lower tiger numbers and China's recent consideration of legalizing domestic (national) trade in farmed tiger products put the tiger in the spotlight at COP14. Procedurally, discussions centered around a CITES resolution dating back to the early 1990s, Resolution Conf. 12.5, which says that domestic medicinal markets for Asian big cat parts should be eliminated. Chinese government officials said that China was seeking international input on their domestic policy review. There was considerable concern among the tiger conservation community over the extent to which countries, particularly tiger Range States, would be willing to stand behind Resolution Conf. 12.5 and voice opposition to tiger farming and re-opening domestic trade in China.

As it happened, leadership by the Range States led to the adoption of a strong new Decision against tiger farming. China joined with India, Nepal and Russia to submit a draft Decision that called for a number of actions including strengthened enforcement

measures. China argued that CITES, as an international treaty, has no jurisdiction over national trade policy. This is true, CITES can only recommend, but not prescribe, domestic measures for nations to undertake. However, CITES Resolutions and Decisions do carry weight, and there has been a history of strong CITES recommendations on stopping domestic tiger trade, recognizing that domestic markets stimulate illegal international trade.

The Decision mandates IUCN to facilitate a tiger conservation strategy workshop. This picks up on a similar recommendation a month previously by the Global Tiger Forum. Planning and organization are underway by the Cat Specialist Group, working within IUCN and with other partners.

### Bobcat

The United States submitted a proposal to de-list the bobcat from CITES (it is currently on Appendix II), arguing that trade in the species is well-managed and not a threat, and that bobcats do not meet the biological criteria for inclusion on the CITES Appendices. De-listing would result in the bobcat being the only felid not requiring CITES permits for international trade, and concern was expressed by both Parties and NGOs (including IUCN in its analysis of the proposal) over potential for resulting in illegal international trade in parts and products of other "look-alike" felids. The US requested a vote, and the proposal was rejected.

### Felidae Periodic Trade Review

On behalf of the CITES Animals Committee, the US is coordinating the first part of a periodic trade review for the family. Such reviews are undertaken periodically to assess whether species are appropriately listed in the Appendices. The genus *Lynx* is first up for review, and the US government undertook

a range State questionnaire survey, with an emphasis on the “look-alike” issue. Although additional results from this survey were submitted (COP14 Inf 30) by the US, CITES decided that the lynx review was not yet complete and should be continued.

### Leopard Quotas

A proposal to double its annual leopard trophy export quota from 60 to 120 by Mozambique was accepted. Uganda also won approval to establish an annual export quota of 28 leopards. Concern was expressed by the Cat SG and others that the determination of quotas was non-scientific, but the consensus view was that the quota levels were unlikely to be detrimental to the leopard populations.

### Side Events

Side events put on by both governments and NGOs are becoming increasingly popular at CITES. The IUCN Cat Specialist Group organized a side event on the regional African lion conservation strategies (see p. 10-11). SSC Chair Holly Dublin chaired the event, and Hans Bauer presented the lion status assessments led by WCS. The two regional strategies (West and Central Africa, and Eastern and Southern Africa) were presented by Range State government officials (Cameroon’s Francis Tarla, and Zimbabwe’s Morris Mtsambiwa), who each gave examples of measures in their countries to implement the regional strategies. For Cameroon, for example, this included designation of a national Focal Point officer for lion conservation, and for Zimbabwe a workshop to develop a national action plan for lions around the regional strategy framework. After the presentations, several government officials in the audience discussed lion conservation problems and actions in their countries in reference to the strategies (Burkina Faso, Kenya and Uganda). The Cat SG also put together a handout ([http://www.rocal-lion.org/documents/cites\\_lion\\_hand-](http://www.rocal-lion.org/documents/cites_lion_hand-)

[out.pdf](#)) based on a survey carried out at COP14 on implementation of the strategy by African lion range States, showing that efforts are underway in a number of range States to census lion habitats and develop



Introduction to the side event on the regional African lion conservation strategies. From left to right: Hans Bauer, Morris Mtsambiwa, Holly Dublin, Francis Tarla and Kristin Nowell (Photo U. Breitenmoser).

national action plans. More examples of the lion conservation strategies being put into action will be presented in the next issues of Cat News.

adapted from  
K. Nowell, H. Bauer and U. Breitenmoser



Morris Mtsambiwa, Zimbabwe, presenting examples of how to implement the strategy in his country (Photo U. Breitenmoser).

