

Strengthening Conservation and Resilience of Globally Significant Wild Cat Landscapes Through a Focus on Small Cat and Leopard Conservation

Project Sites

Dudhwa landscape in Uttar Pradesh, Pakke- Eaglenest landscape in Arunachal Pradesh and Ranthambore landscape in Rajasthan

Species Focus Small wild cats

Grant Amount \$4.5 million

Executing Partner Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India

GEF Implementing Agency UNDP and WWF

Government Contact Mr. Soumitra Dasgupta (adgfwl-mef@nic.in)

Agency Contacts Ruchi Pant (ruchi.pant@undp.org); Dipankar Ghose (dghose@wwfindia.net)

Expected Start Date January 2022

Context

Of the 41 wild cat species occurring globally, fifteen are native to India. Small cats are keystone species, providing crucial economic and ecosystem services. While India’s network of tiger reserves provides a safe refuge to many cat species, a substantial part of the distribution of small cats occurs outside the Protected Area network, making protection, restoration and connectivity of habitats vital for long-term conservation. These areas are subject to varying degrees of habitat degradation and fragmentation, and cats are threatened by poaching and human-wildlife conflict – threats that are increasing in extent and frequency as ongoing development and land use changes extend the human-wild cat interface and increase the potential for local-level conflicts. The project will implement an integrated model for wild cat conservation at the landscape level that can be replicated nationally and in other range states.



Key Stakeholders Global Tiger Forum, the State Forest & Wildlife Departments of Arunachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan, National Tiger Conservation Authority, and relevant government line departments in the States.

Objective Secure populations and habitats of wild cats that are facing habitat degradation and fragmentation, human-wildlife conflict, poaching and illegal trade in priority landscapes of northern, north-eastern, and western India.

- Project Components**
- **Enabling policy, planning, and institutional framework for wild cat conservation:** participatory processes to develop national Species recovery action plans for Caracal, Fishing Cat and Clouded Leopard informed by a national database and atlas on wild cats
 - **Strengthened management and protection of wild cat landscapes:** bringing together key government departments to implement landscape-scale master plans
 - **Community stewardship and human-wildlife coexistence in wild cat landscapes:** through income generation from tourism and improved livestock management
 - **Partnerships, knowledge management, and monitoring and evaluation.**



Photo: Dudhwa National Park © Felineus/Shutterstock