

The background of the entire page is a colorful, painterly illustration of a tiger resting on a thick, brown tree branch. The tiger has orange fur with black stripes and white spots. The forest is covered in snow, with white snowflakes falling from a pink and blue sky. The trees are dark green and black, also covered in snow. The overall style is artistic and vibrant.

**Securing a Future for Amur Leopards  
and Tigers in Russia – VI  
2018 Final Report**

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Photo credits: PRNCO “Tiger “Centre”, Far Eastern Operational Customs Office, Land of the Leopard National Park, Alexander Ratnikov, and children's paintings by Marina Kide, Elizabeth Suzdaltseva, Kristina Marienko, and Nastya Ivannik.



## Background

The southern Russian Far East (RFE) is home to some of the rarest animals and plants on Earth. As many as 100 terrestrial endangered species live here, meaning that 30% of all endangered species in Russia are concentrated in only 1% of the country's vast territory. Up to 48 of these species (15% of all endangered species in Russia) occur nowhere else. This region is home to the Amur tiger (*Panthera tigris altaica*), also known as Siberian tiger, and to the Amur leopard (*Panthera pardus orientalis*), the northern-most of the nine subspecies. Amur leopards and tigers are at the top of the food chain. Conservation of these two umbrella species ultimately requires conservation of the forest ecosystem as a whole. Population size of these animals is an important metric by which conservation action can be measured.

There were times when hunting, poaching, logging and other negative factors drove both Amur tigers and Amur leopards to the brink of extinction. In the 1940s, there were no more than 40 Amur tigers in the wild. In regards to the Amur leopard population, surveys conducted in 2000 revealed that only about 30 of these critically endangered big cats remained in the forests of southeastern Russia. At the eleventh hour these wild big cats were pulled back from the brink of extinction. Conservation efforts with government support have managed to increase their numbers.

According to the 2015 full-range Amur tiger count, about 523-540 Amur tigers are alive today in RFE, compared to 423-502 individuals in 2005. In 2018, Land of the Leopard National Park announced that the population of Amur leopards within its borders has increased to 84 adults and 19 cubs. This is a dramatic increase over the 57 leopards counted in the national park in 2015 and the first time in decades that the Amur leopard population has exceeded 100 animals. The upward trend in the Amur leopard and Amur tiger populations is very encouraging.

But despite sustained conservation efforts over recent years and encouraging recent monitoring results, the big cats still remain at risk due to poaching, logging, forest fires, and prey depletion. Every year the wild populations of Amur tigers and Amur leopards officially lose up to ten individuals due to poaching and other reasons, including collisions with vehicles. According to official statistics published by government agencies and trusted sources, in 2018 the population of Amur tigers reportedly lost six individuals. Also, a huge number of skins, bones and derivatives belonging to about 45 Amur tigers that were killed in different years, were seized in 2018. Brief description of these cases can be found in Attachment I.



## Project Summary

The project is being implemented in the range of the Amur tiger and leopard in Russia. The goal of the project is to stabilize and eventually increase Amur tiger and leopard populations through anti-poaching and environmental education activities. The project's objectives are:



- 1) to reduce poaching of Amur tigers, Amur leopards, and their prey species and improve protection of their habitat;
- 2) to improve law enforcement efforts within five federal-level protected areas;
- 3) and to raise people's awareness about the state of Amur tiger and Amur leopard populations and involve the public in nature conservation actions.

To conserve the Amur tiger, Amur leopard and prey populations the project aims to improve anti-poaching efforts and habitat protection in Primorsky

and Khabarovsk krais. We selected five protected areas, tiger "source" sites, as a basis for population recovery and intend to improve protection there. With successful introduction of SMART, a tool for monitoring and adaptive management of law enforcement, anti-poaching effectiveness should improve in these key protected areas and this, in turn, should lead to reduced poaching levels and increased reproduction and survival rates of Amur tigers, leopards and their prey species, which will ultimately result in an increase in populations both inside and outside the protected areas.



In addition, the project includes a number of education and outreach activities aimed at raising public awareness about the current state of big cats and the importance of their conservation. Our target audience is mostly made up of schoolchildren ranging in age between 6 and 17 and their parents. Also, Phoenix held an annual art contest for children, to promote care and respect for the Amur tiger and Amur leopard at a young age; an annual workshop aimed at increasing the level of teachers' knowledge and professional skills; and Tiger Day Festival, which was celebrated in September, to educate local communities about the importance of tiger conservation and wildlife conservation issues.

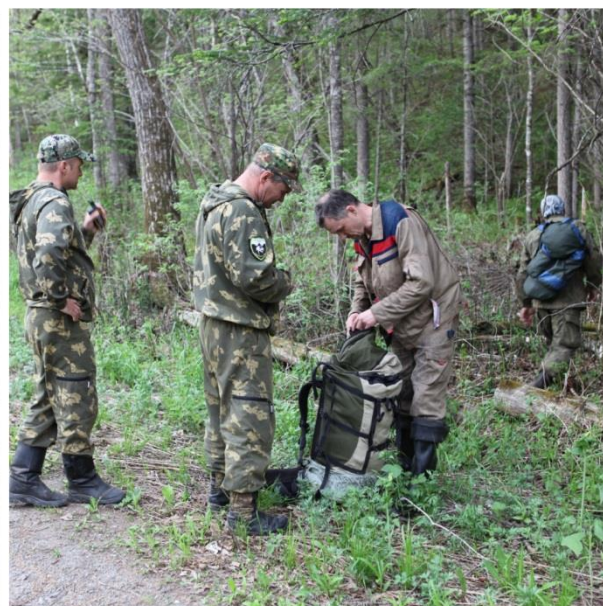
We strongly believe that combined efforts of the environmental law enforcement teams and continuous education and outreach will ensure protection of big cats and their habitat. Here, in our Final Report, we bring you highlights of Phoenix's efforts taken in 2018 to ensure a future for the Amur tigers and leopards in the Russian Far East.



