



Our Wish



Field trip in Russia (by Carissa Wong, WWF US)

As WWF people, as AHEC conservation drivers, we feel pride for what we are doing for this beautiful and living complex. We share one land, we share one river, we love the same animals and we share one similar wish: AHEC is our home----home for Amur tiger and leopard, home for Kaluga, sturgeon and Taimen, home for vast forests, and home for a free flowing river! So let's speak in one coherent voice: We are WWF people, who will certainly realize the wish!



1. New type of forestry could proof to be sustainable in the nearest future

For the first time logging company pays attention to complex forest use. "Primorskii GOK" has leased large area of Korean pine nuts harvesting zone to use non-timber forest products as the main type of forestry. The leased area located in the north of Pimorskii province is 95 303 ha of intact Korean pine forests that have protective status and are home for the Amur tiger.



People should take nuts from the Korean pine and not timber (by D. Kuchma WWF)

The timber enterprise top managers plan to produce certified products made of Korean pine nuts and other forest plants that will compete on domestic and international markets. The company also intents to have non-timber forestry certified. According to WWF staff, this is a precedent in forest management in Russia. Fixing a complete cycle from harvesting forest products to their realization could develop this type of forestry into one of the most sparing in the future.

2. Workshop on HCVF



HCVF workshop (by WWF China)

From Jan 9th to 11th, 2008, the HCVF workshop was held in Beijing. More than 100 forest program officials and experts from WWF, Resources Department and Foreign Cooperation Program Center of State Forest Bureau, etc took part in the workshop. The workshop aimed to share HCVF program experiences, promote HCVF concept in government agencies, forest managers and scientific and research institutes who are interested in sustainable forest

management, provide training to technicians pursuing HCVF certification and management and opportunities to discuss how to integrate HCVF toolkit into existing management system of different forest category.



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Cui Wushe, from Forest Resources Department of State Forest Bureau, introduced current condition of sustainable forest management scheme system and the linkage between HCVF and management scheme; Daniel Arancibia and Barano Siswa Sulistyawan introduced their HCVF experiences of WWF US and WWF India respectively. After the workshop, an expert from ProForest, and two WWF staff went to Hunchun had a field trip in forests near Lingbao Temple, Tumen River, etc. ProForest expert gave suggestions on HCVF and FSC certification in the future.

3. 2008 – the Year for Ramsar Wetlands

The Amur branch of WWF-Russia has announced 2008 the Year for Ramsar Wetlands located in the Amur River basin to prepare the community for launching the Amur Regional Ramsar Initiative (ARRI) later this year. There are 15 wetlands of international significance in the catchments area of the great river in China, Mongolia and Russia. Lack of information about wetland's role creates serious problems for their protection. To preserve and use Ramsar wetlands in a sustainable way WWF together with Ministry of Natural Resources are preparing documents for ARRI launching that hopefully will be supported at the conference of Ramsar countries in Seoul this November. According to Yurii Darman, ARRI could be viewed as a perspective mechanism for building cooperation between three countries within ARRI.

To date, to celebrate the Year for Ramsar Wetlands lots of different activities have been conducted. In Chitinskaya, Evreiskaya, Amurskaya, Khabarovskii and Primorskii provinces hundreds of people have visited fests, photo exhibitions, and press conference. Not to mention that the start of the Year has coincided with a remarkable event – signing of the Agreement between Russia and China on sustainable use and protection of transboundary waters.



Such poster was produced marking the start of the Year for Ramsar Wetlands (by WWF Russia)



4. Save The Tiger Fund project workshop in Changchun

On February 23rd, a special workshop was held for SttF implementation. Dr. Zhu Chunquan, Mr. Fan Zhiyong from WWF CPO, Mr. Yuriy Darman and Ms. Svetlana Titova from WWF RFE, Ms. Lisa Hickey from WCS US, staff from WWF China Harbin Office attended the meeting together with five local experts: Mr. Sun Haiyi, Mr. Wu Zhigang, Mr. Mu Huisheng, Mr. Wang Jiuwei, and Mr. Li Zhenxin. The outline of the Sino-Russia eco-corridor management plan was detailed discussed. A working table was put out including all the activities to be implemented by several working groups before end of FY09 to achieve the SttF goal.

