



WWF

NEWSLETTER

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Panda eco-houses in Laoxiancheng Nature Reserve. © WWF/Wang Lixia.

## Species

# THE BEST NEW YEAR GIFT: 500 KG OF RHUBARB ORDERED

December 2012, 500kg of Traditional Chinese Medicine, Rhubarb was ordered from Qinglong village of Pingwu county, Sichuan Province by the local Chinese medicine dealer. It was the first order of Qinglong communities. This order was definitely the best new year gift.

WWF Chengdu office and Carrefour support Qinglong village developing the sustainable Traditional Chinese Medicine harvesting, in basis of the market oriented mechanism, in order to increase the income of local communities, reduce the consumption of forest land; control the soil erosion, etc. Moreover, as the Qinglong village is nearby the Xiaohegou Nature Reserve that is the habitat of wild pandas, the project will finally contribute to the panda conservation.

After the traditional Chinese New Year, more Qinglong people will attend the workshops on technical training with support by WWF Chengdu office. Furthermore, some new marketing tools will be introduced to them, like e-commerce. This would be a challenge, but also a great opportunity to them.



A villager collecting the Rhubarb. © WWF.

## BAISHUIHE ENVIRONMENT EDUCATION CENTER

In this freezing and hazy winter, a red building located in the hillside was standing out from the woods in Baishuihe Nature Reserve. When we got closed to it, we found that it was still on construction. This building is going to be the Baishuihe Environment Education Center, which was financially supported by Vancl. WWF Chengdu office cooperated with School of Architecture, The Chinese University of Hongkong to build the center.

Zhang DongGuang, from The Chinese University of Hongkong, was responsible for the construction of this building. He said: "We just put on a suit of warm-up on this building." The red layer of the building was the insulation layer, which enabled the build to keep the certain temperature even without the extra energy. This building was constructed by the environment-friendly light steel with energy-saving architectonic.

The education center was expected to show the abundance of wildlife animal and natural landscape in the nature reserve, help explore the importance of bio-diversity and support the region's wildlife protection work. Moreover, BRNNR will become the demonstration center of nature education in Minshan landscape.

The construction of main body was almost finished, and the center would be open after layout in the beginning of 2013.



*Baishuihe environment education center. © WWF.*

## AN INTERMEDIATE REVIEW ON THE 4TH NATIONAL GIANT PANDA SURVEY

An intermediate review was conducted to the 4th national giant panda survey during December 18-19, 2012. Around 50 panda experts and officials participated this review workshop. The objective of this workshop is to review the 4th national giant panda survey work progress, and find out the key issues as well as solutions, and then arrange the next year workplan for this national survey.

Shaanxi, Sichuan and Gansu Forestry departments reported their survey work progress, and Institute of Zoology, the Chinese Academy of Sciences, reported the DNA analysis.

Currently, the 4th national giant panda survey has been smoothly implemented. Sichuan Province has initiated its survey on October 31, 2012, Shaanxi Province on December 22, 2011, and Gansu Province on May 10, 2012. So far as now, Sichuan Province has done 68% of its field survey, Shaanxi and Gansu Provinces have finished all giant panda population survey in the wild.

The drafts of Data Management Guideline for the 4th National Giant Panda Survey and Report Outline for the 4th National Giant Panda Survey were also discussed on the workshop.

According the expected plan, the final survey report will be delivered by end of 2014.



*The intermediate review on the 4th national giant panda survey. © WWF/Chang Youde.*

## PANDA CLUB MEETING FOR THE NEXT PANDA PROGRAMME



*Panda club meeting for the next panda programme. © WWF/Hao Liang.*

On October 7th, WWF Panda Programme Team and the Panda Club members travelled to Laoxiancheng Nature Reserve in the Qinling Mountains. The meeting was held in WWF-supported South Taibaishan Environmental Education Center. During the 5-day meeting, the team reviewed the evaluation report to the current panda programme, the achievements on panda and habitat conservation in the last ten years and over Phase II in particular. The threats and challenges were re-examined, and based on this the strategies for next phase were developed and discussed amongst the panda programme team and

the panda club members. It is agreed that the inappropriate habitat management practices, infrastructures, mass tourism, community activities and the likely climate change are still the top threats or challenges to panda and its habitat conservation in the coming future.

