



Implementation of WWF Forest Strategy in Russian Far East

*Composed by T. Rusina, a coordinator
of WWF Forest Program in RFE*



World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) defines its destiny as to save the World Wildlife biodiversity.

Fund's priority is to protect vitally valuable ecosystems of forests, ocean, and coasts.

As to forest ecosystems, WWF mission is to prevent forests extinction and degradation.

Strategic WWF targets, concerning forest saving in Russian Far East, are following:

- 1. Creating a net of environmentally representative protected (natural) territories.**
- 2. Ecologically based, socially profitable and economically livable forest management out of protected areas.**



Objects for the Forest Programme in Far East to 2005

Object 1. System of Especially Protected Natural Forest Territories

- 10% of the forest area and 10% of every forest landscape type in primary for Global 200 region are preserved in effectively managed EPNT system by 2005.
- Statute and terms of virgin forests are defined normatively and State Inventory in virgin forests is begun by 2003.

Object 2. Forest Certification

- 3 mill. Hs of exploited forests are certified or in a process of certification according to FSC standards (or equivalent) in primary for the WWF Forest Programme ecoregion by 2005.



Activity results expected:

General result:

Shortening areas of valuable and rare types of forests is stopped; biodiversity in both exploited and virgin forests preserved through realization of Sustainable Forest Management



Basic obstacles:

Federal policy – Too few powerful partner organizations, we have to do ourselves almost everything.

Prior regions – Quite low capacity, a necessity to waste much time to raise it on suitable level

People – Extremely little number of people, capable to solve our tasks and work on the set policy level, in forest sphere.

Certification – Only a certification doesn't solve all the ecological problems, it pulls a number of other difficulties to cope with (environmental policy, investments, markets etc.).

System base of problems in forest sector – ecology is tightly bounded with economics, society, and requires system approach for their solution.



WWF priorities to reply on threats to forests

1. Forest trade - logging

Selective cutting of valuable, rare and nonfragmented frontier forest massifs

Harvesting in forests of high nature value **HNVF** (especially protected areas, reserves, closed woods). **Illegal logging** type of forest.

Other “bad” harvesting leading to decreasing of secondary forests quality and to losing of their biodiversity.

2. Catastrophic forest fires/pests

Fires leading to degradation of frontier, valuable or rare forests, rare species, as well as to hard social consequences

