

Objectives of the project

To strengthen the Mongolian communities capacities to implement innovative and sustainable long-term landscape management to address food system challenges and climate stresses.

Background

Mongolia pursues green development as an overarching strategy. Even so, sectoral policies, governance jurisdictions and mandates, planning frameworks, and stewardship responsibilities are compartmentalised and not sufficiently aligned. Moreover, integrated medium/long-term land use planning at the soum level (district) is lacking, leading to largely unregulated and non-sustainable land use. Deficient land use, in turn, gives rise to land degradation and desertification with the concomitant ecological and socio-economic consequences. The causal relationship is obvious and compelling: about 70 percent of Mongolia's territory is used for livestock grazing, and close to 77 percent displays signs of degradation or even desertification. Steppe forest is the transition between taiga forest and grasslands. Humans use the grassland and the steppe forest for herding and at the same time do they need timber, wood-based fuel and non-timber forest products (NTFP) for survival. Human influence has shifted the balance towards grassland. To ensure sustainable landscape use, degradation of grasslands, forest and intermediate zones has to be halted simultaneously.



However, irregular, open-access forest use remains widespread and threatens forest protection. The foregoing problems are exacerbated further by climate change, whose effects are more prevalent in Mongolia than elsewhere. The average air-temperature increased by 2.2 degrees Centigrade over the last 70 years. Consequently, precipitation has decreased and become more irregular, and extreme weather events have increased in terms of both frequency and severity.

The theory of change to achieve the objectives

The project will contribute to the enhanced food security and improved climate resiliency of livelihoods of Mongolian communities. The project's Theory of Change implies that, if agriculture landscape management is adapted to climate change, the agricultural productivity will be increased and agriculture sustainability can be achieved. If local government officials and communities have increased capacity to manage forest resources and protect biodiversity, this will lead to sustainable natural resource management, which, in turn, will lead to resilient livelihoods and improved synergies between agricultural and forest production and eco-system services. For these to be achieved, it is required to develop participatory territorial development plans, enhance agro-ecological value chains, improve capacity of national research institutions, local communities and producers. It will also require practical demonstration of site-specific management options, their validation by means of science-based monitoring, and the communication of evidences and lessons-learnt to decision makers at local, regional and national levels.

The Theory of Change is based on a number of assumptions. First, it is assumed that, given their respective mandates and needs, institutions and stakeholders have sufficient common interests in sustainable landscape management. It is also assumed that, crop farmers and herders are willing to adopt new practices based on agroecology to address food security if the practices provide the sufficient incentives (more climate smart production, increased yields) to be adopted by the local



communities. Furthermore, it is assumed that national and aimag authorities (province) grant exceptions for experimenting new rules beyond the current policy and regulatory framework for the forestry sector, the soum administrations and Forest Units accept participatory planning approaches, and the increased organisational capacities of forest user groups allow their meaningful participation in planning exercises. The Theory of Change is a living document that will be revisited regularly, along with the assumptions, as part of the project's adaptive management.

The project has two outcomes: 1) Mainstreaming climate change adaptation into the agricultural landscape management to increase agricultural productivity, sustainability, and value addition; and 2) Improving capacity for sustainable landscape management of forest resources and conservation of biodiversity in target soums. Each of the outcomes will be operationalised through four outputs.

Main activities

- ✓ Output 1.1: **Selected soums' Territorial Development Plans are developed**, the project will support the establishment of cross-sectoral, multi-stakeholder gender balanced working groups at aimag and soum levels to facilitate participatory, adaptive landscape planning and management in the existing land-use planning process.
- ✓ Output 1.2: **Agroecological value chains are developed to build climate resilient food systems**, the project will introduce agroecological approaches. By building synergies, agroecology can support food production and food security and nutrition while restoring the ecosystem services and biodiversity that are essential for sustainable agriculture.
- ✓ Output 1.3: **Improved capacity of national research institutions, producers and their organizations to spread agroecological practices**, the project will aim at establishing multi-stakeholder platform/network connecting governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, universities, vocational schools and other education institutions as well as national research centers, development partners, other stakeholders representing disadvantaged groups (e.g. women and youth) and private sector entities in the discussions and development of agroecology.
- ✓ Output 1.4: **Optimizing synergies between agricultural and forest production and ecosystem services in the context of an increasingly changing climate**, will increase knowledge on agroforestry and will test some of the practices applicable to local conditions.
- ✓ Output 2.1: **Selected soums apply integrated natural resource management at a landscape scale**, is based on two core-elements: (i) participatory, criteria-based selection of pilot-sites and harmonised decision-making with regard to forests, rangelands and natural resource-based products, as well as (ii) valorisation of natural resources.
- ✓ Output 2.2: **Participatory sustainable management promotes valorisation of forests**, serves to practically demonstrate close-to-nature, multipurpose forest management by forestry enterprises and forest user groups, including piloting of forest-friendly grazing regimes and promotion of non-timber forest products and trees outside forests. Local holders of natural resource stewardship rights and local forest authorities shall be directly involved in all subsequent implementation steps. Output 2.3: **Scientifically validated geo-referenced data inform planning and management decisions**, is dedicated to creating an informational basis for the effective and efficient implementation of the other three outputs ("concept interfaces"). At its core, a scientifically validated monitoring system will be established, enabling unified observation of implementation progress at the pilot sites.



