

Conservation of Persian Leopard in Turkmenistan

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CMS/CAMI Meeting, Tbilisi,

20-22 September 2022

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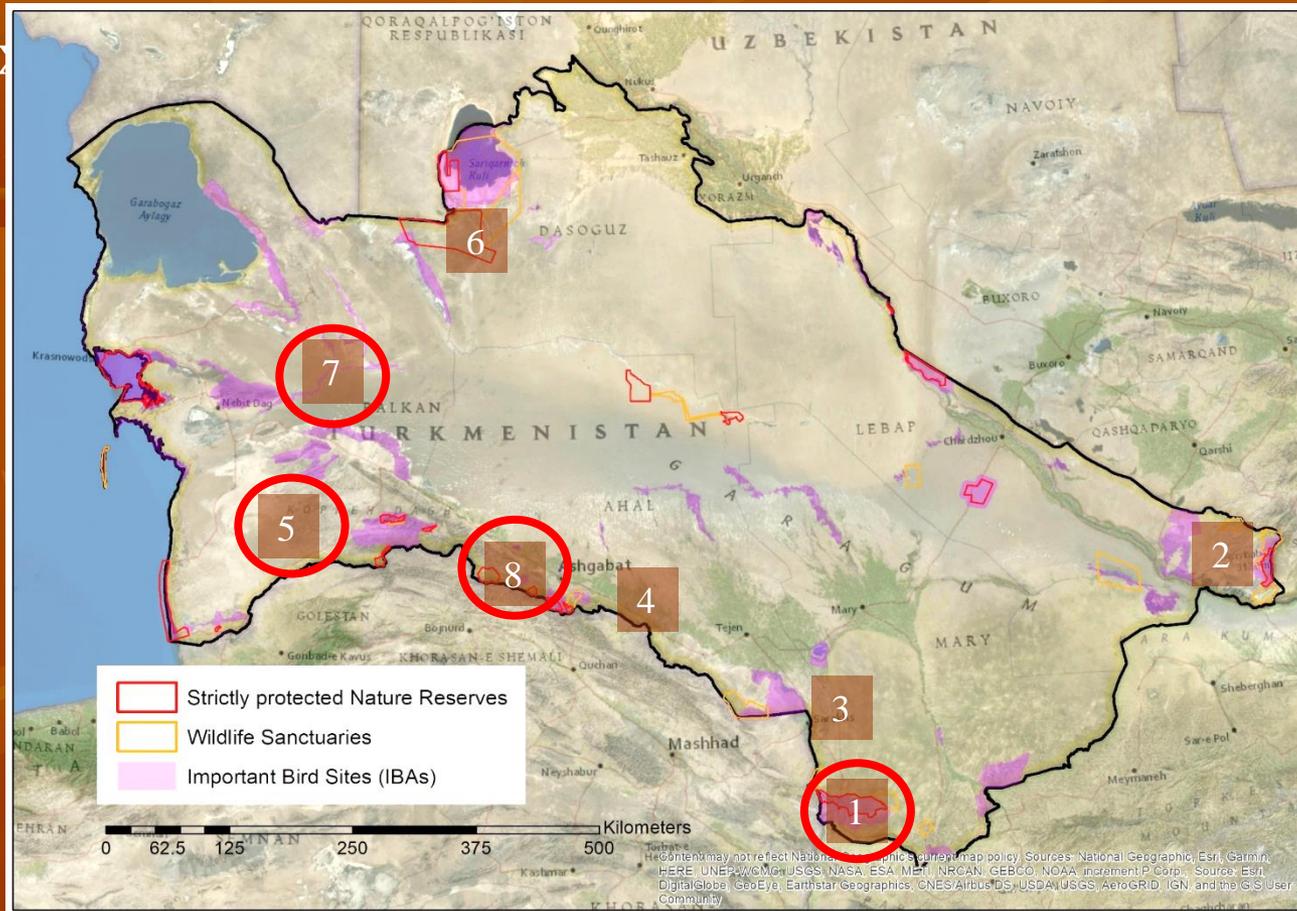
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“Connecting spots – connecting people” project

- In 2018-2022 within the new project field missions are undertaken, camera traps fixed, camera trapping trainings done, new data, information, photo and video images collected;
- Public awareness activities are undertaken;
- Scientific articles, reports are prepared and published.

