



**Darwin Initiative Annual Report 2006**

**ZSL-Amur Leopard Project**

Zoological Society of London  
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Ussuriysk 69251  
RUSSIA

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Project Manager – Amur Leopard Project

## **Darwin Initiative**

### **Annual Report**

#### **1. Darwin Project Information**

Project Ref. Number	13034
Project Title	<i>Wildlife health monitoring and capacity building for leopard conservation in Russia (Amur Leopard Project)</i>
Country(ies)	<i>Russia</i>
UK Contractor	<i>Ms Sarah Christie, Programme Manager, Zoological Society of London - Conservation &amp; People Programme</i>
Partner Organisation(s)	<i>1. Primorskaya State Academy of Agriculture – Ussuriysk Regional Veterinary Teaching Hospital, Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Medicine Institute, Ussuriysk, Russia 2. Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) Russian Far East programme, Vladivostok, Russia 3. Moscow, Novosibirsk, Rostov and Seversk Zoos (Russia); Kharkiv and Nikolaev Zoos (Ukraine); Almaty Zoo (Kazakhstan): all members of Amur leopard European Endangered Species Programme (EEP), co-chaired by Sarah Christie of ZSL and Tanya Arzhanova of Moscow Zoo. 4. Utios Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre, Lazo Raion, Khabarovski Krai, Russia</i>
Darwin Grant Value	<i>£ 177,000.00</i>
Start/End dates	<i>January 2006 – December 2008</i>
Reporting period (1 Apr 200x to 31 Mar 200y) and annual report number (1,2,3..)	<i>1. January 2006 to 31. March 2006 Annual Report No. 1</i>
Project website	<i><a href="http://www.zsl.org/field-conservation/carnivores-and-people">www.zsl.org/field-conservation/carnivores-and-people</a>, <a href="http://www.amur-leopard.org">www.amur-leopard.org</a></i>
Author(s), date	<i>Claudia Schoene, 7. May 2006</i>

## **2. Project Background**

- The project is based in Ussuriysk, Russia, in the same town as the Veterinary Teaching Hospital.

Project partner WCS Russia has been working in the region for 12 years and has established good working relationships with deer farms (e.g. Gaivoron) and hunting organisations (e.g. Neshinskoe and Southern Valley), both of which will be key for obtaining the necessary wild and domestic animal samples.

Starting in 2000, WCS has also held four veterinary training workshops, both in the Russian Far East and in the United States, focusing on training tiger protection personnel. The workshops included lectures, intensive "hands-on" veterinary training, sessions on handling problem animals, and a "Wildlife and Handling Course." During this process, an additional need was identified for provision of training for local veterinarians in the areas of wildlife health and related issues.

Our team of wildlife veterinarians will assist in teaching wildlife health and the role of disease in wild populations to both veterinary faculty and students, creating an ongoing network of Russian veterinarians throughout the region who are knowledgeable and skilled in wildlife health issues. Long-term benefits will be ensured by incorporation of wildlife health into the veterinary teaching curriculum to provide continuing education opportunities for Russian veterinarians.

## **3. Project Purpose and Outputs**

- The purpose of the project is to contribute to long-term biodiversity conservation in the Russian Far East by developing local capacity in wildlife health surveys and monitoring and, in the shorter term, to the conservation of the critically-endangered Amur leopard by conducting disease survey work on wild and captive leopard populations, on their prey in the wild, and on domestic animals suspected of passing diseases on to wild cat populations. There are only about 30 Amur leopards remaining in the wild and over 100 in the managed zoo programme. This wildlife health-based investigation is necessary as a first step towards the establishment, through reintroduction, of a new wild leopard population, which has been clearly identified as an urgent and necessary conservation action. A strategy for reintroduction will be a key output of the proposed project. The project logical framework is included as an appendix.
- Because of the delay caused by the original project manager's illness and the lengthy visa process the new project start date was set as January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2006. This change of starting date was approved by the Darwin Secretariat in November 2005.

#### 4. Progress

- The project just started in January 2006 and the progress made so far is listed in Annex 1. Currently the first session of professional training courses in Ussuriysk and Khabarovsk is being prepared.
- Timetable (work plan) for the next reporting period; April – September, 2006:

Month	Activity
April	First session of professional training in Ussuriysk completed. First session of practical training in Khabarovsk completed.
May	Agreement reached with regional veterinary teaching hospital on terms for creation of WHMU
June	Project Committee established
July	Russian vet counterpart to work with Claudia Schoene identified and engaged
August	Brochure promoting the project produced and circulated.
September	Veterinary Diagnostic Lab capable of conducting analyses of biological samples from leopards, prey species and domestic cats and dogs

