

Funded & Supported by
Asian Waterbird Conservation Fund
亞洲水鳥保育基金

Project Name:
“Establishment of Waterbirds Conservation Stewardship through School and
Community-based Education and Interpretation”

Contract No.: 09-004

HALF-YEAR PROGRESS REPORT

Thanks to generous donation and great support from Asian Waterbird Conservation Fund, the project of “Establishment of Waterbirds Conservation Stewardship through School and Community-based Education and Interpretation” has come true, which inspired all stakeholders including staff of the Tumuji National Nature Reserve, teachers and students of local schools, local community and local government officials to input continuous efforts into sustainable use of natural resources and conservation of biodiversity especially waterbird for future generations. Stewardship concept and environmental conservation awareness is enhanced and popular in locality.

Thanks to awareness awoken and raised higher and higher among leadership by the project execution team, extra bonus and surprising inputs have been provided by local government and Administration Bureau of Tumuji National Nature Reserve to support the implementation of the project, such as co-financing a kick-off meeting, study tours to Momoge National Nature Reserve in Jilin Province and Keerqin National Nature Reserve in Inner Mongolia and so on.

Thanks to public awareness and capacity building enhanced since kick-off of the project, a series of designed activities were successfully carried out on schedule and achievements obtained far beyond what we expected at the very beginning.

A GOOD BEGINNING IS HALF-DONE

Through intensive lobbying and hard work of the project manager and her team, leadership of local government and the Administration Bureau of Tumuji National Nature Reserve were well aware of the project goal and objectives and importance of the project hence input great support to the project, which constituted a solid fundamental basis for successful implementation of the project. As a result, the Administration Bureau agreed to co-finance a Kick-off Meeting to officially announce the opening of the project. Just as an old saying in China, a good beginning is half-done. Since then a series of project activities design within

the project and beyond have been carried out smoothly on schedule.

KICK-OFF MEETING

On April 20th 2009, Tumuji National Nature Reserve (Tumuji NNR) of Inner Mongolia the People's Republic of China organized an inception ceremony to kick-off an environmental education project - "Establishment of Waterbirds Conservation Stewardship through School and Community-based Education and Interpretation" - funded and supported by Asian Waterbird Conservation Fund in the headquarter of the Administration Bureau of Tumuji National Nature Reserve. 52 people attended the inception ceremony, including representatives from local community, teachers from primary and secondary schools. 4 higher leaders from local government presented the ceremony. Media reporters from local observed and reported the ceremony.

Mr. Cheng Wanjun, Deputy Director of Tumuji National Nature Reserve hosted the inception ceremony. Mr. Wang Lianjun, Director of Wildlife Protection Center of Xing-an Prefecture Inner Mongolia, Mrs. Jiang Yuyan, Chairperson of Zhalaiteqi Committee for the Wellbeing of the Youth, Ms. Chen Qinghua, Chief of Publicity Department of Zhalaiteqi, Mr. Bateer, Head of Tumuji Township, Mr. Yi Guoliang, Director of Tumuji National Nature Reserve and Prof. Jinde Shu, senior environmental educator and Advisor of Tumuji National Nature Reserve presented the ceremony and delivered speeches.



Through the inception ceremony and broadcast in local TV station and reports on newspapers, more people knew the project. More interests and attention were drawn so that future activities consequently guaranteed.

RAINING OF TRAINERS (TOT) WORKSHOP

Right after the kick-off meeting, a week long "Training of Trainers (TOT) Workshop" was organized on April 20-25. 18 trainees including 6 reserve staff, 6 school teachers and 6 representatives from local community participated in the training workshop presented by senior environmental educators. Another 10 people participated in the workshop as observers.

During the workshop, an interactive and enjoyable presentation delivered by trainers. A participatory approach combining experiential games was used throughout the workshop. New concepts and advanced techniques of environmental education and interpretation were presented together with case study. During the workshop, a field trip was also organized, which provided trainees a complete picture for what they had learnt.

