

The first males of 2008 generation matured in Aleksin sturgeon propagation facility (Tula Province) in 2015 and since that time there has been no problems with getting sperm from them (some of it was preserved by cryo-conservation in the All-Russian Research Institute of Fresh Water Fisheries (VNIIPRKH). The first females of the same generation matured in Aleksin in 2016. We (the head of Aleksin facility Vyacheslav Shebanin and me) tried to propagate them (and other matured females later) since that time but had not succeeded: eggs always stopped developing at gastrula-neurula stages. But in 2022 we tried to use different methods of propagation (e.g. reverse osmosis water, stable temperature of 13oC, tannin ect.) and we have got the positive result of more than 150 offspring despite the fact that not everything was going well and that we cannot realise precisely which factor was determinative. We have to check everything next Spring. Another part of 2008 generation of sakhalin sturgeon was located not so far from Tumnin River - the spawning river of wild sakhalin sturgeons - at Anyuy state sturgeon propagation facility in the Far East (about 300 km from Tumnin River). The fish there, is not growing in such an intensive way as in Aleksin due to different conditions, but this Spring they had two mature females and Viktor Khrisanfov who is working in the Fishery Department in Moscow (and who initiated the Tumnin expedition in 2008 and propagated the wild fish, parents of all 2008 generation and grandparents of this 2022 generation in Aleksin) went to Anyuy facility, tried to propagate them but failed: the eggs stopped developing at the same gastrula-neurula stages (nobody can say why). The detailed info with a kind of hypothesis is on the special webpage of my website. Only Russian version is available so far but Google translates it into English rather well to be generally understandable: <http://life-on-earth.ru/sokhranenie-bioraznoobraziya/sakhalinskij-osetr-podvizhki-pri-razvedenii-v-akvakulture-v-2022-g-g-aleksin-tulskaya-obl>

There are also some news about Amu Darya shovel-noses. I went to Uzbekistan and tried to re-launch the project there in cooperation with the newly established Khorezm National Wildlife Park. It was established right in the area where both species of shovel-noses live. They are ready to support the project with premises, transport, people.

In Tashkent I met a representative of GEF UNDP. They are generally interested in funding the shovel-nose conservation project. And I found a new participant - Matthew Spencer - a geographer and a sturgeon enthusiast from the UK. We met in Uzbekistan and made certain inquiries about Syr Darya shovel-nose in the upper stream of Syr Darya river (unfortunately we have not succeeded so far.