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TECHNICAL REPORT

BAIKAL BASIN TRANSBOUNDARY DIAGNOSTIC ANALYSIS

COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC AWARENESS PLAN FOR CONSERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN THE BAIKAL BASIN (Mongolian Part)

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2012

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

NGO	Nongovernmental organization
UNDP CO	United Nations Development Program, Country office

SUMMARY

1. The primary objectives of the **Integrated Natural Resource Management in the Baikal Basin Transboundary Ecosystem** project is to spearhead integrated natural resource management of Baikal Lake Basin and Khuvsgul Lake ensuring ecosystem resilience, reduced water quality threats in the context of sustainable economic development, involving the full spectrum of stakeholders, and focusing on the development of public-private partnerships for developing and implementing conservation activities. The project plan includes development of communication and communication and public awareness plan regarding natural resource management issues and the importance of ecosystem resilience. In order for the Project's activities to be successful, awareness and support will need to be generated within all local communities and across all existing and potential stakeholders.

A wide variety of methods and techniques are available for developing communication and public awareness, and can be put to use in promoting basin natural resource conservation. These include modern mass media (newspapers, magazines, radio, television, film); traditional media (national broadband radio); printed materials (posters, leaflets and illustrated booklets); billboards and wall-writing; messages printed on bags, transport, signs and other things used or encountered in daily life; use of popular personalities as advocates; school programs; outdoor education programs; and interpretive facilities in protected areas.

Key practical considerations in the development of communication and public awareness are: 1) that the public has an important stake in nature conservation, and 2) that effective development of communication and public awareness will require a dual national and local focus. The key issue in the development of communication and public awareness is the conservation of natural resource in Baikal Basin ecosystem, in the face of a limited and diminishing resource, heavy and increasing utilization, and the failure of current government programs to effectively conserve resources

Key recommended actions focus on:

1. Immediate development of awareness of the project's activities within potential partners and target groups, with a subsequent focus on broader conservation issues of interest and relevance to the regional community in Mongolia as well as in Russia, on mobilization of broad public support for locally implemented activities in natural resource conservation, and on integration of successful public-private partnership activities into communication and public awareness programming.
2. Identification of appropriate partners for further development and implementation of the Project's communication and public awareness strategy.
3. Regularly update a website providing information on the project's activities, and the opportunity for partner and public input.
4. Development of a network of organizations engaged in biodiversity conservation and related activities in Mongolian and Russia, with the objective of developing and sharing information on transboundary biodiversity, and education and communication materials for development of public awareness.
5. Development of communication and public awareness activities based on as wide a range of methods and techniques as possible, including a broadly-based school program and other activities focusing on children.

1 INTRODUCTION

The objectives of Integrated Natural Resource Management in the Baikal Basin Transboundary Ecosystem project is to spearhead integrated natural resource management of Baikal Lake Basin and

Khuvsgul Lake ensuring ecosystem resilience, reduced water quality threats in the context of sustainable economic development. The project will also support efforts from both national and local governments and civil society to mainstream conservation measures into productive sectors policies and practices by way of strengthening the policy and regulatory framework for mainstreaming biodiversity in order to protect and sustainably utilize the unique aquatic ecosystem stretching from Lake Khuvsgul to Lake Baikal.

It also aims to involve all stakeholders (government, NGOs, research organizations, local communities and the private sector) in the development and implementation of its activities. To fulfill this objectives project planned to establish Baikal Information centre which will promote data collection, monitoring, analysis, harmonization and public communication.

In order to facilitate understanding and support above output, the project's plan includes development of communication and public awareness plan regarding natural resource conservation issues as well as transboundary information sharing. This report defines the objective and scope of the project's communication and public awareness strategy, identifies the target audience, identifies and discusses the range of methods and techniques that could be used to raise awareness, discusses a number of practical considerations in the development and implementation of communication and public awareness activities by the project, develops a strategic framework, and provides recommendations for action.

2. Objective and Scope of the Communication and public awareness

2.1 Objective

The main objective of the communication and public awareness strategy is to ensure widespread awareness, among all stakeholders, of the importance of Baikal Lake basin including Khuvsgul lake assets. This enhanced and widespread awareness is expected to generate both public support and additional focus for basin's natural resource conservation and biodiversity protection. Transboundary conservation issue is also one of the main concerning areas of the project therefore, establishing communication system among two countries should be reflected into Communication and public Awareness strategy.

