



WWF Russia

WWF Mongolia Programme Office

WWF China Programme Office

Amur/Heilong Ecoregion Complex Newsletter

Issue 4, Apr. to Jun. 2007

Achievements

1. Two National Parks Established – A Long-Waited Victory



(c) WWF Russia / S.Titova
Beauties of newly established Zov Tigra National Park

Two national parks have been created following years of advocacy work of WWF and local environmental organizations. 82,152 hectares of the Zov Tigra (Call of the Tiger) National Park's and 88,600 hectares of the Udegeiskaya legenda (Legend of Udege indigenous tribe) National Park received a protective status. The parks are home to abundant wildlife including the endangered Amur tiger.

“The main purpose of the Zov Tigra NP is to conserve biodiversity and develop eco-tourism in the region, and the second besides these two will help preserving the cultural heritage of the aboriginal Udege people who have for centuries depended on the area's natural resources.

The NPs are the third and fourth ones of 21 protected areas planned for Russia by 2010.

2. China Special AHEC Business Operation Planning (BOP) Meeting Held In NE China

During Apr. 26-30, WWF CPO organized a special AHEC BOP meeting in NE China, participants including colleagues from WWF Germany, RFE, and US, Beijing thematic teams (Species, Forest, Freshwater), and Communication, Marketing, Finance, two Conservation Directors and Rep. of CPO. This is the first big and significant event that Harbin Office co-hosted since its establishment. The BOP includes three parts, Changchun Workshop aiming to exchange information with local experts, field trips to biomass factory, Longwan Natural Nature Reserve, Changbaishan Natural Nature Reserve and Hunchun Natural Nature Reserve for fundamental survey, and Yanji meeting to build consensus on priorities and strategies of AHEC, to agree on the AHEC FY08 work plan and enhance internal cooperation.



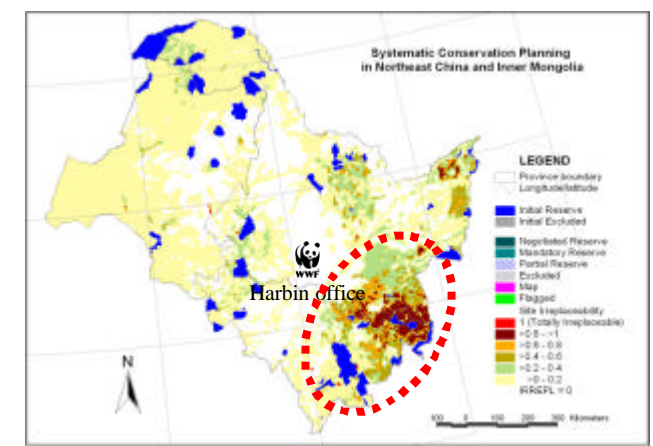
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In Changchun Workshop, four local experts from Jilin Forestry Department, Heilongjiang Forestry Department, Jilin Academy of Environmental Science and Songliao Committee attended and gave presentations which helping further understanding and forging a strong partnership between WWF and local authorities.

The Yanji Meeting made a focus for Harbin Office to intervene in FY08 mainly to best use reasonable fund to make a difference. In FY08, Harbin Office would emphasize integrated conservation of Amur tiger and forest in Changbaishan landscape with Hunchun, Wangqing, Dongning and Muling as the major working sites. Besides that, freshwater strategy would be explored for whole AHEC in order to illustrate a road map for WWF activities.

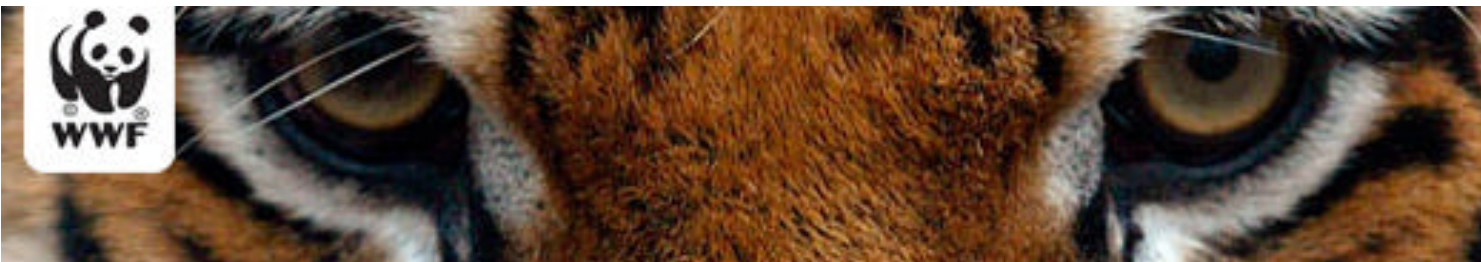
Please look at the right map. The red circle refers to Changbaishan Landscape. The brown dark is the area where major working sites locate.



