



WWF

NEWSLETTER

Apr-Jun

2013

Species

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ALL PARTNERS TOGETHER FOR GIANT PANDAS



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On April 26th, WWF Xi'an Programme Office has organized a joint workshop, on the 2014 to 2016 work planning of Qinling giant panda & giant panda habitat conservation, with its local partners in Shaanxi Province. More than 50 conservation project

managers and representatives from Qinling giant panda conservation network (within which there are more than 20 nature reserves and forest farms) and the relevant administrators from Shaanxi Forestry Department have participated in this activity.

During this meeting, WWF and all the participants have, firstly, reviewed major progress and achievements of Qinling conservation programme in the past 3 years. Then, WWF has shared and introduced its updated conservation initiatives in the

upcoming years. Participants have also discussed the current threats and challenges on panda and panda habitat conservation in the Qinling Mountains, such as ineffective habitat management, road impacts, unsustainable community development, as well as the possible negative influences of mass tourism development and

climate change issues. Meanwhile, in order to better guide and facilitate project development in the future, WWF has also formed and introduced an 'Advisory Board' to its partners. This Board of Advisors is a team of 9 members, consists of professionals, scholars and experts with different contributions to panda and panda habitat

conservation. WWF hopes that through this workshop the local stakeholders and partners could be more engaged in WWF's coming stage panda conservation planning in Qinling landscape and have strengthening cooperation to respond each of the challenges under WWF's panda programme framework.

COOKSTOVE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT LAUNCHED, NINGSHAN COUNTY, SHAANXI PROVINCE



© WWF China/Liu Junli.

On May 10th, WWF and the People's Government of Ningshan County have made a cooperation agreement on the Project "Cookstove Improvement for the Communities Surrounding Giant Panda Habitat in Ningshan County".

Guests and participants on this project launching ceremony

included: Peter Beaudoin (WWF China Chief Executive Officer), Li Lin (WWF China Chief Conservation Director), Tang Zhouhuai (Deputy Director of Shaanxi Forestry Department) and Tian Xin (Deputy Head of the People's Government of Ningshan County) as well as representatives

from the local communities, Shaanxi Huangguanshan Nature Reserve and WWF Xi'an Programme Office team. During this event, WWF China Chief Executive Officer and the Deputy Head of the People's Government of Ningshan County have signed the agreement contract. This project

started from June and will be finished by the end of 2014. About 1300 to 1400 cookstoves will be rebuilt or modified in 14 community villages in Ningshan County.

With the upcoming project implementation, WWF estimate that, more than 6000 hectare of forest in Qinling giant panda conservation areas will be saved;

over 1300 labors will be freed from traditional fuel wood logging; and about 1300 house wives' health will be cared by cooking in clean and smoke-free kitchens. Moreover, more than 8000 tons of CO2 emission will be reduced.

WWF hopes that the project can be a great demonstration, to illustrate how government (from

national level to local level), NGO, communities and individual households can work together to meet the global environmental challenges we have today. Also, WWF hoped that this partnership and community-driven strategy can accelerate conservations on forests, waters, biological diversities, and other natural resources in different areas.

RETRIEVING WILDLIFE INFORMATION IN QINLING GIANT PANDA CORRIDOR AREA



Collecting memory card. © WWF China/Hao Liang.

From April to June, a group of conservation managers and staffs from Huangguanshan nature reserve, Pingheliang nature reserve, Tianhuashan nature reserve, according to the work plan, started

to check and collect information from more than 40 camera traps that have been placed in Caiziping panda corridor in East Qinling.

In every session of this information collection activity, people have

checked cameras working conditions, retrieved digital information, readjusted some camera's location and replaced batteries; also, updated and documented the environment



Top: Vegetation and camera working state investigation. Bottom: Animal transect investigation. @WWF China/Hao Liang.

information around the camera site. For each and every day, these field staffs have to depart from the closest village early in the morning, traveling within the forests and reaching out to cameras at different places, bringing back newly captured information at dusk. During this period, they have collected a great amount of animal information, and some of this information is the first time to be seen on pictures. Besides, all the information is recorded into the database and will be used in the future for biodiversity monitoring of the region.

