

Since the Hohhot workshop in June 2008, the Temperate Grasslands Conservation Initiative (TGCi) has been focused on getting indigenous temperate grasslands included more formally on the global agenda, initiating the development of four regional action plans, developing a world temperate grassland map and locating funding support. Fundraising continues to prove difficult. The J.M. Kaplan Fund recently informed us that they will continue to provide funding support into 2010; however, they have also let us know that this donation will be their final tranche of funding. The importance of finding other funding sources therefore cannot be overstated.

Temperate grasslands are one of the world's great biomes. After cradling our needs for centuries, indigenous temperate grasslands are now the most altered and endangered ecosystem on the planet. Indigenous temperate grasslands occur on every continent (except Antarctica) and occupy about 8% of the earth's terrestrial surface. Of this 8%, only 5% of it is currently protected within the global system of protected areas.

Temperate grasslands have been converted for crop production, forest plantations, urbanization and other land uses such as energy and mining development. Much of the remainder is subject to intensive grazing. These practices have led and are continuing to lead to habitat loss, declining biodiversity, desertification and fragmentation. In addition, the specter of climate



## What's New?

- **In Kazakhstan:** In Kazakhstan: The Kazakh Steppe Conservation and Management Project, recently funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), is scheduled for 2009-2014 to develop a landscape level conservation management system for the Kazakh steppe that links protected areas with conservation compatible land-uses. For more information: [www.TheGEF.org](http://www.TheGEF.org)
- **In South America:** Regional action plans are being developed for the pampas and campos, Patagonia steppe, puna and paramo ecosystems following the highly successful November 2008 workshop.  
Contact: Andrea Michelson, [andrea.michelson@iucn.org](mailto:andrea.michelson@iucn.org)
- **In East Asia:** A letter was sent to the Chinese and Russian governments expressing concern about plans for water diversion that would have harmful effects on the Daurian Steppe. In addition, a coordinated regional action plan is being developed with a focus on the Daurian Steppe and Amur River Basin.  
Contact: Gemma Phelan, [gemma@iucn.org](mailto:gemma@iucn.org)
- **In North America:** The 1.3M acre Janos Biosphere Reserve, Mexico's first federal protected area specifically for grasslands conservation, was recently declared (<http://www.nature.org/wherewework/northamerica/mexico/work/art15209.html>). In October 2009 black-footed ferrets were reintroduced to the Canadian Great Plains – they were last seen here in the early 1900's. An informal North America temperate grasslands group has been formed to discuss mutual conservation interests. They recently sent a letter to the Mexican, United States and Canadian governments requesting that The Hohhot Declaration be endorsed as a framework for temperate grassland conservation on the continent.  
Contact: Bill Henwood, [bill.henwood@pc.gc.ca](mailto:bill.henwood@pc.gc.ca)

## Upcoming Meetings

- **The VI Southern Connection Congress** being held in Bariloche, Argentina February 15-19, 2010 has a special one-day symposium on indigenous temperate grasslands.  
Contact: Dr. Alan Mark, [amark@otago.ac.nz](mailto:amark@otago.ac.nz)
- **The 9th Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference** ([www.pcsc.ca](http://www.pcsc.ca)) is being held in Winnipeg, Canada February 25-27, 2010.  
Contact: Michelle Yaskowich, [pcap@sasktel.net](mailto:pcap@sasktel.net)
- The 9th

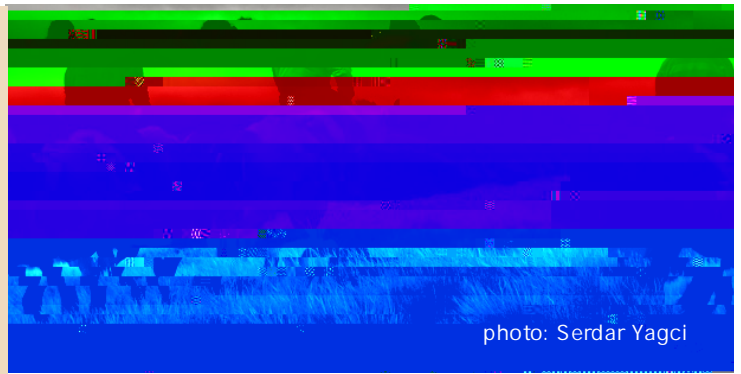


photo: Serdar Yagci

## How You Can Help

In particular we would appreciate receiving any specific information, research or studies that you have related to socio-economic research and the value of temperate grasslands. We would also appreciate you letting us know if you are holding a conference, workshop or symposium related to temperate grasslands so that we are aware of your progress.

The TGCI materials mentioned in this newsletter are available on our website (NOTE: this is a new link):

[http://www.iucn.org/about/union/commissions/wcpa/wcpa\\_what/wcpa\\_conserving/wcpa\\_grasslandstf/](http://www.iucn.org/about/union/commissions/wcpa/wcpa_what/wcpa_conserving/wcpa_grasslandstf/)

If this link doesn't work go direct to the World Commission on Protected Areas website [www.iucn.org/wcpa](http://www.iucn.org/wcpa). Under the 'what we do' link choose 'connectivity-biomes' and then 'grasslands'.

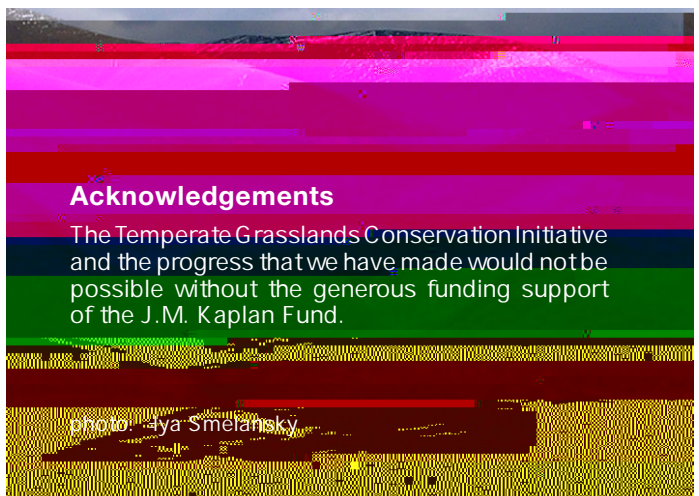
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[http://www.iucn.org/about/union/commissions/wcpa/wcpa\\_what/wcpa\\_conserving/wcpa\\_grasslandstf/](http://www.iucn.org/about/union/commissions/wcpa/wcpa_what/wcpa_conserving/wcpa_grasslandstf/)



## Acknowledgements

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photo: Tya Smelansky