3. Dr. Guillermo Castillerja's Jilin Visit Further Strengthened Partnership Building In NE China

Just after WWF Annual Conference in Beijing, Dr. Guillermo Castillerja, the Executive Director of Conservation of WWF International, had a field trip in Jilin Province and met with Mr. Liu Yanchun, the Director General of Jilin Forestry Department, Mr. Zhang En'xiang, the Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee of Jilin People's Congress and Mr. Xie Zhongyan, the Deputy Director of Jilin Environmental Protection Agency during Jun. 9-12.

As other WWF colleagues felt before, he witnessed the strong commitment of local government to wildlife conservation, environmental protection and good legislation in Jilin province. His field trip to Changbaishan helped know better the National Nature Reserve which is not only the historic hometown of Amur tiger but also a good protected habitat to welcome Amur tiger back. The contact with two forestry processing factories certified by FSC showed Baihe Forestry Bureau benefited from FSC and their strong willingness to cooperate with WWF to



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realize the goal of sustainable forest. The followed two formal meetings with Jilin Forestry Department and Jilin Environmental Protection Agency promoted information exchanges for future cooperation.

One of the outstanding results of Guillermo's Jilin visit is the common sense achieved that Amur tiger conservation is having a good momentum and it is just the time to formulate Amur tiger conservation strategy and action plan for Changbaishan Landscape. Moreover, local people are the owner and end user of the plan.

4. Harbin Russian-Sino Cooperation In The Amur River Biodiversity Conservation

The First Meeting of Working Group on Biodiversity and Transboundary Protected Areas under auspices of Sino-Russian Sub-Commission on Environment under the Mechanism for meetings of Heads of State finally took place in Harbin, China on May 29-31. The purpose of the meeting was to develop a work plan for coming year. Plan includes exchange of basic information on legislation on biodiversity conservation and protected areas, joint workshop on these issues, joint field inspection of one of transboundary protected areas, etc.

From the point of view of WWF work in the region, this plan includes several important activities, which were earlier assisted by WWF and may benefit from such assistance in the future: develop scientific feasibility study for transboundary protected areas network in Amur River Basin (Green Belt of Amur-Heilong); consider development of specific conservation action plans for endangered species; joint strategic research on basin-wide approach to conservation of Amur River wetlands; develop proposal for feasibility study on expanding Dauria international Protected Area in Upper Argun/Eerguna River Valley.

Russian side also insisted on foundation of international field station for bird monitoring in Dauria international nature reserve, and requested help of Chinese side, which established several hundred bird monitoring stations in China in last decade.



(c) WWF Russia / D.Kuchma
The illegally cut Korean pine was over 300 years old



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5. The Korean Pine The Tree Of Life Campaign

In January, WWF announced 2007 the Year for Korean Pine; launching in February the campaign with the same name to protect the Korean pine stands from all types of cutting.

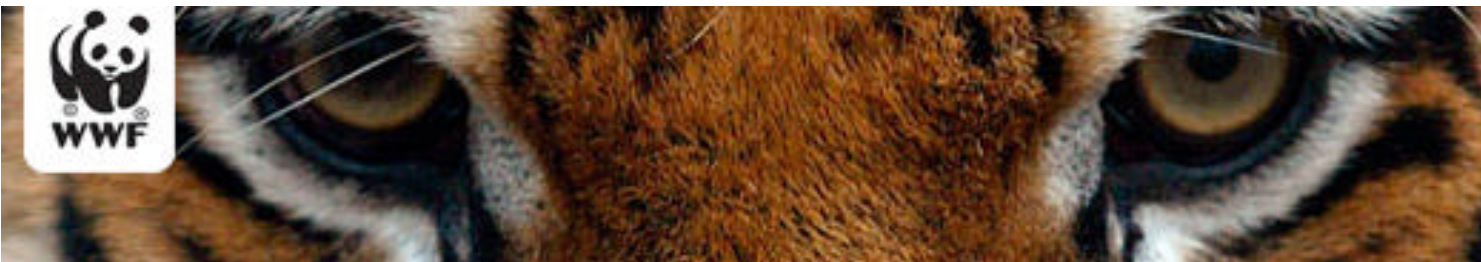
Being actively supported by residents of forest villages the campaign overstepped borders of RFE and became Russia-wide. 50 initiative groups and NGOs, students and teachers of 105 schools, 4 students' brigades for nature protection, 13 nature reserves, zoological garden, two journals, two district newspapers, three clubs of environmental journalists, hundreds of volunteers have joined the campaign. For four months 20 000 WWF-produced post cards, about 1000 e-petitions were sent to Russian President demanding prohibition cedar (the local name for the Korean pine) cutting. WWF initiated several inspections done by environmental Prosecutor's office. Nine administrative cases were filed against heads of two leskhoz; 35 protests passed on illegality of logging permits in four leskhoz.

