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REVIEW OF PROGRAMME PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

(Item 5(b) of the provisional agenda)

Development of the Cooperation Mechanisms for Nature Conservation in Transboundary Areas in North-East Asia

Note by the Secretariat

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I. OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS

1. In accordance with the NEASPEC Nature Conservation Strategy adopted by the 12th Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) in 2007, NEASPEC during 2010-2012 had implemented the project "Establishing Coordination Mechanisms for Nature Conservation in Transboundary Areas in North-East Asia", with the aim to strengthen bilateral and multilateral cooperation for nature conservation in transboundary areas in North-East Asia. Under the project, NEASPEC held a series of meetings, prepared reports and conducted consultations with experts to develop tangible cooperation for the effective conservation of NEASPEC flagship species.

2. Based on the outcomes from the activities, the SOM-17 held in December 2012 endorsed the proposal of the Russian Federation on Amur tigers and leopards, and one of the proposed activities was to monitor Sino-Russian transborder movement of target species by using state-of-the-art methods available for tracking. The NEASPEC Secretariat, subsequently, conducted preliminary situation analysis to support the endorsed activity and facilitate discussions during the SOM-18 held in November 2013. The study showed that camera trapping survey and molecular genetic analysis conducted by China and the Russian Federation during the recent years were effective and efficient methods for monitoring transborder movement of Amur tigers and leopards. The Meeting, thus, came to a conclusion to support the new project, "Study on Transborder Movement of Amur Tigers and Leopards using Camera Trapping and Molecular Genetic Analysis" which would also involve non-tiger range countries, in particular, Japan and the Republic of Korea (ROK) for contributing to the work with technical advice.

3. The project proposal on the conservation and rehabilitation of habitats for Cranes and Black-faced Spoonbills, which was jointly formulated by the Secretariat and Korean Society of Environment and Ecology (KSEE), was also reviewed by the SOM-17. Upon the request by the member States, the Secretariat revised the proposal reflecting potential synergies with existing international mechanisms as well as reframing the project title and activities, and the revised proposal received the approval of the chair of the SOM-17 who continues the chairmanship until the next SOM. As a follow-up to the approval of the project, "Conservation and Rehabilitation of Habitats for Key Migratory Birds in North-East Asia", the first Expert Group Meeting (EGM) of the project was held in October 2013. The EGM reached an agreement on the detailed implementation plan such as project target sites, national focal points, and budget allocation, which was endorsed by the SOM-18.

II. CONSERVATION OF AMUR TIGER AND LEOPARD

4. ***Project implementation.*** Further to the approval of the SOM-18, the first Expert Group Meeting (EGM) of the project "Study on Transborder Movement of Amur Tigers and

Leopards using Camera Trapping and Molecular Genetic Analysis" was held on 15-16 April 2014 in Incheon, the ROK.

5. The EGM brought together national experts from China, Japan (by e-mail consultation), the ROK and the Russian Federation to review existing experience on camera trapping and molecular genetic analysis techniques related to conservation efforts on Amur tigers and leopards, discuss scientific and technical approaches for the Project, and make a detailed project work plan including a timeframe, institutional arrangements and budgetary matters.

6. Presentations at the EGM reviewed the conservation status, population size, monitoring actions and genetic molecular analysis results of Amur tigers and leopards. Pointing out that the conventional animal survey technologies are not suitable to monitor and protect Amur tigers and leopards, experts emphasized the necessity of transnational or trans-regional cooperation by utilizing advanced monitoring technologies as well as unified scientific data. They also indicated the lack of skilled personnel, funding and regular technical training as well as the need of standardized monitoring technique, and underlined the importance of a technology and information exchange platform among experts.

7. Despite such limitations and insufficient resources, researchers of the subregion have achieved several meaningful outcomes. (1) China collected about 600 pieces of information via dynamic information database of distribution areas of Amur tigers and leopards during 2000-2013. The information was accumulated by using molecular genetic analysis, footprint image analysis, body pattern image analysis, prey monitoring and camera trapping analysis. (2) The Russian Federation conducted scientific research and monitoring on Amur tigers and leopards by snow tracking, camera trapping, and molecular genetic analysis. Currently, 151 camera traps are set in the Kedrovaya Pad Nature Reserve and the Land of the Leopard National Park including the border areas with China (80 by the Land of the Leopard National Park; 54 by Wildlife Conservation Society Russia; and 16 by the Institute of Sustainable Use of Natural Resources/WWF). According to the preliminary results of camera trapping in the Land of the Leopard, 32 Amur leopards and 11 Amur tigers were identified. Researchers in the Land of the Leopard also collected 157 scat samples between April 2012 and April 2014, and identified 48 Amur leopards and 86 Amur tigers by molecular genetic analysis. (3) Experts from ROK more focused on technical aspects, such as the creation of an entire genome map of Amur Tiger, and the use of genome map for the development of genetic markers for more efficient and effective research for the species identification and its conservation.

8. The EGM then reviewed the project documents and discussion points prepared by the Secretariat, and had an in-depth discussion on a step-by-step basis; that is, from sample collection and camera trapping in the field to genetic molecular analysis and formulation of policy recommendation for the species conservation. Considering the nature of field survey

and the preparatory period including consultation among implementing agencies, the EGM revised the timeframe accordingly. Also highlighting that this project is not merely scientific research but the intergovernmental cooperation platform to build more solid science-based policy on the two flagship species, the EGM reached an agreement on methodologies for camera trapping and molecular genetic analysis, implementing agencies and capacity building. For further information, please see the Annex I to this document.

