

Hope for the Future

Local communities & local voices
Learning through real partnerships
Building a more sustainable future

Annual Report 2009

A brief introduction to the work of Plateau Perspectives in the Tibetan Plateau region



A SPECIAL ‘THANK YOU’ is due especially to the following people — for their continued support, partnership, counsel and friendship:

Dr Chi Chang

Dr Du Fachun

Dr Peter Foggin

Dr Timothy Foggin

Dr Lauchlan Fraser

Dr Andreas Gruschke

Dr Rich Harris

Mr Hashi Zhaxi Duojie

Dr Li Fafu

Dr Long Ruijun

Dr Ma Hongbo

Dr Douglas Macmillan

Dr Katherine Morton

Dr John Sale

Dr Andrew Smith

Dr Wang Dajun

Dr Andreas Wilkes

Dr Walter Willms

Many other people also have contributed significantly to the work Plateau Perspectives over the past year. To each one of you, we equally extend our sincere thanks!

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A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

As we move into the International Year of Biodiversity, I feel both excitement and some trepidation for the Tibetan Plateau region. In the past year we have begun new relationships with several communities as well as key universities, and there is much potential for good work – for community development and for biodiversity conservation. In the Sanjiangyuan region, past activities have helped us as we move into a new and exciting phase of trialing ‘community co-management’, working closely with local herding communities. In the Eastern Himalayan biodiversity hotspot, teaching about resource management and the role that can be played by local Tibetan communities for conservation has also helped lay good foundations for future cooperative work. At the same time, there remain some concerns, social and environmental, with some of the current trends on the Tibetan Plateau. However many national colleagues already are addressing these and there is much fruitful dialogue throughout the country. So there is indeed much hope for the future, and we count ourselves privileged to be participants in this process.

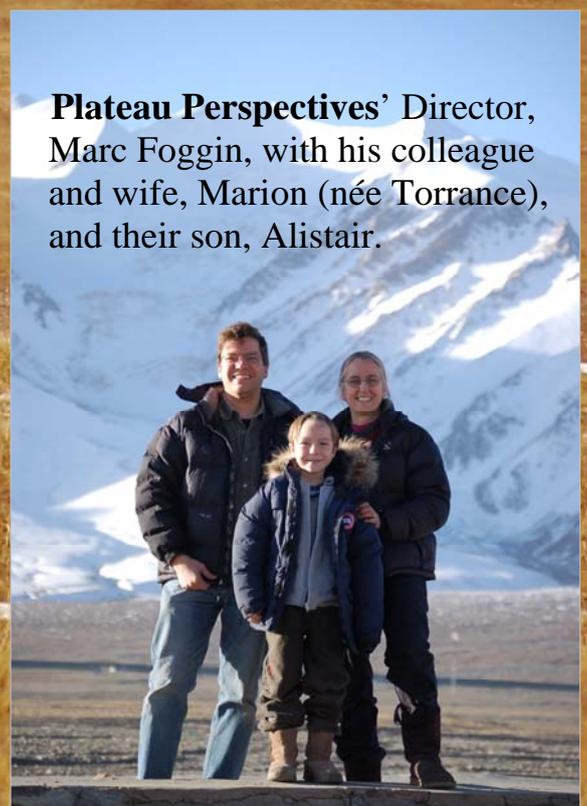
Thank you, everyone, for all your support and encouragement!

Sincerely yours,

Marc Foggin



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Plateau Perspectives’ Director, Marc Foggin, with his colleague and wife, Marion (née Torrance), and their son, Alistair.