Over next phase, WWF panda programme team will be implementing the relevant strategies to mitigate or to adapt these traditional or arising issues to sustain the viable population of wild pandas and the function of their habitat.

### Additional Information:

In 2007, WWF integrated the panda conservation across the three provinces and named it “Green Heart of China Project,” which aims to increase protection of panda habitat and associated ecosystems by promoting the development of an integrated landscape conservation and sustainable development for the upper Yangtze River Basin.

## WILDLIFE ECODUCT HANDBOOK DEVELOPMENT

In November 2012, in cooperation with Shaanxi Institute of Zoology and infrastructure design agencies, WWF has started Wildlife Ecoduct (or wildlife crossing) Guidebook development, which is expected to be finished in April of 2013 by translating the two manuals of best practices in EU and US in combination with the domestic field work in China. The intention to develop this 'Wildlife Ecoduct Guidebook' is that stakeholders could have more information and access to learn from successful cases abroad; to mobilize more supports in countering the

threats of habitat fragmentation and degradation caused by infrastructure constructions; and in a hope that negative impacts can be reduced.

From 2010, in order to mitigate the impacts of infrastructure constructions on panda habitat in the Qinling Mountains, WWF has designed and implemented a series of projects, including biodiversity monitoring & surveys along Xi'an-Chengdu high-speed railway, the study of wildlife distribution, and the feasibility study on setting up ecoducts along

transport infrastructures, for giant panda habitat restorations in the Qinling Mountains. These projects were highly supported by Shaanxi Forestry Department, Shaanxi Institute of Zoology, nature reserves and some infrastructure design agencies.

After the identification of these impacts, researches and studies should move onto mitigation and remediation solutions, WWF considered that, the development of this handbook will be beneficial to panda and panda habitat conservations in the near future.

## 2013 QINLING NATURE INTERPRETER TRAINING PROGRAMME INITIATION --'QINLING NATURE INTERPRETER HANDBOOK'

On November 23rd 2012, WWF organized a workshop on the compilation of 'Qinling Nature Interpreter Handbook' with Training Station of Shaanxi Forestry Department, as preparation for nature interpreter programme development in Shaanxi province. A group of 13 representatives from nature reserves, forest parks, tourism agencies, human resource and conservation management divisions of Shaanxi Forestry Department have participated in this meeting. On this workshop, WWF and all the participants have discussed and agreed on the function and the components of the handbook. This workshop has improved the communication and cooperation between each organization, and

