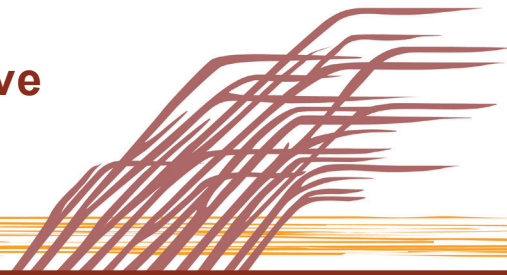


Temperate Grasslands Conservation Initiative

Newsletter 4 – July 2010



Taking Global Action: Towards a Conservation Strategy for the World's Temperate Grasslands

Photo: Alan Mark
The Northern Great Plains of Montana

The TGCI Project Team and membership continue their efforts to raise awareness globally about the temperate grasslands biome and the urgent need to put measures in place to improve its level of conservation and protection. Recent research confirms that, of all the world's 14 biomes, temperate grasslands are at greatest risk, suffering from the dangerous combination of being the most highly altered while being the least protected. The importance of our work is as compelling as ever.

Our next opportunities to raise the grasslands flag are at the upcoming 10th Convention of the Parties (COP10) of the Convention on Biodiversity in Nagoya, Japan in October 2010 and the International Rangelands Congress in Rosario, Argentina, April 2011. The TGCI will be represented at both meetings, hoping to influence the global conservation agenda for the next decade in favour of temperate grasslands. Our sights are also set on the 2012 World Conservation Congress in Korea, the 2013 Southern Connection Congress in New Zealand and the next World Parks Congress in 2014. 2014 is our target date for reaching a minimum 10% global level of protection for temperate grasslands.

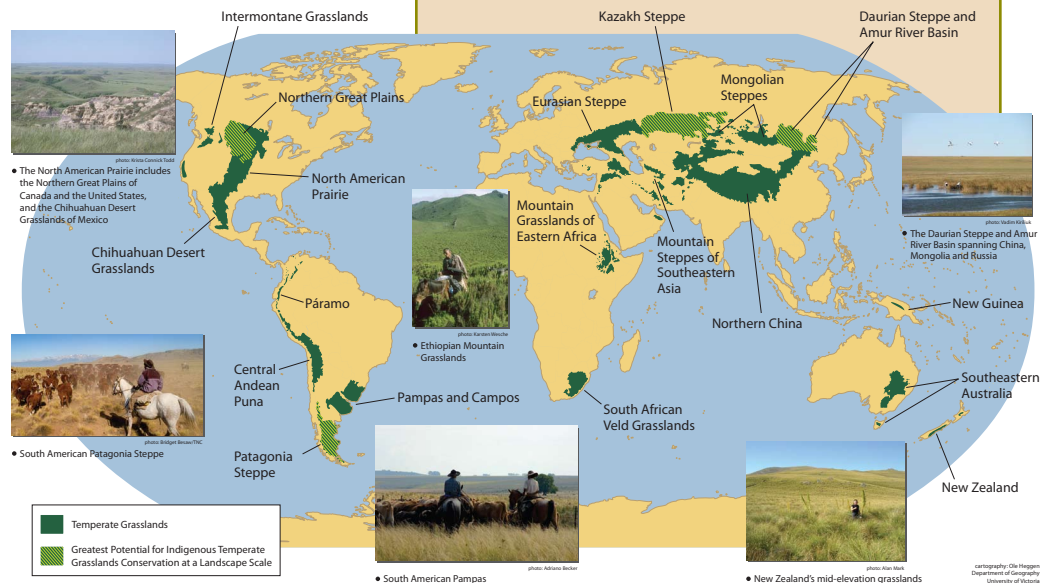
Our funding challenges continue. As our three years of funding from the J. M. Kaplan Fund comes to completion we need to locate new sources of financial support. We have approached this challenge as an opportunity to further define our four regional priorities where the greatest opportunities remain for grasslands conservation at a landscape scale: the steppe grasslands of Patagonia, Kazakhstan, the Daurian region of East Asia and the northern Great Plains in North America. In a series of fifteen concept notes, we describe the challenges to grasslands conservation and protection in each region and, as specifically as we can, identify what we hope to achieve in each region. In this way, we hope to attract regional or project specific funding from a range of donors. Learn more inside!

