AMUR-HEILONG ECO-REGION COMPLEX E-NEWSLETTER

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The discovery of plans to log key Amur tiger habitat in a proposed UNESCO World Heritage Site has led to a public outcry demanding the cancellation of the logging lease in Russia’s far eastern Primorsky Province.

WWF Russia and the Association of Indigenous Peoples of Primorsky Province are leading the call against JSC Les Export, a wood harvesting and export company that specializes in parquet flooring. Primorsky Province, in the Bikin River Basin of the Russian Far East, is one of the last remaining strongholds of the largest of all big cats, the Amur tiger, which numbers less than 500 in the wild.

The protests followed Les Export’s application for a timber lease in the Bikinsky Pine Nut Harvesting Zone in the Bikin River Basin, part of the largest intact tract of old-growth Korean pine-broadleaf forests in the world (407,300 ha) and an extremely important habitat for Amur tigers. But JSC Les Export had already drawn public ire after it gained approval for two forest leases last month, also in Amur tiger habitat.

The two approved leases are in the Pozharsky Pine Nut Harvesting Zone, and the Srednesurskiskiy Provincial Wildlife Refuge, which make up the only ecological corridor connecting the Russian population of Amur tigers with a Chinese population across the border in China’s Wandashan Mountains.

“We regard this as betrayal,” said Yury Darman, head of WWF Russia Amur branch. “JSC Les Export previously agreed that it would not use timber from pine nut harvesting zones or protected areas including the Bikin River Basin.”

“JSC Les Export’s actions go against the company’s commitment to work towards certification under the Forest Stewardship Council, an independent organization that promotes responsible management of the world’s forests.”

“Furthermore, it is a betrayal of the native residents of Bikin – the Udege and Nanai – whose lives completely depend on traditional use of the riches of this area,” said Darman.

“These communities have been defending the Bikin from exploitation since 1992.”

The forests have also been under lease since June 2009 by the Indigenous Peoples’ Association (which has been named “Tiger”) for the processing of pine-nuts and medicinal plants. Russia.
A solder of the border troop shot a wild Amur tiger with his camera in Hunchun nature reserve on April 12, 2011.

According the report, the solders found a moving subject when they were carrying out routine patrol at night in the nature reserve – that’s because Hunchun nature reserve is located along the Sino-Russia border. At the beginning, they thought it just a very big dog because of the weak light. When they drove their patrolling car closer to the “big dog”, they realized it was not a dog but a wild tiger!

The tiger did not run away but stayed and show its majestic-looking while the distance between it and the patrolling car was only less than 10 meters.

Liu Dongxue, one of the solders, thought it was a good chance. Then he rolled down the window and took two photos with his digital camera. The tiger showed its dissatisfaction when Liu wanted to take the third one. The solders retreated to prevent any accident. “I had seen tiger in the zoo before,” said Liu Dongxue excitingly, “but this one is much, much stronger and its fur is more beautiful.”

Later at the same night, the solders found tiger again. But this time, they found two, an adult with its cab.

“It is not really news for Hunchun nature reserve that a wild tiger shows up within the reserve,” said Mr Wu Zhigang, WWF local expert, “the key point is that it is an output of the cooperation mechanism of wild Amur tiger conservation among nature reserve, border troops and local community, which is promoted by WWF.

So far, the mechanism is primarily formed. The border troop has took wildlife conservation as their routine work. The local farmers – the beneficiary of WWF’s alternative livelihood project, established a volunteer patrolling team and periodically carried out patrol and trap cleansing. They also shared all the information of the wild Amur tiger and leopard as well as other wildlife with Hunchun nature reserve. China.
PHOTO STORY

WWF set 5 sets of camera traps in Duhuangzi forest farm, Wangqing Forestry Bureau, where the footprint of Amur leopard was found in this winter.

Aiming to shot the picture of Amur leopard, all the camera traps were placed along the track of leopard found in the winter.

So far, the camera traps did not capture leopard yet. But they shot a set of interesting pictures of roe deer as follows.

The pass-by roe deer seemingly noticed the shutter of the camera and vigilantly looked for what made the unusual sounds. China.

