

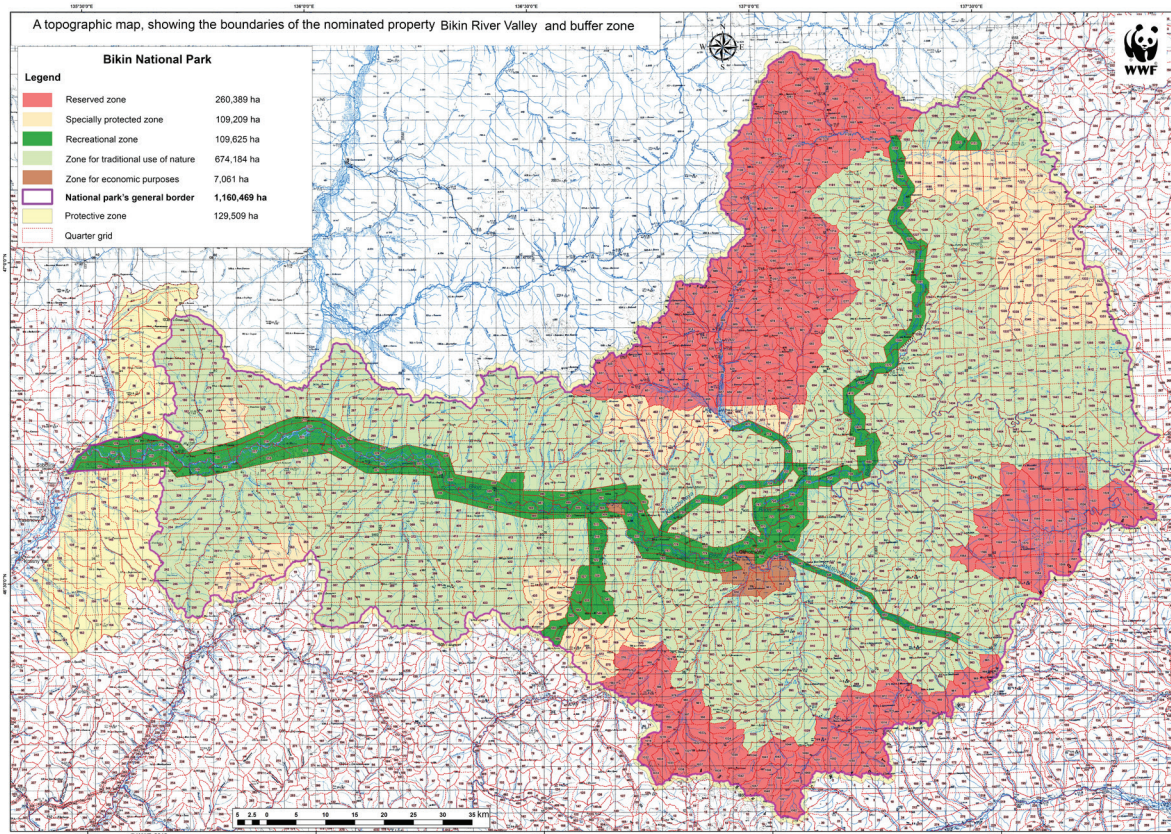
Executive Summary

State Party	Russian Federation
State, Province or Region	Primorsky Kray, Pozharsky District
Name of Property	Bikin River Valley (extension of the Central Sikhote-Alin World Heritage property (766))
Geographical coordinates to the nearest second	<p>Nominated as an extension of the Central Sikhote-Alin property, the territory occupies the basin of the Bikin River's upper and middle reaches and is limited by the following geographical coordinates:</p> <p>The northernmost point is 47° 17' 30" N, 137° 05' 45" E The southernmost point is 46° 05' 35" N, 137° 03' 13" E The westernmost point is 46° 40' 35" N, 135° 27' 35" E The easternmost point is 46° 41' 10" N, 137° 51' 10" E Coordinates of the Central Point: 46° 41' 00" N, 136° 39' 40" E</p>
Textual description of the boundary(ies) of the nominated property	<p>The nominated territory's boundaries coincide with the boundaries of the Bikin National Park. They mainly pass along the natural divides: along the watershed between the Bikin and Khor Rivers, between the Bikin and Bolshaya Ussurka Rivers, and along the main watershed of the Sikhote-Alin range. The territory occupies practically the whole eastern part of Pozharsky Municipal District of Primorsky Kray (51% of the district's territory), is contiguous with Terneysky and Krasnoarmeysky Districts of Primorye and the District named after Lazo of Khabarovsk Kray.</p> <p><u>The northern boundary.</u> It goes from the intersection point of the left eastern watershed between the Takhalo River basin with watershed between the Bikin and Khor Rivers to the point of convergence of the Khor-Bikin-Edinka river watersheds. The entire northern boundary coincides with the administrative boundary between Primorsky and Khabarovsk Krays.</p> <p><u>The eastern boundary.</u> It goes from the point of convergence of the Khor-Bikin-Edinka river watersheds, southward in general, then goes along the main watershed of the Sikhote-Alin range. The eastern boundary coincides with the administrative border between Pozharsky and Terneysky Districts of Primorsky Kray.</p> <p><u>The southern boundary.</u> It goes along the main watershed of the Sikhote-Alin range to the point of convergence of the main watershed of the Sikhote-Alin with watershed between the basins of the Bikin and Bolshaya Ussurka (Iman) Rivers, then along the same watershed to height 847 (Mount Vodorazdel). The southern boundary coincides with the administrative border between Pozharsky and Krasnoarmeysky Districts of Primorsky Kray.</p>

