



21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY TIGER  
giving wild tigers a future



# Phoenix Fund Amur Tiger Conservation in 2008

Final report  
January - December 2008



Vladivostok  
Russian Far East  
2008



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## I. Project Overview

Since 1998 Phoenix Fund has been working hard on sustaining the nature protection potential in tiger habitat. Along with nature conservation and environmental law enforcement the team focused on organizing ecological education and outreach activities at local schools and eco-centres to generate nature-oriented thinking among children and through them reach the adults. Involvement of the public is essential for achieving the long-term goals in nature protection as a whole and tiger preservation in particular.

Phoenix supports a number of ecological centres in the region to foster positive attitudes towards nature through regular educational and outreach lessons, lectures, film presentations, eco-camps and other events for children and adults.

It is today that we have to point our efforts towards bringing up children to be environmental-conscious generation and treating the environment with respect and care. Environmental education activities supported by the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Tiger within the framework of this project have demonstrated good results. Children showed sincere interest in learning about Amur tiger and leopard and other forest dwellers.

The project described in this report is focused on four districts of Primorye: Partizansky, Krasnoarmeisky, Terneisky and Kirovsky. The goal of the project is to strengthen Amur tiger conservation in the Russian Far East through combined environmental law enforcement and ecological education and outreach activities. This report provides information about the activities between 1 January and 31 December 2008.

## II. Project Implementation

### 2.1. Education and outreach activities

In 2008 Phoenix continued supporting the experienced educators who conducted educational activities for children and adults in Terney, Partizansk and Kirovka towns. Over 9,903 children were reported to attend the eco-classes, nature-

oriented actions, and ecological conferences in Primorye in the course of the year. Children demonstrated greater understanding of the Amur tiger and its habitat. With great pleasure senior students developed and conducted eco-lessons for junior schoolchildren. The youth has become more concerned about the fate of the Amur tiger and participated in round tables with scientists and nature reserve's staff to discuss on-going tiger conservation activities and ecological problems. Also, Phoenix has been very successful in holding Tiger Day Festivals and expanding Tiger Day celebration into three districts of Primorye and in the south of Khabarovsk krai. In 2008, over 12,000 participants commemorated the holiday in Primorye and the south of Khabarovsk krai.

### Ecological education in Partizansk town

From January to December 2008 the Phoenix Fund thanks to support from the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Tiger we continued supporting



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Eco-lesson for kindergarten children in Partizansk

“Rostok” (*Sprout*) eco-centre in Partizansk town, Southern Primorye. Initially it was created with the purpose of gathering the youth of Partizansky district to discuss local ecological issues and find solutions to them. Phoenix started cooperation with Lubov Samchinskaya, the club's leader, in 2006. Thus, “Rostok” expanded its educational programs by including lectures on Amur tiger and leopard conservation, and established close relations with other eco-centres of Primorye. The education program



has been designed to make young people understand that without a reduction in deforestation, poaching, forest fires, numerous endangered species may become extinct.

During the reported period the educator of Rostok eco-centre conducted eco-classes primarily with small children (5-10 years old) on all the aspects of tiger life: biology, behaviour, appearance, prey base, size, threats etc.

Over the course of 2008 the educators successfully delivered 68 ecological lessons to more than 2,000 children.

Ecological education in Terney town

The “Uragus” club in Terney in the northeast of the region is oriented towards biology study and nature conservation. It has been operating since 1970. This year Galina Maksimova, the educator and club leader, carried out 424 ecological lessons and actions for over 7,370 children.



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Terneisky district is a great place to go hiking

What is interesting about the club is that children spend as much time on outdoor activities as for lessons in classrooms. They go on hikes, study history, animals’ world, archaeological monuments of their town and its surroundings, take part in various competitions and conferences (e.g. a competition announced by the Marine Museum of the Institute of Biology of the Russian Academy of Science).

In spring, twenty-seven club volunteers took part in a town clean-up. They removed dry leaves from the tree

nursery, planted 150 bushes of dogrose. Some children prepared the seedlings; the others dug the soil, and watered them after planting. The participants also prepared Korean pine seedlings to plant along the path. They started creating a flowerbed around the Centre of Folk Art.

From the end of June till the middle of July Galina was in the United States for three weeks to participate in the Community Connections Program held in Oregon. During her visits to NGOs, governmental organizations and business structures she spoke about her club and its activities, shared her knowledge and gained experience in organizing nature-oriented public events.

