

BHUTAN FOR LIFE
Year: 2019

“A Safe Haven for Red Panda”

The Red panda is a highly protected mammal species which is listed under the Schedule - I of Forest and Nature Conservation Act of Bhutan (FNCA) 1995 and FNCRR 2017. However, little is known about its habitat status and conservation threats in the wild.

With the funding support from Bhutan for Life, JKSNR installed cameras since October 2019 along different locations from c. 2000 to 4000 m.a.s.l. Based on the potential areas and accessibility, a total of 48 grids each measuring 4 km x 4 km were selected for camera installation.

Based on the analysis of camera traps, the presence of Red Panda was confirmed in 6 grids measuring 4 km x 4 km (*Photo 1*). A total of 161 trap nights, 79 images and 8 videos of Red panda were captured (*Photo 2*), mostly from the cool broadleaved forest with thick undergrowth of bamboos. JKSNR has identified 10 individuals from 6 grids.



Photo 1: A pair of Red Pandas captured in grid 32 of the sample plot.

The presence of Red Panda in the Strict Nature Reserve clearly indicates the site as an important habitat and its pristine environment. The study recommended periodic monitoring of its population and habitat for evaluating the effectiveness of conservation investments. The habitat site can serve as an area for future Red Panda conservation research sites. Further the site could also serve as a conservation refugia for the species in addressing the impacts of climate change.



Photo 2: Captured images of Red panda from different grids (G) of the sample plots
 The assessment was conducted by the staffs of JKSNR with the financial support from Bhutan for Life.



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