RECENT ENVIRONMENT CHANGES AND THEIR IMPACT IN MONGOLIA

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Recent Global Warming and World Climate Change gives adverse impact in Mongolian environment condition & economy. During last 60 years the following changes has occurred in Mongolian environment:

- Climate Change has gone up by 1.56 C°;
- 78.4 percent of the total territory is degraded at certain degree classified as degraded, severely or deserted area;
- 1.4 million. ha hectares of forest (8.3 percent of total forest) have destructed by forest fire, wood cutting, insect infection;
- river water level decreased by 14-35 percent;
- natural disaster frequency increased and yearly disaster occurrence is approximately 20 – 30.

Above-mentioned critical incidents cause 5-6 billion.togrog loss to the Government in ever y year. Due to the factors such as increased air pollution, extreme excess of SOx and NOx from the permitted quantity, threatening water pollution, low capacity of water cleaning equipments in the major cities, more than 50 percent of polluted water is thr own to the environment directly without any cleaning process.

Biological diversity decreased extensively threatening the extinction of Gobi bear, Saiga, Eurasian otter and the number of species that are highly demanded in medical, cosmet ic, international trade and other sector for example deer, marmot, have reduce rapidly.

The most affected sectors by those environmental changes in the country are agriculture and socio-economic sector that are more crucial to Mongolian development. The n egative impact of yearly occurrence of drought phenomenon that covers nearly 50-70 percent of the total territory, degrades productivity of pastoral land and cultivation. In some area pasture productivity deteriorated 5 times, the number of species per squ are meter area decreased tightly, and strong pasture degradation observed specially in recent 40 years.

The pastureland near the water resource such as river, spring etc. or settlement area more degraded specially in the forest steppe zone; and the number of plant species reduced from 33 to 18, as well crop yield from 1 square. ha declined from 0.32-0.23 in desert and desert steppe zone.

Pursued by the severe drought in the spring and summer season that deteriorates grassland productivity and reduces pastu re regenerative, the heavy snow "zud" encourages a loss of cattle. For instance during the winter season of 1999-2001 over 12 million head of cattle has been lost and loss is estimated by 225 million USD in total. More than 7000 herd` s families are suffering from the loss of cattle and their life is in the threat of poverty, hunger, and insecure life situation.

Besides the drought occurrence in the rain shed (non irrigated) areas is specifically unfavorable for the seed planting, vegetable crop accordingly reducing the food supply of the country. Even the drought impact puts pressure on national food supply by continuing diminishes of seed and vegetable yield in every year.

In 1995 Mongolia harvested 261.4 thous.tonn crop and in 2001 142.2 thous.tonn in 2002 even less. Such environmental change and its impact rings alarm in socio-economy. Regarding to relieve this obstacle Mongolia became the host country for Asian Regional Thematic Network on "Strengthening Capacities for Drought Impact Mitigating and De sertification Control" within the framework of UNCCD. Government of Mongolia has designated the Environmental Education & Research Institute ECOASIA as a host Institute for TPN5 and posted me for Task Manager. Thematic Programme Network established to investigate drought consequences & its impact and activities to mitigate it.

The following was suggested as an alternative for the composition of the 5 support programmes:

(i) SP1: Desertification Monitoring/Assessment and Early Warning Systems,
(ii) SP2: Integrated land and Water Management,
(iii) SP3: Resource mobilization and partnership building,
(iv) SP4: Information network development, and
(v) SP5: Development and implementation of specific capacity building activities

We concurred with the idea of regarding the SP1 and SP2 as priority activities for the TPN5. SPs 3 – 5 were regarded as issues that are cross-cutting and common for all of the other TPNs. In the presentation objectives and activities of SP1, SP2 that are important part of TPN5 will be detailed.