



WWF for a living planet™

# WWF in Altai-Sayan Ecoregion INFORMATION BULLETIN

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SPECIES / Snow Leopard – Argali

*WWF Russia WWF Mongolia*

## Antipoaching activities: the collaboration of several PAs is proved to be effective

As poaching is still one of the major threats to biodiversity in Altay – Sayan Ecoregion WWF continues to support the activities of the antipoaching units and brigades.

- **“Irbis” antipoaching brigade** – a unique alliance of Nature Reserves and Nature Parks in Sayan Mountains. Considering the lack of finance and capacities of a separate protected area working together is a great support. This spring results proved the effectiveness of a close inspectors’ collaboration.



The raid in Ubsunurskaya Kotlovina Nature Reserve (Republic of Tyva) in April and May resulted in arresting of 5 poachers who illegally killed Mongolian marmots – the animals listed in Red Book of Russia. All lawbreakers were the policemen. Moreover the inspectors confiscated 9 traps, 4 fire-arms, 10 killed Mongolian marmots, drew up 10 violation reports. This case received a wide media coverage and a deep public resonance in Tyva.

Next raid in June in Ergaki Nature Park proved that fact that working with the local people and the propaganda of nature conservation can made a great success. The inspectors did not find any signs of poaching. It was a precedent for this territory!

- WWF continues to support the **inter-agency brigade in Republic of Altai**. This brigade is the result of cooperation of Game Management Department, Altaisky Nature Reserve and Police of Altai Republic. One of the poorest regions in Russia can not provide the full equipment and operational costs for effective anti-poaching activities. WWF support is crucial for fighting poaching in Altai argali and snow leopard habitats in Altai Mountains. Petrol, spare parts and equipment provided for the inspectors served a good job bringing results: 10 poachers were stopped and 5 fire-arms confiscated by the brigade.

## Argali population observation in transboundary area

WWF Mongolia has been doing observation of argali sheep movement in the transboundary area between Mongolia and Russia for the last 6 years through radio-collar on new-born lambs. This year 10 more lambs were collared. The total number of collared lambs in Uvs province reached up to 43 individuals.

This year WWF Mongolia expanded the observation area to Siilkhem mountain range which is located in Bayan-Ulgii province. The process involved the local people, rangers and state border officers who are expected to carry out the further observations.

## WWF Mongolia-licensed BioSan Programme wins the national contest



As the Government pays special attention to the development of ICT, it has launched the contest, entitled “ICT best solutions for the environmental protection” at national scale. The main criteria within the contest was to propose best solutions in the conservation field using ICT means, applicable in the unique Mongolian context to make a valuable contribution to the green economy development.

The BioSan programme, developed and piloted in the Altai-Sayan by WWF Mongolia has won the second place and the price delivered on the occasion of the World Telecommunication and Information Society Day, 14 May 2010. The programme is featured by its uniqueness to convert information on wildlife, gathered by rangers in accordance with approved

methodologies into digital database which allows elaboration of accurate data and use in the environmental conservation planning process.

We are pleased to note that among five short-listed works, the BioSan programme was the only one already developed as a product and being implemented while the others were only the proposals for potential solution.

WWF Mongolia considers that the creation of the BioSan programme is a valuable contribution to improving management of Protected Areas.

Two projects funded by WWF NL and MAVA simultaneously started in 2007 in both parts of the AS in Mongolia and Russia - “**2012 Protected Areas Programme of Altai Sayan ecoregion**” and “**Ensuring Long-Term Conservation of Biodiversity In The Trans-Boundary Areas of the Altai Sayan Ecoregion between Mongolia and Russia**”. “**Integrated Community Development and Biodiversity Conservation in the Republic of Tuva**” project funded by Oxfam-GB started in 2009 in Republic of Tyva (Russia).