5. Saving leopard through learning

Results of the first stage of the ecological school marathon "Saving each of the survivors" run in Primorye on the Land of the Leopard were announced during spring school vacations. Contest of essays on topic "What do you know about PAs of the Land of Leopard" was the basis of the marathon. Searching the literature for answers about local PAs kids have got acquainted with their history, structure, protective regimes. In their papers they had to explain who are poachers, why clear cuts in wildlife refuges are banned, what is the difference between reserves and refuges. The kids managed with the task. Main conclusion made by the kids living side by side with the predator is that the system of PAs in the leopard's habitats should protect rare cat.

All 154 participants were rewarded with diplomas and small gifts and 48 winners were taken to the excursion to the Nature Museum at the Far Eastern State University and visited Institute of Marine Biology to learn about basic techniques how to do research.



6. Sino-Russia eco-corridor survey of Amur tiger, leopard and ungulates



Sino-Russia border survey (by Luo Xingbi, WWF China)

Recovery of Amur tiger and leopard population in the Changbaishan Landscape depends heavily on proliferation of tigers and leopards from Southwest Primorye, Russia. Hunchun-Wangqing-Dongning areas are near Sino-Russia border, which is the main eco-corridor for the movement of tigers and leopards between Russia and China.

Therefore, in order to get information about migration of Amur tiger, Amur leopard and ungulates, as well as the social and natural impacts on it, WWF China Harbin Office cooperates with local agencies and experts on conducting

field survey and social, natural information collection in Hunchun-Wangqing-Dongning area from February to April this year. This survey will also serve as the suggestions to related agencies on eco-corridor protection, restoration, and management in border areas, as well as for the improvement of management in nature reserves in main Amur tiger and leopard habitats.

During the survey, WWF China Harbin Office staff and nature reserve staff found tiger and leopard tracks, roe deer lying tracks, and wild animal droppings. This survey not only provides evidence to formulate regional Amur tiger and leopard conservation plan, but also promotes the application of unified monitoring methodology of Amur tiger/leopard and ungulates in AHEC NEC.



Leopard track in Hunchun sino-Russia Survey (by Luo Xingbi, WWF China)



7. The Sustainable Tourism business in river basins of Onon Balj rivers, Eastern Mongolia was discussed in March 08 local community consultation.

The Onon-Balj National Park and the river basin area of Onon and Balj rivers are considered as the head water area for the world's longest free-flowing Amur River and is a part of the Greater Amur-Heilong Eco-region. Not only picturesque natural scenery, but its life-sustaining service to ecosystems and local communities living in the area make the Onon Balj park unique in terms of its conservation value: with lush green forests occupying 40% of the region that supports ecological integrity for globally important fresh water courses such as Amur Heilong river and hosting a community of biodiversity with 51 mammal species, 223 bird species and 23 fish species registered.

Recent popularity of the area amongst the tour-operators make the area more vulnerable to attacks for resource extraction that needs to be managed with care and professionalism. The taimen (*hucho taimen*) is one the endangered species from the basin who attracts fly-fishing tourists from around the world.

In relation to managing sustainably the resource base in the area, the local community consultation with tourism companies was undertaken in Binder soum,

Khentii province, which WWF Mongolia attended in the capacity of the observer.

The participants discussed the opportunities for setting up the Joint River Basin Council for Onon and Balj river basin and discussed some points to be integrated into drafting of the MoU with Tourist companies regulating their activities in the basin area. The consultation meeting has provided the local communities to get better informed on the provision of the Integrated River Basin Management concept and its practical application.



