



WWF®

2018



AHEC e-newsletter

Issue No. 48 April—June 2018

1. You say Big Cats

Evreiskaya Province becomes new home for two tiger cubs

On May 12 tiger male Saikhan and female Lazovka kept at the Alekseevka Rehabilitation Centre for more than a year were tranquilized, fitted with GPS collars, checked-up by the vets, and put into transportation cages bound to Evreiskaya Province.



On May 13 the tigers arrived to the taiga, were sedated once again and put into the newly constructed open-air adaptation enclosure 50x50 meters wide for the animals to recover from a long way from Primorye, to get used to the new environment, and be ready to leave the enclosure for the real taiga. On May 19, the specialists remotely opened the enclosure where the two tigers lived in for a week. Finally, the animals became free. As all the specialists were not allowed to approach the enclosure they controlled the situation by the signals from GPS collars that have been fixed on tigers before. The female was to first to exit the enclosure in the evening. She headed to

the east while Saikhan stayed inside the enclosure for one more night. He started his west-bound journey next morning. They are separated right away but the distance between the two cats is not long so maybe they plotted to explore the area and meet at some point someday.

More details here: <https://wwf.ru/en/resources/news/amur/tigr-saykhan-i-tigritya-iz-lazo-vypushcheny-v-srednem-techenii-reki-bidzhan/>

And here: <https://wwf.ru/en/resources/news/amur/eao-stanet-domom-dlya-tigra-saykhana-i-tigrityy-iz-lazo/>

International Research and Practice Conference

The Bikin National Park has summed up the Amur tiger camera trap monitoring results in the period of November 2017 – February 2018: camera traps registered 26 rare striped cats! They are 10 males and 10 females – two of them with the cubs (totally 6 cubs in two litters). The most remarkable fact is that one tigress has four cubs which happens quite rarely, and testifies that the tiger group feels safe and secured in the Park.

More details here: <https://wwf.ru/en/resources/news/amur/26-amurskikh-tigrov-zafiksirovali-fotolovushki-v-np-bikin/>



International Research and Practice Conference

“Amur tiger conservation: results, problems and prospects” International symposium was held in Khabarovsk in late June. Experts from Russia, China, North Korea, South Korea, India, Austria, Sweden and USA took part in the conference, as well as the representatives of federal authorities, executive

bodies working within the tiger home range, leading scientific institutions in wildlife conservation, NGOs. The participants discussed the threats to the Amur tiger population, ways to mitigate conflicts between the lord of taiga and humans, anti-poaching work, environmental education and forming eco culture.

It is important that this time the colleagues from China attended the conference and reported on the development of the system of PAs and protection measures on China side. This will allow discussing the prospects of tiger conservation on its entire range.

One of the presentations demonstrated the system of mitigation of human-large predator conflicts and the work of rapid response teams to minimize the conflicts. More details here: <https://wwf.ru/en/resources/news/amur/amurskiy-tigr-v-tsentre-vnimanija-ekspertov-iz-8-stran/>

At least nine breeding tigress cameratrapped in northeast China during 2013-2017

“At least nine tiger breeding families with a total of 16 cubs have been clearly cameratrapped in the wild during 2013-2017 in northeast China,” Dr. Chang Youde, the monitoring officer of Amur tiger and leopard in WWF China, says, “The breeding tigresses have indicated the fast recovery of tiger population in northeast China in recent years.”



The two high peaks for tiger numbers in 2014, and 2017 in China side have paralleled with the breeding families trapped by cameras. Therefore, the proportion of the breeding tigress is a critical indicator for producing capacity of the tiger population in China. Only in 2017, there are 3 breeding tiger families with a total of 4 cubs which are cameratrapped in China. Next, our task is to help these tigers gradually expanding to inland of China away from the border with Russia. With 1.5 million hectares, the new national park for Amur tigers and leopards in China will create a base for this expansion.

Amur leopard increased in China

WWF and our partners' cameratrap data show the Amur leopard has been increasing in China. There are 7, 11, 13, 22 and 27 leopard individuals recorded by camera trap in monitoring areas in 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, and 2017, respectively.



A total of 49 different individuals have been recorded by cameratrap in the period of five years. “It is a very good indicator of leopard population increasing that we have found five breeding leopard families for a total of 7 cubs in the monitoring period,” Dr. Chang Youde says, “All those cubs have successfully grown up.”

The comprehensive measures have played a very important role in helping leopard population recovery including anti-poaching, habitat and prey recovery, and sustainable community development. Currently, a total of near one thousand cameratrap sites in the tiger/leopard range areas in northeast China, nearly covering all the existing tiger/leopard occupied habitats (Figure 3). The cameratrap monitoring network has been maintained by WWF and/or its local partners.

