

Concept Note

Workshop on Transboundary Conservation of the Amur tiger and Amur leopard in North-East Asia

29 July 2019, Harbin, China

Background

As a follow-up to the Nature Conservation Strategy¹ adopted by the 12th Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) in 2007, North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation (NEASPEC) implemented projects on “Establishing Coordination Mechanisms for Nature Conservation in Transboundary Areas in North-East Asia (2010-2012)” and “Study on Transborder Movement of Amur Tigers and Leopards using Camera Trapping and Molecular Genetic Analysis (2014-2016)”². The latter project facilitated the first joint comparative study of results from camera trapping and molecular genetic analysis between China and the Russian Federation.

A key outcome of the study was the identification of Amur tigers and leopards crossing the Sino-Russian border, which includes 19 out of 45 Amur tigers and 15 out of 89 Amur leopards captured by cameras; as well as one Amur tiger and one Amur leopard by joint DNA analysis. This result generated new information on the patterns of cross-border movements including the number of encounters in each country, number of border crossings, and maximum distance moved from the border. Recommendations from the study include not only conducting joint activities for habitat assessment, scientific research programme and monitoring methodology, but also establishing transboundary protected areas and transboundary conservation mechanism. The outcomes and recommendations³ were reported to the Workshop on Nature Conservation and Transboundary Cooperation (Beijing, 2016) and SOM-21 (Seoul, 2017); and further discussed at the Consultation meeting (Incheon, 2018) and SOM-22 (Beijing, 2018).

Recommended joint activities support the existing and new commitments to transboundary cooperation. China and the Russian Federation agreed to set up a transborder protected area for the Amur tiger between Jilin Province and its neighboring Primorsky Province in August 2010⁴. The Global Tiger Recovery Program, which was

¹ http://www.neaspec.org/sites/default/files/Publication_SavingNatureConservation_2.pdf

² Key project partners include Feline Research Center of State Forestry Administration (China); WWF-Russia; and Land of the Leopard National Park (Russian Federation)

³ NEASPEC Project Report, “Saving the Amur Tiger and Amur Leopard”, accessible at http://www.neaspec.org/sites/default/files/2018_12_17_UNESCAP_%ED%98%B8%EB%9E%91%EC%9D%B4.pdf

⁴ <https://www.worldwildlife.org/press-releases/russia-and-china-set-up-first-ever-transboundary-protected-area-for-endangered-amur-tigers>

adopted during the 2010 Global Tiger Summit as a strategic plan by the St. Petersburg Declaration, emphasized the importance of transboundary conservation and cooperation in order to double tiger numbers by 2022. In February 2019, the Northeast Tiger and Leopard National Park (China) and the Land of the Leopard National Park (Russian Federation) signed a Memorandum of Understanding for closer transboundary cooperation. However, no specific activities for realizing such initiatives have been started yet.

In this regard, this workshop aims for effectively responding to the needs for strengthening information exchange and establishing a cooperation mechanism. Celebrating the International Tiger Day, the workshop is organized in conjunction with 2019 International Symposium on Tiger and Leopard Conservation and aims to develop a tentatively named "Harbin Consensus on transboundary conservation of the Amur tiger and leopard" with the launching of an ad-hoc working group for cross-border cooperation.

Objectives

- To review the latest information on conservation policies and activities for the Amur tiger and leopard, as well as related challenges and barriers
- To discuss a follow-up NEASPEC project focusing on scientific study and cooperation
- To reach consensus on transboundary conservation arrangements for the concerned species in support of achieving SDG15 (Life on Land)

Expected outcomes

- Harbin Consensus on transboundary conservation of the Amur tiger and leopard
- Establishment of an ad-hoc working group
- Project plan for 2020 theme study

Organizers

- North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation (NEASPEC)
- National Forestry and Grassland Administration, China

Provisional Programme

| | |
|---------------|---|
| 8:30 – 9:00 | Registration |
| 9:00 – 9:20 | <i>Opening Session</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Opening Remark (NEASPEC)• Welcoming Remarks (NFGA and/or local host)• Introduction to the Workshop (NEASPEC Secretariat) Group photo |
| 9:20 – 10:50 | <i>Session 1-1: Progress review on conservation activities for the Amur tiger and leopard</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Latest information covering issues such as field monitoring, scientific methodology, human-animal conflict, disease monitoring, habitat management and cross-border movement</i> |
| 10:50 – 11:10 | Coffee break |
| 11:00 – 12:40 | <i>Session 2: Recent progress towards transboundary conservation for the Amur tiger and leopard in North-East Asia</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>National and international plans and activities for the conservation of Amur tigers and leopards</i>• <i>Current approaches and practices</i>• <i>Achievement and challenges</i> |
| 12:40 – 14:00 | Lunch |
| 14:00 – 15:30 | <i>Session 3: Ways forward</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Harbin Consensus on transboundary conservation of the Amur tiger and leopard (draft to be circulated in advance)</i>• <i>2020 theme study and its plan</i>• <i>2020 workshop plan</i> |
| 15:30 – 15:50 | Coffee break |
| 15:50 – 17:30 | <i>Session 3: Ways forward (cont.)</i> |
| 17:30 - | <i>Conclusion</i> |