



WWF

NEWSLETTER

2014



Vashlovani National Park. © Agency of Protected Areas (Georgia)

# CAUCASUS ECOREGION NEWSLETTER

Issue **2**

## WWF is Celebrating 10 years of Presence in Armenia

In June 2014, WWF celebrated the 10th anniversary of its presence in Armenia. During the event organized in Yerevan Botanical Garden, WWF-Armenia presented to the official guests, representatives of diplomatic delegations, international and non-governmental organizations, and other invitees its ten-year efforts aimed at nature conservation in Armenia.

The work and achievements in Armenia were presented to the guests, and further plans discussed. The guests had an opportunity to get acquainted with the WWF-Armenia's projects through photos and an informative video-film. A part of the photos was demonstrating the biodiversity of Armenia, including endangered animals and plants which need special conservation; the other part was revealing the works implemented in the frames of WWF-Armenia's projects.

During the event, "WWF-Armenia Best Partner" awards were granted. Afterwards, a new nursery, established in collaboration with the Institute of Botany of RA National Academy of Sciences under WWF-Switzerland funded project, was officially opened.

In his welcoming speech WWF-Armenia Director, Mr. Karen Manvelyan said: "Since 2002, 35,500 ha of protected areas have been technically enforced through the projects implemented by WWF. 91,700 ha of new protected areas were established and subsequently technically enforced – Arevik and Lake Arpi National Parks, Zangezur and Khustup State Sanctuaries, Gnishik Protected Landscape, which constitute 3.1% of the entire territory of Armenia".

In these ten years WWF has implemented numerous projects related to biodiversity conservation, development of protected areas, conservation and restoration of endangered species and ecosystems, community development and environmental awareness. Particularly, the afforestation and reforestation activities have been undertaken in Lori and Tavush regions, covering approximately 850 ha area; the community development projects, aimed at conservation and sustainable use of natural resources, were implemented in more than 25 communities across the whole country.

We wish WWF-Armenia to further successfully pursue the path to the conservation of nature.

For additional information please contact:  
Gera Voskanyan, WWF-Armenia  
[gvoskanyan@wwfcaucasus.org](mailto:gvoskanyan@wwfcaucasus.org)



© WWF - Armenia

# Developing ecotourism potential of National Parks in Azerbaijan

National Park (NP) is relatively new category of Protected Areas in Azerbaijan. The first national park was gazetted in 2003 and during the next 10 years eight more NPs were established. With total area of 322,306 ha they cover almost all ecosystems of the country from coast till high mountains.

Shahdag and Shirvan NPs are located close to the capital of the country and that is why they are the most visited parks by tourists.

Shahdag NP is the largest park in the Caucasus (130,508 ha) and it covers forest, freshwater and high mountain ecosystems. The highest peaks in Azerbaijan (e.g. Bazarduzu, 4466 m) are located within the park boundaries and they attract tourists from different countries. Forests are mostly visited by locals in summer.

Shirvan NP is the more tourist friendly park and covers 54,973 ha. SNP harbors the largest single population of the Gittered Gazelle (*Gazella subgutturosa*) anywhere within its global range. It is the only park in the Caucasus with African safari scenes where you can observe the wildlife from the entrance gate. Besides to gazelles and associated carnivores Shirvan NP is home for nesting and migratory waterfowls which attract birdwatchers.

WWF Azerbaijan with support of Norway government and the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan implements the project to "Improve Governance and Management of Protected Areas System in Azerbaijan" which aims to create in Azerbaijan two model national parks in line with key international criteria promoting good governance, improved management of natural recourses, development of sustainable tourism, and involvement of local business partners.

Development of eco-tourism in National Parks can make objective contribution in improvement of well-being of local communities, assistance to raise economical independence of protected territories, improving conditions of nature complexes and increasing the level of ecological culture level of local population and tourists.

For additional information please contact:

Sevinj Sarukhanova, WWF-Azerbaijan  
ssarukhanova@wwfcaucasus.org



© WWF-Azerbaijan/Elshan Nuriyev



## Continuation of bison restoration work in the Caucasus

A regional meeting on the issues of bison restoration in the Northern Caucasus took place in Vladikavkaz, in June 2014. The meeting was attended by a number of experts from seven regions of the Russian Federation. During the meeting, participants reviewed the results of the bison conservation work undertaken by WWF-Russia over the years, particularly in the restoration of the two groups of purebred bison remaining in Tseysky Nature Reserve and Teberdinsky Nature Reserve. At the beginning of this work in 2008, the total number of bison in these free-ranging groups was less than 60 animals. In 2009, 2012 and 2013, WWF-Russia in cooperation with the Governments of North Ossetia-Alania and Karachay-Cherkessia, nature reserves: North-Ossetian, Teberdinsky, Prioksko-Terrasny, and Oksky, and with the financial support of the Northern Caucasus Resorts released into the wild 36 animals raised at the bison-breeding centers of Russia. These conservation efforts will ensure the transfer of accumulated practical measures for adapting natural bison populations to the Caucasus context for the following generations of the species.

The meeting participants discussed the need for a comprehensive assessment of the Northern Caucasus region for identifying suitable bison habitats and optimum number of animals needed to create sustainable self-supporting populations.

