

RESOLUTIONS
of the
Third Conference on Migratory Birds of the North Pacific Region
Yakutsk, Republic of Sakha, Russian Federation
8-13 August 2007

The Third Conference on Migratory Birds of the North Pacific Region was held in Yakutsk on August 8-13, 2007 within the framework of the International Forum on the Study and Conservation of Arctic Wildlife. The Conference discussed the results and plans for international, regional, and inter-regional scientific cooperation on nature conservation, especially research on the preservation and use of migratory birds and their habitats in the northern Asia-Pacific Region. Ninety biologists, ornithologists and experts in the sphere of nature conservation from four countries took part in the work on Migratory Birds of the North Pacific Region.

The participants of the Conference recognized important achievements in the period after convening of the Second International North-Pacific Migratory Bird Conference in Vermont (2002);

1. Results of work by Novosibirsk ornithologists and virologists on the classification of bird populations and problems related to development of the oil and gas industries and emergence of avian influenza in wild populations of migratory birds.
2. Research results by Pribaikal ornithologists concerning the observation of rare birds and assessment of reserves of wild populations of migratory birds.
3. Research results of Kamchatka ornithologists on implementation of the project on re-introduction of the Aleutian Cackling Goose *Branta canadensis leucopareia*
4. Research results of Yakutian ornithologists in the area of investigation and assessment of waterbird stocks and Siberian Spruce Grouse *Falcipennis falcipennis* in the Lena river basin, nesting ecology of the Siberian Crane *Grus leucogeranus* and Hooded Crane *Grus monachus*, monitoring of bird migrations on the key flyway paths of the eastern Siberian Crane population in eastern Yakutia;
5. Harmonized efforts of Russia, Kazakhstan, Iran and China on the development of a wetland site network important to the Siberian Crane and other migratory waterbirds in Asia under the framework of the UNEP/GEF Siberian Crane Wetland Project and the UNEP/GEF ECORA project, and in cooperation with the Convention for Migratory Species (CMS) Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for the Siberian Crane,
6. The US Fish & Wildlife Service has been supportive of activities in the region including collaboration between ornithologists from Yakutia and Alaska for research on waterbirds.
7. The Department of the Interior including the US Fish & Wildlife Service & US Geological Survey is conducting extensive research on avian influenza and satellite tracking studies on wild waterbirds in the United States and also collaborative studies in East Asia.

The Conference requests the indicated authorities to address the following:

1. UNEP/GEF Siberian Crane Wetland Project and the Convention on Conservation of Migratory Species Memorandum of Understanding on the Siberian Crane on proposal to:

1.1. Collaborate with the Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences to prepare and publish a monograph on the Siberian Crane;

1.2. Work with government agencies and organizations to search for nesting grounds of the Siberian Crane in the Anabar-Olenek basin in the north-west of Yakutia;

1.3. Promote wide awareness of the project results throughout the Asia Pacific Region.

2. The Ministry of Natural Resources, Federal Service for Supervising Natural Resources (Rosprirodnadzor), Federal Agency of Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance (Rosselkhozadzor) and the Russian Academy of Sciences with proposals to:

2.1. Renew effective protection of federal zakazniks especially for habitats of the Siberian crane and other rare and endangered species in West Siberia;

2.2. Arrange in 2008 an All-Russian conference on “Problems of Conservation of Rare Animals” to address scientific and practical aspects of harmonizing the Red Data Books on national and regional levels, to ensure adequate legislation and regional strategies on the conservation of rare species in order to prepare a new edition of the Red Data Book for the Russia Federation.

3. Competent governmental bodies of the Russian Federation with proposals to:

3.1. Positively resolve issues and streamline procedures relating to research permits concerning the use of technologies of satellite tracking to define migration routes of Siberian Cranes and other bird species and to identify possible routes of avian influenza dispersal as an integral component of international collaboration;

3.2. Recognize the impacts of climate change on ecosystems in the Arctic and consider measures to mitigate global warming in economic planning.

4. Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) with proposals to:

4.1. Complete steps to upgrade the status of Kytalyk Resource Reserve to be designated as a Ramsar Site and Important Bird Area as the nesting area of the Yakutian Siberian Crane population; Follow-up with possible designation as a World Heritage Site.

4.2. Nominate Siberian Crane and other important waterbird breeding and stopover sites along the flyway in Yakutia for inclusion in the waterbird site network under the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership;

4.3. Raise additional funds to ensure efficient implementation of the protection functions of Specially Protected Nature Territories at Kytalyk, Kyupsky, Kuoluma-Chappanda, and Chabda.

4.4. Promote policies and legislation that will enable conflicts between development and conservation to be avoided in order to ensure a sustainable future for Yakutia; and to provide comprehensive planning guidelines to protect environmental services, natural resources, biodiversity, landscape values, and cultural heritage.

4.5. Ensure adequate ecological surveillance of the new wave of industrial development on the territory of Yakutia since a new program has been approved for the complex development of the economy including the building of transmission powerlines and the construction of dams.

