



University of Kentucky
UKnowledge

International Grassland Congress Proceedings

XXI International Grassland Congress / VIII
International Rangeland Congress

Pastureland Management in the Gobi Region, Mongolia: Between Centralised and Market Economy, Mongolian Herders Looking for Sustainable Management Systems

A. Altentsetseg

S. Dideron

Follow this and additional works at: <https://uknowledge.uky.edu/igc>



Part of the [Plant Sciences Commons](#), and the [Soil Science Commons](#)

This document is available at <https://uknowledge.uky.edu/igc/21/18-1/10>

The XXI International Grassland Congress / VIII International Rangeland Congress took place in Hohhot, China from June 29 through July 5, 2008.

Proceedings edited by Organizing Committee of 2008 IGC/IRC Conference

Published by Guangdong People's Publishing House

This Event is brought to you for free and open access by the Plant and Soil Sciences at UKnowledge. It has been accepted for inclusion in International Grassland Congress Proceedings by an authorized administrator of UKnowledge. For more information, please contact UKnowledge@lsv.uky.edu.

Pastureland management in the Gobi Region, Mongolia : between centralised and market economy , Mongolian herders looking for sustainable management systems

A . Altentsetseg¹ , and S . Dideron²

¹ Land Use Survey Specialist , Ulaan Bataar , Mongolia . E-mail : bazaltd@yahoo . com . ² Consultant in Rural Development , 16 rue du Lunain , 75014 Paris , France . E-mail : sdideron@hotmail . com

Key words : community development , herding systems , land use planning , pastureland management

Introduction In Mongolia , during more than fifty years , the utilisation of water and pastureland as collective resources was centrally planned as well as the production and distribution of hay . Since de-collectivisation , fifteen years ago , herders (re)-learn individual management in a market economy . In a situation of great uncertainty worsened by unclear land tenure status , threat of climatic disasters , and high unemployment rate , herders' strategy is to keep as many animals as possible . In the Gobi region , recent years' droughts enhanced the scarcity of pastureland resources and raised the issues of mobility and regulation of the access to pastureland . Decision-makers are looking for new regulation mechanisms . The EU-funded Development of Agricultural Services Project carried out community land use planning activities in the region from 2004 to 2006 . The objectives were to support local communities in assessing their pastureland and water resources , and elaborating participatory management plans .

Materials and methods The Pasture Land Use Survey (PLUS) approach was driven by two main concerns : participation of local technicians and herders' communities , and consideration of socio-economic aspects . The challenge was to produce correct information " utilisable " by local officers , local governments , and herders . The methodology had to be simple , and replicable . The PLUS was carried out in seven Soums in three Aimags using a combination of remote sensing techniques , plants identification , dry matter weighing , and socio-economic surveys . The basic unit used for calculation of the carrying capacity is the pasture use area (area under customary use and protection of a group or several groups of herders) . Pasture use areas , herd movements and water points were identified through discussions with both individuals and herders' communities . They were first located on the spot and on draft maps . Their coordinates were then measured (GPS) and limits drawn on topographic maps .

Results and discussion For each Soum , a socio-economic report and a set of 1 : 100 ,000 maps were produced : general (water points , seasonal settlements , etc .) , vegetation zones (status of degradation) , carrying capacity , and seasonal use of pasture . Remote sensing techniques provided precise information on the location of the water points and seasonal settlements , and limits of pasture use areas . However , these measurements only make sense after the pasture use areas are correctly defined . This requires an in-depth understanding of the herding patterns and decision-making processes within the community . The socio-economic approach was essential to understand herding systems , customary access to land and water , existing conflicts and how these were solved or not .

Conclusions Technical know-how and financial resources necessary to carry out a PLUS are not available at local level . Nonetheless , trained technicians are capable to use the information of the PLUS , manage plans and update the data . To become a management tool , the PLUS cannot be only based on statistics but on data collected in the field , discussed and agreed by the entire herders' community to assess sensitive information such as livestock numbers and modalities of access to water and land . Through the process , herders created pasture management groups . To be operational , they would need legal and institutional recognition , definition of grazing rights and law enforcement . Regulation of pastureland utilisation and migration patterns requires decision-making at higher level and coordination between institutions (herders' groups , bag , Soum , Aimag and central government) .

Reference

IAK/Enterplan (2006) . Completion report , DAS Project . Ulaan Bataar , Mongolia .

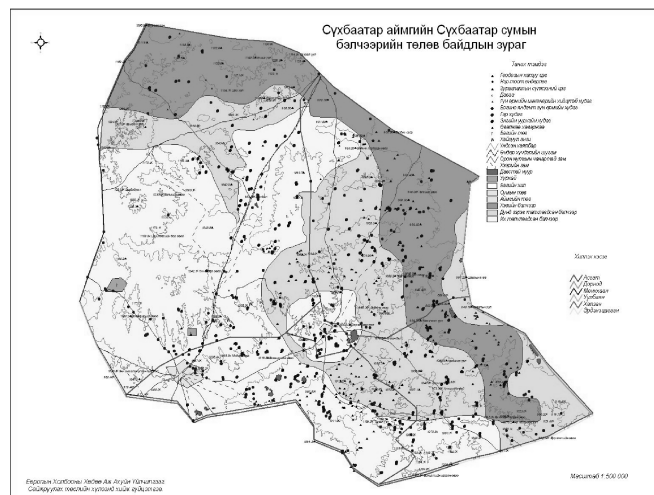


Figure 1 Vegetation zoning map , Halzan Soum 2006 .