

Workshop “Environmental Communication for Protected Areas in Mongolia” UB, 25-26 April, 2022

	Day 1	Day 2
	Context + EEC Events	EEC Events & Tools
Session 1 09:00 - 10:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opening Intro Who-What-How: Training participants, objectives & contents The National Environmental Education and Communication Strategy (NEEC) (PP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback Committee Presentation of WG results (PP)
Session 2 11:00 - 12:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Relevance of the NEEC Strategy to Tourism Operators and to Protected Areas (BG 1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Communication for Protected Areas: Action Plan (WG 3)
Session 3 13:30 - 15:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation of working group results (PP) Raising Awareness of Environmental Issues (WG 1) Presentation (PP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Communication for Protected Areas: Action Plan (WG 3) Presentation of working group results (PP)
Session 4 15:30 - 17:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Communication for Protected Areas: Strategy (WG2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A potential national environmental campaign (BG 2)

¹ **BG 1 Task:** What is the relevance of the National Environmental Education and Communication Strategy to Protected Areas and to Tour Operators?

² **WG 1 Task:** Which successful activities in environmental education and communication can serve as best-practice examples?

³ **WG 2 Task:** What are the main target audiences for Protected Areas and how can they be reached?

⁵ **WG 3 Task:** What is a communication action plan? Who does what? How can we fund the activities?

⁶ **BG 2 Task:** What can a national environmental campaign look like? Where are potential synergies between the different national and international actors?

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The workshop was attended by approximately 30 participants, most of them Communication Officers of various Protected Areas in Mongolia. Two participants from the Department for Protected Areas Management joined the workshop in the afternoon of the second day. The workshop had three main objectives: Firstly, it was intended to give the participants a possibility to familiarise themselves with the draft National Environmental Education and Communication Strategy (NEEC) and to give their feedback on it. Secondly, the two days should initiate a peer-to-peer exchange on best practices in environmental communication for Protected Areas. And thirdly, the participants should learn how to develop their own local communication strategies that are in line with the 10-step structure recommended by OECD-DAC.

Day 1

After the opening remarks by Buyandelger Battumur and an introduction by the moderators, the first day started with a presentation of the draft version of the National Environmental Education and Communication Strategy. The participants learned about the objectives of the strategy, its methodology and the main recommendations made in the strategy. ACT Managing Director Manfred Oepen replied to questions and updated the participants about the current state of discussions with DPAM. After this, three working groups used an executive summary of the strategy to make their comments and develop ideas for improvement. They emphasised the fact that Protected Areas lack political, administrative, and financial support both on national and on local level. This was identified as the main obstacle to successful

environmental communication. They also underlined the need for additional trainings on topics related to communication and public relations, e. g. graphic design, photography, and social media management.

After the lunch break, four working groups were formed randomly. Together, they prepared a best-practice examples of successful communication activities in Protected Areas, e. g. activities for the protection of vultures, and awareness raising events for herders and visitors. This very interactive point on the agenda was much appreciated as it allowed the participants to learn from each other.

The main exercise of the 2-day training was the elaboration of draft communication plans for three “virtual” protected areas. It started with an input by the moderators on how to structure a communication plan along the lines of the OECD-DAC 10-step model for communication strategies. The locations of the three virtual protected areas were “Northern Area”, “Gobi Area” and “Western Steppe Area”. The participants were free to choose on which area they would like to work. As a first step, they had to draw a detailed map of their virtual Protected Area with detailed geographical features, considering the regional characteristics.

Day 2

The day started with remarks by three participants who had volunteered to give their feedback on the first day. The feedback was very positive, but one participant remarked that it would have been desirable to have participants of DPAM present at the training.

After the feedback, the three groups continued with their work on the communication strategies for their virtual Protected Areas. They had around 1 ½ hours to define the three major target audiences and the related communication objectives regarding **Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices**: What do they know about the Protected Area, and what do we want them to know? What is their attitude towards it, and what should their attitude be? What kind of problematic behaviour do they show, and what kind of behaviour would we like to see from them? All three groups presented the results of this exercise in detail.

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Two representatives of DPAM joined the workshop for the afternoon of this second day.

