



21ST CENTURY TIGER
giving wild tigers a future

Anti-poaching activities in Lazovsky Nature Reserve in 2011-2012



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PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Lazovsky Nature Reserve in the southeast of Primorsky krai (about 250 km far from Vladivostok city) was established in 1935. On February 12th, 2010 it celebrated its 75th anniversary. This second biggest nature reserve in the region covers 121,000 hectares; its protected buffer zone is 15,000 hectares. Due to its peculiar relief and location, the reserve is home to 2,000 plant species of various geographical zones (e.g. taiga, tundra and even subtropical zone), 57 animal species and 319 birds. The protected area (PA) is famous for such rare animals as Amur tiger (also known as Siberian, Manchurian, Ussuri, North-Eastern Chinese tiger), goral and sika deer, as well as relict yew trees. The general extension of the reserve is 240 km, where included 36 km along the coast

of the East Sea /Sea of Japan. The southeastern borders of the reserve are spread along the coast. The Lazovsky Reserve is composed of continental area and two islands in the East Sea / Sea of Japan, namely Petrov and Beltsov ones. The Lazovsky Nature Reserve is one of the most beautiful places in Primorye with its mountains, taiga forest and islands.

This nature reserve is the most important area for Amur tiger conservation in the southern Sikhote-Alin mountain range. For the last 20 years the reserve has maintained the highest tiger density in southern Primorye and one of the highest in the whole tiger habitat. Nowadays, there are about 10-12 resident or constantly visiting tigers. One to three litters are born to resident tigresses annually. High prey densities and efficient anti-poaching and fire-fighting activities of



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the reserve promote high density of endangered Amur tigers.

Major and small roads surround the nature reserve. Besides, there are two big villages (Preobrazhenye village – 12,000 people and Lazo village – 2,500 people) close to it. Difficult economic situation and unemployment, especially in remote

crucial to support the anti-poaching teams and improve their field equipment. This will allow to decrease the number of poachers/intruders and maintain high densities of the Amur tigers and other animals, as well as conserving the important habitat.

Nature reserves (zapovedniks) in



areas of the region, represent the biggest problems for conservation. Besides, the reserve borders upon numerous hunting leases, and it often happens that animals migrate and fall prey to hunters. The Lazovsky Nature Reserve still manages to hold back poaching in its territory and adjacent areas, but in order to improve its activities and strengthen protection of endangered wildlife of the reserve it is

Russia are perhaps the most important conservation areas. In Russia, the status of the nature reserve means that nobody can enter the reserve except for the wildlife, scientists, and rangers. All human activities are prohibited. It does not have a fence along its borders, but there are warning boards around it. Since 1995, the Lazovsky Nature Reserve is considered one of the best in Russia on the basis of

their protection, education and outreach activities. But it is a state organization and the federal funding is not sufficient for efficient protection of the unique biodiversity there.

Since 2005, the Dreamworld Conservation Fund has been supporting anti-poaching activities of one of the Lazovsky Nature Reserve's teams. Thanks to continued support from the Dreamworld Conservation Fund and the 21st Century Tiger, the anti-poaching team was provided with fuel, field clothes and necessary equipment. The inspectors who reveal the greatest number of violations were awarded with incentives (supplement to monthly salary).

We present here for your consideration a six-month report on the activities carried out from the 1st of September 2011 to the 29th of February 2012.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

With the support from the Dreamworld Conservation Fund and the

21st Century Tiger, the anti-poaching team of Lazovsky Nature Reserve (LNR) continued implementing its activities in 2011-2012.

There are four anti-poaching teams in LNR and each consists of three to nine experienced rangers. They conduct regular anti-poaching patrols in the protected area and its buffer zone, work with MIST (fill out forms and record patrol routes with GPS, record revealed violations, citations, confiscations and fines) and extinguish forest fires. The rangers carry out patrols on foot and by car, make ambushes in the places of probable poaching and follow the poachers' tracks. The rangers spend 20 days per month in the field. During the patrols they spend nights at ranger stations or tents. The anti-poaching teams of LNR work in cooperation with each other in order to prevent and stop violations in the reserve. They also participate in tiger census. During the reported period the inspectors used UAZ all-terrain vehicle, motor boats, photo cameras, authorized arms and other



necessary equipment. Mostly, they patrolled the territory on foot. A rapid response team worked in shifts, namely the inspectors worked their allotted hours within 10 days, after which they were given time off. The other patrol teams normally went for a patrol in the morning and returned in the evening. Sometimes the officers made longer patrols of 2-3 days.

