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Altai – Sayan Ecoregion Issue #22

WWF Russia  
WWF Mongolia

## Snow leopard found on the Ukok plateau!

**In summer 2012 numerous snow leopard signs were discovered on the pristine Ukok plateau in the Altai Republic. This finding gives WWF an extra argument against the gas pipeline through the plateau**

*- Environmental NGOs and UNESCO has been striving for the changing of the gas pipeline route to China by-passing the Ukok. Unfortunately, "Gasprom" still doesn't hear us, – says Alexey Knizhnikov, WWF Russia Oil and Gas program coordinator.*

Snow leopard marking signs were found by the "Altayskiy" Reserve and regional NGO "Arkhar" staff during the expedition to the Tabyn-Bogdo-Ola and South Altai ranges that frame the high-mountain Ukok plateau along Russian-Chinese border. First findings were done on the South Altai range: one of the scent marks had a strong cat's scent – it allowed the scientists to conclude that the leopard had been there just few days before researchers come. Scent marks' locations and their freshness give evidences that the South Altai range is inhabited by at least 2-4 snow leopards.

It's a part of bigger transboundary snow leopard population in the border area of Russia, Kazakhstan and China.

*- The snow leopard population of South Altai Ridge can be a source of the snow leopards to repopulate the Argut River basin and a migration corridors between Russian, Chinese, Mongolian and Kazakh snow leopard populations - says Sergei Spitsyn, the head of snow leopard research group in Altai.*

According to the specialists, area occupied by snow leopards in the Russian portion of South Altai Ridge is 250-300 sq.km. Siberian Ibex, red deer, marmot, Altaian snowcock and partridge provide local leopards with a prey base. WWF insists on the changing of the gas pipeline route to China which "Gasprom" is going to hack through the pristine Ukok plateau. [Russia](#)



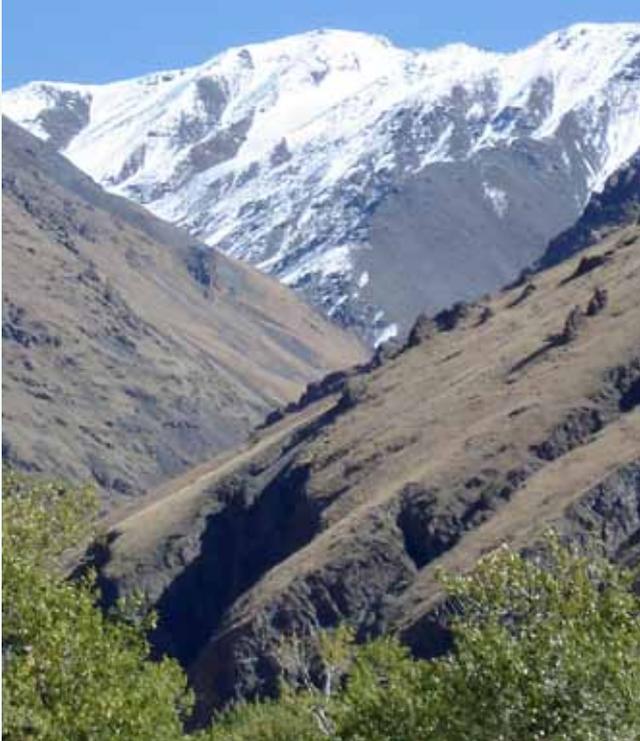
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### Breaking News

December, 29th - Russia's Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev signed a decree on establishing the national park "Sailugemskiy" in the Altai Republic. This document creates legal basis for the implementation of the main NP's goals as a conservational institution. WWF supports the decision of the Prime Minister and hopes that the creation of the "Sailugemskiy" NP will allow to protect the snow lard population in the Argut Watershed and argali on the Sailugem ridge.

# Species and Ecosystems

## Boundaries set for potential local protected areas



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**Proposed area for LPA**

Team of researchers worked on the field to finalize setting the boundaries of potential LPA encompassing the corridors of Snow leopard, Argali sheep and Ibex that connect high mountains of Munkhkhairkhan, Myangan ugalzat, Khukh serkh and Tsambagarav. The justifications for taking the Baatar khairkhan mountain range have been discussed among local authorities and residents of Zereg and Must soums of Khovd province and the proposed boundaries were agreed. The area, identified as potential to be part of LPA takes total of 105020 ha and will be proposed for Nature Reserve category of PA.