Ecological education in Kirovka town

Since 2007 Phoenix has been supporting the educational activity of Galina Goy, a teacher from technical school No. 55 in Kirovka town. About 10 teenagers, students of 16-17 years old, visit regularly the “Ussury” Eco-Centre, where under the teacher’s guidance, elaborate lessons about the nature of the Primorsky region and present them for school and kindergarten children of the town. Such method enables to accomplish two goals: organize teenagers’ leisure and foster respect and love for nature. Schoolchildren are more receptive to information delivered to them by people a little older than themselves. In addition to lessons, students are involved in practical work: they clean their town, plant trees and feed birds in winter.



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Students give an eco-lesson for kindergarten children





During the year the educator developed and gave 23 ecological events (lessons, actions, games etc.) for 533 schoolchildren/students 17-19 years old. Then, the students give these lessons for small children in the kindergartens. The children learned how to identify the tracks on the snow, found out the difference between tiger's and leopard's tracks, studied how animals passed the winter, and gained knowledge on the Amur tiger and its habits.

Tiger Day in Terney

Since 2000 celebration of the Tiger Day has become a wonderful tradition in the Russian Far East. The holiday reminds people about the uniqueness and beauty of the territory they live in. Amur tiger is a symbol of Vladivostok city and Primorsky krai, the animal most respected in the Russian Far East. That is why in 2000 Phoenix Fund and other environmental organizations and enthusiasts initiated the Tiger Day holiday. The main goal of the holiday is to help save the Amur tiger in the



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**A promo action;  
Tiger invites doctors to participate in Tiger Day**

wild for the future generations, not just on logos and coats of arms, and draw international attention to the plight of this endangered species.

Residents of Terney and Luchegorsk towns were the first who celebrated the

Tiger Day holiday this year. A promo action aimed to attract the public's attention to the forthcoming Tiger Day celebration was held in Terney town. A group of volunteers (ten young people of 11-15 years old) in tiger



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**Parade in Terney town**

costumes and with tiger make-ups gave the performances in the streets distributing the holiday announcements and newspapers among the passers-by. The action turned out to be a big success. People were excited to see something unusual going on in their town. They took photos of the children and "tigers".

In 2008, the Tiger Day coincided with a 100-year anniversary of Terney town (September 13<sup>th</sup>). It was the first time when the holiday has been celebrated on a weekend. Over three years of its celebration in Terney the festival expanded its borders to attract more participants. This year over 400 people took part in the celebration. The theatrical performance took place on the main stage of the town. Guest and local artists were welcomed to take part in the performance. The most active participants and the winners of the contests (67 children) were awarded with diplomas and letters of gratitude. There were special boards with information on conservation work implemented by WCS and Phoenix and photo-reports on previous Tiger Day celebrations. Six volunteers did tiger make-ups for more than 100 children and adults.



In the course of the holiday seven teams of 10 people participated in an entertaining and educational game “Stripped Whiskered Family”. After the game, the participants holding hands followed M. La Pérouse leading the column to a stadium where the festival was meant to end. On the stadium the Tiger said “Goodbye!” to everyone and brought a big ball with pictures of various animals – symbol of our planet. Each person touched the sphere and handed it over to the Tiger so that he could bring the merry atmosphere of the holiday to the forest dwellers. The Tiger got on the car decorated with orange stripes and led the procession. The fire engine followed calling upon the public to fight forest fires. The school teams and children clubs also made their loud statements about forest fires, blew soup bubbles, used rattles to make a loud noise and show their excitement, and handed out the latest ecological newspaper issues. During the celebration a joyful and elevated mood was in the air. All the schoolchildren felt themselves involved in a great and extremely important task – the protection of Amur tigers.

On September 20, more than 100 people paraded the streets of Kirovka town during the Tiger Day. Citizens and guests of Vladivostok city celebrated the ninth anniversary of Tiger Day Festival on Sunday, September 28th. Altogether 12,000 people commemorated the big cats in Primorye and south of Khabarovsk krai in 2008.

## 2.2. Anti-poaching activities

### Protection regime in Udege Legend National Park

Established in 2007, Udege Legend National Park is considered one of the main tiger habitat, and thus has a big potential for increasing both tiger and tiger prey populations there. Unfortunately, the Russian Government has not allocated enough funds for the Park to start operating in full and nowadays the Park extremely needs money for anti-poaching, fire-fighting, outreach activities and eco-tourism. Thanks to support from the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Tiger



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### Checking hunters

Phoenix purchased GPS units, uniform, boots, sleeping bags and other field equipment necessary for efficient anti-poaching activities in the National Park and adjoining areas. With the funds from the Whitley Fund for Nature and the Save the Tiger Funds, we provided the mobile team with two military all-terrain vehicles “GAZ” and “ZIL”, two GPS-navigators and a satellite phone. Also, Phoenix supplied the team with winter outfit and provided funds for fuel.

