

Einladung zum Kolloquium

Snow Leopard and the Goat: Science, Conservation and Politics in the Karakorams

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Throughout Pakistan and in other parts of their home range, snow leopards frequently kill domestic livestock. In response, local farmers retaliate by killing snow leopards using methods such as setting leg traps and poisoning the carcasses of killed animals. Conservation institutions and programs regard farmer-snow leopard conflict to be the biggest threat to the snow leopard population, and while they acknowledge the economic burden of livestock losses borne by local farmers, they implicitly associate this problem with “disturbance” created by subsistence, mainly hunting and herding, practices of local farmers in a “natural” ecosystem. Under this situation, farmers are forced to “subsidize” snow leopard populations without any benefits. The benefit of this “subsidy” goes to conservation NGOs, urban elites, researchers (like me!) and state agencies in the form of aesthetic and ethical satisfaction, professional achievement and funding, social and political power and prestige. Based on this asymmetrical cost and benefit relation, I argue that farmer-snow leopard conflict must be seen as conflict between two human groups – farmers and conservationists – over snow leopard.