[Table 1] Timeframe of the Project

Timeline	Activity
April 2014	Inception Meeting
April - November 2014	Activity preparation including the bilateral consultation of China and Russia on sample collection
November 2014 - May 2015	Camera trapping and sample collection
	DNA extraction and delivery for analysis
June - August 2015	Molecular genetic analysis
September - October 2015	Final analysis and policy formulation
November 2015	International/concluding workshop to adopt the final report

[Table 2] Institutional arrangement of the Project

Project components		Leading agency	Supporting agencies
Camera trapping		Land of the Leopard (RF)	
		Wildlife Research Institute of Heilongjiang Province (China)	Hunchun and Laoyeling Nature Reserves (China)
Molecular genetic analysis		Feline Research Center (China) – samples from both China and Russia	Seoul National University (ROK) –samples from Russia
Joint field study	Sample collection	Land of the Leopard (Russia)	Far Eastern Branch Russian Academy of Sciences
		FRC (China)	Hunchun Nature Reserve
	DNA extraction	IBSS (Russia)	
		FRC (China)	
Final analysis and policy formulation		WWF Russia	

9. For the budgetary matters, the Secretariat tentatively prepared and presented it to the EGM based on the tentative project timeframe. Since the EGM revised the implementation schedule for the project and its details, the EGM concluded to finalize the budget plan by mid-June 2014 after having further consultations. The Secretariat then collected the budget proposals prepared by each national focal point of China and the Russian Federation, and reallocated the required amount as below. The total project budget, however, remains unchanged.

[Table 3] Institutional arrangement of the Project

Items	Amounts (in USD)
Inception Meeting/ International workshops	25,000
Molecular genetic analysis (including Capacity building)	50,000 (30,000 to China & 20,000 to RF)
Joint field study	20,000 (10,000 to China & 10,000 to RF)
Miscellaneous (final report)	5,000(RF)
Total Amount	100,000

10. ***Updates on conservation efforts for Amur tigers and leopards in China and the Russian Federation.*** China and the Russian Federation have put forth a multilateral effort to conserve these species and protect their habitats. With the accumulated knowledge and advanced techniques, researchers have achieved several meaningful records over the last one year.

11. Chinese researchers have captured camera trapping footages in protected areas as well as near the Sino-Russia border. Images of a female Amur leopard with two cubs were captured in the Wangqing National Nature Reserve, 30 km away from Hunchun. This rare and unprecedented evidence showed that Amur leopards actually breed in China.[1] In March 2014, a rare Amur leopard couple was spotted in the Hunchun Nature Reserve in Jilin Province.[2] Amur tigers were also witnessed near the border area: according to the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), a wild Amur tiger walking toward the Sino-Russian border in Suiyang of Heilongjiang province was photographed by one of camera traps in March 2014[3]; and another Amur tiger was trying to jump into a boat and later swimming across the river in the border region of Heilongjiang province in June 2014.[4]

12. In addition to the captured images, the South China Morning Post reported that the number of wild Amur tigers in Chin has been increasing after a decade-long campaign to restore the species' natural habitat by banning logging, hunting and trapping.[5] Recently, the World Bank is planning to invest USD 600,000 to protect the wild Amur tigers in the Heilongjiang Province as the World Bank - GEF Siberian Tiger Conservation Project.[6]

13. The Russian Federation has been taking slightly different approaches. In November 2013, the Land of the Leopard National Park and WWF kicked off a joint project called "Leopard's Reality Show", by installing 10 hidden camera traps near the remains of a sika

[1] http://projectpisces.eu/about_us/pisces_en_francais/annonces/index.cfm?6917
[2] http://www.china.org.cn/environment/2014-03/21/content_31856680.htm
[3] http://www.ecns.cn/2014/06-25/120724.shtml
[4] http://www.wantchinatimes.com/news-subclass-cnt.aspx?id=20140618000013&cid=1103
[5] http://www.theworldofchinese.com/2014/03/chinas-growing-tiger-and-leopard-population/
[6] http://hlj.sina.com.cn/news/ljyw/2014-04-03/1458110344.html

deer.[7] The 78 hours of this unique video material reveals how the Amur leopard raises its kittens in the wild as well as giving an insight into family behavior.

14. Other than camera tapping, Russian researchers have reintroduced several Amur tigers, who were orphaned as a cub when their mother was likely killed by poachers, into the wild. IFAW (International Fund for Animal Welfare), jointly with the Phoenix Fund, Special Inspection Tiger, A.N. Severtsov Institute of Ecology and Evolution, the Russian Academy of Sciences, as well as WCS (Wildlife Conservation Society), released a female Amur (named Zolushka or Cinderella) at the Bastak Nature Reserve in Primorsky Krai in May 2013.[8] Confirming that the tiger successfully adapted to the new situation, the team released three Amur tigers (2 males and 1 female) into the wild in the Zhelundindsky Wildlife Refuge, which is the northwestern part of Amurskaya Oblast, in May 2014 with the presence of the President Vladimir Putin,[9] and two more tigers (1 male and 1 female) were back to the wild in the Zhuravliny (Crane) Wildlife Refuge in June 2014.[10] All the reintroduced Amur tigers will be monitored for a year using collars with satellite tracking devices around their neck, and the device will be automatically unfastened in a year. The WCS is now expecting to see young cubs from the tiger, Cinderella, by the end of the year, which will be the first tiger litter in the Bastak area in more than sixty years.[11]

15. In addition to the above activities, the Russian Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment increased the penalty for tiger hunting more than two times from RUB 500,000 (approx. USD 14,300) to RUB 1.1 million (approx. USD 31,400).[12] The Russian Federation also will conduct a full-scale field survey during the winter period of 2014-2015, which will show a complete picture of the Amur tiger and leopard, and their habitat conservation.

III. CONSERVATION OF MIGRATORY BIRD HABITATS

16. ***Implementation of the Project "Conservation and rehabilitation of habitats for key migratory bird in North-East Asia".*** The SOM-18 approved the implementation and reallocation of budget components of the NEASPEC Project, "Conservation and rehabilitation of habitats for key migratory bird in North-East Asia", which was formulated by the first Expert Group Meeting (EGM) held in October 2013. The Project has then made progress in preparation to carry out scoping surveys and joint studies.

