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**Results of regional conference  
in the framework of the project "Biodiversity Protection  
in the Transboundary Region "Northern Tien Shan Mountains"**

**PRESS RELEASE**

On October 21-22, 2013 Bishkek (Kyrgyz Republic) hosted regional conference in the framework of the project "Biodiversity protection in the transboundary region "Northern Tien Shan Mountains", which is aimed at elaboration of the general strategy of rational use and sustainable management of the specially protected natural areas (SPNA) in the region "Northern Tien Shan Mountains".

The conference was organized by State agency on environment protection and forestry under the government of the Kyrgyz Republic, Nature and biodiversity conservation union of Germany - NABU (namely its branch in Kyrgyzstan), "Avalon" Public Foundation (Kazakhstan) with the support of Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany (BMZ).

The conference's participants were welcomed by deputy director of the State agency on environment protection and forestry under the government of the Kyrgyz Republic, Mr. Abdymital Chyngozhoyev, as well as president of the Nature and biodiversity conservation union of Germany (NABU), Mr. Olaf Tschimpke.

The conference featured representatives of the State agency on environment protection and forestry under the government of the Kyrgyz Republic, as well as Committee for forestry and hunting of the Ministry of Environment Protection of the Republic of Kazakhstan; employees of the SPNAs in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan; representatives of the public and scientific organizations, such as Kazakh academy of sport and tourism, Kazakhstan Tourist Association (KTA), Kyrgyz Community Based Tourism Association (KCBTA), "Avalon" Public Foundation, Centre for remote sensing and GIS "Terra", "Aleyne" Ecological Movement of Kyrgyzstan, Association for the conservation of biodiversity of Kazakhstan (ACBK), "Snow Leopard Fund" Public Foundation, Biodiversity Conservation Fund of Kazakhstan, Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia (CAREC), Rural Development Fund (RDF), Zerafshan Tourism Board (ZTB) and "Green salvation" ecological society; representatives of local communities and business-structures of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, as well as spokesmen of the international organizations operating in Central Asia, namely UNESCO, GEF/UNDP, GIZ and NABU.

The conference addressed management matters of SPNAs, took a look at scientific component of their activities, considered obstacles for ecotourism development and opportunities of general public participation in biodiversity conservation matters, as well as the perspectives of nominating "Northern Tien Shan" for the UNESCO's World heritage list.

Aims and objectives of the project "Biodiversity Protection in the transboundary region "Northern Tien Shan Mountains" were stated by the project's national team leaders in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, Lina Valdschmit and Alymzhan Bektemirov respectively.



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Dagmar Schreiber, Asylbek Razhiyev and Vitaliy Shuptar addressed the dynamics, success and difficulties which go hand in hand with the development of ecological and community-based tourism in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan.

Lyudmila Belousova's report on "Establishing norms of permissible ecological tours load in the protected areas of Kazakhstan" aroused keen interest among the participants. Meruert Sarsembayeva and Simon Scharre presented their reports on methods of evaluation and mechanisms of ecosystem service provisioning. Umut Zholdoshova and Sergey Kuratov had a look at the public participation in the biodiversity conservation and development of the protected areas.

In the framework of the conference the following thematic groups were organized: transboundary cooperation and international UNESCO status, sustainable tourism, involvement of the interested parties and local communities in biodiversity conservation and management of the specially protected natural areas.

The conference resulted in constituting and adopting of the resolution, which will be directed to all the competent state enterprises of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.

The conference's participants expressed in the resolution their wishes to join efforts of the interested parties in both countries with the aim of biodiversity conservation of the Northern Tien Shan Mountains, optimization of management systems of all the protected areas of the region, opening of the border crossing points between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan in the Northern Tien Shan Mountains, organization of a SPNA in the Kyrgyz part of the Kungey Alatau mountain range, preserving the unity of Ile-Alatau State national nature park and inadmissibility of constructing "Kok-Zhailau" ski resort in its territory. Other wishes included nomination of the Northern Tien Shan for the UNESCO World Heritage List, introduction of the modern instruments of monitoring of the wildlife in the specially protected natural areas of the Northern Tien Shan Mountains, as well as development, improvement and introduction of the economic tools of ecosystem service control and including of their price into national accounts.

The conference's participants acknowledged that, notwithstanding the fact that the States, international and non-governmental organizations make efforts to contribute to biodiversity conservation in the transboundary region, there still exists a wide range of problems, which require attention and joint activities aimed at their solving.

For more information on conference, including the speakers' reports, as well as the documents summarizing the event's results, see the website of "Avalon" PF ([www.guide.kz](http://www.guide.kz))

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