

Environmental Education and Communication Strategy (EECS) for the protected area system in Mongolia

Capacity Needs Assessment of Stakeholders

The SPACES project has developed a National Environmental Education and Communication Strategy (EECS) for the protected area system in Mongolia in mid 2020. In this context, a capacity needs assessment (CNA) was carried among stakeholders in early 2020.

In early 2022, this CNA was updated among five stakeholder groups: 1-Donors & Government, 2-NGOs & Media, 3-Universities & Research, 4-Protected Area Staff in GTPA and KKSPA, 5-Protected Area Staff in the Western PA Cluster near Khovd. While the CNA 2020 was mostly carried out through individual interviews, the SPACES team conducted the CNA 2022, due to Covid-19, mostly through targeted emails and follow-up telephone calls.

The SPACES team asked stakeholders the questions outlined below

- *What are the top 3 problems you are facing in protected areas, and which target groups are most relevant for these problems?*
- *What do you want the most relevant target groups to know, feel and do in order to solve the top 3 problems you identified?*
- *Which media and communication channels are most appropriate to reach the most relevant target groups in relation with the top 3 problems?*

and documented their responses in three JobAids related to 1-Problems & Target Groups, 2-Problems/Target Groups & Communication Objectives, and 3- Problems/Target Groups & Media/Communication Channels/Learning Aids.

Major conclusions from the CNA 2022 and a comparison with CNA 2020 results can be summarized as follows:

- Even more so than in 2020, stakeholders reported the lack of policy support related to law enforcement, finance, human resources, and particularly research & studies on biodiversity, climate change, ecosystems, etc.
- As in 2020, the lack of public awareness on PAs was again the other most mentioned problem.
- 'Overgrazing' and 'excessive tourism' were the No 3 + 4 problems in 2020 as well as 2022, mentioned especially by PA staff in the Western Cluster and universities.
- As the stakeholder group 3-Universities & Research was new in 2022, a lot more responses under Problem 1- Lack of policy support referred to the dire need for more and better research and studies. More often than in 2020, this concerns was shared by the other stakeholder groups, if only less specific.
- Even more so than in 2020, stakeholders identified political decision makers at all levels of government – in particular the cabinet and parliament, MNET and DPAM – as target groups for environmental education and communication. 'Youth' ran second, 'local residents', especially herders, third, and 'tour operators' fourth in 2020. This was basically confirmed in 2022 with

‘locals’ even more so than ‘youth’ and ‘PA visitors/tourists’ instead of ‘tour operators’, who however may remain important intermediaries to reach out to PA visitors.

- In the CNA 2020 and 2022, no single medium, message or communication objective is effective for all purposes or target groups. Therefore, different media, messages or communication objectives should complement and reinforce each other. Each one has a unique characteristic or particular advantage that is useful to accomplish a specific purpose that needs to be defined per problem and target group.

Aggregated responses for each of the five stakeholder groups are attached in separate JobAids.

At a later stage, the updated CNA will lead to an updated EECS, which will be discussed in a stakeholder workshop in 2022. This will help stakeholders determine priorities for a future EECS Action Plan: *Which media should be produced for which target groups and with which intended impact on selected problems?*

An overview of the 10 used in the National EECS for the Mongolian System of Protected Areas is presented below:

<p>Stage 1 Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o1 Situation analysis and problem identification o2 Audience and Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) analyses o3 Communication objectives 	<p>Stage 2 Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o4 Resources planning: Budget, time, staff o5 Involvement of partners o6 Media selection and mix
<p>Stage 3 Production</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o7 Message design o8 Media pretesting and production 	<p>Stage 4 Action & Reflection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o9 Media use in the field 1o Process documentation and M&E