

# PROTECTED AREAS AND INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES IN CHUKOTKA: FROM CONFLICT TO COOPERATION

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Совместная работа 2 класса  
«Осень из рыболова»

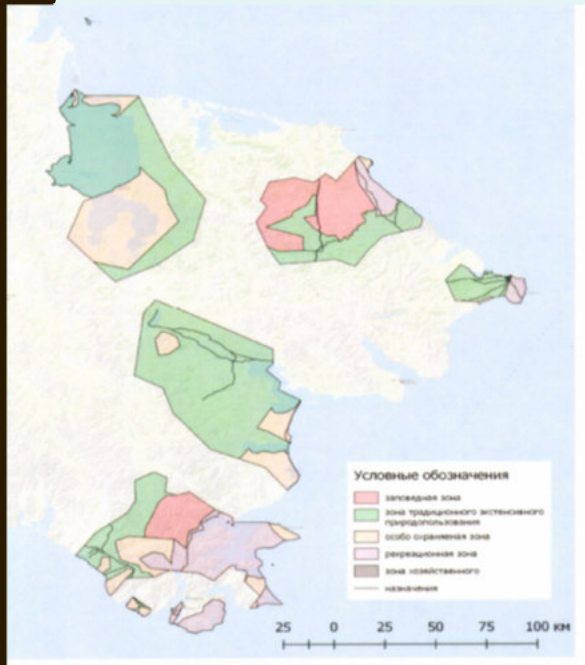
The presentation is based on materials of a sociological survey of the conflict situation in the federal National Park “Beringia” created in 2013 in the North-East of Chukotka (before, there was a regional Natural Park on this site).

**The project was funded by the WWF.**

The survey was made together with the Master of Sociology Alexander **Stepanov** (St. Petersburg State University).

In the course of the survey, 30 depth interviews were conducted with residents of the of **Provideniya town and villages Novoe Chaplino and Sireniki**: indigenous and non-indigenous resources users, indigenous leaders, employees of the National Park, the municipal government and the Government of Chukotka in Anadyr city.

The results was compared with the results of the studying of a similar **conflict situation on Vaigach Island** and the experience of developing a new regional nature **park “Land of Spoon-billed Sandpiper”** project in the south of Chukotka were also used for discussion.





## TWO MAIN PARTS OF LOCAL POPULATION

- **Indigenous** (Chukchi and Eskimo-Yupik), incl. reindeer herders, sea hunters, and “ordinary villagers” engaged in fishing, hunting, and gathering wild plants to support their families
- **Non-indigenous** long-term residents (mostly Russians). They are as well engaged in fishing, hunting and gathering wild plants for their families.



### Settlements:

- Providenia (2150 persons, mostly Russian)
- Novoe Chaplino (380 persons, mostly Eskimos)
- Sireniki (500 persons; 36% Chukchies 40% Eskimos)