All participants not only learnt a great deal of concept in association with sustainable environmental education but also inspired themselves with impressive experiences as well as advanced technique and knowledge though participants aged from as young as 20-year-old to over 60 years old. Trainees expressed at the end of the workshop the teaching and coaching approaches were both easy to understand and enjoyable.



During session of wrap-up at the end of the workshop, Mr. Bai Yuliang, age 63, said: “I had never experienced such an enjoyable lesson before. The learning through playing games allowed us very easily understood the hot points of environmental issues and education of sustainable development. We considered before that human being was master of the nature and earth. Men could do whatever they wanted. Now it was well aware of that we were only stewards of natural resources and we should take care of natural resources intact for our future generations.” All other trainees aging from young to old had the same opinion as Mr. Bai.

Mr. Yi Guoliang, the Director of Tumuji NNR personally observed the TOT workshop at the first day training. The approach and mode of the training impressed him so deep that he promised to provide co-finance for follow-up activities at the end of the workshop. His action conveyed a signal to all people that the environmental education and follow-up events would be of high importance.



It is worth to tell that it was raining at the second day. Temperature in Inner Mongolia is still cold in late April, lower than 10 degree C. We worried about some trainees might not be possible to come. To our surprise, all trainees and observers arrived at the venue before the start time. And more, one man from local community walked to the classroom and requested to involve in the workshop

as a volunteer after he knew the event. Everybody was touched by him and all accepted his request.

Local TVs and news agencies interviewed and reported the workshop. The influence of the event outreached over the county to the whole prefecture.

FOLLOW-UP EVENTS

1-INDOOR TRAINING AND LECTURES IN SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY

On April 28, 21 trainees and observers of TOT divided into 3 groups and went to local primary and secondary schools and community to present environmental education lectures as follow-up training program to train more students and local residents. The theme of the event was “*Waterbirds and Future, Wetland and Life*”. All new trainers delivered lectures and training by using approaches and concepts learnt from TOT workshop with combination of their own expertise and experiences throughout the whole process. The interactive method drew students’ attention and they learnt the up-to-date technique and concepts by playing games. “It was the most impressive training we had ever had and truly learning by enjoying and easy understood” all participants said to the project organizer.

Total 85 students and community representatives participated in the training and lectures. At the end of the event, all participants expressed that they wishes to involve in further training and lecture activities in future and would tell the story they experienced during the training and should teach their family members and relatives and friends as well more about waterbird conservation and further the habitat – wetland – conservation as a steward of nature. This means over 300 people will be influenced by these trainers at home and/or community.

2-FIELD TRIP TO ENHANCE INDOOR TRAINING OUTCOMES

On April 29, to enhance indoor training outcomes, 30 students and representatives from local schools and community participated in the field trip. The organizer took the participants to the nature museum and the wetland where they could physically touch the nature with new feelings. Under guidance of trainers as interpreters, all participants realized the wildness was so beautiful and biodiversity so important that they had never cared about before.

At the end of the field trip, participants told the organizer that they further understood what they taught in the class and really touched by the nature and living creatures through personally involved in the field trip. They wished the project could organize more and more such event and give opportunities to more people.

3-STUDY TOUR TO MOMOGE AND KEERQIN NNR

Based on recommendation proposed by project advisors and promise made by the reserve Director during the TOT workshop, Tumuji NNR co-financed a study tour to Momoge and Keerqin NNR to learn good experiences and expertise in environmental education and community participatory co-management on May 1-2.

19 persons including 6 school teachers and 4 community representatives joined in the study tour to Momoge and Keerqin NNR. Both Momoge NNR and Keerqin NNR administration bureaus warmly received the study tour delegation. Vice Directors of both NNRs accompanied the group to local communities and schools and personally delivered

comprehensive introduction to what they had achieved through international project using advanced participatory co-management concept and approaches. Awareness and capacity building among community and coordination between schools and the reserve for implementation of environmental education impressed the delegation so much that they expressed at the end of the trip an intensive training should be designed and would try their best to deepen the project impact in future. Replication and sustainable use of such good output should be extended to larger audiences.

