

VTB's Partner Projects in the Ecology Field

VTB takes a proactive stance in promoting and developing environmental protection in the Russian Federation and sees its objective in transforming the approach to the implementation of projects in this field from the mere provision of financing to offering expert financial advice.

VTB contributes to this issue by supporting projects of the Arctic Council Project Support Instrument, participating in the national *Ecology* project and providing charitable support to foundations specialising in environmental protection.

Arctic Council

In 2020, the Bank and VTB Ecology LLC, a special legal entity within the Group responsible for monitoring environmental projects, continued to monitor Project Support Instrument (PSI) projects in the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation, and assisted the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation in preparing necessary background materials and opinions on the said projects.

PSI is an international fund that finances projects to reduce pollution and improve environmental impact management practices in the Arctic.

As part of this area, in the reporting period, VTB supervised the implementation of environmental projects in the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation, as well as assisted in finding a consensus in controversial working situations between Russian enterprises and the Nordic Environment Finance Corporation (NEFCO), which provides funding for the implementation of environmental projects.

National *Ecology* project

Since 2019, VTB Bank has been an active participant in the national *Ecology* project and is a member of the Business and Biodiversity working group of Russia's Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection. The major goal of the working group was to achieve synergy in implementing corporate programmes to preserve biodiversity and protect the environment, run by Russian government agencies across designated natural areas of federal importance.

As part of this work, in 2020, an agreement was signed with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Ecology of the Russian Federation on cooperation in implementing measures within the federal project "Conservation of Biological Diversity and Development of Green Tourism". The signed agreement will allow to implement a programme for the conservation and monitoring of rare animal populations and other activities, including those aimed at the development of green tourism.

The main projects of the Arctic Council in 2020

Pilot project on reduction of CO₂ and black carbon emissions in the rivers of the Arctic region of the Russian Federation

Reduction of fluorinated greenhouse gas emissions and ozone-depleting substances at fish and seafood processing enterprises in the Murmansk region

Reduction of black carbon and methane emissions in flare emissions of associated petroleum gas in the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation

Treatment of Solid Waste Disposal Site in the Russian Arctic

At the events of the Business and Diversity working group in 2020, development schemes for the Kronotsky State Reserve and the Russian North National Park were approved, and reports were reviewed and further action plans were developed to restore the Persian leopard population in the Caucasus.

Charitable environmental projects

A separate area of VTB Bank's environmental activities is its charitable support for foundations and organisations involved in the conservation of biodiversity.

The key objectives of VTB's environmental activities include the support of projects to preserve Russia's biodiversity, the most prominent of which is a joint project with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) on the conservation of big cats in the Russian Federation. In 2020, the Bank continued its sponsorship of this project.

The main goal of the project is to improve the environmental sustainability of natural ecosystems in the Far East, Altai, Sayan and North Caucasus in order to preserve and expand the habitat of the Amur tiger, Amur and Persian leopards, and snow leopard populations. By the aid of the implementation of the project since 2012, it has been possible to significantly increase the number of big cat species.

At present the Amur tiger population numbers 580, the Amur leopard 100, the snow leopard 70 and ten Persian leopards released into the wild.

During the cooperation between VTB and WWF since 2016, a lot of work has been done to protect the population of rare animals, including in the following areas:

- Preserving the habitats and foraging sites of these species;
- Ensuring monitoring of animal diseases in their habitats;
- Strengthening the effectiveness of protection;
- Preventing and resolving conflict situations;
- Improving the legal and methodological basis of conservation activities.

The most important charitable environmental projects by VTB



The Amur Tiger Centre

Growth of the Amur tiger population and nature preservation in the Russian Far East

160
million RUB

since 2014



World Wildlife Fund

Sustaining the Amur tiger, Amur leopard, and snow leopard populations, renewal of the Persian leopard population

242.5
million RUB

since 2016



Russian Geographical Society

Preserving Russia's natural, historical, and cultural heritage

200
million RUB

since 2017