COUNCIL OF REFERENCE

Professor Calvin DeWitt

Professor of Environmental Studies, University 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 Ghillean Prance FRS VMH

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Mr Matthias Stiefel

Executive Director, WSP International

Mr David Taylor

Executive Advisor, Humanitarian Assistance, World Vision International

Dr Tony Whitten

Senior Biodiversity Scientist, Biodiversity Group, The World Bank

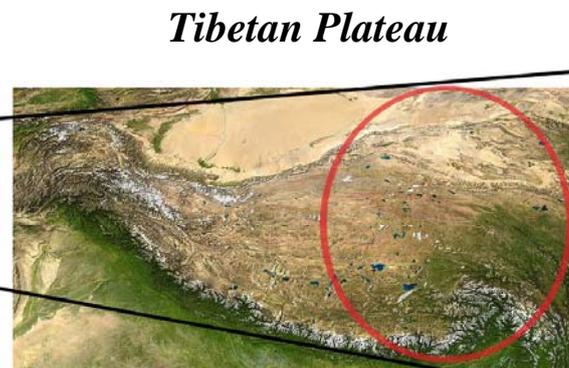


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Where we work	page 4
The Tibetan Plateau	page 5
Community Development	page 8
Biodiversity Conservation	page 10
Community Co-management	page 12
New Partnerships	page 13
Other Projects	page 14
The Future	page 15
Financial Statement	page 18
Field Staff	page 18

WHERE WE WORK

Plateau Perspectives aims to promote environmental protection and sustainable community development in the Tibetan Plateau region. It presently has several programmes and projects located in Qinghai Province and Tibet Autonomous Region.

