



NEWSLETTER

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Kavkazski Nature Reserve. © A. Perevozov

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Protected Areas enlarged in the South of Armenia

In December 2013 the Government of Armenia approved the establishment of a new sanctuary called Khustup and the enlargement of existing Zangezur sanctuary. The area of Khustup sanctuary is 6,946 ha and Zangezur sanctuary - 25,870 ha being enlarged by 8,500 ha. This is a result of UNDP/GEF funded project on Developing of Protected Areas System implemented by WWF Armenia in partnership with the Ministry of Nature Protection. The new expanses are situated within WWF priority conservation areas especially important as habitats to Leopard, Bezoar Goats, Armenian Mouflon and many other threatened species.

By separate decision the Government unified Shikahogh State Reserve and Arevik National Park State Non Commercial Organizations (SNCO) into one entity called Zangezur Biosphere complex SNCO. Shikahogh State Reserve SNCO has been managing Shikahogh Reserve, Zangezur and Plane Grove Sanctuaries and Arevik National Park SNCO has been managing Arevik National Park and Boghakar Sanctuary. Zangezur Biosphere complex SNCO will be managing all above mentioned PAs with the total area of 79,420 ha making 2.7% of territory of the country. These new areas are considered a valuable addition to protected area system of Armenia increasing the chance for threatened species to survive in their historical habitats.

For additional information please contact
Gera Voskanyan, WWF-Armenia
gvoskanyan@wwfcaucasus.org



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Gazelles return back home

WWF, in close cooperation with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan and the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection of Georgia is implementing a project on Increasing Biodiversity in a Priority Transboundary Protected Area in the Iori-Mingechaur Region. The project is co-financed by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and WWF-Germany. The main objectives of the project are to improve protected areas and pastures and reintroduce the locally extinct Goitered Gazelle.

During the project 38 individuals of gazelles were reintroduced from Shirvan NP to their historical ranges in Ajinohur steppe (5), Korchay State Nature Reserve (10), Samukh area (8), Aggel NP (5) in Azerbaijan and Vashlavani NP in Georgia (10). The gazelles were collared with GPS collars, allowing specialists to track their behavior, movement, range use, migration and other ecological characteristics. The scientists were pleased with the fact that the Gazelles made transboundary movements between Vashlovani National Park in Georgia to Samukh area in Azerbaijan and back. We strongly believe that in the nearest future we shall observe flocks of gazelles freely grazing in arid and semi-arid landscapes of the Southern Caucasus.

We are very much grateful to all organizations and just individuals who eagerly participate in this exciting project and hope to report back on further success in the nearest future.

For additional information please contact
Sevinj Sarukhanova, WWF-Caucasus
ssarukhanova@wwfcaucasus.org



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WWF brings bison to the Caucasus Mountains

The bison is the largest land mammal in Europe, and the continent's only wild bull that survived to the present day. The bison is now listed in the Red Book of Russia as a species threatened with extinction. Since 1996, WWF-Russia with support from WWF-Germany has been implementing a program to create a population of wild bison in the forests of the European Russia. With the help of this program, by 2008, the number of bison in Orlov, Bryansk, Kaluga and Vladimir regions of Russia exceeded 150. This size is enough for the population to reproduce itself independently in the wild. After that, in 2009, WWF started to restore the European bison populations in the Caucasus mountains in the southwest of Russia.

Today, bison from a nature reserve in the Moscow region arrived at a nature reserve 1500 kilometers away, located in the Russian part of the Caucasus Mountains – highest mountains in Europe. They will spend one month on quarantine in pens of Teberdinsky Nature Reserve in the Karachay-Cherkessia region of Russia. After that, the bison will be released into the wild.

The bison were brought to the Caucasus with support from the Northern Caucasus Resorts. The Company manages a large-scale tourism cluster development project in the region.

Last year, two groups with total amount of 17 animals were also brought and released in two areas in the Caucasus.

For additional information please contact

What about leopard's right to live?

The leopard, which used to be present throughout the Caucasus Ecoregion is now a critically endangered species. Its main population is in NW Iran and the highlands of its border areas with Azerbaijan and Armenia. Smaller populations of leopard can also be seen in the Greater Caucasus of Georgia and Russia, out. Thus, it should not be a surprise to encounter with some individuals in the eastern part of Turkey.

This incident is not only a clear evidence of its presence in Turkey but also an unfortunate proof of possible consequences when endangered species come across with human, which demonstrates how unprepared we are to deal with a species like a leopard. We expect the officials to initiate administrative and juridical processes in order to make the public informed and take necessary action to prevent similar occasions to happen again.

In order to ensure the recovery of leopard's population, which has dramatically declined in its geographical range and whose habitats are fragmented, it is vital to preserve not only the leopards but also the populations of their prey species, as well as migration routes and source populations in an integrated approach. It would only be possible if each country in the region is open for collaboration and effectively delivers its own responsibilities for the protection of leopard.

