

WHAT IS CAUSING SNOW LEOPARD POPULATION TO DECLINE IN THE WILD

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Picture 2. snow leopard

Background

- There are less than 4000 Snow Leopards. Their numbers are declining due to habitat loss, climate change, and poaching
- Snow Leopards are a key indicator of healthy high level altitude habitat. If snow leopards are thriving countless other species benefit as well as the whole ecosystem



Picture 1. Snow leopard

Hypothesis

- We hypothesize that there is a relationship between human population increase and the decrease in the snow leopard population.

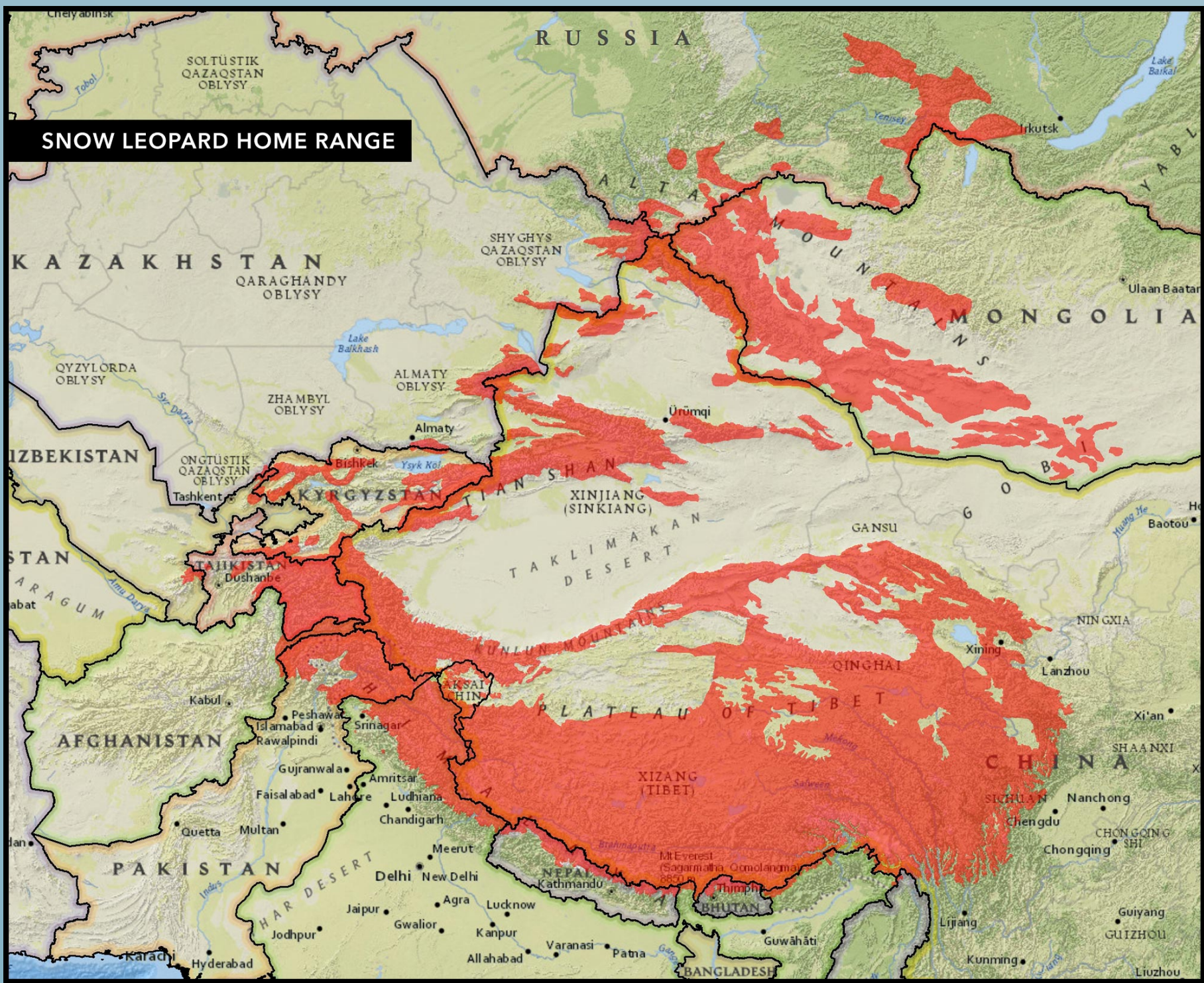


Fig 2. habitat map

Methods/Approach

- Experimental design
 - We will conduct a field experiment in the Himalayas to determine what is causing snow leopards to die
 - We will first set up cameras and work to putting tracking devices on the leopards
 - Collect human population stats in areas with established snow leopard population
- Analysis
 - We want to find what factors are causing harm to snow leopards the most
 - For example poaching, climate change, or habitat loss.
 - The data collected will be used to determine the best course of action to protect snow leopards
 - Compare human population to snow
- Major variables
 - Dieses
 - Weather change
 - Technical difficulties
 - Outside human interaction
- Timeline
 - Collecting the data will take time as reaching the remote climate that snow leopards live in is challenging and expensive
 - Tracking snow leopards is also challenging so there will be trial and error to find the best locations for cameras and finding snow leopards

