

SUPPORTING PROTECTED AREAS FOR THE CONSERVATION OF ECOSYSTEM SERVICES - SPACES

CONTEXT

Mongolia's ecosystems and diverse landscapes provide habitats for a large number of plant and animal species. This biodiversity and the ecosystem services provide form the basis of Mongolia's economy, culture and development. To protect this basis, the government has established national and local protected areas on almost 30 percent of the country's area. However, the exploitation of natural resources and climate change are threatening the biodiversity and ecosystems of this extensive system of protected areas.

A large section of Mongolia's rural population lives in buffer zones surrounding protected areas. If these zones are damaged, rural livelihoods are also affected. The system of protected areas has so far been unable to fully prevent environmental damage because they are underfunded and because the authorities responsible for protected area management lack specialist and technical skills as well as human resources.

OBJECTIVE

The framework conditions for the long-term development of protected areas in Mongolia are improved.

APPROACH

➤ Policy consulting (National level)

The project advises the Ministry of Environment and Tourism on the legal framework for protected areas. In this way, it promotes the financial self-determination of the protected area administrations, allowing them to operate more independently and invest their own income into managing the protected areas.

➤ Cluster development (Western Mongolia - Cluster 2&4)

The project also improves coordination between actors within selected nature conservation areas. It advocates more coordinated action on the part of the government authorities involved and interest groups to better utilise the potential of all parties. A further objective is to preserve larger areas of natural landscape and be more effective in protecting the migration routes of endangered species.

➤ Livelihood improvement (Western Mongolia – Cluster 2&4)

Rural poverty is one of the reasons why the natural resources (pastures, forests, wild animals) in protected areas and buffer zones are overexploited. The rural population living in or between protected areas and the buffer zones is therefore the project's, target group. Alternatives to exploiting the protected areas are developed and implemented. As one of these alternatives, the project supports the development of small-scale tourism in the protected areas, based on the principles of sustainability. By improving the connectivity between local stakeholders in tourism and with the broader tourism sector on a national level, the project aims to increase awareness of the importance of creating networks in tourism.

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| Commissioned by | German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) |
| Co-financed by | European Union (Output 5) |
| Project region | Mongolia |
| Lead executing agency | Ministry of Environment and Tourism |
| Overall term | 2019- 2024 |
| Total budget | 10.830.000 EUR |

➤ Environmental Communication (National level)

The project develops an environmental communication strategy for the protected area system and implements selected elements of the strategy. Measures such as social media campaigns and entertaining educational projects are implemented to help visitors, local people and experts be better informed.

➤ Sustainable Forest Management (Selenge and Khentii Provinces)

The project promotes innovative landscape management and the transition from demand-oriented to environmentally friendly forest use. Sustainable forest management supports livelihoods and thus increases resilience against climate change.

With all these measures, the project creates the prerequisites for environmentally responsible protected area management in villages, regions and beyond, with the aim of conserving biodiversity and safeguarding livelihoods.



What have we achieved so far...

- Since its start, the project is guiding the revision process for the protected area law and its harmonization with other laws and regulations. A revised draft law has been finalised and will be submitted to the parliament in 2021.
- A mobile application for Mongolian biodiversity has been developed and is currently being expanded into a website as an information basis for the participation of citizens in biodiversity monitoring.
- Together with other development partners the project is working on the establishment of a National Conservation Trust Fund to increase the funds for environmental protection activities.
- More than 300 people in the western region have been trained in a variety of subjects ranging from moderation techniques, GIS and MIRADI - protected area management software for government staff - to dairy production.
- About 460 people took part in economic capacity building events in all project Soums, out of which more than 210 received an individual consultation on how to develop their business.
- 23 beneficiaries were trained in project proposal writing, received direct financial support and are now successfully running their own businesses.
- More than 200 people participated in tourism related trainings, covering topics like sustainable tourism, income generation from tourism, involving the community in tourism, hospitality services, networking, promotion, waste management, tour route development, and souvenir development and production.
- With financial support from the project for infrastructure and equipment, several protected areas were able to improve their management capacities.
- Environmental communication has been supported by the production of manuals, toolboxes, Code of Conducts and animated videos.
- The work on sustainable forest management was added to the project after two years. It builds on earlier projects but is still in the first stages of implementation.



Workshop on the revision of the Law on Protected Areas



Training on Beekeeping



A mobile application for Mongolian biodiversity



Manuals for Environmental Communication

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