



PLATEAU PERSPECTIVES

Community Development & Conservation

YUSHU INTERNATIONAL ECOTOURISM WORKSHOP

Co-hosted by **Plateau Perspectives** and **Qinghai Normal University**
Held in Xining, Qinghai Province, China, from 8 - 10 November 2010

Funded by the **Ford Foundation** and **HimalPartner**

Exploring the Potential for Tourism Development to Serve
Community Development Aspirations and Environmental Goals
In Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai Province, China



SUMMARY REPORT, 30 November 2010

Dr J Marc Foggin, Plateau Perspectives

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This workshop aimed to discuss and assess opportunities (and possible constraints) for the further development of tourism in Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. Tourism is already planned to become an economic pillar in Qinghai Province. In addition, following the earthquake that devastated Yushu (Jiegu) on 14 April 2010, (eco)tourism is now being promoted there, too. The goal of the workshop was to identify and promote approaches to tourism deemed most suitable to benefit local communities and environmental protection.

The main methods used were the sharing of experiences between participants, including lessons learned in Qinghai Province as well as Mongolia, Canada, and Tanzania; formal presentations; guided discussions; and some planning sessions on tourism development.

The strategic workshop was held on the North Campus of Qinghai Normal University, with most arrangements made by Plateau Perspectives.

Key participants came from the Yushu area and Xining, and included representatives from Tibetan communities, cooperatives and associations, county and prefecture governments, tour operators, nature reserves, and academia. Several resource people were also invited from elsewhere in China, as well as two colleagues from Mongolia and one colleague from United Kingdom.

Major outcomes included agreement on the value of developing a *Yushu Tourism Network* and advances made in communication between local herding communities and the Yushu Tourism Bureau. A better understanding of the meaning of “community tourism” and of the need for equitable sharing of benefits was also gained by most workshop participants.

2. WORKSHOP AGENDA & SCHEDULE

DAY 1 – Monday, 8 November 2010

Welcome from workshop hosts

Introduction of workshop participants

Overview of tourism in a global context (Douglas MacMillan)

Tourism and local communities in South Gobi, Mongolia (Lkhamaa)

Current tourism plans in Yushu Prefecture, following the earthquake (Wang Dongmei)

- *Lunch* -

Sharing of experiences and lessons learned, with Q&As

Experiences learned from Parks Canada (Yixi Songbao)

Establishment of Mongolian herder cooperatives (Batmaa)

Ngorogoro area in Tanzania, with Maasai pastoralists (Douglas MacMillan)

- *Supper* -

DAY 2 – Tuesday, 9 November 2010

Specialist presentations from School of Geography & Life Sciences, Qinghai Normal University

GIS analysis of land use in the Manas Area, Xinjiang Uyghur Aut Region (Gao Xiaohong)

Recovery of degraded land near the source of Yangtze and Yellow Rivers (Wang Wenying)

History of expansion of human population in northeast Tibetan Plateau (Hou Guangliang)

Tourism plans in the Sanjiangyuan National Nature Reserve (Basang Lamao)

Overview of study tour and visits to First Nations communities in Canada (Gongbu Zhaxi)

- *Lunch* -

Sharing of experiences and lessons learned, with Q&As

Kegawa Herders Cooperative, in Zhiduo County (Qingmei Randing)

Development of a new local association in Zhiduo County (Dongzhu)

Improving herder communities' livelihoods through tourism projects (Batmaa & Lkhamaa)

Geotourism: Comprehensive 'place-based' tourism (Gongbu Zhaxi)

Summing Up: Supporting the development of 'Community Tourism Projects' in Yushu Prefecture

- *Supper* -

DAY 3 – Wednesday, 10 November 2010

Experiences and recommendations from the development of Cailunduo in Huzhu (Fan Wenbin)

Special Session: Open discussion time (led by Marc Foggin, Gongbu Zhaxi, Douglas MacMillan)

- *Lunch* -

Special Session: Open discussion time (continued)

Closing Remarks: from Lhakmaa and Batmaa

Closing Remarks: from the Yushu Tourism Bureau (Wang)

Closing Remarks and 'thank you' to all participants, from workshop hosts

- *Supper* -

3. OVERVIEW OF ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Definition of Ecotourism

Responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people (The International Ecotourism Society, 1990)

Principles of Ecotourism

Ecotourism is about uniting **conservation**, **communities**, and **sustainable travel**. This means that the people, companies and organizations that implement and participate in ecotourism activities should follow the following ecotourism principles:

- Minimize impact (both environmental and social impact)
- Build environmental and cultural awareness and respect
- Provide positive experiences for both the visitors and hosts
- Provide direct financial benefits for local conservation activities
- Provide direct financial benefits and empowerment for local people
- Raise sensitivity to host country's socio-cultural and environmental climate

Additional characteristics of tourism that should be incorporated into current planning for tourism in Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture:

Sustainable Tourism: Tourism activities in a region must be **sustainable**, i.e. they must not over-use, or abuse, the basic tourism resources including natural scenery, wildlife species, local people and communities (with their livelihoods, cultural practices, and traditions), and other material or energy resources.

