

The manuscript “Body condition scoring system of reintroduced banteng (*Bos javanicus* D’Alton, 1923) into Salakphra Wildlife Sanctuary, Thailand” addresses the important aspect of conservation management, i.e., the effect of reintroduction on banteng. There are very few publications on this species, so the authors’ efforts of studying such animals should be commended. The authors have advanced the conventional way of measuring body condition by the camera-traps. The manuscript is well thought of. However, there are several major aspects which I was concerned about, particularly related to writing style, study design and analyses. Thorough proofreading of the manuscript is recommended. I have listed these concerns, as per the Journal format, below:

Basic reporting:

1. The title “Body condition scoring system of reintroduced banteng (*Bos javanicus* D’Alton, 1923) into Salakphra Wildlife Sanctuary, Thailand” needs modification. It is not clear whether the authors are trying to highlight the body condition scoring system? Or, the effect of reintroduction on banteng’s physical health?
2. Abstract:
 - a. Background: Lines 31-33 seem very abrupt. It is also important to highlight briefly why such studies on ‘banteng’, in particular, are important. A brief statement about their conservation status would be valuable.
 - b. Methods: The authors should state how they score the body condition. It was not direct visual scoring, but the photographs through camera-traps. This aspect should be included. It appears that only “Two newborn banteng” were captured via camera traps in 2018 from the first group that was reintroduced in 2015. This should be explicitly explained.
 - c. Line 41: ...into the natural habitat.
 - d. Results: What were the age-differences? Were they adults? Or, a newborn? Was the increment statistically significant? A clearer statement is recommended.

e. Conclusions: This needs to be very strong. The current statements under the Conclusions: “The results from the present study suggest that the BCS of reintroduced banteng can be used to monitor the body condition of reintroduced banteng. These findings are important for possible translocation elsewhere.” should be modified. Lines 45-46 appears repetitive, rather format it as the body condition of reintroduced banteng can be used to monitor “the effect of reintroduction...” And how these findings are linked with translocation?

3. Line 56: clear space before (IUCN).

4. Lines 67-77: How is the social dynamics/grouping in banteng? The authors highlight the global population of banteng, then Line 95: they mention the local population, and state that it is increasing, so what is the current population now? They should mention the current status of banteng.

5. Lines 113-114: Morfeld et al., 2016 was on captive Asian elephants. Authors can also refer the study on wild populations of Asian elephants: Pokharel et al., 2017 (Conservation physiology) studied the effect of seasonality (variations in resources) on body condition and stress of wild Asian elephants.

6. Lines 201 to 202: Font colour appears different.

7. Lines 205 to 215: Kindly mention the sample size here and wherever required.

8. Line 273: correct “the”

9. Line 274: No “full stop”

10. Scientific names to be in italic, see lines 300, 303, 314, 345, 357, 363, 371, 374, 375, and wherever required.

11. All table legends: Banteng scientific name to be in italic and same applies for Figure 1. Figure 2 and others.

12. Figure 2: It's BCS, not BSC.

13. Legends are in different fonts, make it uniform.

14. Thorough proof-reading is recommended.

Experimental design:

1. Lines 116 to 118 should clearly state the hypothesis and objectives (though have been included in the current manuscript) of this study. It is important to justify how studying the body condition will promote the conservation of this bovid species (?). The study should be hypothesis-driven.
2. Methods need major corrections. Issues pertaining to methods/designs are listed below:
 - a. If the studied animals were monitored using the radio-collared signals over a period of time and also photographed using camera-traps, why was not seasonality included in the analysis?
 - b. As seasonality (as a proxy of resource distribution) has been shown to influence the body condition and also animals' physiological states (Pokharel et al., 2017), the authors should define the change in body condition in terms of resources. The influence of dietary shift between captivity and the reintroduced sites cannot be discounted.
 - c. Age-class wise variation should also be included.
 - d. The authors have not explained the statistical analyses. This should be added. Why were Spearman's correlation and Mann Whitney U/Mann Whitney Wilcoxon tests performed? Based on what these tests were selected? What was the distribution of the data? What software was used to analyze? What were the sample sizes for male, female and their age classes? All details should be included.
3. Were the scoring criteria defined in Table 1 designed by the authors for their study? If so, kindly mention this. If it was adopted from other studies then cite them.

Validity of the findings:

1. Though the authors used camera-traps for assigning the body condition score, the authors should/must validate that the use of camera-trap photographs for scoring the body condition. Even in the normal scenarios, where photographs are captured for assigning the body condition, the scores

can be highly biased as the animal might be in different postures: moving, not on the uniform ground, angle of light exposure, our distance from an animal, etc. This might affect the scores. Thus, most of the research validate their studies by including inter-assessor variations. Pokharel et al. (2017) validated the scores by assigning the BCS on the field itself and also capturing the photographs, which was then re-analyzed by the observer and other assessors. In camera-traps, lighting effect, moving animals, clarity and many other factors might complicate to visualize the fat deposition, depression and projections of bones, etc (Figure 2 is the right example for such caveats). It is thus highly recommended to either validate the camera-trap photographs with normal photographs or to refer to the published work where they have used a similar technique and validated the scoring system.

2. Line 198 onwards: Body condition score system: would not cropping an image change the angle of deposition or shadow? Would not that bias the scoring? Validation or proof of validation of the camera-trap technique is highly recommended.

3. Lines 222 to 223: A graph to visualize this trend is recommended. Kindly refer to Figure 3.

4. Lines 225 to 227: terms 'dramatically and slightly steady' should be backed up with p-values.

5. Graphical visualization of change in patterns of body condition is highly recommended. Figure 3, in this context, should be slightly modified. Does the red or blue dots represent female and male? Does that mean there were 13 females in the first year? How many photographs were assessed per individual in a particular year?

6. The discussion should highlight the possible reasons behind increasing body condition and its implication on evaluating the effectiveness of the reintroduction. And how this is important for the conservation of banteng.