#### 5. Actions taken in response to previous reviews (if applicable)

- N/A

#### 6. Partnerships

- Both, the Primorskaya State Agricultural Academy and the WCS Russia office have been instrumental in supporting the establishment of the Amur Leopard Project (ALP) in Ussuriysk as well as in providing logistical support and in introducing the project manager to further collaborative partner organizations and other institutions and individuals who will be important for the future work of the ALP in the Primorski Krai region.
- Further links have been established between the ALP and Phoenix, a Russian NGO focusing on conservation education in Primorski Krai, and between ALP and WWF Russia. Furthermore, contact has been established between the ALP and the Lazovsky State Nature Zapovednik (Reserve) one of the possible release sites for reintroduction of

a second Amur leopard population, as well as with the “Scent Dog Monitoring of Amur Tigers” Project based at Lazovsky State Nature Zapovednik. The expertise of the latter will be used to train the dog of the ALP project manager to locate leopard scat and hence support the efforts of collecting biological samples from the remaining wild leopard population in Primorski Kari.

## **7. Impact and Sustainability**

Our project will contribute to sustainable livelihoods in the host country by:

- Enabling promotion of the Russian Far East as a hotspot for Russia’s only tigers and leopards which has potential for the development of ecotourism
- Identifying diseases in domestic animals and commercially exploited wild animals (deer farms) therefore providing a clear picture of appropriate prophylactic actions to improve their productivity, for example to control possible zoonoses.
- Providing government and private veterinarians in the region with a high standard of training and a permanent wildlife health monitoring centre, both of which will be instrumental in improving farm animal veterinary practice in the area, and will also provide improved employment prospects within the veterinary.

Since the project only started in January 2006 evidence for increasing interest and capacity for biodiversity is just starting to emerge:

Due to the establishment and support of the Darwin Initiative ZSL-Amur Leopard Project as a collaborating partner the Primorskaya State Agricultural Academy is currently developing a curriculum for a “Diploma Course in Wildlife Diseases” as an elective and additional specialisation for their veterinary students during their five-year study of veterinary medicine at the Regional Veterinary Teaching Hospital. The Academy is furthermore applying for the official registration of this diploma course with the relevant Government authorities in Moscow.

As part of a viable exit strategy for the project the analysis functions of the Wildlife Health Monitoring Unit (WHMU), i. e. the diagnostic laboratory for the analysis of all collected animal samples, which will be established at the Ussuriysk Veterinary Teaching Hospital, will be set up to be commercially viable and a business plan will be produced for the WHMU. The activities of WHMU beyond the project period will be linked to on-going activities of ZSL, WCS Russia and other international conservation organizations in the RFE and to appropriate international agencies overseas (e.g. FAO, WHO). Continuation of project benefits regarding Amur leopard conservation is highly significant: the wildlife and captive leopard health assessment will form one of the foundations of the strategy for reintroduction

of Amur leopards in their former range. In addition, the project will contribute to the proposed Amur leopard reintroduction through provision of local capacity for ongoing monitoring of the health status of local wildlife and released leopards.

## 8. Outputs, Outcomes and Dissemination

- The ALP project manager has given one presentation to veterinary students of the Regional Veterinary Teaching Hospital of the Primorskaya State Agricultural Academy on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2006. During this presentation the background, purpose and outputs of the ALT were explained and respective questions to the exact role of the ALP and its collaboration with the Academy were answered.
- Both, the establishment of the WHMU and of the “Diploma course in Wildlife Diseases” at the Primorskaya State Agricultural Academy will ensure that the analysis of collected animal samples and the training of local veterinarians in the areas of wildlife health and related issues will continue when the project finishes.
- **Table 1. Project Outputs (According to Standard Output Measures) N/A**

Code No.	Description	Year 1 Total	Year 2 Total	Year 3 Total	Year 4 Total	TOTAL
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- **Table 2: Publications N/A**

Type *	Detail	Publishers	Available from	Cost £
(e.g. journals, manual, CDs)	(title, author, year)	(name, city)	(e.g. address, website)	contact

## 9. Project Expenditure

- **Table 3: Project expenditure during the reporting period (Defra Financial Year 01 April to 31 March)**

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## 10. Monitoring, Evaluation and Lessons

- N/A

## 11. OPTIONAL: Outstanding achievements of your project during the reporting period (300-400 words maximum) N/A

### ■ I agree for ECTF and the Darwin Secretariat to publish the content of this section

In this section you have the chance to let us know about outstanding achievements of your project over the year that you consider worth highlighting to ECTF and the Darwin Secretariat. This could relate to achievements already mentioned in this report, on which you would like to expand further, or achievements that were in addition to the ones planned and deserve particular attention e.g. in terms of best practice. The idea is to use this section for various promotion and dissemination purposes, including e.g. publication in the Defra Annual Report, Darwin promotion material, or on the Darwin website. As we will not be able to ask projects on an individual basis for their consent to publish the content of this section, please note the above agreement clause.