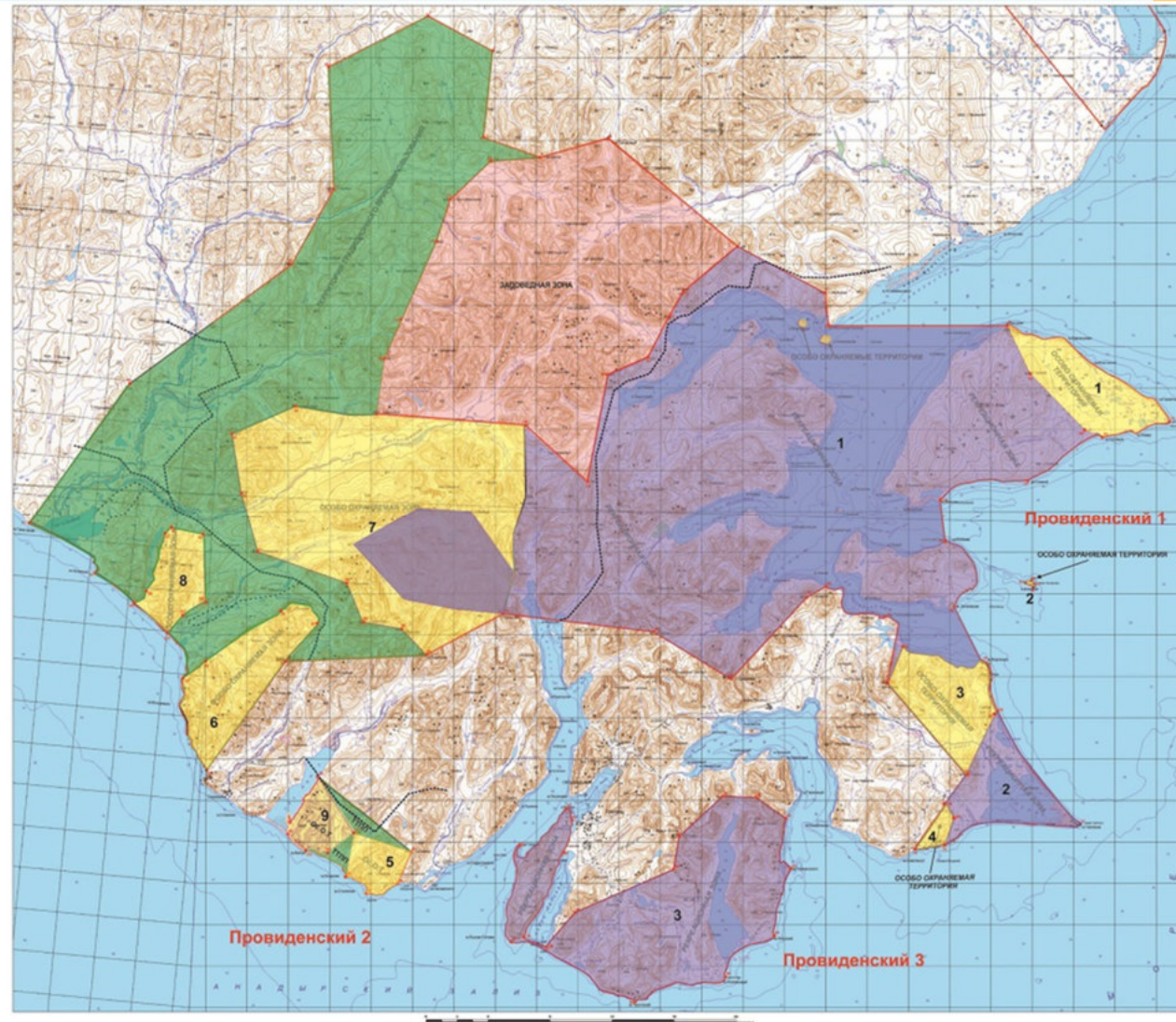


**The conflict has lasted for several years. It has been expressed in a series of documents complaining about the activities of the Park and its management written by local residents and sent to higher authorities, including the General Prosecutor of Russia, as well as a large number of negative reports about the Park in the media (including the Internet). In a number of cases, local residents tried to prevent Park employees from performing their official duties.**



