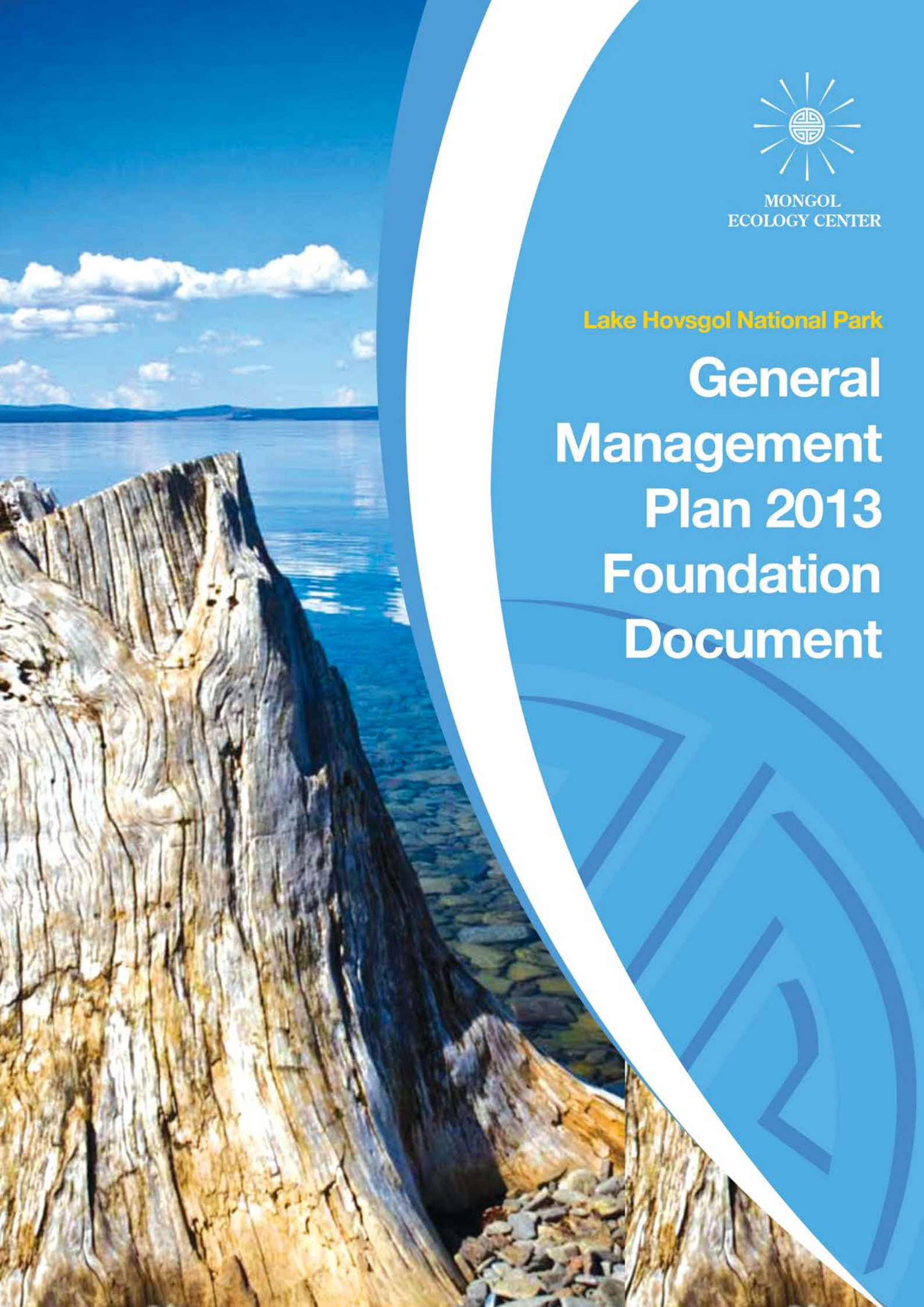




MONGOL
ECOLOGY CENTER

Lake Hovsgol National Park

General Management Plan 2013 Foundation Document



Project is Funded by



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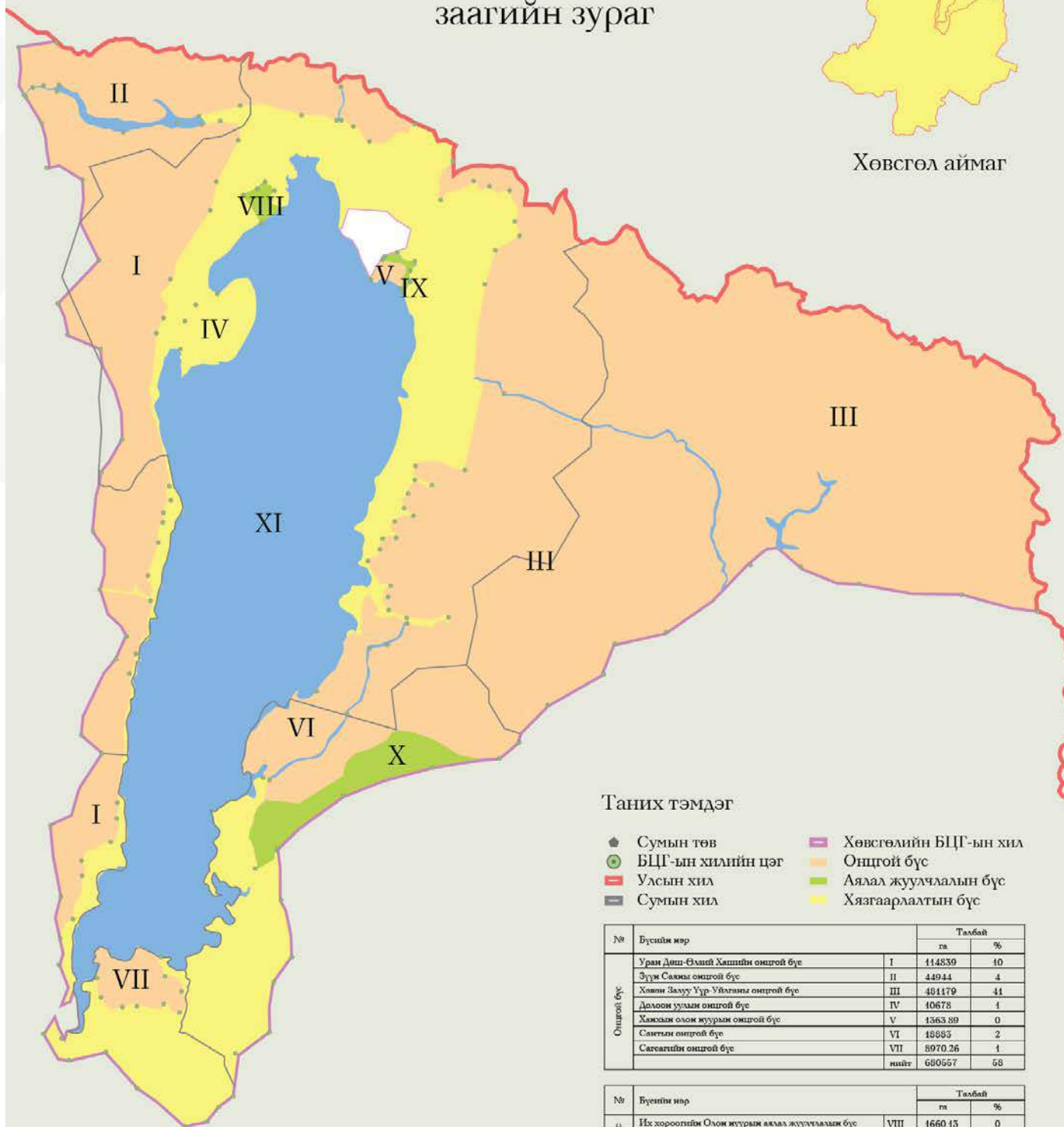
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Таних тэмдэг

- ◆ Сумын төв
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- Сумын хил
- Хөвсгөлийн БЦГ-ын хил
- Онцгой бүс
- Аялал жуулчлалын бүс
- Хязгаарлалтын бүс

№	Бүсийн нэр		Талбай	
			га	%
Онцгой бүс	Урам Дөш-Өндөр Хөхийн Онцгой бүс	I	114839	10
	Эрж Саям Онцгой бүс	II	44944	4
	Ховон Залуу Уур Уйламы Онцгой бүс	III	481179	41
	Долоон уулын Онцгой бүс	IV	40678	4
	Хамгай олон зуурын Онцгой бүс	V	1363.89	0
	Самгын Онцгой бүс	VI	18985	2
	Сагаалтын Онцгой бүс	VII	8970.26	1
		Нийт	680557	58

