

**ASIAN GOOD ESD PRACTICE PROJECT**  
**REPORT ON**

**“TRACKING CRANES”**  
**ENVIRONMENT EDUCATION ACTION**



**BY FRIENDS OF NATURE**

**BEIJING, CHINA**

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**[A] EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The education activity of nature named “Tracking Cranes” (TC) is an environmental education project is proposed by The Beijing Brooks Education Center (BBEC) and International Cranes Foundation (ICF). It aims to develop learning programs and interactive activities to protect the endangered cranes and their living environment, promote the sustainable development in the community with the efforts of staffs of the reserves and near-by schools.



The project section located its activity areas in the east of China where cranes migrate. These areas are Zhalong, Momoge, Xianghai, Keerqin, Tianjin and Poyang Lake. This project cherishes the principle of “basing on the local area and having a vision of the world as a whole”, willing to develop a cooperation relationship with schools near the migrant route and reserves in the hope that these people will have a general idea of the relationship between environment, economics and society properly and enhance their sense of sustainable development.

This project has 3 important enlightenments of the education of sustainable development.

1. It concerns problems in the local area. With its educational conception of “different environment breeds different people”, members of the project section of BBEC actively collaborate with local teachers to edit local native materials and design plans according to the characters of the area. The collaborating foundation, “go back to their origin”, enables the concept of sustainable development to go into the development of the communities in the process of editing.
2. It is indeed sustainable. The members of project section organized and developed interesting and practical activities to avoid its becoming an invading project, and enable it to fit the local environment. At the same time, their efforts will encourage participation and improve execution on the base of the reserves’ and schools’ own

ability so as to ensure the sustainable development of the project.

3. It combines the aspects of environment, economics and society efficiently. None of the activities designed in the project is only from the perspective of environment. May it be teaching material editing, summer campus arranging, essay collecting or photo-taking, the project encourages participants to think actively from different perspectives and take actual actions according to their words. Thus, the concept of sustainable development can be explained in different ways and a variety of methods.

In the process of execution, the project team may face all kinds of difficulties, but this will not affect the passionate and confident team. The "TC" project promotes sustainable development with the cooperation among reserves, schools and NGOs. As a recommended excellent case in china, it is worth studying and referring to. We hope that this case will be an instrument of Asian countries and make greater achievements in the future, providing more reference to the education of sustainable development both in theory and practical aspects.

## **[B] ATTRIBUTION**

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## [C] PROJECT OVERVIEW

1. Project Title: "TC" Environment Education Action.
2. Project Overview

### 2.1 Background

At present, the total number of cranes in the world is less than 3500. The area from Siberia, Mongolia to Northeast of China and then to southern China, is the largest on Earth cranes diversification of the region. Every year the cranes flying



across, many of whom are beautiful and elegant crane. In eastern China, there is a world's largest crane migratory route. However, along with economic development, a large number of water and land has been exploited, wetlands serious degradation of the ecological environment, the cranes increasingly difficult to find a stopping place.

The crane is a natural emissary, but also good fortune in disguise. To improve the cranes habitat of the ecological environment and promoting the conservation district staff and the surrounding school students and the public's protection awareness, BBEC cooperation with the ICF initiated tracking TC Environment Education Action, and explore suitable for the local localization environmental education ideas.

## 2.2 Objectives of the Project

To improve the cranes habitat of the ecological environment and promoting the conservation district staff and the surrounding school students and the public's protection awareness, and promote their communities the BBEC cooperation with ICF initiated tracking "TC" Natural Education Action.



BBEC cooperation with the ICF launched "TC" project, hope that through environmental education activities to protect the endangered cranes and for the survival of ecosystems. Together we will follow the crane flew Zhalong, Momoge, Xianghai, Horqin, Tianjin and Poyang Lake, the purpose of his trip beautiful movement in the search for the localization of local environmental education ideas.

## 2.3 Implementation Mechanism

The Natural Education Action program named "TC" requires multi-cooperation with an executive board including reservations, schools, project team and financial supporters.