The western boundary. The southern part of the western boundary goes from height 847 (Mount Vodorzdel) northward along the watershed between the Sputnitsa and Klenovka Rivers to height 786 (Mount Buntar). Then it goes westwards along the boundary of quarters 117, 116 and 108 of the Verkhne-Perevalnenskoye forestry – Sobolinoye plot forestry, including them, to the Bikin riverbed. Then it goes northward and eastward along the boundary of quarters 107, 110, 109, 112, 168, 186 of the Verkhne-Perevalnenskoye forestry – Sobolinoye plot forestry, including them, to the watershed of the Amba, Bikin, and Malaya Govorunya Rivers. Then it goes northward along the watershed between the basins of the Takhalo and Amba Rivers, via heights 937 (Mount Amba), 543 (Mount Godovshchina), 1038 (Mount Snezhnaya) to the Khor-Bikin watershed (to the border with Khabarovskiy Kray), including quarters 184, 182, 180, 178, 176, 173, 170, 168, 166, 165 of Verkhne-Perevalnenskoye forestry – Sobolinoye plot forestry.

A4 (or «letter») size map of the nominated property, showing boundaries and buffer zone (if present)

A topographic map, showing the boundaries of the nominated property Bikin River Valley and buffer zone. The scale is 1:250 000 (*rolled and to be found separately from the text*).



Criteria under which property is nominated (itemize criteria)

(x)

Draft Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

a) Brief synthesis

The proposed nominee, Bikin National Park, about 1.2 million ha in area, occupies the middle and upper parts of the drainage basin of the Bikin River (the basin of the Sea of Okhotsk). The National Park is located in the south of the Russian Far East, in Primorsky Krai, in the central part of the Sikhote-Alin mountain range, on its western macroslope.

The territory covers the heights from 200 to 1900 m above sea level, with including the full spectrum of the valley, mountain taiga, and bald mountain complexes of the region. More than 95 % of it is covered with forest, which has never been industrially felled here, the resident population numbers only 1 th. people (mainly in the property's buffer zone), who have always engaged in hunting, fishing, picking wild plants, pine nuts, and other forest gifts.

The territory of the Middle and Upper Bikin has unique landscape and biogeographical characteristics. Being a genuine model of Russian Far East nature, it is one of the largest, the most integral and well-preserved mixed forest tracts in the whole Northern Hemisphere. A variation of East-Asian mixed forests, the local Ussuriyskaya taiga includes practically undisturbed broadleaf and pine-broadleaf plantings that are notable for the wealth of their floristic composition, holocoenotic variety, abundance of relict and endemic, rare and vanishing species, arboreal and shrubby stocks.

In the Bikin Valley, the Ussuriyskaya taiga shelters a number of vanishing and rare plant and animal species, the Amur tiger being the main one (endangered in the IUCN Red List), the local population of which consists of about 40 animals.

This corner of nature has been conserved by not only natural reasons (the mountainous relief, difficult access, compactness) as well as the remoteness of this tract from the civilization, but also by virtue of the federal protected natural territory status (national park), which will help to preserve the unique forests and their living inhabitants.

b) Justification for Criteria

The unique natural characteristics of the Middle and Upper Bikin evidence its full compliance with criterion (x), and this manifests itself in the following two aspects:

- Conservation of the large, compact and undisturbed broadleaf and pine-broadleaf Far-Eastern forest tract ("Ussuriyskaya taiga")

The pine-broadleaf complex in the upstream and especially middle stretch of the River Bikin is in fact the sole East-Asian (consequently, the world's one) such a large, well-conserved, and integral tract of Ussuriyskaya taiga, which was very widespread in this geographical region with monsoon climate and mountainous relief, between the River Ussuri and the coast of the Sea of Japan, in the old days.

