

A photograph of a person with long dark hair, wearing a dark jacket, a scarf, and a flat cap, riding a brown horse through a snowy mountain landscape. The horse has red tassels on its bridle. The background shows snow-covered mountains under a clear blue sky.

People & Nature: Working together for a more sustainable future on the Tibetan plateau

Plateau Perspectives
2008 Annual Report



Plateau Perspectives

Annual Report 2008

Building A More Sustainable Future:

Developing Lasting Partnerships for Conservation
& Sustainable Development on the Tibetan Plateau

— A Global Family —

Plateau Perspectives Canada

Reg. no. 88353 0511 RR0001

Business no. 428953-6-M

Plateau Perspectives Scotland

Reg. no. SC036202

Plateau Perspectives, Xining Representative Office

Reg. no. 78144734-9

www.plateauperspectives.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. History of Plateau Perspectives	p. 4
2. Project activities in 2008	p. 6
2.1. Community health and plant conservation in Zaduo county	p. 7
2.2. Snowstorm relief assistance to poor families in Zhiduo county	p. 8
2.3. Partnership with the Sanjiangyuan National Nature Reserve	p. 9
2.4. Study tours to protected areas in Mongolia and Yunnan	p.10
2.5. Other project activities	p. 11
3. Conferences, workshops, and publications	p. 12
4. <i>Who's Who?</i> in Plateau Perspectives	p. 13
5. Financial overview for 2008	p. 14



1. History of Plateau Perspectives

1998	Plateau Perspectives (PP) is founded in Canada
1998	PP assists in the development of Tibetan NGO Upper Yangtze Organization (UYO) and the establishment of community protected areas in Suojia district, Zhiduo County
1998-02	PP enlists the support of Biodiversity Working Group, China Council for International Cooperation on Environment & Development (BWG/CCICED) to help develop more people-centred strategies for conservation in the headwaters of the Yangtze River
1999	PP provides binoculars and other field equipment to the Suojia Ecological Monitoring Committee to enhance wildlife and habitat protection in Suojia district, Zhiduo county
2000-08	PP supports the establishment of Muqu community centre: village school (2000-05), village clinic (2006-07) and village environmental training and research centre (2008)
2001	PP provides field equipment to grassroots NGO Friends of the Wild Yak to enhance wildlife protection, and also provides assistance to the community school and clinic in Cuochi village, Qumahe district, Qumalai county
2001-04	PP assists in the development and execution of a DEFRA-funded FFI project in Suojia district, with local partners UYO and Qinghai Environmental Protection Bureau
2002	PP is registered in Canada as non-profit organization (reg. no. 88353 0511 RR0001)
2002-04	PP collaborates on a SSHRCC-funded regional community health project
2003-08	PP implements the ‘Yangtze Rivers Headwaters Sustainable Development Project’
2004	PP is recognized in Scotland as a charitable organization (reg. no. SC036202)
2004	PP assists in the production of EC-funded participatory video of nomad life
2005	PP is incorporated under Corporations Canada (business no. 83622-7678)
2005	PP organizes and hosts a strategic planning meeting with the Sanjiangyuan National Nature Reserve (SNNR), the Government of Zhiduo County, and UYO
2006	PP begins NORAD-funded project on environmental management
2007	PP establishes an official Permanent Office in China (reg. no. 78144734-9)
2007	PP begins new projects and activities in both Qumalai county and Zaduo county
2007	PP signs Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Northwest Plateau Institute of Biology, Chinese Academy of Science, for joint research on the conservation of grassland ecosystems and biodiversity in Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture
2008	PP signs an agreement with the SNNR Management Bureau to develop ‘community co-management’ as a new people-centred approach to conservation in the source area of the Yangtze, Yellow and Mekong rivers

In its work, Plateau Perspectives exhibits 5 distinctive characteristics:

- PP integrates the conservation of biodiversity and community development
- PP considers and values the "local" – local environments, cultures, indigenous knowledge
- PP develops joint partnerships with Tibetan communities, government, and NGOs
- PP aims to develop replicable models of conservation and community development
- PP seeks to achieve economic and ecological sustainability in all fields of work

Plateau Perspectives also embraces 10 core values:

- Professional excellence in all work
- Performance (results-based evaluation of work)
- Generosity (love for neighbours, care for the environment)
- Integration of development, conservation, and Christian faith
- Partnership between community, government, and external advisers
- Focus on local initiatives, and government policies that affect communities
- Commitment (what will it take to get the job done, not what can we gain)
- Servant attitude (how can we assist each other to achieve joint goals)
- Humility (we don't have all the answers, only suggestions)
- Integrity and honesty in both life and work



2. Project activities in 2008

Throughout 2008, the whole world has been watching China! For us, too, this year has been memorable, both through hardships (e.g., seeing the devastation that severe snow storms can have on herders' livelihoods) and exciting new projects (e.g., the development of new work in Zaduo county).