Says WWF-Turkey's Conservation Director Dr. Sedat Kalem: "the presence of a charismatic species like leopard should not only be taken as a national pride but also an indicator of the conservation value of our natural sites, despite increasing human impact. This news has turned the lights over Turkey, but being brought to the agenda with such an

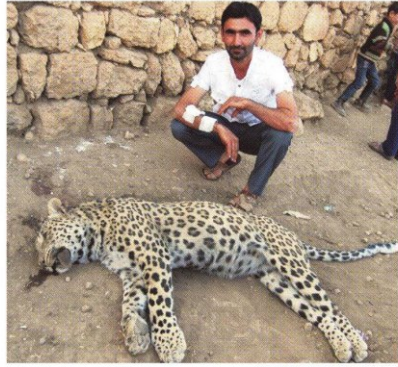
Leoparı öldürenlere 50 bin lira ceza gelebilir

Türkiye'de 39 yıl sonra ilk kez görülen ancak yine öldürülen Anadolu Leoparı ile ilgili soruşturma başlatıldı. 2-3 yaşında erkek olan leoparı öldüren Diyarbakırlı çobanlar suçlu bulunursa 50 bin lira ceza gelebilir. Çiftleşmek için yuvadan ayrıldığı düşünülen genç erkeğin, bu nedenle saldırganlaştığı sanılıyor.

Ölüme detaylı soruşturma

Çınar'a 10 kilometre uzaklıktaki Solmaz köyünde hayvanlarını otlatan Kasım Kaplan'ın üzerine atlayan ve boğuşma sırasında diğer çoban Mahmut Kaplan'ın av tüfeğiyle ateş ederek öldürdüğü leoparı getirdiği Dicle Üniversitesi (DÜ) Veterinerlik Fakültesi'nde inceleme sürüyor. Anadolu Leoparı'nın, 2-3 yaşında genç erkek olduğu belirlendi. Leoparın, gençliğe adım attığı için yuvasından ayrıldığı, çiftleşmek ve kendisine özel bir yaşam alanı bulmak için dolaştığı kaydedildi. Normalde saldırgan olmayan türün üyelerinin, gençlik ve çiftleşme döneminde saldırganlaşabileceği, bu dönemde 200 kilometre yol kat edebildiği de ifade edildi.

1970'lerde soyunun tükendiği düşünülen leoparın son 1974 yılında



Öldürülen Anadolu Leoparı ile ilgili soruşturma başlatıldı. 2-3 yaşında erkek olan leoparı öldüren Diyarbakırlı çobanlar mercek altında.

İlinda Ankara'nın Beypazarı ilçesinde canlı görüldüğü, bir kadına saldırdığı için o leoparı da öldürüldüğü öğrenildi. Leopardan alınan gen ve doku örneklerinin TÜ-BİTAK'a da gönderilirken, ölümüne ilişkin hem Orman ve Su İşleri Bakanlığı hem de il sube müdürlüğü yetkilileri inceleme başlattı. Çobanların "bize saldırdı" ifadesi yeterli ve geçerli bulunmazsa, bin 500 lira idari para cezasının yanında, hayvanın nesli tükenmekte ol-

duğu için Bakanlık tarafından 50 bin lira tazminat cezası uygulanabileceği belirtildi.

Bölgede inceleme yapılacak

Anadolu Leoparı'nın uzun yıllardan sonra yeniden görülmesi yetkilileri harekete geçirdi. Orman ve Su İşleri Diyarbakır Şube Müdürlüğü ve Dicle Üniversitesi Biyoloji Bölümü görevlileri, leoparı öldürüldüğü Karacadağ bölgesinde inceleme yapacak.

incident has been equally heartbreaking. In order to learn lessons from this experience and avoid similar circumstances in the future; we need to better know about the status of the leopard in our country, identify potential habitats and ecological corridors and establish protection zones, ensure the availability of the populations of prey species, take preventive measures to reduce leopard-human interface, develop compensation schemes, raise awareness and conduct monitoring systems. All we have to do is to make sure leopards live in harmony with people, rather than letting them to be killed".

For additional information please contact
Tuğba Uğur, WWF-Turkey
tugur@wwf.org.tr

Forest transformation project in the South Caucasus

WWF is implementing the EU financed Project on Increasing the resilience of forest ecosystems against climate change in the South Caucasus Countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia) through forest transformation. The Project is financed under one of priorities of the EU Thematic Programme on Environment and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources including Energy (ENRTP).

The overall objective of the Project is to increase the resilience of forest ecosystems in the Southern Caucasus against climate change impacts and to improve biodiversity and

livelihoods of local populations. The project demonstrates practical measures through pilot site activities (150 ha in each country) to make forests more resilient to climate change via implementation of forest transformation plants. It has a strong component on building technical and human capacities of the national forest administrations to develop and further implement strategies for transforming monoculture forest stands into highly resilient, "close to nature" forest stands. The visibility of the project is ensured through wide dissemination of communications



products, media events, signs on the pilot sites and others.

The potential for replication is substantial. The total area of forest plantations in the target countries is 90,000 ha; the area vulnerable to climate change is about 20,000 - 30,000 ha. The area of managed forest with severely diminished biodiversity and consequently high vulnerability to climate change comprises a substantial proportion of the total forest stand in the target countries. Strong and sustained political commitment is needed for extension of the action along with the availability of funding for implementing measures.

For additional information please contact
Matthias Lichtenberger, Caucasus Programme Officer
Matthias.Lichtenberger@wwf.de
Malkhaz Dzneldze, Regional Coordinator
mdzneldze@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

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 Caucasus PO under one vision of Ecoregion Conservation Plan.

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