The introduction of the project teams is as follows.



## I Name and Responsibility of The External Executive Boards

Institution	Responsibilities
BBEC	Organizing and technological support
Reservations	Co-organizing and information support
School	Teachers and students
ICF	Financial support

## I Name and Responsibility of The Internal Executive Boards

Name	Responsibilities
Jing Han	Project manager responsible for co-organizing and the Zha-Long Project
Juan Zhang	Project coordinator, full-time, responsible for daily managing, the Chinese website and the Horqin and Momoge Project
Yun Kang	Responsible for both the Chinese and English websites, the translation of English documents and activities on Sino-US art works communication
Yabin Hu	Responsible for educational projects, the summer camp and Tianjin project
Bing Hao	Project counselor

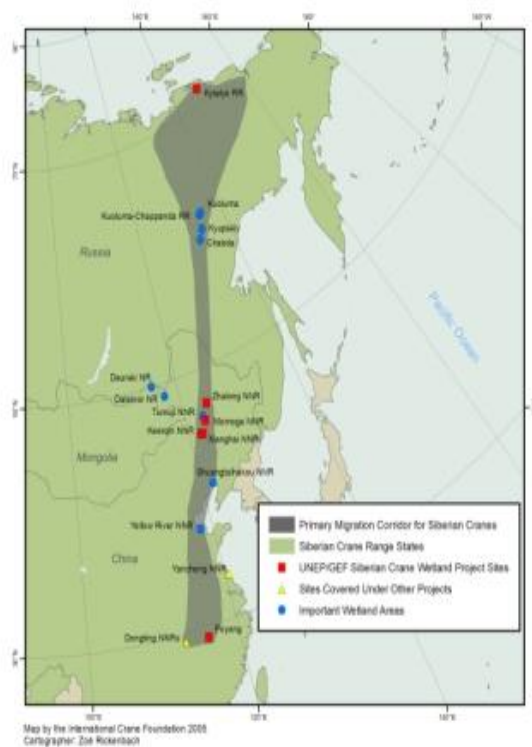
## 2.4 Implemented Activity

Nowadays, the number of existing Siberian Crane is under 3500 worldwide. From the Siberia, Mongolia to the northeast China as well as south China boasts the largest diversity of the crane species in the world. Each year, these places witness flocks of cranes flying overhead, especially the beautiful and elegant Siberian Crane. Furthermore, a migration route largest of its scale worldwide exists in East China. However, with the economic development, a great amount of water and soil resources have been exploited combined with the severe deterioration of the wetland eco-systems, which leads to the difficulty for the cranes to find inhabitant.

The migraines of cranes are harder than that before, the cranes frequently lost in the forests that deforest quickly. They find a breeding and nesting place difficulty. Worst of all, they have to struggle for days without any food. In order to survive from the rapid economic development of China, they need every stop alongside the route is security. Were there any flaw in the process, the number of the crane species and other water birds would decrease.

The crucial spots include Zha-Long National Reservation, Xiang-Hai National Reservation, Horqin National Reservation, Momoge National Reservation, the Bo-Hai Bay Swamp and Bo Yang Hu Lake, where over 99% of the white cranes spend winter.

The project team has already started cooperating with the reservation and has come up with various need-based activities. The main ones are as follows:



#### 2.4.1 Chinese-English Website (<http://www.trackingcranes.org>)

We provide collections of stories between cranes, people and distant education courses on natural observation, creating a platform for people to learn as well as to communicate.

#### 2.4.2 Co-operation, Educational Programs and Contents Development

- I Zha-Long National Reservation: Promotion of local educational materials, teachers' training.
- I Momoge National Reservation: Guiding brochure making to set model for ecological guiding documents.

