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THE LEOPARD (Panthera pardus) IN THAILAND

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1. DISTRIBUTION

Leopards inhabit forests throughout the country but heaviest concentrations in the southern provinces. Leopards are found in wildlife sanctuaries like Huai Kha Khaeng and Kong-Saeng Wildlife Sanctuaries and in national parks such as Khao Yai National Park. The subspecies in Thailand is P.p. fusca Meyer, 17984 and P.p. delacouri Pocock, 1930.

2. POPULATION

According to Lekagul (1977), leopards are seriously endangered, and there may be no more than 400 to 400 leopards widely scattered throughout the more remote areas of the country. Density of male leopards in Huai Kha Wildlife Sanctuary is estimated to be one leopard per 27 to 37 km<sup>2</sup> while females had ranges of 11-17 km<sup>2</sup>, and occurred within the ranges of the males (Rabinowitz, 1990). In 1990, leopards were also considered to be an endangered species by the Thailand Institute of Scientific and Technology Research.

3. PRINCIPLE THREATS

Rapid and large scale loss of forest as well as hunting pressure have restricted leopard populations to a limited number of wildlife sanctuaries and parks.

4. CONSERVATION MEASURES

Leopards were declared to be a protected wild animal of the first category by the Wild Animal Reservation and Protection Act B.E. 2503 (1960). According to this act, no person shall hunt protect animals by means of killing except for educational purposes or scientific research. Leopard skin and carcass trading was also prohibited by law.

Thirty-three wildlife sanctuaries and sixty national parks have been established in all parts of the country in order to preserve wildlife habitats.

INTERNATIONAL LEOPARD STUDBOOK

1989

INTERNATIONAL LEOPARDZUCHTBUCH

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