

MORE STEP – Mobility at risk: Sustaining the Mongolian Steppe Ecosystem

Newsletter No. 1

www.morestep.org

October 2021

Editorial

The MORE STEP team welcomes you to our first newsletter! MORE STEP – Mobility at risk: Sustaining the Mongolian Steppe Ecosystem is a collaborative and interdisciplinary research project run by Mongolian and German partners and funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research. One of the key questions of the project is: how is the mobility of domestic and wild herbivores, as well as herders, in the steppe affected by changes in the social-ecological system?

Stakeholder engagement

Stakeholder engagement plays a vital role in developing suitable governance options and policy instruments for wildlife conservation, herding mobility, and sustainable livelihoods in the steppe.

In 2019, we conducted our second stakeholder workshop in Ulaanbaatar. The overall aim of the workshop was to inform relevant stakeholders about the progress of the project and expected outcomes, as well as to discuss policies and future visions. A total of 52 participants attended this stakeholder workshop, allowing us to integrate valuable local knowledge into the project.



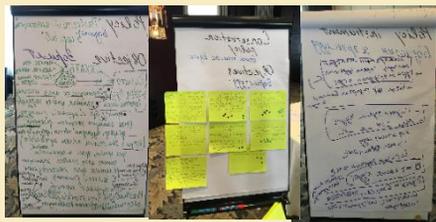
Stakeholder Workshop, 28 Aug 2019, Ulaanbaatar

We thank all participants of the first stakeholder workshop for actively joining the two sessions on societal transformation and policy instruments.

Pasture management policies

Over centuries, Mongolian herders have developed mobile herding strategies to effectively use the heterogeneous resources of the steppe. Herders' mobility is crucial for sustainable resource use. It allows herders to find quality pasture in a dynamic environment and cope with extreme events. By moving more to find fresh forage, herders can also sustain larger herds.

During the stakeholder workshop, we used an interactive session to identify and evaluate the most important policies related to pasture management, based on the stakeholders' experience and knowledge. The workshop participants discussed the effectiveness of relevant policies in three thematic groups: "Pastoral Mobility", "Sustainable Livelihoods" and "Wildlife Conservation".



Materials developed by the thematic groups

The "Pastoral Mobility" group argued that "policies often do not reach herders, they are rather of a symbolic nature and have not been implemented in practice".

Poor monitoring of policy implementation and inadequate financing were identified as reasons for these policy outcomes.

The participants identified the following topics as most relevant for herders' mobility and pasture management:

- Access to pasture and influence of water sources on herder mobility
- Increases in the number of livestock puts pressure on pasture quality
- Pasture-use planning at the local level is vital to improving resource management

Policy responses to these topics are critical to:

- Reduce institutional uncertainties in herders' access to pasture and water to support their mobility
- Incentivise sustainable pasture use by limiting livestock numbers, improving livestock quality and increasing herders' responsibility.
- Support capacity building of local officials responsible for land use and improve data sharing among stakeholders.

NEXT STEP: We will be holding a **third stakeholder workshop online on 2-3 November 2021**. If you would like to attend, please send an email to morestep.mongolia@gmail.com.

Thank you very much! With best wishes,
Your MORE STEP Team

MORE STEP Workshop Report:

Matias, D.M., L. Drees, U. Kasymov, D. Nandintsetseg, B. Batbuyan, T. Dashpurev, U. Dorj, G. Gonchigsumlaa, T. Müller, I. Ring & M. Mehring (2020): Mobility at risk: Sustaining the Mongolian steppe ecosystem – developing a vision. Stakeholder involvement and identification of drivers and pathways towards sustainable development. ISOE-Materialien Soziale Ökologie, Nr. 62. Frankfurt am Main: ISOE – Institut für sozial-ökologische Forschung