

Cats in the news

New snow leopard conservation plan for Nepal

Nepal has released a new snow leopard conservation plan. The previous plan (2017-2021) had a budget of \$ 3.15 million and focused on research and monitoring. The new plan will be valid from 2024–2030 with a budget of \$ 14.24 million. The priority of the new plan lies on community engagement and conflict mitigation (35% of the budget), followed by combatting the illegal wildlife trade (26% of the budget).

Source: *Mongabay* <https://t1p.de/1xtzl>

First camera trap study of Central Cardamom Mountains Landscape, Cambodia

The Central Cardamom mountains are one of the least deforested areas in Cambodia. The first-ever camera trap study of the area has now revealed 108 species occurring there: 65 bird species, 38 mammals and 5 reptiles, incl. 23 species which are listed Vulnerable or higher on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. Among the detected cat species are clouded leopard, marbled cat and Asiatic golden cat.

Source: *Phys* <https://t1p.de/g1p8i>

Chinese mountain cats face many threats

The Chinese mountain cat is endemic to China. In 2021, its status has been uplifted to Class-I National Key Protected Wildlife, the same as for e.g. the giant panda and the snow leopard. The species faces many dangers, starting with a certain degree of ignorance: the first photographs in the wild were taken only in 2007, and recent studies are starting to build our knowledge on the ecology and distribution of the cat. Other threats include hybridisation with domestic cats, mortality from feral dogs, road mortality and accidental poisoning from rodenticide.

Source: *Mongabay* <https://t1p.de/j8dlg>

The unknown small cats of the WAP complex

The WAP complex is a transboundary protected area complex at the borders of Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger in West Africa. Whilst research focuses on large spectacular species, relatively little is known about the smaller cats occurring in the area: caracal, serval and wildcat. Most of what is known comes from bycatch data of camera-trapping studies on e.g. leopards and cheetahs. It is unlikely that the knowledge will soon improve, as the area is heavily impacted by militant terrorist activities. However, it is known that skins of serval and caracal are illegally traded on medicine markets in Benin and Niger, but it is not clear whether these products originate from the WAP complex. Other threats are habitat loss and prey depletion from over-grazing and burning of grasslands.

Source: *Mongabay* <https://t1p.de/rmbab>

Late Cat SG member honoured with Private Natural Heritage Reserve

In September 2022, Howard Quigley passed away. He was Panthera's Jaguar Program Director and had been a member of the Cat SG since 1986. In June in the Brazilian Pantanal, the Howard Quigley Private Natural Heritage Reserve was established in his honour. The reserve encompasses 643 hectares and is home to jaguars, giant otters, ant-eaters and other threatened species.

Source: *Panthera* <https://t1p.de/6e6al>

Indigenous women lead conservation project in Peru

Habitat loss and prey depletion have led to an increase in carnivore attacks on livestock in the Peruvian central Andes. Traditionally, it is the women who look after the livestock. With the aid of the Small Wild Cat Conservation Foundation, local women built up the Mujeres Quechua por la Conservación. Starting with monthly meetings to talk about the problems with pumas, pampas cats and Andean cats and sharing experiences, quickly developing into research field work and conflict mitigation measures.

Source: *Mongabay* <https://t1p.de/t6jw9>

Germany draws positive results from wildcat awareness raising campaign

A two-year project to raise awareness for the European wildcat in Germany comes to an end. One of the threats to the species is the misidentification of young wildcats as abandoned domestic kittens, which are then brought to veterinarians and animal shelters. The project led an information campaign, offered training for veterinarians, and trained 36 ambassadors for the species. Additionally, 217 information signs have been installed in areas where wildcats occur.

Source: *Presseportal* <https://t1p.de/yy24k>

Drug trafficking threatens Central American Jaguar habitat

Up to 70% of jaguar habitat in Central America may be threatened by narco-trafficking activities. Jaguars prefer remote, sparsely populated areas, but so do narco-traffickers for their operations. When law enforcement shuts down a trafficking operation, it often simply moves to another place. Such narco-trafficking operations are estimated to have caused 14–30% of deforestation in Central America. They clear land for buildings, roads and air strips, often establishing cattle ranching farms for a cover story and money laundering vehicle.

Source: *The University of Alabama* <https://t1p.de/mliut>

Positive preliminary results from national jaguar census in Mexico

The final results of the 2024 national jaguar census in Mexico are expected for February 2025. However, preliminary results indicate that the jaguar population remained stable or even increased in most study areas since the previous census in 2018. The census is performed in 19 Mexican states. The first census in 2008 resulted in a population estimate of 4,000 jaguars. The second census in 2018 estimated 4,800 individuals.

Source: *Mexico News Daily* <https://t1p.de/8babe>

See Supporting Online Material SOM for more news articles at www.catsg.org. Current news articles are also published on the IUCN SSC Cat SG Facebook page (<https://t1p.de/evuiq>).

Thank you to Richard Hatekayama for sending news items.

If you would like to contribute current news items from your area, please contact: r.buerki@kora.ch.