№	Бүсийн нэр		Талбай	
			га	%
Аялал жуулчлалын бүс	Их хорооллын Олон зуурын аялал жуулчлалын бүс	VIII	1660.13	0
	Хамгай Олон зуурын аялал жуулчлалын бүс	IX	707.794	0
	Цагаан уул Оршйн аялал жуулчлалын бүс	X	16711	1
	Хөвсгөл нуур	XI	278808	24
	Коридор		7839	1
		Нийт	305725.6	26
	Хязгаарлалтын бүс	Нийт	186507	16
	Нийт		1172790	100

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Хөвсгөл аймгийн Хамх сумын нутаг дэвсгэрт 615352 га
Ренцэнхүрив сумын нутаг дэвсгэрт 86724.98 га
Цагаан-Уур сумын нутаг дэвсгэрт 332863 га
Чандраан-Өндөр сумын нутаг дэвсгэрт 89799.6 га
Алаг-Эрдэнэ сумын нутаг дэвсгэрт 57823.6 га

Lake Hovsgol National Park General Mangement Plan 2013
FOUNDATION DOCUMENT
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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this General Management Plan is to set forth clear direction for the management of Lake Hovsgol National Park. It consists of four separate sections:

1. Foundation Document
2. Transportation Section
3. Visitor Services Section
4. Interpretation and Education Section

This Foundation Document establishes the basic facts and principles for managing the park over the next 20 to 25 years. Based on the Mongolian Law on Special Protected Area (1994), the plan sets forth the park's desired future conditions for:

- Natural, historic, and cultural resources,
- Nomadic lifestyle and traditions,
- Interpretation and education programs,
- Visitor use and commercial services,
- Resource and visitor protection,
- Transportation, potable water, sanitation, and energy infrastructure,
- Coordination with other agencies, the Hovsgol aimag, and the five soums that comprise the park.

From the priorities established in this General Management Plan Foundation Document, five-year management actions are developed in greater detail with the intent to fund and implement the recommended actions immediately. Sustained, ongoing stakeholder involvement by the commercial, residential and existing and potential park user groups is a required element of professional park management.



PARK PURPOSE

Lake Hovsgol National Park was originally established to preserve and conserve in its original condition the specific traits of the natural zones, unique formations, rare and endangered plants and animals, historic and cultural monuments, and the natural beauty and to conduct and permit research in the form of scientific investigation and evaluation. In May 2011 the original purpose was expanded by the 18th Resolution of Parliament to recognize the importance of natural preservation, to maintain and conserve the original landscape, and to develop eco-tourism.

Lake Hovsgol is over two million years old and is the 16th largest lake in the world by volume, holding one percent of the Earth's freshwater, and yields an important part of the inflow to its sister lake in Russia, Lake Baikal.

PARK SIGNIFICANCE

Lake Hovsgol National Park is located in north central Mongolia along the Russia/Mongolia border. With a boundary expansion in 2011, the park covers approximately 1.2 million hectares (2.9 million acres) and includes much of the Lake Hovsgol watershed, the source the Eg River, and to the east the upper headwaters of the Uur River, a tributary of the Eg. The Eg and Uur rivers, near their confluence outside of the park, are home to the world's largest fresh water trout—the taimen. This taimen population is threatened throughout its native range and classified as endangered on the Mongolian Red List. Lake Hovsgol is situated between the boreal forest (Siberian Taiga) to the north and temperate grasslands (Central Asian Steppe) to the south.

Lake Hovsgol National Park is nationally significant because it contains:

- The only ancient lake completely surrounded by permafrost;
- The lake contains 70 percent of Mongolia's fresh water;
- An area relatively unaltered by human development;
- Old growth Siberian Larch, typical of the original taiga forest;
- An area that creates a nationally and globally unique opportunity to isolate the impacts of locally accelerated climate change on both aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems and to examine the resilience of intact ecosystem. The park is a vast area of interconnecting ecosystems that cascade downward from western high mountain alpine forest and tundra, through taiga forests and steppe grasslands, streams, wetlands, and ponds, to the large lake below; and,
- A sacred place long important in Mongolian culture. Mongolians hold sacred Lake Hovsgol the "Mother Lake," the source of life, and to the north, the Munkh Saridag Mountains, the "Father." The lake and the surrounding mountains are still considered a sacred place today.

Lake Hovsgol is over two million years old and is the 16th largest lake in the world by volume, holding one percent of the Earth's freshwater, and yields an important part of the inflow to its sister lake in Russia, Lake Baikal. Located at the southern edge of the Siberian permafrost region and the elevation of 1,645 meters (5,397 ft.), the lake has a very low productivity more comparable to the oceans than to other lakes, yet it has several endemic aquatic species and many rare plants and animals living in its watershed.

