

**STRATEGIC PLAN FOR WESTERN HOOLOCK GIBBON CONSERVATION IN ASSAM, INDIA**

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The Western Hoolock gibbon is an endangered primate, restricted to South Asia . The combination of being strictly arboreal and having a frugivorous diet makes the species very vulnerable to any changes in their habitat. In Northeast India , habitat loss and fragmentation combined with hunting and small population size are the major threats. For long-term conservation of the species, a comprehensive plan of action is required. A Strategic Planning workshop has been organized involving concerned stakeholders to develop guidelines for the conservation of Western Hoolock Gibbon in Assam , India . Ten landscapes in Assam have been identified for long-term conservation of the species based on two criteria – habitat integrity and biological importance. A Gibbon Conservation Committee is being proposed to review overall gibbon research and conservation activities in the state and linking them to better management of the habitats. Regular gibbon censuses, monitoring selected populations to identify trends and a central gibbon database are the major recommendations, along with habitat improvement and improving connectivity between small fragments. Identification of isolated groups, characterization of fragmented forests and development of a translocation programme for meta-population management are additional parts of the plan. The development of separate education and outreach programmes to address different sections of society were also emphasized in the strategic plan.

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