## The Biggest Ever!

From 17 – 19 September 2007, the “Felid Biology and Conservation Conference” united 300 cat specialists, both researchers and colleagues from other fields dedicated to cat conservation. Many more wanted to come, but the number of people allowed in the conference room was limited. The conference was organised by David Macdonald and Andrew Loveridge and their team of the Wildlife Conservation Research Unit from the Zoology Department at University of Oxford, with the Panthera Foundation as generous donor and the IUCN/SSC Cat Specialist Group as co-organiser. The three days brought 103 oral presentations and 77 posters – the largest compilation of felid research ever. In their introduction to the abstract book, David Macdonald and Andrew Loveridge expressed the hope that this conference would become a memorable occasion. This hope became more than true!

The 180 oral or poster presentations in the abstract book provide a comprehensive overview on cat research and offer an opportunity to as-

sess our efforts to understand and preserve the wild living cats. It is obvious that the big charismatic cats get most of the attention, with the four *Panthera* species particularly outstanding, followed by the not less charismatic cheetah. On the other hand, nine of the smaller species were not at all addressed, and some others were presented by only one oral presentation or poster. Such preferences may be justified if they consider the conservation status of the species. In regard to the Red List, if we distinguish the species, we realise that of the 32 presentations on Endangered species, 24 concerned tigers, 4 snow leopards, 2 Andean cats, and none the Bornean bay cat.

Of course, the amount of research goes hand in hand with the awareness and the reliability of our assessment of the conservation status of a species. The tiger is presently not doing well – but at least we know this. For many of the smaller cat species, including those listed as Endangered or Vulnerable, our knowledge is so limited that we cannot even be certain to grasp a significant decrease of the population. After the felid conference, the Cat Specialist Group held a workshop to review the Red List assessment of all cat species (see following contribution). Even though this workshop united an impressive group of cat specialists from all corners of the world, much of the assessment of the lesser cats is still pure guess work.

The Oxford felid conference was an impressive compilation and demonstration of our present knowledge on cats, their biology and their conservation. At the same time, the conference also revealed, which species we still lack on our screen and how much work is left to do. But we left Oxford with the feeling that, in spite of all difficulties we face conserving cats, we have achieved a lot and will succeed with such a bunch of dedicated folks working together.

Urs Breitenmoser  
Cat News 47, 2007



Participants at the Felid Biology and Conservation Conference in Oxford (Photo A. Harrington).



## Evaluation of Felidae for the 2008 IUCN Red List

The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species ([www.redlist.org](http://www.redlist.org)) is the leading measure of global plant and animal conservation status. It illustrates IUCN's great strength in the knowledge, expertise and dedication of its Species Survival Commission (SSC) members. The IUCN Red List is updated annually and, to remain useful, species should be re-evaluated regularly, especially groups with relatively large numbers of threatened species such as the Felidae. The last comprehensive IUCN Red List evaluation for cats was in 2002.

The unprecedented gathering of expertise at the recent Felid Biology and Conservation Conference provided an opportunity to re-evaluate the cat family for the 2008 IUCN Red List and get broader engagement from specialists in the assessment process. The IUCN-led Global Mammal Assessment (GMA) has been undertaking a series of workshops to evaluate the conservation status of the world's 5,500 or so mammals. In collaboration with the Cat SG, a two-day Cats Red List workshop was organized, generously sponsored by Panthera Foundation, and ably hosted by the University of Oxford's WildCRU at their headquarters - Tubney House, Oxford, UK. The GMA also maintained an office at the Felid Congress where delegates whom were not able to attend the workshop could provide input on Red List status and range maps.



Jan Schipper facilitating the European and Asian working group (Photo U. Breitenmoser)



The group dealing with the neotropical cats (Photo U. Breitenmoser).

A re-evaluation of species status at their global extent of occurrence was the top priority of the workshop, with additional subspecies being evaluated as time permitted. Some notable changes from the taxonomy used in the Cat Action Plan (Nowell & Jackson 1996) include the recognition of two species of clouded leopard. Subspecies were included based on modern analyses using either molecular or morphological methods, although not all subspecies have yet been assessed.

Cat specialists also want to see the IUCN Red List applied at the population level to capture priorities for conservation measures. IUCN does provide guidance on the use of the IUCN Red List categories and criteria at the national and regional levels, and a recent European Mammal Assessment evaluated the two Lynx species at the sub-population level. The Cat SG is working with the SSC to find the best way to expand the sub-population level analysis to additional cat species, working closely with recent exercises led by WCS and others to map and categorize populations of felid species including tiger, jaguar, lion, cheetah and snow leopard.