VOLUNTEERS PARTICIPATED IN SCIENTIFIC SURVEY IN TIGER LAND

In March 2011, WWFChina teamed up with CNG (Chinese National Geographic) and China’s leading website portal, Tencent, to organize a volunteer trip to Amur tiger habitat in NE China.

During two weeks, nearly 5,000 candidates applied for the fifteen slots to experience four days of field research. Instructed by WWF experts, the volunteers backwards traced and collected the information of the preys of Amur tiger in the forestry farms in Jilin Province.

A feature mini-site was set up at Tencent, and the field trip was featured regularly on Chinese twitter, allowing tens of thousands of people to experience the field work with the volunteers. China.
On 13 April 2011, Chinese border patrol officers in Hunchun Nature Reserve, Jilin Province along the North Korea and Russian border, have managed to catch a glimpse of a rare and wild Amur leopard. In the video (please visit http://www.wwfchina.org/wwfpress/presscenter/pressdetail.shtm?id=1194), which was taken in late April, the leopard can be seen walking along a mountain ridge before disappearing off screen.

On April 25, a few days later the leopard was captured again, this time via the border patrol’s infrared monitoring system. In the video, a small group of roe deer are wandering around when the leopard appears. As the leopard approaches behind the group, silently making its way towards the nearest target, it jumps to attack as the group of deer run for their life. Not giving up, the leopard chases and attacks one of the deer again, eventually catching it as they both tumble 10 meters down the mountain.

The quality of the video footage is grainy, but according to Lang Jianmin, Communications Director of Hunchun Nature Reserve, the two videos feature the same leopard due to the shape and movements whilst it was preying.

“It happened on a precipitous mountain ridge, which is a typical habitat of leopards rather than tigers. The tracks, excrement, and hairs collected at the scene also proved it was an Amur leopard,” says Mr. Lang Jianmin. “Also, the two videos were filmed at the same place within a few days of each other in Wujia Mountain [in Hunchun Nature Reserve] so we can probably infer that the two videos are of the same leopard.” China.

**Background:**

WWF-China has contributed to the establishment and operation of the first trans-boundary network of protecting both the Amur tiger and leopard over Jilin Province, China and Primorsky Krai, Russia. According to the network agreement, both the Russian and Chinese experts and staff will conduct regular joint investigations in the border area, share monitoring data, research the habitat corridors on the border, and evaluate the impact of the border fence on the population between the leopards in Russia and China. WWF-China has also closely cooperated with Jilin Forestry Bureau and Hunchun Nature Reserve to promote joint monitoring with the border forces. Funds, equipments and training are provided to support joint monitoring directly.

In September 2010, Vladimir Putin encharged executive Ministries and departments with orders to take measures on leopard conservation, development of Kedrovaya Pad reserve and Leopardovyi refuge. Positive changes that have been achieved were reported at the session.

At the session, borders of the future national park were agreed with the total area of the planned PA enlarged up to 380,000 hectares which is twice higher than the area of existing protected areas. Complementary to Kedrovaya Pad nature reserve and Leopardovyi refuge, the national park will add territory of near-border patrolling zone, lands of Nezhinskoye and Borisovskoye hunting estates, as well as plots of other land-users. As was noted at the meeting, round-up hunt, hunt with dogs have to be excluded in the attachable lands with the focus to be made on tourism development.

Among achieved tasks were establishing unified management for these PAs, allocation of serious amounts of money, three-times increasing of rangers staff. The Russian Ministry of Natural Resources has sent China an appeal to create transboundary PA for tiger and leopard.

“What is left is to bring the story to an end, i.e. to create Land of Leopards national park that will allow both to restore the Amur leopard population and to guarantee sustainable nature use” - says Igor Chestin, head of WWF-Russia.
“GIFT TO THE EARTH” FROM AMURSKAYA PROVINCE: ONE NATURE RESERVE AND FIFTEEN WILDLIFE REFUGES

Oleg Kozhemyako, the Governor of Amurskaya province received the “Gift to the Earth” award for the successful implementation of the network of protected areas. The Certificate was presented by Yury Darman, head of WWF Russia Amur branch on behalf of James Leape.

In the end of 90s, when WWF started its projects in Amurskaya province, protected areas (PAs) covered 2.2 million hectares which made 6% of the province territory. That time, the Administration of Amurskaya province committed to enlarge the network of protected areas by 10% by joining the WWF’s program “Gift to the Earth”. Over the past 13 years, 16 new protected areas appeared on the map of Amurskaya province – one nature reserve and 15 zakazniks!