There are 68 species of mammals identified in the Hovsgol area: most originate from the Siberian boreal forest and the cold temperate regions. The Species listed as rare or endangered in Mongolia's Red Book (Shirevdamba 1998) include the following: Argali sheep (*Ovis ammon*), ibex (*Camra sibirica*), elk (*Cervus elaphus*), reindeer (*Rangifer tarandus*), musk deer (*Moschus moschiferus*), brown bear (*Ursus arctos*), lynx (*Felis lynx*), marten (*Martes zibellina*), beaver (*Castor fiber birulia*), wolf (*Canus lupis*), moose (*Alces alces pfizenmayer*), wild boar (*Sus scrofa*), Siberian mole (*Talpa altaica*) and occasional sightings of foot prints of Snow leopards (*Unica unica*) in the Horidol Saridag and Sayan Mountains adjacent to the lake.

The area around Lake Hovsgol is also home to the practice of traditional Shamanism. Shamanism may be the oldest spiritual belief in the world and its exact origins area unknown.

There is belief that this spiritual practice evolved in the mountains of the Lake Hovsgol region. The families in the Hovsgol area still today participate in traditional Shamanistic rituals.

(The above is taken largely from Dr. Clyde E. Goulden's 2006 draft World Heritage Site nomination.)

VISION for PARK MANAGEMENT

The pristine, diverse natural, historical, cultural, and scenic resources that embody the spiritual values of the “Mother Sea” and the “Father” Munkh-Saridag Mountains, and nomadic traditions and folklore they support, are conserved forever through long-term preservation fully integrated with sustainable economic development.

Desired Future Conditions for Lake Hovsgol national park

The vision for Lake Hovsgol National Park is fulfilled over the next 20 to 25 years through the achievement of these Desired Future Conditions.

Natural, Historic, and Cultural Resources

- There is a broad diversity of research, monitoring and management programs in place to ensure that the park's resources are not harmed, and are managed and restored where necessary.
- Park Management Zones (Special Zones, Protected Zones, and Limited Use Zones) as prescribed by law are established and managed based on scientific knowledge, scholarly research and scenic values.

Nomadic Traditions

- Nomadic traditions are maintained in a fashion that protects park resources and reflects long enduring and evolving traditions.

Visitor Use

- A wide variety of nature-based visitor uses are designed and managed in a fashion that leave park resources and cultural/spiritual values unharmed.
- Information centers and websites provide park maps and information that identify and explain management zones, available commercial services, the diversity of park resources, and the permitted uses in the park.
- Road signs, trail directional and distance signs, maps, and interpretive/information signs/wayside exhibits are installed in strategic locations.

Interpretation and Education

- Area residents and park visitors are informed through a comprehensive program of interpretation and education about the park's purpose and significance in a way that inspires personal connections and a commitment to preserve park values.

Commercial Services

- Rigorous and clear policies, standards, and enforcement authorities are in place to guide

management of all commercial services to ensure that ger camps and other commercial services provide a quality visitor experience in a fashion that does not harm natural and historic resources, and cultural/spiritual and aesthetic values.

Resource and Visitor Protection

- Clear law enforcement authorities, policies, standards, and a professionally trained staff are in place to ensure that development and management of all commercial services are in compliance, provide for quality visitor experiences and do not harm natural resources or aesthetic and spiritual values; that the park's resources are protected from poaching and other illegal activity; and that the park's visitors are safe and protected from illegal activity.

Transportation, Potable Water, Sanitation, and Energy Infrastructure

- Visitors and area residents have sufficient access to parks areas over a carefully designed, limited, environmentally sensitive, and well-maintained network of clearly designated roads, foot trails, traditional horse trails, and waterways.

- Individual or collective potable water, sanitation and energy systems are developed with professional green engineering, energy, and environmental standards. Management Plans for all regional protected areas are integrated and provide for compatible policies and practices consistent with pertinent legal authorities.

Business, Funding, and Administrative multi-year strategy

- Business, funding and administrative multi-year strategy that includes park operation, staffing and construction project costs and revenues is in place and updated annually.

- Levels of funding annually available to park managers through government appropriations, retention of entrance fees, and other sources are sufficient to assure that park facilities and park operations, including the field-ranger force, are managed to achieve the standards of internationally recognized professional park management.

- Hiring, training, and other components of human resources management are based upon par needs and reflect internationally recognized professional practices.