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[7] http://wild-cats.net/blog/main/3184700/?cat=420; "Leopard's Reality Show" is available on the website.
[8] http://blog.therainforestsite.com/ifaw-releases-amur-tiger-zolushka/
[9] http://www.themoscowtimes.com/news/article/putin-helps-free-amur-tigers-back-into-wild/500735.html; http://fundphoenix.org/en/three-tigers-released-into-the-wild; http://www.ifaw.org/united-states/news/largest-ever-amur-tiger-release-russia-hopes-signal-species-return
[10] http://www.ifaw.org/australia/news/video-epic-tiger-release-russia-wildly-successful; http://fundphoenix.org/en/tigers-go-to-jao/
[11] http://www.wcsrussia.org/AboutUs/NewsArchive/tabid/2041/ID/1442/language/en-US/CINDERELLA-IS-STILL-SEARCHING-FOR-HER-PRINCE.aspx
[12] http://wwftigersaliveinitiative.org/2014/02/25/russian-penalties-for-tiger-poaching-enforced/

17. For common understanding of roles and responsibilities as well as consistent implementation and reporting of scoping surveys across all selected sites (see Table 4), the Scoping Survey and Joint Study Guidelines and Site Information Sheet were drafted and circulated to consult all nominated participants for the EGM. Further to receiving comments on the circulated documents, the documents were revised accordingly. The final Guidelines and Sheet are attached as Annex II.

[Table 4] Information of the scoping survey sites

Site Name	Description
Black-faced Spoonbills	
1. Xingrentuo/ Yuanbaotuo, China	These are small islands along the coast of Liaoning Province located approximately 5 km south-east of Shicheng Dao. They are uninhabited but has small scale acquaculture operations. The islands were threatened by collection of bird eggs prior to the establishment of non-hunting area.[13]
2. Hakata Bay, Japan	Hakata Bay is located at Fukuoka in the southwest of Japan. The habitat is an inland wetland consists of estuarine waters and intertidal flats. Part of the bay overlaps with the Genkai Quasi National Park. It is a wintering site of Black-faced Spoonbills and has been affected by the Island City Project and other development proposals to dredge or fill parts of the bay.
3. Incheon, ROK	Incheon is the third most populous city of the ROK. The Songdo Tidal Flat and it nearby areas in the Incheon Free Economic Zone are nesting and feeding sites of Black-faced Spoonbills. The habitat is the latest addition to the ROK's list of Ramsar sites. Threats to the Site include land reclamation and building of facilities at the adjacent Songdo International City.
Hooded Cranes	
4. Lindian, China	Located in Heilongjiang Province and the major grain producing regions of China, Lindian consists of wetland, grassland and agricultural land. It is one of the most important stopover sites for Hooded Cranes with records of large numbers of Hooded Cranes found in the Sognen Plain. Hooded cranes are threatened by farmland expansion and conflict with local farmers.
5. Izumi, Japan	Izumi is located at Kagoshima of Japan, consists of estruaine waters as well as rice paddies. Cranes are fed and carefully protected at Izumi. Unlike other habitats, issues with Hooded Cranes at Izumi relates to over concentration of birds and the increased risk of an avian flu (H5N1) outbreak.
6. Cheonsu Bay, ROK	Cheonsu Bay at Chungcheongnam-do of ROK, is a large marine bay that has some reclaimed areas. The habitat includes rice paddies and artificial wetlands, and has been designated as a Sea Resources Conservation Area in 1992. Land reclamation has been the major threat of the habitat.

[13] Bird Life International Datazone

Site Name	Description
White-naped Cranes	
7. Dauria International Protected Areas (DIPA) at China, Mongolia and the Russian Federation	DIPA was created in 1994, consists of over 1.7 million hectares of protected areas from the Daursky State Nature Biosphere Reserve (Russia), Dalainor Biosphere Reserve (China) and Mongol Daguur Strictly Protected Nature Area (Mongolia). DIPA is a Ramsar site, and part of it was included in the network of UNESCO biosphere reserves. It consists of a range of habitat including meadow steeps, forestry steppes, hills and salt lakes. It is an important stopover and nesting site for three to six million migratory birds per year along the East Asia Australian Flyway.
8. Khurkh-Khuiten River Valley Areas of the Onon River Basin and general distribution range in eastern Mongolia	The area is located in Khentii Province at northeastern Mongolia, and it was nominated as a Ramsar site in 2004. It contains many small lakes with reed beds and willow groves which are important for birds. Main activities at the site include livestock grazing and hay making, with small-scale crop growing. Pressures on the site include unmanaged burning and expansion of agricultural areas, leading to soil erosion and degradation[1].

18. Simultaneously the Secretariat had been seeking nomination of a national focal point (NFP) from each country to carry out activities of the Project. All nominations have been received and the Secretariat is in the process of developing and signing Letter of Agreement (LoA) with each nominated NFP. They are as follows:

- Chinese Academy of Forestry, China
- Wild Bird Society of Japan (WBSJ), Japan
- Wildlife Science and Conservation Centre of Mongolia, Mongolia
- Korean Society of Environment and Ecology (KSEE), Republic of Korea
- State Nature Biosphere Reserve "Daursky", the Russian Federation

19. For each bird species, a NFP will act also as the coordinating body to coordinate with national focal point of each country on carrying out surveys; ensuring consistency of methodology and reporting; facilitating information exchange among all partners; gathering and summarizing information collected from surveys by national focal points/ partners; and consulting and discussing with national focal points/ partners on findings of the surveys, recommendations or points to be highlighted for the species studied (refer to the Guidelines in Annex for further details).

20. As one of the Project's aims is to promote cooperation and exchange amongst member States, joint activities with each other are encouraged. Moreover, NFPs are advised to carry out Project activities with existing or other planned activities (e.g. regular surveys/ projects with other partners) to maximize value added of this Project and to avoid duplication of work with other programmes. To consider and explore these possibilities of

joint activities, NFPs and coordinating bodies are therefore in discussion on timing for each survey activity with a tentative timeline shown in Table 5.

[Table 5] Tentative timeline of Project activities

Timeline	Project Activities
May 2014	Consultation on draft guidelines and information sheet
Jun – Aug 2014 or 2015	[*Summer Scoping Survey*] Black-faced Spoonbills and White-naped Cranes
Aug – Sep 2014 and 2015	[*Joint Study*] at Dauria International Protected Area (DIPA-China, Mongolia, and the Russian Federation)
Oct 2014	Side event workshop at CBD COP-12 in Pyeongchang, ROK to introduce preliminary findings and progress.
Dec 2014	[*Joint Study*] at Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) (DPRK and ROK)
Nov 2014 - Feb 2015	[*Winter Scoping Survey*] Hooded Cranes
Jun 2015	Development of interim report with results/ latest updates of scoping surveys and joint studies, by KSEE
Jul 2015	Submission of project update/report to NEASPEC 20th Senior Officials Meeting (SOM-20)

21. ***Side event at the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP-12) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)***. As shown in the timeline, COP-12 will take place in Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea, during 6 to 17 October 2014. It will engage in a mid-term review of the implementation of the Strategic Plan and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, under this year's theme of 'Biodiversity for Sustainable Development'. Taking the opportunity of this event which will gather key stakeholders in biodiversity all over the world, and considering the direct relevance of NEASPEC's work, the Secretariat proposes to participate at COP-12 through hosting a side-event to promote and exchange with stakeholders on NEASPEC's Nature Conservation Programme.

