

**Capacity building for Mongolian Ministry of Environment and Green Development
(MEGDT) in relation to
biodiversity and conservation in the southern Gobi Desert**

Contract No: C30074/EBSF-2012-08-107

**Report on Task 2:
Stakeholder identification and engagement**

June 2016

Introduction

A critical element of the Conservancy's approach is active engagement of key stakeholders, to ensure that there are opportunities for government, academia, and business. TNC has developed a stakeholder database that serves as its main tool for ensuring appropriate engagement with the greatest possible number of stakeholders.

We aimed to both continue engagement with and build upon the foundation of stakeholders, seeking EBRD's and the ministries' advice on additional personnel, and will on an on-going basis seek their advice and feedback as we conduct the assessment of the current and foreseeable future state of development in the south Gobi as we create the Mitigation Design Tool and perform the corridor analysis.

We conducted stakeholder workshops/meetings/training under this task by monthly and following are brief explanation of these activities with the purpose, participants numbers, and results. Detailed reports have been submitted to MEGDT and EBRD on schedule over the course of the project:

December, 2014

The project inception meeting was held in the Ministry of Environment and Green Development (MEGDT) offices in Ulaanbaatar for a full day on December 4, 2014. The goals of the inception meeting were to review the Scope of Work and revise it as necessary, to identify any other stakeholders beyond MEGDT (such as the Ministry of Transportation) in the Mongolian government, and to review the ideal qualifications for trainees for the GIS/connectivity, Mitigation Design Tool and Soil Assessment training courses.

Opening remarks from MEGDT and EBRD stressed the importance of the project's resulting in tangible outputs related to the government's capacity to implement its mitigation policy in the mining sector, and that this capacity be developed in a way to be self-sustaining within the ministry. Participants held detailed discussions on

each of the project components and revised the scope of work and timing of deliverables in a subsequent exchange of correspondence.

March, 2015

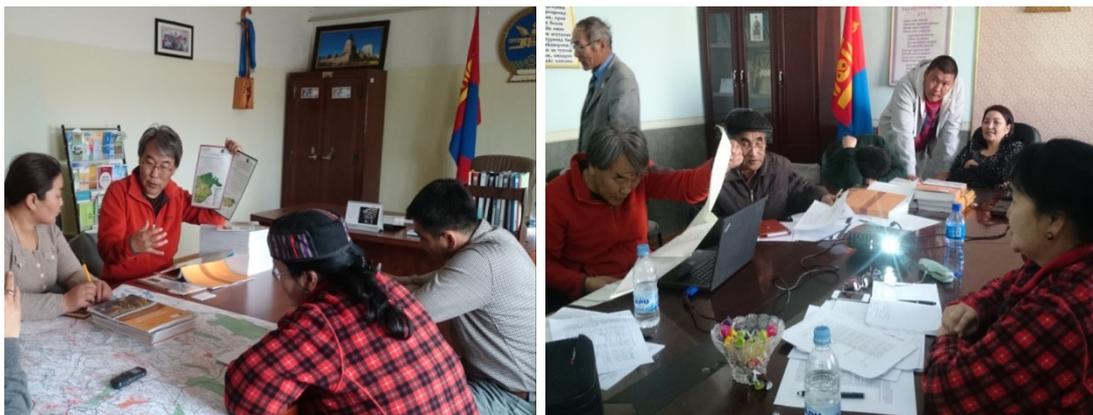
1. On 3 March, we reviewed the achievements of the “Core Biodiversity Monitoring Project 2013-2014,” which was organized by the Wildlife Conservation Society to discuss their research in the Gobi. The table shows some results of their wildlife study in Southern Gobi. Goitered gazelles with a satellite collar crossed the OT road 37 times, and the Energy Resource road two times. Eleven (11) of 20 khulan with a satellite collar crossed the OT road 100 times, but they passed with disordered routes.
2. Additionally, project manager Galbadrakh.D and other staff went to the Gobi and observed that some antelopes came over into the settlement areas due to the water shortage. The Gobi area is now arid and the rate of desertification that is occurring is high. The road connecting Tavan Tolgoi and Sainshand was very active and generating significant dust.
3. Project officer Naranzul.B attended a stakeholder meeting to discuss the standardization work for highway and railway areas of Mongolia. This meeting included representatives from the Ministry of Green Development and Tourism, the Ministry of Road and Transportation, WCS, WWF, UNDP, national universities, scientific institutions, private companies, and the Standardization and Metrology Center, among others. Totally 20 people participated this meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to finalize the standardization work for general demands on ungulates crossing along highway and railway by reflecting recommendations and comments of scientists and experts from related organizations. Project staff Pat McGowen (WTI) had provided comments to the draft standard, which were largely incorporated into the updated draft. For example, Sections 6.1, 9.7 and appendix B were edited for consistency. Revisions to section 4.1 also reflected input. Stakeholders disagreed with the types of crossings and discussed needed changes to improve precision of the guidance. We made note of the many other comments and proposals that were discussed in this meeting and look forward to the finalization of the Task Force’s work in May.
4. The [MMDT Web Portal](#) was developed to aid TNC in distributing all information, data and applications produced by this effort.