SAFE Workshop Held in Hunchun

On April 12th to 13th, WWF has launched a 2-day SAFE system approach workshop in Hunchun, Jilin Province. Dr. Ashley Brooks who leads the Habitats and Human



Wildlife Conflict program in WWF Tigers Alive introduced SAFE assessment system to 40 officials and rangers from 16 Forestry Bureaus; he shared practical experiences in Bhutan, India and Nepal, and helped the Forestry bureaus to taste the process of SAFE rapid assessment. Human Wildlife Conflict (HWC) refers to all cases in which interactions between people and wildlife lead to negative impacts on both sides through fear, injury, death, and loss of property or livelihoods (WWF working definition). Conflict is highest where wildlife and people co-exist and share limited resources. In some



places, continued and unmanaged HWC leads to the loss of wildlife altogether. With the strengthened of the Amur tiger and leopard conservation and the increasing number of wildlife in the habitats of China, to solve the human wildlife conflict is emerging to be one of the major issues that we need to face in Amur tiger protection. How do we manage and solve human wildlife conflict effectively? Human wildlife conflict SAFE assessment system promoted by WWF is the first global human wildlife conflict management framework that could resolved the issue. SAFE system can effectively help the conflict areas to understand the status and trend; it can also help to develop the security strategy action plans for the conflict areas. The SAFE system has been practiced in Bhutan, India and other countries. In the future, we will gradually promote the SAFE system to develop assessment work in China, manage and solve potential risk of human wildlife conflict.

CA|TS Training in Wangqing

On June 25th, 2018, WWF has completed the introduction and training of CA|TS in Wangqing National Natural Reserve. Liuduo, the Anti-poaching officer, represented the background, structure, application process and approval process of CA|TS to 6 managers of Wangqing Forestry Bureau Reserve Administration in details, and explained the 7 pillars, 17 elements and 64 criteria. Dr. Fan zhiyong, is the only independent examiner in China, and he is also a member of Jilin CA|TS Committee. He communicated face to face with the managers deeply, discussed the shortcomings in management of natural reserve, and gave suggestions and requirements of CA|TS.

2. Our Forests

WWF Mongolia opened a grove “Panda”

Under a campaign “Tree retains water and water retains life”, the WWF Mongolia in cooperation with local partners has already started planting in 500 ha in Onon River basin, which is to be scheduled to be complete within four years. In last two years, they planted in a total of 52 hectares (ha). As of May, 2018, the campaign initiator expanded the planted area with additional six hectares, where pine seedlings were planted. Amongst, the Eastern Regional Office of WWF Mongolia planted five-



year old 1200 pine seedlings in 1 ha in a territory of Dadal soum of Khentii aimag for its 10th anniversary in May, 2018. This event was widely involved by local communities and seedlings were planted in a shape of the organization’s logo “Panda”. It was much motivate for other local organizations and entities to have such parks or stands created in their neighborhoods by using their specific identities and logos according to the local people took part in it.

Such park or grove in an identity figure or logo of organization, institution, and business entity will be an important promotional platform either for the organization’s public

recognition or for forest conservation simultaneously according to the event participants-representatives. The seedlings and seeds for forestation are supplied by local forest user groups and Onon-Balj National Park Administration.

Interestingly, the campaign “Tree retains water and water retains life” has been initiated with the aim to create a model region for green development through improved livelihoods based on forest conservation and support of environmentally sound green businesses in Onon River basin.

WWF-developed KEDR system awarded by the Russian Government

In April, the award was handed out to WWF-Russia Amur branch, a winner of the All-Russia contest Open Data of the Russian Federation, run by the Open Government.

KEDR is designed to halt illicit loggings in valuable forests of the Russian Far East. It automatically detects forest cover changes based on the real time space imageries



and operates using neural networks. Using mobile applications rapid response teams promptly react to the information on illegal logging operations and prevent forest violations. The system is successfully put into operation in Khabarovsk and Primorsky Provinces by the Forestry Departments and has already revealed hundred-million-rubles damages in both provinces. WWF-Russia finds very important to introduce such software and replicate lessons learned across other regions of Russia where illegal use of forest resources are among top priorities.

More details here: <https://wwf.ru/en/resources/news/lesa/razrabotannaya-wwf-avtomaticheskaya-sistema-kedr-zasluzhila-nagradu-pravitelstva-rossii/>

[razrabotannaya-wwf-avtomaticheskaya-sistema-kedr-zasluzhila-nagradu-pravitelstva-rossii/](https://wwf.ru/en/resources/news/lesa/razrabotannaya-wwf-avtomaticheskaya-sistema-kedr-zasluzhila-nagradu-pravitelstva-rossii/)

WWF: only an immediate moratorium can save linden

According to WWF-Russia, the real volume of linden logged in the Russian Far East for export exceeds the officially reported volume by four times. It is quite



possible that the Planet already lost one of the Far Eastern linden tree species. The analysis of customs data carried out by WWF-Russia in April 2018 has proved that urgent measures are needed now. In 2016, according to official data, 171 800m³ of linden was logged, however, 218 966m³ of processed timber crossed the border to China! The real timber volume for production of such amount of sawn wood is even higher, considering losses during processing and the fact that the domestic consumption was not considered in these calculations. In this connection WWF-Russia calls for the introduction of an immediate moratorium on linden logging until comprehensive assessment of

linden species status is carried out, as well as effective measures are elaborated to prevent linden from extinction. More details here: <https://wwf.ru/en/resources/news/lesa/wwf-tolko-nemedlennyi-moratoriy-mozhet-spasti-lipu/>

A Center of new knowledge



On May 21-23, Forestry Innovation Center established at the Primorskaya State Agricultural Academy with the help of WWF on TOYOTA funds hold trainings for state forest inspectors, forestry units' staff, and policemen. 70 attendees got knowledge on forest taxation, on the types of forest permit tickets for logging operations, on the KEDR system, on the modern character of illegal forest use, on the environmental damage from forest fires and illicit hunt, on the existing abusive practices used by logging companies. The focuses of the previous similar seminars was on peculiarities of revealing forest infringements and illicit loggings. This time the seminar was designed to train the participants how to conduct forest taxation independently and how to correctly choose the type of forestry practice.