The Strictly protected area of Khukh serkh will be proposed to be extended by 40291,4 ha, thus making the area of 114798,3 ha under protection. The proposed area is one of the core habitat or migration route of endangered species like Snow leopard, Argali sheep and Ibex and would certainly make greater contribution for their conservation.

The ecological corridor linking Munkhkhairkhan, Myangat ugalzat NP, Khukh serkh SPA has been justified to take under LPA based on the existing LPA Alag-Yendert-Must area.

*Mongolia*

## More than 60 snares and 15 traps confiscated from poachers in the snow leopard habitat in Argut River Basin

**In November WWF Russia supported inspectors of Wildlife Protection Agency in the Altai Republic to organize patrolling of the snow leopard habitats in the upper part of the Argut River valley**

*In result of the raid the inspectors stopped local poachers and confiscated more than 60 snares and 15 traps. Also they found a hiding with 2 illegal guns. This winter Altai inspectors are going to patrol this part of the Argut River valley on a regular basis because it's the most important territory for the snow leopard restoration in Altai.*



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*- We should notice that patrolling of the hard-to-reach areas of the Argut River valley is held extremely rare because of the limited budget and lack of staff, – says Michael Paltsyn, senior project coordinator of the Altai-Sayan Ecoregional Office, WWF Russia. – But it's here where the last Argut snow leopards live – once this population was the biggest in Russia and counted 30-40 leopards.*

To stop illegal snaring in the Argut River valley it's necessary to implement the whole complex of activities including organization of the "Sailugemskii" NP effective work, ecological tourism and other small business development, elaboration of the incentives scheme for local herders for for protection of snow leopards.

*Russia*

## Snares in the snow leopard habitats in the Sayano-Shushenskiy Reserve are not found. That's the result of the 3-years stiff fight of the "Irbis" rangers against illegal snaring

These encouraging results were received during the raids supported by WWF in the snow leopard habitats in October – December



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© SAYANO-SHUSHENSKIY RESERVE

- The south part of the Sayano-Shushenskiy Reserve and its' buffer zone are the only places in the Krasnoyarsk region where snow leopards still live, - says Michael Paltsyn, senior project coordinator of the Altai-Sayan Ecoregional Office, WWF Russia. - This is the northernmost population of the snow leopard among the other known sustainable populations. Over the last 8 years the number of snow leopards here remains constant – 8-9 animals. And the effective work of the "Irbis" rangers and the fight with the illegal snaring on the protected area play the key role in such situation.

In October – December 3 groups of inspectors patrolled the vast areas of the Reserve and its' buffer zone and drew encouraging conclusions – there were no poachers' traces and no evidences of the hunting on the protected area. There were no hunters' traces even in the found poachers' hut in the Chumurlu stow. Instead there were a lot of traces of the musk deer, red deer, wolves, elks, sables and other animals. The inspectors also found traces of two snow leopards!

In addition the researchers of the Reserve working at the same places definitely noted that there were almost no snares, and due to this fact the populations of the musk deer and lynx increased significantly.

The effective work of the "Irbis" rangers allowed to reduce the number of the snares in the snow leopard habitats in 2011-2012 by 3,5 times as compared to the 2008. And at this season the snares haven't been found at all.

- We think this is the great result of the 3-years intensive fight with snaring in the Sayano-Shushenskiy Reserve, - comments Michael Paltsyn. - Probably, it's just a lull. But we hope that the nowadays situation can lead to the growth of the snow leopard population, because the absence of the killing snares is the main factor of the rare cat survivor. [Russia](#)

## Joint patrolling of Irves-3 and Irves-5 teams



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Inspector Sh. Gantulga, the leader of mobile anti-poaching unit Irves-3 is satisfied with his work. Being the resident of the western provinces e.g. Altai-Sayan Mongolian part, he worked in the other part of the country e.g. in the headwaters of Amur-Heilong. This joint patrolling with Irves-5 team took place in October 2012 throughout the territories of Dornod, Khentii and Sukhbaatar provinces. They have detected 18 cases of illegal logging and imposed fines.