## Project Activities

### SMART in five protected areas

Well-run protected areas are a safety zone for the Amur tiger and other wildlife populations, but with limited resources and lack of monitoring, conservation management is challenging. In most PAs, systems to assess threats, monitor performance, and evaluate success and failures were largely absent before MIST/SMART introduction. The Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART) is a tool for measuring, evaluating and improving the effectiveness of anti-poaching patrols and site-based conservation activities, and has already had a significant impact in a number of Amur tiger conservation sites. Overall, Phoenix, WCS and ZSL have jointly introduced SMART to seven sites in the Russian Far East.



With the support from the WildCats Conservation Alliance (formerly Amur Leopard and Tiger Alliance), Phoenix and its partners have had considerable success in implementing an anti-poaching program of comprehensive law enforcement developed around SMART. The biggest advantage of law enforcement monitoring is the opportunity to measure and compare both efforts (such as kilometers patrolled, patrol days) and results (such as citations). Together these data

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provide a more realistic picture of true poaching pressures, and an accurate portrayal of anti-poaching efforts and successes (or failures, as the case may be). This data-driven approach allows managers to see how their effort has been allocated across management units, and where violations are most prevalent, thereby allowing rapid and efficient reallocation of law enforcement efforts to target areas. It also provides a means of identifying problem staff, and addressing those problems using exact and specific information gleaned from the SMART law enforcement monitoring database. Within the framework of this project, we selected five protected areas, tiger “source” sites, as a basis for population recovery and intend to improve tiger protection there. Protected areas are the foundation of holistic biodiversity conservation strategies, but due to direct threats, such as wildlife poaching, they are on the frontlines of efforts to conserve their fauna and flora. In order to adapt and respond effectively to these threats, Phoenix and its partners rolled out SMART in these five protected areas: providing their managers and staff much needed support, including the tools enabling them to collect information on where threats are occurring and the capacity to address them quickly.

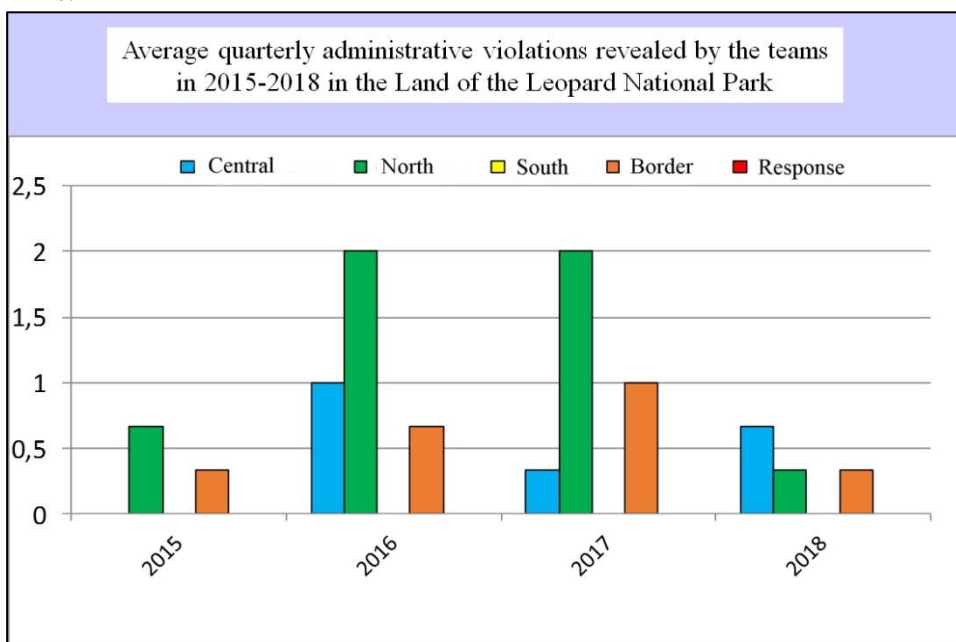
Violations revealed in protected areas in 2018						
	Sikhote-Alin NR	Ussuriisky NR	Lazovsky NR and Zov Tigra NP	Anyuisky NP	Kedrovay Pad NR and Land of Leopard NP	Bikin NP
Violations revealed	66	25	53	215	107	53
Citations issued for violations, including:	66	25	53	208	107	53
Illegal hunting	1	2		8	6	6
Illegal fishing		5		11	2	
Illegal logging			1			
Illegal gathering of wild plants		10	2			
Violation of fire safety rules	2			7		4
Pollution of natural habitat						
Unauthorized presence	63	8	50	168	99	41
Other violations				21		2
Confiscated:						
Rifled guns				1		1
Smoothbore guns	1			5	5	2
Traps						5
Other devices				3 snares		2 snares
Illegally captured or killed wildlife:						
Mammals				2		4
Birds						
Fish				60 kg		
Other						
Administrative fines imposed (Rubles):	204000	91000	171000	664300	330000	119000
Amount demanded in the claim (Rubles)				36000		510000
Materials passed to law enforcement agencies				9	8	5
Criminal proceedings initiated			1	3	8	5