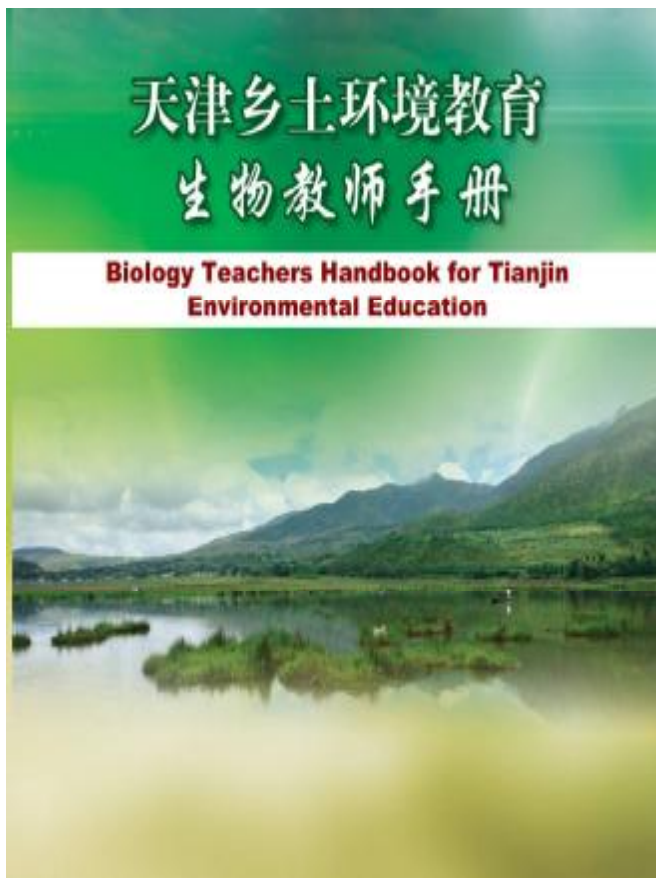
- I Xiang-Hai National Reservation: Construction of the international campsite, improved the environment education ability.
- I Kerqin National Reservation: Promotion of Mongolian educational materials.
- I Tianjin Education Academy of Sciences, Green Friends: Development of the secondary school biology teachers Local Participation and promote summer camp activities to promote teaching native of disciplines.
- I Poyang Lake: Promotion of local educational materials, and to promote the use of schools.

#### 2.4.3 Local materials development results:

Name	Places taught	Support agencies
"Crane Xiaoyun"	National nature reserves in Poyang Lake in Jiangxi Province	ICF
"Huolinhe flow place"	right in the Inner Mongolia Branch flag Horqin world-class conservation area, Jilin national nature reserves to the sea surrounding schools	ICF
"Dances with Crane"	Red Administration of Heilongjiang Farm Bureau neighboring schools booming	ICF
"Zhalong"	Heilongjiang Zhalong national nature reserves surrounding schools	ICF
"Local environmental education biological Tianjin"		ICF

Teachers Handbook"		
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The project team tried embodying in the local folk customs, traditional culture, geography, history, culture, resources, livelihoods, economic development and other topics in the native materials, at the same time sought to lively and interesting in form, stressed participatory and interactive. In the edit of native materials in BBEC promoting "The



unique features of a local environment always give special characteristics to its inhabitants” of native education philosophy, from real knowledge, move toward native.

These native materials development has the following characteristics:

- Ø Edit ideas: Cognitive local community - the face of changes - Society Selection.
- Ø Expert guidance: An invitation to cultural, ethnic, ecological and other experts to discuss forming the outline accredit views.
- Ø Local teachers are participation in the edit: Project team and teachers have a full exchange in outline, and division of commitment by the local teachers and native materials led the data collection.
- Ø Edit courses and training: Prior to the issuance of formal teaching, through collective classes and training, revised textbooks.
- Ø Entered Timetable: With the local Department of Education signed cooperation agreements with schools to ensure that the materials promoting the use of locally.

#### 2.4.4 Art of children exchange both in China and in the United States

China and the United States students through the exchange of art works, both sides have strengthened to understand the habitat of the crane extremely, broaden the horizons of students.