The bison is listed in the Red Data Book of the Russian Federation as a species threatened with extinction. Within the framework of the Bison Recovery Strategy, in 2009, WWF-Russia started a project on restoring the European bison populations in the Caucasus mountains in the southwest of Russia. Restoration of this species, which was nearly wiped out at the end of 1990s, is by all means one of the most indicative examples of a concerted effort of many experts in the field of bison conservation. As a result of effective collaboration, the current population estimate in the Russian Caucasus now accounts for about 90 purebred animals.

For additional information please contact:  
Natalia Shalaeva, WWF-Russia  
[NShalaeva@wwf.ru](mailto:NShalaeva@wwf.ru)

## Projects in the Caucasus Region of Turkey

WWF-Turkey initiative Turkey's Life Grant Programme, aiming to raise awareness about Turkey's biodiversity values, continue supporting conservation efforts of local NGOs. The second period grants were distributed to five more projects that needs urgent funding. Among these projects two of them - Trabzon Ađaçbaşı Peatland, and great bustard & demoiselle crane - are conducted in the Caucasus Region of Turkey. Conservation of Trabzon Ađaçbaşı Peatland takes place in Black Sea; endangered birds great bustard & demoiselle crane are protected in Muş which falls in the Eastern Anatolia.

### Jungle cat action plan is ready

Jungle cat is among the five cat species living in Turkey and its population is decreasing due to habitat loss, illegal hunting and decline in prey. Conservation of their habitats is important for the survival of the species. Akyatan Lagoon in Adana, which is in the southern part of Turkey, is one of the areas where jungle cats known to live. Recent field studies of WWF-Turkey, together with the Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs VII. Regional Directorate in Adana, demonstrated that there are about 70 individuals. In collaboration with the Regional Directorate, WWF-Turkey prepared an action plan to protect jungle cat in Adana and its surroundings. The plan synthesises research findings upto date and field works where data were digitized and mapped. Actions defined for a)conservation and management; b)monitoring; c)awareness raising, capacity building and education; d)coordination. Prepared with a holistic approach, the plan is one of ten species action plans that the Ministry has completed.

For additional information please contact:  
Tuđba Uđur, WWF-Turkey  
[tugur@wwf.org.tr](mailto:tugur@wwf.org.tr)

© WWF-Turkey



# Caucasus - the plant diversity between the Black & Caspian Seas

In May 2014 the Berlin-Dahlem Botanical Garden and Botanical Museum opened the exhibition dedicated to the plant world of the Caucasus. The exhibition will last until March 2015 and demonstrates the unique plant diversity of the area spanning from Black to Caspian Sea. It also offers the concise information regarding partnerships with different organizations in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. You can enjoy the remarkable exhibition in the Garden, as well as in the Museum. The live flora and numerous devices supporting the specific climatic conditions offer a spectacular adventure to the visitors.

The exhibition is a result of cooperation between different organizations, namely: Volkswagen Stiftung, Institutes of Botany in Armenia and Azerbaijan, National Botanic Garden of Georgia, WWF Germany and WWF-Caucasus and media partner "Der Tagesspiegel".

This adventurous initiative is very important for Caucasus countries for bringing the beauties of the Caucasus nature closer to the European society.



For additional information please contact:  
Tamaz Gamkrelidze, WWF-Caucasus Programme Office  
tgamkrelidze@wwfcaucasus.org

## WWF Caucasus Programme Office

11 Aleksidze St.  
Tbilisi 0193, Georgia  
Tel: (+ 995 32) 237 500  
Fax: (+ 995 32) 237 501  
Email: office@wwfcaucasus.org  
www.panda.org/caucasus

## WWF Armenia Branch

11 Proshyan St.  
Yerevan 0019, Armenia  
Tel/Fax: (+ 374 10) 58 89 83  
Email: office\_am@wwfcaucasus.org  
www.panda.org/armenia

## WWF Azerbaijan Branch

M.Mushfig St., Blok 501, 2K  
Baku AZ1073, Azerbaijan  
Tel/Fax: + 994 12 53853162  
Email: office\_az@wwfcaucasus.org

## WWF Turkey

Büyük Postane Cad. 43-45 Kat 5  
Bahçekapı İstanbul 34420, Turkey  
Tel: + (902 125) 282 030  
Fax: + (902 125) 282 040  
www.wwf.org.tr

## WWF Russia (office in Moscow)

19 Nikoloyamskaya St., 3 building  
Moscow 109240, Russia  
Tel: + 7 (495) 727 09 39  
Fax: + 7 (495) 727 09 38  
Email: russia@wwf.ru  
www.wwf.ru



### Why we are here

To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

[www.panda.org/caucasus](http://www.panda.org/caucasus)

Regional projects in Turkish and Russian parts of the Caucasus are coordinated and implemented accordingly by WWF-Turkey and WWF-Russia in close cooperation with WWF Causus PO under one vision of Ecoregion Conservation Plan.

To subscribe, unsubscribe, contribute or for further information please send an email to [tgamkrelidze@wwfcaucasus.org](mailto:tgamkrelidze@wwfcaucasus.org)