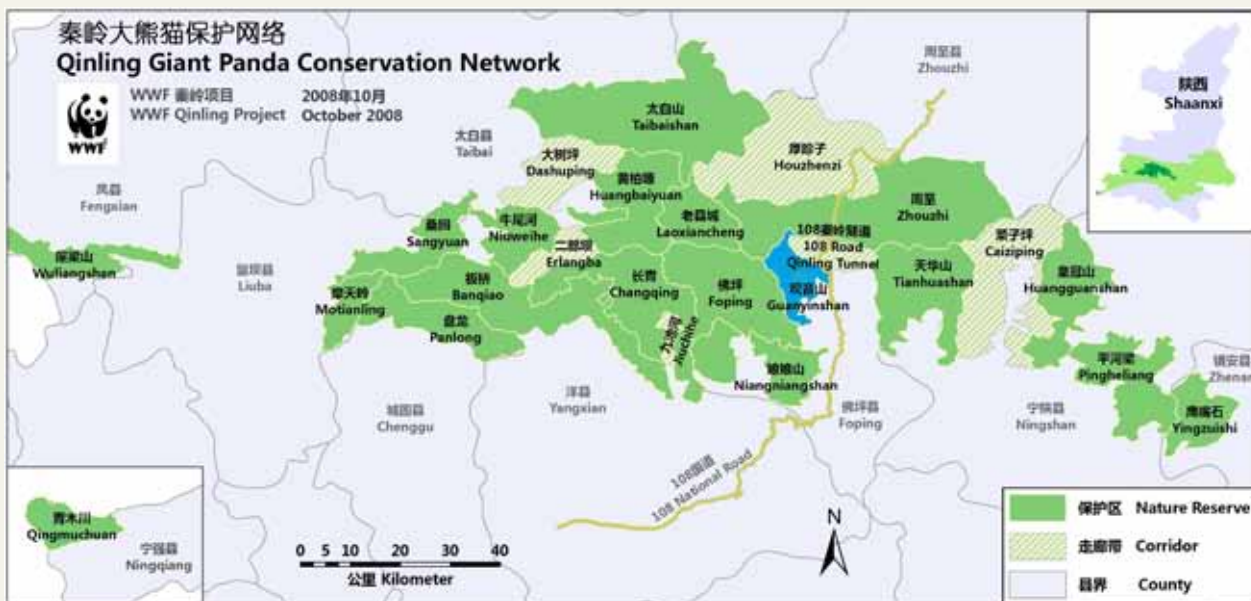
served as a foundation for upcoming training programmes in 2013. In 2012, WWF and Training Station of Shaanxi Forestry Department have discussed and agreed to co-organize the 'Nature Interpreters Training Programme' in the Qinling Mountains. Statistics from earlier surveys and studies showed that this programme development applies to the current eco-tourism development need, and it is also an effective communication tool to promote conservation work and can change tourists' negative behaviours while traveling in Qinling. WWF believes that a good numbers of qualified nature interpreters could help visitors and tourists to learn to love and appreciate nature, to share the knowledge and life experiences in the nature; at the meantime, to

strengthen conservation awareness among groups and individuals. All in all, the ultimate purpose of this programme development is to promote insight, respect, commitment and care for the natural environment.

### Additional Information:

Since the establishment of the first nature reserve in 1965, there are more than 47 nature reserves and 78 forest parks in Shaanxi province. Today, as more and more individuals seeking to get close to nature, nature interpreters can be seen as a group of nature professionals passing on knowledge and life experiences in nature and demonstrating how important a harmonious relationship between man and nature.

# COLLECTIVE FOREST MANAGEMENT DEMONSTRATION PROJECT INITIATION



From November 2012, WWF and Guanyinshan Nature Reserve have initiated a demonstration project on collective forest management. The project has zoned out more than 200ha of collective forests from 6 households in Donghe village. It will be focused on exploring production values under the forest, such as high-value medicinal herb plantation, profitable poultry raise, and other value-added forest products, to showcase how forests can be sustained while making profits. By the end of 2012, the project has already finished inquiries and feasibility study, the development of work plan, and will be working on project implementation in the coming 2013. WWF hopes that social and economic values could work together in the forest, family farms and communities can seek more direct economic benefits; on the other hand, the local community's

knowledge on the significance of sustainable forest management and habitat conservation can be reinforced.

In 2013, WWF and Guanyinshan Nature Reserve will also work together to keep monitoring National road 108 Qinling panda corridor, to collect more data and information on wildlife activities and the effectiveness of bamboo forest restoration. Meanwhile, another 14 ha of bamboos will also be planted in the coming spring in the connecting areas of this corridor. In the middle of 2012, WWF supported Guanyinshan Nature Reserve in developing 'Donghe Collective Forest Management Plan'. With an abundance of interviews and on-spot investigations beforehand, strategies and mitigating solutions were designed to the possible negative impacts of over exploitation of forest resources in

the collective forest area. Zoning out an area for management demonstration is one of the top measures on the Plan.

#### Additional Information:

Guanyinshan Nature Reserve is located on the southern slope of the Qinling Mountains. It connects several pieces of isolated giant panda habitat in Qinling and formed a corridor for the genetic exchange of wildlife. It is a favorable nature environment and migrating corridor for many rare species, such as giant panda, takin, musk deer.

Donghe village has 52 families and is the only village within Guanyinshan Nature Reserve. It has an area of 1466ha collective forest. As a part of panda habitat, keep conserving these forests is essential to panda habitat conservation and the survival of many wild animals and plants.

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