Background information: From March 30th to April 2nd, WWF has organized a camera traps application training programme for its partners in Qinling giant panda conservation network, and also donated more than 100 cameras at the meantime. Sooner after this training, Tianhuashan nature reserve, Huangguanshan nature reserve and Pingheliang nature reserve have departed to the field to have the cameras setup in the region.

ECODUCT PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Since early 2012, WWF has initiated a pilot experiment on the construction of wildlife crossings in Qinling in association with Shaanxi Institute of Zoology and Guanyinshan Nature Reserve. The project selected a country road, Dongliang road, within Guanyinshan nature reserve as the research object. By now, the project

has already finished the studies and researches on the distribution of wild animals in the area, the evaluation of the roadway impacts, and the identification of possible animal passages along the roadway. The feasibility study has identified 11 sites along the road that can be utilized for wildlife crossing, among which 7 are culverts and

river crossings, and another 4 are overpasses. Besides, 10 warning signs will be put up to instruct vehicles that drive along this road.

It is also worth mentioning that, the construction and use of roads is a direct source of habitat fragmentation, which subdivide wildlife populations into smaller and more vulnerable



Culvert for animals. © WWF China.

sub-populations. In China, the study on detrimental wildlife impacts of roads and traffic is still at the beginning stage, and few experimental researches have conducted on established roadways. WWF hopes that, with WWF network and research institutions support, this small scale preliminary study and demonstration would help to

reinforce the work on mitigating road impacts, and to reduce the threat of habitat fragmentation for better panda and biodiversity conservation in the Qinling Mountains.

Background Information: Dongliang road is a country road, covering a total of 14.1 kilometres, in the northwest of Guanyinshan

nature reserve. The road connects Donghetai village to Liangfengya (in Foping nature reserve), and supports the economies of the communities. Since the discovery of giant living in this area and the establishment of the Guanyinshan nature reserve, the road has become a major path for panda and panda habitat conservation.

BAISHUIHE NATURE RESERVE ENVIRONMENT EDUCATION CENTER



Baishuihe Nature Reserve Environment Education Center. @WWF China.

June 2013, Baishuihe Nature Reserve Environment Education Center, sponsored by WWF and VANCL Corporation, welcomed the first group of visitors, who were the leaders from WWF, VANCL, Sichuan Forestry Department and Baishuihe Nature Reserve. This building that designed and constructed by Dr. Zhu JingXiang from Hongkong Chinese University, was built with the pre-construction and light-steel system. This system was capable to reduce the resourcesconsumption and save the energy. Moreover, as Baishuihe Nature Reserve was located in the Longmenshan Mountain, the seismic zone, the building had high anti-quake capacity.

Baishuihe Nature Reserve Environment Education Center was the third education center supported by WWF for panda conservation in Sichuan Province. It would promote the education of biodiversity conservation to the tourists and the nearby communities.

ALLIANCE ACTION OF ANTI-POACHING IN HUANGTULIANG CORRIDOR



The patrolling team in the forest. © Sichuan Forestry Department.

On May 9th, 2013, the annual anti-poaching action was carried out in Huangtuliang corridor, the key area connecting the biggest wild panda group (Minshan Group A), by Wanglang Nature Reserve, allied with Forest Police Bureau of Pingwu County, Baishuijiang Nature Reserve, Wujiao Nature Reserve, etc. Through the action, the law enforcement was strengthened against poaching and illegal NTFP collecting in this area.

Panda corridor is the linkage areas for wild panda and other

animals to seasonally transfer from different landscapes. It plays tremendous role in reproduction for wild panda and other animals. Huangtuliang corridor is located in the junction areas of Pingwu County, Jiuzhai County and Wenxian County. According to the research, Huangtuliang corridor is the key area connecting the biggest wild panda group (Minshan Group A). Since 2003, WWF has been supporting the effective management of Huangtuliang corridor, such as monitoring and

patrolling, vegetation rehabilitation, public communication, etc.

