



**Dr. Yury Darman**

**Date and place of Birth**

30.09.1956, Blagoveshchensk, Amurskaya Province, Russia

**Education and Academic Degrees**

Oct 2004	WWF International Management Training for Senior Conservation Managers, Rolle, Switzerland
Feb-Apr 2000	Ecoregional Immersion Program, WWF US, Washington, DC
Sept 1986	Ph.D. "The Biology of Roe deer". All-Russia Institute for Nature Conservation and Nature Reserves, Moscow
July 1973 – Sep 1978	Master Degree in Biology at the Wildlife Biology Faculty, Irkutsk Agriculture Academy, Russia

**Employment Record**

Jan 2001 - current	Director, Amur branch, WWF Russia, Vladivostok, Russia
Sep 1999 - Jan 2001	Econet Coordinator, WWF Russia Far East, Vladivostok, Russia
Oct 1994 – Sep 1999	Director, NGO Amur Social-Ecological Union, Blagoveshchensk, Russia
Nov 1988 – Mar 1993	Elected as Deputy Chair of Environmental Commission of Amur Province Parliament, Blagoveshchensk
Sep 1987 - Oct 1994	Senior researcher, Amur Research Center, Far Eastern Branch of Russian Academy of Science, Blagoveshchensk, Russia
Oct 1978 – Sep 1987	researcher-senior researcher-deputy director, Kningansky Nature Reserve, Amurskaya Province, Russia
May – Dec 1977	Researcher, Scientific department of Barguzinsky Nature Reserve, Buryatia, Russia
Jul-Sep 1976	Technician, Scientific department of Barguzinsky Nature Reserve, Buryatia, Russia

All my life has been connecting with Amur River, one of the ten greatest rivers of the World. My grand-grand-father arrived to Blagoveshchensk at the end of XIX century using the rafts from up-stream of Amur River. The raft’s timbers then were used to build house on the high bank in confluence of Amur and Zeya rivers. My childhood I spent on these rivers and surrounding wetlands and riparian forests. Starting my acquaintance with wildness through out the books about American Indians I recognized that indigenous tribes live near me in Amur province as well. And that the history of discovery of Russian Far East is same exiting as America opening.

The first summer after graduating of secondary school I spent in my first expedition with Evenki tribes on the border between Amurskaya province and Yakutia. Following the trails of pioneers I felt the power of Taiga, when no any settlements around hundred kilometers. It helps me to make decision to enter to Irkutsk Agricultural Academy to study wildlife biology. For five years I had an unique opportunity to travel around Baikal Lake to prepare my master degree in biology of sable in famous Barguzin nature reserve. From the very beginning I was involved in activity of student anti-poaching brigade growing up to be its leader in 1975: a very important experience in practical use of academician knowledge in fighting for nature conservation. I had a most-favoured regime of attendance, with options to organize expeditions to many wild areas of Siberia. During one of them the backgrounds were prepared for Kirenga wildlife refuge which

was established in 1977. I couldn't know that the creating of nature reserves will become my main fate for many years.

After graduating of Academy as wildlife manager, I had working for 9 years in Khingansky Nature reserve in the middle stream of Amur River. I was first and single researcher there who was responsible for monitoring of ecosystem, from weather records to mammal censuses. We were growing together – me and nature reserve. The protected territory was enlarged twofold, the staff and budget had increased 10 times. I spent months in the forest, following on skies the tracks of lynx and wolf. The results are the doctor thesis on relationships in the intact system between vegetation-ungulates-large predators, and monograph “The Mammals of Khingansky Nature Reserve”.

Being the deputy director of nature reserve I had an opportunity to visit all the protected areas of Russian Far East. It was very useful to use their experience in my future work in Amur Research Center of Russian Academy of Science. It was another decade of my life which gave me the opportunity to investigate all huge Amur province using annual expeditions, aerial censuses of ungulates in winter, and cranes and stork in summer. I had participated in Environmental Impact Assessments of five projects to construct dams in Amur basin. Based on our investigation of existing Zeya Hydropower station the monograph on negative impact of its reservoir was published. Two years I had led the campaign to halt dam construction on Selemdga River and it was the first success of green movement in Russian Far East. Instead of artificial reservoir the Norsky nature reserve was created to conserve 211 thousand hectares of northern wetlands. It was the first reserve from the “Program for development of protected areas (PA) system in Amurskaya province”, which I had elaborated and approved by provincial government.