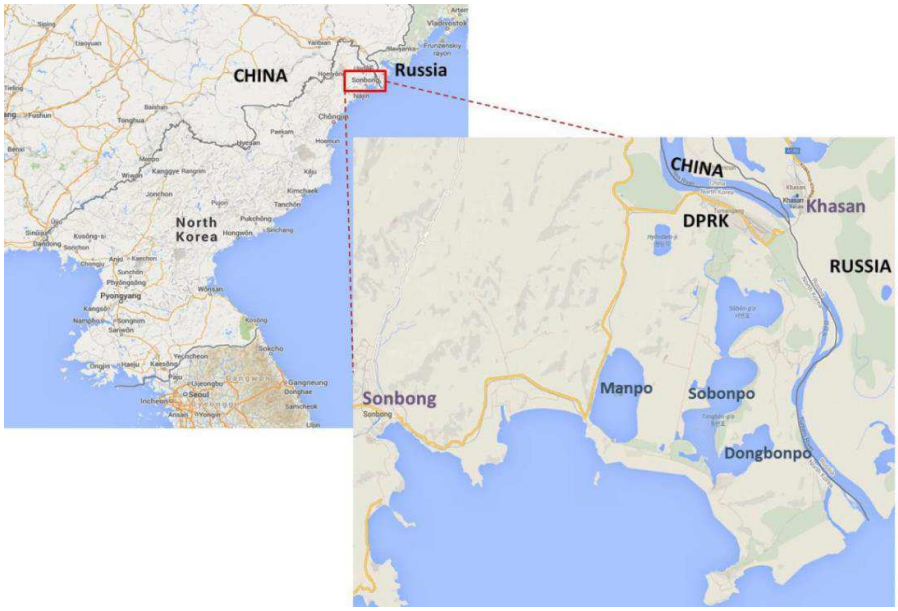
22. ***Field Survey at the Rason Migratory Bird Reserve, DPRK, 27-30 March 2014.*** In view of the importance of migratory bird habitats in DPRK and the vital need of DPRK's involvement for the success of habitat conservation, the EGM held in October 2013, called for efforts to actively explore opportunities to collaborate with DPRK on migratory bird habitat conservation. Further to the Meeting, UNESCAP ENEA and Hanns Seidel Foundation decided to carry out a field survey with a team of international experts at the Rason Migratory Bird Reserve.

23. The Rason Migratory Bird Reserve is one of the thirteen migratory bird reserves in DPRK with NEASPEC target species observed, located at east of the Rason Special Economic Zone, which borders China and the Russian Federation, and is adjacent to the Tumen River Estuary. The Reserve therefore has a vital role in conservation and transboundary

cooperation of the overall Delta habitat. Research and monitoring on migratory birds in the Chinese and Russian territories of the Tumen River Delta indicates that it is a habitat for thousands of migratory birds including globally vulnerable migratory bird species.

24. This field survey has produced the first makings of baseline information of the habitat including key geographical information, and most importantly, it confirmed that the Reserve meets Ramsar criteria as an 'internationally important wetland' and that it supports over a hundred species of birds. As this initial finding suggests that the Reserve offers high quality stopover and breeding habitat, this field survey and its follow-up work will provide the technical basis for international cooperation in conserving this important transboundary habitat.

[Figure 1] Location of the Rason Migratory Bird Reserve



IV. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

25. [Conservation of tigers and leopards] The Meeting may wish to request member States to provide their views on the outcome of the EGM and endorse the proposed implementation plan.

26. [Conservation of migratory bird habitats] The Meeting may wish to request member States to provide their views and interests on cooperation opportunities from the NEASPEC Project as well as follow-up works to the field survey at the Rason Migratory Bird Reserve.

27. The Meeting may wish to invite member States to indicate their intended contributions to the implementation of the two projects.

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[Annex I]

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Meeting Report of the Expert Group Meeting on the NEASPEC Project, "Study on Transborder Movement of Amur Tigers and Leopards using Camera Trapping and Molecular Genetic Analysis"

15-16 April 2014, Incheon, Republic of Korea

1. The NEASPEC Secretariat organized the Expert Group Meeting (EGM) of the Project, "Study on transborder movement of Amur tigers and leopards using camera trapping and molecular genetic analysis" on 15-16 April 2014 in Incheon, Republic of Korea (ROK). The EGM reviewed existing experience on camera trapping and molecular genetic analysis techniques related to conservation efforts on Amur tigers and leopards, discussed scientific and technical approaches for the Project, and agreed on a project work plan that includes more efficient use of camera trapping, molecular genetic analysis techniques, joint field survey and sharing of knowledge on these matters between China, the ROK and the Russian Federation.

2. The Meeting reviewed the protection status, population size, monitoring actions and genetic molecular analysis results of Amur tigers and Amur leopards in each member State, as well as scientific and policy constraints in the conservation of the animals.

3. **[Camera Trapping]** The Meeting agreed that as the current camera trapping scheme is sufficient for providing the baseline information to support molecular genetic analysis, the Project will utilize results from the existing scheme. In this connection, the Land of the Leopard National Park and Heilongjiang Wildlife Institute will be responsible for compiling camera trapping data in the Russia Federation (the Park) and China (Heilongjiang and Hunchun), respectively.

4. **[Molecular Genetic Analysis]** The Meeting agreed that China and the Russian Federation will coordinate the schedule and methodology of fecal sample collection before November 2014, and simultaneously carry out the work in their respective areas from late November 2014 to early March 2015. Fecal samples will be collected by the Land of the Leopard National Park in the Russian Federation and Feline Research Center (FRC) in China. Collected samples will be preserved at low temperature *in situ* and DNA extraction will be carried out as soon as possible to minimize the effect of degradation.