Fires in secondary forests causing remarkable emission of CO₂, desertification

3. Changes in climate and hydrologic systems

Changes in forest Ecosystems due to climate ones

Priority



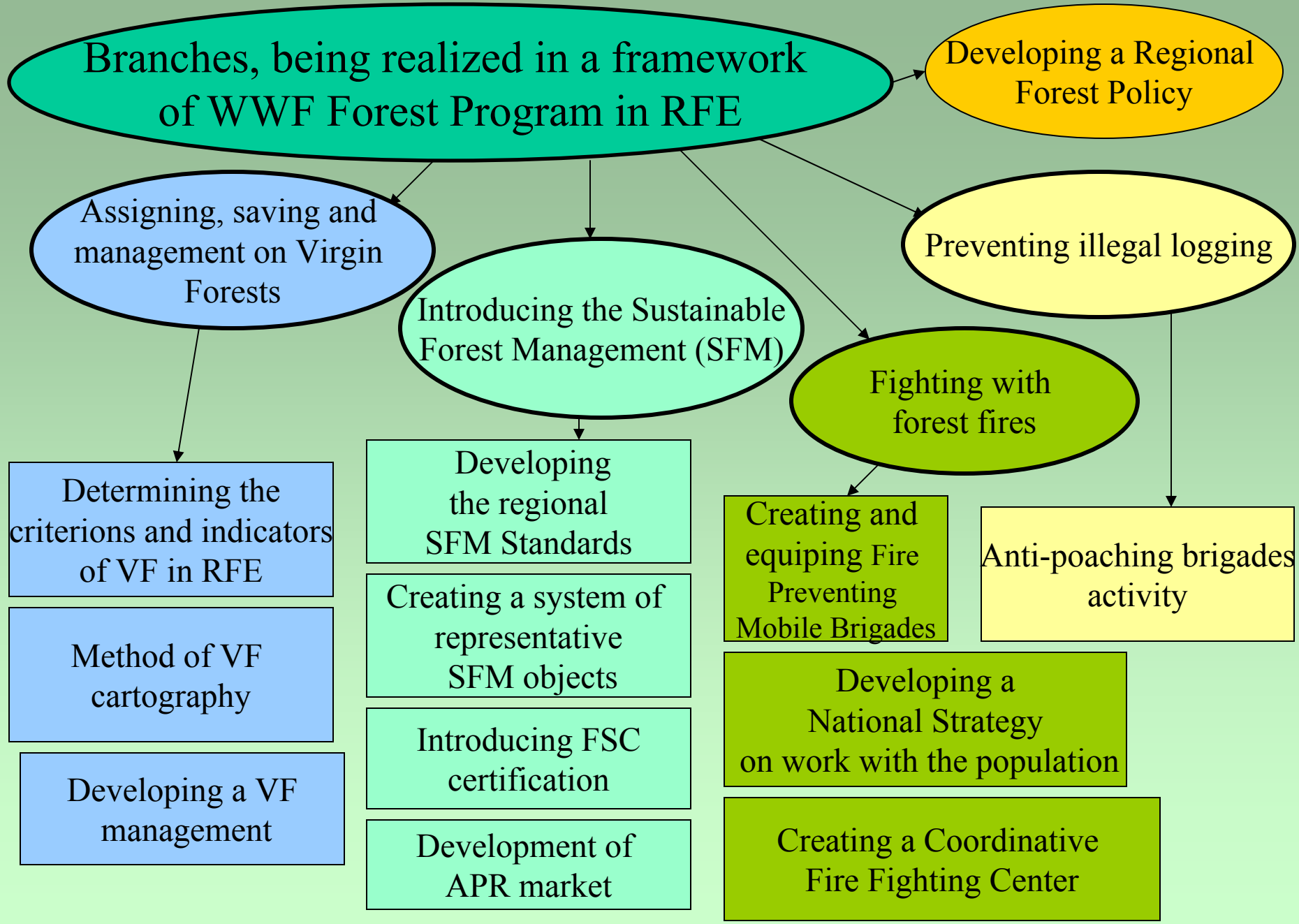
highest



high



middle





Virgin Forests is the site in WWF Forest Program and the direction to act

☞ Saving the virgin forests (as the Econet cores) is the general priority of Forest Programme

- The higher and more unique virgin forests biodiversity is, the higher their value for us (particularly large, nonfragmented massifs more than 50.000 ha)

1. **Program on awareness of the problem of virgin forests:** for professionals and society
2. **«Manifestation» of virgin forests:** through universally recognized determination of VF, creating the criterions and indicators system, inventorying, cartography and evaluation
3. **Creating the VF management system:** legal statute, normative papers, officials skill upgrade, etc.
4. **It is necessary to offer the economic alternatives system to use VF on all the levels:** for instance deep processing, intensification of forestry and forest exploitation, certification, investments to SFM (Sustainable Forest Management), etc.

- We developed the **Saving VF WWF Program in transient period and for future** (till VFs are adopted in the national forest management system) and it is being introduced through the forest intervention of ecoregional project in Far East.

- Primary activities on saving inside the ecological (WWF) framework are the threats to virgin forests.



What is done by FEB WWF to save virgin forests in the region?

- **Criteria and indicators to assign virgin forests in FE Ecoregion are developed.**
- **Method of FE Ecoregion virgin forests cartography is developed.**
- **Brochure is published.**

Nearest plans:

Development of FE Ecoregion virgin forests management system.



Landscape planning of forest management

Absence of landscape approach is the **general problem** (from ecological point of view) **of forest management in Russia**

ISSUES

1. Forest, as a management object, is torn from landscape.
2. Forest management doesn't correspond to natural structure and dynamics of territory.
3. Reducing of species and ecosystem biodiversity in used forests.

GOALS OF LANDSCAPE APPROACH

1. Sustainable management on forest areas based on properties of the landscape structure and dynamics.
2. Achieving the many-sided usage of forest resources taking in account interests of forest affairs participants.
3. Keeping up the forest forming functions and preserving the biodiversity in forest landscapes.
4. Developed forest management monitoring system.

. WAYS TO SOLVE

- Developing the norms of forestry operations taking in account territory landscape structure.
- Passing to the forest management based on units of territory landscape subdivision.



Landscape-Environmental planning in RFE region

Achieved:

- Method of landscape-environmental planning for FE region is developed and published.
- Approbation and introduction of developed method in a model territory (Chuguyevskiy forestry).

Nearest plans:

- Consultations and providing with methodical assistance on implementing the landscape planning in FE region.



SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT

**Strategic intervention on forest biom
(WWF/IUCN strategy)**

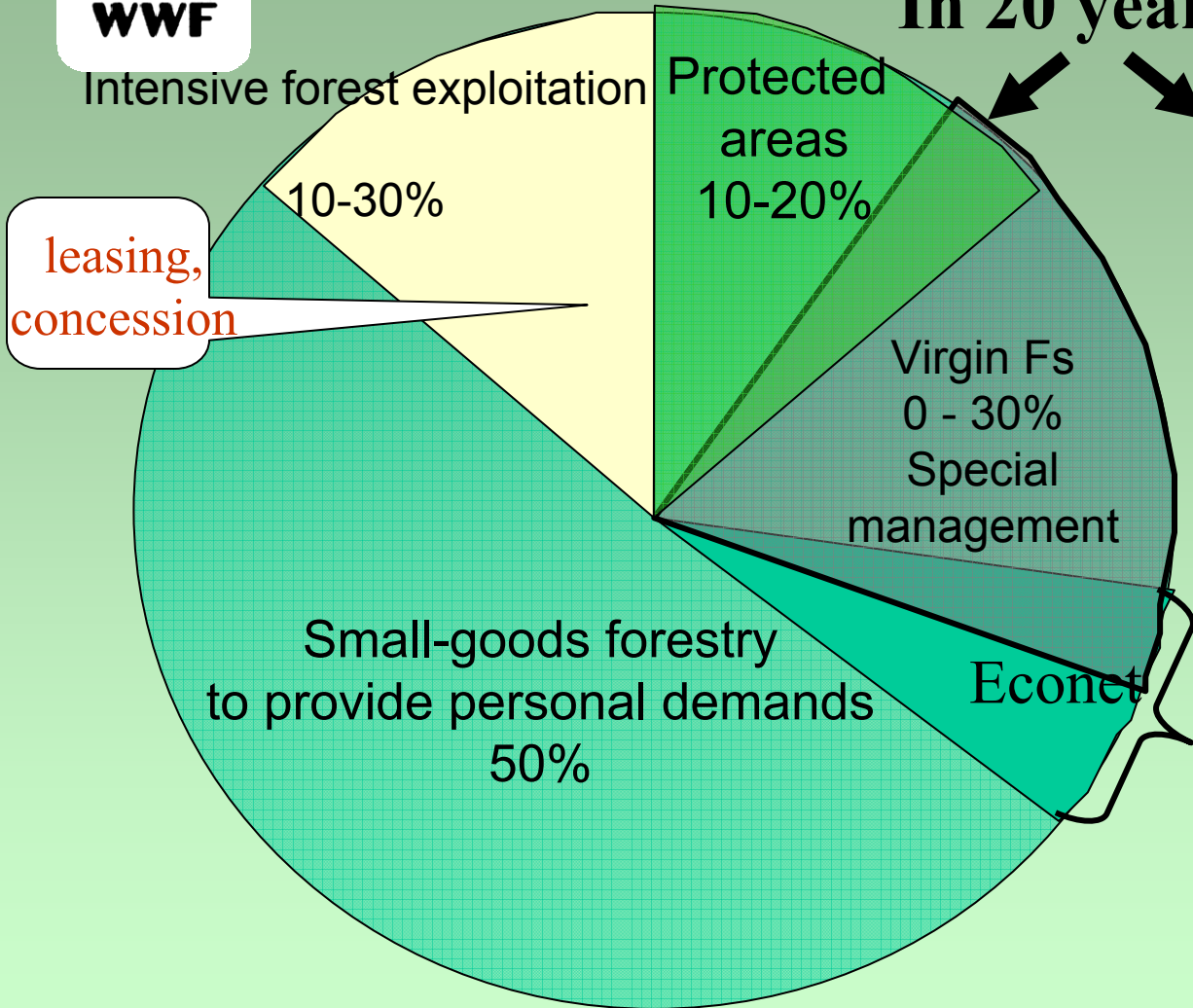
- 1. Setting a net of environmentally representative protected (natural) areas**
- 2. Environmentally based, socially profitable, economically livable forest management out of protected area borders**

**Sustainable forest management (as a special term) =
landscape based planning(LP) + correct forest exploitation +
independent certification**



Sustainable Forest management and forests saving WWF ideology

In 20 years



1. Formed environmental frames (**Econets**) in prior ecoregions
2. Dividing a territory on **intensive**(commercial) and **small-goods** forest using.
3. **BD** in intensively exploited forests is being kept by the system of landscape planning and certification.
4. Forest supports some communities in different forest areas through wood processing and usage of other forest production.