In 2018, Phoenix focused on the following five PAs: United Directorate of the Land of the Leopard National Park and Kedrovaya Pad Nature Reserve, Sikhote-Alin Nature Reserve, Ussuriisky Nature Reserve, and Bikin National Park. As a result of anti-poaching efforts in these five protected areas in 2018 (Anyuisky NP and United Directorate of Lazovsky Nature Reserve and Zov Tigra National Park were not included in calculations), 251 violations were revealed, 13 criminal proceedings were initiated, and nine rifles were seized. We are glad to report that far fewer serious violations, such as illegal hunting or fishing, were revealed in the protected areas

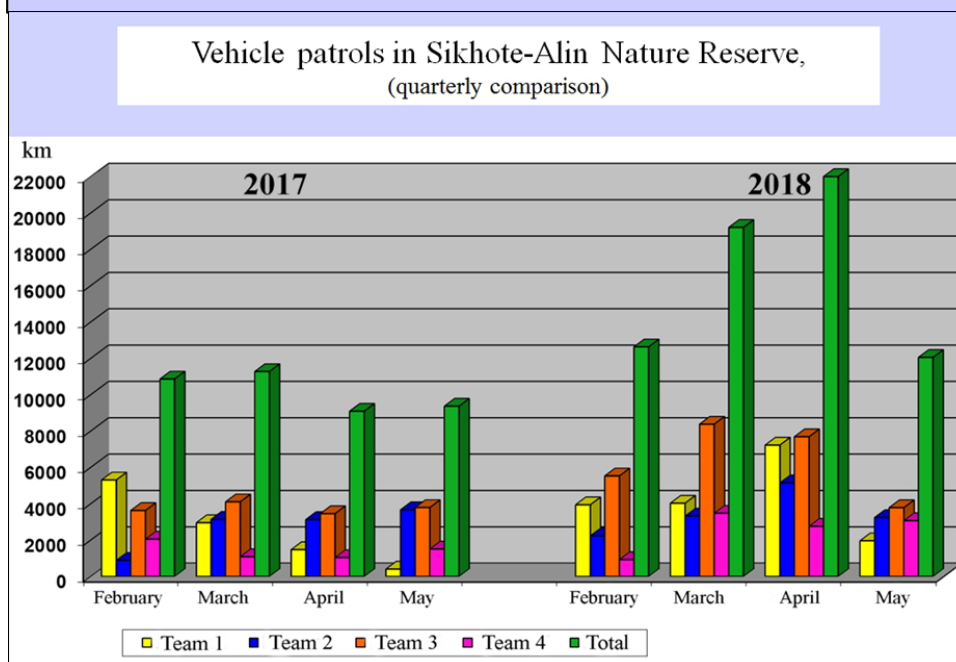


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during the 12-month period. Unauthorized presence was the most common violation occurring in PAs.



Overall patrol quality at existing sites remains good and we witness a continuing diminishing dependency on technical and management assistance from us. The growth of patrol efforts seems to be levelling off at most of our SMART sites. Eight SMART feedback meetings were held for the law enforcement staff and PA managers.



In order to motivate rangers to work with SMART, we continue using a bonus system. Patrol teams are given specific patrol targets which reflect the priorities identified at the latest patrol review meeting. For example, this may be to increase intensity of

patrolling in a particular part of the reserve, or to conduct a certain number of night patrols. If they meet the targets, inspectors receive bonuses, which may be paid to the team or individual. We also expanded the SMART program to new sites: Annyuisky National Park and Bikin National Park, and the program is progressing exceptionally well.



On December 12-14, a three-day workshop was held at the headquarters of the Land of the Leopard National Park with support from WCS, WWF, and WildCats Conservation Alliance. The goal of the workshop was to disseminate our experience in improving the efficiency of law enforcement efforts through the use of SMART and introduce CyberTracking<sup>1</sup> to representatives of tiger protected areas. The event was attended by the chiefs of security departments and rangers of nature reserves and national parks of the south of the Russian Far East.

One of the key topics of the training was the transition to SMART data collection using mobile phones. Previously rangers had to use GPS trackers to work with SMART and had to fill in paper forms with observations. Now it is possible to record both routes and observations using a smartphone with a special application in the GLONASS<sup>2</sup>. This application allows registering violations, animal observations, and synchronizing smartphones with a common database.



The workshop programme also covered the following topics:

- use of SMART worldwide;
- presentations of SMART work by the PAs of the Russian Far East;
- components of SMART systems for patrol monitoring and management;
- steps in the SMART and CyberTracking design and introduction;
- database management;
- how to produce data on patrol efforts and results from the database.

An important addition to the SMART program is

the expansion of the main monitoring indicators. In addition to registering violations, CyberTracking with SMART gives an opportunity to anticipate and prevent negative impacts through ongoing long-term monitoring of various aspects of the environment, for example, predator and prey distribution.

We plan to continue assisting the selected PAs in improving use of SMART and in training management staff how to use their patrol teams more effectively.

<sup>1</sup> CyberTracker is a software application for mobile data capture and visualization fully compatible with SMART that allows rangers to collect all sorts of data using smartphones.

<sup>2</sup> GLONASS is an acronym, which stands for Globalnaya Navigazionnaya Sputnikovaya Sistema, or Global Navigation Satellite System. GLONASS is Russia's version of GPS (Global Positioning System).