5. The Meeting agreed that the Institute of Biology and Soil Science (IBSS) will be responsible for DNA extraction from the Russian samples and these will be shared with FRC for molecular genetic analysis (the Project) by late May 2015. IBSS will also share

DNA extracts with Seoul National University (SNU) of Republic of Korea for research on new methodologies, by late May 2015, to be funded by SNU. FRC will be the leading agency for the analysis of the Russian DNA extracts, and also responsible for extracting and analyzing samples from China. The results of molecular genetic analysis will be delivered to IBSS and the NEASPEC Secretariat by late August 2015.

6. The Meeting agreed that relevant experts available in participating countries including Japan will be utilized as needed.

7. **[Final Report and Policy Recommendation]** The Meeting agreed that World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) will analyze outcomes of camera trapping and molecular genetic analysis in the context of policies and measures for improving transboundary ecological corridors, and formulate the policy recommendations for the project report by October 2015.

8. **[Knowledge Sharing and Capacity Building]** The Meeting agreed that Russian students will be provided the opportunity for training on molecular genetic analysis techniques at SNU and FRC, funded through other sources. The specific arrangement for the visit will be bilaterally discussed among involved institutions taking account of analysis work and the project budget. Korean students will be provided the opportunity to join sample collection and to learn camera trapping in the Russian protected areas including the Land of the Leopard National Park and Hunchun Nature Reserve, funded by SNU.

9. **[Timeframe]** The Meeting reviewed the tentative timeframe prepared by the NEASPEC Secretariat, and revised it as follow:

Timeline	Activity
April 2014	Inception Meeting
April - November 2014	Activity preparation including the bilateral consultation of China and Russia on sample collection
November 2014 - May 2015	Camera trapping and sample collection
	DNA extraction and delivery for analysis
June - August 2015	Molecular genetic analysis
September - October 2015	Final analysis and policy formulation
November 2015	International/concluding workshop to adopt the final report

10. **[Institutional Arrangement]** Under the overall coordination by the NEASPEC Secretariat, the following institutions will be responsible for carrying out the agreed work.

Project components		Leading agency	Supporting agencies
Camera trapping		Land of the Leopard (RF)	
		Wildlife Research Institute of Heilongjiang Province (China)	Hunchun and Laoyeling Nature Reserves (China)
Molecular genetic analysis		Feline Research Center (China) – samples from both China and Russia	Seoul National University (ROK) – samples from Russia
Joint field study	Sample collection	Land of the Leopard (Russia)	Far Eastern Branch Russian Academy of Sciences
		FRC (China)	Hunchun Nature Reserve
	DNA extraction	IBSS (Russia)	
		FRC (China)	
Final analysis and policy formulation		WWF Russia	

11. Based on the agreed implementation plan and the role of institutions, the NEASPEC Secretariat will prepare the Letter of Agreements with WWF Russia for coordination and implementation of all project components in the Russian Federation, and FRC and Wildlife Research Institute for molecular genetic analysis and field survey, respectively. The Letter of Agreement with SNU will be explored based on the outcome of its consultation with the Chinese and Russian implementing agencies.

12. **[Budgetary matter]** The Meeting agreed that further consultations will be made on the budget based on the following indicative budget and the detailed activity and budget plan by implementing agencies on the project components. The NEASPEC Secretariat will collect the detailed plan and revise the budget plan accordingly. The budget plan shall be finalized by mid-June 2014.

Items	Amounts (in USD)
Inception Meeting/ International workshops	[25,000]
Molecular genetic analysis (including Capacity building)	[50,000]
Joint field study	[20,000]
Miscellaneous	[5,000]
Total Amount	**100,000**

13. Implementing agencies will make efforts to mobilize additional financial and in-kind

contributions from their agencies. In particular, the FRC will seek financial and in-kind contributions for supporting the molecular genetic analysis and ANO-Amur Tiger Center will also seek financial contributions to the visit of Russian students to FRC and SNU.

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[Annex II]

NEASPEC Nature Conservation project 'Conservation and Rehabilitation of Habitats for Key Migratory Birds in North-east Asia'

Scoping Survey and Joint Study Guidelines

1. **Background and Objectives**

To support and implement the NEASPEC Nature Conservation Strategy for key migratory bird species, the NEASPEC project 'Conservation and Rehabilitation of Habitats for Key Migratory Birds' kicked off with an expert group meeting (EGM) held in Incheon, October 2013.

The Project's objectives are to contribute the conservation of target species; and to promote transboundary and intergovernmental cooperation and enhance coordinated mechanism for their conservation. Under these objectives, scoping surveys and joint studies will be carried out on the three NEASPEC flagship migratory bird species (Black-faced Spoonbill, Hooded Crane, and White-naped Crane) by national focal points and coordinating bodies.

The EGM agreed that the target sites studied in this Project should have **scientific significance**; strong relevance to **international cooperation**; and implications of **local community participation**, and eight sites for the scoping survey and two sites for the joint study were selected as shown below.

There are two major components of the Project as shown in Table 1.