WWF Russia took part in the National Forest Forum



WWF voiced the issues of the non-timber forest products management and conservation of the Far Eastern linden species at the National Forest Forum. Together with the partners WWF delivered the report with the analysis of the situation with forest management and new inventions on efficient revealing of illegal logging and control in the forest with the use of innovative technologies as well as the development of non-timber forest management. More details are here: <https://wwf.ru/en/resources/news/lesa/wwf-rossii-prinyal-uchastie-v-natsionalnom-lesnom-forume-v-khabarovske/>

3. When the Belt is Green

Bikin National Park got UNESCO World Heritage Site Status

On July 2, 2018, the World Heritage Committee declared the Bikin National Park a part of the Central Sikhote-Alin UNESCO World Natural Heritage Site. The

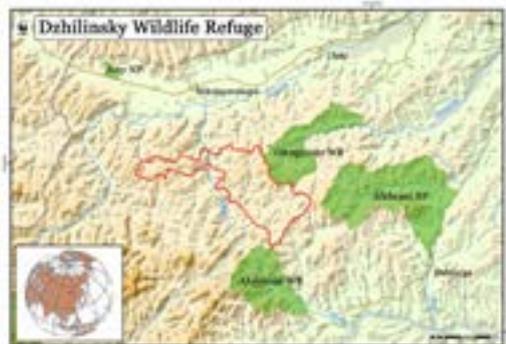


Bikin River Valley was included into the tentative List of UNESCO World Heritage Sites in 2010. But according to the strict UNESCO rules the country has to guarantee the long-term conservation of the site. Only a federal PA status meets this criterion. Yet, one of the demands of the Committee is the creation of a buffer zone around the Park and the elaboration of a Management Plan jointly with the Sikhote-Alinsky NR and the Goraliy Wildlife Refuge. International recognition of the value of the Bikin River Valley – “the Russian Amazon” – will facilitate the establishing of the buffer zone around the national park and will attract new investments to build sustainable infrastructure

to preserve traditional nature use of the indigenous peoples. More details are here: <https://wwf.ru/en/resources/news/amur/natsionalnyy-park-bikin-vklyuchen-v-spisok-vsemirnogo-naslediya-yunesko/>

New PA declared in Zabaikalsky Province

in May with the support of WWF Russia. Dzhilinsky Wildlife Refuge of provincial level of 111 404 hectares was established in the upper reaches of the Ingoda River,



one of the main sources of the Amur River. The refuge was created as a part of the Strategy of development of provincial PAs network in Zabaikalsky Province till 2030. It will preserve the old-growth forests in remote areas of Khente-Chikoisky uplands – the last territory of Zabaikalsky province with large forest stands not touched by fires. The refuge is important for preservation of many bird species, of highly productive spawning grounds of taimen, lenok and grayling. Now the total area of protected areas in the Province makes 7,8%. More details here: <https://wwf.ru/en/resources/news/amur/v-den-biologicheskogo-raznoobraziya-v-zabaykale-sozdana-novaya-oopt/>

Cooperation between conservationists and energetics helps saving Oriental stork

The Federal Grid Company (the largest electricity transmission company grid in



Russia), WWF Russia and NGO AmurSEU organized a photo expedition to the electric grid objects of Amurskaya province where the Oriental storks used to build nests. Statistically, every fifth disturbance of operating regime on Russian power transmission lines is bird-related. Large bird species such as Oriental stork are in a high risk group. The only possible solution for their protection is the mounting of anti-landing devices and safe platforms for nests. This equipment is mounted on 52 out of 59 main transmission lines within the Oriental stork home range.

More details here: <https://wwf.ru/en/resources/news/amur/sotrudnichestvo-ekologov-i-energetikov-pomogaet-sokhranyat-dalnevostochnogo-aista/>

The Second Working Meeting for the Chinese Members of China-Russia Reserve Network in the Heilongjiang River Basin

The investigation of the breeding of Oriental White Stork shows that the population of Oriental White Stork has increased and the number of nests has increased significantly due to the improvement of habitat and the strengthening of protection.



On May 13th, the second working meeting for Chinese members of China-Russia reserve network in Heilongjiang river basin, and Oriental White Stork breeding in Heilongjiang province 2018 synchronous survey working meeting was held in Harbin, and issued more than the investigation content.