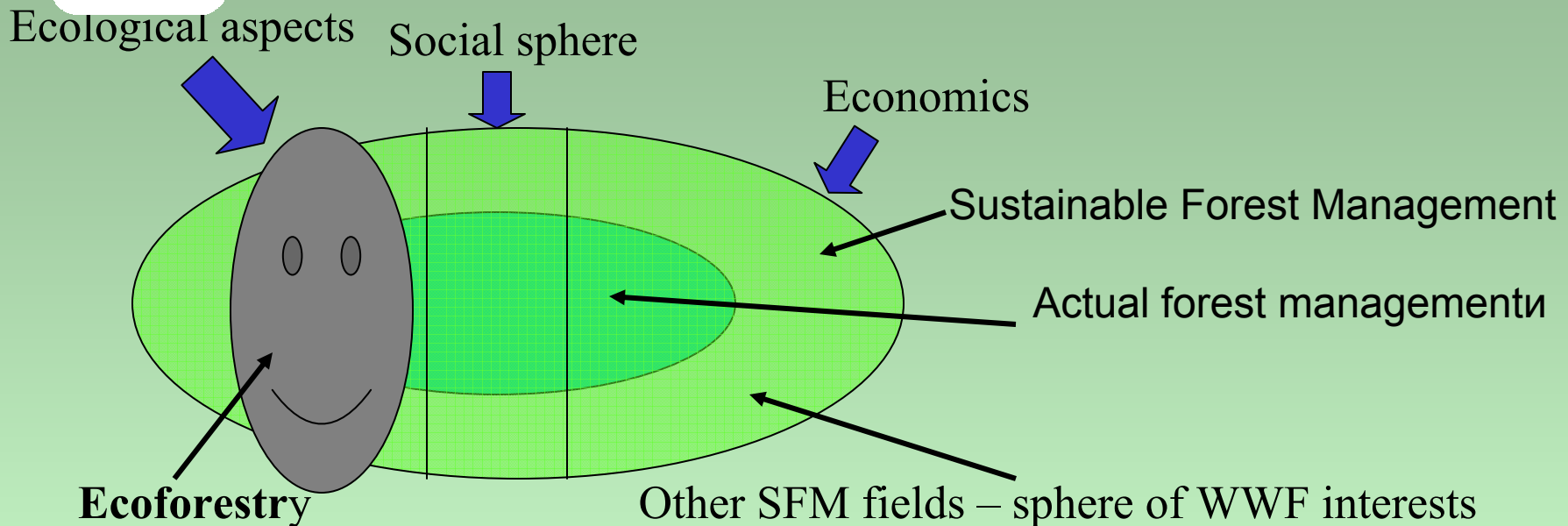
It is necessary to work out mechanisms of forest exploitation territory dividing!



WWF targets are to implement SFM

ECOFORESTRY –ecological aspects of SFM.