- Depending on their natural resources, the illegal activities of the eastern provinces is fairly different from my home place, - highlighted inspector Sh. Gantulga. - The dominant cases are illegal logging and poaching. For us, this was an exciting opportunity that enhanced the co-operation between two teams and enriched our knowledge and experience. [Mongolia](#)

## WWF starts snow leopard monitoring in the Buryat Republic

**This winter the scientists of Irkutsk Agricultural Academy will observe the potential snow leopard habitats on the Tunkinskie Goltsy range, Eastern Sayan Mountains**

WWF plans to clarify the distribution and the number of snow leopards on the territory of Buryat Republic along the border with Mongolia. It's also planned to estimate the number of the leopard's prey species (Siberian mountain goat, musk deer, Altai snowcock etc.) and to collect information about threats for snow leopard in this area. The field investigations have to result in the recommendations for the snow leopard conservation on the Tunkinskie Goltsy range.

WWF presumes that a sustainable group of snow leopards could inhabit the Tunkinskie Goltsy - big mountainous area in Eastern Sayan. Snow leopard were filmed twice in this area by camera-traps in 2012/ First photos of the leopards were received in February, and the last – in July.

*- Regular researches on the Tunkinskie Goltsy range and on other ranges of the Eastern Sayan will let us estimate the value of this huge and hard-to-reach territory for the snow leopard conservation in Russia, - says Michael*



© SNOW LEOPARD STUDY AND CONSERVATION CENTER (IRKUTSK)

Paltsyn, senior project coordinator of the Altai-Sayan Ecoregional Office, WWF Russia. *–Probably, this enormous area has considerable snow leopard population.*

The local scientists with the WWF support will try to find out if this is true or not. [Russia](#)

## Illegal wildlife trade of Saiga horns discussed

WWF Mongolia has accomplished a small grant project, titled “Building capacity for preventing transboundary trade of Saiga derivatives in the Western parts of Mongolia and China” funded by the SCA-USFWS. The objectives of the project were to establish China-Mongolia contact for wildlife trade by expanding cooperation with governmental agencies; build capacity of customs inspectors and staffs at priority border points for effective control saiga derivatives illegal trade and increase public knowledge on international and national legal frameworks concerning Saiga and its derivatives. Following the decisions of joint coordination meeting, held in March 2012, CITES MA China and Mongolia and WWF Mongolia has worked on the draft MoU on the conservation and management activities of the Saiga antelope with one year work program. The MoU between the Ministry of Environment and Green development of Mongolia and Ministry of

Environment of China took place late December 2012 at the joint government meeting. So, the first initiative and contact started between CITES MA of both countries in a common understanding and it is led to governmental agreement on the future collaboration in environmental fields to strengthen control of export/import of wildlife related products, building capacity for related officers who are working in the hot lines. Within the second objective, a working group has been established for the joint training for rangers, inspectors, and border and customs officers of two countries who are working close to project location. WWF Mongolia with the CITES MA of Mongolia and China organized training in Urumqi, China in November 2012. More than 40 law enforcement officers participated in the training and success of this training will be monitored, e.g. by comparing the number of discovered illegal activities between now and 12 months

later. It was suggested that China and Mongolia shall cooperate in efforts and activities in facilitating the legal wildlife trade and curbing the illegal trade in endangered species, as identified in the areas, within their respective purview and in accordance with their respective applicable national laws and regulations. [Mongolia](#)



**CITES MA of Mongolia and China**

## The Mongolian Saiga – our pride, the only on the Earth

Information is very powerful tool. If conveyed right messages to right target audiences using right communication tools, tangible results could be achieved. Indeed, wrong information leads to wrong perceptions entailing negative impacts. This is especially true for communicating environmental and wildlife conservation. Therefore, the saiga rangers agreed to undertake integrated advocacy campaigns throughout the Saiga range under the slogan “The Saiga – our pride, the only on the Earth”. This would also contribute to the global campaign to



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**Saiga rangers**

### “See how we can do”

Within the Saiga conservation project, WWF Mongolia motivates Saiga rangers to carry out public outreach activities on quarterly basis with the purpose to improve communication skills, provide platform for experience sharing and enhance their cooperation. The quarterly meeting has been organized in Bayan-Uul soum of Gobi-Altai province and along the meeting, an event “See how we can do” jointly with local governor’s office and Environment and sustainable development unit of the soum. Three teams of Shargiin Gobi, Khuisiin Gobi and Durgun valley were given assignments to name plants that grow in their places, recognize wild animals’ map, excrements, compete for their legal knowledge, provide explanations for some of ecological processes. Moreover, the rangers competed for their communications skills, physical capacity, and skills to use GPS device. This competitiveness made the meeting not only interesting, but also informative and fun.