For the reported period the team conducted over 49 patrols to reveal and investigate violations of logging, hunting and fishing regulations. Each patrols lasted 5-6 days. The officers initiated six criminal procedures and 31 administrative (9 on illegal hunt and 22 on illegal fishing), confiscated a tractor, six shotguns, seven fishing nets and poached prey (a red deer, a wild boar and two bears). Logging violations are very numerous inside the park, because previously the territory belonged to two timber enterprises. For example, this year the team revealed illegal woodcutting, that brought damage in the amount of \$167,000. Most of all people cut oak, Korean pine, ash-tree and others.

As a result of an agreement with a local forestry, the team can occasionally use a “MI-2” helicopter for patrols. This opportunity enable rangers to see what is happening in remotes areas, which are hard to reach even by off-road vehicles and trucks. From the air one can notice fire outbreaks and react promptly. Besides, this is helpful for animal surveys and determination of their density: during the recent flight the team saw two wild boar herds and three red deer herds.



Fishing is permitted in some zones of the park, but fishermen should observe fish size limit. When anglers exceed the limits the Park's rangers make them pay fines. This year greylings and goldlocks were harvested most.

In November Yuri Trusch, ex-ranger of Inspection Tiger and at present the head of the Park's protection division, and Andrey Golobokov, former leader of the Forest team and now leader of the Park's prompt response team, held a training for 15 newly employed officers. They covered such



© Phoenix Fund

Confiscated illegal rifles

aspects as role and functions of national parks, drawing citations with observance of all technical and bureaucratic formalities, regulations within each functional zone of the Park etc. Due to absence of other job positions in the villages, young people come to work in the protected areas, often ecologically ignorant and having no particular interest in nature and its protection. Therefore, at the very beginning it is necessary to select intelligent people and teach them well.

In early November, the mobile team arrested an armed poacher inside the Park. He was badly drunk and shot three times at rangers. Fortunately, he missed the mark, but Yuri Trusch, had a heart attack due to stress and was taken to hospital. A criminal procedure was initiated against the poacher.

In November 2008, thanks to the team's efforts, Arminskaya logging company was deprived of the logging license and was sentenced to pay damage compensation in the amount of \$2,230 for operating inside the protected area.

In 2008, much was done to prevent and fight forest fires in the park. With funds from international donors we purchased 15

backpack fire extinguishers, a blast engine, a generator and a peat tube to extinguish underground burnings. Other equipment (a monoblock pump, a petrol-powered saw, rakes, axes and spades) was bought with state money. A fire-fighting team was created, and a plan of measures was adopted. The team patrolled regularly around the Park and put out incipient burnings. Fortunately, we had wet fall with regular rains without thunderstorms that helped much. We expect spring and early summer 2009 to be another fire-dangerous season. By that time several training sessions for firemen will have been held, and material and technical basis will have been reinforced. As for remote areas, the team will have to rent a helicopter (agreement was obtained), and heavy vehicles.

### III. Measurable objectives delivered

For the reported period, the project has successfully delivered the following measurable objectives:

- 9,903 children attended 515 lessons on wildlife and nature protection, ecological conferences and other nature-oriented events;
- 49 many-day patrols were conducted to reveal and investigate violations of logging, hunting and fishing regulations in Udege Legend National Park;
- a tractor, six shotguns, seven fishing nets and poached prey were confiscated;
- 6 criminal proceedings initiated;
- 3 self-made illegal salt licks destroyed;
- 2 patrol videos passed to the local television;
- 70 warning signs fixed along the boundary of the Udege Legend National Park.



#### IV. Acknowledgements

The project is the result of joint efforts of many people and organizations, such as “Uragus” club, “Rostok” (*Sprout*) eco-centre, “Ussury” eco-centre, Udege Legend National Park and others. Thanks to support from the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Tiger, we helped increase capacity of the anti-poaching team to reduce poaching activities, enhance wildlife and habitat protection in Udege Legend National Park, and increase awareness of the local communities about the importance of wildlife and habitat conservation through education and outreach programmes.

Phoenix greatly appreciates the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Tiger for having supported our conservation activities in the Russian Far East.

#### Quantitative results of anti-poaching activities in Udege Legend National Park

Activities	January – December 2008
Patrols carried out	49
Criminal proceedings initiated:	6
Violations revealed:	31
- Illegal hunting	9
- Illegal fishing	22
- Felling of timber	3
- Manufacturing and carrying of rifles	1
Condemned people	1
Fines	\$170,000
Illegal guns withdrawn	6
Fishing nets confiscated	7
Machinery confiscated	2 (tractors)





ATTACHMENT

## Udege Legend (Udegeiskaya Legenda) Nature Reserve