Norsky nature reserve was the first in the “Gift to the Earth” list. It took a long time to be declared: three Governors replaced one another in Amurskaya province, and each of the Governors signed the documents for the establishment of the nature reserve. Finally, in 1998 it was created. Yury Darman, who in 1999 became one of WF staff found the financial support for the newly created PA. The nature reserve received its office building in the Fevralsk settlement, as well as its first car and an outboard motor.

In general, over the past 13 years, the network of protected territories increased by 2.1 million hectares and covered 11.3%! Russia.
After 5 months of internal discussion and external interview, in May 2011, WWF-China figured out the 3-year work plan for Amur-Heilong Ecoregion Project. The plan will be combined with those of Mongolia and Russia into the Master Plan of WWF AHEC PROJECT and implemented in FY12-14.

Amur-Heilong Ecoregion includes parts of Russia, China and Mongolia. The scope of this project located within China covers about 43% of AHEC area and 93% of its population, which provides the critical habitats for the flagship species of Amur tigers, Amur leopards and Oriental White Stork. The abundant biodiversity is generated from the vast expanses of virgin temperate forest and the wetland networks.

The 3-year work plan focuses on the following jobs:
1. Increase the number of wild Amur tiger population by improving the density of prey, e.g. enhance the building of protected areas, reintroduce ungulate and promote tiger friendly forest management, etc.
2. Acquire and analyze the basic information of Amur tiger population and Amur leopard, e.g. distribution and prey, by supporting the daily monitoring of Amur tiger and Amur leopard and the establishment of International Feline Research Centre.
3. Increase the temperate forest area, further popularize FSC certification and accelerate the improvement of nature reserve quality.
4. Enhance the wetland conservation network, and promote the conduction of trans-boundary monitoring of waterfowl.
5. Enhance the conservation of Oriental White Stork’s habitat and effectively recover the habitat quality and population. China.
WHITE-NAPED CRANE (GRUS VIPIO) TRANS-BOUNDARY WORKING GROUP MEETING – DISCUSSION

White-naped crane (Grus vipio) trans-boundary working group meeting was held at Onon Balj NP administration from May 29 to June 1, 2011. The meeting was attended by totally 33 participants including representatives of research institutions that engage in research and conservation of White-naped crane within Daurian trans-boundary areas of Mongolia, Russia, and China and international and national experts and researchers from the Bird Study Department of Institute of Biology under the Mongolian Academy of Sciences, Onon Balj NP administration, Wildlife Conservation Society (WSC) Mongolia and China Programme Offices, Hulunbuir Grasslands project –China, Sohond Biosphere Protected Area administration, trans-boundary international Protected Area that includes Mongol Daguur (Mongolia), Daurski (Russia), and Dalai Nuur (China), International Crane Conservation Fund, & Asia Birdlife etc.

On the first day of meeting, the participants addressed at the White-naped crane distribution areas and actual and potential threats to the species and distribution areas as well as future proposed actions. On the second day of the meeting, they identified and listed target distribution areas in importance of their conservation and efficient conservation actions in their feedback cycle. Being divided into 4 groups, the participants had field monitoring and data confirming trips on the last day of the meeting. The meeting participants and organizers agreed to have more practical meetings & discussions like this meeting in the next time.

The meeting opened a gateway to upgrade and periodically update the research data on historical and current distribution areas of the species in the near future. Moreover, the researchers will study and collect comprehensive data on the species habitats, breeding, and population dynamics and densities for modeling and adaptation of the species to global warming and changes in the species life patterns. To regularly exchange the research data and findings, the participants exchanged e-mail addresses. Mongolia.
June 24, 27. Public gathering in defense of the Bikin River took place in Krasny Yar, Verkhni Pereval villages and the city of Luchegorsk in the north of Primorye.

Over 700 people from Luchegorsk, 288 citizens of Krasny Yar, and 350 dwellers of Verkhni Pereval appealed to the government of the Russian Federation and to all citizens of Primorsky province to support them in an urgent issue: saving the last massif of intact Ussury taiga on Earth.