This meeting held by the WWF and partners—Heilongjiang Forestry Department, Northeast Forestry University and Wildlife Research Institute of Heilongjiang province, aims to strengthen the communication and contact network members before, understand each member's progress over the past year and cooperation needs, report the Oriental White Stork synchronous survey stage progress of each nature reserve, as well as the exchange of Oriental White Stork protection experience.

Oriental White Stork Population Increased

The initial investigation results showed that the population of Oriental White Stork has increased and the number of nests has increased significantly. This was mainly due to the improvement of ecological environment, the increase in fish as food,



the improvement of its habitat conditions, and the effective protection efforts on Oriental White Stork in recent years.

In addition, the artificial nest construction work promoted by WWF and partners has also played an important role in the restoration of the population of Oriental White Stork. In the range of 80% Honghe National Natural Reserve found 42 nests, comprising 4 natural nests, 38 utilized artificial nests, 4-5 pieces of eggs per nest. In Dongfanghong National Nature Reserve, 3 nature nests were found and 6 artificial nests were used (except for one newly used this year, the rest were used for more than 1 year). The Duluhe River Nature Reserve has newly built 20 artificial nests this year. Three breeding nests have been established and young birds have been hatched.

The final results of the investigation of Oriental White Stork reproduction will be released in June. At the meeting, some conservation areas mentioned that they found that several nature nests were placed on high-voltage wire towers, mainly because of the lack of tall trees in the habitat. In the future, it may be necessary to consider to increase the height of artificial nests and to change artificial nest patterns, so as to avoid interference with human activities. In the future, WWF and partners will continue to strengthen the OWS conservation, reinforce the monitoring and technological upgrade, promote Sino-Russian cooperation in the bird conservation, to build the artificial nests of the OWS. In addition, we will learn from the protection of the OWS and apply it to the conservation practice of other endangered birds.

A request on Onon River related concerns forwarded to the Government of Mongolia

WWF-Mongolia and Local Council of Khentii province organized a consultation meeting “Onon River and Mining” to resolve the gold mining to be started in upper area of Onon River through stakeholder engagement. The meeting was attended by over 70 individuals including the Parliament Members elected from Khentii province and representatives from the Ministries of Environment and Tourism and



Mining and Heavy Industry, the provinces Environment and Tourism Office and local communities.

The concern discussed on the meeting was related to the Gutai gold deposit located in a territory of Batshireet soum of Khentii province to be mined by the “Pegmatite Mining” company and a protest by local people. This gold mine is located in upper area of the Onon River. If mining takes place at this deposit, the river and its basin ecology will be lost. Moreover 20 thousand of local people residing within the basin will have no a drinking water source, but considerable amounts of ecological damages

in the basin. The Onon River is a source of the Amur River, listed as internationally important site. It is obvious that the Amur River will be impacted if the Onon River is polluted or contaminated.

The meeting participants openly discussed about many other pressing issues such as and agreed to forward a request on making head of the river free of mining to the Government. The request addressed to: immediate termination of mining licenses issued to Onon River basin, set aside the region under state protection through submission of a proposal to the State Great Khural (the Parliament) for approval, and ban mining licenses to Gutai area which is a source of the Onon River and supports water and forest resources in the basin.

National standard on construction of wildlife crossings along roads and railroads in any parts of Mongolia is in effect now

The Mongolian Agency for Standardization and Metrology has officially approved the mandatory standard for "Construction of Wildlife Crossings along the road and road infrastructure in Mountainous areas", which was jointly developed by WWF-Mongolia and other stakeholders.



WWF-Mongolia, the Ministry of Road and Transportation, the Ministry of Nature, Environment and Tourism and the biologists have actively worked on the development and approval of this standard that reflect wide ranging research findings and recommendations. Back in 2015, Mongolia became the first ever Central Asian country that introduced national standard for “Wildlife crossing for migratory ungulate populations in the Steppe and Gobi Desert zones”. The approval second standard secures a mandatory requirement for creating wildlife crossings during the construction of roads and railways in any part of Mongolia.

Mining is rapidly developing in Mongolia and is expected to remain as one of the leading sectors in the coming years. The development of mining and linear infrastructure also bring high risks for fragmentation of wildlife migration routes and habitats. The environmental community emphasizes that the implementation of the above standards is a good starting point for preventing fragmentation of habitats and migratory routes of globally endangered wild ass (khulan), black tailed gazelles, Mongolian gazelle, argali sheep, siberian ibex and Mongolian saiga.

United for Conservation Effectiveness Jilin Bird Loving Week

On April 19th, WWF and its partners (Forestry Department of Jilin, Jilin Wildlife Conservation Association, Changbai Forestry Administrative Committee and Jilin Wentou Group) jointly developed the Changbai Mountain Nature Reserve 2018 Jilin Province "Love Bird Week" and the launch of the "Scaly-sided Merganser Conservation Project". Jilin Wildlife Conservation Association, Northeast Normal University Life Sciences Academy and WWF signed the Scaly-sided Merganser



Conservation Cooperative Agreement, and the three parties will jointly carry out the "Scaly-sided Merganser Conservation Project". This is China's first project specifically for the joint protection for Scaly-sided Merganser, which is of great significance for the protection of the province's Endangered Species. In the future, the three parties will conduct in-depth and cooperative investigations on the status quo, reproduction status and habitat condition of the Scaly-sided Merganser, which will lay a solid scientific and systematic foundation for the Scaly-sided Merganser conservation.

