



for a living planet®

8. Creating a model of sustainable use of fisheries in delta lakes of the Syrdaria River.

9. Development of rural tourism: organization of a model tourist center with the establishment of the initial infrastructure.

10. Development of the WWF Forest School in the village of Abay through the construction of a greenhouse to produce sampling for the restoration of wild fruit forests of Karatau.

11. Reduced pressure on the ecosystems of Karatau Mountains through alternative ways of cattle-breeding: demonstration sites.

12. Impulsive irrigation for planting wild fruit forests of Turkestan region

Capacity building, ecological education and awareness raising

Three new Kids Clubs were established during the period of project implementation: in the settlement Abai, town Kentau and town Turkestan.

There are not less than 50 participants in each Club; by-law documents; each Club has developed its Action Plan. Funding is provided from the project on practical development of various activities of the Kids Clubs.

As one of the Small Grants of QWWF, a Greenhouse has been built in Abai settlement in order to support the development of the Forestry School of the Kids Club of WWF friends.

The Greenhouse is equipped with a drip irrigation system, heated floor, ventilation system. It is used for growth

of transplants in a closed rootage system.

The greenhouse has been built by a group of specialists on the renewable sources of energy of the Center of Ecological bio-physics of the Kazakhstan State University, Almaty.

Establishment of three new NGOs supported:

- NGO "Biogen",
- NGO "Jaiylma",
- NGO "Karatau".

Establishment of an EONET model as a Web of life in Turkestan region – is the major goal of the WWF project

WWF – is one of the World's largest and most experienced independent conservation organizations, with almost 5 million supporters and a global network active in more than 100 countries.

WWF's mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature, by:

- conserving the world's biological diversity
- ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable
- promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption



Photo on the cover sheet – T.Bragina

For additional information please contact:

Dr. Olga Pereladova, The head of WWF Central Asian Programme;

e-mail: opereladova@wwf.ru;

Prof. Tatiana Bragina – senior coordinator of WWF projects in the Republic of Kazakhstan;

e-mail: naurzum@mail.ru

More information about WWF and Central Asian programme is presented on the website: <http://www.wwf.ru>

RIPARIAN FORESTS OF SYRDARIA AND KARATAU MOUNTAINS - UNIQUE NATURE COMPLEXES OF THE EARTH



WWF Projects: Biodiversity preservation and integrated river basin development in the Syrdaria river valley of Kazakhstan

A concept and scheme of Ecological network (ECONET) was developed in the frame of UNEP/GEF/WWF Project "ECONET – Central Asia". Integrated analysis of satellite images, variable data on biodiversity, socio-economic development of the territories was used as the base for Econet scheme development. It was suggested as the major background for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of nature resources in the Region of Central Asia.

ECONET is a joint system of core areas - protected areas of high status, ecological corridors and buffer zones. The Econet scheme was officially approved in all countries

of Central Asia.

This scheme allowed identifying key territories, protection and sustainable development of which is critically important for the conservation of integral biodiversity of the Planet. One of the most valuable territories in Kazakhstan is the Syrdaria river valley and Karatau Mountains. This area was chosen as a pilot territory for the WWF project on ECONET implementation – in order to establish a model of ecological network for supporting biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of nature resources.

Syrdaria is one of the two major rivers of Central Asia. Its ecosystems less suffered from exhausting resources use



for a living planet™



Nature of the Syrdaria river valley and Karatau mountains is unique, great variety of species, inhabiting this area and highly valuable in the scale of the whole Planet.



and high population density, then any other river system of the region.

Karatau Mountains and surrounding ecosystems constitute a single ecological complex of Syrdaria watershed. Stability of this region and sustainable development of ecosystems are vitally important for ensuring the economical development of the local communities.

WWF Central Asian Programme started implementation of the project "Biodiversity preservation and integrated river basin development in the Syrdaria river valley of Kazakhstan" in 2007. The project is a funded by MFA/WWF Norway and WWF Netherlands.

The project is aimed on the establishment of a base for sustainable river basin management, environment conservation and restoration of natural ecosystems in the Syrdaria river basin and Syrdaria section of the Karatau Mountains. The project supports a number of major activities: establishment of a system of new protected areas of different status; restoration of populations of the "flagship species" – Bukhara red deer and Karatausski argali; development of various forms of sustainable land- and nature-resources use in the regions, identified as important ecological corridors and buffer zones; coordination of activities with and capacity building of local communities and regionally based NGOs.

To save Bukhara red deer – "Kings flower"

There were only 350-400 Bukhara deer in Central Asia in 1999, while according to the data of 2009 year census their number already exceeded 1400 animals. Since 2000 WWF supports various activities on Bukhara deer restoration – or "Kings' Flower" as its local name (Hangul) is translated.