For the period from September 1, 2011 to February 29, 2012 the team revealed 16 violations (illegal hunting, trespassing and gathering non-timber forest products), seized two illegal guns, and initiated two criminal proceedings. A Table 1 below shows the results for the reported period.

Description of the field work

In September-October, the inspectors of Lazovsky Nature Reserve worked in teams of 4-5 people. All in all, four anti-poaching teams conducted patrols to prevent and detect violations and apprehend criminals, issued 10 citations,



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Firearms seized by inspectors

detained two poachers, seized two rifles and initiated two criminal proceedings. Most part of the citations issued was against trespassers. In early September, people tried to penetrate into the nature reserve in order to have a rest on the

protected seacoast. October is known to be the best season to pick pine nuts that is why nut gatherers prevailed among the detained persons during that period of time.



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Inspector collects evidence

While patrolling on foot along the Uglovaya Bay coastline, the inspectors discovered a bivouac which judging by the footprints left around it had been repeatedly visited by people. It was decided to lay an ambush near the bivouac in order to catch violators. In the morning October 6, the inspectors nabbed a man with a smoothbore rifle, cartridges and a knife. Later, another man was apprehended near the camp. He did not have a rifle, although he possessed several cartridges. Both violators were taken to the police office. The fact that one of the detainees had cartridges but no gun aroused suspicion among the police officers, and it was decided to make an ambush again near the bivouac. Next morning the inspectors saw again the same person, who was put under surveillance and was unaware of it, retrieving his gun hidden in an inaccessible place. The violator was caught red-handed. As a result, two criminal proceedings were initiated against the two poachers.

In November, the inspectors of Lazovsky Nature Reserve patrolled on foot along the perimeter and in the core of the protected area. November is always the hardest time for the law enforcement personnel. Due to the lack of snow the inspectors hardly could find footprints left by trespassers. Low temperatures did not let make ambushes. Only three citations were issued by the inspectors against people who had entered the protected area illegally to gather Korean pine nuts. Each violator was made to pay a fine of 1,000 roubles (31 AUD).



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Foot patrol

After snowfall in December, the inspectors patrolled mostly by vehicle, and patrolled on foot only in hard-to-access areas. The footprints left in the snow let reveal or prevent violations promptly. From mid-December special attention was paid to areas where young fir trees grow. As a result, no tree was cut there in the run-up of Christmas holidays.

In late December a few motorboats were observed from time to time near the reserve's borders. People on the motorboats probably hunted illegally there. The inspectors addressed to the border guards asking to assist them with detaining those violators. As the result, the border guards strengthen their control over of small fishing vessels.

In January-February 2012, the inspectors of Lazovsky Nature Reserve continued patrolling the protected area and were engaged in Amur tiger snow-tracking activities. The rapid response team members rotated on a 10 day basis. The other patrol teams normally went for a one-day patrol. Sometimes, they spent 2-3 days in the field. The patrols were mainly conducted by vehicle along the periphery of the protected area without penetration in the core area because it was easy to spot the footprints left in the snow by intruders. Special attention was paid to patrols during holiday season and days-off. Thus, during Christmas holiday season the inspectors detained two men who had illegally entered the protected area. One of the detainees told that he had entered the nature reserve in order to catch fish. The other one allegedly came into the protected area to pick up cone pine nuts. Both violators were fined.

Considering that there was warm weather in February and snow on the



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Inspectors are crossing a river during a foot patrol in winter

southern slopes began melting rapidly, the inspectors preferred conducting foot patrols. On February 9, they stopped a man when he emerged from the protected forest. He probably had been hunting, but the inspectors found no

firearm on him. The man was made to pay a fine.

Besides conducting anti-poaching activities, the inspectors also took fire prevention and safety measures.

