



wetland in China as the "dining room".

Local residents see them as friends or even companions and they cannot bear to hurt them. The reserve provides public education for local residents to help them understand the importance of the wetland and its inhabitants, Wu said.

"Locals always say 'these animals do not have an easy life, traveling such a long way for a meal'. The fisherman just whacked the tiger with his oar to frighten it, but would not have hurt it much," he said.

Sanjiang works closely with the three Russian reserves on wild Siberian tigers, Amur leopards and other rare wild animals.

Siberian tigers, one of the world's rarest mammals, live in eastern Russia, northeast China, and northern parts of the Korean Peninsula. Fewer than 500 remain in the wild.

China puts its own number of wild Siberian tigers at between 18 and 22.