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## Ecotourism camps in the habitats of a snow leopard and argali

WWF and UNDP Project started a joined program devoted to development of transboundary ecotourism route in snow leopard and Altai argali habitats in Altai, Tuva and Western Mongolia. The project is based on local communities living in the habitats of endangered species. Thus, in May-June two eco-camps for tourists were organized in Altai on the base of the communities of *telengits* – the indigenous people of Sailugem Ridge. Three traditional telengt yurts, a sauna, a guest house and the solar panels were established in the eco – camps in collaboration with *Ere – Chui*, the Association of Telengt Communities. Poaching – is one of the major threat for argali and snow leopard in Sailugem, where Sailugem National Park was established recently. A chance to watch a snow leopard and its prey in the wild is supposed to be a specific trait of the planning eco-tours. Rare species conservation will become an indispensable condition for income generation of the local people. The communities receive the equipment and constructions for tourists in exchange for argali and snow leopard conservation. In case of poaching among the participants of the ecotourism project all equipment and constructions will be confiscated. The involvement of the local people into ecotourism activities secures the requisites for snow leopard and argali protection. Community inspection was organized in Sailugem Ridge as a part of the project. So, telengits now can take active part in anti-poaching activities in cooperation with government agencies.



## LOCAL COMMUNITIES

### WWF assessed the level of conflict between herders and a snow leopard in Republic of Tyva



The understanding of local people's attitude towards a snow leopard is crucial for conservation of this endangered species. In May 2010 special research was supported by WWF Russia to collect information on snow leopard attacks to livestock on Shapshal Ridge – one of the most important species shelter in Altai-Sayan. WWF experts discovered that only 127 heads of livestock were killed by a snow leopard in Shapshal Ridge area in 2001-2010 (for 10 years). So, snow leopards kill on an average 12 – 13 heads of livestock a year (to compare a wolf kill 703 heads of livestock annually – which is 6 times more than a snow leopards kill for 10 years!).

*«There are the herders' camps where a snow leopard attacks livestock every year, - says Alexander Kuksin, Ubsunurskaya Kotlovina Nature Reserve. – The shepherds themselves relate this fact with a mating period of this wild cat when snow leopards become more active. They say once a herder saw a snow leopard killing his goat on a pasture at daytime. The tuvinian drove away a leopard's kill however at night a snow leopard got into "koshara*

*(a sheep shed) and killed 30 goats and sheep there".*

Local people poll opinion's results proved that the shepherds had either neutral or negative attitude towards a rare animal. The people are perfectly aware of a punishment for killing a snow leopard however the cases of poaching are known. One shepherd tried to shoot a snow leopard two years ago but missed, a female snow leopard was shot as a revenge for killing cattle, another animal was caught in a wire loop in 2007. The case is still being investigated.

WWF experts consider the measures for the conflict mitigation. The activities proposed include the active propaganda of snow leopard conservation among the local people, the promotion of a snow leopard image as a sacred symbol of Altai – Sayan, ecotourism development involving the herders, souvenirs productions (a snow leopard statuettes). The planning Shui Nature Park will provide for the conservation of a rare animal as well.



### The preliminary study of socio – economic development of the regions of Republic of Tyva was conducted.

The experts of the joint project of WWF and Oxfam – GB "Sustainable Development Programme in Tuva" conducted a survey in the pilot areas to assess the level of livelihood, the attitude towards poaching and households. The information received became the basis for elaboration of measures for local people's income generation in harmony with nature. The results of the survey was presented in the Government of Republic of Tyva and brought together the representatives of the official organization (statistics department, ministers of economics and nature resources, placement service and so on). The data gathered by an independent non-governmental organization did not cope with those of the official statistics which caused a wide discussion. The Vice – President of Republic of Tyva, Anatoly Damba - Huurak stressed that the project would prove its efficiency even if the only one working place was organized. The results of the survey indicate that more than a half respondents poach for food, one third would poach provided that they are not punished for that. Nature conservation organizations activities are supported by 14% of respondents, 60% have no any idea of this kind of work in the region, 23% have negative attitude towards nature conservation authorities. Most of local people consider punishment hardening and fine raising are to be the most effective tools to fight poaching in the area.