This year we have worked with several government partners in Qinghai Province, including:

- Management Bureau of the Sanjiangyuan National Nature Reserve, under the Qinghai Province Forest Bureau
- Suojia Environmental Protection Station (Suojia EPS) of the SNNR
- Northwest Institute of Plateau Biology, Chinese Academy of Science
- Civil Affairs Bureau of Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture
- Civil Affairs Bureau of Zhiduo County
- Government of Zhiduo County
- Government of Zaduo County

More information is provided below about the work of Plateau Perspectives in 2008:

- 1) Development of a program to promote **community health in Zaduo county** in concert with the **conservation of medicinal plants**
- 2) Due to a severe winter with extreme cold and heavy snow storms, emergency **relief work** was carried out with re-distribution of yak in Zhiduo county
- 3) Collaborative work with the **Sanjiangyuan National Nature Reserve**, as part of the '*Yicun Yidian*' project in the Suojia-Qumahe conservation area
- 4) **Study tours** were also organized with SNNR leaders and other project partners to Omnogov province, Mongolia, and to Yunnan province, China
- 5) **Other work activities** in 2008 also included the monitoring of village clinics, a survey of breeding bird colonies, participation in conferences and workshops



Community health and plant conservation in Zaduo county

A new program is being developed in Zaduo county that seeks to enhance the provision of health care in remote herding communities and to build linkages between traditional health care and plant conservation. In previous years, at the invitation of the county health bureau, Plateau Perspectives provided medical training to village doctors and midwives, built two community clinics, and began to explore ways in which to assist in the provision of basic education. In 2008, Plateau Perspectives helped design and fund two more rural clinics as well as contribute to the building of a new wing of the county Tibetan medicine hospital.

With enhanced interaction between Plateau Perspectives and the local doctors who practice mainly Tibetan medicine, there will also be increased exchange and learning between these different approaches to health and health care. Additionally, greater involvement with such traditional approaches may also open avenues into medical anthropology, ethno-botany and plant conservation in Zaduo county, which encompasses not only vast grassland and wetland ecosystems but also a variety of shrubland and species-rich forest regions as well. With plans to conserve plants recognized as 'medicinal,' the local government also desires to grow some of these species with the help of local farmers, both to supply the Tibetan medicine market as well as to trial a possible alternative source of income for poor families.



Snowstorm relief assistance to poor families in Zhiduo county

Following a severe winter with extreme cold and heavy snow storms, in which many herding families lost between half and nearly all of their livestock (mostly yak), Plateau Perspectives organized an emergency **disaster relief response** to provide the poorest and most seriously affected families with several new yak to help them begin to build afresh their livestock herd.

In collaboration with the county and prefecture Civil Affairs bureaus (and a provincial leader in attendance), 180 yak were purchased from local families who had lost fewer animals, then redistributed to 90 families in four villages of Duocai township, Zhiduo county. The recipient families were selected by village and township leaders who were most familiar with the local situation. With follow-up visits planned to these communities in the coming year, there may be scope for the development of some new alternative income-generating activities as well.



Partnership with the Sanjiangyuan National Nature Reserve

Collaborative work with the Sanjiangyuan National Nature Reserve continued in 2008, in the context of the '*Yicun Yidian*' (community co-management and biodiversity protection) project – which already has begun to receive favourable media attention at the provincial level.

This work included...

- capacity building of local Tibetan herders to serve as wildlife monitors (wardens) in core zones of the nature reserve, to undertake anti-poaching patrols and to promote environmental awareness within the community
- capacity building of reserve field staff through training in conservation planning and applied wildlife research, as well as the provision of field equipment including GPSs, binoculars, spotting scope and tripod, video cameras, and warden outfits and badges
- planning trip for snow leopard monitoring, with assessment of possible locations for more in-depth snow leopard research with use of camera traps in subsequent years
- environmental education and awareness raising by national partners at local schools
- construction of additional building for community outreach, attached to the station
- construction of a new garbage disposal system for local communities and schools
- trialing of solar-powered electric fences to help mitigate human-wildlife conflict (cf. intrusions by brown bears, and depredation of livestock by wolves and snow leopards)



Study tours to protected areas in Mongolia and Yunnan

Study tours were also organized in 2008 for several senior leaders and field station managers of the Sanjiangyuan National Nature Reserve, two academic researchers focused on current environmental and social issues in the region, and a local Tibetan NGO representative.