*- Scaring cold winter with heavy snow falls welcomed us at Bayan-Uul on 17<sup>th</sup> December, - recalls Altantsetseg, the communications officer of Altai-Sayan field office. - The electricity coming from the Taishir HPP was cut off and in the complete darkness I thought Wow this is where we see a real winter with possible dzud, the natural disaster. Despite all those challenges, we could make the best out of this thanks to dedication and preparedness of our rangers. They have proven themselves as the best military servants, researchers, teachers, environmentalists, legal advisors, Santa Klaus, snow-maiden, wild animals, and amazing performers in this event.*

fight against illegal wildlife trade. Existing information boards were improved and two new boards were erected with information about ecological and economical assessment of Saiga antelope, fines and liabilities in case of poaching and trade. In addition, on the crossroad to the western state boundary, on the way to Takeshkin, in the place called Namiin, a big board was erected to reach potential smugglers giving them information on legal liabilities. The saiga rangers have also initiated and carried out number of advocacy campaigns.



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**Winning team**

Altantsetseg continued:

*- In those two busy days, I think the most difficult assignment for our rangers was to act as teacher and give lecture. We can cite many fun stories happened these days. For example, the assignment was about to tell the story of Saiga calf following the cognitive book “Sovin”, produced by our former press officer Delgermaa for the pupil of 4<sup>th</sup> grade of general secondary school. But, the kids said they have already read that book so there’s no need for teacher talk about the story. The teacher-ranger, a bit frustrated, said “well then I have nothing to say.*

The team of Shargiin Gobi was rated as best and been rewarded with G-Mobile cellular phones. The importance of such meeting is to make understand that “a ranger” is not a person who does only talk about laws, impose fines and liabilities, fear the people, but this is someone who plays a significant role in educating people, connecting people and linking nature and environment with its people for a better world. We deem important that this kind of gathering makes a great contribution for rangers themselves to break the ice of communicating with wide range of people with different beliefs and perceptions.

A nested purpose of this event was to create knowledge and build positive attitude of local residents to contribute to nature conservation. Therefore, our rangers have invited locals and young people to raise awareness on different issues such as “Nature conservation and human development”, “Pasture use”, and “Human-wildlife relations” through giving presentations and providing platform for discussion. The Nomadic Nature Trunk has also been used as advocacy tool for better understanding of some of the aforementioned issues. [Mongolia](#)

# Transboundary cooperation

## Altai Argali census demonstrates the growth of wild sheep in the trans-boundary area of Russia and Mongolia

Argali census supported by WWF Russia and WWF Mongolia was held from October, 15th till November, 7th. During this time almost all habitats of the Altai argali in border zone of Russia and Mongolia were observed.



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© SERGEI SPITSYN

Four groups of specialists consisted of the Russian and Mongolian scientists worked simultaneously along the Russian-Mongolian border to count argali groups. In result 1948 animals were counted (427 – in Russia, 1521 – in Mongolia). In the Russian part the animals were mainly distributed on the Sailugem and Chikhacheva ranges (270 and 150 individuals respectively). In Mongolia 427 Altai sheep were calculated on the Sailugem area, and 1049 argali – on the foot-hills of the Mongun-Taiga Mountain.

Argali census in the Altai-Sayan ecoregion is held on regular basis since 2003. Data received gives evidence of the sustainable growth of the population in the trans-boundary area of Russia and Mongolia which, appearingly, is a result of the Mongolian conservation staff activities. There are 3 national parks located in the key argali habitats on the Mongolian territory along the border with Russia, and PR campaigns with local communities and established protection of the argali habitats in cooperation with border guards allowed to reduce poaching.