April, 2015

1. We organized total of 4 trips to 12 soums out of all 14 soums of Dornogobi province and 2 soums of Omnogobi province that were selected with portfolio sites as a result of Gobi ERA. We traveled about 4600 km to verify our ERA result portfolio sites with field data and to introduce the suggested

portfolios to local soum government and communities to promote benefits and importance of protected areas in the Gobi region, in order to protect habitat for biodiversity. Moreover, these are potential sites for future to implement biodiversity offsets by the mining companies that operate in that area.

EBRD project staff Naranzul also presented about the project funded by EBRD to engage local government staff in the project activities. We met with Directors of Environment and Tourism department and Land Affairs and Urban development administration and other staffs. Tsogtsaikhan from TNC and Oyungerel from Institute of Geography helped soum rangers to develop maps on GIS and Protocol of suggested protected areas based on the Gobi ERA results (Figure 1). As a result of this trip it was clear that capacity building is necessary for local government staff to complete their duties successfully to ensure that the mining companies that operate at their province are following the Biodiversity offset guidelines that was approved by the Ministry.



2. On April 16, TNC Mongolia provided day training to 90 participants from corporations. The training included a demonstration of the website and desktop based mitigation design tool being developed by the project, as well as ArcGIS.



Training included topics how to identify impact and offset areas. All participants received the approved version of the Mongolian Offset Guideline but half of them was reading it first time. Most participants said that they have difficulty when making mathematical calculation related offset procedure. All participants were satisfied with the training and requested to organize regularly. Especially, they demand the training combined offset procedure and GIS tool.

June, 2015

1. An expert review of study design was done by Batsaikhan (NUM mammal biologist) and Lhagvasuren (MAS mammals lab head, gazelle and khulan expert, Mongolia chair of the Convention on Migratory Species). This review narrowed the modeling question and study design. We met with Wildlife Conservation Society staff to discuss collaboration on the connectivity analysis and improving their habitat mapping. We may clarify terms in a Memorandum of Understanding.
2. Gala Davaa, Michael Looker (TNC Asia lead for Development by Design), and Mike Heiner participated in two MEGD-EBRD-Mongolian Mining Association-sponsored Mitigation hierarchy and Biodiversity Offset Workshops in late May and early June in Ulan Bator. They gave a presentation on the project, and discussed the mitigation hierarchy and implementation of the Mongolian offset regulations. This conference was attended by wide range of stakeholders including MEGDT, Ministry of Mining, The Asia Foundation, EBRD, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Oyu Tolgoi LLC and local government representatives, the private sector, NGOs and others.
3. Mike Heiner participated in a trans-disciplinary research conference “Building resilience of Mongolian rangelands” organized by Colorado State University, American Centre for Mongolian Studies and some NGOs and gave a presentation on the project.

July, 2015

TNC organized the ArcGIS training by cooperating with Mrs. Bolorchuluun who is a lecturer at the Geographic school, NUM for officers of Environmental Department, Land Affairs Department in Omnogobi province to engage stakeholders of the project. Totally 49 people attended and 32 were from soums.