This is a sphere of WWF practice

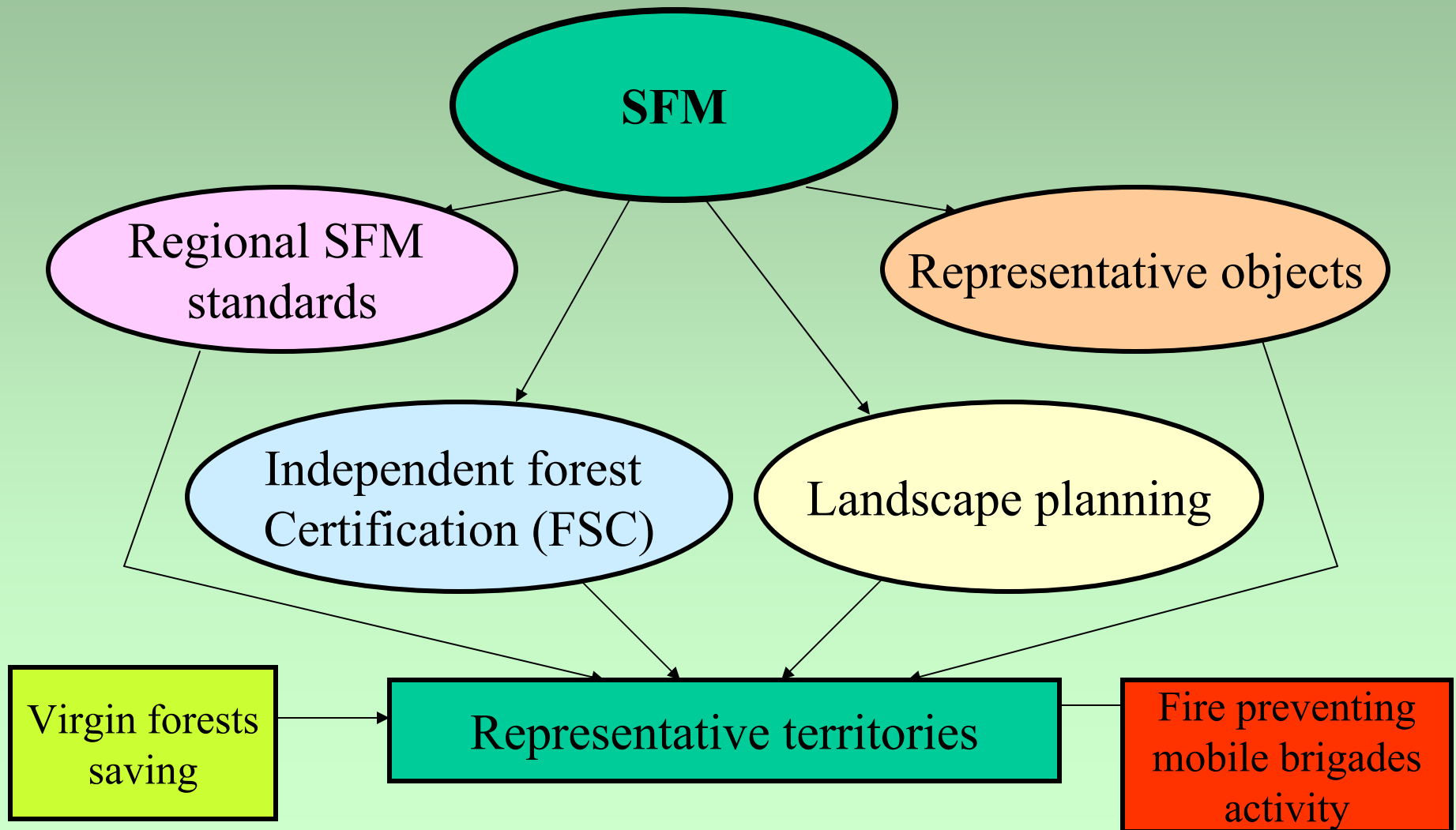


Organizing WWF tasks

- 1. To play leading role in forming the ideology and SFM concepts in Russia*
- 2. To take leading positions in social support of SFM introduction*
- 3. To promote introduction and implementation SFM in RPO WWF prior regions*



Ways to implement sustainable forest management





What is done to introduce SFM in FE Ecoregion?

- Regional “SFM Standards” are developed and agreed
- System of representative SFM objects is established.
- Method of landscape planning for FE Ecoregion is developed and published.
- Regional Center on Forest Certification is founded.
- 2 environmentally sustainable companies are in the process of preparing to certification.
- SFM principles are being approbated on a representative territory.



Model (representative) territories

Because all the SFM principles are being approved and implemented on model (representative) territories. Chuguyevskiy forestry (Primorsky region) is chosen as one of them.

Choice criteria:

1. It is typical mountainous taiga area with high level of biodiversity (BD).
2. Plots of nonfragmented virgin forests remained.
3. Tiger habitat range.
4. Many years positive experience of favorable forest dynamics forests management.
5. Economically profitable forest exploitation.
6. Direction and specialist got education at leading forest institutions in Russia and abroad
7. It has unique in the region well-grounded system of especially protected forests, agreed with complex forest/nature usage plan for Chuguyevskiy district and Primorsky region



FEB WWF activity on implementing SFM on the model territory (Chuguyevskiy forestry)

Achieved:

- The forestry got a statute of experimental one
- Fire preventing mobile brigades are based there
- Landscape-environmental planning is being introducing
- Network of representative objects is created and the program, training SFM on them, is developed
- Forest fund plots for preparing to certification are arranged
- The forestry entered into Association of Environmentally Responsible Russian Forest Companies (WWF project)
- Direction and specialists got education at leading forest institutions in Russia and abroad

Nearest plans:

- To conduct preliminary assessment of sites chosen for certification with the help of invited FSC-accredited auditor.



System of Demonstration Plots for SFM

Achieved:

- System of demonstration plots (DP) is established in Khabarovskiy (Hehzirskiy forestry, Gasinskiy model forest,) and Primorsky (Chuguyevskiy forestry) regions.
- System training SFM on RO is developed and implemented. 4 forest logging companies went through training according to the system of RO (including “Rimbunan-Hidjau”, “Terneyles”, Cuguyevskiy forestry)

Nearest plans:

- Spreading the experience of RO to other territories FE Ecoregion (Amurskaya and Yevreiskaya regions)
- Publishing an educative text-book on SFM training in ROs



Promotion of FSC certification in RFE

Achieved:

- Regional Center on forest certification is established in Khabarovsk
- Center began to provide companies with consulting service on preparing to certification with contractual terms.
- “Terneyles” company is preparing to certification (audit of forest exploitation).
- Club of environmentally responsible forest FE companies is open.
- Additional criterions (from invented) are introduced into activity of License Commission on forest exploitation in Khabarovsky region.
- Trade in the APR market of certified products is started, relations with potential consumers are set.