## Annual workshop for educators

Thanks to financial support from the WildCats Conservation Alliance, David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation and US Fish and Wildlife Service, an annual educational workshop organized by the Phoenix Fund, ANO WCS and Land of the Leopard National Park was held at the Land of the Leopard central compound in Barabash village on March 25-28. Among the workshop participants there were educators, ecologists and protected area specialists – “Ambassadors of Nature” to the world of people. This year, Land of the Leopard National Park welcomed 35 guests from nature reserves, national parks and eco-centres of the southern Russian Far East.

During the workshop, the educators shared their unique developments, interesting interactive elements of educational programs, and learned about new educational methods. Thanks to specialists of the regional social rehabilitation centre for disadvantaged and at-risk children “Sail of Hope”, the workshop participants learned much about psychological aspects of work with children and adults, means of communication with different audiences, and creative components of environmental outreach. Ekaterina Blidchenko, Land of the Leopard research fellow and a zoologist at the PRNCO Tiger Centre delivered a report on day-to-day work and main achievements at the Centre for Rehabilitation and Reintroduction of Tigers and Other Rare Animals located in Alekseevka village. This information will be used by teachers to inform schoolchildren about the role of the rehabilitation centre in conservation of Amur tigers, leopards and other rare animals. Real stories of tigers that were successfully rehabilitated and released back into the wild will hardly leave anyone indifferent towards the fate of these big wild cats. A significant part of the workshop was devoted to the performing arts, in particular the theatre, as an effective tool of work with the community. A class given by a dramatic artist and student of the Far Eastern State Academy of Arts Mikhail Belozеров proved that in order to stage an interesting theatrical performance there is no need to study acting techniques for many years.

The successful union of ecology and theatre was demonstrated by the performance of “Green Whirl” Children’s Eco-Theatre from Vladivostok. The young artists devoted their show to the Amur leopard, tiger and fragile harmony between nature and people. Upon completion of the workshop, the participants were invited to take part in a “Theatre and Ecology” contest in which schoolchildren used their new knowledge to stage ecological performances. As a result, eight eco-performances were submitted for the contest. We hope that the educators will continue using drama lessons to attract children and locals towards ecological problems, taking into account that the year 2019 was declared the Year of Theatre in Russia.



## Education in Khasan, Lazo, Terney and Vladivostok



We recognize that it is the education of the community that will ensure the survival of the Amur tiger and leopard as well as their prey species in the long term. Many damaging human activities often result from ignorance. The majority of people are unaware of the threats to tiger and leopard survival and of other ecological problems of the region. The Phoenix Fund carries out a broad range of ecological education and outreach programs at schools, kindergartens, universities and eco-centres in Primorye. Our goals are to foster a positive attitude towards endangered wildlife and nature conservation in the region's young people and increase their environmental awareness and involvement in conservation activities.

Our main target groups are local villagers, and especially schoolchildren, because it is easier to influence children's mentality than that of adults. Children's appreciation for nature develops at a young age; kids watch and imitate the attitudes and actions of the adults around them towards living things, so we also support educational activities designed for kindergarten children. We also aim to influence adults through the environmental education of their children.

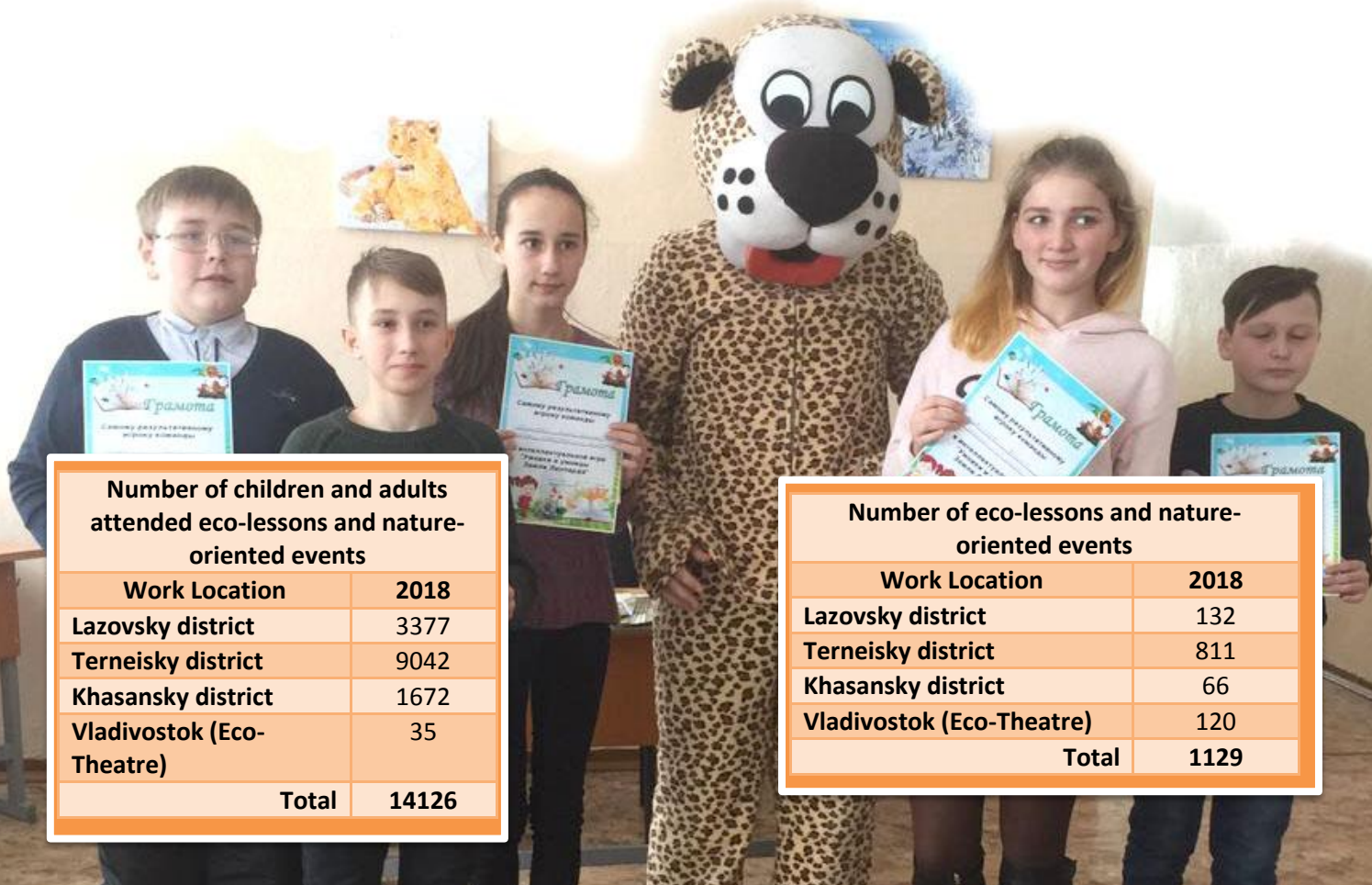
Since 1998, Phoenix has been supporting a number of eco-centres in the region and initiated their creation in some cities. Experienced educators conduct ecological classes, lectures, slide presentations and other activities for children and adults. Every year over 25,000 children attend the eco-classes organized by the Phoenix Fund throughout Primorye. In some schools, senior students collaborate with teachers, and enjoy preparing and giving eco-lessons for junior schoolchildren. During the reported period, thanks to support from the WildCats Conservation Alliance, the Phoenix Fund continued assisting the educators working in three administrative districts of Primorye, namely Lazovsky, Khasansky, and Terneisky, and in Vladivostok city. In all, from January through December 2018, the teachers gave 1,129 lessons and nature-oriented events for 14,126 children.