National and International recognition

- A variety of agreements are established and maintained to assure regional, national, and international consistency is maintained and reflect professional park management standards.

- Lake Hovsgol National Park is known for its national and international significance through recognitions such as a UNESCO World Heritage Site designation.

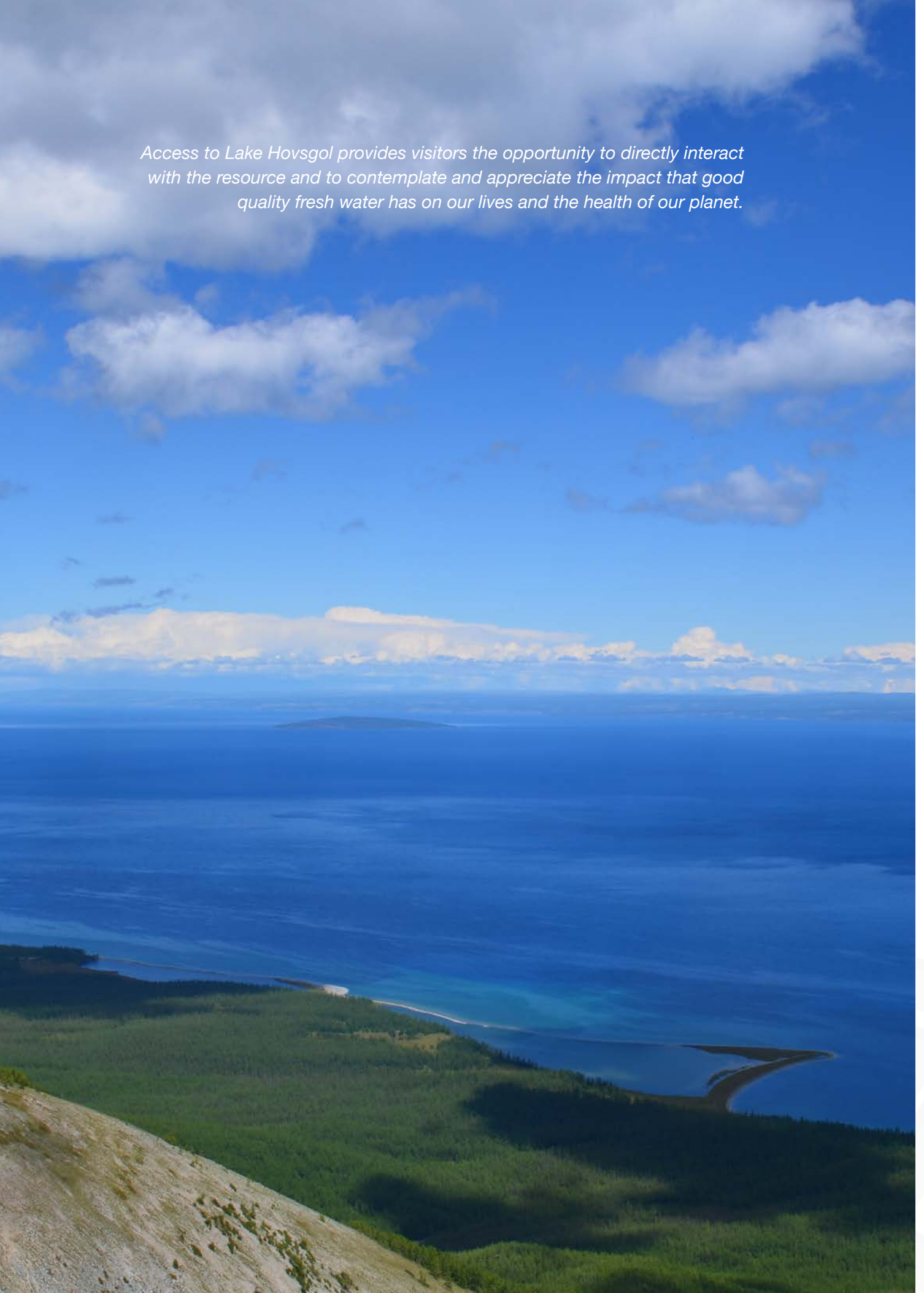
Coordination and Communication

- Coordination is in place at the national, aimag, and soum levels to ensure agreement on policies and practices that clearly establish responsibilities, promote the proper use of the park, and protect the park's resources.
- Through the Buffer Zone Council the park coordinates with the soums and the Hovsgol aimag. At the national level the park administration coordinates goals and activities with the National Plan for the Protected Areas, the Water Plan, and the National Tourism Plan.



