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Schedule I (FNCA, 1995)

Black-necked Crane *Grus nigricollis*

FACT FILE

STATUS

Near Threatened

COMMON NAME

Black-necked Crane,
Thrung Thrung Karmo(Dzongkha)

HABITAT

Wetlands and upland
agricultural fields

DIET

Plant roots and tubers, insects,
snails, shrimp, fish, frogs,
lizards, voles and waste/leftover
grain from harvest fields

BREEDING SITES

In alpine bog meadows and
riverine marshes, favoring
lacustrine marshes from 2,600-
4,900 m.

DID YOU KNOW?

Bhutan hosts the largest
wintering population outside
of China.

SCIENTIFIC NAME

Grus nigricollis

GLOBAL POPULATION

17,389 - 17610 individuals
in total (Chen et al., 2022)

WINTERING SITES IN BHUTAN

Bumthang
(*Chokkhor, Chumey and Tang*)

Lhuntse
(*Dungkar and Tangmachu*)

Trashiyangtse
(*Bomdeling and Yangtse*)

Wangduephodrang
(*Phobjikha and Khotokha*)

GLOBAL DISTRIBUTION RANGE

China, India, and Bhutan
(*Birdlife International, 2016*)

KEY THREATS

- i. Loss of habitat and degradation
- ii. Climate Change
- iii. Stray dogs

CONSERVATION INITIATIVES IN BHUTAN

Out of the global population of ~ 17500, more than 600 Black-necked Cranes are recorded each winter across several valleys in Bhutan. Black-necked Cranes are protected throughout Bhutan and listed under Schedule I as a protected bird species, both in the Forest and Nature Conservation Act of Bhutan, 1995 (RGoB, 1995) and the Forest and Nature Conservation Rules of Bhutan, 2017 (DoFPS, 2017).

Recognizing the importance of the habitat for the wintering cranes, the Royal Government of Bhutan (RGoB) designated Phobjikha valley as an important Conservation Area in 1999, with the Royal Society for Protection of Nature (RSPN) as the focal agency for management. RSPN, as a nongovernmental organization, began its journey in early 1987 with the simple task of population survey and inventory of wintering BNC population in the country. Gradually, RSPN's efforts have been strengthened towards habitat improvement, enhancing community support, and research.

In recent years, the conservation measures to save the BNC have been further enhanced through the establishment of local/community conservation groups, involvement of stakeholders, and implementation of conservation projects in managing the overall landscape of BNC habitat.

Through the concerted efforts of partners, stakeholders and donors across the range countries and beyond, much of the important sites of the Black-necked Cranes have been identified and protected. Subsequently, the population is observed to be increasing and thus an upgradation from Vulnerable to Near Threatened in the IUCN Redlist category of threatened species.



