

# Biological corridors in Bhutan: *An ecological connectivity connecting conservation landscapes.*

Project Management Unit  
Tourism Council of Bhutan



# Background – Process involved 1999

- Site selection using satellite images and detailed land-use maps
- Trained foresters on how to conduct suitability survey
- Standard questionnaires were developed for selected consultation of local residents
- Level of human disturbance, width at narrow constriction and rare species were recorded for boundary demarcation

# Background - Vital statistics

- Biological corridors are established in the country in 1999
  - As a gift to the earth from the people of Bhutan
  - BC comprise of 7.73% (2966.54 sq. km) of the total geographical area and 15% of the protected areas in the country
  - Three biological corridors intercept with the Ecotourism project landscapes (BC 4,6 & 7)
  - The protected area systems including BCs were revised in 2020
  - The Protected areas constitute roughly 50% of the ecotourism project landscape

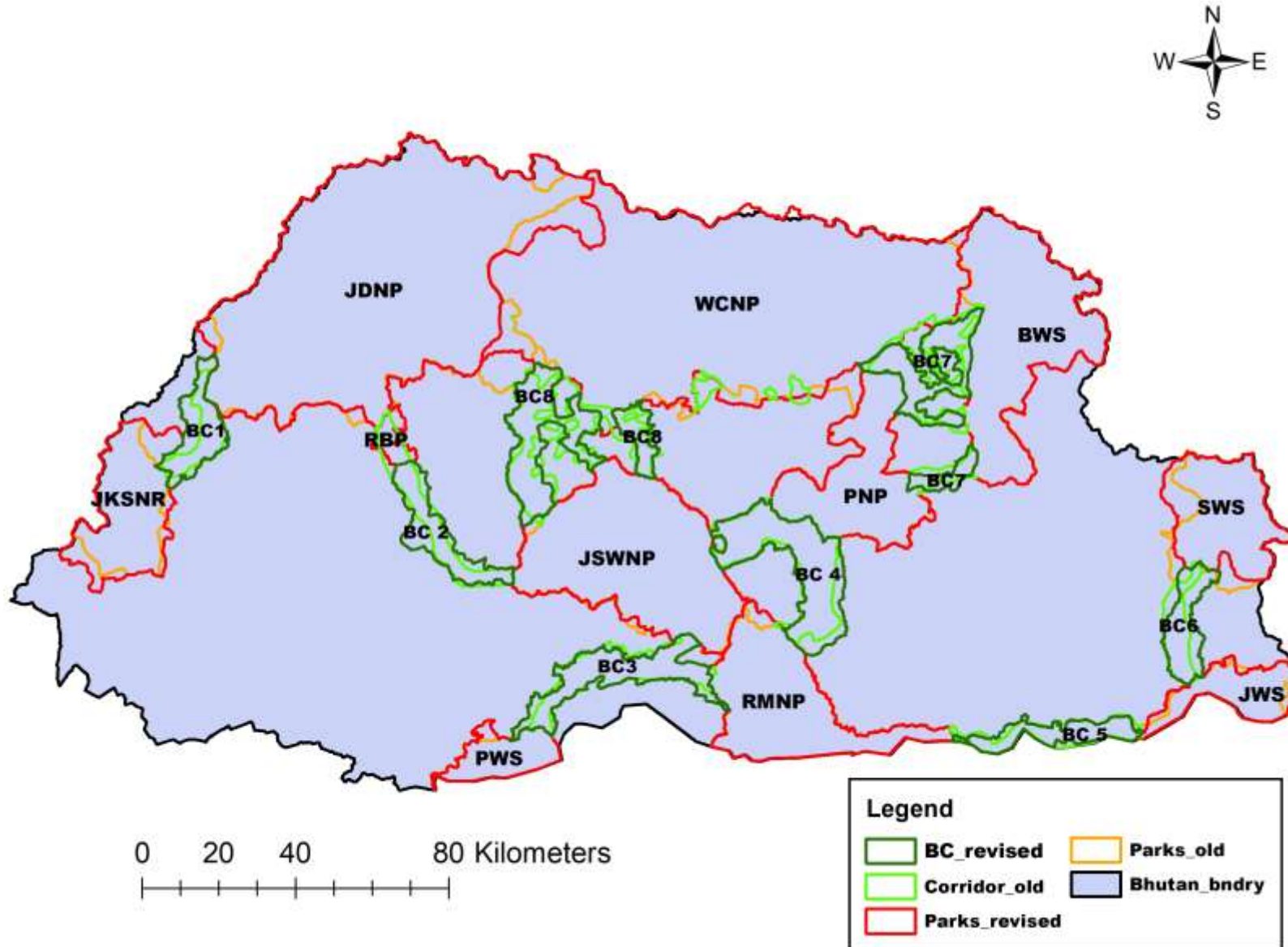
# Need for conservation intervention

- Strengthening and enhancing conservation outside national parks and wildlife sanctuaries
- Support operationalization of Biological Corridors as a management unit under the administration Forest Divisions
- Develop Biological Corridor Management Plan