2.2 Scope and Target Groups

To develop and implement its program of activities, it is suggested for the Project to form working partnerships with NGOs, government organizations, development assistance agencies and the private sector. The Project will also need to gain the support and cooperation of policy makers, government officials, and decision-makers at all levels. Awareness of conservation issues within this group of organizations and people is critically important to the successful implementation of the project's programs, and will be promoted by the project as an integral part of its activities development. Raising awareness among policy-makers and decision-makers, although a relatively small group, will be particularly important for the initial development and implementation of the project activities. Various means, including personal contacts, meetings, workshops and written materials, should be employed by the project in order to secure the cooperation of these partners.

However, for the achieving project objectives—which is, to have a real, positive and lasting impact on the conservation of basin natural resources and their constituent biodiversity—awareness and support will need to be generated across a much broader base, including all local communities, and all existing and potential users of natural resources. Hence this mass general public is ultimately the target group for public awareness development activities, and for this communication strategy.

3. Methods for Communication and public awareness Development

3.1 Existing Resources

The development of communication and public awareness regarding the importance of Selenga River and Khuvsgul lake basin, which is main part for Baikal Lake basin and conservation of biodiversity, is

not a new issue in Mongolian. A relatively broad knowledge base and skills sets have already been developed over many years of communication and public awareness activities, particularly within several international projects, local NGOs, research organizations and community. This experience can be drawn on for the purpose of further promoting natural resource conservation.

Although much remains to be done regarding inventory and documentation of the current state of natural resource in Mongolian part of Baikal Lake, the some conservation issues have already been documented (e.g., Annual State of Environment Reports, IUCN Red Data Books, regional environmental reports and other publications dealing specifically with environment and nature conservation issues). Articles dealing with environmental issues and increasingly with biodiversity frequently appear in the popular press (daily newspapers and magazines). Although limited in reach to the rural community, this delivery mechanism has already initiated the development of awareness of biodiversity conservation issues and is a key means for continuing the development of a broader awareness base. Hence there is both good information and experiential base, and some existing awareness, on which to build additional communication and public awareness activities. There is an existing system on information sharing between Mongolia and Russia on transboundary water issues.

Additional information on global and regional conservation concerns also is widely available.

3.2 Methods and Techniques for Developing Communication and public awareness

A wide variety of methods and techniques are available for developing communication and public awareness, and can be put to use in promoting Natural resource conservation in Mongolian part of project. Communication and public awareness activities that could be carried out in support of the “natural resource conservation message in Mongolian part of Baikal Lake basin” are listed below under the main types of delivery mechanisms. This list is not exhaustive and may be expanded as the Project’s communication and public awareness is implemented and further developed.

3.2.1 Modern Mass Media

The mass media (newspapers, magazines, radio, television, film) provide one of the most effective, ready-made means of reaching a wide target audience. Potential activities include:

Organization of workshops, field visits and sensitization courses for print and broadcast journalists, with the aim of developing an adequate knowledge base for conveying reliable information to the public. Outstanding journalists could be provided additional sensitization through sponsored travel to international meetings and training courses.

Development of a syndicated feature and photo service on conservation for newspapers and magazines.

Publication of messages and slogans as paid advertisements in newspapers and magazines. These will be most effective if accompanied by attractive or dramatic photographs or other illustrations.

Publication of special and investigative reporting on conservation issues as well as project achievements. This could be encouraged by recognizing journalistic efforts through annual awards for the best reports, features and photographs.

Development of radio discussions, and radio spots conveying specific conservation messages, for broadcast at local level.

Production of television spots, dramas and other programming, with content aimed at an appropriate audience, recognizing that television watchers in Mongolia are primarily both urban and rural residents. Production of special documentary films for screening on television, in schools, community centers, rural areas and other public gatherings. Such films could convey either a national level theme (e.g., biodiversity conservation in Mongolia) or locally-based message (e.g., conservation issues in the Khuvsgul aimag).

Production of slides and short features for screening in cinema halls prior to main features. Film shows are an extremely popular in Mongolia and provide a captive and diverse audience for conservation-related messages.