Compactly represented in the Bikin's basin, the broadleaf and pine-broadleaf forests (with a total area exceeding 800 th. ha) are actually full analogs of Eurasia's preglacial broadleaf forests, but such ecosystems have almost completely transformed or disappeared entirely on the rest of the territory. It is the sole large basin where trees have never been felled, and that is why it is only this site that can give the idea about how Ussuriyskaya taiga had looked like till the mid 19th century.

As a variety of East-Asian broadleaf and mixed forests, Ussuriyskaya taiga may be well recognized as a leader by the biodiversity degree; these tracts are among the richest and the most original forest types by the species composition in the whole Northern Hemisphere.

The synthetic character of the flora and fauna of the territory under research is of a great importance: taiga fauna along with Okhotsk-Kamchatka flora representatives, on the one hand, combine with southern, Manchurian species.

The forests in the Bikin basin are inhabited by the autochthons of the Bikin River basin – the Bikin group of the Udege and Nanai people. Life activities of these peoples are impossible without preserving the taiga.

- Conservancy of the population of the Amur tiger inscribed on the IUCN Red List as an endangered subspecies

Along with the Sikhote-Alinsky Reserve already inscribed on the UNESCO List, the Bikin River Valley is a key dwelling place of the Amur tiger (*Panthera tigris altaica*). It is here that by the mid last century one of the last breeding grounds of the Amur tiger had been conserved, thanks to which this unique cat managed to renew its habitation area in Russia. By now in the Bikin River Valley about 40 tigers have been recorded, which make up approximately 10 % of the total population.

The Amur tiger population can be characterized as quite problem-free at the Bikin. The tiger is especially attached to the broadleaf and pine-broadleaf tracts in the middle part of the Bikin River, but the animal is more and more often noted near its upstream stretch, too.

Along with other Russian reserves of this region, the Bikin National Park will become an essential element of the united 'tigers' econet' formed now in the south of Russia's Far East.

Moreover, the nominated territory is inhabited by some other rare and vanishing animal and plant species, which also meets criterion (x). For example, the IUCN Red List includes 2 species of vascular plants and 5 vertebrate animal species (*Panthera tigris altaica*, *Grus monachus*, *Mergus squamatus*, *Ketupa blakistoni*, and *Haliaeetus albicilla*).

c) Statement of Integrity

The Bikin River's basin, which is located in the central part of the Sikhote-Alin mountain chain, is a united, integral and composite natural macrocomplex, the main components of which are closely connected by their common origin, history and evolutionary dynamics, as well as the peculiarities of the modern ecologic processes that take place here.

The protected territory has a shape of a huge, oval, and almost fully closed natural 'cup' about 100 150 km across, slightly open only in the west, towards the lower reaches of the Bikin River. The boundaries of the national park have been drawn along the natural ones – the lofty watershed ranges up to 1500 2000 m high. This makes the protected mountain taiga landscape that covers the integral drainage basin highly resistant to external influences.

The National Park comprises the whole characteristic spectrum of mountain taiga landscapes of the Central Sikhote-Alin: floodplain spots and low mountains covered with broadleaf and pine-broadleaf forests (200–

600 m), medium mountain landscapes with their dark coniferous forests, larch forests, birch crooked forests and the dwarf Siberian pine (600–1600 m), as well as a zone of bald mountains with scattered stones and mountain tundras that occupy the lofty spots (more than 1600 m high).

The Bikin National Park is located on the western slopes of the Sikhote-Alin, which successfully supplements the main location of the Sikhote-Alinsky Reserve on the opposite, eastern slopes.

d) Requirements for Protection and Management

The Bikin National Park is a federal-level protected natural territory, its regime satisfies the set goals optimally. In conformity to the international classification (IUCN), Russian national parks belong to category II. It is this status enables a reliable conservation of both the separate sights and vast spots of the virgin or tame nature.

Conservation of the valuable forest planting is a priority of the adopted functional zonal system of this park; that is why 1/3 of its total territory has been defined as the 'reserved zone' and 'zone of special protection'.

A second mission consists in preserving the way of life of the small-numbered Northern peoples – Udege and Nanai – who live here. That is why benign economic activities to support the local people are permitted on 2/3 of the park's total territory.

Practically the whole territory is federally owned. It is managed by a specially created Directorate, and representatives of the aborigines are actively attracted to the management.

Preservation of the Bikin River's drainage basin is additionally guaranteed by the national park's protective zone created on its western outskirts and planned round the protected natural territory mountains.

At present, there are no strong and direct threats to the natural complexes of the Bikin River Valley; however, logging districts have extended from the west close to the boundaries of the protected natural territory. This circumstance should be taken into account first of all when planning the national park's activities in future.

Name and contact information of official local institution/agency

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