[Table 1] Two Major Components of the Project

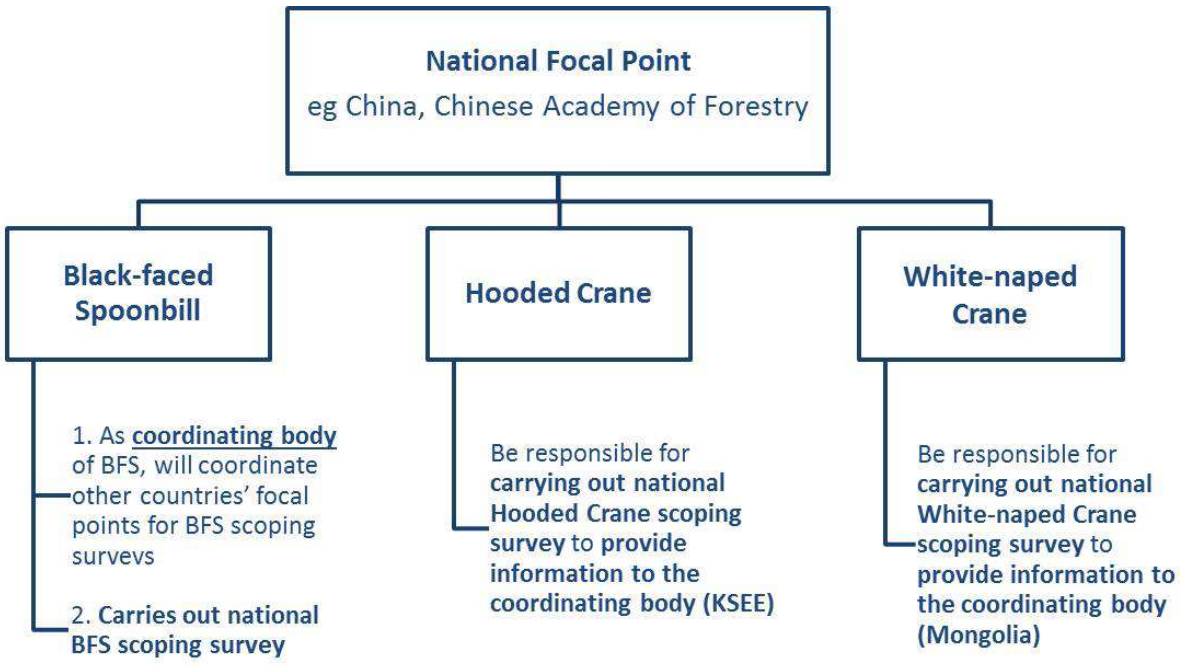
Scoping Survey	Joint Study in transboundary areas
Description	
Each country's national focal point carries out **domestic** survey for the selected sites. Scoping surveys will generate consistent and comprehensive information through: utilizing existing information sources, direct consultation with local stakeholders (e.g. local governments, institutions, academia, civil society and communities) and carrying out additional survey activities if needed.	Coordinator of each Joint Study (i. DIPA, and ii. DMZ) will coordinate with other national focal points to jointly carry out the Joint Study in these selected **transboundary sites**. Joint studies will generate information through **international cooperation** in: information collection and sharing, consultation of local and international stakeholders and international joint study at the selected transboundary sites.
Selected Sites and Tentative Timeline	

Black-faced Spoonbills ***(June 2014 –July 2015)*** Coordinating body: Chinese Academy of Forestry (China) • Xingrentuo/Yuanbaotuo at Liaoning (China) • Hakata Bay (Japan) • Incheon (ROK) **Hooded Cranes** ***(November 2014 - February 2015)*** Coordinating body: Korean Society of Environment and Ecology (KSEE) (ROK) • Lindian (China) • Izumi (Japan) • Cheonsu Bay (ROK) **White-naped Cranes** ***(June - August 2015)*** Coordinating body: Wildlife Science and Conservation Centre (Mongolia) • National protected sites in Dauria International Protected Area and adjacent territories (including Dalai Lake for China) of Dauria ecoregion (China, Mongolia and the Russian Federation) • Khurkh-Khuiten River Valley Areas of the Onon River Basin and general WNC distribution range in the eastern Mongolia (Mongolia)	**Dauria International Protected Area** ***(August to September 2015)*** Coordinating body: State Nature Biosphere Reserve "Daursky" • China, Mongolia, and the Russian Federation **Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ)** ***(December 2014)*** Coordinating body: Korean Society of Environment and Ecology (KSEE) • DPRK and ROK

2. Coordinating Bodies and National Focal Points

Roles and responsibilities of coordinating body (CB) for each species are explained as follows:

[Figure 1] Example to Illustrate Roles of National Focal Point and Coordinating Body



The coordinating body (CB) for each species will:

- Coordinate with national focal point of each country on carrying out surveys, such as timing, means of communication, methodology (understanding of guidelines), data collection, information exchange and logistical issues, etc. This may involve organizing international meetings or field visits together with national partners.
- Ensure common methodology is adopted for the survey and consistent reporting of information from national focal points
- Facilitate information exchange among all partners including national focal points and the Secretariat, including updates on plans and progress of surveys and relevant activities.
- Gather and summarize information collected from surveys by national focal points/ partners and provide a scoping survey report with raw data to the Secretariat
- Consult and discuss with national focal points/ partners on findings of the surveys, recommendations or points to be highlighted for the species studied

The national focal point (NFP) for each country will:

- Carry out scoping survey (by itself or allocate resources for a partner to carry out the survey) according to this Guideline and in coordination with each species' coordinating body
- Be responsible to allocate resources for scoping survey to be carried out for the subject species
- Directly discuss and consult with local stakeholders for input. Participate in communications and meetings held by coordinating body

- Closely liaise with the official government counterpart of the Project for the implementation, updates and outcomes of Project activities
- Provide survey output, recommendations and other comments directly to coordinating body

3. Tentative Timeline

It is a tentative timeline with flexibility for local conditions and natural changes such as migratory pattern or weather conditions, etc. Please inform the coordinating body and the Secretariat if any changes.

Timeline	**Activities**
May 2014	Consultation on draft guidelines and information sheet
Jun – Sep 2014 and 2015	[*Summer Scoping Survey*] Black-faced Spoonbills and White-naped Cranes
Aug – Sep 2015	[*Joint Study*] at Dauria International Protected Area (DIPA-China, Mongolia, and the Russian Federation)
Oct 2014	Workshop at CBD COP12 in Pyeongchang, ROK to introduce preliminary findings and progress.
Dec 2014	[*Joint Study*] at Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) (DPRK and ROK)
Nov 2014 - Feb 2015	[*Winter Scoping Survey*] Hooded Cranes
Jun 2015	Development of interim report with results/ latest updates of scoping surveys and joint studies, by KSEE
Jul 2015	Submission of project update/report to NEASPEC 20th Senior Officials Meeting (SOM-20)

4. Scoping Survey

4.1. Information Sheet and the Survey Report

To conduct comprehensive and integrated scoping survey, Scoping Survey Information Sheet has been developed for each species with consultation of national experts and relevant resource persons.

* To maximize added value and avoid duplication of work, wherever appropriate it is encouraged that Project activities be carried out with existing or other planned activities (eg regular surveys/ projects with other partners). In addition to the filling the information sheet, **face-to-face exchange with local communities and national focal points should be carried out by each coordinating body where possible**.