## FUNCTIONAL ZONES OF THE NATIONAL PARK: SECTOR OF PROVIDENIYA

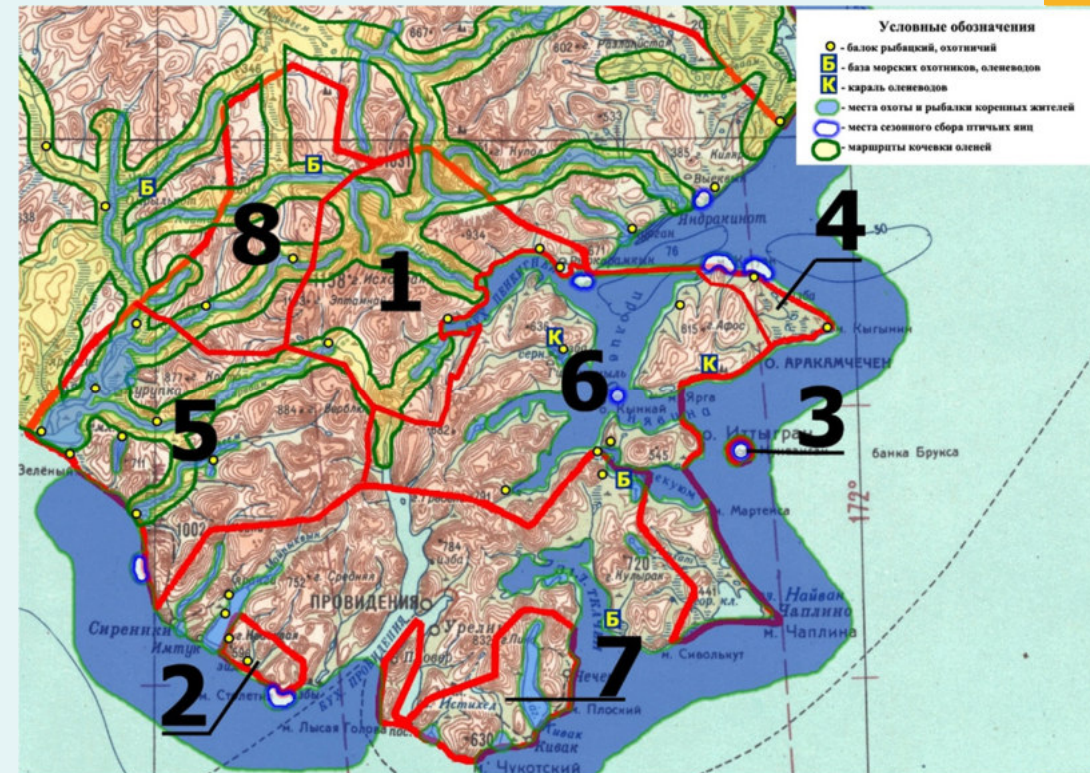
- Conservation area
- Protected area
- Recreation area
- Area of traditional wildlife resource use
- Economic activity zone (mainly - roads and territories for all-terrain transport use)





## THE MOST IMPORTANT AREAS FOR LOCAL PEOPLE SUBSISTENCE USE:

- Marine areas for fishing and **for hunting marine mammals** (whale, walrus, seals) in open water and at the edge of ice.
- Coastal areas for **fishing** and collecting other marine biological resources (shellfish, crustaceans, algae)
- Valleys of rivers and lakes for **fishing, birds and hare hunting**.
- Seashore colonies of birds on the rocks and places of nesting concentrations of gulls and eiders on the coastal plains and islands for **eggs collecting**
- Tundra areas for **picking berries, mushrooms** and other food plants
- Tundra pasture for **reindeer herding**



**Interviews showed that among the local population there are many dissatisfied.**

## INDIGENOUS PEOPLE ARE UNHAPPY WITH:

- a) **lack of respect** towards the indigenous people from Park managers;
- b) **restrictions on the movement of tracked all-terrain vehicles** in the tundra during the summer, which deprives them of free access to tundra lakes and rivers for fishing;
- c) **restrictions on egg collection** in seashore bird colonies;
- d) they don't like that the Park develops the profitable tourism business for cruise tourists, **but does not organize eco-tourism for local people.**



## NON-INDIGENOUS ARE UNHAPPY WITH :

- a) the fact that **the indigenous have more rights** to hunt and fish (they regard this inequality as unfair);
- b) the **lack of the ability to legally harvest of salmon** in convenient places;
- c) **more strict control** over fishing and small game hunting (beside the police and border guards, they are now controlled by National Park inspectors);
- d) the way the public hearings on the restrictions of hunting, fishing, and defining the boundaries of the functional zones of the park were held, as **their opinion has not been taken into account**;
- e) in addition, **they fear a further increase in the restrictions** in connection with the creation of the marine protection zone around the Park; they believe it will limit the possibility of mining in the shelf zone, and hence undermine the prospects for the economic development of the district.