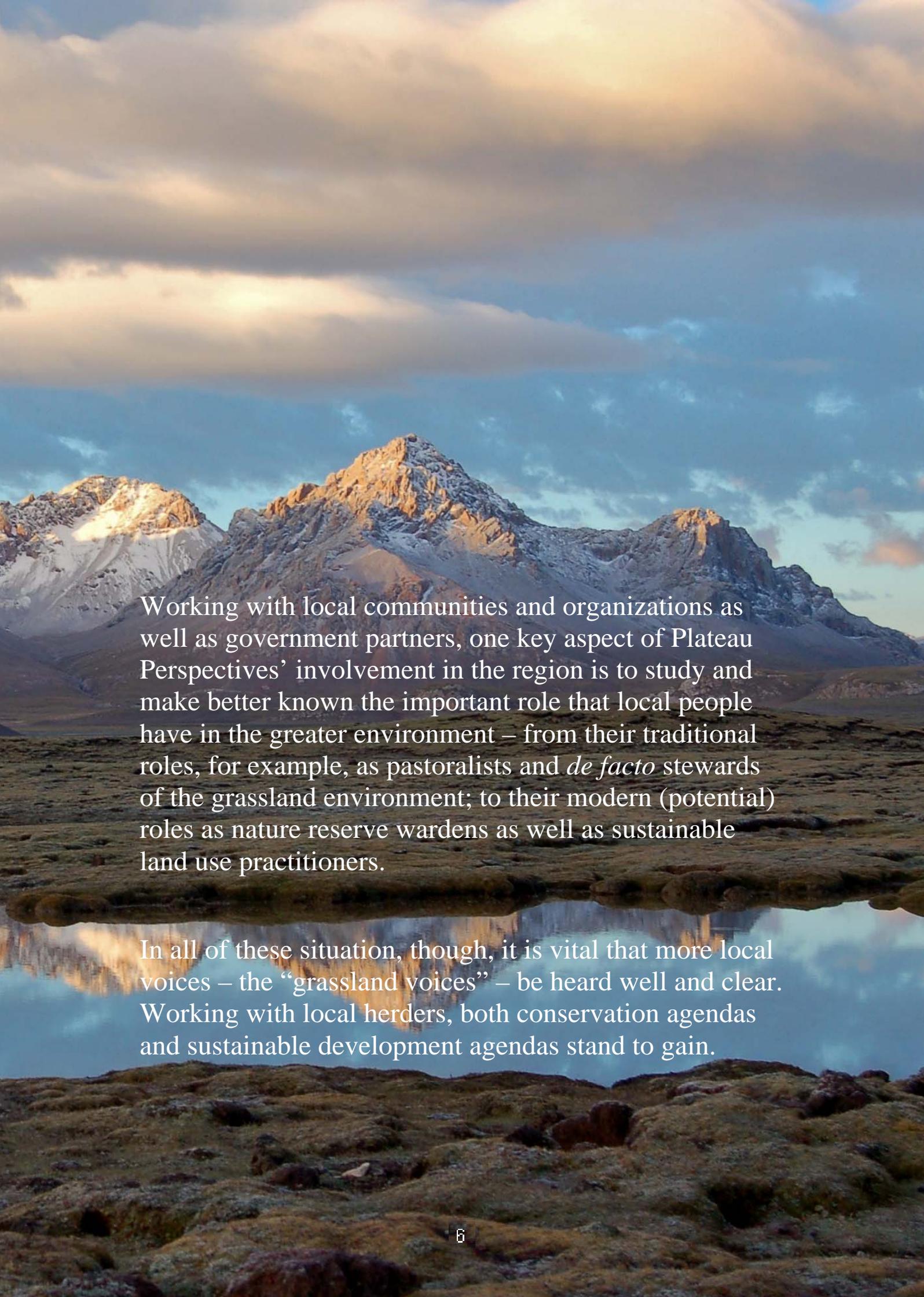


The Tibetan Plateau

The Tibetan Plateau in western China covers 2.5 million square kilometres, or one-quarter of the country's entire land area. It includes the source and headwaters of many of Asia's major rivers – including the Yellow, Yangtze, Mekong, Salween and Yarlung Tsangpo Rivers.

This vast highland has been home to Tibetan pastoralists (herders) for thousands of years. It also is the home for a unique assemblage of wildlife species, many recognized as rare or endangered.

The Tibetan Plateau region also is recognized as being disproportionately affected by both regional and global climate issues, with many of the Tibetan Plateau glaciers now rapidly melting away... Through the plateau's rivers and watersheds, changing climate soon will impact not only local Tibetan herding and farming communities, but also agricultural production throughout Southeast Asia – and hence much of the world's population.



Working with local communities and organizations as well as government partners, one key aspect of Plateau Perspectives' involvement in the region is to study and make better known the important role that local people have in the greater environment – from their traditional roles, for example, as pastoralists and *de facto* stewards of the grassland environment; to their modern (potential) roles as nature reserve wardens as well as sustainable land use practitioners.

In all of these situation, though, it is vital that more local voices – the “grassland voices” – be heard well and clear. Working with local herders, both conservation agendas and sustainable development agendas stand to gain.



Community development, cultural diversity, and the empowerment of local communities to enhance their quality of life

Development must focus on the people, and be carried out in culturally appropriate ways.

Plateau Perspectives has been carrying out an ‘integrated development programme’ in several counties of Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai Province, for over a decade.

Recently, we have brought development assistance – with both local and international expertise – in the following programme areas:

- Mitigation of human-wildlife conflict, with the introduction of new technology (solar powered electric fencing)
- Establishment of the Muqu Herders’ Association, following study tour to Omnogov (South Gobi) Province, Mongolia, in 2008
- Vocational training (health, literacy, numeracy) in Zhiduo County
- Veterinarian training for animal health workers in Zaduo County
- Improvement of health care for women and children, with donation of ultrasound machine to village clinic
- Further exploration of the possible causes and exacerbating factors of severe gout observed in the project area

Community development and empowerment have been achieved as we work in partnership with local herding communities, organizations and the government.





Biodiversity conservation is best achieved with local people and communities as full partners, working in concert with regional and national authorities

Capacity building has been our main focus for several years – of nature reserve staff, local government leaders, and local community members.

In the headwaters of the Yangtze River, local communities have led us to focus conservation efforts on several internationally endangered species, notably the snow leopard (*Uncia uncia*), Tibetan wild ass (*Equus kiang*) and black-necked crane (*Grus nigricollis*). Through such collaborative work, the technical skills and overall capacity of reserve staff is being enhanced.

