

Workshop on nature conservation and biodiversity for transboundary cooperation

28-29 August 2024

Holiday Inn Incheon Songdo
Incheon, Republic of Korea

Concept note

Background

North-East Asia contains some crucial habitats of critically endangered species across countries that form the ecological connectivity beyond national borders. In 2007, given this ecological importance, NEASPEC member States identified six flagship species (Amur tiger, Amur leopard, Snow leopard, Black-faced Spoonbill, White-naped Crane and Hooded Crane) for this subregion with the adoption of the NEASPEC Nature Conservation Strategy¹ at the 12th Senior Officials Meeting (SOM-12).

The Strategy envisages more transboundary cooperation in geographical proximity. At the same time, the Strategy also emphasizes while these target species do not necessarily inhabit in all NEASPEC member States, the key species constitute a single ecological community, leveraging the potential to contribute to the national and global biodiversity goals and targets. To this end, the Secretariat has collaborated with member States and conducted several activities in align with the Strategy, agreed by the Senior Officials Meetings, mainly for two target areas: (1) feline species; and (2) migratory birds and their habitats.

Conservation of Feline Species

From 2020 to 2023, the Secretariat conducted a project titled “Transboundary cooperation on the conservation of Amur tigers, Amur leopards and Snow leopards in North-East Asia” to conserve big cats in North-East Asia, initiated with approval in 2019 funded by the Russian Government. This effort involves collaboration on transboundary environmental cooperation with China, Mongolia, and the Russian Federation. A key workshop in October 2021 highlighted the necessity of cross-border protected areas and ecological corridors, alongside effective cooperation for habitat management. Following this, in 2022, an additional component was conducted to evaluate the status of transboundary snow leopard populations between Mongolia and the Russian Federation, marking a continued commitment and sustainability to these conservation efforts.

Conservation of Migratory Birds and Habitats

Migratory birds and their habitats are crucial for ecological connectivity in North-East Asia. NEASPEC has conducted several studies on nature conservation as follows:

¹ [Publication SavingNatureConservation 2.pdf \(neaspec.org\)](#)

- Studies conducted between 2014 and 2016, including in the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) and the Dauria International Protected Areas (DIPA), show that existing protected areas are insufficient for conserving these species and that domestic policies have failed to adequately protect key habitats.
- A 2017 study titled “Connectivity Conservation and Transboundary Cooperation in North-East Asia” recommended establishing a “North-East Asia Transboundary Protected Areas Network” for the conservation of endangered species and important landscapes, citing the Rason Migratory Bird Reserve and the lower Tumen River area as key sites for future research and conservation actions. There has been a push for enhanced coordination among member States for the conservation of these areas, including the creation of transboundary protected areas to safeguard migratory birds and their environments.

Workshop on Nature Conservation and Transboundary Cooperation

In 2016, a workshop was organized with the primary goal of enhancing transboundary cooperation for nature conservation in North-East Asia. It aimed at assessing the current state of collaboration in the region, evaluating the outcomes of two pivotal NEASPEC projects focused on the conservation of Amur tigers and leopards and the preservation of critical habitats for migratory birds, and proposing subsequent actions. The workshop also sought to explore future directions in transboundary conservation, particularly through the lens of connectivity conservation and the development of cross-border protected areas. Participants comprised an array of stakeholders from NEASPEC project partners and national focal points to international organizations, NGOs, government representatives, protected area managers, and experts in the field. This diverse group included specialists from the Feline Research Centre of China's State Forestry Administration, WWF-Russia, the Land of the Leopard National Park in Russia, and entities involved in migratory bird conservation like the National Bird Banding Centre of China and the Wild Bird Society of Japan, among others.

Building on the previous projects and the workshop, this workshop aims to conduct a thorough review of previous projects on the NEASPEC flagship species, drawing lessons learned to be used as a guidance for further nature conservation activities under NEASPEC.

Objectives

- Lessons learned from previous projects
 - Review previous projects on the conservation of key feline species along with efforts to protect habitats crucial for migratory birds.
 - Assess the effectiveness of these conservation projects, pinpointing successes and areas needing improvement.
 - Foster a more coordinated conservation approach at local, national, and regional/global levels.
- Streamlined Strategic Approach
 - Discuss and develop strategies that align with and contribute to global conservation goals, particularly the Global Biodiversity Framework.
 - Strengthen overall conservation strategies to enhance biodiversity and ensure the sustainable management of natural resources.
 - Promote a unified approach to achieving global biodiversity targets, reinforcing the commitment to preserving our planet's biological diversity.
- Expert group meeting for the migratory birds project
 - Invite key experts from primarily the subregion including those who engaged in the previous projects, aligning their execution of the project with the Strategy under NEASPEC.

- Draw recommendations on the new project and the Strategy.