In Russia the situation with the argali habitat protection is much worse than in Mongolia. In 2010 a Government edict on the creation of the national park “Sailugemskii”

in the Altai Republic was issued. The park is located in the habitats of largest argali population in Russia, but it still doesn't have staff and government funding. Wildlife Protection Agencies in the Altai and Tyva Republics can't ensure effective protection for argali because of the extremely limited budgets and lack of professional staff. And the Border Service seems not to take seriously its' duties on the endangered species protection. Can Russia ensure effective protection for argali and its' habitat in the trans-boundary area in nearest years?

- *First of all, it's necessary to increase the budget and the staff of the regional Wildlife Protection Agencies in the Altai and Tyva Republics,* - says Michael Paltsyn, senior project coordinator of the Altai-Sayan ecoregional office, WWF Russia. – *Next, it's important to strengthen the Border Service's work in combatting poaching in the Russian border zone where except of argali such endangered species like snow leopard and saker falcon live. And, of course, it's crucially important to organize the “Sailugemskii” NP's conservation activities. Now it is only “paper hark”.* **Russia**

**See “Breaking News” on page 1**

# Community Development

## WWF and Citi Foundation joint project in Altai: small business obviously helps to biodiversity conservation!

In October WWF experts visited Ongudai and Kosh-Agach districts of the Altai Republic where they had meetings with the beginning entrepreneurs who organized their own business in the framework of “Land of Snow Leopard” Homestay

### **Program**

First meetings were held in the villages of Inya rural district. The unemployment rate is very high there: for example, there are 219 residents in the Malyi Yaloman village, and only about a dozen of official jobs. To survive people rely on livestock and poaching, including snaring dangerous for snow leopard. From the other hand this area has beautiful landscapes and nice climate, attractive for visitors. Such situation leads one to think about the tourism development as alternative to poaching because this field has great opportunities here.

Olesya Torlomoeva from the Inya village is going to develop vegetable farm to supply the tourists and locals with fresh vegetables: she has already spent granted by WWF and City Foundation money to buy a greenhouse.

Next meetings were held in the Novyi Beltyr village – this place was the epicenter of the earthquake in 2003.

Today many tourist groups come here, and the local entrepreneurs can organize interesting excursions for them and sell local handicrafts. For example, Alena Surunova,

teacher, is going to open a visitors-center in the Staryi Beltyr (village partly destroyed by the earthquake) – there the tourists will be able to see videos and to rent needed equipment.

During the held meetings the entrepreneurs made some sensible suggestions, for example, they opened a question about the creation of a felt-making community for local women. They also would like to learn how to work with the Internet – for many villagers the world wide web remains over their heads.

*- We should say that the changes concerning the small business development in the Ongudai and Kosh-Agach districts are obvious, - says Elena Repetunova, project coordinator of the Altai-Sayan ecoregional office, WWF Russia. – We saw “green” houses, visitors-centers and other small enterprises. Further it’s necessary to create optimal conditions for the tourists including the right cost - quality ratio and the organization and of the appropriate infrastructure.*

According to the WWF experts, the number of poaching cases on the territory of the Program implementation decreased by 20% in comparison with the 2010 data.



## The entrepreneurs' stories:

Lubov' Beletova from Malyi Yaloman village is building a guest home with steam bath and an "ail" (traditional Altai wooden house) with swimming-pool. - *The number of tourists grows constantly in our region.*

*I just wanted to do something to offer people a civil rest – comfortable overnight stops, for example. If the tourists stay at our guest house, we can take away the garbage after them, and the river shores and our mountains will remain clean, - says Lubov' Beletova.*

Today she is also ready to offer tourists the horse-riding and interesting excursions dedicated to the Altai unique places. Further she plans to develop the rural tourism – to invite tourists for milking the cows and for making hay.



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© GALINA MIRONOVA

Oksana Baidanova, Marina and Michail Bokchukov from Iodro-village breed horses – they also offer tourists horse-riding and excursions. This summer they have already had tourists from Moscow and Saint-Peterburg.

Nina Konstantinova from Kokorya-village has been working with felt for 3 years already (before she was unemployed). She spent granted money to buy a special sewing machine – now she sells yurts made of felt to the tourist camping's owners. She also gives work to 2 fellow villagers.

Andrey Sapo from Kurai-village is building not just a "green" house but the whole complex with the accommodations, children's playground and visitors-center.

