



HIGHLIGHTS

- 51.44% of country protected
- Ecologically representative and well-connected system
- Pristine contiguous habitats protecting endangered species and ecosystem services
- Constitutional support for habitat conservation including minimum 60% forest cover
- A practical conservation approach actively engaging local people without prejudicing community needs
- Bhutan Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool plus (Bhutan METT +) the first system wide assessment of protected area management effectiveness

CHINA

JIGME KHESAR STRICT NATURE RESERVE
Gazetted: 1993
Area: 609.51 km²
Staff: 22 permanent
Management plan: 2012-2017

JIGME DORJI NATIONAL PARK
Gazetted: Wildlife Sanctuary in 1974, gazetted as a National Park in 1993
Area: 4,316 km²
Staff: 87 permanent, 3 temporary
Management plan: 2015-2019

WANGCHUCK CENTENNIAL NATIONAL PARK
Gazetted: 2008
Area: 4,914 km²
Staff: 37 permanent
Management plan: 2012-2017

JIGME SINGYE WANGCHUCK NATIONAL PARK
Gazetted: 1993
Area: 1,730 km²
Staff: 40 permanent
Management plan: 2014-2018

BUMDELING WILDLIFE SANCTUARY
Gazetted: 1993
Area: 1,520.61 km²
Staff: 30 permanent, 1 temporary
Management plan: 2013-2018

SAKTENG WILDLIFE SANCTUARY
Gazetted: 2003
Area: 740.60 km²
Staff: 31 permanent
Management plan: 2008-2013; revised plan near completion

PHIBSOO WILDLIFE SANCTUARY
Gazetted: 1993
Area: 269 km²
Staff: 12 permanent, 6 temporary
Management plan: 2011-2016

ROYAL MANAS NATIONAL PARK
Gazetted: 1993
Area: 1,057 km²
Staff: 50 permanent, 48 temporary
Management plan: 2015-2020

PHRUMSENGLA NATIONAL PARK
Gazetted: 1993
Area: 905.05 km²
Staff: 37 permanent, 3 temporary
Management plan: 2013-2018

JOMOTSANGKHA WILDLIFE SANCTUARY
Gazetted: 1993 (formerly known as Khaling Wildlife Sanctuary), formed by merging Khaling Reserved Forest (notified in 1974) with Neoli Wildlife Reserve (notified in 1983)
Area: 334.73 km²
Staff: 19 permanent, 2 temporary
Management plan: Under development

BHUTAN

A SMALL COUNTRY WITH A BIG PROTECTED AREA STORY

INDIA

PROTECTED AREAS IN BHUTAN



Red panda (*Ailurus fulgens*), Jigme Singye Wangchuck National Park © JSWNP/WWF-Bhutan



Black Necked Crane (*Grus nigricollis*), Bumdeling Wildlife Sanctuary © WWF-Bhutan



Haa District, Jigme Khesar Strict Nature Reserve © WWF-Bhutan

PROTECTING OVER HALF THE COUNTRY

Bhutan's protected areas form a conservation network covering 51.44% of the country composed of ten protected areas, one botanic park and seven connecting biological corridors. Established with the support of local people, the network protects and controls important biological resources for sustainable development (most notably the Cordyceps insect-fungi and medicinal herbs) along with endangered species like the tiger, snow leopard, takin etc.

ACHIEVING AICHI BIODIVERSITY TARGETS

Bhutan has achieved many of the CBD's targets. In terms of area, the target of 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water ... *especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well connected systems of protected areas* has been reached. But to date there have been few attempts to understand management and its effectiveness, or to record how management changes over time.

MANAGING THREATS

Threats impacting nature conservation in Bhutan are quite low. The country's remote and, for much of the year, inaccessible terrain, along with effective protection systems, helps keep poaching levels relatively low. Human wildlife conflict and forest fires are both issues, although mostly outside protected areas. Local people generally support conservation and for this reason conflict incidences can go unreported, indicating a high tolerance level by communities for wildlife. The Government has also put in place mitigation measures and community-based insurance schemes to address emerging conflicts.

DEVELOPMENT PRESSURES

As Bhutan opens its door to the world, threats are likely to increase. Tourist numbers are growing, roads improving and increasing, massive hydropower plants are changing hydrology, networks of transmissions lines are crossing the country and the future impacts of climate change will be significant but to date have been little studied.