To help school children and students understand the situation in which tigers and leopards in Russia live, educators supported by the Phoenix Fund used



several teaching methods such as PowerPoint presentations, group discussions, role playing and interactive games at schools, kindergartens and ecological clubs on the current state of the Amur tiger and leopard populations. Children were introduced to the concepts of seasonal changes, life cycles and the basic needs of plants and animals through theatrical performances and hands-on exploration activities and games that promote befriending nature in various natural habitats. In addition to eco-classes at schools and eco-centres, 120 drama lessons were given at the Eco-Theatre and 10 theatrical eco-performances were staged, including: “Princes of the Ussuriiskaya taiga”, “I am Nature!”, “Stories of Birds”, “Dog-Sleigh”, “How Tiger and Leopard Lost Their Coloration”, “Tiger in Danger”, “How Leopard Was Seeking Fortune”, “Elections in the Forest”, “Under the Mushroom”, and so on.

In order to measure how the level of children’s knowledge about tigers, leopards and other wildlife has changed, Phoenix conducted two opinion polls before and after the educational events. Data from opinion polls acknowledged the fact that our educational programme is good enough to increase people’s knowledge of and attitude towards big cats and nature as a whole. Comparison of questionnaires before and after the project activities showed significant positive change in children’s attitude towards Amur tiger and nature conservation. As expected, the schoolchildren possessed some knowledge on tigers and leopards without attending ecological and drama lessons. They gave an average 29% correct answers. But lessons devoted to the big wild cats and performances on ecological topics boosted scores to 67% correct answers. We also interviewed our educators who highlighted the need to hold more outdoor eco-classes with the use of various interactive tools, such as games, quizzes, and quests. Responding to this request, Phoenix has started developing a teachers’ guide “Games for Tiger Conservation” that will contain various types of outdoor games on tiger conservation topics and other ecological themes.



**Number of children and adults attended eco-lessons and nature-oriented events**

Work Location	2018
Lazovsky district	3377
Terneisky district	9042
Khasansky district	1672
Vladivostok (Eco-Theatre)	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>14126</b>

**Number of eco-lessons and nature-oriented events**

Work Location	2018
Lazovsky district	132
Terneisky district	811
Khasansky district	66
Vladivostok (Eco-Theatre)	120
<b>Total</b>	<b>1129</b>



## Tiger Day in Primorye

Tiger Day Festival began in 2000, when the Phoenix Fund took up an idea of children's writer and gamekeeper Vladimir Troinin, who celebrated the holiday in remote village schools for a few years. Phoenix invited the Far Eastern Branch of WWF to hold the festival jointly in Vladivostok, and so it happened with support from Vladivostok City Administration. In 2001, Tiger Day was officially announced as a city festival, and Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) joined the Festival Organizing Committee. After the first year of the Festival, Tiger Day has developed into a wonderful autumn festival that is celebrated across the country, from Moscow to Vladivostok. The festival attracts people's attention to the most burning issues of tiger conservation, and gives them a chance to help in their resolution.