I thank the J.M. Kaplan Fund and the ongoing commitment of the TGCI Project Team for their support for this important work.

Bill Henwood, Project Director

The Temperate Grasslands of the World

The world's temperate grasslands and the four priorities for large landscape grassland conservation are now illustrated on one map. Since the previous newsletter, the North American configuration has been altered to better reflect the temperate grasslands of Mexico. If you have other suggestions for changes/additions to the map please contact Bob at bobpeart@shaw.ca.



cartography: Ole Heggan
Department of Geography
University of Waterloo

Our Mission

Temperate Grassland Conservation Strategy

To reverse the trend of biodiversity loss and degradation of the temperate grasslands biome by promoting both the designation and special management of representative protected areas, and the widespread use of sustainable management practices beyond protected area boundaries, with the goal of at least doubling the current level of 5% protection by 2014.

Regional Action Plans to Protect Temperate Grasslands

In an effort to clarify our work plan we have developed a series of simplified regional action plans. One note focuses on our global strategy. The remainder highlight our work in the Daurian Steppe/ Amur River Basin of East Asia (eastern Mongolia, China and Russia); the Kazakh steppe; the Patagonia steppe and the Northern Great Plains of North America (see adjacent list).

These action plans vary from region to region. This variation in approach is determined by such factors as the current level of protection and disturbance, existing ecological conditions and the potential for connectivity, the possibility of restoration, the status of wildlife populations and ability for reintroductions and the realistic prospects for sustainable management and further protection.

In turn, these factors lead to the identification of three categories of grassland landscapes: large and relatively intact; moderately modified and fragmented; and highly modified and fragmented.

The TGCI immediate priority is large and relatively intact landscapes as these four regions offer the greatest potential for large landscape level conservation.

These action plans provide contextual and budget guidelines for each of our four temperate grassland priority regions. The TGCI's fundraising campaign relies on these regional plans to attract interest from potential donors. These fifteen notes are posted on the TGCI website or may be obtained by contacting Bob at bobpeart@shaw.ca.

Profiling Temperate Grasslands at COP 10

The Conference of the Parties (COP) is the governing body of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) that meets periodically to advance global implementation of the Convention. COP 10 is to be held in Nagoya, Japan October 18-29, 2010 and will set the conservation agenda for the next decade. As temperate grasslands are the most threatened biome on Earth, we feel it is essential to have a presence at the upcoming COP.

To this end we have arranged to host a formal side event at COP 10. As well, building on our highly successful workshop in Hohhot, we intend to conduct a day-long temperate grasslands workshop in association with COP - perhaps with a focus on the Daurian Steppe and Amur River Basin of East Asia. We will circulate details associated with these two events as soon as more information is available. If you are attending the COP 10 meeting and are interested in attending either of these events please contact Naomi at Naomi.Doak@iucn.org.

In preparation for COP10, the TGCI was represented at the May 2010 SBSTTA 14 meeting in Nairobi, Kenya. While progress was made in raising the level of awareness and cooperation, it is disappointing that the draft package of recommendations going forward to COP10 from SBSTTA does not mention temperate grasslands as an imperiled biome. In particular, neither of the documents reviewing the implementation of the Programme of Work on Protected Areas nor the biodiversity of dry and sub-humid lands stresses the urgent need to conserve temperate grasslands. While grasslands are mentioned in "dry and sub-humid lands", the creation of protected areas is not put forward as a tool to protect their biodiversity.

In addition to our two events, our strategy at COP10 will be to enlist a signatory country to champion specific recommendations with respect to the conservation and protection of temperate grasslands. We will keep you apprised of our progress.

Global Approach

Towards a Conservation Strategy for the World's Temperate Grasslands

East Asia (Daurian Steppe/Amur River Basin)

The Dauria Ecoregion: Conserving East Asia's Last Vast Grassland

Climate Change in the Daurian Steppe

Water Conservation in East Asia

Transboundary Conservation of the Mongolian Gazelle

Securing steppe fauna in the Daursky Biosphere Reserve

Bringing back the Eastern Great Bustards

Mining in Mongolia: Engaging the communities to help reduce the impacts of mining

South America

South American Temperate Grasslands: The Regional Case for Conservation

Patagonian Steppe

The Paramos and Climate Change

The South American Puna Grasslands

Pampas and Campos: The Rio de la Plata Grasslands

North America

North America's Northern Great Plains

Eurasia

The Kazakh Steppe

CONCEPT NOTES



Successful Southern Connection Gathering!