ADAPTING TO CHANGE

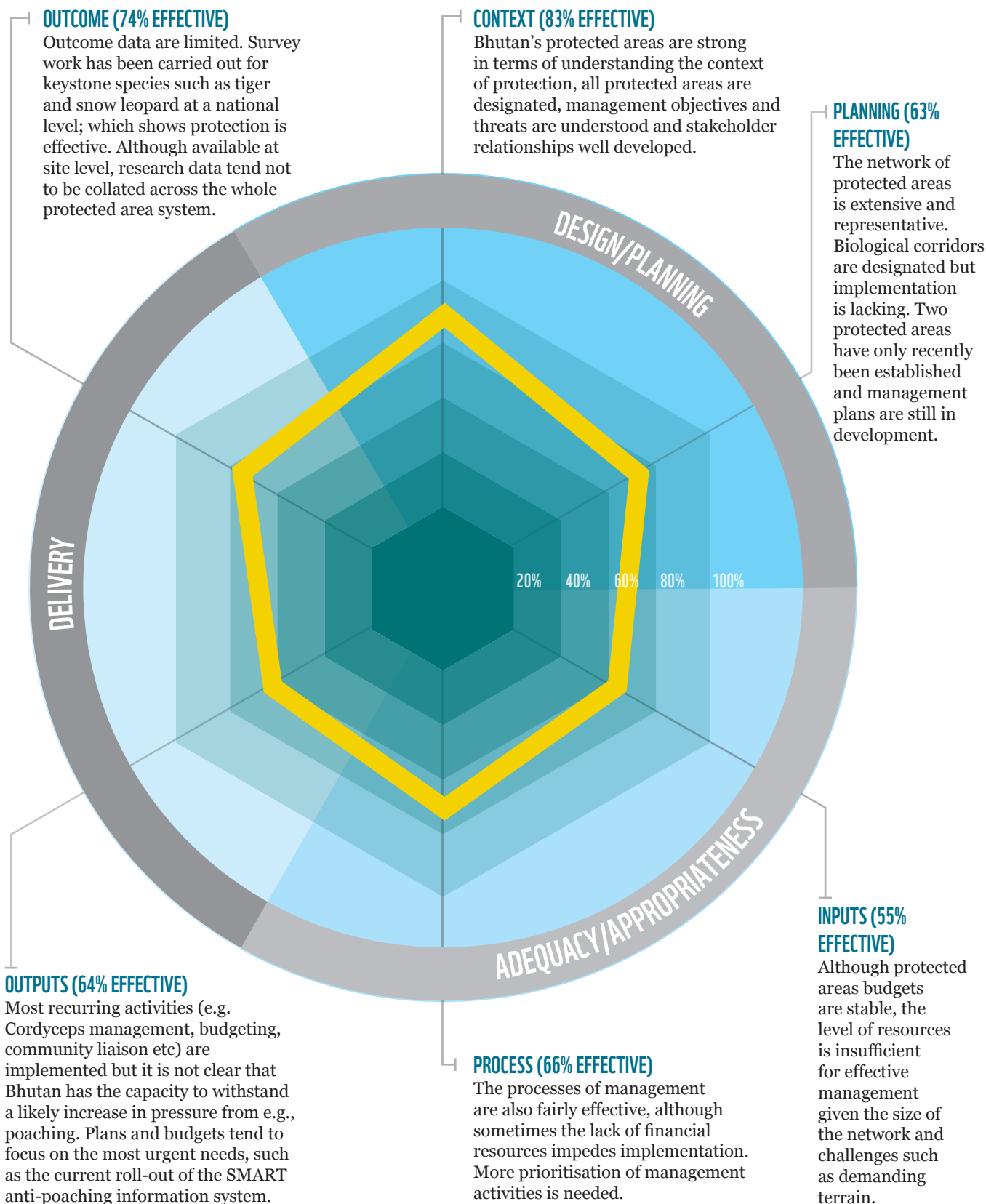
All these developments will impact protected areas and calls for effective and adaptive management, based on assessment and monitoring systems and baseline population data, predator-prey dynamics and habitat condition.

ASSESSING MANAGEMENT EFFECTIVENESS

In 2015, Bhutan's Wildlife Conservation Division, Department of Forest and Parks Services began a two year project to develop and implement a management effectiveness assessment system for its protected areas network, which has to date involved two national level workshops and four protected area level consultations, development of a Bhutan-specific methodology and assessments by all the individual protected areas.

MANAGEMENT EFFECTIVENESS IN BHUTAN

Bhutan adapted the Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) for application in its protected area system (the Bhutan METT+). The overall results from implementing the Bhutan METT + show that protected areas in Bhutan are well managed; but their effectiveness is limited both by a low level of resources (both financial and appropriate technical resources) and by gaps in the monitoring and research data, which limits the ability to understand the impact of conservation in Bhutan, react to changing conditions and to adapt management to improve efficiency and effectiveness.





Rangers, Phibsoo Wildlife Sanctuary © Tenzin Rabgye/WWF-Bhutan

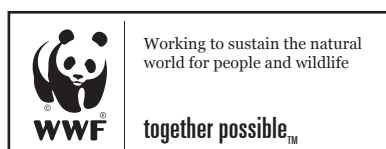
TOWARDS AN EFFECTIVE SYSTEM OF PROTECTED AREA MANAGEMENT IN BHUTAN

**STATE OF THE PARKS
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EFFECTIVENESS OVER TIME.**

The Bhutan METT + implementation has provided the Royal Government of Bhutan with a huge resource of information on the management effectiveness of protected areas. A State of the Parks report will be published/launched at the Convention on Biological Diversity 13th Conference of Parties in Cancun, Mexico, in December 2016, using the information gathered and giving for the first time a detailed and definitive picture of the status, trends and management needs of Bhutan's protected areas system.

The Royal Government of Bhutan and WWF are working to create an innovative funding mechanism for protected areas system called "Bhutan for Life". This initiative will mobilize financial resources and other commitments to effectively manage 51.44% of the country in perpetuity. Importantly, State of the Parks will provide both a baseline against which to measure progress towards Bhutan for Life, and a methodology for tracking protected area management effectiveness over time.

At the same time, Bhutan is one of the tiger range countries interested in implementing the Conservation Assured |Tiger Standards (CA|TS) accreditation approach, which is developing the best practice in tiger conservation across the tiger range. The State of the Parks assessment can help provide background data for any future implementation of CA|TS.



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