Indigenous people ready to conduct public control on Amur



Khabarovsk. On 7-8 June, two seminars for leaders of indigenous people communities from six districts of Khabarovsk Province were held with the help of WWF. One was dedicated to the public control over spawning sites of the Pacific salmon while the other was about the participation of the people in the action of fish protection. The main idea of the meetings was to show people that they have all rights to make a personal contribution onto fish resources conservation. The participants discussed the up to date problems in the spawning sites conservation located in the vicinity of each district and defined the vector of monitoring activities."

Far Eastern rivers are under satellite surveillance

Wide scale satellite monitoring of water bodies is launched in Zabaikalsky and Amurskaya Provinces with the support of WWF Russia. Environmentalists of the international coalition "Rivers without borders" and specialists from the Center of satellite monitoring and public control reveal cases of river pollution caused by gold dredging. WWF thinks that the negative environmental impact from gold dredging is underestimated. First results of satellite monitoring have been already submitted to the supervising agencies. According to a partner organization's specialists, «Pollution of the river with suspended substances dozens kilometers downstream from a golden dredging site is a serious argument for supervising agencies to launch the inspection raids. Field inspections initiated by our signals very often prove the violation of the legislation by gold-dredging cooperatives». Satellite monitoring of water bodies near licensed gold mining sites in



Amurskaya and Zabaikalskaya provinces will be continued till late autumn, when the field season is closed.

More details here: <https://wwf.ru/en/resources/news/amur/-zlotye-reki-v-zabaykale-i-amurskoy-oblasti-pod-pritselom-sputnika/>

6. Law Enforcement

The BIKIN National Park staff learns how to protect their territory



In April, WWF conducted a seminar for 30 Park's inspectors (the second in the row) to improve their knowledge in legal issues. The day before, the participants compiled a list of questions they face in their raids and everyday work to get detailed answers from the seminar facilitators. Also more general topics were cover at the seminar. What are the rights of a state inspector, how to qualify administrative and criminal cases, how to correctly collect information on the accident site. Not only theoretical issues were raised at the meeting. Among the practical skills the inspectors were trained were how to issue protocols and how to deal in each concrete case where components of crime are observed.

7. United for Conservation

International training for conservation coaches

One of participatory conservation approaches is to empower people to plan, evaluate and monitor effective conservation practices as CCnet coaches and expand their network nationally and internationally. Generally, this type of training allows upgrading conservation effectiveness through building capacities of PA officers, specialists, and rangers and updating or revising annual conservation plans for PAs through the trained or empowered coaches.



Recently, on May 21-25, 2018, the WWF Mongolia and TNC-Mongolia Representative Offices jointly hosted conservation coaches training in Mongolia. It was an international training attended by 26 representatives from the governmental organizations: the Ministry of Environment and Tourism and PA Administrations and the international NGOs: WWF and TNC Representative Offices in Mongolia, Russia, and China, the neighboring countries, and facilitated by international CCnet coaches.

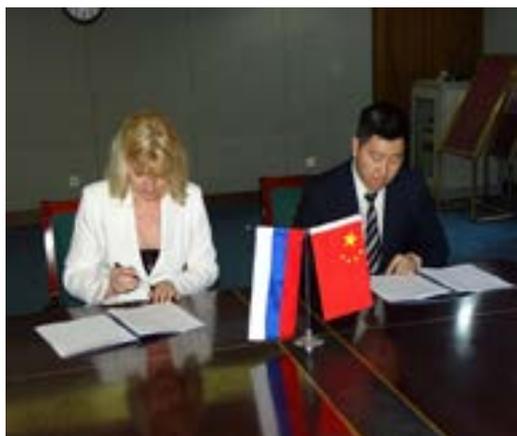
On training, the open standards for conservation planning were presented and followed by planning exercises. One of the main training purposes was to empower the participants to supervise and guide conservation planning. The participants shared and exchanged their views on overcoming existing barriers/constraints and effective approaches to solve them during planning. On other hand, the training was an enabling environment for the conservation practitioners to be networked with regards to their improved performances and communications according to the participants.

Oriental stork tracking is launched in the Amur-Heilong ecoregion

Russian and Chinese specialists will be able to track Oriental stork migration routes with GPS transmitters from the breeding to wintering sites. An international workshop “Research on the Oriental stork migrations with GPS transmitters” was organized on 24-25 June in Khabarovsk by WWF Russia Amur branch and the United Directorate “Zapovednoye Priamurye”. The specialists from China handed over 80 transmitters to the Russian experts. The ornithologists will fix the transmitters on the juvenile chicks of the Oriental stork in four provinces of the Amur River basin. The data will be received on migration routes of the Oriental stork in their breeding and wintering sites. It is important to register the main stopover sites and bird concentrations for further protection measures in



Russia and China. More news here: <https://wwf.ru/en/resources/news/amur/mechenie-aistov-nachnetsya-v-blizhayshie-dni-v-bassejnye-amura/>



Russia and China discussed joint measures for migratory birds conservation

The Second Meeting of the Sino-Russian Working Group on implementation of the Agreement between the Governments of Russia and China on protection of migratory birds and their habitat was held on June 26, in Beijing. Yury Darman, senior adviser at WWF-Russia, was included as an expert into the delegation of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation. He reported about the work for conservation of cranes and storks in the Amur-Heilong ecoregion. During the meeting both sides reported about the work results in 2015-2017, discussed the priority

bird species which require urgent measures for preservation, and elaborated a joint work plan for 2018-2020.