#### 2.4.5 "TC Environmental Education Action" project schools:

The project surrounds the crane migration routes in several nature reserves, these schools can be together with the project team to observant the crane migration process

and the various conditions encountered. Items listed in the school group, these schools receive priority by the ICF, BBEC and nature reserves organize kinds of learning opportunities, learning crane knowledge, exchange migration routes people and nature of the story. Project team hope that the schools can unite and pioneering vision, and enhance our ability to actively participate in the crane and other conservation activities.

There are groups in these schools, which are composed by 5 or 6 students, a teacher as a mentor. Specific activities include the participatory activities which are essay contest, photographing, field investigation, laboratory studies, etc., and networking activities. And also we hope that we can build our common regularly update and exchange the website.

"Tracking crane" Environmental Education Action, Schools participating in the project are assumed the following responsibilities:

- I Cooperate with the conservation actively, and participate in the activities organized by "Tracking Crane Environmental Education Action".
- I Using the local environmental native materials and learn the relevant knowledge in their education.
- I Participate in the Sino-American children's arts exchange program, painting with heart.
- I Access to the Internet, and be able to engage in the online learning of the website: <http://www.trackingcranes.org> at school or in the conservation.

#### 2.4.6 Thematic article-soliciting program of "Fly with the crane" in spring

"Fly with the crane" is the online-interactive learning program conducted in the school participating in the project organized by BBEC "TC" project group in 2007. Through different sorts of activities, students can know more about the cranes around them and the local environment, and get their reports recorded and published on "Tracking Crane <http://www.trackingcranes.org/>". It will enhance the cooperation among schools along cranes' immigrating line, and arouse students' relevant awareness.

Procedures:

(1) Instruct students to write observations on what they saw in the spring outing. If condition permits, relevant photographs are encouraged.



(2) Interview the colleagues on different issues, such as their routine work, researching and protecting ways, and the greatest joys and difficulties during work, etc., write a report afterwards.

#### 2.4.7 “Catch the Nature in Camera” youth’s wetland photographing program

“Catch the Nature in Camera” is a refreshing program aimed at enhancing the communication between different sites based on “Fly with the Crane”. Thematic article-soliciting program launched during the immigrating period. In the program, students will get loser to the environment. It’s the first time that students around the conservation implement photographing of wetland. Every team records nature, hometown and stories in the conservation by camera, and share their report with others.

##### (1) Format of activities

Project team sent a camera and two rolls of film for schools in the activities. Shooting process needs to complete filming daily notebook, recording the activity and the feelings. Each team must have personnel division; everyone can take turns to be "photographer" and "small press", a "liaison officer", under the guidance of instructor, at the completion of shooting action.

Project Group encourages fresh bold attempts, each team can discuss what they wanted to observe themes and clues, centering on the theme of organizations and activities designed and sorted out activities results, and ultimately the world to BBEC, and then from project unified Group published on the web site, so that every schools can be

communicate with each other, and let more people know that shooting occurred in the story.

(2) Photographs of the content mainly include the following categories:

- 2 Hometown environment, especially mountain and water surround the reserve, and ordinary lives scene;
- 2 Common animal, plant in wetlands, if they do not understand, can ask teachers and staffs;
- 2 the content include the relationship between humans and animals, plants, mountains, water in the nature, and people's moving story in the protection of the natural process;
- 2 Shooting students in the appearance, and in the process of shooting, etc.

### **[D]Project Review**

In eastern China, along the migration routes of the Siberian Cranes, six conservation areas and surrounding schools were involved in the TC project. Staffs, teachers and students in these nature reserves have become more understanding and more enjoyable living in these lands by participating in the projects, such as edit of native materials and a variety of other educational activities. Students had learned about species protection with the staffs, particularly the significance of the cranes protection. The use of native materials had provided a guarantee for the implementation of the project. More teachers are now actively being involved in the edit of native materials. Feedbacks from the involved primary schools will be presented in the following section, from which we can see how this project has been integrated into the local education system and to play an important role.

