



Panda Report

*July –September, 2002
Species Program
WWF China Programme*

Integrated Conservation and Development Project in Pingwu County (Pingwu ICDP)

Pingwu County is located in the center of the Minshan Mountain panda habitat of Sichuan Province, China. It supports one of the largest panda populations in the world, however, most of the panda's habitat falls outside the county's three panda reserves. These areas are facing growing pressure from local economic development. In order to address the problem, Pingwu ICDP was launched in 1997 to harmonize conservation and development in the region.

Participatory Evaluation of the Pingwu ICDP Completed

As an important example of how sustainable development can be achieved, the Integrated Conservation and Development Project (ICDP) in Pingwu aims to conserve the giant panda population and its habitat while also improving the quality of life for local residents. Since its launch in 1997, Pingwu ICDP has implemented various activities related to reserve management, wildlife protection, ecotourism, social development, environmental education and capacity building. From August to September, an evaluation team of people from WWF, Pingwu County, Mianyang Municipality, Sichuan Forestry Department, Sichuan Forest School carried out a participatory evaluation of the project. The evaluation lasted for 20 days and the report is now under development. This evaluation is not only a summary of ICDP's past 5 years, but also a guide to help develop the new strategy and approach for WWF's panda conservation work in the Minshan Range. The report is expected to be completed in October.

Pingwu Tourism Festival

In order to promote the development of ecotourism in Pingwu County, improve conservation awareness and facilitate cooperation amongst stakeholders, WWF and the Sichuan Provincial Government jointly organized the Pingwu Tourism Festival from September 15 to 18, 2002. Around 10,000 people including delegations from over 10 ethnic groups domestic and international visitors and special guests participated in the festival. During the festival, the organizers discussed the development of ecotourism with specialists from various fields. Achievements of Pingwu ICDP were also introduced to visitors through displays and publications.



Biodiversity Monitoring at Foping National Reserve, Shaanxi Province



Due to serious flooding last June, wildlife monitoring work at Foping National Nature Reserve was postponed to July. The flood has not only resulted in huge economic losses, but also impacted conservation and research work. The two roads leading into the reserve were destroyed. Staff now must walk over 30 km to enter the nature reserve. Most of the roads and bridges inside the reserve were also damaged to some degree, making it difficult to carry out field work.

Foping reserve sent its best research team to conduct wildlife monitoring work one month after the flood. Thirty transects were monitored over 13 days of field work. The team observed 2 pandas, 17 takins, a group of golden monkeys, 29 other wildlife and recorded 97 wildlife traces. Compared with the situation at the same time in past years, there are few differences in the core area and the buffer zone; however, there are less wildlife and traces in the experimental zone. At this time of year, giant pandas have mostly migrated to their summer habitat over 2200m. The monitoring work revealed that their movements are normal, indicating that the flood had little impact on them.



Although all the field stations and basic facilities of the reserve were seriously damaged, monitoring showed that vegetation degradation was not serious, especially at Xihe and Sanguanmiao where forest vegetation has been well preserved. Although no serious damage was found in the major habitat and vegetation, the impact of the flood might still occur at a later stage. Close monitoring and further study is still needed to see whether the flood will unbalance the micro-environment of certain areas, which could cause problems for wildlife.

WWF's Partner Organizes Contest in Sichuan



Located in Pengzhou City, Sichuan Province, Baishuihe Nature Reserve is the closest panda reserve to Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan. The reserve covers an area of 301.5 square kilometers. It was gazetted by the government of Pengzhou City in 1996, and was ratified as a nature reserve at the provincial level by the government of Sichuan Province in 1999. WWF has supported work to improve its management and the management of the experimental zone since 2001. In 2002, the reserve became a National

Nature Reserve under the State Council of China. From August to September, Baishuihe Reserve has carried out a series of communication activities with the support of WWF, including publishing a VCD, setting up signboards and organizing a contest on biodiversity knowledge in Sichuan.

Qinling Panda Focal Project



Xi'an Office in Operation

The Xi'an office of the Qinling Panda Focal Project began operations in the beginning of August. Contact details are as follows:

Room 1811, Zijin Mountain Hotel
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Tel: 86-29-7668892, Tel and fax: 86-29-7668969.

The Houzhenzi Forest Farm (HFF) also established a WWF field office in Houzhenzi and arranged two part-time staff to assist Liu Xiaohai on the ecotourism related module.



From August 19 to 23, a reconnaissance trip was arranged by WWF, Zhouzhi County and Xi'an University of Architecture and Technology to collect baseline information on the design of regional conservation and the tourism master plan. About 10 people from different parties participated in the activities, including Wu Haohan and Liu Xiaohai of the Panda Focal Project team and two reporters from Central China Television Station.

Director General of INBAR visits WWF Project Site

From August 8-11, Dr. Ian Hunter, director general of the International Network for Bamboo and Rattan (INBAR), Dr. Ellen Dierenfeld, American Wildlife Association and Dr. Fu Jinhe of INBAR visited the Qinling Focal project area to explore opportunities for working with WWF. Liu Xiaohai represented WWF's Qinling Focal Project team and gave a presentation on the Qinling Focal project and WWF's efforts on panda conservation and ecotourism development in the Houzhenzi region. The Director General expressed his interest in future cooperation with WWF and his willingness to contribute to Panda conservation in Qinling. Dr. Fu Jinhe visited WWF CPO again on August 26 to discuss ideas for cooperation between him and the WWF Panda focal team. As a result, a concept document based on the discussion was made.