The Mongolia study tour was hosted by People Centred Conservation and the New Zealand Nature Institute, with a 6-day tour to the Gobi Gurvan Saikhan National Park to learn about the successful integration of wildlife conservation, ecotourism development and community-driven socio-economic development in the region. Several workshops and meetings were also organized with the United Nations Development Program, Mongolian Academy of Sciences, World Wildlife Fund, World Conservation Society, Swiss Cooperation Agency, and several environmental movement organizers and community association leaders.

In Yunnan province, the study tour focus was on learning from the long experience of China's oldest nature reserve, the Xishuangbanna National Nature Reserve, established in 1958. This reserve became a member of the International Man and Biosphere Reserve Network in 1993. On this tour, attention was focused mainly on the establishment of a long-term conservation research program and on the potential benefits and challenges associated with ecotourism.



Other project activities

Other activities in 2008 included the on-going monitoring and strengthening of several village clinics, most notably the Cuochi, Muqu and Yaqu clinics. Government approval was gained to proceed with the Canada Fund project to build a community environmental training centre in Muqu village. Field assistance was also given to a senior researcher at the Northwest Institute of Plateau Biology, Chinese Academy of Science, to search for and document new breeding colonies of migratory birds including bar-headed geese, ruddy shelduck, brown-headed gulls and other species.

Agreement was reached for a new conservation project with a study of saker falcon ecology including tracking local and regional patterns of movement, predator-prey relations, and the determination of key threats to their survival.

Finally, Plateau Perspectives staff also participated in a variety of training workshops and international conferences in 2008 (see below).



3. Conferences, workshops, and publications

Conferences & workshops

Marc Foggin was the invited speaker at the inaugural seminar organized by Bistandsnemnda (Norway) on environmental protection, entitled “Environment and Indigenous Peoples: The experience of Plateau Perspectives in partnership with Tibetan herders,” held in Oslo on 26 February 2008.

Gongbo Tashi attended the international conference, *Range-wide Conservation Planning for Snow Leopards*, held in Beijing on 7-11 March 2008. Conference organizers included Panthera Foundation, Wildlife Conservation Society, International Snow Leopard Trust and the Chinese Institute of Zoology.

Peter Foggin presented a keynote paper (with co-author Marc Foggin) at the *Canada-China Forum for Western Development and Socio-Economic Change*, held in Beijing on 27-28 March 2008, organized by the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (IEA/CASS) and University of British Columbia (UBC), and co-sponsored by the Canadian Embassy in Beijing.

Gongbo Tashi participated in a study tour to USA in April 2008, hosted by University of Virginia, to learn about the potential of creating new economic opportunities for Tibetans through “geotourism” – tourism that is culturally, economically and ecologically attentive and beneficial to local communities.

Gongbo Tashi attended the renowned Tällberg Forum 2008, held in Tällberg, Sweden, on 25-29 June 2008. Supported by the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Tällberg Forum is an innovative global meeting that annually brings together 450 leaders from all over the world and various sectors of society in order to promote a more equitable and secure world for man and nature.

Marc Foggin attended a training workshop on “Climate Change and Sustainable Cities,” organized by LEAD Canada, in Toronto on 10-15 August 2008.

Publications

Foggin, J.M. 2008. Depopulating the Tibetan Grasslands: National policies and perspectives for the future of Tibetan herders in Qinghai Province, China. *Mountain Research & Development* 28(1):26-31.

Foggin, P.M. and J.M. Foggin. 2008. The practice and experience of settlement and relocation among Canada’s Aboriginal peoples. In: P. Potter and Du Fachun (eds), *Proceedings, Canada-China Forum, Western Development and Socio-Economic Change*. Beijing, China: Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and University of British Columbia. 472 pp.

Foggin, P.M., M.E. Torrance and J.M. Foggin. In press. Accessibility of Healthcare for Pastoralists in the Tibetan Plateau Region: A case study from southern Qinghai Province, China. In: Zhang C. and Cao H. (eds), *Inclusion and Harmony: Improving Mutual Understanding of Development in Minority Regions*. Proceedings of the 5th International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS5): Sharing a Future in Asia, held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 2-5 August 2007. Hainan, China: Hainan Publishing House.

