

Inception Workshop and Start-up of the Project

To launch the project, an inception workshop was held in Novosibirsk from 18 to 27 October 2000. It included plenary meetings, discussions in workgroups, and the presentation of the project.

At the workshop, the project team:

- developed a detailed workplan
- determined timetables and deadlines
- worked out final products
- appointed project staff
- discussed financial and technical matters

The presentation of the project for regional stakeholders was the central event at the Novosibirsk workshop. Over 70 participants represented local administrations, nature conservation committees and local communities of the focal areas; scientists of research institutes and universities; conservationist NGO's and mass media. The regional project supervisor Prof. Oleg Vasiliev and principal project participants Dr. Jan Veen (VEDA), Dr. Hans Drost (RIZA) and Mr. Ion Grigoras (The Danube Delta Research Institute, Romania), and Dr. Alexander Yurlov (ISAE) informed the audience of project goals, planned activities, and expected outputs. During the discussion that followed, matters of the project organization, ecological condition of the focal lakes and their catchments, as well as relevance of the project were addressed. It was stressed that one should agree interests of economic development and biodiversity conservation, provide close co-operation with local communities, regional administrations, and conservationist NGO's.

Organisations involved in the Project:

The Institute for Water and Environmental Problems (IWEP) of the Siberian Branch of RAN deals with water resources, hydrological and environmental research and plays an important part in developing scientific expertise and knowledge required to understand and to resolve environmental issues of fundamental, Siberian, and national significance.

The Institute of Systematics and Animal Ecology (ISAE) of the Siberian Branch of RAN deals with research on biodiversity, studies on animal populations, and development of methods for wise use, control and protection of animal resources.

National Institute for Inland Water Management and Waste-Water Treatment (RIZA) is the research and advisory institute of the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water management for fresh water in the Netherlands and a national knowledge centre for integrated water management.

VEDA-Consultancy is a recently established in the Netherlands bureau for advice and research in ecology and geography. VEDA staff has much experience in carrying out large-scale research programmes on the ecology of wetlands and waterbirds in the Netherlands as well as abroad.

Wetlands International - Africa, Europe, Middle East (WI-AEME). Wetlands International is a global organisation concerned with promoting conservation and wise use of wetlands. WI-AEME has an office in Moscow.

For more information, please contact:

Regional Project Supervisor (IWEP, Novosibirsk)
Prof. Oleg Vasiliev
vasiliev@ad-sbras.nsc.ru
Phone/Fax: (3832) 30-20-05

Regional Project Co-ordinator (IWEP, Barnaul)
Dr. Vladimir Kirillov
kirillov@iwep.secna.ru
Phone: (3852) 36-78-57
Fax: (3852) 24-03-96

Head of Ornithological Research
Dr. Alexander Yurlov
ya@eco.nsc.ru
Phone: (3832) 17-00-07
Fax: (3832) 17-09-73

Project Manager WI – Moscow office
Olga Stepanova
olgastepanova@cityline.ru
Phone: (095) 331-36-46

Project Consultant VEDA
Dr. Jan Veen
dallmeijer@planet.nl

Project Supervisor WI – Wageningen
Rob van Westrienen
westrienen@wetlands.agro.nl

International Project

CONSERVATION OF WETLANDS AND WETLAND SPECIES IN SOUTH WEST SIBERIA



Photo: Jan Veen

The forest steppe and steppe zone of Southwest Siberia embodies a huge network of wetlands – more than 10.000 lakes and marshes – that are of vital importance for waterbirds in the breeding season and on migration. Many species breeding there are included in the Russian Red Data Book as well as in the Red Data Lists of BirdLife and IUCN.