A study tour to several national parks in Yunnan and Sichuan provinces in 2008 proved to be particularly helpful, raising overall awareness of reserve staff about some alternative approaches to conservation (e.g., people-centred conservation) and the importance of regular monitoring.

A trip was made in 2009 to the Eastern Himalaya ‘biodiversity hotspot’ in Linzhi Prefecture, Tibet Autonomous Region, with preliminary plans now in place for a new integrated programme of community-based conservation and development. In addition, a lecture series was given on conservation, on the management of protected areas, and on the role that can (should) be played by local communities in biodiversity conservation.





'Lhadre Rayon' Canyon

Community co-management (CCM) in the heart of the Tibetan Plateau – working together to conserve snow leopard, one of the world’s most elusive cats

Traditional approaches to conservation have generally excluded people from the equation... a loss for both people and the natural environment.

Through ‘community co-management’ – an approach that we introduced to the Sanjiangyuan National Nature Reserve several years ago – local people are now more active partners in on-going conservation efforts.

As part of our agreement with the nature reserve and local communities, we continue to develop an integrated snow leopard project with research, survey and conservation planning components. Several herders serve as wardens (wildlife monitors), a dozen camera traps have been set up, and standard transect surveys are planned. It is thus being demonstrated how herders can contribute positively to national conservation concerns.



Plateau Perspectives has opened my eyes (through the 2008 study tour to Yunnan)... Now I know more what I should do and how I can protect our natural resources, carry out research, and work with local people...

Leader, Tongtianhe Station
Sanjiangyuan Nature Reserve

We will begin to develop a comprehensive wildlife research and monitoring programme this year, upon which we will base our long-term management efforts. Our trip to Yunnan and working with Plateau Perspectives has helped make this clearer for everyone...

Senior Officer, Management Bureau
Sanjiangyuan National Nature Reserve



New partnerships developed with three universities

In order to learn more and to exchange ideas with national colleagues about conservation and development in the Tibetan Plateau region, we developed several new academic partnerships over the past year.