3.2.2 Traditional Media

In addition to the modern print and broadcast media, there is traditional media in Mongolia which is very effective communication tools, especially in rural areas. This is National Radio Broadcasting. There are several programmes specially dedicated for local herders and rural residents with permanent time of broadcasting. Using this opportunity serial of programs could be developed and broadcasted.

The approach can be taken a step further by testing audience reactions to the production, recording discussions of the message by audience members, and presentation of this audience interaction in addition to the basic message. This melding of the effectiveness of traditional media with the efficiency of modern media in reaching a large audience, has often proven to be one of the most effective ways to communicate messages to rural populations.

3.2.3 Printed Materials

Printed materials such as posters, leaflets and illustrated booklets have already been widely utilized in Mongolia for conveying conservation information and messages. However, there is broad scope for production of additional materials, particularly with illustrated messages aimed at rural audiences. Posters are especially effective as they can be widely distributed and displayed in public areas. Leaflets are particularly cost-effective and can be mass-distributed in rural gathering spots.

All printed materials will be most effective when they are attractively illustrated, and with a clear and to the point message.

3.2.4 Billboards and Wall-writing

Billboards provide an easy and cost-effective method of attracting the attention of a broad cross-section of people. Specific messages can be conveyed through the use of slogans and attractive pictures. Similarly, boundary walls are widely used throughout Mongolia for displaying commercial advertising, and this technique could also be used for disseminating messages on conservation.

3.2.5 Messages in Daily Life

Messages printed on jute bags, t-shirts, rickshaws, buses, shop signboards, window displays and other things used or encountered in daily life can be an effective means of passively conveying a message to a wide audience. A primary feature of this technique is that the messages are frequently encountered and reinforced, and impossible to ignore. This technique could potentially be used to convey conservation-oriented messages, but the amount of information that can be included is very limited, and messages need to be both memorable and to the point.

3.2.6 Popular Personalities

Personalities known from TV, music, film, traditional forms of entertainment and sports can be effective spokespersons and advocates of popular causes, as they have massive public appeal. Inviting such personalities to become involved in communication and public awareness campaigns could be an effective means of promoting natural resource conservation. A primary advantage of this technique is that it can reach a wide and varied audience.

3.2.7 School Programs

School programs have been shown elsewhere to be one of the most effective means of promoting awareness of "green" environmental issues. Advantages are a large and receptive target audience, and an established structure (the school system) that facilitates dissemination and presentation of materials. Potential techniques include incorporation of conservation-related materials in textbooks and curricula, presentation of audio-visual materials, drawing and writing contests, and field trips. Intervention in school programs is a particularly attractive option as it allows an early introduction to conservation issues and concepts, which if effectively presented and assimilated will continue to influence attitudes and actions later in life. Children will also take the message home to their families and provide another means of disseminating messages to adults with limited access to communications media.

3.2.8 Outdoor Education Programs

Outdoor education programs can be used to provide direct, hands-on contact with nature, either as part of organized school programs or as an extracurricular or outside of school activity. The main objective would be to provide an opportunity to observe and study biodiversity in its natural setting, within an appropriate learning structure and under informed guidance. Although this technique is likely to be limited to a relatively small target audience, effectiveness at promoting a conservation message and having a long-term influence on attitudes is likely to be very high. Attendance at extended programs could be used as a “reward” for exceptional performance in school environmental programs (see Section 3.2.7 above), thus focusing and enhancing positive impacts.

3.2.9 Interpretive Facilities and Programs in Protected Areas

Some areas (e.g., Khuvsgul lake Protected) currently receive high levels of visitation, primarily for tourists. These all are suitable target areas for development of visitor centers, nature trails, and other interpretive programs for the promotion of communication and public awareness among park visitors. However, planning and development of protected area facilities would need to proceed according to international standard guidelines to ensure that communication and public awareness efforts in protected areas send the right message and are well-perceived by the recipients.