More news here: <https://wwf.ru/en/resources/news/amur/mechenie-aistov-nachnetsya-v-blizhayshie-dni-v-bassejne-amura/>

THE SINO-RUSSIAN DAY OF THE ORIENTAL STORK CELEBRATED IN HONGHE NATURE RESERVE

In the Year of the Oriental stork – 2018, Honghe Nature Reserve in China has for the first time hosted a great holiday devoted to this rare bird. Thanks to the support of WWF Russia, the delegation from Bastak Nature Reserve of Evreiskaya

province had a chance to join the celebration of the Oriental stork Day in China.

The holiday “The Oriental stork – the living symbol of the Amur River” took place in Honghe Nature Reserve of Heilongjiang province in China on 22nd May on the World Day for Biodiversity. It united local people, students of secondary schools, government officials, staff of the nature reserves of Russia and China and WWF.

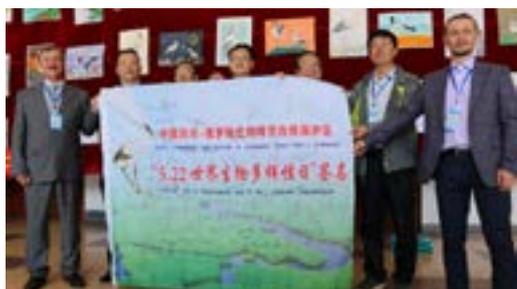
The exhibition of children paintings from China and Russia was organized specially for the holiday. It was presented by the works of the winners of the contest “Stork – the living symbol of the Amur River” held by Bastak NR (Russia) and Honghe NR (China) with support of WWF Russia Amur branch. The winners of the contest were awarded with diplomas and the staff of Bastak Nature Reserve for the contribution to the Oriental stork conservation.

The scientific symposium was held as a part of celebration activities. The experts on stork monitoring both from Russia and China delivered their reports and presentations on the

current situation.

During the field trip to the territory of Honghe Nature Reserve the delegates from Russia were impressed by the great number of artificial nests on rather small area. In the end of the visit the parties discussed the action plan in 2018 - 2019.

More details are here: <https://wwf.ru/en/resources/news/amur/rossijsko-kitayskiy-den-aista-otprazdnovali-v-zapovednike-khunkhe-/>



Work with People



Oriental stork “schools” opened in the northern Primorye

as part of The Year for Oriental Stork. The kids from secondary schools of different northern districts, friends of the Udegeiskaya Legenda National Park conducted numerous actions, art festivals, interactive lessons. The climax of the movement – the flash mob Let there always be Oriental Stork – was held on May 12. The most active kids were rewarded with diplomas and souvenirs.

Keepers of Oriental Storks’ Nests

In the Year for Oriental Stork announced by WWF and the Amurskaya Coalition NGO. WWF in cooperation with nature reserves and local grassroots conducts a series of trainings to help developing the movement of Oriental stork nests keepers in the Amur River basin. The movement is being active for 15 years but active only in Amurskaya and Evreiskaya Provinces. In 2018 it was planned to be expanded into Primorsky and Khabarovsk Provinces.

The city of Luchegorsk, March 23. 25 teachers participated in the training “How to organize school volunteer movement”

The city of Khabarovsk, March 20-22. 35 teachers took part in the seminar “Oriental Stork is a Symbol of Amur”. On March 18, at the Russian President Election Day one of the NGO instructed the pollers on how to use mobile app “Birds of Amur” developed by WWF.

Vladivostok, March 26. A lecture was organized on how to monitor the rare bird and how to conserve it at an interregional environmental seminar-training.

Amurkaya Province, Khingansky NR, March 30. A seminar for teaches was conducted by the NR’s staff, AmurSEU, and WWF.



World Fish Migration Day

this year was held under the slogan Saving Rivers for People and Fish uniting 1100 participants from 18 governmental, scientific, and public organizations of the Amur Ecoregion. Multiple events were dedicated to this global action: cleaning ups, performances of the teams of agitators, an experimental theater piece, kids’ drawings contests and exhibitions, field plays, team competitions, environmental lessons for students, master-classes, and role plays.



Korean Pine Day

took place for the 8th time in Primorye. The mission of the event is to show the young generation the unique forests of the Russian Far East, to present the technics of artificial forest restoration, and to get them acquainted with the activities done in the tree nursery. The main participants of the holiday were winners of the Primorsky Province-wide Forest academic completion who were brought to the Primorskaya State Agricultural Academy’s tree nursery to plant 300 kilograms seeds of Korean pine under the supervision of the

students brigade Tis. Also excursions, quests were organized for the kids as well as hot tea with cookies near the bonfire.