Traditionally, Tiger Day in Vladivostok begins with a carnival procession and continues on Central Square with theatrical performances, contests and entertainment. Every year, the participants compete in the main contest – the Best Parade Unit - using any and all possible methods such as colorful tiger costumes, masks, balloons, posters, conservation slogans encouraging people to save Amur tigers and other wildlife in the Russian Far East in order to make their parade units stand out. Since 2014, thanks to united efforts by the administrations of Primorsky Krai and Vladivostok city and the Amur Tiger Centre autonomous non-profit organization, the festival is celebrated for two days. It is even celebrated internationally now. International Tiger Day is held annually on July 29. It was founded at the St. Petersburg Tiger Summit in 2010 in order to give worldwide attention to the conservation of tigers.

Thanks to support from the WildCats Conservation Alliance, Phoenix started preparations for the Tiger Day Festival 2018 in March by working on design of Tiger Day promotion materials, such as magnets, toys, and symbolic awards to be given away to the most-active participants of the festival. The 19<sup>th</sup> Tiger Day in Vladivostok was celebrated on September 29-30, 2018. In September-October, the Tiger Day Festival was also celebrated in cities of Primorsky and Khabarovsk Krai.





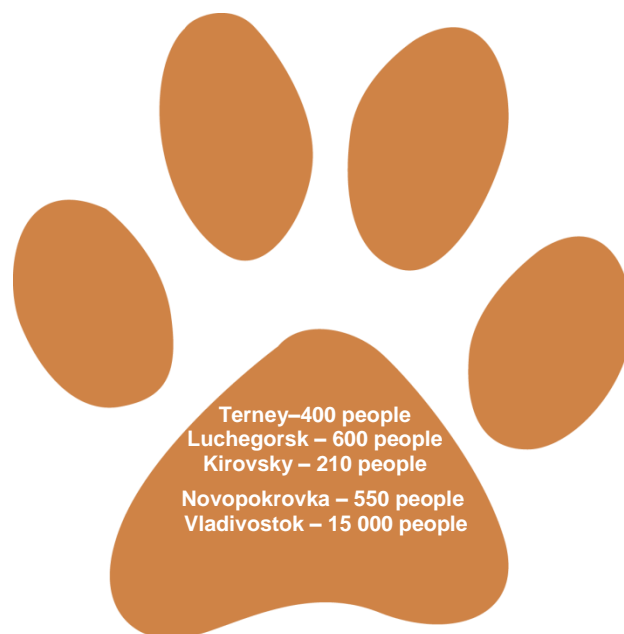
This year, the people of Luchegorsk town (Pozharsky district of Primorye) took the lead in celebrating Tiger Day. The Festival with 600 participants was celebrated in Luchegorsk on September 15. On September 22, as many as 150 adults and 400 children came to celebrate rare wild cats in Novopokrovka town (Krasnoarmeisky district of Primorye). Tiger Day Festival began with a carnival procession led by artists from circus team “Carnival” from Dalnerechensk and that included transport (baby strollers and bicycles) adorned with tiger decorations. On the central square of Novopokrovka town people could participate in various entertainments and contests and shared their knowledge of the Amur tiger, its biology, habits and threats to survival.

On September 30, over 15,000 people marched in a colourful festive parade in Vladivostok. The Phoenix Fund’s parade unit was called the “Immortal Tiger Regiment” (Bessmertny Tigriny Polk) in order to commemorate famous ecologists and scientists who significantly contributed to the study and conservation of the Amur tiger and other wildlife of the Ussuriiskaya taiga.

In Kirovsky town, about 160 children and 50 adults came to celebrate Tiger Day for the 11<sup>th</sup> year in succession. As always, there were various contests and games on Amur tiger and other wildlife of the Ussuriiskaya taiga.

On October 6, 2018, Tiger Day in Terney started with a carnival procession from the stadium to the park. Local schoolchildren and guests from Kavalerovo, Plastun and Vladivostok participated in the parade. In the park, the participants watched a theatrical performance with tiger Vladimir, the main character of the festival, and participated in various educational and entertaining programs. During the holiday children demonstrated their knowledge about biology of the Amur tiger, earned ‘tigrons’ and swapped them for various gifts (notebooks, pens, magnets, calendars, T-shirts, etc.) The evening program of Tiger Day Festival ended with awarding ceremony of active participants, flash mob and fireworks.

Besides entertainments in all these towns and villages, people were interviewed during Tiger Day Festivals in order to assess how celebrating changes people’s views. The results showed that festival participants (350 people were surveyed) have good knowledge about the Amur tigers, its prey species, habitat and main threats to survival. Almost 87% of respondents gave correct answers to questions (up from 74% in 2016), which shows that education and outreach activities held by local NGOs, including the Phoenix Fund, are spreading environmental awareness to both children and adults. The stable number of festival participants in towns and villages also proves that local people are deeply concerned about the fate of the Amur tiger population.



## Art Contest

In 2018, Phoenix held the 13<sup>th</sup> annual art contest for children with the purpose of promoting careful and respectful attitude towards the Amur tiger and Amur leopard at young age. Every year the contest expands its geographical borders and welcomes participants from new territories. The topic always concerns two big cats: the Amur tiger and Amur leopard. We believe that creating art is a healthy way for children to use their imaginations and to express themselves. Children have a natural affinity for animals and art – both of which can help them develop fundamental skills, values, and attitudes. Art helps to give children a voice, encourages



open-minded thinking, and builds a sense of connection with the natural world. In 2018, as many as 3,285 children between 5 and 18 years of age have sent their paintings from Primorsky and Khabarovsk Krai, Amurskaya and Leningradskaya provinces, and the Republic of Korea. The best 54 drawings were selected for the wall calendars for 2019. Every participant got his/her own copy of the calendar. The remaining copies were used as gifts during various contests, events, and festivals devoted to Amur tiger and leopard conservation. Next year's theme, "Real Stories of Rescued Tigers", will encourage children to illustrate stories of tigers that have been rescued, rehabilitated, and successfully returned into the wild.



