



MONGOL MONITOR

WWW.MONGOLIA.USAID.GOV

APRIL 2012

April Mission News

USAID/Mongolia Representative Karen Hilliard travelled to Dornod Province in mid-April to view activities under USAID’s Daurian Steppe “Sustainable Conservation Approaches in Priority Ecosystems” (SCAPES) project. The USAID delegation held in-depth discussions with customs officials on illegal wildlife trade and other priority concerns, helped kick-off a training for volunteer rangers, and met herder families participating in SCAPES-supported cooperatives. Although this area continues to face significant challenges, the citizens of Dornod are keenly aware of the fragility of their unique environment and are taking active roles to be part of the solution. A stunningly beautiful region, Dornod is a true treasure – and, with continued efforts, one that future generations will experience and enjoy as well.

In celebration of Earth Day 2012, the U.S. Embassy in Mongolia proudly hosted its first annual Recycled Fashion Show on April 23rd. Earth Day is an annual day to increase worldwide awareness and appreciation of the Earth’s natural environment; it is celebrated in more than 175 countries each year. Mongolian students from design schools took part in the Recycled Fashion Show, showing off their creativity and skills by creating unique designs from recyclable materials such as paper, old electronics, bottle caps, bus tickets, and even toilet paper. Perhaps these beautiful and earth-friendly creations will inspire a new trend!



Mission Director Karen Hilliard (on the left) showcasing her 20s style flapper dress made of paper shreds; winner (on the right) wearing a dress created with 850 bus tickets and a wedding dress made of toilet paper.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Private Sector-led Economic Growth

- Business Plus Initiative (BPI)

USAID Centrally and Regionally Funded Projects

- Sustainable Conservation Approaches in Priority Ecosystems (SCAPES)
- Mongolian National Consensus Building Program (NCB)
- Enabling Market Integration through Rural Group Empowerment (EMIRGE)

USDA Funded Projects Managed by USAID

- Rural Agribusiness Support Program (RASP)--USDA



The U.S. Embassy hosted 19 future diplomats during the April 16th Take Your Child to Work Day. In addition to “hammer time” in the warehouse and “defense training” with the guards, the kids proved their development acumen by creating their own projects to address current issues in Mongolia ranging from biodiversity to urban migration, and pollution to illegal hunting; the kids later pitched their ideas (and drawings) to the Ambassador and DCM. Mongolia is clearly in safe hands with the next generation!

PRIVATE SECTOR-LED ECONOMIC GROWTH

Business Plus Initiative Project (BPI) Chemonics

The Staggering Costs of Inefficient Trade Regulation

“Preliminary Estimates of the Staggering Costs of Inefficient Trade Regulation in Mongolia” was released as the first of BPI’s new series of “Working Documents on Competitiveness and Business Enabling Environment – Mongolia.” This report focused on the costs of burdensome documentary requirements that, with political will, could be eliminated in a matter of months. BPI estimates these unnecessary requirements produce annual burdens of almost \$20 million in unnecessary paperwork costs; \$80 million in lost opportunities for businesses; more than \$2 billion in reduced trade volumes (and the associated loss of about \$154 million in revenues collected by the Customs General Administration (CGA) on imports), as well as \$2 billion in lost gross domestic product growth. The report has been circulated to public and private sector stakeholders. Based on the report’s findings, a draft MOU aimed at achieving measurable improvements in trade facilitation in Mongolia by July 31, 2012 is being circulated within the CGA and Mongolian National Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

CGA Considers Lessons from Georgia

BPI presented “Lessons from Georgia: Rapid Reforms, Rapid Results” via a nation-wide video conference. The session, linking customs offices and border posts around Mongolia, discussed how Georgia, a world’s leading reformer, approached trade facilitation reforms under very challenging circumstances. Discussions covered specific initiatives as well as general reform strategies. Of particular interest to CGA is how such reforming economies introduced customs risk management and the impact on revenue collection.

USAID CENTRALLY AND REGIONALLY FUNDED PROJECTS

Sustainable Conservation Approaches in Priority EcoSystems (SCAPES) Project -- USAID Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)

Rare Pride and Collaborative Wildlife Protection Training on the Eastern Steppe

On April 17-18, 24 citizen volunteer rangers from 14 soums of Dornod Province participated in a training workshop focused on steppe biodiversity and wildlife law enforcement organized by WCS and supported in part by the Daurian Steppe SCAPES project as a component of the Eastern Steppe Rare Pride campaign. The training was designed to “remove barriers” to effective wildlife protection on the steppe by engaging motivated citizens who have come forward to play the role of “soum volunteer rangers”. The workshop was part of the effort to address illegal hunting and wildlife trade in this portion of the Daurian Steppe by enhancing collaboration among citizens, community-based organizations and government agencies to improve the public’s awareness of the value of biodiversity and the laws and regulations governing the harvest and trade of steppe wildlife. The request for the training workshop came from the Environmental Protection and Tourism Agency who participated in the training along with the General Inspection Agency, Eastern Mongolia Protected Area Administration and the Eastern Mongolia Community Conservation Association. Participant performance on pre and post-workshop surveys indicated more a 20% increase in knowledge of specific law and regulations related to wildlife with more than half of the participants scoring over 80% in the final test. These results indicate that soum-level citizen volunteer rangers are now much better equipped to play their role in collaborative wildlife protection across this portion of the Daurian Steppe.