Nearest plans:

- Conducting preliminary assessment of two forest felling companies by invited FSC accredited auditor.
- Organizing the sale of first lot of certified timber.



Regional SFM and FSC Certification Standards

Achieved:

- Approved in common for Khabarovsky region.
- Went through approbation in Primorsky region («Terneyles»).
- Agreed after public audition in Amurskaya and Yevreiskaya regions.

Nearest plans:

- Ratifying the SFM standards as regional ones and presenting them in FSC for confirmation.



WWF RFE activity on preventing illegal logging in FE Ecoregion



Activity of anti-poaching brigades, supported by WWF, in FE region

Achieved:

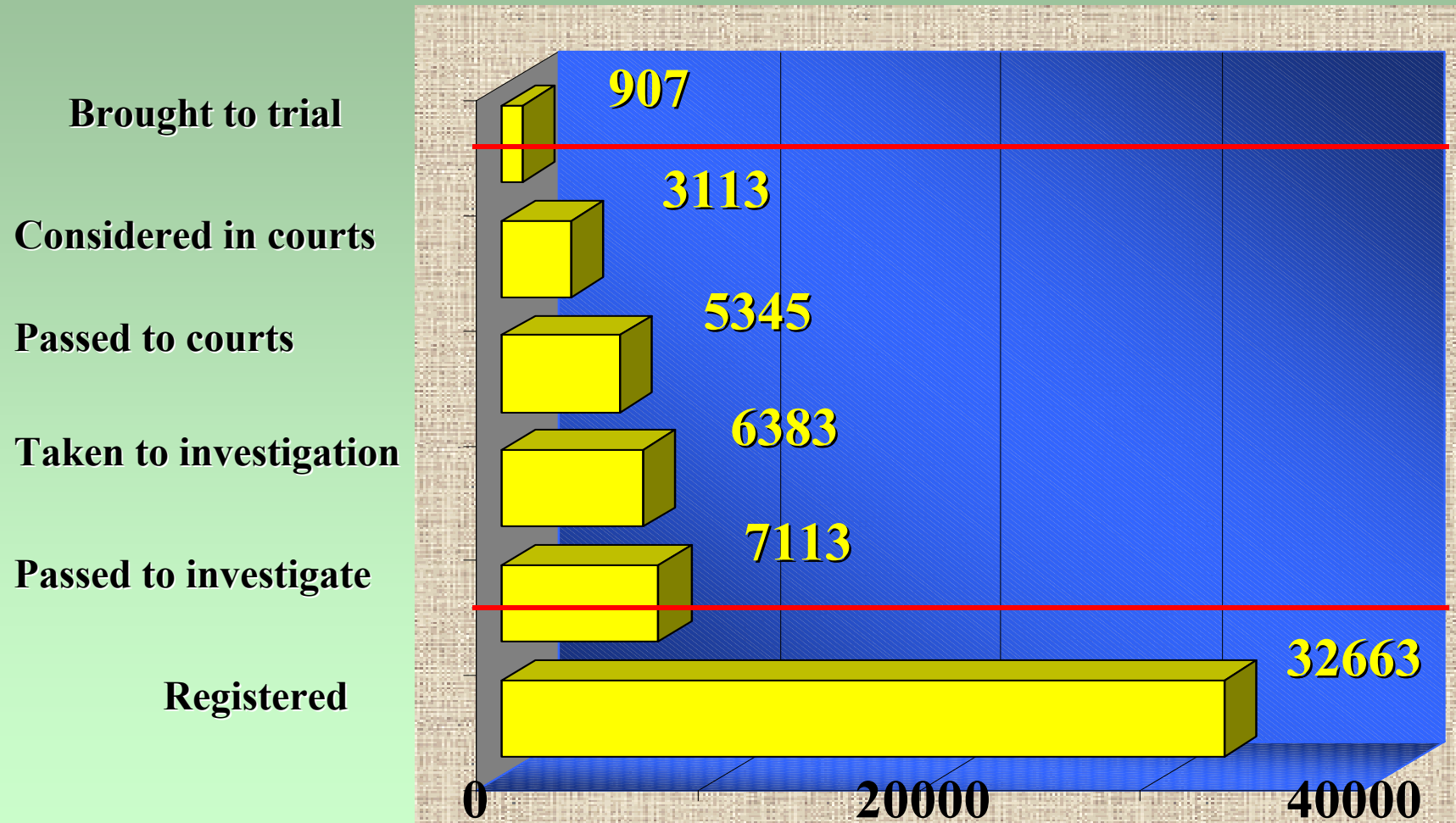
- Activity of antipoaching brigades “Cedar” and “Sova” have been supported during 3 years in Primorsky and Khabarovsky regions.
- Air forest guard is involved to raise efficiency of raids conducted.
- New technologies are introduced (using notebook to check up correctness of signed wood tickets).
- Interaction with special agencies (police, FIB, Custom) is worked through.
- Analysis of their many years activity on preventing illegal felling as well analysis of illegally logged wood sale ways in RFE.

