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Moscow

1,000,000 Cedars To Be Planted in the Russian Far East in the Name of Citibank's 1,000,000 Clients

Citibank and WWF announce a new joint project on restoration of unique pine-broadleaved forests in the South-West of the Primorye Region.



In the photo left to right:
Amit Sah, Consumer Banking Head
Zdenek Turek, President ZAO Citibank, Head of Citi in Russia & CIS
Viktor Melnikov, CBR's Deputy CEO
Elena Kulikova, Forest Program Director, WWF-Russia

ZAO Citibank announced the launch of a joint project with World Wildlife Fund (WWF) on restoration of pine-broadleaved forests in the South-West of the Primorye Region (Russian Far East). In 2010, the number of the bank's clients has exceeded 1,000,000 Russians. To celebrate this milestone, 1,000,000 Korean pine and needle fir seedlings will be purchased in November. In the spring of 2011, WWF volunteers will plant the trees in Russia's Far East and will organize for one-year special care of the newly planted cedars.

"We are extremely proud of our 1 million clients' milestone and are very thankful to our customers for their trust and loyalty, says Zdenek Turek, President ZAO Citibank, Head of Citi in Russia & CIS. – It is a testimony to our commitment to Russia where we have been building our retail business organically since 2002. We believe that our project with WWF will be well received by both our clients and the broader population as this is a real contribution for the long-term benefit of Russia, the country where we all live and work."

Amit Sah, Consumer Banking Head, notes: "One million customers implies 38 bank transactions every minute as our clients make purchases at the shops, or make online money transfers, or pay for their communal services, or engage in other consumer activities. This is an impressive number for a bank as young as Citibank in Russia that we hope will grow in the years ahead as we will continue to strengthen our range of products and build on client excellence."

In 2010, Citibank's clients saved about \$12 mln through the bank's co-brand projects, cash back card, as well as discount programs with Citibank's over 1,000 partner merchants with more than 2,500 points of sales across Russia. In mid-2010, the bank started to offer [mobile bank services](#). Also, the [3D Secure](#) technology was launched that enabled the bank's clients to make online payments with their [debit cards](#). In June 2009, the bank opened a special loan mitigation program. Over 6,000 borrowers with the aggregate debt exceeding RUB 1bn have taken advantage of the opportunity to restructure their loans.

"Forests are part of Russia's national heritage, and cedar forests are vital. They belong to one of the world's 200 ecoregions that play a key role from the biodiversity perspective, says Evgeny Schwarz, Director for Nature Conservation Policy at WWF, co-Chairman of the Public Ecological Committee under the Russian Federal Forestry Agency. – Illegal logging and fires have become pandemic in Russia. All programs aimed at preserving of the unique forest resources are important and timely."

The Land of Tiger and Leopard has been earmarked for the Citibank-WWF cedar project. This is the main habitat for the tiger whose population in this country has only 500 specimens left, as well as the Far East Leopard who is also on the verge of extinction.

ZAO Citibank was one of the first banks with foreign capital that entered Russian market in 1993. Citibank has since grown to become one of the largest banks in the country. Citibank offers its corporate and individual clients a broad range of [products](#) and [services](#). At present, the Bank has over 3,000 employees; its distribution network includes over 350 [ATMs](#), [retail branches](#) across major cities in Russia, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine. For more information on Citibank in Russia, visit www.citibank.ru

Citi is the leading global financial services company that provides services to circa 200 million client accounts and does business in more than 140 countries. Through its two operating divisions: Citicorp and Citi Holdings, Citi provides consumers, corporations, governments and institutional clients with a broad range of financial products and services, including consumer banking and lending, corporate and investment banking, securities brokerage, and wealth management. For more information, visit www.citigroup.com or www.citi.com

World Wildlife Fund (WWF), one of the largest international independent nature preservation organizations unites about 5 million permanent supporters and operates in over **100 countries**. **WWF's mission is to stop degradation of the planet's environment to achieve harmony between human and nature.** WWF's strategic priorities are preserving biodiversity of the planet, securing sustainable use of renewable natural resources and advocacy of actions to reduce environmental pollution and wasteful use of nature.