## EMPLOYEES OF THE NATIONAL PARK BELIEVE THAT CONFLICTS WITH THE LOCAL POPULATION ARISE MAINLY FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

- 1. When defining the boundaries of functional zones **at the design stage** of the Park, **the interests of the local population have not been taken into account.**
- 2. The boundaries and control regimes of functional zones **have not been discussed and agreed** with the local population **in advance.**
- 3. Park management **staff do not have experience** with the local population and **did not enjoy his respect.**
- 4. The local population **does not understand the purpose** of the creating of the National Park and the tasks of protecting biodiversity.
- 5. Parks **did not elaborate a strategy** for working with local population.
- 6. The Park does not provide **sufficient practical assistance to the local population** and therefore does not enjoy they trust.
- G) **The Coordinating Council** at the Park with the participation of representatives of the local population has been created **only recently** and it is not yet sufficiently effective.

# **WHY THE LOCAL POPULATION IS DISSATISFIED WITH THE PARK (IN SHORT):**

- not enough respect to indigenous mentality

**What are you doing here ?!**

- not enough trust to decision makers

**We don't believe you !!**

- not enough understanding (mutually)

**Take into account our opinion !!!**



## WHY THE LOCAL POPULATION IS DISSATISFIED WITH THE PARK (IN DETAILS):

- 1. **People mistakenly associate many of the bottleneck in wildlife management with the activities of the Park.** In fact, these shortcomings are associated with federal legislation, and Park employees only control its implementation. So, most part of people are unhappy with the complicated procedure for issuing permits for salmon fishing, which is established in Chukotka Region, the differences in hunting and fishing rights between indigenous and non-indigenous, a ban on driving across the tundra on tracked off-road vehicles in the summer. **The Park is not competent to solve all these issues.**
- 2. Local people, both indigenous and non-indigenous, are **not motivated to protect biodiversity.** They have no idea about the ecological value of the endangered species living in this area, what measures are necessary for their protection, and why. During the interviews, the majority of respondents recognized the need for protective measures only for archaeological, cultural and historical sites. None of the locals believe that existing fishing and hunting activities can damage biodiversity. This position is argued by the fact that the population in Chukotka reduced greatly, and hence the pressure on the wildlife, is now much less than in Soviet times.
- 3. The local population **does not receive any benefit** from the fact that the Park develops tourism business. They consider it unfair that the Park exploits the recreational resources of the region for their own purposes, but not in the interests of the local population.
- 4. The local population (especially non-indigenous) feels **general distrust of all government projects** that are implemented from above and do not believe that their living conditions as a result of these projects can be improved. People believe that they are being deceived and promises will not be fulfilled. There is a **general protest mood in relation to all innovations from above.**
- 5. Despite this, all informants believed that the **Park is necessary**, but its work should be organized **differently.**
- 6. Protest moods are supported by **several active informal leaders.** They are campaigning against the Park using demagogic techniques in the spirit of the “yellow press”.

## POSSIBLE WAYS TO HARMONIZE THE PARK'S RELATIONS WITH THE LOCAL POPULATION:

- 1) **Much more information is needed** on why and how to protect biodiversity. We need an information war against the demagogy of informal leaders.
- 2) To strength **contacts with the local population** in various forms.
- 3) **Joint discussion of problems** at meetings, and not just inform people about new rules.
- 4) Conclude **co-operation agreements** with indigenous associations and communities.
- 5) Conduct specific activities for **the benefit of the local population**.
- 6) Priority development of ecological **tourism and recreation for the local population**.
- 7) Further improvement of the boundaries and environmental protection regime in functional zones in order **to mitigate all contradictions with local people**.
- 8) Do research and monitoring **with local people**. The Park needs have friends.
- 9) And the last and most important: the management and employees of the Park must **be tolerant of the mentality and culture of the indigenous people**. Cooperation should replace the control.



## **CONCLUSIONS:**

**THERE ARE TWO GROUPS OF THE MAIN CAUSES OF CONFLICTS BETWEEN PARKS AND THE LOCAL POPULATION:**

### 1. General (not removable at the local level):

- the imperfection of the **federal regulation** of hunting and fishing;
- **distrust** of the local population to all projects that are implemented "**top-down**"

### 2. Local (can be eliminated during the design of the Park):

- **weak motivation** of the local population to protect biodiversity;
- **lack of understanding** of the Park's tasks by local residents;
- **distrust** of the Park designers;
- **lack of contact** and joint discussion of controversial issues in the early stages of design.