Qinghai Normal University

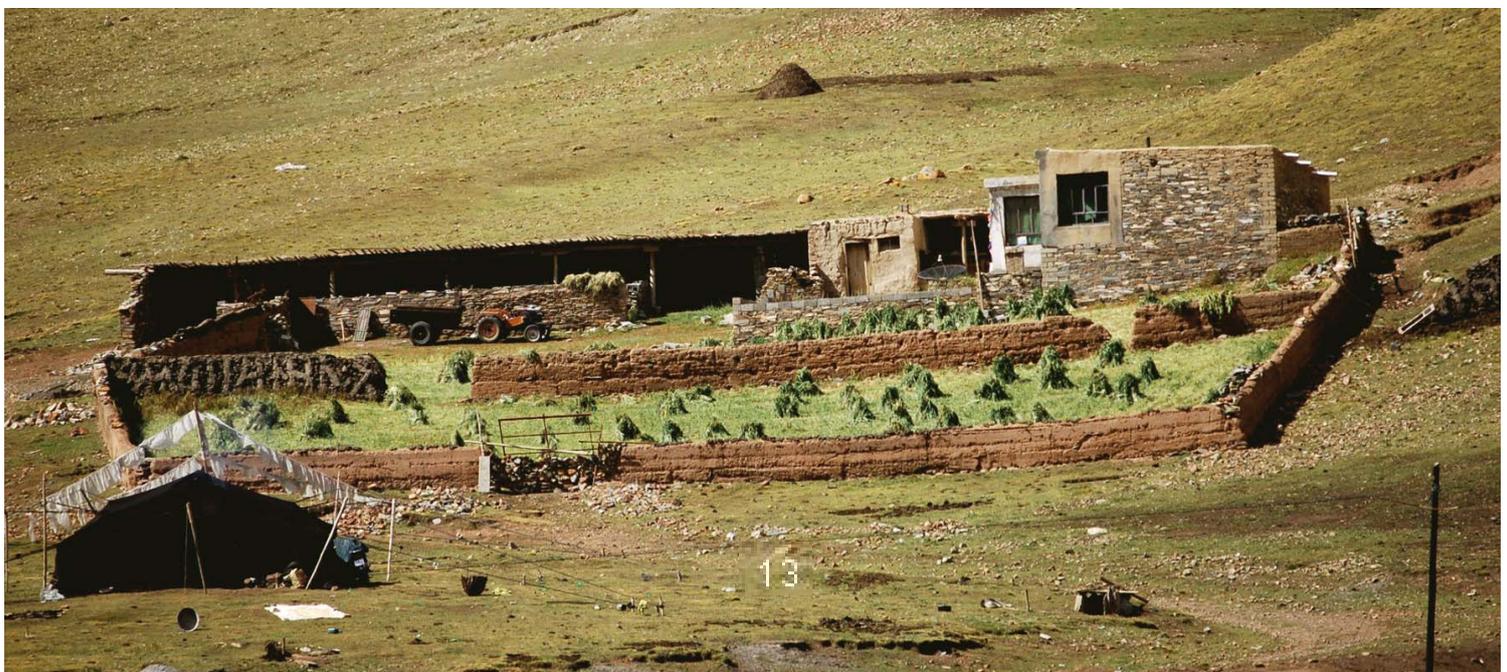
An international conference on natural resource management and conservation and on ecotourism development in the Sanjiangyuan region was jointly hosted by Plateau Perspectives and the university, with over 30 participants from China, Canada, United Kingdom and USA. In addition, a research project that aims to better understand the primary driving forces of environmental degradation in the Tibetan grasslands was introduced to the university. Marc Foggin was appointed *Associate Professor* in the School of Geography and Life Sciences at Qinghai Normal University. Ben Henderson was enrolled for postgraduate research on the use of GIS to promote sustainable development.

Qinghai University

John Friberg is now *Lecturer/Researcher* in the Engineering Department at Qinghai University, with a main focus on construction of trail bridges.

Tibet Agriculture College

Marc Foggin is a visiting lecturer at the Tibet Agriculture College with a primary focus on biodiversity conservation, natural resource management and the role that local communities can play in conservation. Planning for future cooperative work also began, including research projects and community-based conservation and development projects.



Other projects and activities in 2009

Gongbo Tashi led the development of a new agricultural project – based on a crop, *Quinoa*, which has been grown for centuries high in the Andes of South America. It is hoped that this could provide the basis for future income generation initiatives.

Construction of the Muqu Environmental Training Centre was completed

The New Zealand Embassy in Beijing approved a grant to assist with the construction of a village clinic in Bomi County (Linzhi Prefecture, Tibet Autonomous Region). In addition, the regional poverty alleviation bureau has agreed to provide funds to build a trail bridge, to improve access for local residents of the same village in Bomi County.

With technical expertise provided by Ironman Windmill Co. Ltd., a wind powered water pump has been built and will soon be installed to provide water for residents of Namserling village in Zhanang County (Shannan Prefecture, Tibet Autonomous Region).

Plateau Perspectives field staff also attended the following conferences:

Christian Medical and Dental Association

International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences

Leadership for Environment and Development (LEAD International)

Partnership for Community Development / Cultural Exchange Camp

Society for Conservation Biology



Sound choices must be made for a sustainable future

Many changes are occurring in the Tibetan Plateau region. In some ways, it may become unrecognizable in the future; in other ways, it will always be the same – with its people, its unique wildlife and habitats, and its vast stunning landscapes. Yet the question of people’s livelihoods, of Tibetan nomad culture and identity in the context of lost pastures (for the people that have relocated to towns), of future development opportunities... this is a question of hope for the future... this important question must remain at the forefront of our minds, whether it be considered from a viewpoint of biodiversity conservation or regional sustainable development.