Framework of Integrated Conservation and Tourism Development Master Plan for the Southern Taibaishan Region of Qinling Mountain Range Passes Evaluation



A workshop to evaluate the framework for a regional master plan, called the "Integrated Conservation and Tourism Development Master Plan for the Southern Taibaishan Region of the Qinling Mountains," took place in Xi'an on September 10th, 2002. The workshop was jointly hosted by the Tourism Bureau and Construction Department of Shaanxi Province and organized by the Zhouzhi County Tourism Bureau and the Xi'an University of Architecture, Science and Technology. Participants included specialists on tourism development and design, WWF and the Country Research Committee (CRC) of Australia. The plan is an important step to the success of long-term conservation and tourism development in the region, while preventing negative impacts on the giant panda population and the water resources of Xi'an Municipality. The framework was well received by the participants. The Deputy Director of the Xi'an Tourism Administration commented that this plan is "revolutionary" in the sense that it will lead a new trend of planning for responsible tourism in this area. Journalists from about 10 newspaper and TV stations reported this event.

A stakeholder workshop for module B of the Qinling Panda Focal Project was organized on Sept. 11th. Participants included Zhouzhi County Government, Zhouzhi County Tourism Administration, Laoxiancheng Nature Reserve, Taibaishan National Nature Reserve, Xi'an University of Architecture and Technology and WWF. This is the first of this kind since the launch of the project. All stakeholders reviewed the work in the past few months and planned for the future. It provided an opportunity for all people involved to share their concerns and ideas for development. A committee will be established and meetings will be organized on a regular basis.

Communications Leads To New Investment on Panda Conservation in Qinling

Janssen Pharmaceutical Ltd., a Belgian company based in Xi'an, learned about the existence of pandas in Shaanxi Province through press reports on the launch of WWF's Qinling Focal Project in March. Together with a Belgian zoo, an investment of USD 500,000 has been received for captive panda conservation in Shaanxi. According to the Shaanxi Forestry Department, this is the largest non-governmental investment they have ever received for wildlife conservation. WWF is happy to learn that our work has brought the attention of others agencies to this area.

Small Grants Fund for Wildlife Conservation in China



Over the past year, through the efforts of Novozymes, WWF and our conservation partners, the China Conservation Small Grants Fund has supported 13 projects in 10 provinces including Guangxi, Hainan, Hunan, Hebei, Shaanxi, Yunnan, Henan, Jiangxi, Zhejiang and Beijing. In May 2002, the Bird-Lovers Association of Pingshan County, Hebei Province saved three baby Black Storks from a local hunter. With the help of media and local people, the storks were sent to Beijing Zoo for treatment. After three months of care, the storks were released back into the wild at the end of July.

Supported by the Conservation Small Grants Fund, a project team led by Professor Ding Ping from Zhejiang University put together a proposal to strengthen the protection work of the

Wenzhou Coastal wetlands. He has presented it to the municipal government and it was well received. From June 16 to 17, an International Wetland Conservation Workshop was held in Wenzhou. During the workshop, the mayor of Wenzhou City, Mr. Qian Zhongxing, discussed the status of development in Wenzhou and their plans for future wetland conservation. Fifty wetland experts from China and abroad, including WWF-China's Country Representative, Mr. Jim Harkness, and WWF Species Program Director, Dr. Yu Changqing, attended the workshop.



The Derbyan Parakeet conservation project team in Simao Prefecture, Yunnan Province, held a drawing contest for primary school students with the Bee, a popular teenage newspaper. With the support of the newspaper and school, drawings of the Derbyan Parakeets from the contest were made into post cards and distributed to help raise awareness. In March 2002, with the help of the project team, villagers made seven artificial nest boxes and installed them on trees frequently visited by the Parakeet. During the following days, people from the local forestry bureau and villagers observed the birds breeding in the artificial nests. This greatly encouraged local people and they now have plans to install 13 more boxes by the end of 2002.

From August 12th to 19th, 2002, the International Ornithology Conference was held in Beijing, China. The Conference was hosted for the first time in Asia since its first meeting in 1884. As one of the chairpersons for the conference, Jim Harkness, Representative of WWF China, introduced the Conservation Small Grant Funds and the projects under its support.



Brief News

In order to understand the impact of the National Natural Forest Program on giant panda conservation, the Species Program supported the China Forest Economy and Development Center to carry out a study. The research will be completed in June 2003.

Based on the 3rd National Survey of the giant panda and its habitat in Sichuan, the Sichuan Forestry department made an overall plan for the monitoring transects in the province, especially in areas with high population densities and areas under the biggest threats. Wanglang Reserve will be identified as a key area for monitoring work in Minshan.

With the support of the Species Program, the first draft of the "Study on the Status of Giant Panda Corridors" was completed. This study was conducted by researchers at the Forest Planning Institution of the State Forestry Administration. WWF will provide input to the report before its finalization.



The focal project team meeting took place over three days at the Xi'an Office. The new project associate, Ms. Zhang Zhelin, participated in her first team meeting. Work in FY02 was reviewed and plans and budget revisions were made for FY03.

Photo of the team: (left to right: Wu Haohan, Project Leader, Zhang Zhelin, Project Associate, Li Ning, Communications Manger, and Liu Xiaohai, Ecotourism Module Manager).

Supported by the Species Program of WWF, *The Primates of China: Biogeography and Conservation Status-Past, Present and Future* was published by the China Forestry Publishing House. This book provides an important synthesis and updating of what we know about China's primates, and is designed to provide a scientific basis for conservation planning.

WWF China Program appreciates the support of WWF International, WWF Netherlands, WWF UK, and WWF US to giant panda conservation work in China.

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