LEAD Canada Newsletter, November 2008. Promoting sustainability in the Tibetan Plateau.

Worthy, F. R., and J. M. Foggin. 2008. Conflicts between local villagers and Tibetan brown bears (*Ursus arctos*) threaten conservation of bears in a remote region of the Tibetan plateau. *Human-Wildlife Conflicts* 2(2):200-205.

4. *Who's who?* in Plateau Perspectives

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF REFERENCE

Professor Calvin DeWitt	Professor of Environmental Studies, Univ of Wisconsin-Madison
Sir Brian Heap CBE ScD FRS	(former) Master of St Edmunds College, Cambridge University
Dr John Hodges	Consultant, formerly with UN Food & Agriculture Organization
Sir John Polkinghorne KBE FRS	(former) President of Queens College, Cambridge University
Sir Ghillelan Prance FRS VMH	(former) Director of Kew Royal Botanic Gardens (London, UK)
Mr Matthias Stiefel	Executive Director, WSP International
Mr David Taylor	Director, USAID Office of Transition Initiatives
Dr Tony Whitten	Senior Biodiversity Scientist, Biodiversity Group, The World Bank

PP CANADA, BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mr B Arsenault	Senior Research Officer, National Research Council of Canada
Mrs M Bergen, Treasurer	Accountant, AXA Assurances Inc.
Mr B Désorcy	Sociology consultant
Dr P Foggin	Retired professor, Department of Geography, University of Montreal
Mr W Kent, President & Chair	Development Expert (Latin America and the Caribbean)

PP SCOTLAND, TRUSTEES

Ms Tricia Anderson	Community development worker
Rev Dr J Begbie	Vice-Principal, Ridley College, University of Cambridge
Mrs R Begbie	Public relations
Dr D Evans	Research Associate, Biological Sciences, Bristol University
Mrs S Evans	Avian ecologist
Rev Prof A Torrance, Chair	Chair of Systematic Theology, St Mary's College, U of St Andrews
Dr C Warren, Secretary	Senior Lecturer, Department of Geography, U of St Andrews
Mrs S Warren	Art therapist

FIELD STAFF

Dr J Marc Foggin	International Director	October 1998 – present
Dr Marion E Torrance-Foggin	Medical Director	August 1999 – present
Prof Gongbo Tashi	Projects Manager	November 2007 – present
Mr Huting	Assistant to Projects Manager	September 2008 – present
Mr Jigme Rabden (Timothy)	Translator and field officer	July 2007 – present
Mrs Xu Haiying	Office assistant	June 2006 – present
Mr Andy Buchanan	Field officer	April 2008 – June 2008
Dr Fiona R Worthy	(in language study)	April 2006 – present
Mr Ben Henderson	(in language study)	August 2008 – present
Mrs Shinay Henderson	(in language study)	August 2008 – present

5. Financial overview

Approximate field expenditures in 2008

(For exact figures, see annual reports submitted to Revenue Canada and Scottish Charities)

Project or activity	Main partner	Funds contributed
Yicun Yidian project	SNNR, Suojia EPS	225,000 RMB in 2008
Study tours to Mongolia, Yunnan	SNNR and others	140,000 RMB in 2008
Saker falcon research, conservation	NWIPB, IWC	(secured for 2009-2013)
Construction of PP field station	IWC, NWIPB	(secured for 2009-2010)
Snowstorm disaster relief	Civil Affairs Bureau	360,000 RMB in 2008
Muqu environmental centre	Zhiduo County	(secured for 2009-2010)
Construction of 2 village clinics	Zaduo County	120,000 RMB in 2008
Construction of Tibetan hospital	Zaduo County	100,000 RMB in 2008

Total funds contributed by Plateau Perspectives for projects in 2008, as outlined above:

945,000 RMB in 2008
(approx. 170,000 CAD)
(approx. 100,000 GBP)

Contact Information

Plateau Perspectives Canada

Dr Peter Foggin, 200 Walnut Ave, St Lambert, Quebec, J4P 2T1, Canada

Plateau Perspectives Scotland

Prof Alan Torrance, Kincapple House, Kincapple, St Andrews, Fife, KY16 9SH, U.K.

Plateau Perspectives, Xining Representative Office

Dr Marc Foggin, Haihu Lu Meili Jiayuan, Bldg 6, Apt 162, Xining, Qinghai, 810008, China

info@plateauperspectives.org



All photos by J Marc Foggin
© Plateau Perspectives 2009