**WWF Russia**

**Workshop for PA trainers**

The first training workshop was conducted in April for the future teachers of recently established Rangers Training Centre for the Protected Areas of Republic of Altai. The experts from Moscow taught the participants the basic knowledge of lecturing, teaching process planning, strategic thinking, psychological aspects of auditorium, interactive methods of teaching and so on. Each participant no matter what sphere he is from (Ministry of Nature Resources, PAs, a university or an NGO) elaborated his own practical project. The Centre established by the Ministry of Nature Resources, Altai University and Fund of Sustainable Development of Altai will serve for the capacity building of PAs in Republic of Altai.



**Training workshop on tourism and recreation impact on the nature complexes of transboundary PAs for Russia and Kazakhstan's experts.**

The workshop included the issues of the recreation impact on mountain territories. Katunskiy Biosphere Reserve has developed and implemented the monitoring program within the PA and Nature Park "Belukha", the results of the monitoring include the assessment of the acceptable recreational pressure and serve as the baseline for implementation of tourism regulation measures. The goal of the training is to share this experience with protected areas of the Eastern Kazakhstan for further implementation of the monitoring program within the proposed transboundary protected area "Altai".

**IN BRIEF**

***Ak-Cholushpa Nature Park in Mountain Altai – establishing in progress***

The regional meeting to discuss establishing of Ak – Cholushpa Nature Park brought together government authorities, non-government organizations and local people. The participants approved the draft of Regulations.

***Shui Nature Park in Tuva and Pozarim Federal Refuge in Khakassia – the feasibility studies are developed***

***The cadastre of the PAs prepared for Republic of Altai***  
It's the first time the regulations for PAs' cadaster has been developed and approved. The database of existing PAs is being collected.

***Funding Strategy for Protected Areas is developed***  
It's the first time such kind of work for Protected Areas of ASER has been done. WWF experts defined the main income sources, the shortages and advantages of the regional PAs, assessed the existing and potential situations, prepared the recommendations on raising the level of the government and additional funding for each region.

**WWF Mongolia**



**The management team of locally protected area Gulzat is going to be in charge of community-based wildlife management**

In Uvs province, 126772 ha area, near the state border, was taken under local protection in 2008. The specifics of this locally protected area (PA) is its location – in both Bokhmoron and Sagil county. So the function of management team of Gulzat locally PA differs from other locally PA.

The first meeting of the team was held in April of 2010 with support of WWF Mongolia and discussed many issues about not only PA regulations but also functions of herders' community groups in the locally PA. At the end of the meeting the team adapted the following resolutions:

1. To establish a fund among herders' community groups within locally PA;
2. The community groups will be in charge of argali sheep trophy hunting at the PA;
3. Multilateral contract between hunting company, sum governor and community group made for trophy hunting.

## **IN BRIEF**

### ***Mongolian delegates participated in trans-boundary ecotourism meeting held in Russia, Republic of Altai.***

The participants – the representatives of regional authorities, PAs and tourism agencies - discussed the aspects of transboundary ecotourism development, PAs' cooperation and involving of tour operators into nature conservation.

### ***One sum - one initiative***

Every year WWF Mongolia, Environment and Tourism Agency of Khovd province and UNDP Altai-Sayan project organize a seminar-meeting to discuss the concrete environmental issue and conduct follow-up activities. This May Environment and Sustainability Workshop was based on the resolution of Khovd Aimag Citizen Representatives' Khural that proclaimed 2010 as the year of environment and sustainable development. The head of the Citizen representatives khural, environmental inspectors, rangers, and volunteer rangers of all sums of Khovd aimag shared experiences, reported outcomes and lessons learnt of the previous seminar and planned the next year's activity. The participants initiated to dedicate one particular activity to one year except the general work plan. In this connection they delivered the initiatives to the governor of the province.

## **FRESH WATER**

### ***WWF Mongolia***

### **Management plan of Khovd and Buyant rivers is developed and supported by local decision makers**

After several research works and group discussions the final draft of Khovd and Buyant river management plan was successfully supported by Aimag Citizen Representatives' Khural of Khovd, Bayan-Ulgii and Uvs provinces, the highest decision making organizations at local levels.