As a second step of this exercise, the participants had to propose communication activities and products that would enable them to effectively reach out to the target audiences they had proposed in the first step. They had to group the communication measures by “activities/events” (e.g., trainings, festivals), “products” (e.g., videos, flyers, social media activities), and “infrastructure” (e.g., information kiosks). They were also asked to suggest possible financing sources for these activities and specify whether they themselves would need additional skills to be able to implement these communication measures. The groups subsequently presented their results and discussed it with the other participants.

As a last point on the agenda, the moderators gave a first look at the concept of a nation-wide environmental education and communication campaign that is currently being discussed under the working title “My Green Mongolia”. The idea was generally welcomed by the participants, although details still need to be clarified.

The workshop ended with feedback that the participants were able to give anonymously on pinboards. It was generally very positive.

Please see the photo report for more details and for a documentation of the working group results.

Recommendations

- For similar trainings, a joint programme on the evening of the first day should be considered, as it would allow the participants to get to know each other even better.
- A unified template for a local communication strategy on the level of the Protected Areas could be useful.

- Additional trainings on matters related to communication would be helpful to the participants and were requested several times (e.g., social media management, graphic design, photography).

Summary of working group results regarding the EECS

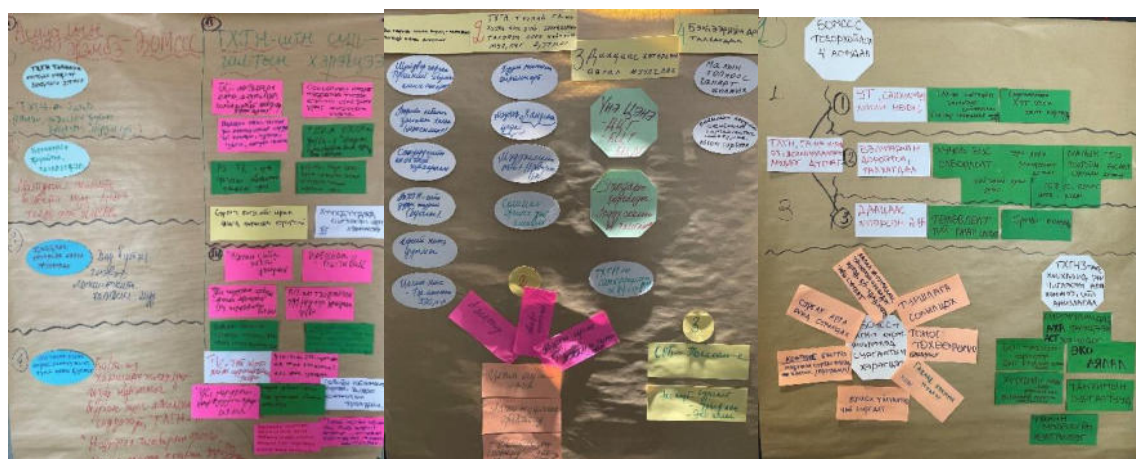
Three WGs prioritized the problems defined in the EECS (see **BG Task 1**). All of them assured that the number one problem is lack of knowledge and information about PAs of public including decision makers. WG 2 suggested to elaborate more on the problem related to the lack of political will, budget and human capacity. They think this issue needs to be explained including the following points: 1) Decision makers' conflict of interest regarding the PAs land usage, 2) Government bodies change after each election 3) Lack of efficient allocation of government budget, 4) Low level of salary of PA staff etc. The second key issue for 2 of the WGs was Pastureland degradation, while one WG says lack of legal information about PA of public. However, one WG identified political will as least problem. They explained that PAs can/could work on its own without political support from decision makers at some level.

Regarding the training support to implement EECS:

- Manuals for PA staff and teachers to run EEC activities
- Need to learn how to effectively work and manage via social networks, facebook, website etc
- Create integrated program on EEC at the national level
- Training need both for PA staff and tour operators to work with public (organizing public events)
- Need to learn to run events interactive way; tools and techniques
- Need to learn English etc

Regarding events for kids from PAs:

- Eco-clubs
- Essay or Drawing competition
- Summer outdoor activities
- Eco tour
- Festivals etc.



WG 1-3

Best-practice examples of successful communication activities in Protected Areas (Day 1):

The participants divided into 4 WGs and identified the best practices on EEC events under the following guiding Questions (see **WG Task 1**):

- What activity and Where?
- For whom?
- How it happened/organized?
- Key outcomes or features?

WG 1: Big brother trip

What and Where: Khugni Tarna PA, TV Programm named “Big Brother’s Trip”.