On the civil wave of anti-dam activities I was elected to Amur provincial parliament where was a deputy chair of Commission on environmental protection and natural resources use. Such public work gave me a huge experience in policy and human relations. After that together with my confederates we had established the non-governmental organization – Amur Socio-ecological Union (AmurSEU), which is now the leading NGO in Amur province and main partner of WWF here. Many noted actions were undertaken like the Contest of children creative activities “Crane, the Bird of Peace” with participation of thousands of students and arts' mobile exhibition shown in Japan, Korea, China, Mongolia and USA.

I led AmurSEU till 1999, when I was invited to WWF office in Vladivostok as coordinator of programs for PAs creation. My first step was to elaborate Programs for PAS development in 5 provinces as basic documents for biodiversity conservation the whole Amur River basin. And from 2001 I has been appointing as director of Amur branch of WWF Russia, full operating office in Vladivostok with 3 main programs such as conservation of temperate and boreal forests, species program (Amur tiger, Far Eastern leopard, Oriental white stork) and Amur Basin freshwater initiative.

Tiger is charismatic species and serves as umbrella to save all biodiversity of Sikhote-Alin Mountains. Now, it is the biggest in the world non-fragmented population of up to 540 cats, inhabit the northern corner of species area. WWF support the emergency action like anti-poaching brigades and improving control at Russia-China boundary, creating the tiger econet as a system of PAs linked by corridors and buffer zones, implementing of sustainable forestry and wise use of game animals, developing of ecotourism and environmental education. In Amur province, at Kningan Range the tiger had disappeared just before my arrival. But legends were still kept between local people. So, it was my honour to start the work at Sikhote-Alin Mountains, the huge wildness country with one of the highest biodiversity richness in Russia. In 17 years I had visited many remote areas, preparing the scientific backgrounds for new PAs. The Anuisky

national park in Khabarovsk province, “Zov tigr” and “Udege Legend” national parks in Primorsky province: that are the territories which were created to protect Amur tiger in its last intact habitats. The last victory is the gazetting of “Bikin” national park (1.2 mln.ha) which not only protect the largest virgin temperate forest in Northern hemisphere with all set of unique biodiversity and 10% of Amur tigers, but support the traditional way of life and culture of local indigenous people.

But the main threat was the possible disappearance of the Far Eastern leopard. Only 30 individuals of these rarest sub-species were registered at the beginning of 21 century in last patch of its former area. We initiated the program “Save each of survivors” to move leopard away from the edge of extinction. WWF has been supported the special anti-poaching brigades, insisted large scale law enforcement actions, collaborated with local hunting estates to increase the number of leopard prey. But the major task and success was establishment of large united protected area – “Land of Leopard” national park, which covers 70% of leopard habitats. And after 15 years the number of leopard increased 2.5 times – to about 70 animals in Russia and 10-12 in China!

Under the fast infrastructure development on the Border of Russia and China, I had devoted main efforts to form the comprehensive and representative network of PAS as one of CBD directions and AICHI Goal. Due to my work such system of nature reserves, national parks and wildlife refuges in Amur Ecoregion in Russian Far East was enlarged as much as 7.4 million hectares, covering in average 12% of the territory.

The Amur-Heilong Ecoregion Complex covers 3 of WWF Global-200 ecoregions and so, play a worldwide role in biodiversity conservation. The WWF national organizations in USA, Germany, Netherlands and Great Britain gave us the chance to invest huge amount of funds to support of anti-poaching brigades, creating PAs in tiger area, leasing nut-harvesting zones as conservation concessions, fighting with illegal logging and forests fires, developing the ecotourism capacity, strengthening non-governmental organizations, implementing wise use of non-forest timber products. Since 2005, the program became international, jointing the efforts with WWF offices in Eastern Mongolia and North-East China.

For the last decade I have been working more in policy field to build coalition of interesting NGOs and to create capacity to impact on governmental structures on provincial level. One of the best results is the concerted work of Amur Coalition, which joints the efforts of 25 local NGOs to implement the co-operative Conservation Action Plan (2002-2022). Some time I am very tied to play politics, so many conflict situations. And it is so sad when one green organization vilify other to raise up own rating. Too many conversations with people who are usually don't fulfill their obligations. But when I could look back, I saw that slowly we are going ahead to the CBD and WWF goals. And our office became a real team of similar-minded enthusiasts which firm shoulders I can feel in daily battles.

The ecological situation on the Planet became more and more worth and we are here on the front line trying to conserve for Mankind the last island of wildness. It is not easy to live and to work here, not because of frost and snow, mosquito and ticks, roadless and impassable ridge – all of us are outdoorsmen and like the wildness conditions. But sometime we give way to despair because of the incomprehension of Russian authorities, ignorance of local citizens, collapse of some long-term efforts. We need for moral support, we need the feeling that we are the important mesh in a worldwide environmental movement and many people know about our work for nature conservation.