

Planning for the Assam Roofed Turtle

Freshwater species are some of the most threatened species groups. Northeastern India boasts of 21 species of turtles and tortoises out of the 29 species found in India. Among these, 17 species are found in some hot spots like Kaziranga in Assam; one such highly threatened species is the Assam Roofed Turtle *Pangshura sylhetensis* along with the other three *Pangshura* species. These threatened species have few sporadic studies and are in urgent need for conservation action. To address this concern Sanjay Molur from the Conservation Planning Specialist Group South Asia RRC of SSC/IUCN and Zoo Outreach Organisation facilitated the conservation planning workshop for the Assam Roofed Turtle from 02-05 April 2025 in Guwahati, Assam at the request of Aaranyak and the Assam Forest Department. The workshop involved 25 participants including members of the forest department, subject experts, young researchers, and academicians.

The workshop started with introduction to the species in focus - the Assam Roofed Turtle, introduction to the Conservation Planning process introduction, and went ahead to the visioning process by dividing into working groups. The rules for working groups were also mentioned and clarified. The second day started with the finalization of the vision for the conservation of the Assam Roofed Turtle. The second half was spent working out the three major aspects identified through the mind map conducted on the first day — 1. Threats, 2. Habitat management, 3. Research, and 4. Education, outreach, & capacity building.



Zooreach Activity Update



Based on the vision and discussions held in the working groups, different aspects to put the plan into action were noted such as roles, responsibilities, deadlines. The whole exercise was beneficial for the Assam Roofed Turtle as it is going to help save other freshwater turtles that use similar habitats in Assam. The conservation plan also encourages collaborative working of different stakeholder groups with assigned tasks making conservation action more efficient and synergized.



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