Signing of Taimen Conservation MOU (by Balbar Gankhuyag, WWF Mongolia)



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8. Tiger seminar

In March, WWF-Sweden and Kolmarden Wildlife Park hold an exclusive tiger seminar to highlight the critical situation for the world tigers. Several of the world's leading conservationists and scientists including WWF-Russia, the Amur branch's representative came to Sweden to present the latest figures and current status of the tigers in the wild. Global status for tigers, threats and WWF's Global action plan for tigers, status of the Indian and Amur tigers and WWF-Indian and WWF-Russia activities on tiger conservation were voiced during the meeting. Before the seminar mass media was briefed on the subject to draw attention of broad public worldwide to tiger conservation. The seminar and panel discussion held right afterward was attended by scientists, journalists, researchers, students, and ordinary people really interested in nature conservation.

WWF representatives from Russia and Sweden also discussed opportunities to transform and enlarge ongoing WWF-Sweden-funded project "Siberian Tiger" into "Community-based Amur tiger conservation in the Bikin River basin through tourism development". The project will help the Udege and Nanai aboriginal tribes inhabiting the Bikin River area to ensure stability of the Amur tiger, their divinity, through development of tourism and hunting and fishing tourism as alternative to logging and mining.

9. European commission supports new WWF's project

"Local initiatives to create opportunities for children, young people and women of the Udege and Nanai tribes in the Bikin River area, Russian Far East" to be run in the upper and middle Bikin River catchments area, Pozharskii District of the Primorskii Province, Russia. The project will strive to build and reinforce formal as well as non-formal civil society organizations within the Udege and Nanai communities. It will do so by establishing a cultural centre with a natural and cultural history museum as well as other facilities for the training of traditional skills and practices (hunting, fishing, gathering of non-timber forest products, sewing, carpentry, etc.).



The future of the Bikin River is in hands of local aboriginals (by WWF Russia)

Children, young people and women will be encouraged to participate in the workshops and center's activities, while economic opportunities are created through marketing local products and promoting small-scale ecotourism in the Bikin area. The cultural centre will be made a real community centre also thanks to a legal aid office offering legal advice, opportunities for participation in decision-making and advocacy for the establishment of a "Territory for Traditional Nature Use". Partners of the project are WWF Germany, WWF Russia, NGO "Association of Indigenous People of the Primorskii Province", Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, non-commercial association "Tribal Commune 'Tiger', Municipality of Krasny Yar village and Village Council of Deputies.

10. Biotic resources monitoring and managing training in Changbaishan Nature Reserve

From March 15th to 18th, 2008, the conservation and management center of Changbaishan Natural Reserve and WWF China Harbin Office co-hosted a training course on monitoring and managing the biotic resources in natural reserves. The training course involved more than 100 people. During the training, Mr. Lang Jianmin, from Hunchun NNR gave a presentation to share tiger /leopard conservation experiences with other NR colleagues. Through the training, Changbaishan Nature Reserve's capacity of monitoring and managing wildlife resources has been further improved; the training course has laid solid foundation and paved the way to build a communication platform for different NRs, and for realizing the sustainable conservation of Changbaishan Landscape, and WWF profile was promoted through Changbaishan media.



Changbaishan Nature Reserve training (from WWW.Changbaishan.gov.cn)



11. AHEC FY09-11 Planning workshop in Vladivostok

From March 27th to 31st, 2008, AHEC FY09-11 planning workshop was held in Vladivostok, Russia. Representatives from WWF RFE, WWF Mongolia, WWF US, WWF Netherlands, WWF UK, WWF DE, WWF CPO, TRAFFIC, ISUNR, PHOENIX, FEBRAS and WCS Russia took part in the workshop.