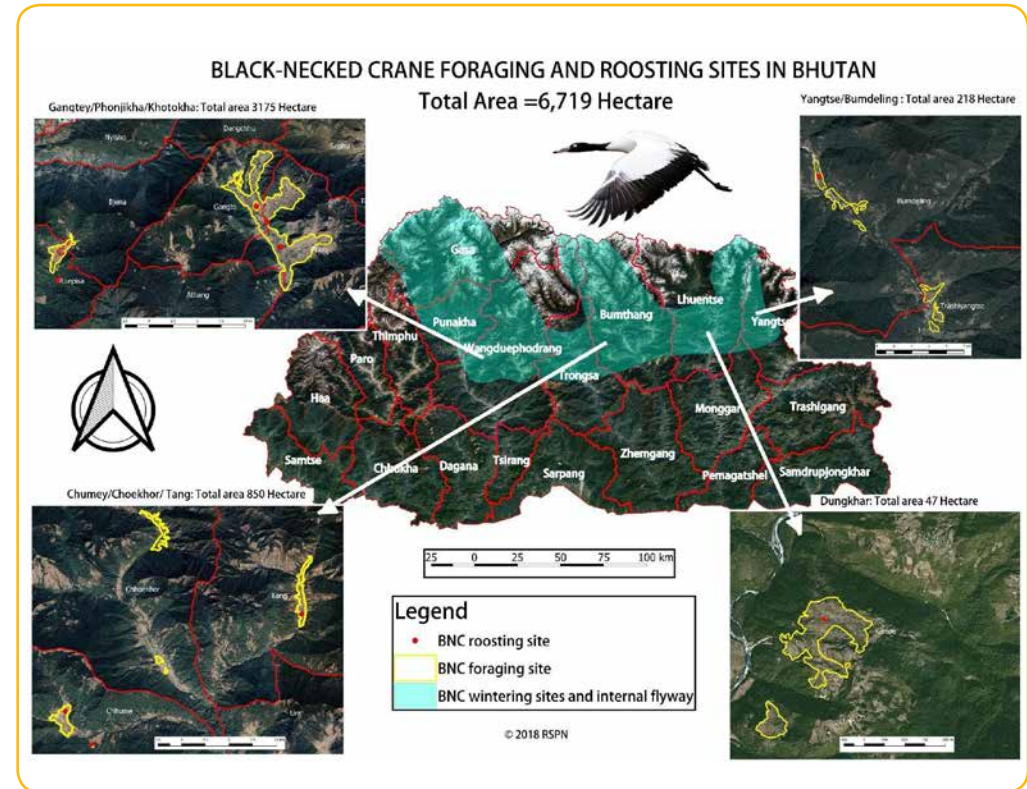
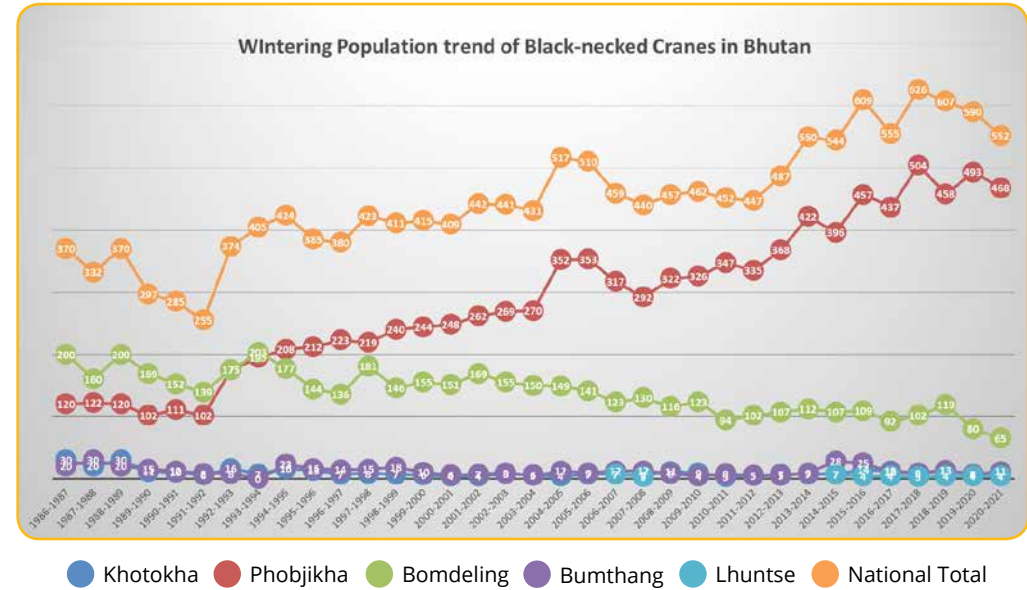
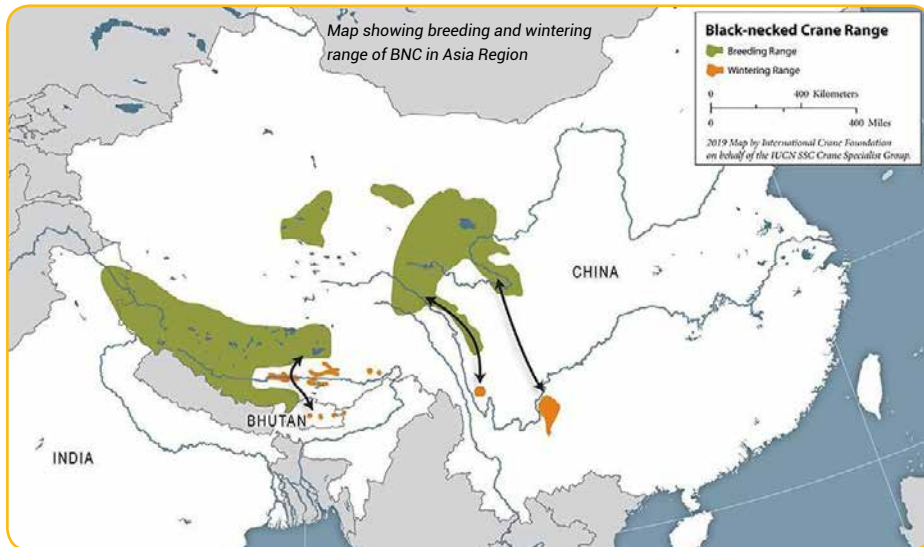
WHY BNC CONSERVATION?

Culturally, Black-necked Cranes (BNCs) are revered as holy birds and messengers from heaven due to their magnificence, monogamous nature, and their longevity. The birds have inspired numerous folk songs and folktales. Ecologically, they are the ambassadors representing the pristine environment, wetland, and the healthy agricultural practices. The presence of these birds indicates a sound and pristine environment; the wetland and agricultural ecosystem that the birds depend on.

Cranes forage in the post-harvest farmlands, feeding on waste grains and insects, while they use the wetlands for roosting safely at night. Economically, local farmers benefit from the presence of the birds in their valley through the hosting of visitors from across the globe.

GOAL

Maintain a viable wintering population of BNCs in Bhutan through improved habitat, enhanced community support, and increased knowledge base.





ACHIEVEMENTS THUS FAR

- » Mapped the distribution range (summer - winter sites and migration routes).
- » Initiated annual population count since 1987.
- » Developed strategies, action plans and built a network of citizen scientists, conservationists and experts.
- » Educated, inspired, and engaged local communities, students, researchers, institutions, and policymakers in its conservation.
- » Instituted Black-necked Crane festival since 1999.
- » Established Black-necked Crane Education Centre at Gangtey - Phobjikha, Wangduephodrang.

WAY FORWARD

- » Maintain the intactness of key habitats of the species.
- » Continue educating and inspiring youths in the conservation of the cranes.
- » Strengthen regional coordination and collaboration.
- » Establish consistent funding mechanism for BNC conservation in Bhutan.



PLEASE SUPPORT US

To consistently carry out BNC conservation activities and for daily operation of Black-necked Crane Education Center (BNCEC) in Phobjikha valley, RSPN requires a minimum of USD 30,000 annually.

Since 1987, the BNC conservation works in Bhutan were supported by donors and philanthropists.



Donate Now!



RSPN

*Inspiring personal responsibility for
environmental conservation since 1987*

Royal Society for Protection of Nature

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