* **Relevant information from past/ other monitoring activities should be utilized as much as possible** to present a more comprehensive and long-term picture of the habitat. Therefore **when designing the scoping survey for this Project, it should aim to fill knowledge gaps of current understanding and existing information**, with reference to the information sheet.

* **Local stakeholders should be consulted and provide direct input** to the survey e.g. through consultation meetings with local groups or authorities etc. It is also encouraged to involve young professionals to **build local capacity** and awareness in addition to the survey.

The final survey report for each target site will be produced **in Microsoft Word Format and should not exceed 20 pages**.

4.2. Other Potential Activities and Partners

4.2.1. ROK Black-faced Spoonbills scoping survey and habitat mapping may potentially take place up to twice along with national Black-faced Spoonbill Workshop (May to June 2014, Ganghwa at Incheon, ROK)

4.2.2. ROK Hooded Cranes scoping survey (and coordination meeting) may take place along with International Hooded Crane workshop, **potentially** supported by Seosan City (February 2015, Seosan, ROK)

5. Joint Study

5.1. Stages of Implementation

There will be 3 stages to carry out the joint study:

- **Preparation** – Background baseline information on species, habitat condition, local community status, etc. will be collected by national focal points and collated by coordinating bodies (Korean Society of Environment and Ecology (KSEE) and State

Nature Biosphere Reserve "Daurskiy").

- **Field Study** – It will be kicked off with a workshop organized by the coordinating bodies to discuss and exchange information on species and habitat condition, conservation and management status, local community cooperation and research methodology among participants. Field study will involve site visits to collect information for habitat mapping, spatial planning, agricultural activities, sustainable local development, local community participation, and other topics deemed appropriate further to consultation with national focal points.

- **Analysis and Reporting** – After field study, the joint study team will collate and analyze findings. Based on the findings and analysis, recommendations will be made on conservation and rehabilitation of the target sites for key migratory birds such as advice on further activities for promoting international cooperation and local community participation. A joint study report will be put together by KSEE and State Nature Biosphere Reserve "Daurskiy" to report on the findings and recommendations.

International experts and international (non-governmental) organizations, such as East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP), BirdLife International, International Crane Foundation (ICF) and IUCN, will be invited to support and participate at different stages of the joint studies.

5.2. Expected Outcomes

The expected outcomes of the joint study are:

5.2.1. Generate information and identify key factors/actors of migratory bird conservation through field studies and joint research, analysis, mapping exercise among member States;

5.2.2. Information exchange and experience sharing amongst expert participants across member States;

5.2.3. Build local capacity in studying and monitoring habitat and birds' status;

5.2.4. Create zoning maps of critical sites for habitat conservation and management strategy and recommended potential protected areas; and

5.2.5. Provide specific input to enable long-term action plan for management and rehabilitation of critical sites to be developed.

5.3. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Coordination** – KSEE and State Nature Biosphere Reserve "Daurskiy" will be the coordinating bodies of the joint studies. They will actively collaborate with national focal points and inform the NEASPEC Secretariat on the progress.

- **National focal points** will coordinate national and local input for the joint study and support field study in collaboration with coordinating bodies.

5.4. Other Potential Activities and Partners

5.4.1. Joint survey to the DMZ area, potentially supported by Cheorwon county, ROK (10-20 December, 2014, ROK)

HOODED CRANE (*Grus monacha*)

(*Note: Information sheets are the same for all three migratory bird species)

Site name		**Submission Date**	
Compiler name		**Contact Information**	

1. Biophysical Information
1.1. Location & site boundary (*size in hectares, range, and map coordinates etc.*)
Please fill in
1.2. Maps *(please include the scale of maps, and mays can be attached as separate files for submission)* a. Ecological character b. Geopolitical boundary
Please fill in
1.3. General description of the site *(including indication of natural or artificial habitats, current and historical land use etc)*
Please fill in
1.4. Climate zone and major features *(e.g. elevation, Ramsar Classification of Wetland Types and IUCN (1994) Protected Areas Category (if applicable), see Annex I)*
Please fill in
1.5. Soil (structure and color) and Geology
Please fill in
1.6. Water regime *(periodicity, extent of flooding and depth, source of surface water and links with groundwater, tidal fluctuation etc.)*
Please fill in
1.7. Main ecosystem services *(e.g. groundwater recharge, flood control, shoreline stabilization etc)*
Please fill in
1.8. Photographs *(please provide key photos that best illustrates the above characteristics of the site)*
Please fill in
2. Species Information
2.1. Hooded Crane population
2.1.1.Numbers of Hooded Crane in the site in 2014-2015
Please fill in

2.1.2.Numbers and trends of Hooded Crane in the site from 2003[14]to 2015
Please fill in
2.1.3.Numbers of other associated birds
Please fill in
2.2. Hooded Crane behavior in the site
2.2.1. Breeding behavior
Please fill in
2.2.2. Feeding behavior
Please fill in
2.2.3. Roosting behavior
Please fill in
2.2.4. Other noteworthy behavior
Please fill in
2.3. Noteworthy fauna and flora *(please indicate the presence of unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important species)*
Please fill in
3. Habitat Information
*Note: If possible please illustrate below information with maps
3.1. Ecological features of the site (if possible, please describe by breeding zone (nesting ground), feeding zone, roosting zone, and other relevant zones)
Please fill in
3.2. Dominant flora communities of the site (if possible, please describe by breeding zone (nesting ground), feeding zone, roosting zone, and other relevant zones)
Please fill in
3.3. (Past and) Present land use of the site (if possible, please describe by breeding zone (nesting ground), feeding zone, roosting zone, resting zone and other relevant zones)
Please fill in
3.4. Potential areas to be habitat for species (if any)
Please fill in
3.5. Threats[15] Please check box(es) as appropriate and provide further information in the additional notes box.
Current Threat **Potential Threat**

[14] The year launched the International Black-faced Spoonbill Census. For more information, see www. Hkbws.org.hk
[15] With reference to EAAFP Site Information Sheet (SIS) version 2013 http://eaaflyway.net/documents/key/eaaf-sis_form_ver2013.doc