4. Practical Considerations in the Development of Communication and public awareness

4.1 Stakeholders

Important practical considerations regarding stakeholders are as follows:

- ✦ Although the stakeholders in natural resource conservation can be broadly conceived as the mass general public (see Section 2.2), those who rely on natural resources for their livelihoods or are otherwise involved in their exploitation or management have a disproportionate influence on the success or failure of conservation measures. These include local businessmen, Environmental Department officials and politicians. All of these groups need to understand both the value of resources and the consequences of its degradation and loss, and hence are critically important target groups for communication and public awareness activities.
- ✦ Widespread awareness that the general public and local communities have an important stake in conservation needs to be developed. Communication and public awareness needs to be raised as to the contribution that public-private partnerships can make to family livelihoods and, what is required to make them successful. In particular, the importance of the “social fencing” that can be created by strong public-private partnerships, by awareness of the importance of natural resources, and by demonstrably sustainable use of resources, needs to be promoted.
- ✦ Grassroots organizations and local NGOs will play a pivotal role in the successful development of communication and public awareness, as they are typically most aware of current social, cultural, economic and political issues. Such organizations need to be closely involved in the development and delivery of awareness materials.
- ✦ Communication and public awareness materials need to adapt the abstract and technical subject matter of conservation into a practical and understandable format. Language, media used and level of sophistication all need to be adjusted to specific target audiences. Awareness materials need to be developed and field-tested in consultation with local people. Messages aimed at rural residents should be relevant to their lifestyle and avoid jargon and scientific terminology. Development of broader awareness materials aimed at school children and the general public should focus on charismatic, high profile “flagship” species. “Red Databook” species also are suitable focal species for development of broadly based communication and public awareness. Awareness materials for these audiences should focus on printed materials (posters, booklets) and radio programming.

4.2 Geographic Scope

Effective development of communication and public awareness will require a dual national and local focus. Many important issues are cross-cutting and national in scope, and can be effectively covered through development of national-level awareness campaigns. Other issues, as well as benefits from local conservation efforts will vary from location to location within the region, and these differences will need to be addressed in the development and delivery of communication and public awareness programs. Such programs will be most effective if they address issues of immediate relevance to a majority of stakeholders, utilizing suitable methodologies.

4.3 Cost-Effectiveness

As indicated in Section 3.2, there are several methods and techniques that can be used to raise communication and public awareness. All are not equally cost-effective. Important practical considerations regarding cost-effectiveness are as follows:

- The print media and other printed materials are generally highly cost-effective and suitable for mass distribution. Radio is also a highly cost-effective medium suitable for a wide audience.
- Television and film involve expensive front-end (production) costs but can be highly effective if the right message is developed. At present television is a suitable medium primarily for urban audiences.
- Some techniques (e.g., traditional media) are suitable primarily for small and selected audiences, although they also are low cost and can be very effective in terms of message delivery.
- School programs can be expensive and time-consuming to develop, but are highly cost-effective in the long-run. Well-designed school programs are likely to be the best long-term investment in awareness development.
- Interpretive facilities in protected areas can also be expensive relative to the size of the target audience, and require a high level of expertise for their development. However, they can be very effective in terms of message delivery and subsequent positive impacts.

4.4 Timeframe

Where basic facilities and expertise already exists, certain awareness activities (e.g., print media and other printed materials, radio programming, traditional media, billboards and wall-writing, messages in daily life, use of popular personalities) can be developed quickly, delivered within a short timeframe, and easily modified, as circumstances require. These provide a logical starting point for initial implementation of the Project's communication and public awareness strategy.

Other awareness activities (e.g., television and film, school and outdoor education programs, interpretive facilities in protected areas) require a longer timeframe for development and delivery. The primary consequence of this is the need for careful forward planning, particularly in terms of funding and other resource availability.

5. Framework for the Development of Communication and public awareness

The answers to the following questions provide a conceptual framework for the Project's communication and public awareness strategy. This framework is based on a consideration of target groups, feasible methodologies and techniques, and practical considerations as outlined above.

• What are the key issues?

Conservation of Mongolian part of Baikal Lake Basin, in the face of a limited and diminishing resource, heavy and increasing utilization, and current government efforts to effectively conserve its resources.

• What is the message that the Project wants to deliver?

The key messages of the Project should be:

- Importance of sustainable utilization of natural resources in Mongolian part of Baikal lake

basin

• **Who will develop the messages?**

The messages should be developed by selected partner organizations, with overall guidance by the project.

• **Who will deliver them?**

The messages should be delivered by selected partner organizations, possibly including, but not limited to, those involved in their development, also with overall guidance by the Project.

• **How will they be delivered?**

Communication and public awareness should be delivered through a variety of methods and techniques, including but not necessarily limited to, modern mass media, traditional media, printed materials, billboards and wall-writing, messages in daily life, popular personalities, school programs, outdoor education programs, and interpretive facilities and programs in protected areas.