August, 2015

1. Mike Heiner presented the connectivity modeling and training project at CMS conference Aug 25-27 (“Implementing Wildlife-Friendly Measures in Infrastructure Planning and Design in Mongolia”). In addition, Pat McGowen presented at the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS) workshop. Although there was little feedback during the group question/answer period following the presentation, informal discussions during workshop breaks proved very fruitful. Pat met with Davaanyam Tsedendamba, environmental officer for Mongolian Railways. Pat gained permission to inspect the partially constructed rail lines in the Gobi, and talked about obtaining data on construction details (particularly the cut and fill slopes). Pat met with Enkhtuvshin with WCS and discussed some of their continuing public outreach efforts. He also visited with many international wildlife experts in attendance (Petra Kaczensky, Kirk Olson, Buuveibaatar) and discussed their research work and how that can inform mitigation methods. This workshop was attended by many international organizations such as GIZ, WWF, WCS, WTI, CMS, TNC and academic organizations like Senckenberg & Goethe University Frankfurt, University of Veterinary Medicine, scientists and researchers, Mongolian Academy of sciences, and private sectors that operate in Gobi region.
2. We organized a separate meeting for managers and decision makers of big mining companies that operate in Mongolia that are capable of implementing sufficient biodiversity offset. We invited 17 representatives, but 8 participated: Oyu Tolgoi, Boroo Gold, Mongolyn Alt, Bayan-Airag, Theiss, Energy Resources, Sustainability and Offset Consulting firm. The meeting was organized more as a discussion form to talk about Offset guidelines and challenges to implement. We also handout the offset guidelines and received comments from companies to develop the guidelines further.
3. TNC staff Joe Kiesecker, Jim Oakleaf, Galbadrakh Davaa and Binderya Oyunbaatar traveled to Tost Uul local PA in Gurvan Tes soum, Omnogobi province to understand the conflicts between the local government and community and the mining operating companies. They met with Orgilmaa.B

/environmental officer/ and Omnogovi Provincial Director of Protected Lands within the Mongolian Ministry of Environment and Green Development and Tourism to discuss mitigation activities/issues and the MDT tool.

4. In Ulaanbaatar on 24 August 2015 Pat McGowen met with Dr. Gerelnyam at the Ministry of Transportation. We talked about mitigation methods and the feasibility of implementing them. We also talked about the Ministry's traffic data collection efforts and how they planned to improve them.
5. In Ulaanbaatar on 26 August 2015 McGowen met with Tsenguun Tsogt, the CEO of Gashuun Sukhait Road LLC.
6. In Tsotsetsgi on 31 August 2015 Pat met with Altankhuyag one of the local managers for the Gashuun Sukhait Road Company.

September, 2015

1. Brad McRae(TNC) presented on connectivity modeling concepts and methods at the manager's meeting and the technical training (September 8, 2015). In addition, we presented two lectures to each audience on connectivity issues that are central to current planning challenges in Mongolia. Pat McGowen (Western Transportation Institute) presented on effects of transportation infrastructure on wildlife, data on traffic in Mongolia, and strategies for mitigating road impacts. Mike Heiner (TNC) presented preliminary results of a case study applying Circuitscape to khulan connectivity modeling in the Gobi desert.
2. For the connectivity and MDT trainings (September 9-11, 2015), we hosted 44 representatives from MEGDT, the United Nations Develop Programme, the Mongolian Academy of Sciences, Oyu Tolgoi, The Nature Conservancy, Wildlife Conservation Society, the National University of Mongolia, seven provincial governments, Altai Tavan Bogd National Park, the Mongolian Bird Conservation Center, the SPAN project, the Wild Sheep Center, and the Agency of Land Affairs, Geodesy and Cartography.
3. The soil training has gone well and we have had 24 people involved. During the eight days of training we did four field trips and excavated 12 soil pits. All trainees learned to describe soils, determine organic matter content using soil color charts, take pH and EC and determine what was usable soil in reclamation what should be avoided.

October, 2015

The TNC Mongolia program organized the offset implementation meeting by cooperating with the Ministry of Environment, Green Development and Tourism. The purpose of this meeting was offset planning, implementation, and stakeholder engagement. Giving and sharing information about offsets was designed to assist stakeholders in using the Mitigation Design Tool.

Twenty-nine (29) representatives from the MEGDT, EBRD, mining and environmental companies, non-governmental organizations, and international organizations participated in the meeting.