Adapted from  
K. Nowell, M. Hoffmann and J. Schipper  
Cat News 47, 2007

## Sir Peter Scott Fund

In 1990, IUCN Species Survival Commission received a grant from the Sultanate of Oman. A Fund was established in the name of Sir Peter Scott to prepare and publish a series of Species Action Plans identifying the actions necessary for the survival of species.

In 2004, the aim was changed to support IUCN/SSC Specialist Groups working to

implement the Commission's Strategic Plan with its overall vision of „a world that values and conserves present levels of biodiversity.“ Grants are only available to IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) members.

In 2007, two projects of the Cat Specialist Group have received a grant. We present here some preliminary findings that were summarized for the SSC website.

## Arabian Leopard Assessment in Yemen

Project responsible: David Mallon

To conserve The Arabian leopard, the project set out to assess the status of the leopard population and to initiate capacity building in Yemen for future monitoring and conservation.

In December 2007, a Rapid Assessment Survey of Wada'a and two other areas was carried out, during a field trip accompanied by representatives from the Amran governorate. Short visits were also made to assess the leopard status at Wadi Dhaloum and Bura'a Protected Area.



Leopard habitat in Wada'a (Photo J. Fatterbert).



Survey participants (Photo D. Mallon).

Interviews with local people revealed that sightings of leopards and attacks on livestock were now much rarer than in the past, in some parts none had been seen for 10 to 15 years. Their disappearance has coincided with the expansion of human settlement

and agriculture into the 'wadis', dry riverbeds where flooding occurs at certain times of the year. The arrival of a team of international conservationists to the area had the affect of reinforcing the local community's sense of pride and positive attitude towards the leopard. Trapping of the animal is said to have completely ceased in the region, creating a sound basis for the project's goal of establishing a conservation programme in the area.

Training and capacity-building strategies were initiated during this period and have been developed further during discussions with government and other authorities. Ta'iz Zoo in Yemen, which holds a large number of Arabian leopards all originating from Wada'a, was visited to assess the captive breeding programme.

A large scale leopard conservation project has also recently begun in Yemen. This project plans to cooperate with the larger scheme to maximise the impact of its work to protect the future of the species.



Margaba - traditional leopard trap (Photo J. Fatterbert).

## Living with leopards in Northern Pakistan

Project responsible: Ashiq Ahmad Khan  
An innovative scheme encouraging local communities to live peacefully with leopards has reached a new milestone by extending its range to three new communities in Northern Pakistan.

Since June 2005, there have been 13 leopards killed in the Abbottabad district of Pakistan, after a rogue animal tragically attacked and killed a reported 6 people. Before then, predation on livestock had been the main cause of retaliation towards leopards, which escalated dramatically after the fatal attacks.

The aim of the project is to find a mutually beneficial solution to the human-leopard conflict. It is supported by IUCN's small

grants programme the Sir Peter Scott Fund. The community-based 'livestock insurance scheme' was created to reduce the economic losses to farmers when their animals are killed by leopards. The funds are managed and administered by the local community themselves, and has proven to be very successful. "This scheme provides a tangible incentive to local communities to support conservation and find ways to live in harmony with leopards," says Muhammad Wa-seem, Research Officer for the project. Launched back in March 2006, membership of the scheme has steadily grown ever since. There is now government interest in bringing the initiative to new areas of Pakistan. Three new Abbottabad communities - Bako, Lahur Kus and Thandiani - have approached the project and are in the process of being included into the scheme.



Dialogue with the local communities regarding the livestock insurance scheme (Photo: Ashiq Ahmad Khan).



Women training session (Photo: Ashiq Ahmad Khan).



## Snow leopard

### Evaluation of the WWF Snow Leopard Conservation Activities in Mongolia

The Mongolian snow leopard population is estimated to be about 1000, threatened by direct persecution, prey depletion, and habitat deterioration and population fragmentation. WWF and partner organisation have launched a conservation programme in the Mongolian Altai region in 1995, focussing on the snow leopard. WWF asked Urs Breitenmoser and Victor Lukarevskiy to evaluate the programme and make recommendations for its continuation. In September 2005, the two experts from the Cat Specialist Group visited Mongolia, logistically supported by Onon Yondon, WWF's national programme co-ordinator. They went to see several protected areas to assess the monitoring of the snow leopard and its major prey species, met with community officials, park administrators and rangers, spoke to herders, local women participating in Snow Leopard Enterprise, and visited teachers and

youth clubs, and educates and trains local people. Many local women produce handicrafts for Snow Leopard Enterprise, which are sold in North America. Profits go back to the community, but only if the conservation contract with SLE is fulfilled. Several strictly protected areas were created and many nomad families had to leave these areas. But the local people understand that sustainable use of the landscapes and pastures is the key to their own survival. "Quality before quantity" is a slogan nowadays often heard among the nomads, and sustainable management plans are developed for the buffer zones surrounding the SPAs. Nevertheless, the total amount of livestock is still increasing and threatens the long-term success of the conservation programme.