	Current Threat	Potential Threat
A. Residential and commercial development		
Housing and urban areas	☐	☐
Commercial and industrial areas	☐	☐
Tourism and recreation areas	☐	☐
Others or additional notes:		
B. Agriculture and aquaculture		
Annual and perennial non-timber crops	☐	☐
Wood and pulp plantations	☐	☐
Livestock farming and ranching	☐	☐
Marine and freshwater aquaculture	☐	☐
Others or additional notes:		
C. Energy production and mining		
Mining and quarrying	☐	☐
Energy-related activities	☐	☐
Others or additional notes:		
D. Transportation and service corridors		
Roads and railroads	☐	☐
Utility and service lines	☐	☐
Shipping lanes	☐	☐
Flight paths	☐	☐
Others or additional notes:		
E. Biological resource use		
Hunting and collecting terrestrial animals	☐	☐
Gathering terrestrial plants	☐	☐
Logging and wood harvesting	☐	☐
Fishing and harvesting aquatic resources	☐	☐
Others or additional notes:		
F. Human intrusions and disturbance		
Recreational activities	☐	☐
War, civil unrest and military exercises	☐	☐
Work and other activities	☐	☐

	Current Threat	Potential Threat
Others or additional notes:		
G. Natural system modifications		
Fire and fire suppression	☐	☐
Dams and water management/use	☐	☐
Landfill and/or Reclamation		
Other ecosystem modifications	☐	☐
Others or additional notes:		
H. Invasive and other problematic species and genes		
Invasive non-native/alien species	☐	☐
Problematic native species	☐	☐
Genetically Modified Organisms	☐	☐
Others or additional notes:		
I. Pollution		
Household sewage and urban waste water	☐	☐
Industrial and military effluents	☐	☐
Agricultural and forestry effluents	☐	☐
Garbage and solid waste	☐	☐
Air-borne pollutants	☐	☐
Excess energy	☐	☐
Others or additional notes:		
J. Climate change and severe weather		
Habitat shifting and alteration	☐	☐
Droughts	☐	☐
Temperature extremes	☐	☐
Storms and flooding	☐	☐
Others or additional notes:		

4. Socioeconomic and Stakeholders Information

4.1. Stakeholders of the site

4.1.1. Stakeholders influential to site management *(e.g. decision-makers, land owners, developers, community representatives, key advisors and consultants etc)*

Please fill in

4.1.2. Stakeholders impacted by site management *(e.g. local communities, site users, land owners, service providers etc)*
Please fill in
4.2. Socioeconomic significance
4.2.1. Relevant cultural/ economic values of the site *(whether material or non-material, e.g. those with national/ international recognition)*
Please fill in
4.2.2. Main economic activities and general income
Please fill in
4.3. Access and tourism
4.3.1. Annual visitor numbers and visitors characteristics
Please fill in
4.3.2. Access to the site
Please fill in
4.3.3. Visitor facilities and infrastructure
Please fill in
4.3.4. Reasons to visit the site (e.g. Wildlife attractions and other features that attract people (material and non-material) e.g. UNESCO sites, cultural events etc)
Please fill in
4.3.5. Income generated from tourism
Please fill in
4.3.6. Research and education facilities
Please fill in
5. Planning and Management Information
5.1. Tenure and Ownership
5.1.1. The site
Please fill in
5.1.2. Surrounding areas
Please fill in
5.2. Status of legal protection/ management
5.2.1.Current status of legal protection *(local, national and international)*
Please fill in
5.2.2.Administrative authority in charge of management

Please fill in
5.2.3.Current management measures taken by the authorities
Please fill in
5.2.4 Current scientific research and facilities (e.g., details of current research projects etc)
Please fill in
5.3. Participation and cooperation with local community (Any CEPA (Communication, Education, Participation and Awareness) programme for community)
Please fill in
5.4. International Cooperation
5.4.1. International partners cooperating for site conservation
Please fill in
5.4.2. Potential international partners influential to site conservation
Please fill in
6. Suggestions for Conservation of Hooded Cranes through NEASPEC
For the Site (local level)
6.1. Suggested local/ national strategy to address identified challenges
Please fill in
For subregional actions
6.2. Suggested areas and modality of subregional cooperation to address identified local/ national challenges
Please fill in
6.3. Future cooperative project for Hooded Cranes
Please fill in
7. References
e.g. list of key technical references relevant to the site, including management plans, scientific reports and internet resources etc)
Please fill in
[End]

Annex

IUCN Protected Areas Categories System

IUCN protected area management categories classify protected areas according to their management objectives. The categories are recognised by international bodies such as the United Nations and by many national governments as the global standard for defining and recording protected areas and as such are increasingly being incorporated into government legislation.

Ia Strict Nature Reserve

Category Ia are strictly protected areas set aside to protect biodiversity and also possibly geological/geomorphical features, where human visitation, use and impacts are strictly controlled and limited to ensure protection of the conservation values.

Ib Wilderness Area

Category Ib protected areas are usually large unmodified or slightly modified areas, retaining their natural character and influence without permanent or significant human habitation, which are protected and managed so as to preserve their natural condition.

II National Park

Category II protected areas are large natural or near natural areas set aside to protect large-scale ecological processes, along with the complement of species and ecosystems characteristic of the area, which also provide a foundation for environmentally and culturally compatible, spiritual, scientific, educational, recreational, and visitor opportunities.

III Natural Monument or Feature

Category III protected areas are set aside to protect a specific natural monument, which can be a landform, sea mount, submarine cavern, geological feature such as a cave or even a living feature such as an ancient grove. They are generally quite small protected areas and often have high visitor value.

IV Habitat/Species Management Area

Category IV protected areas aim to protect particular species or habitats and management reflects this priority. Many Category IV protected areas will need regular, active interventions to address the requirements of particular species or to maintain habitats, but this is not a requirement of the category.

V Protected Landscape/ Seascape

A protected area where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct charcter with significant, ecological, biological, cultural and scenic value: and where safeguarding the integrity of this interaction is vital to protecting and sustaining the area and its associated nature conservation and other values.

VI Protected area with sustainable use of natural resources

Category VI protected areas conserve ecosystems and habitats together with associated cultural values and traditional natural resource management systems.

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