**THE LESSONS OF THE NATIONAL PARK "BERINGIA" PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY TO CHOOSE THE BEST STRATEGY FOR THE DESIGN OF THE NATURAL REGIONAL PARK "LAND OF SPOON-BILLED SANDPIPER" IN SOUTHERN CHUKOTKA.**



Work with local residents began **a few years before the start of Park design**. It included:

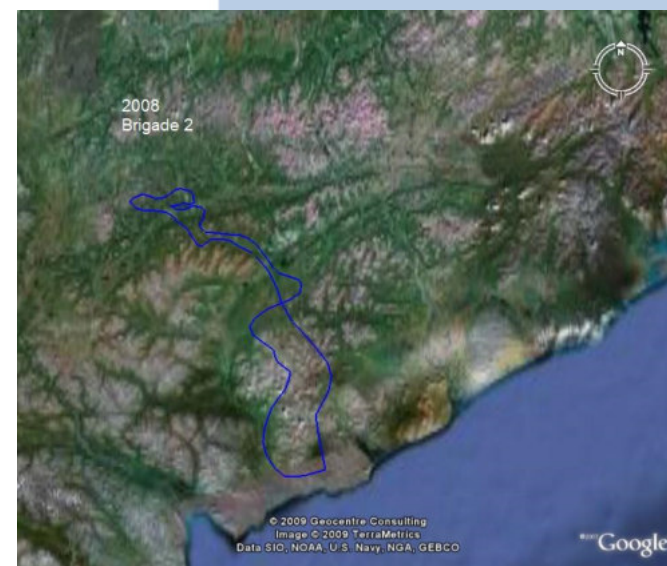
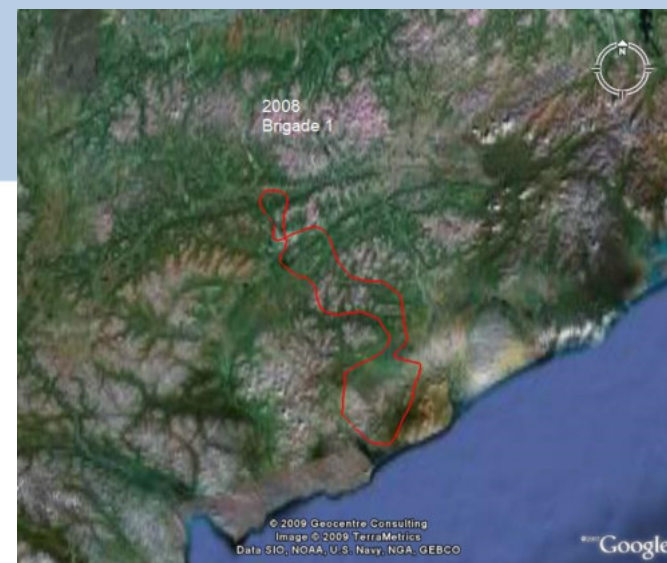
- acquaintance of local residents with the work of ornithologists in protecting the Spoon-billed Sandpiper and other species of birds;







## Mapping of subsistence activities



### Условные обозначения

#### Традиционные занятия

- сбор яиц
- рыбалка на сига
- рыбалка на нерку, горбушу

- рыбалка на гольца
- охота на гусей и уток весной

- тундровые дороги
- балки



**Collection of texts on the traditional culture of the Chukchi jointly with the elders of the village (to publish the book “The Traditional Knowledge of the Meynipilgyno Residents”)**



## Anatoliy Cheivytegin restarted reindeer herding after 20-year hiatus





The thought of reindeer  
Always lived in Father's mind  
No matter whether it was frost or  
heat:

*Reindeer,  
Reindeer,  
Reindeer !!!*



Прощание с другом



*When I was born my life was dedicated  
To reindeer as well.*

*Because I thought the same:  
I cannot live without the reindeer,  
He cannot survive without me.*

**Vladimir Tyneskin (1945 – 1979)**  
*a Chukchy poet*

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION !!!**



**Thanks to WWF for the financing support !!!**