The snow leopard conservation programme in north-west Mongolia is a classical flagship species project with a high potential to become a model for integrated species and ecosystem conservation with a broad approach and partnership between governmental and private conservation agencies, scientists, and local people. The evaluators recommended continuing the programme and to advance or improve it in several aspects, such as the monitoring of snow leopard and prey species, the partnership agreement between private and public partners in regard to the long-term tasks, the reporting and communication, and to launch model projects improving the economic situation of local people. The full report (Breitenmoser U, Lukarveskiy V, Yondon O. 2006. Evaluation of WWF's snow leopard conservation activities in Mongolia, 36 pages) can be downloaded from our website ([www.catsg.org](http://www.catsg.org)).



students of local schools. The snow leopard conservation project is well known by the local population and widely accepted. A Mobile Anti-Poaching Unit with a tight network aims to reduce illegal killing of snow leopards and their prey. WWF runs education programmes for local schools by supporting

## Miscellaneous

### WWF Conservation Award for the IUCN/SSC Cat Specialist Co-chairs

At the WWF Annual Conference that took place from 5-9 June 2006 in Villars-sur-Ollon, Switzerland, Dr Urs Max Breitenmoser, Senior Researcher, Institute of Veterinary Virology, University of Bern, KORA Programme Director, and Co-Chair of the IUCN/SSC Cat Specialist Group, and Dr Christine Breitenmoser-Würsten, KORA Programme Coordinator and Co-Chair of the IUCN/SSC Cat Specialist Group received a WWF Panda Award in recognition of their dedication and commitment to large carnivores worldwide and particularly for the conservation of the lynx in Switzerland. As two of the world's leading cat specialists, with particular experience in the conservation of the Eurasian lynx, Drs Urs and Christine Breitenmoser have worked with WWF-Switzerland on the re-introduction of the lynx in the Alps and on large carnivore management in general. They have also supported WWF-Spain on Iberian lynx conservation and helped evaluate WWF projects on the snow leopard in Mongolia and the leopard



in the Caucasus. Both are coordinators of the Swiss-based KORA Carnivore Research Centre and, by serving as co-chairs of the IUCN/SSC Cat Specialist Group, they have fostered both global and local conservation actions based on sound science combined with practical implementation.

WWF International

#### Staff and ...

We wish to thank all the dedicated colleagues and members of the Cat Specialist Group for their hard work throughout 2006 and 2007. Working very closely with the Cat Specialist Group Co-chairs were Manuela von Arx (Assistant to the Chair), Anna Huber (book keeping), Kristin Nowell (Focal Point of the Cat SG Red List Authority), Peter Jackson (Advisor to the Chair and Co-editor of Cat News): a great thank you to all of them.

We would like to thank the many enthusiastic people who helped develop and run the various projects in 2006/2007: Fridolin Zimmermann (Balkan lynx capacity development, leopard in the Caucasus), Guillaume Chapron (Digital Cat Library), Ivan Sasu, Dorothea de Gruyter and Birgit Reichart (interns for Cheetah Conservation Compendium) and Julien Fattebert (Arabian leopard assessment in Yemen). We would also like to thank the many colleagues who have contributed to the website, Cat News and the Digital Cat Library.

Alex Sliwa has generously donated a lot of his superb cat pictures for Cat SG purposes, many thanks.

#### ...Sponsors

Although much of our work as an IUCN/SSC Specialist Group is done on a voluntary basis, our projects would not be possible without financial support from many committed institutions and private persons. We would like to thank the following organisations for their partnership and support: WWF Caucasus Programme Office, the Mava Foundation, Columbus Zoo, CCF Namibia, the Howard G. Buffet Foundation, the Karl Mayer Foundation, Fundacion Biodiversidad, Zurich Animal Protection Society, Taiwan State Forestry Administration, Mr Jean-Claude Tschumper, Mr Peter Stämpfli and last but not least, the many Friends of the Cat Group.