Most of Lake Hovsgol National Park's ecosystems remain intact and provide outstanding opportunities for research on a local basis as well as on a global scale for monitoring climate change.

Access to Lake Hovsgol provides visitors the opportunity to directly interact with the resource and to contemplate and appreciate the impact that good quality fresh water has on our lives and the health of our planet.



SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND OPINION

Staff from the Mongol Ecology Center and the teams from Global Parks have met on many occasions, formally and informally, with a wide variety of groups and individuals. Such meetings include one attended by about 20 local people in Hatgal and one attended by an equal number in Hankh. Other meetings of ger camp managers, commercial tour operators, park staff, teachers from local schools and eco-clubs, and other local residents.

There was strong consensus on the following points regarding commercial services both inside and outside the park:

- The vision and long-term future conditions for the park set forth in the General Management Plan are appropriate and consistent with the goals of residents and commercial operators.
- The park needs to be “managed,” especially all actions needed to protect the lake.
- Garbage and sewage removal are not consistent among ger camps and not sufficient.
- There were too few rangers/inspectors to enforce existing laws and regulations.
- Existing laws and regulations regarding the required set-back of ger camps from the lake, sewage and garbage removal, and illegal tent camping are especially important and should be enforced.
- All ger camps, tour operators, and other commercial services should be provided with brochures, maps, and other orientation and interpretive materials to provide to their guests.
- There should be a greater diversity of activities for park visitors staying at the ger camps to do both independently and/or with a guide, such as established and signed trails for independent hiking.
- Independent tent camping by individuals, family groups, etc. is a significant and growing problem. All tent camping should be restricted to designated campgrounds; such campgrounds should be located at least 150 meters from the lakeshore and separated to the extent possible from ger camps; this regulation should be vigorously and predictably enforced.
- Ger camp owners and commercial tour operators should form associations that meet regularly and provide a more unified message when speaking to government leaders regarding park management issues and decisions.
- Park staff should be better trained regarding management of visitor use and commercial services.
- Park leadership and staff should do much more to collaborate and communicate with local people regarding “what is happening” and decision-making that effects their lives.

- Local people, especially school children, should be provided with training, educational materials, and other information describing the purpose, significance, values, and park regulations.
- All guides, ger camp managers/staff, and others providing commercial services to park visitors should be trained to understand the purpose, significance, values, and regulations of the park.
- There is a strong need for more and better equipped rangers to enforce laws and regulations.
- Uncontrolled and unmanaged growth of ger camps, guest houses, and nomadic herder camps, especially along the road skirting the southwest shore of the lake are reducing the quality of the visitor experience.
- Establishment of varied low quality and limited service ger camps and guest houses around the lake is discouraging international and more affluent visitors from visiting the lake.



Staff from the Mongol Ecology Center and the teams from Global Parks have met on many occasions, formally and informally, with a wide variety of groups and individuals seeking their input on park management and related issues.

LAW and POLICY

There are specific laws and policies that ensure park managers and rangers have sufficient authority to make appropriate and timely decisions necessary to protect park resources and to ensure visitor safety and enjoyment.

The Mongolian Law on Special Protected Areas, November 15, 1994, as amended, regulates “the use and procurement of lands for state special protection and the preservation and conservation of its original condition in order to preserve the specific traits of the natural zones, unique formations, rare and endangered plants and animals, historic and cultural monuments, and the natural beauty, as well as research and investigate evaluation.”

The 1994* law organizes the Mongolian Special Protected Areas in four categories:

1. Strictly Protected Areas
2. National Conservation Park
3. Nature Reserves
4. Monuments

The 1994 law originally established the national conservation park management zones as Special Zones, Travel and Tourism Zones, and Limited Use Zones. The law was amended in 1995 by State Ikh Hural Resolution #26 on Rearranging Categories of Protected Areas and established the current zones as Special Zones, Protected Zones and Limited Use Zones.

Other sections of the law authorize the establishment of Buffer Zones adjacent to the Special Protected Areas, the establishment of Special Protected Areas in the State Border and Near Border Territories, and the financing of Special Protected Areas.

Article 13 of the law provides that National Conservation Parks shall consist of those areas taken under state special protection whose natural condition is relatively preserved and which have historical, cultural, scientific, educational, and ecological importance. Article 14 also creates three management zones* for a National Conservation Park:

1. Special Zones
2. Protected Zones
3. Limited Use Zones.

Management requirements for the three zones are stipulated in the law. Several amendments to the Law on Special Protected Areas have been authorized since 1994 and care must be taken to assure that the laws referenced include all the amendments to date. Articles 15, 16, 17, and 18 of the 1994 law, as amended, outline the uses that are permitted or prohibited in national parks.