PeLe main habitats (dots # 1, 5, 7, 8)



Camera trapping and field missions:

1. Badkhyz
2. Koytendag
3. Meana-Chacha
4. Gury Howdan
5. Sund-Hasardag
6. Kaplankyr
7. Balkan
8. Kopet Dag

PeLe distribution in Turkmenistan

- After Iran (Kiabi et al. 2002) the second largest Persian leopard population is found in Turkmenistan (Lukarevsky 2001; T. Rosen *pers. comm.*), mostly in the border areas between Turkmenistan and Iran (Farhadinia et al 2020), in the Kopet Dag range. Leopards have also been recorded in Badkhyz reserve on the border with Iran and Afghanistan (Kaczensky et al 2019), and in Sunt Hasar Dag on the border with Iran. A small population and reproduction has been recorded in the Big Balkhan range north of the Kopetdag and local herders reported sightings in the Small Balkhan (which lies between the Big Balkhan and the Kopetdag).

- Leopards have also been reported along the Garabogaz-gol depression on the Ustyurt plateau. In 1989, leopard tracks were spotted in the Kulansai gorge at Garabogaz-gol (Lukarevsky 2001). In 2020, a leopard was seen by Arsary Baba, near Garabogaz-gol and 120 km north-east of the Big Balkan range. There is the likelihood that some of these animals have historically and until recently dispersed into Kazakhstan.

Abundance and density

- 80-100 leopards are reportedly still found today in Turkmenistan (Geptner, Sludsky, 1972; Lukarevsky, 2001; Red Book of Turkmenistan, 2011), with the highest densities recorded in the Kopetdag in the vicinity of the city of Ashgabat.
- Unfortunately the only known leopard in Kazakhstan, died in 2021. It is not excluded that as population in Turkmenistan grows, barriers to movement are addressed and protection efforts strengthened to secure the prey base, there could be more animals dispersing to Kazakhstan from Turkmenistan.

Trainings on camera trapping (2018-2019)





Habitats of the PeLe (Central Kopetdag)



Central Kopetdag (Kopetdag State Nature Reserve)



First images of the Persian
Leopard (*Panthera pardus*)



Southern-Western Kopetdag, Ayidere Plot, Sunt Hasardag State Nature Reserve



- First images of the Reed Cat (*Felis chaus*)

First images of the PeLe (*Panthera pardus*) in Sunt Hasardag SNR



Badkhyz State Nature Reserve





Wild Boar
(*Sus scrofa*)

Mountain Sheep
(*Ovis vignei*)



Bushnell Camera NameZ 875.1mbt -1°C

03-22-2019 17:54:01



Stripe Hyena
(*Hyaena hyaena*) in
Central Kopetdag

Manul (*Felis manul*)
in Central Kopetdag



Tolay Hare
(*Lepus capensis*)



0°C 02/07/2019 04:03AM KOPETDAG1



7°C 01/27/2019 04:43AM KOPETDAG1

Fox (*Vulpes vulpes*)

Needs for cooperation and conservation activities of the PeLe

- Search for new habitats of the PeLe in the PAs territories and beyond
- Enhancing the PAs with technical equipment (camera trapping, satellite tracking, vehicle, radio talking, etc)
- Establishment of the new Big Balkhan Nature Reserve in Balkhan region
- Strengthening the fight against poaching and illegal hunting of ungulates
- Cooperation with CBD, CMS, CAMI and other Conventions, Funds, Initiatives)
- Development of the National Strategy and Action Plan for PeLe conservation

References

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Thank you for attention!