During the action, two temporary tents where the collectors of wild Chinese medicinal herbs stayed, 9 sets of hunting tools and 7 sets of collecting tools were destroyed. Thanks to the yearly action, the conservation awareness of communities has been gradually strengthened. It would contribute to the effective management of Huangtuliang corridor to protect the habitat for the biggest group of wild pandas

PROGRESS ACHIEVEMENT ON COLLECTIVE FOREST MANAGEMENT

In early 2012, WWF has setup a 3000mu (200 hectare) demonstration zone composed of the collective forests of the six households in Donghe village within Qinling giant panda corridor area. This is one of the top actions on the management plan that was developed by WWF for the 1400ha collective forests of the whole village.

In late 2012, the nature reserve signed agreement with each of the households, and comprehensive measures have been implemented to conserve this specific area.

Within this area, 180mu gap area is planted with bamboos in this spring; by manual method, 300mu is tended to facilitate natural forest regeneration and the well growth; 4 households are supported with Polyporus (high-value Chinese medicine) cultivation underneath the forest ground, with a total area of 2000 square meters; as an alternative livelihood method, 22 households are supported with bee-keeping facilities and techniques, with over 900 boxes being placed. In addition, the monitoring on the forest quality (as panda habitat) and the livelihood improvement is carrying on. The combined practice within the demonstration zone has been highly recognized by local communities and the local government, which also helped the project area to leverage the eco-compensation fund from the government. In the future, WWF hopes that this demonstration work can be magnified in a larger area in Qinling giant panda landscape.

Top: Handing-out bee-keeping materials; Middle: Planting polyporus; Bottom: Checking forest growth state. @ Guanyinshan Nature Reserve.



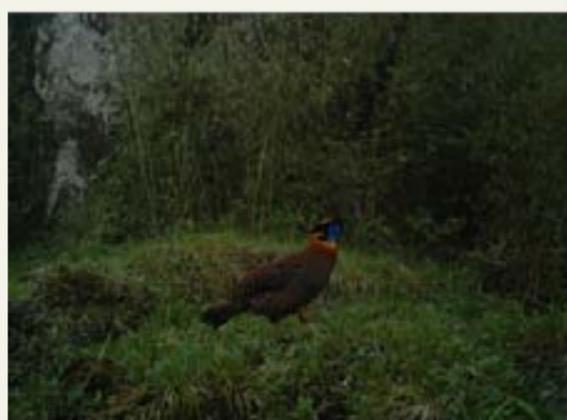
PANDA CAPTURED ON FILM IN NATIONAL ROAD 108 QINLING TUNNEL CORRIDOR AREA



Captured Time: 2013/05/07 00:58:13 @WWF China.

Camera traps deployed on the northwest of Dongliang road (in Guanyinshan Nature Reserve) have retrieved two pictures of a panda, as well as many other animals in the area. The camera traps were placed in the area in April in order to get photographic evidence of animal movement in the area.

From early 2012, WWF, in cooperation with Guanyinshan nature reserve, has setup 15 infra-red cameras and 10 manual transects to track wildlife activities in this habitat restoration region. In the past, there were only tracks found. This is the first time that we have photographic evidence of pandas at this site.



Other captured wild animals on this same site include black bear, Serow, Takin, Yellow-throated Marten, Temminck's Tragopan, Golden Pheasant and Koklass Pheasant.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special thanks to WWF Netherlands, WWF-Switzerland, Fondazione Zegna and EU for their financial supports to the Qinling Project Phase III, WWF UK, WWF US, WWF Germany and WWF Sweden for their financial supports of Minshan Initiative, and WWF Netherlands, WWF UK, WWF US, WWF Germany, WWF Sweden, WWF Switzerland and WWF Canada for their supports of the Green Heart of China Programme. Sincere thanks to the Coca-Cola Company for WWF-TCCC Partnership, WWF Network and WWF-US Humanitarian Partnership Programme for making efforts to post-disaster reconstruction plans, and Carrefour for Sustainable Management and Development Project for Medicinal Plant Resources.

	<p>Why we are here To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature. www.panda.org</p>
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