

Project Update: July 2016

1. Household survey in Manang District, Annapurna Conservation Area (ACA)

Well-designed questionnaire was prepared for household survey with the aim to know intensity and pattern of livestock depredation, to assess the effectiveness of adopted human-snow leopard and co-predators conflict mitigation measures, and to explore the degree of tolerance towards the predators considering livestock depredation. A BSc student of Kathmandu Forestry College (KAFCOL) (Figure 1) was trained on about to prepare questionnaire and to interview household survey. For this, 50 households (26.45% of the total households) from two selected settlements (Khangsar and Upper Manang) of Manang District, ACA, were interviewed randomly. Questionnaire includes close-ended as well as open-ended questions.

Similarly, a key informant survey and focus group discussion is going on in few selected settlements of Lower Mustang of ACA. Ranger of ACA is engaged for household survey. Personally I am also taking in part for focus group discussion with village leaders and Units of Conservation Office of ACA (Mustang and Manang).

2. Camera traps and signs survey

From June 2016, I began to install the camera traps in Lower Mustang (Figure 2) and Manang covering ca. 400 sq. km. During the camera trap survey, I have been characterising habitat features of carnivore's each signs and collecting faeces samples for genetic analysis. Ranger of ACA and local herders are also engaged in camera trap survey (Figure 3).

3. Diet Analysis:

I trained the same student from KAFCOL about to prepare micro-histological hair slides. After then, he performed laboratory work preparing slides and making picture folders of each hair obtained from 180 faeces as of today.

4. Genetic Analysis:

Regarding genetic analysis, 198 samples (197 scat samples +1 hair sample) have been screened as of today. Of those samples, DNA extraction, species identification for snow leopard, common leopard and carnivores, and sex identification of snow leopard have completed. Individual identification of snow leopard using 12 loci microsat panel is being performing.



Left: Research Assistant, Deu B Rana, with Manangis for household survey. Right: PI, Bikram Shrestha, checking camera trap's position in Lower Mustang, Annapurna.



Left: Ranger, Yungdiung Gurung, engaged in camera trap monitoring (along with Conservation Officer, Neeru Thapa)) at Lower Mustang, Annapurna Conservation Area. Right: Researcher, Bikram Shrestha, Mustang, Annapurna.