Ms. Zhou Jingying, the Project Manager and Ms. Wu Youqin, the assistant of the Project gave both NNRs brief introduction to the project design and application and initiation as well. Leaders of both NNRs showed high interest to learn good experiences from Tumuji NNR and would like to establish a long term mechanism of learning through study tour between 2 NNRs. The group leader Vice Director of Tumuji NNR Mr. Cheng Wanjun thanked the hosts and expressed it was also his idea to build such a mechanism.

Local news reporters tracked the event and reported the story on the local newspaper.

“LOVE BIRDS WEEK” CELEBRATION

On May 20-26 2009, celebration of “Love Birds Week” was organized in Tumuji and Yinde-er townships. The theme of this event was “*Conserving Wetland and Save Waterbirds*”. Together with the slogan of “*Care Birds and Protect Nature*”, the theme input residents mind.

During the celebration of “Love Birds Week”, a series of activities was organized. The main activities included:

1. Opening Ceremony

On May 20, Opening Ceremony was organized at the plaza of Nature Museum of Tumuji NNR. Tumuji NNR hosted the event. Tumuji Lantian Secondary School and Tumuji Zhongxin School co-sponsored the ceremony. Mr. Dong Daixiao, Director of Nature Reserve Administrative Committee of Xing-an Prefecture, Mr. Bao Zhengping, Vice Director of Forestry Bureau of Xing-an Prefecture, Mr. Wang Lianjun, Director of Wildlife Protection Center of Xing-an Prefecture, Li Zhenlin, Deputy Head of Zhalaiteqi County, Mrs. Jiang Yuyan, Chairperson of Zhalaiteqi Committee for the Wellbeing of the Youth presented the ceremony.

Mr. Cheng Wanjun, Vice Director of Tumuji NNR hosted the ceremony. Mr. Bao Zhengping, Vice Director of Forestry Bureau of Xing-an Prefecture, Mr. Li Zhenlin, Deputy Head of Zhalaiteqi County, and Mr. Yi Guoliang, Director of Tumuji NNR delivered speeches. Tong Hongxia, student of Tumuji Zhongxin School was speaking at the ceremony on behalf of all students.

Right after the ceremony, a drawing contest was carried out themed at “Bird in My Heart”.

Art tutors and naturalists gave students guidance on birds' knowledge, behaviors as well as culture associated with birds and relationship between birds and human beings using easy words. Most students joined in the contest. All drawings were appraised on spot and 30 excellent drawings were selected for exhibition.



10 students hung up 10 handmade bird nests. They told other people with their action that donating love and protecting birds could make difference and make the world more beautiful. A performance themed at “Love Birds and Protect Birds” then was acted.

Near 400 people attended the ceremony. Local TV and news agency reporters interviewed the event and reported both on TV and newspaper.

Through this event, students realized that to protect birds and wildlife not only an obligation but also an inherent responsibility. Human beings should humbly care about all creatures and allow them share the only planet freely with human beings.

2. Chalk Drawing Contest

This was the first time we ever had the “Chalk Drawing Contest”. On May 22 2009 the contest was conducted in Tumuji Zhongxin School. The theme of this event was “*Care Birds – Let Birds Fly Freely in the Sky*”. Some 60 pupils participated in the contest. Art and nature teachers presented lectures relevant to birds before the contest. The lectures not only gave scientific information but also lots of cultural information.



The drawings made by pupils were so beautiful and colorful with lots of unique thoughts that fully displayed hopes, imagination and creative ability of the pupils. It was obvious that all pictures provided us a bright future and birds conservation and wildlife protection had already rooted in their hearts.

“This was really an excellent opportunity to everyone involved in the event. In the process of the contest, everybody’s heart and mind was flushed and cleansed. Especially a strong concept of care nature and wildlife was set up in the pure hearts of those little pupils.” said the



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