## ATTACHMENT I

A brief description of cases on tiger poaching, smuggling of tiger derivatives, and other tiger related incidents registered in 2018:

1) On January 27, 2018, Far Eastern Customs officers jointly with Primorsky Krai Border Guard of Russia's Federal Security Service prevented an attempt to smuggle the largest-ever shipment of wildlife derivatives, including pelts and bones belonging to five Amur tigers, 867 bear paws, bear claws, and gall bladders, red deer tails, and others. The crime occurred in the vicinity of Platono-Alexandrovskoye in the Khankai district of the Primorsky Krai. The Khankai District Court of Primorsky Krai found guilty a resident of Primorsky Krai and sentenced her to three years and six months of imprisonment. She will have to serve the sentence in a correctional colony of the general regime and pay a fine of 1.3 million roubles with a restraint of liberty for a further period of six months.

2) On January 28, 2018, an Amur tiger attacked two hunters in Olginsky district of Primorye. As a result, a tiger was killed and one of the hunters got serious injuries (head, shoulders). In August 2018, Olginsky Court sentenced the man to two years on probation and fined him USD 32,835 (2.2 million roubles) for killing the tiger intentionally.

3) On January 28, the Khabarovsk Territory's Ministry of Natural Resources received information that a tigress had been found lying on the terrace of one farm homestead in Solontsovy village, Lazo district, of Khabarovsk Territory. On January 29, the human-wildlife conflict resolution group of the Khabarovsk Territory's Ministry of Natural Resources arrived on the scene and captured the predator. The animal was extremely emaciated, without gunshot wounds. The tigress behaved in a friendly way as if she was waiting for human assistance. However, she had serious gum injuries; and due to loss of missing upper teeth it was impossible to identify the age of the animal (about 10 years old). She was in critical condition and needed urgent medical treatment. The tigress was transported to the Centre for Rehabilitation and Reintroduction of Tigers and Other Rare Animals in Alekseevka village, Primorsky Krai, where all necessary tests were taken to diagnose her health. Unfortunately, the tigress died due to age-related illnesses.

4) On February 16, 2018, a man was caught red-handed selling tiger derivatives. Police officers managed to establish a fact of illegal trade of rare wildlife in Ussuriisk town. The frustrated deal was worth 120,000 roubles. Derivatives for sale were transported in the suspect's car.





Undercover cops caught the dealer red-handed. According to experts, the confiscated wildlife body parts were from Amur tigers. At the dealer's place, police officers discovered cash in different currencies worth 4.5 million rubles, 350,000 Russian rubles, and 30 fragments of animal bodies (skulls, teeth, horns). The arrested 41-year-old man was interrogated at the police office and pleaded guilty. During the search it was also established that the dealer had previously sold the derivatives of eight Amur tigers for 1.2 million rubles and organized their illegal transfer across the Russian state border to one of the East Asian states. A criminal case was initiated according to Article 258.1 of Criminal Code of the Russian Federation.

5) On March 7, 2018, an Amur tigress was found with wounds from buckshot in Mataisky Wildlife Refuge in Khabarovsk Krai. She had wounds in her hip, tail and abdomen, and one hind leg was badly injured. The animal was taken to the rehab centre in Alekseevka village, Primorsky Krai. According to specialists, due to serious wounds the animal could not be returned into the wild and would have to remain in captivity for the rest of her life. Unfortunately, the



extremely exhausted animal refused to eat or drink anything and died on April 27, despite the best efforts of veterinarians. The police did not manage to identify the poacher who shot, and eventually killed, the endangered animal.

6) On April 29, 2018, remnants of two dead tiger cubs were found by fern gatherers in woodland of Lazo district, Khabarovsk Krai. According to specialists of ANO Amur Tiger Centre, the cubs were about 3 to 5 months old. They were found 300 metres away from Srednekhorsky village, lying four metres apart. It seems like the cubs died long ago, probably in late autumn or winter of 2017.

7) On May 27, 2018, Artyom city police officers stopped a taxi and found an Amur tiger skin in a trunk. The detained the taxi passenger, who told them that she had received a box with "valuable cargo" from her acquaintance in Vladivostok. A postmortem examination determined that skin belonged to a male Amur tiger older than 3 years. A criminal case was initiated against



the 44-year-old woman and a 55-year-old man from Vladivostok. The investigation is still pending.

8) On July 18, 2018, the rangers of Bikin National Park reported that a dead Amur tiger had been discovered in a logjam of the Bikin River. The corpse of the dead animal was taken for postmortem examination, the results of which should tell whether the tiger had been killed by a poacher or died naturally. There are cases when tigers die crossing the river due to their physique: a tiger cannot keep its head high above water and may inhale water even from small waves. Also, poachers tend to hide killed animals near a river. So postmortem examination is needed to discover the cause of death.

9) On July 26, 2018, specialists of the Frontier Department of the Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation seized Amur tiger bones from a citizen of Khabarovsk city. Expert examination proved that the bones belonged to three tigers. According to the arrested man, the derivatives were intended to be transported for sale in Asian countries. As a result of operational search activities, other people involved in smuggling derivatives of high-value wild animals were identified. A criminal case was initiated pursuant to Article 258.1 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation. The article establishes criminal responsibility for the illegal capture, keeping, procurement, transportation and trading of especially valuable wild animals and aquatic biological resources that are listed in the Red Data Book of Russia and which are protected by Russia's International Agreements (for these, criminal liability of up to seven years in prison is provided).