Positive results of the campaign have been already received. Recently created Forestry Department of Primorskii province has given time-out to cedar forests having stopped all types of logging in Shkotovskii leskhoz territory and in Korean pine harvesting zone of Roshinskii leskhoz.

From April 20 intermediate cutting has been suspended in Primorskii province. Forestry Department of Primorskii province has informed the public that in cooperation with Legislative Assembly they are in the process of preparation proposals to the Russian Government to include Korean pine into all-Russia list of species forbidden for cutting.

6. Chinese Responsible Logging Companies Seeking For Partners In Primorye

On May 21-26, at the initiative of WWF-China forest program the first ever visit of responsible logging companies from China – some of them being members of FTN-China – was organized. The purpose of Chinese business was to find in Primorye suppliers of wood logged on a legal basis and in accordance with sustainable forest use principles. Among visitors were purchasing directors of largest Chinese producers «Shanghai An Xin Flooring Com» ? «Dalian Huade Wood». During the trip around Primorye Chinese guests met with candidates and members of FTN Russia. When negotiating China's business tried to arrange purchasing FSC-certified timber from Russian loggers. It means that the demand for certified products is growing on China market and that the incipient cooperation between the countries could be fruitful in the nearest future.



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7. Amur Tiger Conservation Experts Workshop Held In Changchun.

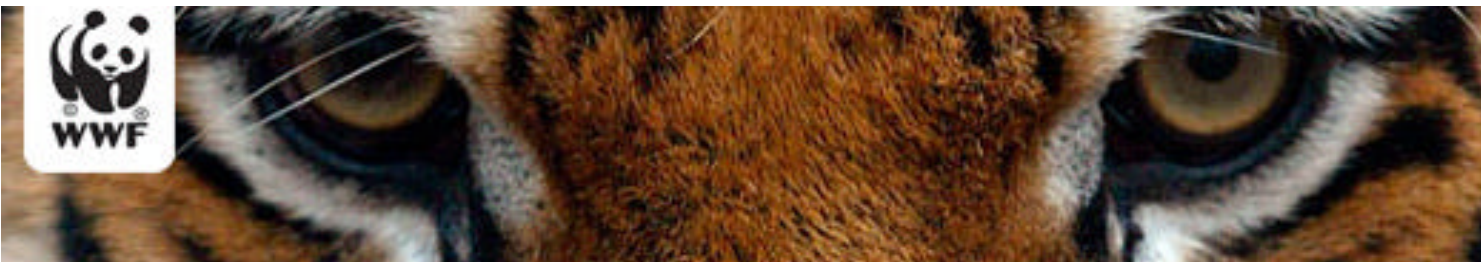
On June 17, Changchun city, experts and officials from Jilin and Heilongjiang provinces discussed joint Amur Tiger Conservation in NE China. The workshop explored the name, scope, log-frame of NE China Amur Tiger Conservation, and decided *China Changbaishan Mountains Amur Tiger Wild Population Conservation and Rehabilitation Strategic Action Plan (SAP)* as its formal name. The scope includes Changbaishan Landscape and Wandashan landscape. The SAP would include four parts with nine modules. The Changchun Workshop decided that Mr. Sun Haiyi, the Director of Heilongjiang Wildlife Conservation Research Institute, and Mr. Wu Zhigang, the Director of Jilin Wildlife Monitoring Center, would work with related experts respectively to provide two formal documents where more detailed outline of SAP, working schedule, budget and cooperative stakeholders would be described. Thereafter, an enlarged meeting would be held for further discussion aiming to have a practical action on SAP formulation.