The management plan have seven chapters including content of background of the river condition, facing problems and measures to be taken. The measures to improve river basin management are going to mostly direct to decrease anthropogenic negative impact and their consequences while changing their attitude and improving current management organization. The final draft of the management plan will be discussed at the Ministry level in July.



### **Best methods and technology to irrigate agriculture and gardening of town is learned**



Members of Khovd and Buyant river basin council went to Chingel and Altai aimag of Shinjan province, China. Purpose of the trip was to see and learn their irrigation system, especially water allocation and effective technology. In this area drop-irrigation system is getting popular and is being supported by the government and about 40 per cent of agricultural irrigation is done by this technology. Therefore, in each county there is an organization which is responsible for water usage and canals. "Drop-irrigation technology is very important for both water conservation and economical income. Though introducing new technology costs expensive and takes long process. Thus we may test it in some places in Mongolia. And further we can adopt" said participants of the trip.

## **EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

### ***WWF Mongolia***

### **School-centered trainings for Environment and Sustainable Development**

Environmental education is one of the ways of WWF Mongolia to reach people and call to action. That is why the school-centered methodological trainings are organized quarterly for the teachers of the project sites. Teachers are trained to use new methods of integrating issues of SD into school subject and the process to develop ESD runs successfully.

To evaluate result of formal education activities WWF Mongolia has started to organize experience sharing event and methodological contest among teachers since 2009. Within this aim WWF Mongolia's education team and the Department of Education and Culture in Khovd and Gobi-Altai provinces jointly organized the



methodological contest in April, 2010. The 1<sup>st</sup> phase of the contest was organized at school level and winners of the schools participated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase which was at regional level. The aim of the contest was to share teachers experience on integrating environmental, cultural and ecological issues into school subjects and teaching methods. *“Comparing to the previous contest, the teaching skills and methods of the teachers has improved and this can directly influence to the educational quality”* said B.Sainsanaa, the methodologist of the Department of Education and Culture of Khovd province.

## **Schools will become a driving force for development of their county**

Within objectives to support development and implementation of outreach initiatives by pilot schools for sustainable entrepreneurship activities the “Small scale business training” conducted within four pilot schools’ teachers and school managers (about 160 participants) in Khovd province.

The training linked with methodology and practice work on how to develop environmental friendly small scale business plan. Participants were asked to determine business initiatives that are need for improvement of local development. Rooted on those business initiatives teachers developed their sample business plans. Linked with the training, a students’ handbook was developed. The handbook included step by step instruction on how to initiate the first interest and awareness that it is possible to start business activities which can improve living standards and environmental conservation in local areas.

As a conclusion of the training a short discussion between participants and teacher experts were conducted, under issues how to integrate in the curriculum and what expectation after the training etc. Teachers expressed to use the knowledge not only teach students but also to train parents and herders to evening sessions to support sustainable way of living. In this way the schools will become a driving force for development of their county.

## **Eco Clubs**

### ***WWF Mongolia***

#### **Ecological trip along Khovd and Buyant river basin**

Students of “Strawberry” eco club involved an ecological trip along Buyant river to Dorgon Hydropower station. The Buyant river basin council supported the trip to see and explore current situation of the river, water usage (irrigation etc), impact of development on environment and to share experiences with other eco clubs in Buyant, Myangad and Dorgon county. “We are really satisfied with the trip and got a lot of knowledge about water ecosystem and human impact on the environment. Further we are going to cooperate with the Buyant river basin council to aware residents of Khovd town and call them to action. For instance, this year during our summer holiday the students of our eco club decided to do public awareness activities for the ones who are relaxing on beach of Buyant river” says one of the students.



#### **Nature smiles children summer camp**

An annual experience sharing event among the Eco Clubs of Altai - Sayan Ecoregion was hold in June, 10-15 in Uvs province. About 160 students and teachers of 18 Eco Clubs were involved.

The event aimed to let the Eco Clubs to share the achievements and lessons learned during last year to increase the nature loving while traveling and seeing a piece of Mongolia’s beautiful nature, to improve the knowledge of biodiversity and various ecosystems such as water, steppe-desert and mountain forest, to train the students how to make a primary bird, water and insect observation.