• **How much it will cost?**

Costs will depend on the methods and techniques used, the size of the target audience, and the time period over which the message is delivered. The choice of methods should strike a balance between relative cost-effectiveness and reaching the widest possible audience.

• **How will the effectiveness be evaluated?**

Effectiveness should be evaluated through continuous monitoring and assessment, using an appropriate mix of methodologies including standardized accounting techniques, questionnaires, focus groups, and periodic independent evaluations based on measurable performance indicators.

6. Key Recommended Actions

To further develop and implement an effective communication and public awareness strategy, it is recommended that the Project take the following actions:

- mount a modest communication and public awareness initiative aimed at informing government decision-makers, NGOs and other development assistance agencies of its structure, goals and initial program of activities. This should include an information brochure for general distribution, appropriate press releases and briefings. This initial initiative should be followed by regular, periodic press releases, briefings, interviews and feature articles on the work of the project. These “public relations” activities notwithstanding, the communication and public awareness program of the project should otherwise focus on 1) broader conservation issues of interest and relevance to the public; 2) mobilization of broad public support for locally implemented activities; and, 3) effective integration of successful partnership activities.
- identify appropriate partners for further development and implementation of its communication and public awareness, including identifying activities, division of responsibilities and budgets, and monitoring and evaluation program. Co-funding by partner organizations should be encouraged to the extent possible.
- Run exiting website that provides information on all of its activities, with the opportunity for partner and public input. The website should provide linkages to other relevant organizations websites that contain educational and communication and public awareness information on conservation.
- spearhead the development of a network of organizations (including government agencies) engaged in biodiversity conservation, environmental education, eco-tourism and related activities in the target area.
- ensure that its communication and public awareness activities are based on as wide a range of methods and techniques as possible, consistent with available funding and cost effectiveness considerations.

	Promotional Literature	Annual reports on “State of the Baikal-Khuvsgul Basin report																		
	Website																			
Local communities: local NGO, herders, local citizens, school pupil	Local media channel (local TV and FM radio)	Project achievements	Local Aimag Administration office and River Basin Administration office																	
	A newsletter	Through semi-annually printed project newsletters get attention of key stakeholder																		
	Olympiad among school pupil in target aimag	Essay competition on "My contribution to conserve lake Khuvsgul", the winner's essay will be published	Local Aimag Administration office and River Basin Administration office																	
																				There are several Eco-clubs were established with support from previous UNDP supported project in Khuvsgul aimag (Khatgal, Ulaan uul, Tsagaannuur and Renchinlumbe soums)

Annex II. List of the organizations working on Environmental education and communication

The Government of Mongolian is giving high attention to the conservation of nature and environment. Therefore are many organizations are working in the Environmental education and communication sector. However there is not existing compiled report or assessment of their activities. Therefore based on the own capacity and experience below I am providing list of the organization working in Environmental education and communication sector.

No	Name of the Organization	Scope of the activities	Contact details
1	"Unuudur" daily newspaper	The Mongolian most popular daily newspaper "Unuudur" has a special section on ecology which runs every Tuesday. (Daily 10000 copies)	Ms. Tseveenkherlen, Head of the Ecology section Phone: 88091660
2	"Green Journal" Journal	One of the few Journals on ecology. Published every quarter	Mr. Ganbold
3	"Eco TV" television	Main program dedicated to the ecology and conservation issues.	
4	"Green Club" Club of the journalists	The club was established in 2008 with support from UNDP CO Mongolia. Several trainings were organized for journalist who willing to report/write on ecology and biodiversity issues.	Ms. Gynjidmaa, Press institute
5	The Nomadic Nature Conservation	The NGO is implementing program which aimed to bring needed ecological education to the rural Mongolia's schools and communities. For that purpose they developed trunk which contents full curriculum with 25 lessons that are designed on the participatory approaches, and also includes needed lesson materials.	Ms. TUnjalagtuya Phone: 99189987 www.nnc-mongolia.org
6	"Eco Mongol" Vocational training centre	Previously known as "Eco Asia" environmental research institute re-organized its structure and type of the	Ms. Erdenetugs Phone 99183069

		trainings and became “Eco Mongol” vocational training centre. The Centre is conducting training and public awareness activities based on the request (Tailor made trainings)	Erdenetugs_l@yahoo.com
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