A documentary "Forest and People"

was produced and presented in social media by the Planet Taiga group of travelers in cooperation with WWF. The film portrays the KEDR system, public monitoring and issues of forest use in Khabarovsk Province. The film-makers, being a part of the rapid response team, spent five days in the field visiting remote forest sites, met the rural villagers and lumber men of the Province. The footage provided the basis for the documentary. The main message of the film is to prove that public monitoring can help conservationists in monitoring of forest use.

Crane Festival is celebrated for the fifth year in the headwaters of Amur

On the occasion of Migratory Bird Day, the Crane Festival is being celebrated for the fifth year since 2014 in Binder soum of Khentii province in order to raise



awareness on the White-naped Crane, an endangered crane species. WWF Mongolia collaborates with wide range of other organizations including the Wildlife Conservation and Science Society, Administration of the Onon-Balj National Park, Administration of the Khan Khentii Strictly Protected Area, and local government office.

This year many interesting activities were held during the event, including the exhibition of children's drawings, performance by the children's eco clubs, mini Naadam (traditional games) and Q & A session. The organizers were happy that many children could give correct answers to all of

the questions. Also, children were taught how to make origami of the crane, color the drawings and do drawing. More than 600 participants attended the event from Dadal, Batshireet, Bayan-Uul and Binder soums, including the children from eco-clubs, students from Khurkh village, as well as local residents.

"Plastic free Rivers" initiative has been launched

WWF-Mongolia introduced "Plastic free Rivers" initiative in order to remove plastic waste from rivers and to engage stakeholders. A successful launch of this initiative continues in the eastern part of the country, Kherlen River. In particular,



a meeting was held in Khentii province on 19 July 2018, to discuss cooperation and opportunities of parties to implement Kherlen River's plastic waste disposal. Representatives from Dornod, Khentii, Baganuur, and WWF-Mongolia participated in the meeting. The parties agreed one of the issues Kherlen River facing is a waste and they exchanged views on how to solve this problem.

During the meeting, the sides agreed to jointly collaborate on "Plastic free Kherlen River" campaign. Within this framework, a nationwide cleaning of the Kherlen River will be organized in July 2018 and will promote publicity of plastic waste. The

sides also developed a work plan for the coming fall and expressed their willingness to work for a successful campaign.

Experience sharing between the eco-clubs in Eastern and Western Mongolia

WWF-Mongolia support initiatives and efforts of eco-clubs at schools under the framework of its planned conservation activities. One of the recent activities was an experience sharing event through which representatives from eco-clubs in Eastern Mongolia supporting Amur River basin could visit Western Mongolia supporting Altay-Sayan Ecoregion. This experience sharing-study tour event was combined with the Mongolian Saiga Day in Western Mongolia.



The eco-club members from Eastern Mongolia were presented with the activities under this campaign in the western region. An interesting part of the event was a tour within the area, where the Mongolian saiga occurs. During the study tour, the eco-club members from the eastern region also presented their conservation activities. In addition to their conservation efforts, they made presentations on conservation of the Mongolian gazelle, a key species of the

region, including the increasing participation of local communities.

The eco-club members highlighted the educational and awareness activities on conservation of forest resources and rare birds and some details on their eco-club efforts. They gifted pine and medicinal plant seeds to representatives from 11 eco-clubs in the western region and provided brief instructions on how to plant them. In such, the experience sharing event was successfully held and its participants have agreed to jointly organize such events in the future. Representatives from eco-clubs in Western Mongolia will visit Eastern Mongolia in this summer.

The 37th Bird Loving Week held in Heilongjiang Province

On May 13th, WWF cooperated with partners (Heilongjiang Forestry Department, Heilongjiang Wildlife Conservation Association and Northeast Forestry University)



to celebrate the conservation of birds. The 37th Bird Loving Week in Heilongjiang Province launched in Heilongjiang Forest Botanical Garden. "Protecting bird resources, guarding our habitat." is the theme of this Bird Loving Week.

WWF and partners organized plenty of activities to make people understand the importance of the birds conservation, call them to take actions to protect the birds as our friends, including the birds loving commitment signature, theme painting competition, the birds knowledge Q&As and the photography exhibition, attracting up to 20,000 people to attend the event. In order to draw the public attention on the protection of birds, the State Council issued a notice in 1981 on the "Request to strengthen the protection of birds and implement the China-Japan Migratory Bird Protection Agreement." It is recommended that all provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities determine one week as the Bird Loving Week at the beginning of April or May each year. Now "Bird Loving Week" has become an ecological and cultural festival in which people are close to nature,



understand nature, and promote harmony between man and nature.

AHEC Ambassador Shapes Eco-education at China's Wetland National Reserves

From June 10th to 15th, collaboration with The Forestry Department of Heilongjiang Province and Jilin Province Wetland Protection Association, WWF held “AHEC Ambassador Campaign” event. We went into 10 nature reserves including Xingkaihu, Zhengbaodao, Qixinghe etc. And volunteers are organized to develop education campaigns of environmental protection in the primary and middle schools in the areas.