During last year Jilin Hunting Ban Celebration, Jilin Government announced to develop and implement Changbaishan Amur tiger conservation plan. After communication with Jilin and Heilongjiang Forestry Departments, a trans-province Amur tiger conservation plan is expected. The Changchun Workshop helped kick off the planning process.



8. Achievements of Mongolian part of the Amur/Heilong Ecoregion Complex

Funding for Onon River Basin CAP (Conservation Action Planning) secured, WWF staff capacity for CAP increased, CAP process is started, initial contact with Asian Development Bank (ADB) established for implementing Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM) for Onon river. At the end of June, WWF personnel and representatives of the seven soums (small administrative units) in the Onon River Basin met in Dadal soum to work on the CAP in the Basin. They identified eleven important conservation targets (species, plant communities and eco-systems), the principle threats to their long long-term persistence, and strategies to combat those threats. A draft document on workshop results will be submitted to a larger group of stakeholders and scientists for review.



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Gap Analysis: Assembled information on species and eco-systems of the Daurian Forest Steppe eco-region (which includes the Onon River Basin) and the Mongolian-Manchurian Grassland Ecoregions. Compiled information on Local Protected Areas for all of Mongolia. Project participants met in Ulaanbaatar in late June to review progress and plan next steps.

[Other information](#)

1. On April 2007, the Amurskaya province Council of People's Deputies adopted the law "On Protected Areas in Amurskaya Province". This is the second – after creation of buffer zone for the Amurskii wildlife refuge – important step enlisted in the Agreement between WWF Russia and the Amurskaya province Administration aimed at development of PAs network in the region.
2. WWF and Association of Indigenous People of the North and the Far East initiated creation of the alliance of ten Russian and international environmental organizations who have signed an agreement on joint actions in conserving unique biodiversity of the Bikin River and giving it the status of the World heritage. WWF has been collaborating with the aboriginal Udege tribe for several years already in conserving nature of the Sikhote-Alin Range providing support to anti-poaching brigade, preparation of documents for PAs creation. The kids school "Young Ranger" created three two years ago with WWF teaches local kids "how not to forget traditional trades.
3. HCVFs and FSC related activities have been carried out smoothly in Northeast China. Recently, WWF CPO signed two contracts with Muling Forestry Bureau and Dongfanghong Forestry Bureau for their HCVFs identification so that the two forestry bureaus would enhance their capacity of forest management and have access to CFTN to realize sustainable forest finally. The identification of Muling Forestry Bureau would help Amur tiger conservation at the same time because Muling is near to Dongning county where has direct links with RFE and Hunchun National Nature Reserve for Amur tiger habitat. The Dongfanghong Forestry Bureau locates in Wangdashan Landscape where another Amur tiger habitat near the Sino-Russian boarder is.
4. In FY07, Harbin Office emphasized the eco-net construction in AHEC. Up to now, two provincial level protected areas (Xiao Beihu and Baishan) were approved by competent authorities and one small protected area (Huangnihe) was established with management plan. Besides that,



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application documents of Suibiliangjiang Protected Area and Small Protected Areas in Changbai and Songjianghe have been finished for approval.

Meanwhile, WWF strengthened cooperation with Jilin Forestry Department in snare removal by providing financial support. In fact, three governmental documents were issued and one special campaign was carried out with the Forest Police participation. More than 28000 snares were removed.

5. Four WWF staff participated in CAP training in China organized by The Nature Conservancy, initiating the CAP process for the entire Onon river basin. This will be the basis for the future IRBM Plan. Initial contact with ADB established for implementing IRBM project for Onon River. Deadline for the project proposal submission is September 2007.

6. Negotiation process with Ministry of Nature and the Environment of Mongolia for taking over Onon-Balj National Park management responsibilities is in place with positive feedback; initial funding is secured from WWF-US for NP management.

Funding for a project called Supporting Capacity Development for Onon-Balj National Park is secured from WWF Netherlands.

7. The Onon River Basin project has been implemented for one year. At the starting time of the project launch no specific documents and information were available for locals and moreover no activities had been held in the Onon-Balj NP area. Implementation of the project for the first year has resulted in the following:

- Compiled data, reports and information on the Onon River Basin.
- Elaborated on the draft of the initial integrated conservation management plan for the Onon River Basin.
- Developed the concept of the Onon River Basin Management Board.
- A concept for the developing eco-tourism in the area has been drafted.
- The construction work of WWF field office has been started in the Onon River Basin.
- The CAP process with relevant stakeholders was started.
- The Onon-Balj NP management document has been written.