

**Meeting Report of the Expert Group Meeting on the NEASPEC Project,
“Study on Transborder Movement of Amur Tigers and Leopards using
Camera Trapping and Molecular Genetic Analysis”**

15-16 April 2014, Incheon, Republic of Korea

1. The NEASPEC Secretariat organized the Expert Group Meeting (EGM) of the Project, “Study on transborder movement of Amur tigers and leopards using camera trapping and molecular genetic analysis” on 15-16 April 2014 in Incheon, Republic of Korea (ROK). The EGM reviewed existing experience on camera trapping and molecular genetic analysis techniques related to conservation efforts on Amur tigers and leopards, discussed scientific and technical approaches for the Project, and agreed on a project work plan that includes more efficient use of camera trapping, molecular genetic analysis techniques, joint field survey and sharing of knowledge on these matters between China, the ROK and the Russian Federation.
2. The Meeting reviewed the protection status, population size, monitoring actions and genetic molecular analysis results of Amur tigers and Amur leopards in each member State, as well as scientific and policy constraints in the conservation of the animals.
3. **[Camera Trapping]** The Meeting agreed that as the current camera trapping scheme is sufficient for providing the baseline information to support molecular genetic analysis, the Project will utilize results from the existing scheme. In this connection, the Land of the Leopard National Park and Heilongjiang Wildlife Institute will be responsible for compiling camera trapping data in the Russia Federation (the Park) and China (Heilongjiang and Hunchun), respectively.
4. **[Molecular Genetic Analysis]** The Meeting agreed that China and the Russian Federation will coordinate the schedule and methodology of fecal sample collection before November 2014, and simultaneously carry out the work in their respective areas from late November 2014 to early March 2015. Fecal samples will be collected by the Land of the Leopard National Park in the Russian Federation and Feline Research Center (FRC) in China. Collected samples will be preserved at low temperature *in situ* and DNA extraction will be carried out as soon as possible to minimize the effect of degradation.
5. The Meeting agreed that the Institute of Biology and Soil Science (IBSS) will be responsible for DNA extraction from the Russian samples and these will be shared with FRC for

molecular genetic analysis (the Project) by late May 2015. IBSS will also share DNA extracts with Seoul National University (SNU) of Republic of Korea for research on new methodologies, by late May 2015, to be funded by SNU. FRC will be the leading agency for the analysis of the Russian DNA extracts, and also responsible for extracting and analyzing samples from China. The results of molecular genetic analysis will be delivered to IBSS and the NEASPEC Secretariat by late August 2015.

6. The Meeting agreed that relevant experts available in participating countries including Japan will be utilized as needed.
7. **[Final Report and Policy Recommendation]** The Meeting agreed that World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) will analyze outcomes of camera trapping and molecular genetic analysis in the context of policies and measures for improving transboundary ecological corridors, and formulate the policy recommendations for the project report by October 2015.
8. **[Knowledge Sharing and Capacity Building]** The Meeting agreed that Russian students will be provided the opportunity for training on molecular genetic analysis techniques at SNU and FRC, funded through other sources. The specific arrangement for the visit will be bilaterally discussed among involved institutions taking account of analysis work and the project budget. Korean students will be provided the opportunity to join sample collection and to learn camera trapping in the Russian protected areas including the Land of the Leopard National Park and Hunchun Nature Reserve, funded by SNU.
9. **[Timeframe]** The Meeting reviewed the tentative timeframe prepared by the NEASPEC Secretariat, and revised it as follow:

Timeline	Activity
April 2014	Inception Meeting
April - November 2014	Activity preparation including the bilateral consultation of China and Russia on sample collection
November 2014 - May 2015	Camera trapping and sample collection
	DNA extraction and delivery for analysis
June - August 2015	Molecular genetic analysis
September - October 2015	Final analysis and policy formulation
November 2015	International/concluding workshop to adopt the final report

10. **[Institutional Arrangement]** Under the overall coordination by the NEASPEC Secretariat,

the following institutions will be responsible for carrying out the agreed work.

Project components		Leading agency	Supporting agencies
Camera trapping		Land of the Leopard (RF)	
		Wildlife Research Institute of Heilongjiang Province (China)	Hunchun and Laoyeling Nature Reserves (China)
Molecular genetic analysis		Feline Research Center (China) - samples from both China and Russia	Seoul National University (ROK) - samples from Russia
Joint field study	Sample collection	Land of the Leopard (Russia)	Far Eastern Branch Russian Academy of Sciences
		FRC (China)	Hunchun Nature Reserve
	DNA extraction	IBSS (Russia)	
		FRC (China)	
Final analysis and policy formulation		WWF Russia	

11. Based on the agreed implementation plan and the role of institutions, the NEASPEC Secretariat will prepare the Letter of Agreements with WWF Russia for coordination and implementation of all project components in the Russian Federation, and FRC and Wildlife Research Institute for molecular genetic analysis and field survey, respectively. The Letter of Agreement with SNU will be explored based on the outcome of its consultation with the Chinese and Russian implementing agencies.
12. **[Budgetary matter]** The Meeting agreed that further consultations will be made on the budget based on the following indicative budget and the detailed activity and budget plan by implementing agencies on the project components. The NEASPEC Secretariat will collect the detailed plan and revise the budget plan accordingly. The budget plan shall be finalized by mid-June 2014.

Items	Amounts (in USD)
Inception Meeting/ International workshops	[25,000]
Molecular genetic analysis (including Capacity building)	[50,000]

Joint field study	[20,000]
Miscellaneous	[5,000]
Total Amount	100,000

13. Implementing agencies will make efforts to mobilize additional financial and in-kind contributions from their agencies. In particular, the FRC will seek financial and in-kind contributions for supporting the molecular genetic analysis and ANO-Amur Tiger Center will also seek financial contributions to the visit of Russian students to FRC and SNU.

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