Population Impacts

- Habitat loss
- Climate change
- Poaching
- Removing leopards to protect animals

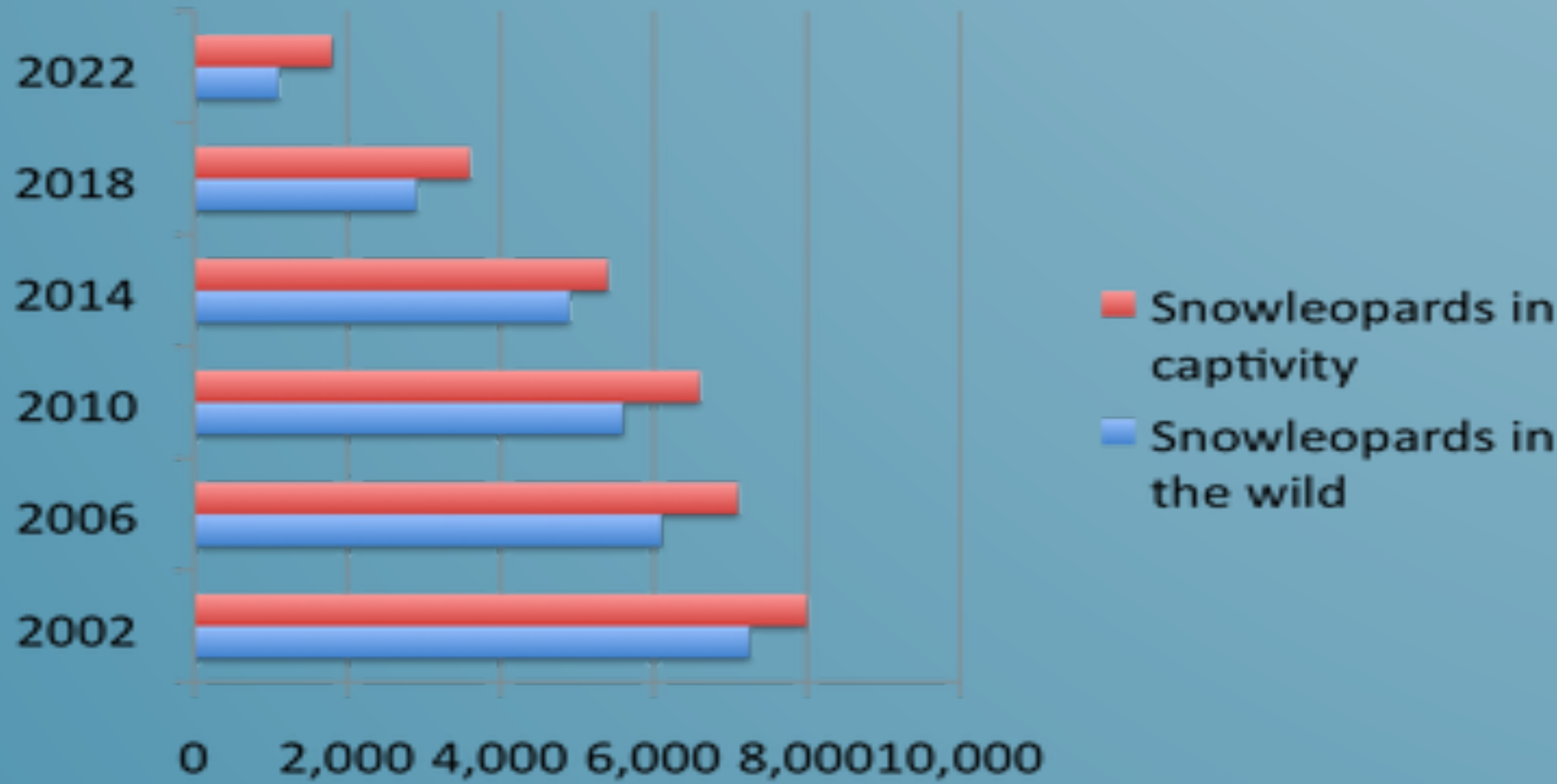


Table 1. Current snow leopard population trend

• Fox, J. L., Sinha, S. P., Chundawat, R. S., & Das, P. K. (1991). Status of the snow leopard *Panthera uncia* in northwest India. *Biological conservation*, 55(3), 283-298. McCarthy, T. M., & Chapron, G. (2003). Snow leopard survival strategy. International Snow Leopard Trust and Snow Leopard Network, Seattle, USA, 105. Hussain, S. (2003). The status of the snow leopard in Pakistan and its conflict with local farmers. *Oryx*, 37(1), 26-33.