December, 2015

1. A GIS specialist Tsogtsaikhan.B, a project coordinator Naranzul.B and assistant worker Purevbaatar of the TNC Mongolia Program organized and provided MDT training with the help of Bolorchuluun, who is a GIS lecturer of the Mongolian National University, School of Geography. Totally 28 people attended to the training, and most of them had GIS knowledge and were responsible for the environmental assessment. Training curriculum and content were according to the previous training, but the difference was the data that covered whole Mongolia. This training also included a utilization of the Web Tool. All participants were very active, and they estimated the training is relevant. The most of them requested to organize this type of training again. Moreover, they requested a recommendation session about conservancy planning activities related offset cost and site condition.
2. We created a blog and facebook page to share information about biodiversity offset:

Facebook page:

[/https://www.facebook.com/NPI-Mongolia-1552978878346002/?fref=nf/](https://www.facebook.com/NPI-Mongolia-1552978878346002/?fref=nf/)

Blog name: NPI (Net Positive Impact) Mongolia

Blog url: [/http://npi-mongolia.blogspot.com/](http://npi-mongolia.blogspot.com/)

January, 2016

1. Introductory level GIS and MDT training was organized for total of 45 government officials of Environment and Tourism departments, Land affairs and urban development administrations, Protected areas administrations, River basin Administrations of 5 Western provinces of Mongolia and Knovd University teachers. Basic introductory 3 day course was taught by Bolorchulun, GIS professor of National University of Mongolia, and

Tsogtsaikhan, TNC GIS specialist, presented Western ecoregional assessment results and taught Mitigation Design Tool.

All course materials were given to attendants on flash drives that include lecture slides, exercises, help documents both in English and Mongolian, MDT installment and Data. According to the survey from participants, the training was useful for them and requested for more training. MDT tool requires introductory/intermediate level GIS knowledge and local government officials lack sufficient GIS knowledge, therefore organizing MDT training with GIS was very successful.

Out of 45 participants, 26 people rated 10, 5 people rated 9, 6 people rated 8, 2 people rated 7 and 1 person rated 6. 38 participants thought it was an important training to perform better at their duties.

2. In January 2016 TNC hosted a 6-member government delegation headed by Mr. Dejid Rinzaan, Director of Environment and Natural Resources Management Department, MEGDT on a learning exchange in Arlington, VA and field visits to mitigation sites near New Orleans, Louisiana. The purposes of the Mitigation Learning Exchange were to learn about the recent changes to US government mitigation policy, better understand The Nature Conservancy Mitigation Principles and to discuss major issues that need to be addressed in the new biodiversity offset regulation of Mongolia. In addition to the participation of TNC staff, US government officials from the Bureau of Land Management and the Environmental Protection Agency presented to the Mongolian delegation.
3. TNC transferred equipment requested by the Director-General, Mr. Dejid Rinzaan, to him during his visit to Washington for a mitigation study tour in January. The equipment included a Phantom 2 Vision drone and two Trimble Yuma 2 field computers. In addition, the missing sieves and soil color charts for the soil kits were provided, and two complete soil kits.

February, 2016

1. TNC transferred remaining soil test equipment as requested by MEGDT to representatives from the aimags on 5th February 2016. The equipment included pH and EC meters. In addition, the sieves and soil color charts for the soil kits were provided to the Gobi aimags. We had invited ministry officials to join in the equipment transfer, but they were busy and accepted TNC to deliver equipment solely. After transferring the equipment, we sent official letters to all aimags informing them of the equipment transfer.

2. We arranged to hold an offset meeting in every season. The first meeting of 2016 was held on 3rd of February (see photo), and included the participation of 23 government officials and representatives from mining and environmental companies. A presentation on the mitigation design tool was provided and participants discussed it and other issues related to offset procedures.



March, 2016

1. On March 24th we held an expert review workshop on Modeling Wildlife Movement and Barriers with scientists from NUM, MAS, MEGD, NGOs, and others. We presented the study design, discussed results, and compiled the comments. Totally 17 people participated this meeting.
2. James Oakleaf provided the MDT training during the week of March 28th, 2016 specific to understanding and using the MDT-Desktop. Two different groups of 49 people attended the trainings: federal and provincial government employees (i.e. MEGD & Aimag Environmental Agencies responsible for EIA law in Aimag), and private mining and environmental companies required to comply with the offset regulation. This required one-day classroom trainings occurring on two separate days for government employees (March 30th) and private employees (March 29th). For the one-day trainings, we had one overall objective of providing users with the knowledge and expertise to be able to use both the MDT-Desktop and MDT-Web. We accomplished this by providing one lecture, two demonstrations, and three exercises.

