

**Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Program
&
International Snow Leopard Trust**



SNOW LEOPARD ALLIANCE RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS INTERNATIONAL AWARD IN SPAIN

At a prestigious event in the Headquarters of the BBVA Foundation in Madrid on 23rd November 2022, the [International Snow Leopard Trust](#) (SLT) received the Worldwide Award for Biodiversity Conservation in recognition of its role in helping to create and support a 12-nation cooperation alliance for conservation of the endangered snow leopard. The [Global Snow Leopard Ecosystem Protection Program](#) (GSLEP) is a first-of-its-kind intergovernmental alliance for the conservation of the snow leopard and its unique ecosystem. Led by respective Environment Ministers, this alliance provides a cooperation platform for governments, conservationists, scientists, industry, and others to work together for the conservation of snow leopards and their high mountain ecosystems in Asia. The GSLEP Program's secretariat is based in Bishkek, and is hosted by the Ministry of Natural Resources, Ecology and Technical Supervision of the Kyrgyz Republic.

SLT's Executive Director, Dr. Charu Mishra, received the trophy and citation, together with the International and National Coordinators of the GSLEP Secretariat, Dr. Koustubh Sharma and Mr. Chyngyz Kochorov. Earlier this October, on the eve of the International Day of the Snow Leopard, Government representatives from snow leopard range countries had come together to review ongoing work and launch new conservation programs. The [Resolution of this meeting](#) celebrates this award as an important global recognition of the multi-national conservation efforts undertaken by the 12 countries.

"We're thrilled that this award recognizes the remarkable coming together of sovereign nations, all united by snow leopards, to set a path-breaking model of cooperative nature conservation," said Snow Leopard Trust Executive Director Dr. Charu Mishra. "It's a model many other groups – and even countries – could learn from and emulate."

The snow leopard's range spans two million square kilometers and extends across 12 Asian countries (Afghanistan, Bhutan, China, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan). Exact numbers are unknown, but it is believed that there may be as few as 4,000 and no more than 6,300 snow leopards left in the wild. Its habitat provides vital services, including clean water, to a third of the world's human population. This iconic species faces many threats, including illegal hunting, loss of prey, habitat loss, retribution killings for livestock loss and climate change.

GSLEP was created in 2013 when officials, politicians and conservationists arrived at a common conservation strategy enshrined in the Bishkek Declaration (2013) to cooperate in the conservation of this species and its habitat.

"This award is a watershed moment in the nearly 10-year journey of this remarkable conservation collaboration by 12 governments and various international and national organizations," says Dr. Koustubh Sharma, International Coordinator, GSLEP Secretariat. "It's also a fitting recognition of the magnificent snow leopard as a symbol of Asia's globally important high mountain ecosystems."

"As a top predator, the snow leopard serves as a thermometer of the health of the ecosystem it represents," adds Charu. "While its extinction could lead to cascading effects disrupting the natural food chain, more importantly, future generations will not forgive us if we allow that to happen. We owe it to our children to protect this amazing species."

Additional assets:

1 Video premiered at BBVA event featuring Snow Leopard Trust's work:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sUcpo61HPZ8>

2 BBVA Press release on the World Conservation Awards:

<https://www.biophilia-fbbva.es/en/noticias/ceremony-17-bbva-foundation-biodiversity-conservation-awards/>

3 Photos of the ceremony:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/v4afqiyylolb2m/KIKE4513.jpg?dl=0>

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/9dhy47t3gbjedql/KIKE4762.jpg?dl=0>

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/7fn23sgmpxpf2ac/KIKE4773.jpg?dl=0>

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/tqrx9q8qcuzdaul/KIKE4794.jpg?dl=0>

About Snow Leopard Trust:

Snow Leopard Trust, a 501c-3 Seattle-based non-profit organization, is the recognized world leader in snow leopard research and conservation, with operations throughout Central and South Asia. As a technical and financial partner of the GSLEP Program, the Snow Leopard Trust works to protect the threatened snow leopard and its mountain ecosystem through community-based conservation, rigorous science, conservation education, and international cooperation.

About GSLEP:

The Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Program is an intergovernmental alliance of snow leopard range countries and partner organizations to implement the Bishkek Declaration (2013 and 2017) to protect and recover snow leopard populations and their fragile habitats. The GSLEP Secretariat is hosted by the Kyrgyz Government and technically and financially supported currently by the Snow Leopard Trust, United Nations Environment Program, Global Environment Facility and United Nations Development Program.

About BBVA:

Based in Spain, the BBVA Foundation Awards for Biodiversity Conservation seek to recognize and support the work done by conservationist organizations, institutions and agencies in carrying forward environmental conservation policies and projects, and the efforts of communication professionals who have placed their abilities at the service of protecting our natural heritage.

Contact:

Koustubh Sharma, PhD
International Coordinator
Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Program
Whatsapp/Signal: +91 987 1144 991
koustubh@snowleopard.org

Media Contact:

Beth Stewart
+1 (206) 632-2421
beth@snowleopard.org