- ✓ **Output 2.4: Enabling framework conditions for forest landscape restoration and valorisation of forest resources are promoted**, is serves to reduce barriers for upscaling of Forest Landscape Restoration-measures, and to translate validated lessons learnt into evidence-based recommendations and decision-making tools.

Project results and lessons learnt will be shared through social media and the organizations' websites, will be published in nationwide publications, and will be presented at national conferences and meetings.

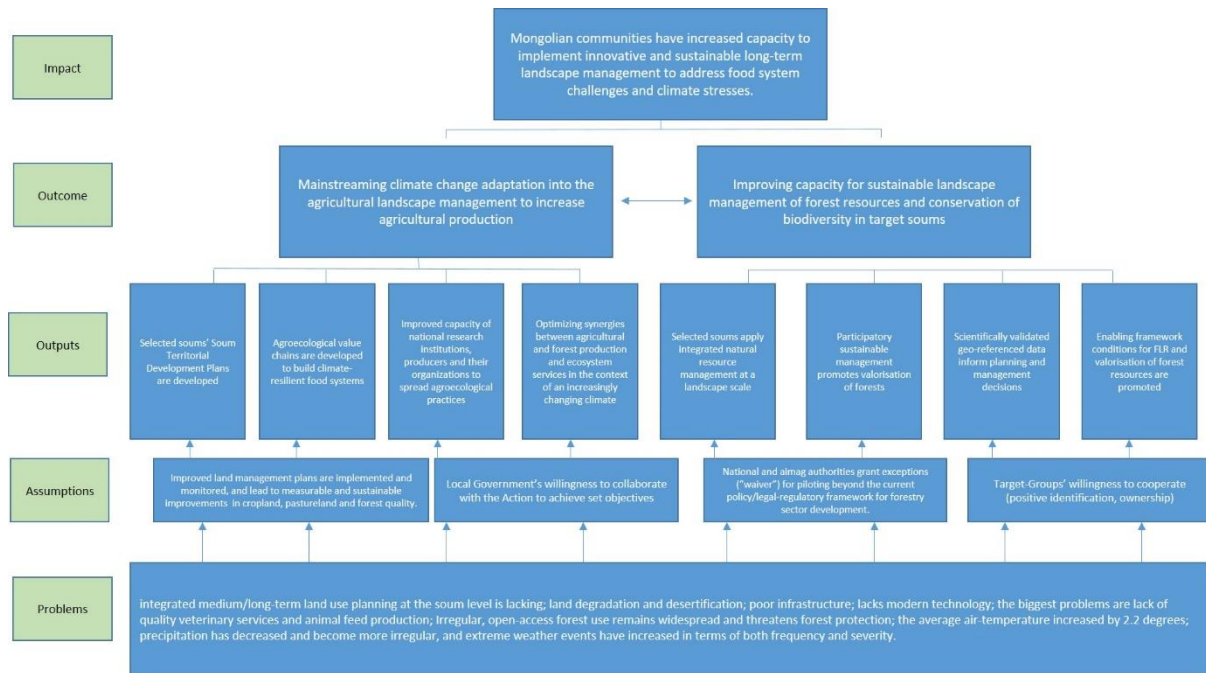


Figure 1 Theory of change

Organization

STREAM will be built around its two main components (specific objectives) with four outputs each. The project will be governed by a unified Project Steering Committee (PSC), to be co-chaired by a high-level representative of the Mongolian Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET). The PSC will be established by official communication or Ministerial Decree. GIZ and FAO will establish a joint Project Management Unit (PMU) with the main functions to ensure overall efficient management, coordination, implementation and monitoring of the project through the effective implementation of the annual work plans and budgets. The project has one joint project office in Ulaanbaatar as duty station of the PMU, attached to (and housed at) a department or affiliated body selected by MET. Further decentralised joint project offices will be set up in Sukhbaatar (Selenge aimag) and Chinggis City (Khentii aimag), attached to the respective aimag (province) governments' Department of Environment and Tourism or affiliated body selected by the aimag government.

Implementing organizations

STREAM will be implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO).

Partners of the project

The Mongolian Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) will assume the role of Project Executing Agency.

Additional cooperating ministries are the Ministry of Construction and Urban Development (MCUD) and the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry (MOFALI). Agency for Land Administration and Management, Geodesy and Cartography.

Furthermore, a University Consortium led by Mendel University (Brno, Czech Republic) will support project implementation

Other main stakeholders:

Herders, crop farmers and forest user groups, units and their enterprises and professional organizations, in the target areas.

Region:

Mongolia – national level; Javkhlant, Mandal and Eruu soums (districts) in Selenge aimag (province); Bayan-Adraga, Binder and Umnudelger soums in Khentii aimag

Funding and co-funding

EU: GCCA+/DeSIRA - Global Climate Change Alliance plus/DeSIRA	€ 4,150,000
German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development	€ 400,000
Total budget	€ € 4,550,000

Duration

3 years – 01 May 2021 – 30 April 2024



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MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM

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