Lake Hovsgol National Conservation Park (National Park) was established on May 4, 1992 through Resolution No. 13 of the State Committee of Environmental Inspection Resolution. Resolution 13, based on articles 6 and 7 of the state protected areas regulation amended by the 36th resolution of the Government of Mongolia in 1992, carried three parts.

- I. Approve the bylaws of the “Hovsgol” center of the Hovsgol National Park in the first appendix, and include the protected, tourism and service zones and their boundaries in the second appendix.*
- II. Locate the trails and ways for boats, cars, and hiking in direction of Mongol Huh Suvd, Hisengiin Orgil, Lake Hovsgol, and Munkh-Saridag.*
- III. Assign the duties to determine the land area and zoning in the park to N. Purevsuren, Land Policy Institute, and N. JambaaJamts, Hovsgol Center of Hovsgol National Park, within the second and third quarter of 1992.*

The 2nd Appendix of Government Resolution #169, dated 1995 further established General Procedure of National Park Conservation Areas and the 3rd Appendix of Government Resolution #169, dated 1995 contains special provision to be followed in Lake Hovsgol National Park.

Lake Hovsgol National Park administration shall enforce this procedure by the following:

- Freight types, amount, and shipment times through the ice and water routes shall be determined,*
- a. Monitored accordingly, and permits to be issued in cooperation with relevant organizations;*
 - b. Inspect motor boats, ferry boats on lake water, and issue permits after ensuring no pollutants such as oil and petroleum entering the lake;*
 - c. Stone pit locations for rocks, gravels, sands and pebbles shall be set for repairing and maintaining roads from Hatgal to Hankh and from Hatgal to Jankhai;*
 - d. Require travellers not to pollute lake water with petrol, fuel and trash, floating devices must meet technical safety requirements and not to be overloaded;*
 - e. Land use in Hatgal village and Hankh soum in the national park shall be regulated in cooperation with the soum governors.*

On May 5, 2011 the 18th Resolution of Parliament of Mongolia was enacted for the approval of territories as state protected areas and re-establishing boundary lines of some state protected areas.

RESOLVED, based on the 2nd clause of Article 2 of Law on Specially protected area, 3rd and 4th clauses of “National program of specially protected area” of Resolution #29, dated April 09, 1998 by the Parliament of Mongolia:

- 1. For the reason to recognize the importance of natural preservation, maintenance and conservation of original landscape, development of eco-tourism, the following areas are taken into the protected areas:*
 - a. Certain areas of Ulaan-Uul and Bayanzurkh soum territories along with the Ulaan Taiga National Park to be advanced as Strictly protected area;*
 - b. Tengis-Shishged river basin in Tsagaannuur, Renchinlkhumbe and Ulaan-Uul soum territories to be set national park area;*

2. Boundary lines of the protected areas for the reason to recognize the importance of natural preservation, maintenance and conservation of original landscape, development of eco-tourism, the following areas are re-established accordingly:

a. Territories of Hatgal village of Alag-Erdene soum and Hankh soum center of Hovsgol aimag are removed and parts of Chandmani-Undur, Tsagaan Uur and Hankh soums of Hovsgol aimag are acquired as part of the National Park and boundary lines are established as in the 1st Appendix.

Summary of Other National Laws Applied to Nature and Environment

(except most resolutions and orders relating to relevant laws)

- Constitution of Mongolia 1992
- Law of Protection of Nature and Environment 1995
- Law of Special Protected Area 1994
- Law of Buffer Zone of Special Protected Area 1997
- Law of Forest 1995
- Law of Natural Plants 1995
- Law of Animal Kingdom 2000
- Law of Hunting 2000
- Law of Water 2004
- Law of Spring Water 2003
- Law of Land 2002
- Law of Air 1995
- Law of Plant Protection 1996
- Law of Protection of Forest & Steppe from Fire 1996
- Law of Land Subsurface 1988
- Law of Tourism 2000
- Law of Preservation of Cultural Heritage 2001
- Law of Protection from Chemical Toxins 1995
- Law of Home & Industrial Wastage 2003
- State Ikh Hural Resolution #26 on Rearranging Categories of Protected Areas 1995



Park ranger in uniform



Logo designed for the 25th anniversary celebration of the park

ACTION PLANS

Short-Term Action Proposals

Short-term issue-specific action proposals include a description of existing conditions, presentation of standards/best practices/criteria for decision making, and proposed actions to achieve on-the-ground results. All recommendations made are those determined appropriate and necessary to fulfill the long-term vision and desired future conditions set forth in this foundation portion of the General Management Plan 2012.