All these stories demonstrate that people in the Altai are becoming less dependent on poaching and nature resources exploitation as a source of income and are turning to the alternative sources of income. *Russia*

## Pasture information system to be integrated in Saiga range soums of Gobi-Altai and Khovd provinces

WWF Mongolia sees the sustainable use of grassland as one of the efficient ways to improve wildlife habitat. Therefore, it closely cooperates with local administrations and herders on developing and implementing sound pasture management policies. One of the good examples is "Pasture management program of Gobi-Altai province" which has been approved by the Citizen Representatives Khural of the province.

Within its strategy to apply community-based nature resource management, WWF-Mongolia supports the province to create GIS database for pasture and build capacity for their proper use. In this line, pasture database training was conducted for 29 participants including land officers and pasture specialists of the soums of Gobi-Altai and Khovd provinces last December 2012. The main purpose of this activity was to train the specialists on how to create an integrated database of all information related to pasture such as plants, their yearly conditions, usage, number of livestock, carrying capacity and make use out of this information for sustainable pasture management in the future. Theoretical knowledge was built for the participatory photo monitoring methodology and legal



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### GIS training

aspects of pasture use relations. Some practical classes for effective land use were also undertaken for exploiting GPS, working online and using Google Earth program "One or two trainings are not enough to reach definite results. More advanced trainings and more efficient facilities are needed" mentioned trainees. *Mongolia*

# Green Economy

## China gets the profits, and the Yenisei River gets the runoff?



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**WWF Russia is concerned about the Chinese company Lunsin LLC's plans to build an ore enrichment and processing plant in the Tyva Republic. WWF has proposed that the Government of the Tyva Republic set up an advisory council to oversee the construction and management of the plant. The plant will be located at the source of the Yenisei River, where it could potentially cause environmental damages not only in Tyva but also downstream in the Khakasia and Krasnoyarsk regions.**

The Kyzyl-Tashtyg complex ore deposit, which also contains, gold and silver, is located 240 km from Kyzyl, the capital of Tyva. In 2006 Lunsin LLC, part of the largest Chinese mining corporation "Zijin Mining Group," won a tender for complex ore development there. The proposal stipulates the construction of an open mine for ore extraction and building of the ore enrichment and processing plant. According to information from the company's management, investments in this facility are \$129 million. Another \$97 million will be invested before 2014.

Lunsin LLC plans to produce zinc, lead, and copper concentrates for further export to China. The construction of the ore plant is being carried on by Chinese workers – at present the number of workers exceeds twice the original plans (1000 instead of 500). This fact is a worry for regional authorities because it's one of the first precedents when the development and running of a deposit in Russia is totally carried out by a Chinese company using a Chinese labor force. According to Eugene Simonov, the coordinator for the "Rivers without Borders" project, this is the way 90% of Chinese commodity-driven business abroad works:

*- The main goal of the official policy is to provide in-flow for Chinese economic development. Projects in Russia differ little from schemes throughout the world from Mongolia to Australia, - says Simonov. – By the way, the "Zijin Mining Group" has a reputation of large-scale poisonings of local people and conflicts both in China and abroad.*

The Kyzyl-Tashtyg mineral deposit is located in the midst of a cedar taiga forest on the shores of the Ak-Khem River, which is a tributary of Greater Yenisei (Bii-Khem). The last confluence with Kaa-Khem near Kyzyl and forms the Yenisei – one of the biggest rivers in the world. Unfortunately, today hundreds of hectares of the cedar forest have already been destroyed, and a 175-m deep open pit has formed on its place. Debris, household rubbish, and other garbage are simply buried on-site, and drainage issues are not yet resolved. Some estimates say that following the plant's start-up, about 500 cubic meters of untreated sewage will be dumped daily into the Ak-Khem River (or 182.5 thousand tons a year). This could potentially lead to the growth of enteric and other infections among local people and to the reduction of fish resources.

WWF Russia and other ecological NGOs claim that the delay in the construction of treatment facilities as compared to the construction of the plant is the greatest cause for worry. The public Prosecutor's office of the Tyva Republic also unveiled some violations in the ore enrichment and processing plant project: as of August 2011, 11 administrative cases were initiated against Lunsin LLC. The total amount of the fine is trifling compared to the investments – about \$20,000, which was paid by the company. It is estimated that mitigation for damages to the natural environment will total about \$5 million (only 4% of that which has already been already invested).