Amur River Basin is a globally important, cross-border eco-region with freshwater, forest and grassland. It is planned as one of the global key protection eco-region. AHEC Ambassador Campaign is a long-term brand in Amur River basin by WWF freshwater protection project. It was established in 2005; and the theme is Hand in Hand to Protect Green Belt in Amur River Basin.

In May, WWF announced volunteer recruitment on Wechat and Weibo, and rapidly received 200 applications from all over the country; we picked 12 excellent volunteers as environmental protection ambassadors among all the applications. On June 10th, volunteers were divided into 3 teams, visited the most important wetland reserves in Jilin and Heilongjiang provinces, and developed the wetland eco-education for primary and middle school students.



Our volunteers introduced wetland definition, types, functions and protection methods to the students. These 10 schools are awarded as “Member of WWF Pilot Eco-education Network”, and they will form WWF eco-education network.

All the members and reserves will develop eco-education cooperation: 1. To draw the eco-education teaching materials in Northeast China; 2. To strengthen the communication and interaction among students in schools in different nature reserves. By building this eco-education network, the communication among WWF, cooperative schools and nature reserves will be strengthened effectively, the public attention will be raised, so as to make contributions to environment conservation, and to better educate primary and middle school students.

After several days of eco-education, every volunteer has a deep feeling for environmental education. “After watching a video about wildlife protection, a little girl’s eyes were filled with tears. I believed that children are all kind in nature, they want to protect environment. And the significance of education is to arouse children’s willingness to participate into environmental protection.”, Wu from Tsinghua University says.



Zhang from Hong Kong University of Science and Technology says, “The students have some basic knowledge of ecology and biological sciences, they are brave to participate in class interaction and answer questions. Children are emotional. Education is the effective for environmental protection, education is a fire lighter.”

Via questionnaire and education, “AHEC Ambassador Campaign” activity could raise the value of environmental protection, get more people to participate in environmental conservation, enhance the initiative consciousness and responsibility sense of the public. It plays an important role in guiding the content design of eco-education curriculum for schools around nature reserves as well.

Other News

WWF-Mongolia's driver rescued three German citizens who were lost

D.Bat-Erdene, driver of WWF-Mongolia Eastern branch, assisted three German citizens who lost their way in Onon River. Specifically, three German "MOMO" project staff have conducted a fish survey on the Onon River and their driver was supposed to get back after their research was completed.



After waiting for two days for their car, they informed the WWF-Mongolia Eastern branch by radio. WWF-Mongolia immediately sent driver D. Bat-Erdene, who knows the area well. Driver D.Bat-Erdene said, "We were informed that German citizens could be at the confluence of Onon and Balj rivers. The search covered 5 km long stretches of river and surroundings. For the first time we couldn't find. The second time we searched, three Germans were found on the side of the river. Normally, it is an outback with no roads and herder camps. Because they did not plan to stay over, they didn't have food, nor tents. I gave them a food I had and brought

them to the center." Rescued people were very thankful and happy for WWF-Mongolia prompt action. The driver who was supposed to pick up the research staff was lost and got stuck in a mud. Thus, he wasn't able reach the arranged destination. Driver D. Bat-Erdene is an eco-friendly person. When he was called to Ulaanbaatar for short visit, he came across freshly cut-off aspen branches and brought them to his home city for cultivation. The aspen saplings were then donated to local communities.

Schisandrachinensis Survey

With the help of Northeast Forestry University, WWF did a survey of distribution and yield of wild Schisandrachinensis, from March to June, 2018. 8 Amur tiger and leopard areas were surveyed including Hunchun Forest Bureau, Wangqing Forest Bureau, Daxinggou Forest Bureau, and Huangnihe Forest Bureau, etc. Through this survey, we understood the attitude of the residents on improving livelihoods by picking wild Schisandrachinensis, and the working capacity of the community residents; these data are the basis to implement the pilot of wild Schisandrachinensis sustainable picking.

A Survey of Community Commercial Activities

WWF coordinated with College of Economics and Management, Northeast Forestry University, did a survey of community commercial activities and incomes in the Amur Tiger and Leopard National Park and surrounding communities by literature review questionnaire and interview. It will provide important data and rationalization proposal and help to take a further step to carry out the protection activities of the Amur Tiger and Leopard National Park Administration. It is useful to understand what kinds of operating activities of the Amur Tiger and Leopard National Park and surrounding communities are exist; what community commercial activities affect the protection work of the Amur Tiger and Leopard; What is the impact of the protection activities of Amur Tiger and Leopard on the community economy; what measures should be taken to address the relevant community issues.

For more information please contact:

Chen Xu, senior communication Officer, WWF-China, chenxu@wwfchina.org; **Selenge Gantumur**, communication officer, WWF-Mongolia, selenge@wwf.mn; **Yulia Fomenko**, communication Mmanager, WWF-Russia, yfomenko@wwf.ru