The Temperate Grassland Conservation Initiative sponsored a highly successful one day symposium to further the development of a strategic plan for the temperate indigenous grasslands of the southern hemisphere. This gathering was held as part of the VI Southern Connection Congress in Bariloche, Argentina, on February 17, 2010. There were a number of presentations on various grassland management strategies and the research being undertaken to better our ecological understanding of this increasingly rare biome.

The participants were so engaged in the discussion that they were determined to ensure the symposium had a lasting legacy, thus the Bariloche Temperate Grasslands Declaration was approved. This declaration was signed by most of the ~50 attendees at the final session when the declaration was discussed.

For copies of the papers, a summary of the Bariloche symposium, or a full copy of the Bariloche Temperate Grassland Declaration please contact Alan at amark@otago.ac.nz.

Plan to attend the VII Southern Connection Congress at the University of Otago in Dunedin, New Zealand - January 25-30, 2013.

THE BARILOCHE TEMPERATE GRASSLANDS DECLARATION

VI Southern Connection Congress:
"Gondwana reunited: a southern perspective for a changing world."

February 2010
Bariloche, Río Negro, Argentina

We the contributors and/or participants of the Temperate Grasslands Conservation Initiative Symposium in Bariloche from three continents and eight countries of the Southern Hemisphere, plus Canada, the United States of America and England:

- Declare that the temperate indigenous grasslands require urgent and targeted action to protect, maintain and restore their many valuable social, cultural, economic and ecological services they provide to sustain human life and well-being;
- Encourage the CBD Conference of the Parties reunited at the 10th meeting in Nagoya, Japan, in October 2010, to adopt specific measures to protect temperate grasslands within the revised and updated Strategic Plan for the Convention, including new targets for temperate grasslands conservation for the post-2010 period.

Acknowledgements

The Temperate Grasslands Conservation Initiative and the progress that we have made would not be possible without the generous funding support of the J.M. Kaplan Fund.

What's New?

- **The Global Biodiversity Outlook #3** (<http://gbo3.cbd.int>)
- **Worldwide database of economic valuation:** This online geo-referenced database is now available. It allows users to select ecosystem services of interest according to different biomes and ways of valuing ecosystem service. (<http://www.consvalmap.org/>)
- **The Bariloche Temperate Grasslands Declaration:** Endorsed at the VI Southern Connection Congress, February 2010. Available on the TGCI website
- **New publication:** Towards a Strategy for the Conservation and Protection of the World's Temperate Grasslands. William D. Henwood. Great Plains Research 20 (Spring 2010). Now posted on the TGCI website
- **Recent research reminder: What are Global Temperate Grasslands Worth?** A review of the current research on the total economic value of temperate grasslands. Available on the TGCI website

Upcoming Meetings

- The IUCN Commission on Ecosystem Management (CEM) together with the Hustai National Park Trust (HNPT) of Mongolia are organizing an **international conference in Mongolia on steppe management and climate change** for September 10-12, 2010. Contact: Munkhbat Tarav takhi@hustai.mn, or munkhtolui@yahoo.com
- The IXth International Rangeland Congress being held April 11-15, 2011 in Rosario, Argentina. (<http://www.irc2011.com.ar/>)
- The 9th World Conservation Congress in Jeju, Republic of Korea, Fall 2012. (<http://www.iucn.org/congress>)
- IUCN World Park Congress, 2014. Location to be determined

The TGCI materials mentioned in this newsletter are available on our website:

http://www.iucn.org/about/union/commissions/wcpa/wcpa_what/wcpa_conservingd/wcpa_grasslandstf/

You can also go to the World Commission on Protected Areas website www.iucn.org/wcpa. Under the 'what we do' link choose 'connectivity-biomes' and then 'temperate grasslands'.

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http://www.iucn.org/about/union/commissions/wcpa/wcpa_what/wcpa_conservingd/wcpa_grasslandstf/

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