



### SNOW LEOPARD (*Panthera uncia*)

- Endangered (EN) on the IUCN Red List
- Protected under Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972, India.
- Included on Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), making international trade in this species illegal

#### HABITAT

Snow leopards are found at a height of 3,000 to 4,500 m in cold and dry habitats of ravines, rocky outcrops and cliffs and mountains.

#### RANGE

Snow Leopard range extends from India to China in the east. They are also found from Afghanistan to Kazakhstan and Russia. Very few numbers are found in Central Asia with majority of the population found in the Tibetan region of China.

#### PHYSICAL FEATURES

- Head-Body Length – 115 cm, Tail length – 90 cm, tail almost as long as their body at times.
- Weight – 35 to 55 kgs.
- Males approximately 30 percent larger than females.
- White to smokey-grey color fur tinged in yellow and having a pattern of grey-black rosettes, that provides a wonderful camouflage to the cat in its habitat.
- Entire body is covered with thick fur, that is almost 12 cm long and all body parts are well adapted for its survival in harsh cold climate.
- Short and round ears that reduce loss of heat, enlarged nasal cavity warms the air before it reaches the lungs, extra large paws that prevent sinking in snow, a strong chest that

	helps in mountain climbing and prey capture and a thick long tail for balance and warmth.
<b>FAST FACTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Snow Leopards are extraordinary leapers and can jump almost as far as 50 feet using their long and powerful hind limbs.</li> <li>• They can kill a prey almost three times their own weight.</li> <li>• Mating season is from early January to Mid-March and litter size is 2 or 3 cubs.</li> <li>• They are known for their solitary nature, the only exceptions being, a Male and Female seen together during mating season or female may be seen with the young cubs.</li> </ul>
<b>POPULATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only 4000 to 6500 of these beautiful and elusive cats exist in the wild.</li> </ul>
<b>THREATS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate change</li> <li>• Illegal poaching for fur trade</li> <li>• Increased man-animal conflict since they kill livestock.</li> <li>• Lack of awareness about their importance in eco system.</li> </ul>
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