

»» Project Information

Environmental Protection – Russian Federation

First forest and climate protection project of its kind.

Russia’s forest areas bind half of the terrestrial carbon of the northern hemisphere. The Russian Far East has particular significance for global climate protection. The biodiversity of the forests is huge and they are also habitat of the endangered Amur tiger. KfW helps the Russian Federation to protect these unique areas in an innovative way.

generations. They also have to defend the forest: forestry companies have been trying to obtain logging rights for the middle and upper part of the Bikin Valley for a long time.

Project approach

Through KfW Development Bank, the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) supported the protection of the middle Bikin Valley with a sum of more than EUR 2.6 million using funds from the International Climate Protection Initiative (IKI). The aim of the project was to ensure the long-term protection of the wilderness, the biodiversity and the livelihood for the indigenous Udege in the middle section of the Bikin Valley. In this context,

Context

Revenues from the sale of climate certificates can be used to protect forest areas and improve their management. The Russian Federation has not taken advantage of this opportunity so far due to a lack of good projects and concepts, but KfW Development Bank helps the country to establish such projects.

A region that receives close political attention in this context is the Russian Far East. The region is considered a biodiversity hotspot. The unique forests – mixed deciduous forests with Korean Pine – mainly occur in this region and rank among the most diverse in the temperate zone. They also provide habitat for the endangered Amur tiger – only around 450 still exist in the wild all over the world.

10 % of these Amur tigers live in the Bikin Valley, one of the last large wilderness areas of the region. Based on its outstanding importance for flora and fauna, the Bikin region was nominated to become part of UNESCO’s World Natural Heritage.

The Bikin Valley is also home to the indigenous Udege, who have protected and used the forest sustainably for

Project name	Protection of the Bikin Valley
Commissioned by	Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB)
Country/region	Russian Federation
Lead executing agency	WWF Germany WWF Russia “Tribal Commune Tiger”





At risk of extinction: there are only 450 Amur tigers left worldwide. 10 % live in the Bikin Valley, the last jungle in the Far East Source: WWF

KfW has worked closely together with the Russian authorities as well as local organisations. WWF Germany together with WWF Russia and the indigenous "Tribal Commune Tiger" (TCT) cooperation were responsible for implementing the project activities.

KfW and the WWF helped "TCT" lease special use rights for non-timber-forest-products on 461,154 hectares of primary forest over 49 years (making the area the first "nature conservation concession" in the Russian Federation). This grants the native people the right to prohibit logging on the concession area and pursue their hunting and lifestyle traditions. Furthermore, they may also collect and sell the valuable Korea pine nuts, but also berries, ferns, fungi and other non-timber-forest-products to generate additional income.

Ranger groups have been organised in conjunction with state control bodies protecting the area against illegal deforestation and poaching. The area is also monitored from the air during the fire season to detect and fight forest fires early.

Impact

Protecting the forests beside the Bikin River prevents the release of 13.5 million tCO₂eq over 49 years (roughly 275,000 tCO₂eq/year). This climate performance can be sold through the "Joint Implementation Mechanism" (JI) of the Kyoto Protocol or on the free market. This makes the Bikin project the first REDD+ project to be approved in the temperate and boreal region.

The income from the sale of carbon certificates should protect the area in the long term and benefit the Udege people. The first revenue – totaling EUR 380,000 – were generated at the end of 2013.

The project became an important programme of the German-Russian cooperation, and shows how protecting the climate, forests and biodiversity as well as the sustainable development of indigenous people can be combined in a unique way.

Boosted by the positive experience from the Bikin project, the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) is supporting another key project in the region as part of the IKI: the exemplary application of various tools of forest protection, sustainable forest management based on FSC criteria and standards as well as ecological reforestation should all help preserve the valuable mixed forests with their climatic and biological services over an area of roughly six million hectares.

Encouraged by the success of the first project, the Russian government now plans to turn the Bikin area into a National Park. This approach is supported by the new project which is financed by the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety with EUR 4.8 million. The project is implemented via KfW by WWF Germany, WWF Russia, GfA Envest and the NGO "Transparent World".



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