The letter of appeal to the Prime Minister of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin, and to the Governor of Primorsky Province Sergey Darkin was accepted unanimously. It states:

“The gathering draws your attention to the fact that the areas, where JSC «Les Export» is going to conduct timber harvesting are the largest intact pine and broadleaved forests in the world and are the part of natural object “The Bikin river valley”, which was included into Tentative List of UNESCO World Heritage Sites in 19.11.2010 on the basis of the application submitted by the Russian government.

Since 2009, one of the largest tiger conservation projects “Mitigate impacts of climate change through the protection of large scale virgin forests in the Bikin area” is being implemented here. This project was presented at the International Tiger Conservation Forum in St. Petersburg on 21-24.11.2010.

In accordance with the “Tiger conservation strategy of the Russian Federation” the creation of new Federal Protected Area is planned on this territory along with preservation of traditional nature use.

The unique cultural, social and scientific significance of this territory on the global scale was stated many times by both Russian and international nature conservation and scientific organizations.

By the decision of the gathering we appeal to you to take urgent measures to recall the proposal.
on Lease Agreement for timber harvesting on this territory and prevent such practices in future”.

For the time being about 3000 people of Pozharskii district has signed the Appeal for saving the forest of Bikin.

“For more than twenty years nature conservation society was constantly struggling side by side with indigenous people to save the tiger home – “Russian Amazon”. Its time to demonstrate the political will and make Bikin intact once and forever, - says Yury Darman, head of WWF Russia Amur branch. – I call those who are not indifferent, the society of our and foreign countries to sign the letter of appeal to support local dwellers of Bikin and save the largest massif of pine-broad-leaved forest in the world.” Russia.

A FOREST FOR LEOPARDS

576 thousand Korean pines were planted by volunteers in May-June on 354 hectares in the south-west Primorye as a joint project of WWF-Russia and Citibank.

The idea to plant 1 000 000 Korean pines on the Land of Leopard has brought together 820 volunteers of different ages and professions. Since 30th April, the volunteers from the big cities of Primorye - Vladivostok, Ussuriisk as well as the citizens of Khasanskii district joined the ranks of “pine keepers”.

Planting was done under the canopy on five degraded oak stand areas selected by WWF experts, where natural restoration of Korean pine in the nearest future is impossible and took place every day, in the heavy rain and under the boiling sun.

As a result, 208 hectares of Korean pine plantations appeared in Khabarikha River basin and 22 ha - in the Gryaznaya River. Here, by the way, on 15 May, for the first time in Russia the Day of Korean Pine was celebrated. Both areas are located within the nature conservation lease, where the tending operations will be held as a part of WWF project. Plantations covered 102 ha in Verkhniye Brusya River basin within the federal refuge “Leopardovy”. 18 ha - on the territory of “Borisovskoye” hunting estate, in Ussuriski military forestry, and 4 ha - in Barabashhevskoye military forestry. All together, 576 thousand Korean pines were planted by volunteers under the canopy on the area of 354 hectares!

In spring 2012, WWF will appeal to caring people to join the planting again in order to plant the remaining trees thus finishing “Plant a forest for leopards” campaign. Russia.
Conservation and poverty reduction interventions in the Onon river basin bring a number of positive impacts at local level and local communities are indeed appreciative. Women forum on the theme “International Year of Forests and Women” was organized early June, 2011, gathering women from all 7 Soums underlying Onon river basin. It was one of good opportunities to share knowledge, expertise, and experiences gained not only in the environmental conservation but also in life skills.

The rural populations in Mongolia that still live in nomadic life styles in untouched natural conditions recognize the life quality is regulated by natural law. In households, the mothers’ or women’s roles and responsibilities are very high. The women, who play an important role in taking care of and bringing up their children and improvement of their household livelihoods, have convened for their better development and empowerment.

During the forum, Q & A contest on forest conservation and other environmental topics, a fashion show of national dresses, and an excursion to forest area were organized.

Women from the Soums of ORB have joined for the efforts “To protect Onon river basin natural condition that is specific with its fresh water re-

source and natural beauty is not only the Government responsibility, but also the responsibility of each citizen” and “To preserve and disseminate considerable traditions of environmental conservation practices for the future generations”.

The women aim to make their tangible contributions in introduction of sustainable natural resource management through standing for their voices and mobilizing internal resources for improvement of their livelihoods.