Table 1. Results of anti-poaching activities September 2011 - February 2012

	Quantity
Illegal hunting	2
Illegal fishing	1
Illegal gathering non-timber products	3
Trespassing/illegal presence	10
Seized rifles	2
Imposed fines	14,000 Rub (437 AUD)
Initiated criminal cases	2

Work with MIST

In January 2012, we finally got the results of MIST work for the period from December 2010 to December 2011. We are glad to report that the Lazovsky Nature Reserve has made impressive progress with the implementation of MIST. The system already operates well and has produced good quality data. The overall quality of data collection by inspectors was satisfactory. The quality of the data entry by the protected area staff has been excellent (see examples of maps patrol routes created based on MIST database in the attachment). After analyzing MIST data collected by the teams and comparing their results and efforts, once per three months we paid incentives according to the incentive system approved previously by the protected area administration. The point is that some inspectors lacked motivation due to extremely low salaries, and it was

hard to ensure them to work with MIST without incentives. However, some of them were interested in improving protection, but hesitant to use new procedures that substantially increase the workload of inspectors. We agreed with the protected area management to finance an incentive system that will be based on quality of MIST work, patrol efforts and patrol results. After the first incentive payments being paid, we noticed more enthusiasm and willingness among the inspectors to carry on the work with MIST.

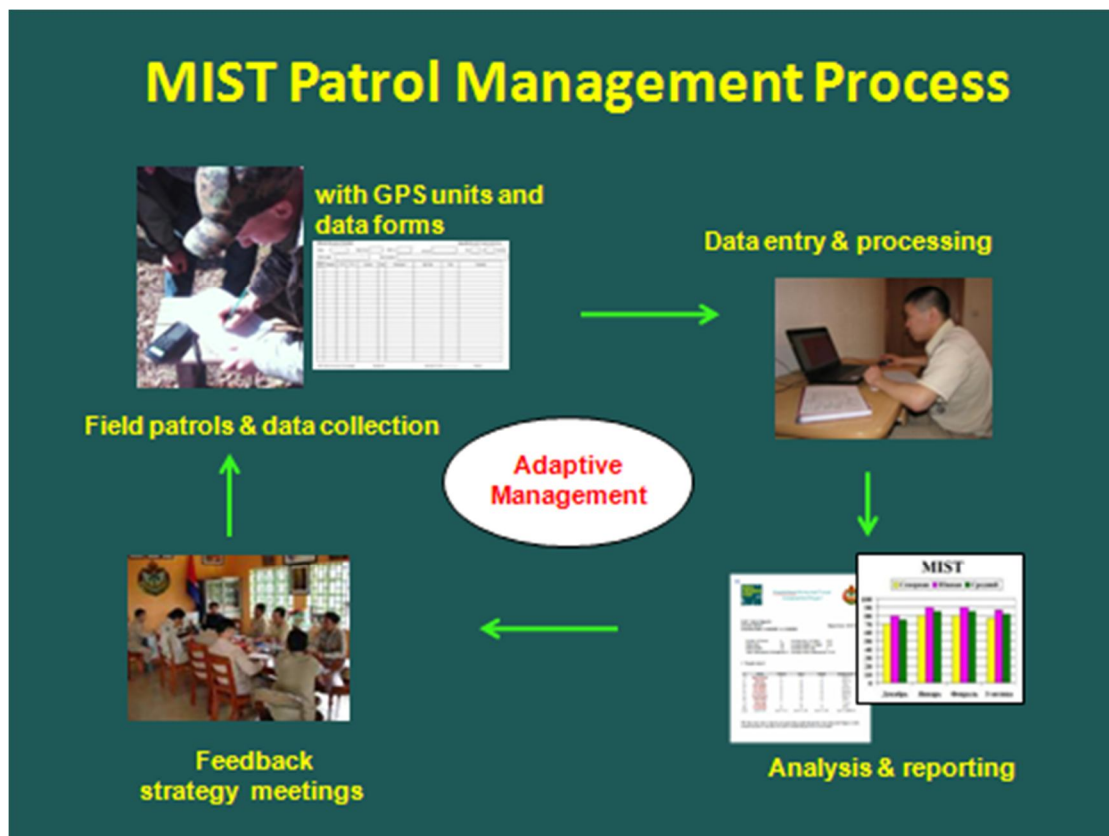
As you can see from Table 2 below, there are improvements for four indicators. It shows the MIST project works in the protected area! The table compares data for 2008, 2009 and 2010 with 2011. The Phoenix Fund successfully started the implementation of MIST in Lazovsky Nature Reserve in December 2010 and got first results by the end of the year 2011. According to the MIST report, from 1st January to 31st December 2011 the Law-Enforcement Service of the Lazovsky Reserve revealed 53 violations (illegal hunting, trespassing and gathering wild plants), caught 8 poachers, seized 8 rifles, put out 27 forest fires, imposed fines for 1,930 AUD and initiated 8 criminal proceedings. We would like to continue this work in 2012-2013.