*- As a result, the Chinese enterprise Lunsin LLC stands to make enormous gains, Chinese industry will receive the metals it needs, and it seems that Russia will only receive the cost of the license and innumerable damages in the form of water pollution in the Yenisei, logged cedar forests, unsightly open mines, and destroyed ecosystems, - says Alexei Knizhnikov, WWF Russia Oil and Gas program coordinator.*

*Russia*

# Water Conservation

## Hydrological study for Buyant river completed

Within water conservation work in the Altai-Sayan, WWF Mongolia works toward applying integrated water resource management in Buyant River basin. With financial aid from the Swiss Development Cooperation, a hydrological study has been executed involving 3 components: 1. Setting up a water balance for river basin to provide general understanding of the hydrology of the river basin; 2. Developing a hydrological model (HBV) for the complete river basin to reproduce the observed hydrographs in the river basin and simulate the impact of climate change on river discharge; 3. Developing a hydraulic model (SOBEK) to simulate water allocation over the different river branches of downstream Buyant River and irrigation canals in the delta, and show the impact of restructuring the irrigation network on water efficiency for the crop fields and environmental flow in the Buyant River.

As this work came to its end, the findings and outcomes were presented in Khovd town during 2-day closing meeting, 21-22 December 2012. Reporting was done for the successes and lessons learned for the land use works, operations of 395 ha irrigation system, and

the results from the hydrological studies. Discussions were held to integrate findings into the updated integrated water resource management plan.

This enables scientific-based conservation and adequate use of Buyant river waters. The use of those findings and models is crucial for long-term sustainable use of Buyant waters.

The fourth meeting of Khovd, Buyant river basin council has been held on the second day. Newly approved amendment to the law of water has been introduced with special focus on duties and responsibilities, by-laws of river basin administration and council, and some conceptual changes within new amendment. In addition, the council members reported on their activities and have discussed their successes and failures, and future interventions. Recommendations were developed for integrating in the updated IWRM plan based on the achievements and lessons learned and handed over to the relevant national authorities.

*Mongolia*



**Buyant river delta**

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## “20-year old Panda” paid visit to Khovd province

The celebration of WWF-Mongolia’s 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in the Altai-Sayan Mongolia part, was not only an event to celebrate an anniversary, but also an opportunity to look back and think about our successes and failures, our wins and losses and set firm objectives for the future. Mini exhibition of best photos taken by WWF-Mongolia’s staff has been exposed for the public during a week, attracting many visitors, including children. Small contests were organized for kids such as drawing contest “the most beautiful panda” and the winners were rewarded with books produced by this office.



**Panda through kids’ eyes**

### In brief:

- WWF-Mongolia gave birth to a documentary film, titled “Argali”. After months of tremendous efforts, extensive field trips, and work with the best professionals, this film could be seen as one of the best documentaries about animal in the country. The film talks not only about the Argali sheep’s biological and ecological values, but also tries to draw attention of new decision makers to the pressing issues of trophy hunting in the country. The film builds awareness of benefit of coming together as CBO and get ownership of natural resources, that results in sustainable growth of Argali sheep in the Gulzat LPA in the Altai-Sayan part of Mongolia. The film was aired two times through the Mongolian National Broadcaster.
- The Khukhmorit soum of Gobi-Altai province witnesses the most severe desertification problem in the country being located on the edge of Great Mongol sand dunes.



**Panda in Khovd**

However, the eco club “Ireedui” of has set an objective to become the healthiest and most “green” institution within their school premises. They decided to start with planting indoor plants.

- The “Environment and sustainable development” unit of Khukhmorit soum of Gobi-Altai province has initiated a training titled “Environment-friendly lifestyle” involving kids from each grade of general secondary school of their place and a contest named “Love Monther eath” among the secondary level students last November 2012.
- “Future masters of twin Altai” eco club members of Chandmani soum, Khovd province carried out a campaign within the school to have eco code and eco slogan for each classroom.

### Mongolia

	<b>Why we are here</b> To stop the degradation of the planets’ nature environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature
	mongolia.panda.org
	www.wwf.ru/altay

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