They were happy with their roles and responsibilities to bring up the next generation and motivate them in protection and preservation of valuable natural resources in their untouched conditions as proud of Onon river basin, the naturally beautiful area, as its residents. In addition, most of women attended to the forum were the female members of local CBOs and they shared their experiences and success stories to other non-members.

Additionally, there is a Women’s Council in each Soums in the Basin and all the activities are organized through these Councils. Prior to this forum, in each Soum the Women’s Day event was organized. Furthermore selected members from the event were participated to the forum.
FOREST AND STEPPE FIRE PREVENTION CONTEST

A contest “ASK” (Club of Astute People) with a topic of forest and steppe fire prevention was organized in Dadal Soum of Khentii Aimag. It was organized by WWF-Mongolia and Onon Balj NP administration as well as by local government.

The contest was an important event that provided comprehensive understanding on sustainable management of forest resources, concerns & constraints encountered the ecological integrity, the Mongolian Law on Forest and Steppe Fire Combating, and damages incurred by forest and steppe fires to the public.

Each display of the contest was very informative either for participants and audiences as concluded by its jury. Each team participated in the contest brought its bulletin board that was full of awareness raising information and data for audiences. At the end of the contest, the teams decided to keep and maintain their bulletin boards with periodic updates at their organizations in the future.

WWF PRODUCES FILM FOR FOREST STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Amur Branch of WWF Russia and the nature film production company «Zov Taigi» produced a film for the General Assembly of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), the world’s largest third party forest certification system. The film describes the process of FSC certification in the Russian Far East, particularly the delineation of High Conservation Value Forests.

The film will be shown on July 1, 2011 at the General Assembly in Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia for an audience of certified forest product companies, specialists and stakeholders from Asia, Africa, Europe, North and South America and Oceania.
On May 15, for the first time Primorye celebrated the Day of Korean Pine as part of the Plant a Forest for Leopards campaign.

About 200 persons, representatives of 34 organizations, have put aside all prearranged plans and instead of sitting in cozy sofas in front of TVs decided to join WWF and Citibank and come to Khasanski district to plant trees for leopards. Namely, for a male Elduginskii, his “girlfriend” (scientists have not named her yet), and a young female tiger, their neighbor, who roam the area according to the data of this winter monitoring. These interesting facts were voiced by Anatoly Belov, recipient of the Duke of Edinburgh Conservation Medal, WWF’s premier award.

Within 5 hours, volunteers worked in pairs when one person dug a hole with a special spade-like tool and the other carefully placed a seedling into the hole and packed the soil with hands and feet to make sure that there were no air pockets. It was also important to keep the distance between the seedlings and rows.

“The Day of Korean Pine is a newly-born holiday but with a great future ahead, - remarked Igor Chestin, head of WWF-Russia, when awarding participants with certificates and souvenirs. – Today by planting young trees we celebrate a significant event that took place in November 2010 – imposing a ban for Korean pine harvesting. Helping to restore forests we introduce a new tradition. Over coming 50 years the area of coniferous-broadleaved forests in the south-west Primorye should increase by 50%. This is the goal of the WWF’s project, and Plant a Forest for Leopards campaign proves it is feasible. ” Russia.
The largest contraband shipment of bear paws in the history of the Russian Customs Service was detained in the city of Blagoveschensk at the international check point “Blagoveschensk – Heihe”.

The attempt to smuggle the large shipment of derivatives was foiled by the officers of the Blagoveschensk Customs check point and canine inspection unit of the Blagoveschensk Customs Service during inspection of a truck returning to China from Russia.

According to the Customs Service press agency, notwithstanding the fact that the truck was empty, the officers noticed unusual behavior from a sniffer dog and the nervous demeanor of the driver, a citizen of China. It was decided to conduct a search with special mobile inspection equipment.

Inspection of the vehicle revealed hidden 26 moose snouts (65 kilograms), 1041 brown bear paws (1244,8 kg), 5 mammoth tusks (81,9 kg) and 4 lynx pelts.

The contraband goods were confiscated. At present time analysis of the goods and interrogation of the suspects are ongoing. A criminal case was initiated on the basis of Article 188 of the Russian Federation Criminal Code (contraband goods). As WWF notes, despite the fact that brown bear and lynx are common game species in Russia, they are included in Appendix II of the CITES convention, which limits their commercial utilization outside of the country.