Nearest plans:

- Spreading the positive experience of the brigades and copying it in other units of FE Ecoregion (Amurskaya and Yevreiskaya region).
- Training the brigades to improve their forest law knowledge.

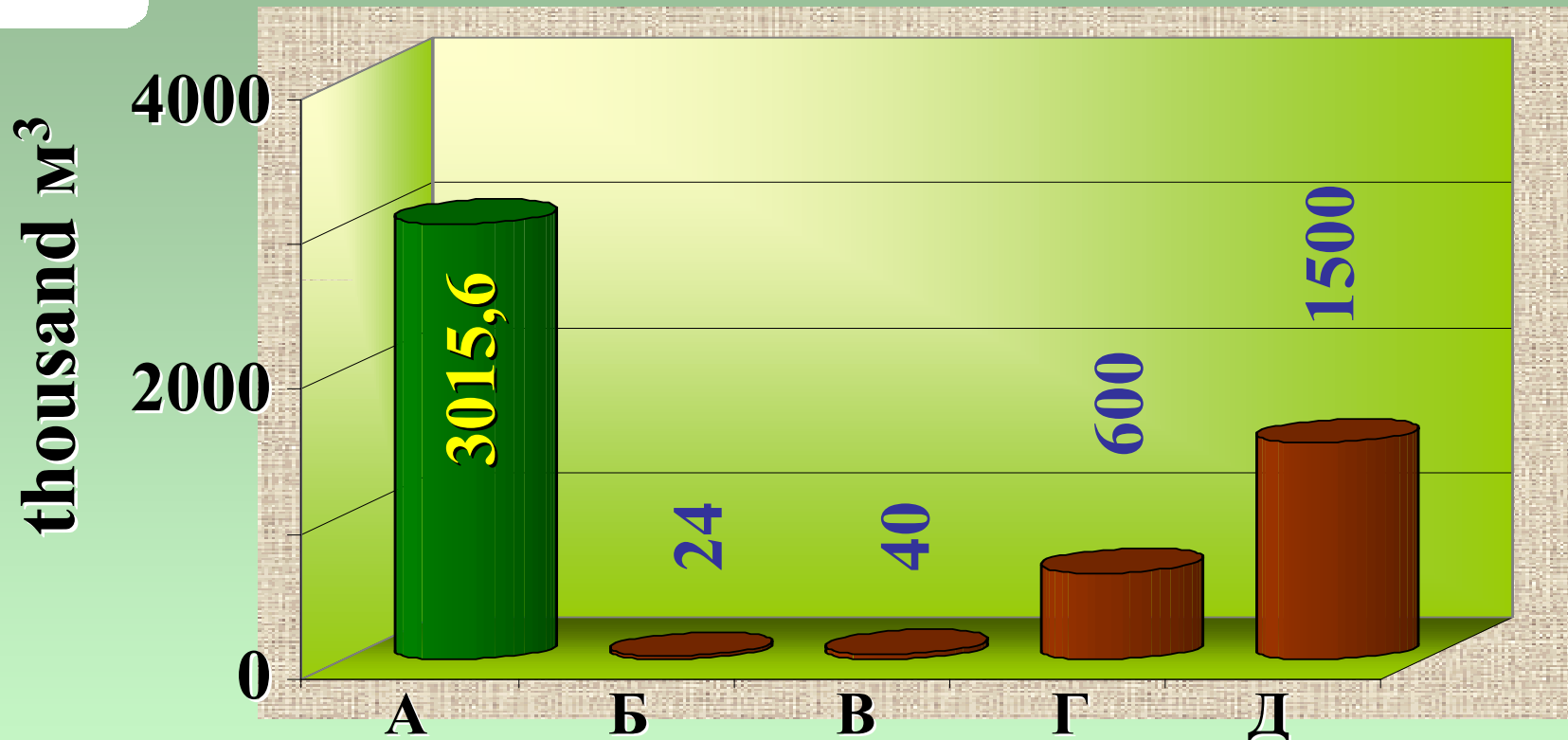


Number of forestry violations and their observation in total over Russia in 1999





Official and estimative data on volumes of legally and illegally logged woods in Primorye in 1999