Mongolian National Consensus Building Program (NCB) - USAID International Republican Institute (IRI)

IRI Conducts Focus Group Discussions in Umnugobi and Orkhon Provinces

On April 23-28, 2012, IRI conducted two focus group discussions (FGD’s) in Umnugobi and Orkhon Provinces respectively in cooperation with the Social Policy, Development and Research Institute under the National University of Mongolia. Concern about economic issues such as widespread unemployment and rising consumer prices dominated the discussion in both focus groups and among participants

from both sexes and all age groups. The participants of the FGDs held in Umnugobi Province expressed deep concern about the negative consequences of the mining industry on the environment. A desire for more economic development, concern about social problems such as alcoholism, the need to re-examine the terms of major mining project agreements and complaints about private sector nepotism were also raised.

When completed, IRI plans to share a formal report on the focus group results with local officials and area MP's.

Enabling Market Integration through Rural Group Empowerment (EMIRGE)
CHF International

Operational Plan for 2012

CHF-supported dairy farming groups finalized their Operational Plans for 2012. The cooperative plans include new business strategies and cost benefit analysis to project profits. This year, seven cooperatives made plans to increase the production of fodder and silage from plant materials.

Monthly Production Monitoring

Due to CHF dairy group members increased production and usage of silage and green fodder, milk production during last 3-4 months significantly increased (December 2011- March 2012).

Combined data for 12 farmers from 4 cooperatives with a total of 76 milking cows:

Quarter	Production
September- November 2011	12,287L - 8,440,909 MNT (before use of silage)
December - March 2012	17,471L - 12,155,509 MNT (after use of silage)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FUNDED PROJECTS MANAGED BY USAID/MONGOLIA

Rural Agribusiness Support Program (RASP)-USDA
Mercy Corps

Toxic, Medicinal Pasture Plants and Endemic Disease

In collaboration with the Veterinary Research Institute (VRI), State Central Veterinary Laboratory (SCVL) and Mercy Corps, a veterinary capacity building training on "Toxic, Medicinal Pasture Plants and Endemic Disease" for both state and private veterinarians was organized in 12 Provinces. In total 592 veterinarians and veterinary health care specialists participated in the training, the first of its kind in shared memory. All

participants received a training kit, which included an automatic syringe with drencher, stainless needles for the syringe, a stethoscope, eye safety glasses, a memory stick (Flash - 4Gb), cotton bag and 3 books titled "Toxic and Medicinal Plant Identification and Usage," "Illustrated Reference of Commonly Occurring Endemic Diseases in Mongolia", and "Endemic Diseases." Participants learned how to recognize toxic pasture plants and diagnose poisoned livestock, as well as how to improve their endemic disease diagnosis by using modern techniques; prepare vet drugs with local medicinal plants and produce enriched mineral fodder to prevent endemic diseases.

Rural products in modern packaging

RASP conducted a training to link package producers with rural businesses that were selected for the "Package Grant" on April 4, 2012 in Ulaanbaatar. The business entrepreneurs from the provinces who participated in the training received information on bar code and its use in labeling. Representatives of the five largest package producers such as "OB Press" LLC, OB Plastic LLC, FinPak LLC, Chadavkhi Trade and IPA Pack LLC introduced their products, price offers and requirements for product ordering and answered questions of the participants. This way, the participants were provided with the opportunity to receive all information from one place and could also place orders for packages. As result of the training, 18 businesses purchased products worth 12 million 850 thousand tugrug and placed orders worth 11 million 872 thousand tugrug. The usage of these improved packaging will increase the safety of the locally produced food products.

Launching the Safe Food—Happy Life

This short-term campaign is currently underway from April 25 through May 15 and seeks to offer information about purchase of appropriate food products from food markets, stores and shops for herders, consumers, children. The campaign highlights symptoms of food related diseases; the process of infection and prevention opportunities. It further propagates a proper and healthy way of eating and lifestyle. The campaign is co-organized in partnership with MOFALI, Food and Agricultural Department, State Professional Inspection Agency and the rural health departments. To get started, a training-of-trainers occurred in UB April 14—15 to introduce the trainers to the materials and the essence of the campaign. Within the framework of the campaign 1800 copies of three brochures were prepared—Things to consider when buying food; Let's prevent from diseases transmitted through food; and Guide for healthy lifestyle. 2400 brochures of "The health of your loved ones depends from right choices of the housewife" and 3650 poster of "5 keys for safe food" have been printed and delivered to the Provinces to be used in the campaign

trainings and public awareness. The campaign will reach 12,000 consumers in the 12 provinces.

April in pictures



Contestants of the Recycled Fashion Show 2012



Alyson refused to leave unless we kept the baby goat



Monument to the Mongolian Army troops who won the battle in Khalkhiin Gol battle, in Choibalsan, Dornod province



L. Ganchimeg, journalist from Unuudur, interviews a senior customs inspector at Khavirga Border Inspections Point



Monument of Lenin among ruins of a former Soviet military base in Choibalsan, Dornod province



Twin baby camels with their mama in the steppes of Dornod province

On the right: Spring time in Mongolia is in full swing and baby animals are everywhere