Project donors



Why South West Siberia

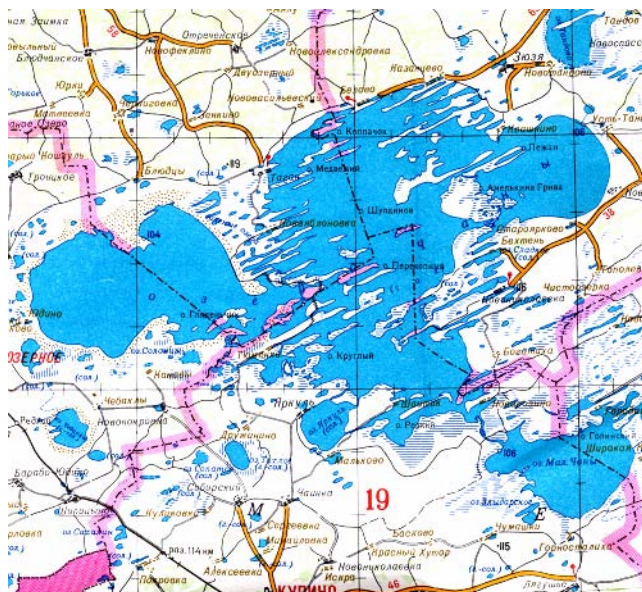
According to ring recoveries, wetlands of SW Siberia are important stopover sites of migrating birds on their way from immense breeding grounds in Russia to wintering areas in Europe, Africa, South and Southeast Asia. Traditionally, the region has been used by local communities for agriculture, hunting and fishing. However, an increase in human impact on the environment in the latest years makes it necessary to identify and protect the most important wetlands in the area. The project focuses on two areas: Lake Chany and Lake Kulundinskoye.

Goals and objectives of the project:

- **To develop environmental profile for Lake Chany, including a socio-economical and ecological analysis, as a tool for community participative management in the area, and as a concept with demonstration value for the Russian Federation. To determine nature values for Lake Kulundinskoye.**
- **To develop a case study on involvement of the local community in the protection of threatened bird species through the adjustment of agricultural practices, with special reference to breeding bird colonies.**
- **To develop a management vision in collaboration with local communities towards the wise use of natural resources in Lake Chany, including integrated management. To develop protection recommendations for Lake Kulundinskoye.**
- **To enhance the capacity of local, regional and national planners and policy makers in integrated management planning and sustainable use of wetland areas in Russia.**

The **ultimate goal** of the project is to identify and address in close collaboration with local key stakeholders priorities for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and wetland resources of the steppe and forest steppe of Southwest Siberia

The duration of the project is 2,5 years.



Lake Kulundinskoye

Kulundinskoye (73.000 ha) is located at the border between steppe and forested steppe in western Altai Krai, its' catchment covering 2.4 million ha. Main tributaries are the rivers Kulunda and Suetka. The lake is shallow and, similar to other closed lakes, displays cyclic variations in water level. Its' mean depth is 3.9 m, maximum depth 4.9 m. A great salt load results in a highly adapted flora and fauna. Especially noteworthy is the absence of fish. A total number of 126 bird species has been recorded in the shore zone. Breeding colonies of gulls, terns and waders occur on the islands. A colony of the endangered Great Black-headed Gull was recently discovered. Lake Kulundinskoye is on the Ramsar Shadow List. Part of the area has a status of nature reserve ('zakaznik').

Lake Chany

Lake Chany is the largest closed lake in the West-Siberian lowland. Its' total area varies between 200.000 and 260.000 ha, depending on long-term fluctuations in water level. The lake consists of two parts: the freshwater lake Malye Chany, which receives water from two small rivers, and the brackish lake Bolshye Chany. Average depth is 2.2 meter, whereas maximum depth is about 6-7 meter. The lake freezes in late October; ice breaks in early May. About forty islands on the lake provide breeding sites for a variety of gulls, terns and waders. The bird fauna of Lake Chany has been studied by scientists of ISAE. Of special importance are colonies of Great Black-headed Gulls (300-400 pairs) and Caspian Terns (300-500 pairs). In autumn and spring, the lake is inhabited by large numbers of migratory waterbirds, such as swans (50-300), geese (1.500-5.000), coots and ducks (45.000-110.000), waders (5.000-15.000), gulls and terns (20.000-40.000) and cranes (500-700). Since 1995, Lake Chany is a Ramsar site.