Reintroduction

Reintroduction is returning of Bukhara deer in nature – to the ecosystems, which had been inhabited by them till the mid of XX-th century. Turkestan is one of the suitable places for this purpose in Kazakhstan.

WWF supported building of pens and infrastructure constriction in order to ensure protection, taking care and observations of animals. During the latest years running the maintenance of animals in the pens is to a great extent funded by the Forest and Hunting Committee (FHC) of the Ministry of Agriculture of Kazakhstan and Government of the South-Kazakhstan oblast. In winter 209-2010 a catch, delivery and release in the nature of the additional group of animals was fully supported by FHC. Thanks to the initiative

of the regional administration, a sanctuary is in process of establishment including 2169 ha of the area of first deer releases. Further on the territory of the sanctuary would become a part of Syrdaria cluster of the planned Turkestanskii state national nature park, which would ensure sustainable restoration of the Syrdaria population of Bukhara deer (Hangul).

Conservation of Karatau argali

Various argali in habit different territories of Kazakhstan: Syrdaria section of Karatau Mountains, Tian-Shan, Djungarskii Alatau, Trabagatai, Saura, Kalbinskii and Southern Altai, Tchu-Ili Mountains, Kazakhstan upland. Unlimited argali hunting and destruction of their habitats lead to a serious decrease of numbers and cutting down of the area inhabited by this species in Kazakhstan. Thanks to special conservation measures a sustainable tendency of argali restoration was registered since the end of 1980-th.

Karatau argali is the most rare and threatened subspecies in the country. Tendency on its' population restoration started to be registered only since the establishment of Karatausski zapovednik, and further positive development is connected with application of special measured for its protection, implemented in the frame of WWF project. In order to achieve sustainable restoration of Karatau argali population it is planned to establish Turkestanskii state national nature park (Karatausski cluster). This initiative is fully supported by the regional and governmental authorities.



In order to improve the existing system of protected areas:

Special survey of the area conducted, recommendation for the integrated river basin management prepared. Plans of sustainable nature resource-use in ecological corridors and buffer zones developed and submitted to the relevant administrative bodies. Documentation prepared for improving the system of protected area (core zones of



ECONET of the project area), including establishment of the new PAs of high categories. It is submitted to the relevant regional, district and national bodies and is passing the process of official evaluation/adoption. Integrated plans of ecological management of Turkestanskii region are in process of development/evaluation.

In order to develop the network of specially protected nature territories of various statuses in the region:

The Nature Scientific Background (NSB) and



Technical-Economic Background (TEB) developed for the establishment of Syrdaria state nature complex sanctuary of the regional status;

The possibility of establishment of the Turkestanskii State National Natural Park (TSNNP) agreed

with the administration and the Major of the South-Kazakhstan region and of Turkestan, with the Forest and Hunting Committee (FHC) of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan and with various regional stakeholders. Special expedition was organized and materials collected and proceeded and used as a base for the development of the Nature Scientific Background of the Turkestanskii State National Natural Park;

the Nature Scientific Background developed of the Kyzylkum State Nature Complex Preserve of the Governmental level with indefinite duration of existence;

Proposal prepared for the development of ecological corridors and improving the system of protected areas and ECONET establishment of the Turkestanskii region.

Involvement of local communities in the project implementation.

Models of sustainable nature resource use – the base for long-term well-being and development.

In order to raise capacity and for the awareness raising – a special programme of trainings and practical actions is developed, aimed on various aspects of the integrated river basin management and sustainable nature resource use. Administrative staff, NGOs, representatives of local communities participated in these trainings.

WWF small grant programme

As an important part of WWF project, Small Grant programme was announced and a competitive selection was completed in order to choose projects aimed on practical implementation of the models of sustainable resource use by local communities and supporting conservation of unique ecosystems of the region: riparian forests of Syrdaria and Karatau mountains.

Over 40 representatives of NGOs, associations of farmers and water users, scientific and environmental organizations that are actively dealing with biodiversity and sustainable development have participated in the first two rounds of small grants programme in the project area. Currently the following projects are funded:

1. Creating estuary grasslands to preserve riparian forest of Syrdaria a in Turkestan district of South Kazakhstan oblast.
2. Ecotourism development and preparation of tourist routes in the Hantagi gorge.
3. Conservation of ordinary minnow (marinka) populations in the Bozbutak River with the construction of tanks for rearing fry.
4. Preservation and restoration of the population of Asiatic poplar in the Syrdaria River delta through the establishment of a sanctuary and special nursery.
5. Creating a school nursery for breeding of rare, endangered and Red List species of trees and shrubs of Karatau. Development of education module in applied botany for schoolchildren.
6. Producing national handicraft and their sale.
7. Identification of the range and finding ways of reproduction of ex situ and in situ Allohuza kachimovidoja (Turkestan soap-root).