The use of the native material "Dance with Crane" started in September 2006 in the Harvest Primary School's teaching curriculum. Teachers carried out the environmental education base on the materials and the real life environment, inspiring students'

awareness that environmental protection being everyone's responsibility; environmental protection starting from ourselves; protecting the environment meaning protecting our own and giving students a sense of responsibility and mission on environmental protection. In the course of the "Life Net", students were asked to give feedback on what had learnt, from which we felt the students fully recognizing the importance of environmental protection. Some students wrote: "by learning the "life net" course, my heart was inspired, making me recognize that terrible consequences of ignorance on environmental protection." Then, I must love nature, not throwing rubbish, always paying attention to and being a young guardian of green to make the world with more fresh air and more clear water, so that all the small animals can live comfortably and also our campus will be more beautiful. From the investigation report of the students, we know that they realized the danger brought by the empty bottle of pesticide in rivers, and was skeptical on the planting of foreign species by finding the rapid spread of Clover in campus.

Environmental education was carried out frequently in the schools. With the "World Water Day", "World Earth Day" and "World Environment Day", there are activities, such as cleaning white rubbish in campus and street, environmental speech contests, and actively



being little environmental guards; and extensive environmental protection education through windows, blackboard, newspapers, small broadcasting and many different education and publicity ways. By using the "Dances with the Crane," , our school teachers and students clearly understood that uncontrolled developed land and logging trees illegally endanger ecological balance, and that human will be the victims had we destroyed our environment. Though students were unfamiliar with some abstract concepts, they had build up strong confidence on protecting the environment, plants and animals through the vividly explanation of teachers, which showed frequently from the diaries and essays of the students.

### **[E]ESD Implication**

Based on the theme of the project "Tracking Cranes" - species protection, the way of Siberian Crane migration was chosen as the primary position for environmental education and dissemination. Meanwhile, the native materials on how to carry out local environmental education had been accomplished, implementing the educational idea of "The unique features of a local environment always give special characteristics to its inhabitants". The new perspective of Education for Sustainable Development has been promoted.

Putting biological diversity conservation as a starting point, schools and communities around the nature reserve carried out the environmental education, which was pertinent and facilitating the local long-term species protection, training local people and promoting the protection of the



sustainable development. In order to better strengthen environmental awareness, the "native materials" were prepared according to the actual situation in this project. By inviting experts into the local places, extensively considering the opinion of local teachers, the native materials combined the education with local students' features, focusing on the idea of the project - "from the local, to the native to be".

This the contents of "native materials" provided a new way of thinking to Sustainable Development Education. Through this native material, local children not only understood the surrounding environment, and were strengthened the protection awareness, but also displayed folk customs, traditions culture, geography, history, culture, resources, livelihoods, economic development and other topics. In the book, you will find the story about fish and bird, a game of "Bao Gen Ji Ri Ge" (a Mongolian's board games), the Naxi girl (national dress), the Torch Festival custom, many songs such as "beautiful grassland my home" etc. That the lively and interesting content, richful and variety format, participatory interaction made the children experience gradually during the activities. As in the book "Zhalong", the letter to middle school students in Zhalong was written: you could put it (this book) as textbooks, but we hope you would think about it in your daily life, because there is history in it which makes you more wisdom; there is natural knowledge which makes you more reasonable; there is different ideas which makes you differentiate black and white; there are also anecdotes which remind you see the world from Zhanlong and see Zhalong from the world as well.

Meanwhile, teachers were trained intensively before the publication of native materials. Through making the agreement between Department of Education and local schools, the promoting and spreading the native materials



were guaranteed.

From education for sustainable development perspective, by joining to the native materials, the "migratory crane" Education Project and based on the local reality, the content of the materials was edited for the psychological acceptability of people. This series of native of teaching materials were initiative in promoting biodiversity conservation and combining community and were feasible based on local reality.

Hope that this project and the materials which carried by the civil society can continue to be promoted, providing the basis for protection biodiversity and education for sustainable development of the community.

## **ACRONYMS**

TC -Tracking Cranes

BBEC -The Beijing Brooks Education Center

ICF -International Cranes Foundation