

Project Update: October 2018

Camera trapping-

I have started the habitat assessment of Asiatic black bear in the Khangchendzonga National Park with camera trapping. The first and second phase of camera trap had completed. A total of 36 camera traps were installed in the Khangchendzonga National Park as well as in the buffer areas. The camera trap installation is still on progress remaining two phase will be completed within the time framework.



Asiatic Black bear taken from camera traps



Wild boar and barking deer captured by the camera traps

Scat Analysis-

Scat analysis were divided into seasonal wise analysis and the collection are still in progress



Interview and Questionnaire survey

I have completed the door-to-door pilot survey in the different villages which are situated near to the buffer areas of Khangchendzonga National Park (KNP). Interview and questionnaire survey is almost completed in the west and south district of Sikkim which comes under the Yuksum range jurisdiction. Total of 23 villages has been completed by doing survey and they are as (Chongji, Yambong, Chojo, Khechelpolri, Yuksam, Chung, Hungri, Chongrang, Kongri, Labdang, Karjee, Shophaka, Kumboo khola, Sepi, Nesa, Kongtey, Milling, Karmatar, Sada, Phantam, Lingee payong) to date. Likewise, I have only started Interview and questionnaire survey in the north district like Leek and Dzongu villages of Sikkim.

Awareness Programme

Awareness programme related to the conservation and conflict of the Asiatic black bear was conducted in four secondary schools of West district, which is closed to the Khangchendzonga National Park. School children, as well as the teacher, participate in the classroom programme.

1. Gyangyap Secondary School, west Sikkim.
2. Labdang Secondary School, west Sikkim.
3. Karjee Mangnam Secondary School, west Sikkim.
4. Shophaka Secondary School, west Sikkim.
5. Tshong Primary School, west Sikkim.

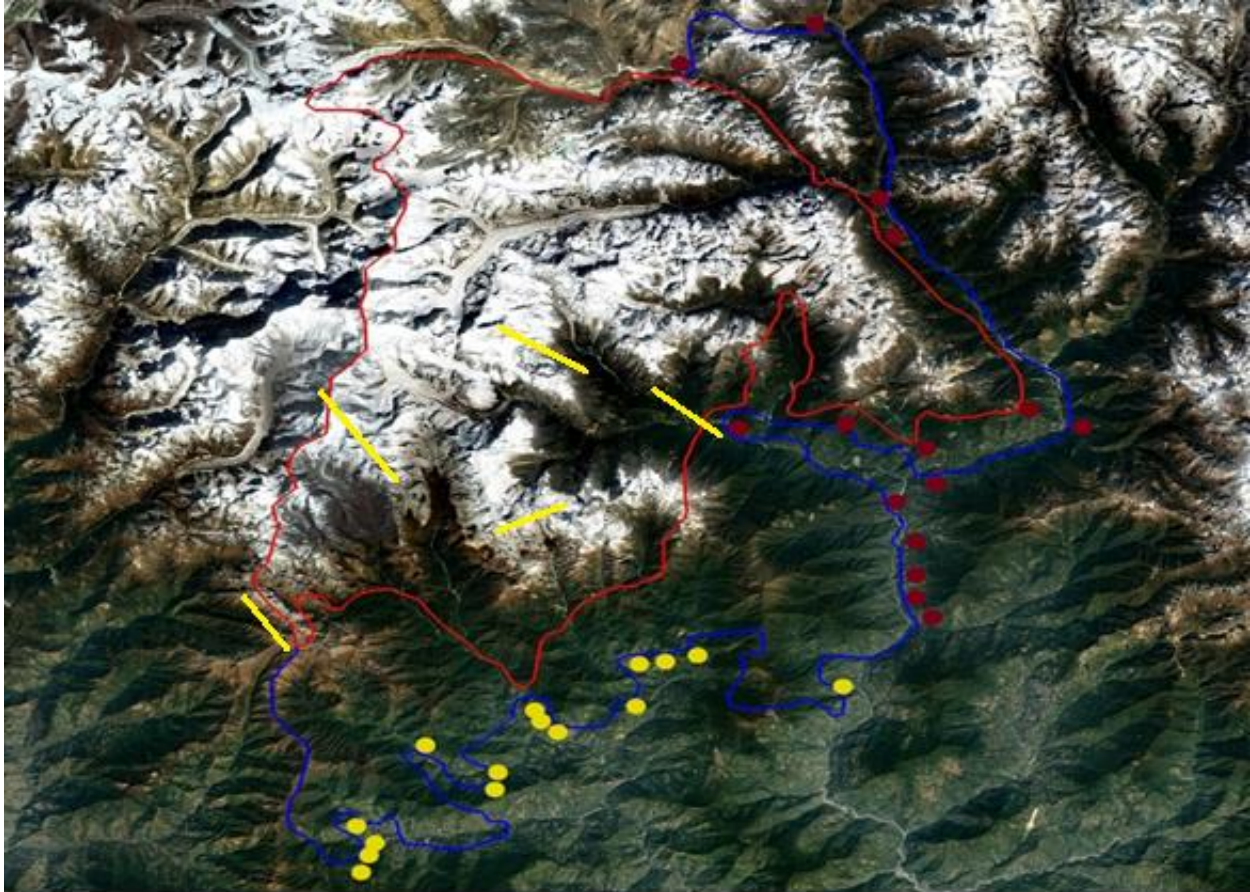


Figure 1. Khangchendzonga National Park and Its Buffer area. Red line- KNP, Blue line- Buffer areas of KNP, Yellow dot- Survey completed, Brown dot- Survey yet to start or in progress and the Yellow lines are camera trap Transect.

I have also collaborated with some village EDC and JFMC to develop bear aware trail signs for trails in and around the villages which share their boundary with the protected area. An outreach initiative was also started with the help of different EDC and JFMC to address food conditioning of bears in the buffer areas of KNP. Along with this,

Preliminary findings from the west Sikkim show that:

- Agricultural practices in the buffer areas of KNP.
- Less knowledge or aware of the ecology of Asiatic black bear.
- Less crop rotation in the villages.
- Plantation practices did by the forest department and EDC in an around the buffer areas.
- Competition for food in the forest between different animals especially for
- *Machilus spp.*, *Symplocos theifolia*, *Castanopsis spp.*, *Quercus pachyphylla*,

These are the reason may be the cause of human-bear conflict in and around the Khangchendzonga National Park.

Bear Attacks –



Interview and Questionnaires survey



Interaction with school children and teachers.



Certification of Participation in various platform.



Poster presentation at Amity Institute Forestry and Wildlife, Noida in Society for Conservation Biology Asia Section, International Conference and Workshop from 19th-20th March 2018. I used the logo of Rufford Small Grant as image as well as in the written form in the poster.



Landscape of buffer area of Khangchendzonga National Park.

Note: All the picture are copyright to PI.