Recently, in very similar circumstances, another major smuggling channel was shut down, and both times it could not have occurred without the work of the Customs Service sniffer dogs, which is supported by WWF Russia in partnership with TRAFFIC.

It is important to note that in Russia there is no special consideration for wildlife smuggling. The law only considers them as common goods, which makes it all the more difficult to reveal such violations. If measures are not taken to amend the legislation, the great efforts taken to investigate such crimes could be in vain. Russia.

First joint workshop of Primorski Province Directorate for Protected Areas and WWF-Russia took place in Khabarovsk. It gathered together game users and rangers working in the Amur tiger habitat.

The workshop was held as a round table with questions asked and answered straight away. “Tiger and its role in hunting industry”, “Changes in the hunting law. Suppression of crime”, “Positive lessons of Primorye in anti poaching”, “Methods of raising ungulates number” and other issues were covered during the seminar. Russia.
CAPACITY BUILDING TRAINING FOR VOLUNTEER RANGERS OF ONON BALJ NP

Volunteer rangers have responsibilities to organize public awareness activities on the conservation tasks, to make contributions in the law enforcement through building up the public mentality and attitude to the environmental conservation, and conduct observations and studies. Thus, the volunteer rangers should have a wide range of knowledge on their areas, competency to conduct patrolling and monitoring, and good reputations among local communities, and be honest and residents of the areas. However, their reputation has been impaired due to lack of capacity building and supervisions.

Thus, capacity building trainings were conducted by the WWF-Mongolia, Onon Balj NP administration, and Soums’ (seven Soums located in Onon Balj Basin) Buffer Zone Coordinators, Forest units, and the State environmental inspectors.

On trainings, much attention have been paid the guidance on mobilization of CBO members into research and monitoring and assessment of natural resource, and providing the CBO members with necessary information and to develop justifications of natural resource assessment based management plans. Exercises of natural resource assessment were done at CBO level in accordance with specially developed field work agenda. Additionally, they were trained in some monitoring and research methodologies with a focus on species, their distribution areas, habitats, and population dynamics. As completed the training, the volunteer rangers will be able to collect accurate data in accordance with the methodologies and enter and process data in Biosan database. As the database is appropriately established at local level, the stakeholders will be able to use the database in mapping, tabulated, and text forms for their operations. However the volunteer rangers should be provided with some necessary items e.g. manuals, GPS, and maps.

A methodology to identify the forest states was presented and field trips were organized. During these events, the participants were provided with updated information and manual on forest pests and their distributions. Mongolia.
A herder forum was held in Umnudelger Soum of Khentii Aimag in June, 2011. On the meeting, the herders were informed with the options how to efficiently engage in animal husbandry in order to improve their livelihood. Experts, explorers, researchers, specialized officers, who do not frequently visit local areas, and representatives of the projects and programmes being implemented in the animal husbandry and other business entities were invited to the meeting. The invitees presented and shared information and their feedback on wide range of topics such as importance of intensive livestock husbandry, planting of feed or forage plants, fencing around parts of pastureland for protection and restoration, establishment of cooperative, index based livestock insurance, livestock genetic fund, land possession and ownership, maintaining and planning of household incomes, and importance of community based organizations (CBOs).

During the forum, the professionals, experts, and researchers provided detailed responses to the questions inquired by the herders. A call for improvement & development of animal husbandry has been issued and delivered to respective stakeholders.

The Call has addressed at improved accountability of herders and potential risk mitigation options through having their livestock herds covered by insurance, in addition to the traditional animal herding that is regarded as environmentally friendly practice. The meeting participants have recognized and agreed on that the herders should cooperate in herding in order to be aligned in the market society.

During the forum, the Umnudelger Soum entrepreneurs and CBOs organized a fair, where their products were traded. During the meeting, sets of fire extinguishers and other fire extinguishing tools were displayed with support of WWF-Mongolia. Mongolia.