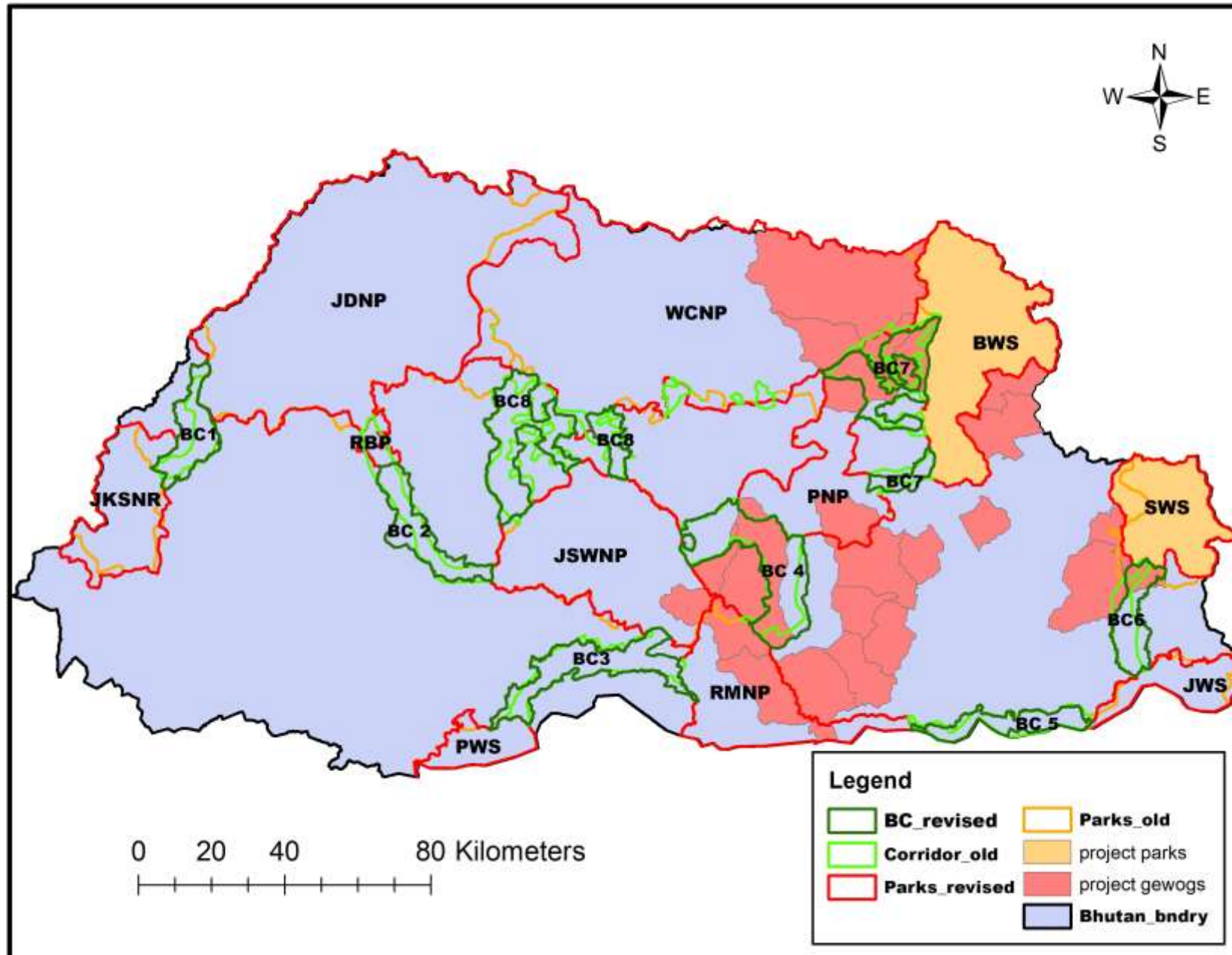
# Role of ecological connectivity

- Create enabling network of protected area connectivity across the country
- Identify and designate management intervention for focal or iconic species at different landscapes
- Create topographic diversity to facilitate animal movement in the face of climate change
- Protect riverain forests as a part of the ecological connectivity

# Revised protected area system



# Connectivity within the project landscape



# Incorporation of Wildlife sanctuaries and BCs into project landscape

- Two Wildlife Sanctuaries and and three BCs overlap with the project landscape – the objectives considered include-
  - SMART patrolling within the entire project landscape
  - METT+ assessment for two wildlife sanctuaries (Bomdeling Wildlife Sanctuary and Sakteng Wildlife Sanctuary)
  - Protection of iconic species within the project landscape
    - Golden langur
    - Red Panda
    - Golden Mahseer
    - Black-necked crane
    - White-bellied Heron
    - Ludlow's Bhutan Swallowtail



# Shareholder engagement

- Local government of five Districts and 19 gewogs (blocks)
  - Identification of local tourism products and services
  - Effective engagement in project activities
- Managers of two wildlife sanctuaries and three Divisions
  - Aligning PA objectives into the project
  - Identifying flagship species to promote wildlife-based economy
- Non-governmental organizations and project implementers
  - To built landscape level partnership
  - To collaborate cost sharing mechanisms wherever projects overlapp

# Key lessons

- The importance of the stakeholder consultation in identifying connectivity
- Overlapping of developmental activities with the ecological connectivity
- The need of advocacy and awareness

THANK YOU