4.6. Support and approve constructive support from the Yakutskenergo Company to avoid negative impacts during construction of transmission powerlines for migratory birds. Ensure that the design of the facilities built in the Lena basin, especially across the areas of intensive Siberian Crane and Baikal Teal *Anas formosa* passage in the Middle Aldan region, will be safe for birds.

4.7. Provide support to develop specialized ecological and tourism programs connected to waterbird habitats.

4.8. Approve activity of the Olonkho Association and Ecological Center of Evenk People of the Republic of Sakha to preserve the culture of the Yakutian people, and support proposals of Olonkho Association and Ivan Gogolev Museum to develop a combined ecological education program in collaboration with UNEP/GEF Siberian Crane Wetland Project and other interested organizations.

5. Kamchatka Krai with proposals to:

5.1. Direct maximum efforts towards the conservation and strengthening of the existing efficient system of Specially Protected Natural Territories in Kamchatka Krai which are of outstanding importance in maintaining large migratory populations of bird species in the Asia Pacific Region;

5.2. Ensure support to Dr. Nikolai Gerasimov in his activity on the re-introduction of the Aleutian Cackling Goose and request to recognize him with a governmental award for his outstanding research in the sphere of nature conservation.

6. Irkutsk Oblast and Republic of Buryatia with proposals to:

6.1. Initiate conservation efforts in the regions of Lake Nichatka, Selenga Delta and Inigda River through the establishment of nature reserves at the earliest to guarantee the preservation of places of waterbird concentrations in the region;

6.2. Support the initiative of Irkutsk ornithologists on the organization of an international expedition to Yunnan (China) to investigate the causes of mortality of the Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca*, Greater Spotted Eagle *Aquila clanga* and other birds during the northern winter period of 2007.

The participants of the conference recognize a potential danger of the Highly Pathogenic H5N1 strain of avian influenza dispersal for rare bird populations and people and consider it expedient to:

7. Create a diagnostic laboratory in Yakutsk focused on the study of avian influenza viruses and other locally and globally hazardous wildlife diseases in Yakutia. In Yakutia there are a great number of nesting grounds, crossing migration flyways and non-breeding (wintering) sites of birds connected with many regions of Russia, adjacent countries and many others in the Asia-Pacific region.

8. Develop a system of monitoring avian influenza on the migration flyways of the Siberian Crane as outbreaks of the Highly Pathogenic H5N1 strain of avian influenza have been recorded near the stop-over sites of Siberian Cranes in north-eastern China that indicate the possibility of its distribution over the territory of Yakutia along the migration corridor.

The Conference participants note that:

9. International agencies including World Health Organisation, Food and Agriculture Organisation, World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), European Union, international conventions including the Ramsar Convention, CMS and Convention on Biological Diversity and international organizations dealing with conservation of migratory wild animal species including Birdlife International and Wetlands International have condemned attempts at conducting avian influenza control by culling wild birds as contradicting the interests of nature conservation and recognized it as ineffective and potentially counterproductive, leading to potential further spread of the disease. Likewise, the destruction of wetlands which are wild bird habitats is also recognized as an ineffective way to solve the problem. The participants of the Conference call on the federal and regional authorities of the Russian Federation to take into consideration this opinion of the international agencies and avert such practice over the Russian territory;

10. Mass killing of any bird species as a measure to fight against avian influenza will not be effective and that at the current stage of this problem the most crucial action is thorough surveillance of the dynamics of the known virulent strains, determination of the role of different bird species in influenza virus distribution and their territorial ties as well as educational work with people having permanent contacts with wild migratory birds;

11. Actions to reduce the risk of highly pathogenic avian influenza spreading on wetlands of key importance for migratory bird species meet the interests of environmental protection, therefore in this context the participants suggest the publication and distribution of guidelines on

taking these measures within the framework of the UNEP/GEF Siberian Crane Wetlands Project together with other concerned organizations.

Conference participants proposed to:

12. Organize the Fourth Conference on Migratory Birds of the Northern Asia-Pacific Region in 2011. The organizing committee is requested to investigate options for the next meeting including host country, location, and dates. Participants indicated an interest in convening the next meeting in China or Mongolia. Participation from colleagues in China, Mongolia, the Korean Peninsula, and Canada should be encouraged.

13. Organize a section on radiation and pollution impacts on migratory birds at the next meeting;

14. Strengthen cooperation with the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership.

The participants of the Third International Conference on Migratory Birds of the Northern Asia Pacific Region express their gratitude to the President of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), Vyacheslav A. Shtyrov, Vice-President of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) Eugenia I. Mikhailova, Vice Prime Minister Aial Stepanov, Sakha Government and the Institute of Biological Problems of the Cryolithozone of the Siberian Division of the Russian Academy of Sciences for organizing and hosting the International Forum on the Study and Preservation of Arctic Wildlife (8-13 August, 2007, Yakutsk) on a high level.

Note: this translation elaborates slightly on the official Russian version of the Conference Resolution for the sake of clarity, but is consistent with the meaning of the original.