10) On August 3, 2018, officers of the Border Service of the Federal Security Service in Primorsky Krai stopped a car for a check on Razdolnoye-Khasan federal highway, near Barabash village. A search inside the car revealed pelts and bones of the Amur tiger. Examination showed the derivatives belonged to at least three adult Amur tigers. It was determined that at least one animal died due to gun shots. The owner of the derivatives turned out to be a foreigner who came into Primorye with intent to buy body part of animals used in Asian medicine and to cross the border with wildlife products. The damage caused to nature was estimated at 3.300 million roubles. A criminal proceeding was initiated.



11) On September 7, 2018, officers of the Border Service of the Federal Security Service in Primorsky Krai seized wildlife derivatives (Amur tiger bones, brown bear paws, sable skins, etc.) to the value of 40 million roubles. According to the examination conducted by ANO "Amur Tiger Centre", the seized derivatives belonged to at least 16 to 19 Amur tigers that were killed in different years; 100 bear paws and 40 bear internal organs; over 200 internal organs and body parts of red deer; over 70 skins of sable, otter and Siberian weasel; about 1,700 items of sea cucumber; 38 ginseng roots; and over 60 kg of wild meat. A criminal proceeding was initiated in accordance with Article 258.1 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation.

12) In September, a woman from Ussuriisk city will appear before the court of Khankaisky district for attempting to smuggle an Amur tiger skin and bones; bear paws, claws and gall bladders; red deer tails and other internal organs; and dozens of kilograms of dried frog fat. The smuggler was stopped by specialists of the Far Eastern Customs and Border Service of the Federal Security Service in Primorsky Krai. The investigators believe that between January 2017 and January 2018 the criminal was purchasing body parts and derivatives of rare and endangered animals listed in Russia's Red Book. A criminal proceeding was initiated in accordance with Articles 258.1, 175 and 210 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation.

13) In October, tourists and locals saw a tiger with abnormal behaviour on a river spit in Pozharsky district of Primorye: the predator was lying on the shore. Sometimes it went deep into the forest. They took video and widely distributed it to the media. After analyzing the collected material, the employees of the Hunting Department decided to leave for the scene immediately and find out what had happened to the tiger, because the predator's behavior was very strange and might be due to a gunshot wound. On October 21, the tiger was caught near the village of Yaseneyv on the bank of the Bikin River by the employees of the special groups of the Hunting Department of Primorsky and Khabarovsk Krai. The predator was sent to the Utyos Rehabilitation Center in Khabarovsk Krai for further examination and determination of the causes of the unusual behaviour. Unfortunately, the tiger died on December 13. Postmortem examination showed that the animal had died due to acute viral infection (panleukopenia) developed because of decreased immunity caused by parasitic invasion.

14) In December, on the land of a private house in the village of Koksharovka of Chuguevsky district, employees of the Frontier Department of the Russian Federal Security Service of Primorsky Krai discovered a large number of wild animal parts stored in freezers. In total, the border patrol seized 28 fragments of various bones of the Amur tiger; 60 paws, 14 fragments of jaws and 13 gall bladders of Himalayan and Brown bears; more than 40 parts of animal bodies; various internal organs, horns and skins, antlers; and the body of a lynx. The specialists also found 22 ginseng roots listed in the Red Book. Some of them were stored in tinctures. In addition, 11 rare mushrooms also listed in the Red Books of Russia and Primorsky Krai were discovered. A resident of Arsenyev town stored these derivatives. It should be noted that he had come to the attention of the law enforcement agencies previously. A criminal proceeding is pending now.

Also, a tiger-human conflict was resolved in the first quarter of 2018. A female tiger named Kozachka ('Cossack woman') with two cubs became new patients at the rehab centre in Alekseevka. The tigress and the cubs were kept in a carefully monitored open-air enclosure, where they had no contact with humans. Live prey was introduced, and the family were hunting and eating together. Unfortunately, a study showed that the tigress cannot be released into the wild because she has a motor coordination disorder as a result of an injury or disease; she will not be able to survive in the wild and will again approach people. In September 2018, the tigress



was sent to the zoo in Zelenogorsk city, Krasnoyarsky Krai. The two young predators will probably be released into the wild in the spring of 2019.

During the reported period, two young Amur tigers – Saikhan and Lazovka – were rehabilitated at the centre in Alekseevka, and later in May were successfully released into the wild in Jewish Autonomous Province (JAP). They feel good in their new home. The specialists note that the predators regularly hunted ungulates.

Other good news is that Cinderella the tigress has become a mother for the second time! As you may remember, in 2012 a 6-month-old orphaned tigress was rescued in Primorye and successfully released back into the wild in Bastak Nature Reserve after a long rehabilitation period. In 2015, Cinderella gave birth to her first litter, the two male cubs. On February 7, 2018, specialists from ANO "Amur Tiger Centre" reported that in early 2018 a 6- or 7-month-old cub was caught on the camera traps installed in and around Bastak Nature Reserve. Video from the camera also shows Cinderella and the young walking together through their hunting grounds. After a while, camera traps captured Cinderella with two 18-month-old cubs.

In light of the continued poaching threats, it is crucial to continue activities aimed at protecting Amur tigers and leopards, their prey and habitat, and raising the environmental awareness of local communities.

