

## **Project Update: September 2015**

**Project Area** - Gehrate Gol Community Game Reserve lies in the south of Chitral town along the left bank of Chitral River. The game reserve (950,000 km<sup>2</sup>) is considered to be one of the "Home of Snow Leopard" and most isolated places in Chitral. A human carnivore conflict due to livestock predation to large carnivores like snow leopard, Himalayan lynx, wolf and fox has risen sharply in recent years. Assessment shows that during 2013-2014, 632 livestock depredation cases were recorded from the area and in result of retaliatory killing more than 96 carnivores were killed by the local people. It has identified human carnivore conflicts as major conservation issue and need to be address on urgent

If we can secure these carnivore populations in the long term this will have broader biodiversity and social benefits for the local people.

**Progress Summary** - This project is planned to implement in GGGR, lies in the south of Chitral town. A HCC due to livestock predation to large carnivores like snow leopard, Himalayan Lynx etc., has risen sharply in recent years. Livestock depredation cases were recorded from the area and in result of retaliatory killing carnivores were killed by the people. This reserve supporting endangered markhor providing livelihoods opportunity for the local people through trophy hunting, killing of carnivore the natural balance in the ecosystem has disturbed, to overcome the issues and to mobilise the local people towards mitigation of HCC through awareness and planning

**Activities Conducted** – Different issues related to human carnivores conflicts was discussed in detail, it was also told that carnivores are integral parts of ecosystem and regulate the population of their ungulates in the area and can be used to generate additional income through eco-tourism etc. The local people shared their losses that carnivores are major causes of their livestock depredation and affecting the livelihood of the poor people, responding to this, it was informed to them that Almighty Allah has Allah not create a useless thing and Everything HE creates has many uses. The human mind cannot comprehend these facts. The importance of carnivores in an ecosystem and the teaching of Holy Quran regarding Conservation and wise use of natural resources and to treat animals were also shared with them with proper references. A separate meeting with women of the area was also conducted on the same day and was briefed about the project and upcoming project interventions.

After a detailed meeting the local people expressed their willingness for their involvement in the project to protect the carnivore's population in the area. The upcoming planned activities were also shared with them. The local people happy to hear about the livestock vaccination campaigns for their livestock's. The meeting was ended with vote of thanks.

**Participants** – 20 people (from all major stakeholders of the area,) three women and two wildlife staff.

**Challenges** - The recent flash flood and glacier outburst in Chitral as well as in the project area has delayed the project activities as all the people was engaged in relief and

rehabilitation of their houses and other infrastructures. For more info please click of the following links.

<http://reliefweb.int/report/pakistan/chitral-flash-flood-monsoon-2015-july-19-2015>

<http://www.geo.tv/article-192248-32-dead-in-Chitral-as-floods-continue-to-wreak-havoc-in-Pakistan>

**Observations** - It was noted that using reference from the Holy Quran regarding Conservation was the most effective techniques to motivate/mobilize/sensitise the local people regarding conservation.

The local people considered livestock's as their main part of life and they have strong affiliation with the livestock and have no tolerance for carnivores.

It was also noted that constant gathering/meeting with the community can develop trust among the people and can be used for conservation.

Women's are not allowed to photographs.

#### **Pictures of the Event –**



**Upcoming Planned Activities** - Formation of Village Conservation Committee(s)