The following sections address the most urgent actions that are especially critical to preserve the cultural and natural resource values of Lake Hovsgol National Park, and to provide for a quality experience to ever-increasing numbers of visitors.

1. Visitor Services will include the full range of visitor activities and services, including management of ger camp and other visitor accommodations as well as design and management of various nature-based recreational activities that best balance resources preservation and visitor enjoyment.
2. Transportation policies and proposals will set forth design criteria and routes for a primary park transportation system. Proposed routes and roads will give the highest priority to resources preservation by respecting significant natural, cultural, and scenic values and rigorously limiting the existing—mostly unplanned—network of driving routes now used by park visitors.
3. Interpretation and education program will identify park interpretive themes and establish a wide variety of locations and techniques to deliver information and provide interpretive opportunities.
4. Management zoning for the park will be reviewed and updated. The established management zones within the park will be reviewed in light of the park's management plan vision and desired future conditions, and a basic inventory, mapping, and zoning map will be developed for additional lands added to the park's northeast corner.

Long-Term Action Proposals Not Addressed in this Plan

1. Natural Resources Management

The lack of comprehensive understanding of the research that has been accomplished in the Lake Hovsgol area, and the lack of an ongoing research program, serve to delay the development of science-based natural resource management actions. To overcome this barrier the Mongol Ecology Center is exploring the feasibility of establishing the Hovsgol Science and Education Center, a key part of the envisioned Hovsgol Conservancy. This center would have three major purposes:

- a. It is a staffed institution that collects, distills, and translates the existing body of scientific and ethnographic knowledge for use in park management decision-making and management actions,

b. It develops park related educational material and programs for park staff, nomadic families, area businesses, and community residents;

c. a physical facility that provides:

- offices for the institution and research and laboratory space for scientists and ethnographer conducting research within Lake Hovsgol National Park and four other Special Protected Areas in the Hovsgol region,
- dormitory, kitchen, and dining area for visiting scientists, and
- a multi-purpose room for group discussions of field scientists, community meetings, and a training room for protected area administration staff and business leaders and their employees.

2. Cultural Resource Management

The park's archeological, historic, and ethnographic resources will be identified, catalogued, and mapped. Management requirements for each resource site will be identified. Proposed cultural resource actions will include Nomadic Lifestyle and Grazing Management.

The park's livestock grazing areas will be inventoried, mapped, and analyzed to assess the type and number of livestock and their impacts on grazing habitats. A combined team of professional ethnographers, steppe grassland biologists and climatologists, together with the nomadic families, will develop management actions and an implementation strategy that will allow grazing and the nomadic lifestyle to be sustained on healthy grasslands within the park.

3. Forest Health and Fire Management

These will be part of the Natural Resource Management Actions. The parks forest stands will be inventoried and a strategy will be developed to address both long-term timber stand health, resistance to large-stand destroying fires, and personal safety of forest users. The plan will address reforestation of areas already impacted where natural regeneration is not adequate to enhance visual appearance and habitat. Stands in high public use areas will be undergo hazard tree removal for public safety and thinning where appropriate to increase the long-term resistance to disease and spread of ground fires to the canopy. The park will utilize removed trees for a variety of purposes including firewood and fencing materials.

4. Lake Management

The surface waters of the park, Lake Hovsgol and its tributaries, and smaller ponds and springs, will be inventoried and the quality and quantity of the water will be monitored to detect long term changes. A team of aquatic biologists, chemists, and geologists will analyze the information and propose management actions to sustain Lake Hovsgol's pristine condition.

5. Buffer Zone Management

The park will map the areas designated as Buffer Zone as prescribed by the Mongolian Law on Special Protected Areas, November 15, 1994, as amended. The purpose of the Buffer Zone is to reduce, eliminate, and prevent adverse impacts to Lake Hovsgol National Park and to foster the appropriate use of the park's natural resources by the local citizens, to broaden their participation in environmental protection, and to ensure proper living standards. Representatives from the park administration will meet in facilitated discussions with the Buffer Zone Council(s) to develop the legally required Buffer Zone Plan and Implementation Strategy.

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Publication Design:

Mongol Ecology Center