The MIST (Management Information System), specially designed management tool for measuring and monitoring AP patrol efforts and results, have been introduced in Lazovsky Nature Reserve jointly by the Phoenix Fund, WCS and ZSL. The analysis of MIST data used in this report was prepared and kindly provided by Michiel Hotte.

Table 2. Comparative analysis of anti-poaching results (2008-2011)

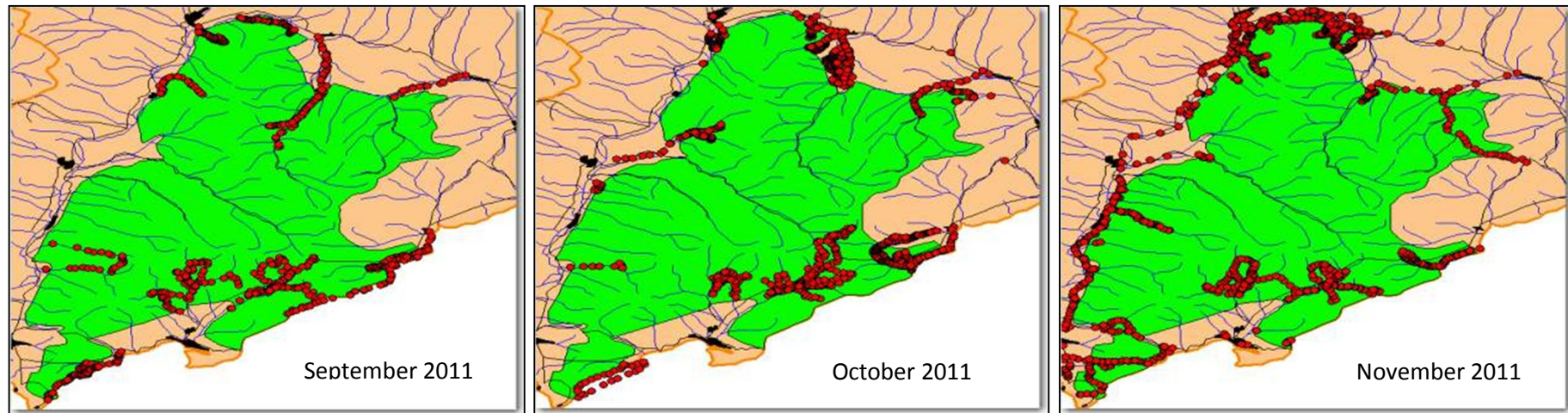
	2008	2009	2010	3-year total	3-year average	2011	increase
Confiscated arms	5	3	2	10	3,33	8	2,40
Protocols :poaching	4	7	2	13	4,33	8	1,85
Protocols: other violations	55	29	34	118	39,33	45	1,14
Fines (poaching and others)	96,5	57,5	54,5	208,5	69,50	89,5	1,29

Pic. 1. MIST patrol management process



This picture shows the general process for use of MIST in the protected areas where we operate. The inspectors collect data during their patrols with use of specially designed data collection forms and they document the patrol routes with GPS unites. The data and patrol routes are stored with use of MIST software in a database on a computer. Data from the database are processed into bi-monthly patrol reports. We evaluate the patrol performance on the basis of these reports together with the management of the protected areas. Feedback to the inspectors is provided in the form of a PowerPoint presentation during a meeting in which all the inspectors of a protected area participate. During these meetings very lively discussions of the patrol efforts and results of various teams take place. During the meeting patrol targets for the next 2-month period are set for each of the patrol teams.

Pic. 2. Patrol routes by all teams in September-November 2011



These maps were created based on MIST data. Each map let the management staff to see where the protected area was patrolled well and where the protection efforts should be improved.