WWF RFE, WWF Mongolia and WWF CPO introduced three-year planning log-frames and figured out potential transboundary activities and support from each side, such as conducting Free Flowing report in each country and integration into trilateral report for publication; Jilin, Heilongjiang Provincial delegation exchanging with RFE the successful experiences of forest fire control, while China side learning from RFE the Amur tiger, leopard and ungulates conservation approaches; and exchanging information about HCFV certification, etc.



Planning workshop in Vladivostok (by Luo Xingbi, WWF China)

This workshop is of great help for the three countries' FY09-11 program planning and budget balance. All participants believe through hard work on each side and nice cooperation among WWF Mongolia, WWF RFE, WWF CPO and WWF international colleagues, AHEC will turn out to be a living heaven for human and nature.



12. Meeting with nature reserve and forestry department



Meeting with Hunchun NNA (by Luo Xingbi, WWF China)



Meeting with Head of Jilin Forest Administration (by Luo Xingbi, WWF China)

From April 2nd to 5th, 2008, under the lead of Dr. Zhu Chunquan, WWF Harbin Office staff had a series of meetings with two Vice-directors of Hunchun NNR, Vice-director of Yanbian Korean Autonomous Forestry Administration and Head of Jilin Provincial Forest Administration. Meeting went into issues like fueling system change of Hunchun NNR, reserve staff capacity building through exchange with RFE; Changbaishan landscape planning, which, after discussion, turned out to be more efficiently implemented from technical aspect, doing surveys to know what kind of information and data are available and lacking at present, such as maps, ungulates density; and Chinese delegation visit to RFE for fire prevention and Amur tiger and leopard conservation experiences exchange, etc.

From the friendly and harmonious atmosphere, Hunchun NNR, forestry department and WWF showed great willingness to promote future cooperation through communication.



Others

1. Wong Carissa's secondment in WWF Harbin Office from February 21th to May 2nd.



Carissa in WWF Harbin Office Meeting (by Luo Xingbi, WWF China)

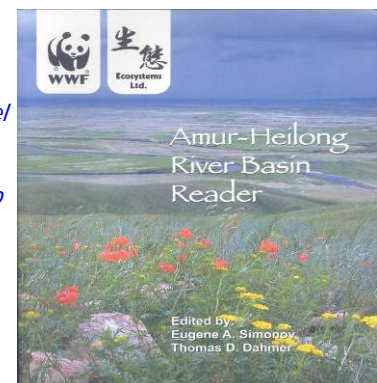


AHEC planning workshop in Changchun (by Luo Xingbi, WWF China)

2. AHEC NEC part planning workshop in Changchun on February 21st and 22nd.

3. Amur-Heilong River Basin Reader and DVD-disk published.

We hope the Reader will fuel up the spread of global awareness and contribute to its long-term protection (by WWF Russia)



Field trip in Jingxin (by Luo Xingbi, WWF China)

4. Field trip in Jingxin, Hunchun National Natural Reserve on March 11th



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Tiger poem for those who contributed, are contributing and will contribute to Amur tiger Conservation.

Wandering in Mist

Author: Mao Wei

Open gloomy eyes,

*Wandering on the misty morning,
Look for the original intention of love
with tottering steps.*

*Many years, you and I walk in the moonlit night,
Many times, you and I appreciate the wonderful rainbow.
Drinking water in the same river,
Enjoying the sunshine,
And singing in the valley.
Suddenly, good time disappears,
and best wishes are gone with wind.
But why let me behind.
Only I feel lonely? Only I feel lonely?*

*Leaving my hometown,
Is my wordless pain.
Coming back and seeking former happiness,
Is an extravagant hope.
How much do I expect meeting you again;
How much do I hope to enjoy the beautiful snow and the bright moon,
Sit beneath the blue sky, listen to the forest song with you,
Feel freely and in harmony.*

*The scenic beauty of hometown
In long night is a dreamland.
How many days I need to wait,
And fling myself into your embrace again?*



Mr. Mao Wei, experienced journalist working for environment protection for more than 30 years, who is also a poet, music composer, and photographer.