The future of the region – its development, and its conservation – is now the topic of numerous conferences, workshops and planning meetings in China and abroad. This is good, as the issues are complex and do require serious thought and attention. Much can be learned from elsewhere in the world, too, since the issues are not entirely unique to China.



Several policy options oft discussed – each with both environmental and social ramifications, regardless of the prime focus or intent of the policy – include amongst others ecological migration, community co-management and contract conservation. While Plateau Perspectives has been involved in dialogue regarding all these options with its academic and government partners, it has put most effort in recent years in exploring and trialing the potential for community co-management of natural resources to serve as a platform or approach by which the related goals of protecting the natural environment and building a more sustainable future for herding people in the Tibetan Plateau region can be met. Some initial successes already are evident in its on-going collaboration with the national nature reserve and Tibetan communities of the Sanjiangyuan region of Qinghai Province.

Partners in this work include colleagues from the Chinese Academy of Sciences, several universities and colleges in Xining, and elsewhere.





Financial Statement ¹

	PP Canada <i>General Fund</i>	PP Scotland <i>Barbour Trust</i>	PP China <i>NORAD</i>	
Income	CNY 30,400	CNY154,300	CNY 712,400	<i>CNY 897,100</i>
	CAD 4,600	CAD 23,400	CAD 108,300	<i>CAD 136,300</i>
	GBP 2,800	GBP 14,000	GBP 64,600	<i>GBP 81,400</i>
Expenses	CNY 18,300	CNY 117,000	CNY 712,400	<i>CNY 847,700</i>
	CAD 2,800	CAD 17,800	CAD 108,300	<i>CAD 128,900</i>
	GBP 1,700	GBP 10,600	GBP 64,600	<i>GBP 76,900</i>

Note:

1. Approximate figures only. Detailed accounts available on request.

Field staff

Marc Foggin	Director	Conservation biology
Marion Foggin	Medical Director	Community child health
John Friberg	Technical Advisor	Civil engineering
Ben Henderson	Assistant Manager	GIS specialist
Shinay Henderson	Computer Support	IT specialist
Huting	Office Manager	Historian, policy analyst
James Nofsinger	Business Development	Business management
Jigme Rabden	Field Office Manager	Business management
Gongbo Tashi	Projects Manager	Environmental management
Xu Haiying	Office Assistant	Office logistics

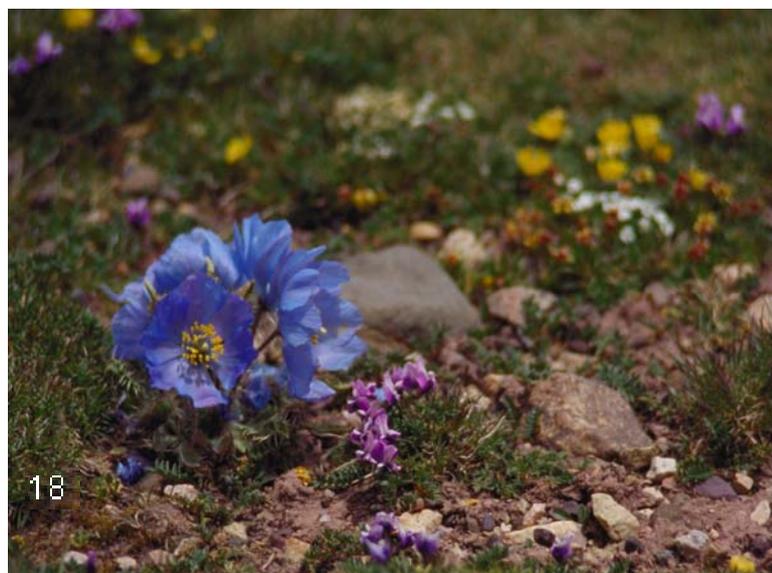
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All text by J Marc Foggin





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