April, 2016

1. In early April we organized, with MEGDT and the Omnogobi Provincial authorities, a multi-stakeholder workshop to discuss issues and challenges related to biodiversity offsetting in the region. The workshop was attended by nearly 80 people from local communities, government at the province and soum levels, and companies operating in the South Gobi.
2. In late April we organized, with MEGDT and the Dornogobi Provincial authorities a multi-stakeholder workshop to discuss issues and challenges related to biodiversity offsetting in the region. The workshop was attended by nearly 70 people from local communities, government at the province and soum levels, and companies operating in Dornogobi province.
3. Galbadrakh Davaa participated in “Protection of wildlife movement, migration and habitat connectivity, legal framework” discussion to present Mike Heiner and Brad McRae’s “Modeling wildlife movement” presentation and study results on April 15, 2016. The meeting was organized by MEGDT, GEF, UNDP, WWF and Institute of Biology of Mongolia and was attended by 53 people representing these organizations and other organizations that do similar research on this topic.

May, 2016

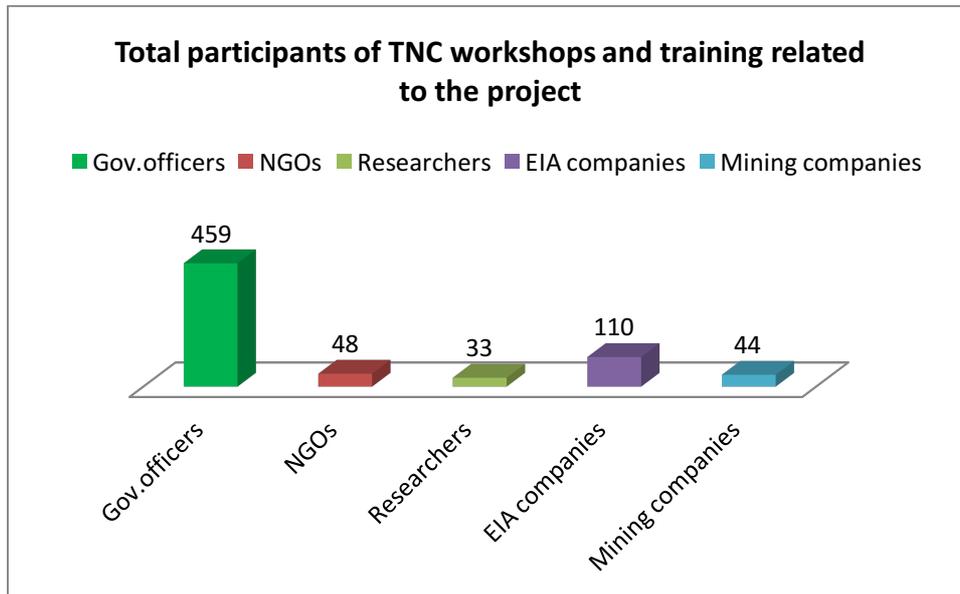
The Nature Conservancy and the Ministry of Environment, Green Development and Tourism (MEGDT) organised the final workshop on “Capacity building for MEGDT in relation to biodiversity and conservation in the Southern Gobi Desert” project. The final workshop focused on the project outcomes and on how to strengthen the partnership between the government, private entities, and international organizations. The participants had the opportunity to share their experience and knowledge on measures and policies for mitigation hierarchy in particular the roles of biodiversity offsets and connectivity conservation. This workshop was attended by 73 people from many organizations such as MEGDT, EBRD, GIZ, WWF, WCS, IFC, KfW, TNC, Mongolian Academy of sciences, and private sectors.

Conclusion

In sum up, The Nature Conservancy organized 16 meetings, 9 trainings, 9 workshops for over 700 people from funding organizations, MEGDT, NGOs, private companies and science academies. If we consider the meetings organized by other organizations, TNC provided the project information for 1201 people by discussion and presentation.

We got the feedback from all training participants. As a result of the feedback from connectivity training, 21 percent of total participants was not aware about

connectivity analysis. However, all participants agreed that their knowledge is increased after training.



All participants from MDT and soil trainings wanted to continue this type of trainings in the future. Stakeholders highlighted multiple times that it was an important meeting/workshop to bring together every related stakeholders at one table to gain a common understanding, share opinions and challenges in implementing biodiversity offsets and habitat connectivity.