- A** – Total logging volume (main and intermediate logging in whole);
- B** – Volume of illegally logged wood according to regional administration’s data;
- C** – Volume of wood taken from poachers according to Reg. Police data (during 9 months);
- D** – Volume of illegally logged wood according to “Greenpeace” data;
- E** – Volume of illegally logged wood according to WWF – TRAFFIC Eur.-Rus. Data.



Project on fighting with forest fires



The Project was triggered as a reply on catastrophic fires in Khabarovsk region in 1998. Only in one that region more than 2.5 mill. ha of forest burned, 30% of forest raw material bases suffered from it. Fires appeared to be a global ecological disaster, throwing into the atmosphere about 70 mill. Ts. of carbon.

Brought damage was estimated as several bill. dollars, and lost reserve of commercial wood was equal to volume of wood extraction from whole forestry in the region for 10 years.



Project components

Creating and completing of
mobile brigades

Furnishing with mobile
radio communication



Development and promoting of
National Strategy and Logo

Establishment of Center on
fire preventing coordination



WWF activity on fighting with forest fires in RFE

Achieved:

- 7 fire preventing mobile brigades (FPMB) are created and provided with technics and radio equipment (4 in Khabarovsky region and 3 in Primorsky region).
- Number of spring forest fires in Khabarovsky region decreased 30% as much as a result of fire brigades activity.
- National Strategy of work with the population to prevent forest fires is developed.
- The Symbol and Logo of national fire preventing campaign are invented.
- The Center of interagency fire coordination is established.
- Conducting the workshop on preparing FPMBs to fire season

Nearest plans:

- Providing the Coordination Center with necessary equipment.



Furnishing a mobile radio connection

430 mobile radio stations on the territory of Khabarovsk region provide early notification of detected forest fires, connection and coordination between fire brigades during the fires are putting out





General results of WWF Forest Programme in RFE (mid of 2001)

RPO FEB WWF forest program approved in Russia and abroad as well – RFE region is included in number of the priorities in European Forest Programme (April 2001, Switzerland)

1. Quick development of certification

- More than 0.5 mill. ha of forests (“Terneyles”) are in the process of FSC certification
- FSC Standards for RFE are completed and agreed in units of RFE region and they are in passing to FSC
- Consulting center on certification, which took part in nature audit (pre-assessment) with Terneyles FSC system in 2000-2001, is founded and working now

2. Influence of WWF on timber industry increased sharply

- Club of Environmentally Responsible Forest Companies is opened
- Workshop of Association of ERFC was conducted in RFE first time (Khabarovsk, June 2001)
- Certification is developing without affection from market (Terneyles)
- New regions of RFE support FSC certification very actively (Amurskaya, Yevreiskaya regions)
- RFE forest companies study SFM and FSC certification on representative objects actively and voluntarily



General results of WWF Forest Programme in RFE (in the mid of 2001)

- **3. Anti-poaching activity**
- Anti-poaching brigades “Cedar” and “Sova” passed under the control of FE Natural Resources Ministry
Analysis of their 7-years activity is done.
Press-conference on illegal logging conducted by FEB WWF in Vladivostok on the 2nd of April raised an indignation over the World
- **4. We are getting ready to save Virgin Forests**
- Criteria and method of VF cartography in RFE are developed and published with separate brochure.
- Map of Russian Virgin Forests including Far East is being produced (by Scanex)
-



General results of WWF Forest Programme in RFE (mid of 2001)

5. We prevent forests from fires

7 fire preventing mobile brigades (4 – in Khabarovsky, 3 – in Primorsky regions) are completed and provided with special devices and radio communications (430 radio stations).

General result from their activity and usage of radio communication in 2000: number of fires in Khabarovsky region dropped 30% as much (due to early detection and fast suppression)

Interagency Coordination Fire Center is established
First training of FPMB on preparation for fire season is conducted



I want to express my
acknowledgements to
everyone who took part in
carrying on the WWF Forest
Program in Far East