N/A

Annex 1 Report of progress and achievements against Logical Framework for Financial Year: 2005/2006

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Progress and Achievements April 2005-Mar 2006	Actions required/planned for next period
<p><b>Goal:</b> To draw on expertise relevant to biodiversity from within the United Kingdom to work with local partners in countries rich in biodiversity but poor in resources to achieve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The conservation of biological diversity,</li> <li>• The sustainable use of its components, and</li> <li>• The fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Purpose</b> Biodiversity conservation in the RFE enhanced by developing local capacity to conduct wildlife health surveys and monitoring and by assessing the health status of Amur leopards, of their prey, and of domestic animals suspected of passing diseases on to wild cat populations as the basis for improved strategies for long-term wildlife health monitoring and management, and disease risk management in Amur leopard reintroduction.</p>	<p>Wildlife health and disease status of leopards, prey and domestic animals assessed by Year 3</p> <p>Evidence of improved wildlife health monitoring in Russian vets by Year 3</p> <p>Strategies developed by end of Year 3 for long-term wildlife health monitoring and management, and for possible leopard reintroduction programme</p>	<p>ZSL and partner organisation reports</p> <p>Wildlife health monitoring reports</p> <p>Disease transmission limitation strategy and leopard reintroduction strategy</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Outputs</b></p>			
<p>Capacity of vets in the RFE to address wildlife health issues increased</p>	<p>Approx. 110 students trained over three years through a total of 15 weeks of training workshops. Each student will receive 3-5 weeks of training.</p>	<p>The first workshop is being prepared for the period of April 10<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup>, 2006</p>	<p>N/A</p>



Health status assessed of leopards, their prey, domestic cats and dogs, and of health threats to wild leopards.	Approx 600 samples (from approx 6 species) collected and processed Prevalence and incidence of approx 15 diseases documented.	N/A	N/A
WHMU established in Ussuriysk.	All staff and equipment in place and unit fully functional by Year 3.	Preliminary discussions have taken place with the Regional Veterinary Teaching Hospital concerning the establishment of WHMU at the Veterinary Faculty.	N/A
Strategies developed to monitor and limit disease transmission and for possible reintroduction programme.	2 strategies formulated and distributed by the end of Year 3.	N/A	N/A

*Note: Please do NOT expand rows to include activities since their completion and outcomes should be reported under the column on progress and achievements at output and purpose levels.*

Annex 2 Logical Framework of the Amur Leopard Project

<i>Project summary</i>	<i>Measurable indicators</i>	<i>Means of verification</i>	<i>Important assumptions</i>
<p>Goal:</p> <p>To draw on expertise relevant to biodiversity from within the United Kingdom to work with local partners in countries rich in biodiversity but poor in resources to achieve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the conservation of biological diversity,</li> <li>• the sustainable use of its components, and</li> <li>• the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources</li> </ul>			
<p>Purpose</p> <p>Biodiversity conservation in the RFE enhanced by developing local capacity to conduct wildlife health surveys and monitoring and by assessing the health status of Amur leopards, of their prey, and of domestic animals suspected of passing diseases on to wild cat populations as the basis for improved strategies for long-term wildlife health monitoring and management, and disease risk management in Amur leopard reintroduction.</p>	<p>Wildlife health and disease status of leopards, prey and domestic animals assessed by Year 3.</p> <p>Evidence of improved wildlife health monitoring in Russian vets by Year 3.</p> <p>Strategies developed by end of Year 3 for long-term wildlife health monitoring and management, and for possible leopard reintroduction programme.</p>	<p>ZSL and partner organisation reports.</p> <p>Wildlife health monitoring reports.</p> <p>Disease transmission limitation strategy and leopard reintroduction strategy.</p>	<p>Sampling effort successful.</p> <p>Sampling effort successful.</p> <p>Local authorities collaborative and supportive of leopard conservation Broad consensus can be reached among all stakeholders on appropriate next steps.</p>

<p>Outputs</p> <p>Capacity of vets in the RFE to address wildlife health issues increased</p> <p>Health status assessed of leopards, their prey, domestic cats and dogs, and of health threats to wild leopards.</p>	<p>Approx 110 students trained over three years through a total of 15 weeks of training workshops. Each student will receive 3-5 weeks of training.</p> <p>Approx 600 samples (from approx 6 species) collected and processed</p> <p>Prevalence and incidence of approx 15 diseases documented</p>	<p>Training workshop reports (including evaluations by participants)</p> <p>Reports on analyses conducted in RFE and overseas</p> <p>Project reports and scientific publications</p>	<p>Partner institutions collaborative and logistical problems overcome</p> <p>Necessary agreements reached with all parties</p> <p>Sampling effort successful</p> <p>Journal editor(s) interested</p>
<p>WHMU established in Ussuriysk</p>	<p>All staff and equipment in place and unit fully functional by Year 3</p>		
<p>Strategies developed to monitor and limit disease transmission and for possible reintroduction programme.</p>	<p>2 strategies formulated and distributed by the end of Year 3</p>	<p>Strategy documents in English and Russian versions</p>	<p>Local authorities and other stakeholders supportive of leopard conservation</p>