Community based organization “Bayan-Ovoot” was established with 28 members in Bayanzurkh Bagh of Umnudelger Soum of Khentii Aimag in April, 2007 to protect and sustainably use 4293 thousand ha forested area in the Bagh. Since its establishment the Bayan-ovoot CBO members have undertaken the following efforts within their designated area in cooperation with the Bagh ranger S.Shijirbaatar:

1. They have had a bulletin board “Trees retain water, water supports life”, where the CBO members call for protection of heads of rivers and other water bodies and keeping the environment pollution-free.

2. They collected solid wastes thrown away along Bayangol River that runs through their designated area and established a temporary dump site.

3. In order to prevent from forest and steppe fires, a guarding tower was built to conduct patrolling & monitoring within the area. Mongolia.
WOOL PRODUCT MAKERS HAVE COMPLETED TRAINING

In April, totally 14 women from Batshireet, Binder, Bayan-Adraga, and Norovlin Soums of Khentii Aimag attended training on making felt products. The ladies who were involved to the training had essential knowledge in making wool products. As they completed training, they have learned about advanced techniques & technologies to make more marketable felt products. On training they learned about wool washing and combing techniques and making felt products e.g. toys, floor covers, and slippers. For instance, the participants sold some of their products during training. The training was organized in an open, so local residents were able to visit and observe training process.

Trainers, Munkhsoyol and Tuya, were invited from UB for delivery of training. One of trainers has research experiences of many years in felt arts and working experiences with local residents.

Most of trainees have basic experiences in making felt products and are willing to gain more experiences in the field. “It was very useful and efficient training for us. Also we are able to improve our livelihoods through what we learnt” said the participants. Currently, trainees from Binder Soum have decided to cooperate in the business and requested a support from the Soum government to the proposed cooperation. Mongolia.
On June 22-25, 2011, the WWF-Mongolia and Onon Balj NP jointly organized eco-clubs experience sharing meeting under a slogan “Trees retain water, water supports life”, in Dadal Soum of Khentii Aimag. This meeting was participated by 42 school children and 7 teachers from the Soums of Onon river basin.

The meeting aimed to share their experiences and achievements, to motivate the eco-club members and to learn about basic methods of environmental studies.

During the 4-days meeting, the children learned about one’s best practices, challenges that they face and its ways how to overcome. One of the most motivated activities was to analyze water quality through basic methodology. Furthermore, the eco-club members have promised to devote special activities through their cooperation to the 20th anniversary of WWF-Mongolia and the Forest Year. Mongolia.
CAMPAIGN
“CONSERVATION OF MIGRATORY BIRDS”

WWF-Mongolia and Onon Balj NP administration has jointly organized 14-day campaign “Conservation of Migratory Birds” since April 1. Main purpose of this campaign was devoted for the International Year of Forests to introduce the importance of bird conservation to school children and local communities.

During the campaign, the school children learned about building bird nest boxes and undertook an excursion around their residential areas.

About 100 children from different grades of the secondary school in Dadal Soum of Khentii Aimag took part in learning and making bird nest boxes and displayed their products in an exhibition “Jargaltai Khavriin Shuvuud” (Birds of Cheerful Spring).

As the children made and placed bird nest boxes on trees, they are encouraged to take care and protect the birds, not only observe them. With their creativeness, the school children show an exemplary action to their parents and other relatives. During the excursion, the children learned about the methodologies & techniques of bird watching and specific features of the environment. Mongolia.

CAMPAIGN
“ONE POTATO-OUR HELP”

School children engaging conservation activities with full of creative ideas and works. They already moved from the traditional actions e.g. planting seedlings and cleaning the environment (removal of solid wastes) to more comprehensive actions such as to make contributions in poverty reduction and improvement of livelihood of local residents. For example, the eco-club “Nature and Children” of Bayan-Uul Soum of Dornod Aimag announced a week campaign “One potato-Our help” during the vegetable growing season. 95 members of the eco-club collected 9 kg of seed potato and distributed to families of vulnerable group and female headed families.

During the campaign, the eco-club members collected some survey data on local residents from six Bagh Governors and grouped the data into e.g. families of vulnerable group, single parent families, families with many children and families with their vegetable plots etc. They selected a family of Enkhtaivan Lkhamsuren, a resident of Bagh 4 of the Soum. Enkhtaivan L., single mum, has totally 11 family members including her 7 children, 3 children of her brothers and sisters, and 3 grandchildren. The eco-club members planted seed potatoes in her fence and taking care of its growing. Mongolia.