Who participated: Local school Kids, local government, local elderly herders and Mongolian National TV

How it happened: Kids traveled to PAs and met local elderly herders who explains them about PA, its features and the traditional way of protecting the local nature. So far 3 soums organized this programm with PAs and broadcasted at the national level. The programm has 5 series and each series broadcasted 3 times. It reached out to 300.000 people. Currently 7 soums and PAs made request to have this programm in their respected soums and PAs.

WG2: “Tuj” cedar forest rehabilitation

What and Where: Cedar forest rehabilitation in Tujiin Nars PA, Selenge aimag

Who participated: PA Administration, local government, National TV, Journalists, celebrities, popular News paper: Zuunii Medee

How it happened and key outcome: PAA and local government developed slogan to get attention from different levels of people, including president and decision makers. The Slogan was: Save Tuj cedar forest. The concept note was delivered to President, different donor funded programs through TV and Newspaper where celebrities were involved. Journalist wrote very touching article, which brought big change among public. Government and other organizations funded to plant cedar in 20 hectar of land. Now the forest is rehabilitated fully.

WG3: Our local pride is Taimen

What and Where: Tuul and Onon river (western part of the country). The activity was organized to protect taimen, whose number dramatically decreased due to illegal fishing.

Who participated: Local people, local kids and fishers

How it happened and key outcome: Organized fishermen club, where they received training and discussed how they can be involved in the protection of this species. Different events and competitions were organized among local people/fishers and local kids. Fisher’s club members established fund to organize eco fishing tours. Later the club became NGO, created Facebook group, 2500 people joined, fashion developed: catch and get them back to the river reached all fishers of the country.

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WG4: Vulture program

What and Where: Ikh Nart PA, to increase awareness among kids about vulture

Who participated: Local school teachers and kids with PAA

How it happened and key outcome: Training conducted for school teachers about vulture. Then they developed their own Vulture Programm, which only one good programm was selected to be implemented. The students from 1 to 12 grade were involved to get classroom education, and later had chance to visit PA to learn more about vulture. Some of the students already shared their interest to be a ranger or biologist. The programm result is reported at the soum level during Environmental Day. Parents already got some information about vulture and PA through their kids.

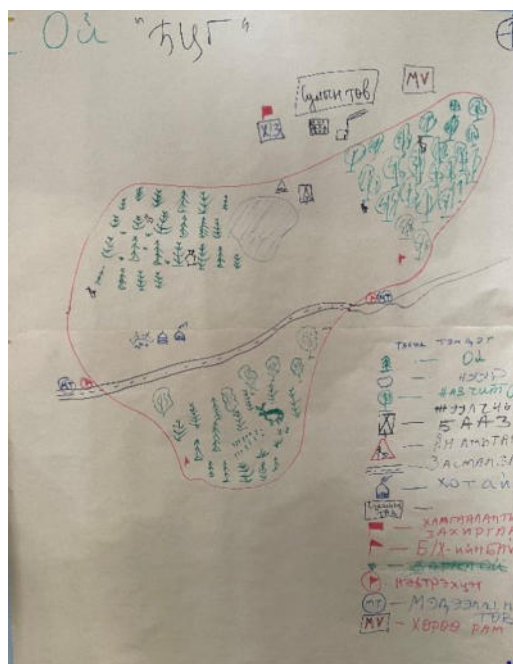
Draft communication plans for three “virtual” protected areas: “Northern Area”, “Gobi Area” and “Western Steppe Area”

Summary (see WG Task 2 & 3)

The key target groups were herders, kids, local government, visitors and decision makers.

	Herders	Kids	Visitors	Local government/ decision makers
Activities	Training Events- festivals	Event like festival, contest etc	Video content to be prepared	Organize workshops Meetings

	Herders	Kids	Visitors	Local government/ decision makers
			Information boards	
Skills/training needed	Trained as ToTs to work with them	Experience sharing tour to different schools	Learn how to develop video content etc	Learn how to organize Lobbying events
Service providers: Professionals and experts at the national level, WWF, GIZ, TNC etc				
Product development	Role plays Brochures	Role plays	Video and TV programm	Prepare short videos Messages
Service providers: Local government, professionals, journalists				
Infrastructure	Outdoor activities	Outdoor activities School halls	Routs Boards, signs	Use social media
Financial sources	Local government budget, donation from local people, donor funded projects at the local areas, Tour operators etc.			



Forest plan
and map

