

Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species

Half Year Report (due 31 October each year)

Project Ref. No.	13 – 034
Project Title	Wildlife health monitoring and capacity-building for leopard conservation in Russia
Country(ies)	Russia, United Kingdom
UK Organisation	Zoological Society of London
Collaborator(s)	Primorskaya State Agricultural Academy, Moscow and Novosibirsk Zoo, WCS, European Zoos, Lazovsky State Nature Reserve, Russian Institute of Biology and Soils
Report date	April – September 2006
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	HYR 1
Project website	www.amur-leopard.org http://www.zsl.org/field-conservation/carnivores-and-people/amur-leopard-conservation-in-russia,468,AR.html

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – September) against the agreed baseline timetable for the project (if your project has started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up).

See page 4 + 5

2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

I. During the first few months of the project it became clear that a fruitful and sensible collaboration with the Krai Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory would not be possible. This mainly seems to be due to a number of political reasons that we are neither privy to, nor can influence or mitigate. The Amur Leopard Wildlife Health Project (ALWHP) has therefore decided to restore the currently unused laboratory of the Veterinary Faculty at the Primorskaya State Agricultural Academy in Ussuriysk to become the project's Wildlife Health Monitoring Unit (WHMU) (Annex II).

This change has now a number of impacts on the project:

1. The restoration of the veterinary laboratory requires additional funds, most of which are not covered by the Darwin Initiative grant and have to be sought from additional donors. Due to delays in the administrative process of issuing the respective permits to the Russian Institute of Biology and Soils and WCS Russia though, the leopard captures envisaged for spring 2006 could not take place. We therefore re-allocated funds of £ 8 000.00 earmarked for WCS and their capture work in the remaining FY 2005 to the restoration of the laboratory, instead. This was discussed with the Darwin Secretariat beforehand.

The unavailability of a diagnostic laboratory furthermore delayed the onset of the sampling process, which had to be postponed to early 2007.

original proposal, as well as for the running costs for the DSL-Internet connection as lifeline for the project. Furthermore, an additional budget line for "Rent" should be established to accordingly assign the Rub 4 500.00 / month (app. £ 90.00 / month) used for office rent.

Furthermore, costs for car maintenance, repair and insurance might exceed the £ 1 000.00 / year assigned for this budget line. Since the car has just been purchased no detailed prediction with regards to the actual costs per year can yet be made at this moment.

If you were asked to provide a response to this year's annual report review with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan or budget should not be discussed in this report but raised with the Darwin Secretariat directly.

Please send your **completed form by 31 October each year per email** to Stefanie Halfmann, Darwin Initiative M&E Programme, stefanie.halfmann@ed.ac.uk . The report should be between 1-2 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message.**

Answers to Box 1

Baseline project progress for April – September 2006	Actual project progress for April – September 2006	Comments
Russian vet counterpart to work with Claudia Schoene identified and engaged.	Professor Lada Vladimirowna Julikova, Head of the Department of Epizootology at the Primorskaya State Agricultural Academy, has been identified as the vet counterpart for Claudia Schoene (see picture in Annex II).	The existing Russian labour laws require a lengthy process before a contract can be signed between a Russian citizen and a foreign employer. The Academy is currently investigating all details required for the successful completion of such contract.
	A Contract of Cooperation has been agreed upon between the Primorskaya State Agricultural Academy and the Conservation Programme of the Zoological Society of London. This CoC is due to be signed in early October 2006 (NB completed at time of writing).	
Krai Veterinary Diagnostic Lab capable of conducting analyses of biological samples from leopards, prey species and domestic cats and dogs.	The restoration of the former veterinary laboratory of the Academy has been envisaged instead. The first reconstruction works are due to start in October 2006. (NB started as planned at time of writing)	The reasons for this decision are outlined in box 2 I.
1-2 students to take DVM identified.	Two final year veterinary students from the Primorskaya State Agricultural Academy have been identified to apply for the MSc in Wild Animal Health offered by the Zoological Society of London / the Royal Veterinary College. This activity is therefore additional to the Darwin-funded activities of the ALWHP.	The students will apply to participate in the course of 2007/8. They will furthermore apply for funding for this course to the Darwin Fellowship programme 2007. The students will return to Russia in June and July 2008 to undertake their field study under the guidance of the Academy before returning to London to finalise their course work until September 2008.
Arrangements for sampling from deer farms, hunting organisations and villages finalised.	Preliminary talks have been taking place with WCS Russia and the Russian NGO Phoenix to establish contact with relevant hunting organisations and deer farms in early 2007.	Final arrangements will be made as soon as the sampling strategy has been finalised. Deer farms can only be sampled in June and July of each year when de-antlering takes place. The hunting season is restricted to November and

		December of each year (for further details see Annex III). District veterinarians will be contacted with the help of the Primorskaya State Agricultural Academy to organise sampling in the relevant villages identified. Depending on the weather sampling will begin in late February / early March 2007.
Sampling and associated student training carried out on Amur leopards held in former Soviet bloc zoos	WCS Russia had already arranged to run our joint "Veterinarian Training in Wildlife Health and Tiger-Human Conflict Resolution Training: Second Workshop" in April 2006, the dates originally intended for the zoo sampling. We have therefore rescheduled the sampling of Amur leopards held in former Soviet bloc zoos to Spring 2007.	A detailed report of the workshop is attached in Annex I.
	A strong collaboration is being developed between Lazovsky State Nature Reserve and the ALWHP. The Reserve is situated in south-east Primorski Krai and has been chosen as one of the possible future release sites for a second Amur leopard population.	One or two students of the 2006/7 MSc in Wild Animal Health in London hope to undertake their field studies at the Reserve. They will investigate the disease status of a selected group of racoon dogs and a relevant control group. The results of this survey will also become part of the overall survey on animal diseases in Primorski Krai by the ALWHP. Existing reserve staff will also contribute to the sampling, whether or not the students are successful in finding funding to assist.
	A poster introducing the ALWHP was produced in September for presentation at selected international conferences and meetings.	A pdf.file of the poster is attached in Annex IV.