

## DHORPATAN HUNTING RESERVE

Although Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve (1,325 km<sup>2</sup>) in the districts of Myagdi, Baglung and Rukum, was gazetted in 1987 for the hunting of large ungulates primarily the blue sheep, it also provides refuge to several rare and endangered mammals such as snow leopard, musk deer, red panda and Tibetan wolf. Of birds, rare species like cheer pheasant and Himalayan pied woodpecker occur, as well as 14 other breeding species for which Nepal may hold significant populations. This Reserve has one of the highest endemic plants ( 36 species ) suggesting its biological riches.

Being a food-deficit area, local communities rely on subsistence agriculture and livestock. Also, many households have supplemental income derived from remittance to locals working outside Nepal. Some 5,338 households with a population of 33,936 and 114,104 livestock from 12 village development committees (VDCs) are affected by the Reserve. Dhorpatan is known for its traditional summer grazing pastures where over 100,000 livestock, including horses, mules, donkeys and cattle are brought as far as from Mustang district. Thus, over-grazing of high altitude rangelands of Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve has become a key issue for the management.

