



**UNDP/GEF project “Integrated Natural Resource Management
in the Baikal Basin Transboundary Ecosystem”**

The Russian Federation and Mongolia

Inception Workshop Report

21 November, Ulan-Ude, Russia

The purpose of the Inception Workshop is to present of the project to the project team, partners and expert community; make detailed review of the project goals, objectives, outcomes and activities; rise discussion on the implementation and management arrangements; provide review of GEF M&E requirements; organize discussion on the roles of various partners and stakeholders in the project implementation.

The workshop activities were carried out over one day. The main workshop elements were: a) introduction to the project, b) project implementation, monitoring and evaluation, c) discussion on project components and work plan, d) next steps and closing remarks. These activities are briefly described below.

a) Introduction to the project

The workshop was officially opened by Mr Arnold Tulokhonov, Director of Baikal Institute of Nature Management SB RAS. Director introduced presidium members and presented results on international cooperation on Baikal. Welcome addresses were subsequently provided by Mr Vladimir Mamaev (UNDP) and Mr Sergey Kudelya (Project manager). Mr Mamaev reviewed the workshop’s goal and expected results; introduced the GEF International Waters Focal Area and pointed out the importance of appropriate monitoring and reporting. Mr Sergey Kudelya also provided a brief overview of the project and characterized adaptive management principles.

b) Project implementation, monitoring and evaluation

Project implementation, its coordination and management arrangements were presented by Mrs Nataly Olofinskaya, Head of Environment Unit UNDP Russia. Steering Committee spearheads the project: The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (Russia) and the Ministry of Nature, Environment and Tourism (Mongolia). Also it consists of committee members and observers - representatives of nongovernmental organizations. Executive partner is the United Nations Office for Project Office (UNOPS). The scheme of the project team, the main parameters for monitoring and project management were described. UNOPS Portfolio Assistant Mr Uriel Heskia provided an overview of the UNOPS International Waters Cluster (IWC), its support services as the executing / implementing partner to the INRMBB project. In the next report Mr Vladimir Mamaev introduced to overview of the UNDP/GEF M&E requirements. Basic principles of project monitoring, adaptive management, project budget, and evaluation system were provided. He mentioned that the purpose, outcomes of the approved project cannot be revised. Any changes, additions should be documented and approved by the Steering Committee. Finally, Mrs Nataly Olofinskaya provided an overview of co-financing arrangements.

c) Discussion on project components and work plan

In this workshop element Mr Alexander Shekhovtsov (Advisor to director of Center for International Projects, National Project Technical Director, The Russian Federation) explained the most important parts of Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Action Programme. Professors Mr Andrey Khristoforov and Mrs Larisa Radnaeva jointly presented study on the Selenga Delta habitat and water quality. In continuation of the session, Mr Holger Treidel (Programme Specialist, Division of Water Sciences Natural Sciences Sector, UNESCO) told about Transboundary surface and ground water study (International Hydrological Programme, Groundwater in the Lake Baikal Basin, Shallow groundwater resources).

Pollution hot spot assessment was demonstrated by Mr Alexander Lbov, the first Vice-Ministr of natural resources of the Buryat Republic, Russia. The main hot spots are: Dzhidinsky tungsten-molybdenum industrial complex, oil accumulation near settl. Steklozavod, coal mine in Selenginsk district, Gusinozerskaya mine, human impact on Kyahtinka river.

The overall comparative analysis of terrestrial ecosystems diversity in Selenga basin in Mongolian and Russian sides was made in report Mr Sergey Bazha, Deputy head of Russia-Mongolia expedition, Russia.

Report on Sub-basin watershed management plans was provided by Mrs Khishigjargal Kharkhuu, Officer of Sustainable Development and Strategic Planning Department, Ministry of Nature, Environment and Tourism, Mongolia.

Head of Lake Baikal Water Resources Agency Federal Water Resources Agency (Russia), Mr Valery Molotov told about Joint Commission for the Baikal / Selenga Basin.

In speech Mr Badrakh Tsend (Head of Water Authority, Mongolia) issues on Inter-ministerial committees established at national were raised. Water Authority has accumulated 40 years' experience of collaborative research, which must be taken into account in further work on the project. The work of inter-ministerial bodies is not only the water industry, but also economic. Methods should be approximate to a single image.

Further report Mrs. Nina Dagbaeva (Director of Baikal Information Centre "Gran", Russia) was devoted to training program on enhanced transboundary management. Key issues were: working out the mechanisms of social partnership with civil society; government, scientific organizations; training seminars, practices, and international conferences; cooperation with UNDP; Environmental Film Festival.

Mr Vasiliy Pronin (Head of Buryat Republican Center for Gydrometeorology and Nature Monitoring, Russia) demonstrated the harmonized Water Quality Monitoring programm. Mr Davaa Gombo, (Head of Surface Water Research Department, Institute of Hydrology and Meteorology, Mongolia) made a report on observation of quality of transboundary Selenga waters.

Among the reports on Outcome 3, pilot projects on biodiversity conscious mining approaches was presented by Mr Bator Tsyrenov (Vice Director of Investment and Financial Company METROPOL, Republic of Buryatia, Russia). The project will develop the four mining companies. Mining operations have a significant impact on the ecosystem.

Problems of biological disposal utilization in the Republic of Buryatia were covered in report of Mr Petr Evdokimov (Buryat Department of veterinary control service, Russia).

Mr Viktor Boychenko (Deputy Director of Baikal State Biosphere Reserve, Russia) presented pilot projects for the mainstreaming of biodiversity into tourism.

Finally, Mr Alexander Lbov talked about Baikal Information Center, NGO Forum and Business Partnerships.

In conclusion, Mr Sergey Kudelya emphasized indicators: Reducing pollution in mining on 30% by the end of 4th year, the incidence of anthrax is reduced to zero, three development plans of eco-tourism must be approved; investment in eco-tourism should be increased by the end of 4th year at least 10k USD; organizations, participating in informational centre must be increased by 10%.

d) next steps and closing remarks

The first meeting of the Regional Steering Committee, will approve a budget and the work plan for the first year. A project office will be opened soon. In the near future working groups for TDA updating, SC assistance and Joint Commetee consultations will be formed to start the project activities. All countries ecological programs have to be harmonized with the project.