Expected Outcomes

- Relevant experts are well acquainted for future collaboration
- Good practices and challenges are well extracted to inform the future planning
- More strategized guidance from the project members
- The migratory birds project is well initiated with momentum

Evaluation



Programme

[Day 1] 28 August 2024	
08:30 - 09:00	Registration
09:00 - 09:50	<p>Opening session</p> <p>Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Kazuhiko Seriu, Associate Environmental Affairs Officer, East and North-East Asia Office, ESCAP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Opening remarks</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Ganbold Baasanjav, Head, East and North-East Asia Office, ESCAP • Mr. Seungwoon Choi, Executive Director, Research Center for Endangered Species, National Institute of Ecology • <u>Congratulatory remarks</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Kyoung Hae Kim, Director, Climate Diplomacy Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Korea • <u>Keynote speech</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Jennifer George, Chief Executive, East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) • <u>Group photo</u>
09:50 – 10:20	Break
10:20 – 12:00	<p>Session 1. (Plenary) Progress on policies and programmes for promoting transboundary environmental cooperation in North-East Asia</p> <p>Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Kazuhiko Seriu, Associate Environmental Affairs Officer, East and North-East Asia Office, ESCAP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Introduction of the workshop format</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Kazuhiko Seriu, Associate Environmental Affairs Officer, East and North-East Asia Office, ESCAP • <u>Global/regional Policies for Nature Conservation</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) and the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Moon-Hyun Shin, Associate Researcher • <u>NEASPEC Strategic Setting</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of the NEASPEC Nature Conservation Strategy and 2021-2025 Strategic Plans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Kazuhiko Seriu, Associate Environmental Affairs Officer, East and North-East Asia Office, ESCAP • Review of the NEASPEC NC Projects

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Mi-Jin Lee, Research Assistant, East and North-East Asia Office, ESCAP • Dr. Yury Darman, Senior Researcher, Pacific Geographical Institute, Far Eastern Branch of Russian Academy of Science • Dr. Bernhard Seliger, Representative, Hanns Seidel Foundation Korea Office • Knowledge Platform • Dr. Jeong Eun (Anyu) Lim, Senior Researcher, Research Center for Endangered Species, National Institute of Ecology <p><u>Q&A</u></p>	
12:00 – 13:30	Lunch	
13:30 - 15:00	<p>Parallel Session 2.1 Conservation of big feline species</p> <p>Moderators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Jeong Eun (Anyu) Lim, Senior Researcher, Research Center for Endangered Species, National Institute of Ecology • Ms. Mi-Jin Lee, Research Assistant, East and North-East Asia Office, ESCAP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations on the review of NEASPEC projects, national-level conservation efforts, and bi-/multi-lateral projects • Discussions on follow-up activities <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Open discussion on follow-up activities (esp. based on NEASPEC project outcomes and recommendations) (2) Experts may want to present project proposals. 	<p>Parallel Session 2.2 Conservation of migratory birds</p> <p>Moderators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Lyu Cai, Center for East Asia-Australasian Flyway Studies (CEAAF) & School of Ecology and Nature Conservation, Beijing Forestry University • Mr. Kazuhiko Seriu, Associate Environmental Affairs Officer, East and North-East Asia Office, ESCAP <p>The focus will be discussion on detailed action plans and activities for implementation of the newly approved NEASPEC project on <i>“Connectivity conservation for habitats of flagship migratory birds in North-East Asia”</i>.</p>
15:00-15:30	Break	
15:30-17:30	Parallel Session 2.1 (cont.)	Parallel Session 2.2 (cont.)
18:00 -	Dinner Reception	

[Day 2] 29 August 2024		
09:00 – 10:20	<p>Parallel Session 2.1 (cont.) Conservation of big feline species</p> <p>Discussion points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we link to the global/regional policies? • How do we enhance knowledge sharing? (platform) 	<p>Parallel Session 2.2 (cont.) Conservation of migratory birds</p> <p>Discussion points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we link to the global/regional policies? • How do we enhance knowledge sharing? (platform)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical issues • Methodologies • Stakeholder engagement (local communities, CEPA (youth, gender, etc.)) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methodologies • Stakeholder engagement (local communities, CEPA (youth, gender, etc.))
10:20 – 10:40	Break	
10:40 - 12:00	Parallel Session 2.1 (cont.)	Parallel Session 2.2 (cont.)
12:00 – 13:30	Lunch	
13:30 – 15:20	<p>Session 3. (Plenary) Roundtable discussion on coordinated actions and plans for systematic transboundary conservation in North-East Asia</p> <p>Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Jeong Eun (Anya) Lim, Senior Researcher, Research Center for Endangered Species, National Institute of Ecology • Mr. Kazuhiko Seriu, Associate Environmental Affairs Officer, East and North-East Asia Office, ESCAP <p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rapporteurs’ report on each parallel session • Open discussion for 2026-2030 Strategic plans 	
15:20 – 15:40	Break	
15:40 – 17:30	<p>Session 3. (Cont.)</p> <p>Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Jeong Eun (Anya) Lim, Senior Researcher, Research Center for Endangered Species, National Institute of Ecology • Mr. Kazuhiko Seriu, Associate Environmental Affairs Officer, East and North-East Asia Office, ESCAP <p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Means of Implementation</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) / Data Room <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Karen Grace C. Ochavo, Environment Officer, Regional Flyway Initiative, Asian Development Bank (ADB) • Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Vivian Fu, Senior Manager, Wetlands for Asian Flyways • Information sharing platform • Wrap-up <p>Closing</p>	