The students had a lot of fun while doing all the activities such as hiking to the mountains, field research, and group discussions on different topics in three aspects of sustainable development and ecological games and the art contests. Movie time was one of the most attractive and interesting part of the event. The movie was made by the students themselves.

Experience sharing summer festival of kids clubs of Tuva Republic of Russia and Uvs province of Mongolia was hold in Mongun-Taiga district, Republic of Tuva, in June. The aim of this summer festival was to provide an experience sharing platform for kids who are an essential aspect for the further development and motivation.

### ***WWF Russia***

#### **Eco-camp for WWF Kids Clubs**

*Rubicon*, WWF Kids Club of Katunsky Nature Reserve participated in a summer camp. The children walked more than 60 kilometres carrying heavy bags, crossed the mountains rivers, learned how to survive in taiga, made their own ecobags and got to know the basic of ecological education. As volunteers they cleaned the ecotrail of the Reserve.



## PUBLIC AWARENESS

### WWF Russia

#### The first ecological festival in the history of Mountain Altai for snow leopard conservation!

The festival called “A Snow Leopard Day” was held in Republic of Altai in May, 2010. This unique and very attractive way of promoting rare species conservation was used for the first time and worked very well.

78 schoolchildren of Ulagansky and Kosh – Agachsky regions of Republic of Altai – two key sites for snow leopard conservation in Mountain Altai – became the participants of the event. The Head of the Directorate of protected areas of Mongolian Altai Mantai Khavilkhan was the guest of the festival.

The results of two contests on the best legend “Snow Leopard – the Legend of Mountains” and the best drawing or craftwork “Save a Snow Leopard” were summed up at the festival. The amazing craftworks made by schoolchildren – a snow leopard and other rare species statuettes made of ceramics, wax, dough and wheat, paper applications were exhibited during the festival. The different songs, dances, performances and even power point presentation were presented for the jury to choose the winner. The wish to help a vulnerable animal and care for its future were seen through children’s appeal to save a snow leopard.

“I was surprised how knowledgeable the children are, - marked Mikhail Paltsyn, - the projects coordinator in Altai – Sayan Ecoregion. - It is extremely important to make a base for nature conservation in the souls of the people from the very early age. Our children will make our future”.

The regional level festival is planned to be promoted up to the level of Republic. The children proposed to name 26, May the Snow Leopard Day and next year invite the children from Republic of Tyva and Mongolia.



### WWF Mongolia

#### Doctors joined for the conservation

In Gobi-Altai province, mobile doctor service was conducted under the umbrella of WWF Mongolia. It was aimed at providing the correct information on consumption of wildlife related products for health reasons, enhancing the value of wildlife and increasing legal knowledge. The team consisted of 4 doctors, a biologist and Saiga rangers. The campaign reached up to 1755 people mostly rural herders

“We really appreciated that WWF Mongolia is organizing the mobile doctor service after the harsh winter. This was the most valuable moral support than we ever had...” said herders.

During the event WWF Mongolia offered first aid kits to doctors from 30 bags (the smallest administrative unit). The campaign included lecture on misconception about the use of wildlife products for medical purposes, wildlife and ecosystem value and related legislation. Furthermore, herders enjoyed drama play which was performed by ecoclub kids.



#### Biodiversity Day was celebrated in Mongolia

WWF Mongolia organized the series of public awareness activities on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of May: biology experts lectures, the leading university professors working as museum guides in the Natural History Museum, the mobile campaigning of students who wore species costumes and with the masks.

Altai - Sayan field office of WWF Mongolia also developed work plan within the Biodiversity Day and implemented it in close cooperation with UNDP Altai Sayan project, Norwegian project organization and local medias. TV programs like talk shows, game shows, documentary film, law time were broadcasted by local televisions, prepared newspaper articles and organized workshops and seminars to make aware public on biosphere ecosystems, plant and animal species, their harmony and human role in nature.



WWF is one of the world’s largest and most experienced independent conservation organizations, with almost 5 million supporters and a global network active in more than 100 countries.

WWF’s mission is to stop the degradation of the planet’s natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature

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