Responsible Tourism: Tourism activities in a region also should be socially **responsible** – this can be regulated with legislation as well as promoted through education campaigns. Examples include fair payment for services, equitable sharing of benefits (financial and otherwise) with local communities, and a full internalization of costs of tourism into tour operations (e.g., adequate payment for local service provision, removal of all garbage).

Community Tourism: By encouraging the development of **community-operated tourism** (such as homestays, guided treks, wildlife tours, cultural experiences), much more benefit can accrue to local communities at the same time as the tourists gaining a more authentic experience of the region – this is a win-win situation for all parties.

Two other distinctions to remember during the planning and development of tourism in Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture:

Nature Tourism vs Ecotourism: Simply visiting an area with beautiful natural scenery does not constitute ecotourism, but rather only nature tourism. Nature tourism is only one small part of what can be developed in Yushu. Ecotourism must also incorporate the concept of sustainable travel and bring financial and other benefits to local communities in the area.

Mass Tourism vs Niche Tourism: While it will be important to educate the entire traveling (tourist) public about the environment and local culture, as well as about responsible and sustainable travel; in order to protect and sustain the basic tourism resources in the area, the long-term goal for tourism development should be fewer but higher-value customers. By focusing on a niche market (instead of simply trying to attract as many national and/or international tourists as possible), it will be possible to maintain a higher quality of tourism resources and a pristine environment, which in turn can be continuously marketed to draw or attract higher value niche-market customers.



Community Based Ecotourism

What is Community Based Ecotourism?

According to the Nature Conservancy and the World Conservation Union (IUCN) ecotourism is defined as , "environmentally responsible travel to natural areas, in order to enjoy and appreciate nature (and accompanying cultural features, both past and present) that promote conservation, have a low visitor impact and provide for beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local peoples." As opposed to other forms of travel, ecotourism can be distinguished by its emphasis on conservation, traveler responsibility, education and active community participation.

More specifically *community based ecotourism* should follow the following principles:

- *Maintain local ownership and control*
- *Result in minimal impact*
- *Build environmental and cultural awareness and respect*
- *Provide positive experiences for both visitors and hosts*
- *Provide direct financial benefits for conservation*
- *Provide financial benefits and empowerment for local people*
- *Raise sensitivity to host countries' political, environmental, and social climate*

The principles of ecotourism have arisen following a realization that without appropriate planning and management systems, tourism to ecologically sensitive areas can threaten both the integrity of local ecosystems and local cultures. However, with adequate foresight, it has also been recognized that tourism can establish viable economic opportunities for local communities and encourage environmental conservation.

Evidence has demonstrated that the most effective way to maximize such environmental and fiscal benefits is through projects which emphasize local community ownership and control. Such projects generate funds which can be invested in community social projects, such as the purchase of medical supplies or the construction of a school-house, and/or provide increased economic incentives for local efforts at conservation.

For more information:

[What is sustainable tourism?](#)

[What is the history of sustainable ecotourism?](#)



4. SUMMARY OF PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

Tourism plans for the Sanjiangyuan National Nature Reserve (Basang Lamao)

The Qinghai Tourism Bureau has asked the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences to make a tourism development plan for Sanjiangyuan National Nature Reserve. However, the plan will focus more on the control and direction of “mass tourism” (i.e., large number tourism). With regard to ecotourism, we agree that we should focus on a niche market, local people should be involved in the tourism activities (development and implementation), the tourists should be given an authentic experience, and education should be promoted for all parties. The main challenge will be to find the best way(s) to work closely with local communities. Another key challenge will be to determine how best to structure tourism relationships, e.g. how to form an effective *Yushu Tourism Network* that will help guide relationships between tour operators, local communities and organizations, government agencies, tourists, etc.

The government, including the nature reserve, are responsible to provide the proper legal framework for the development of ecotourism; non-government organizations may assist with the provision of technical and training support related to tourism development matters. Among the nature reserve’s roles in tourism, it will include a strong emphasis on education and awareness of environmental concerns.

Lessons learned from Study Tour to Canada in September 2010 (Gongbu Zhaxi)

Parks Canada is the government agency responsible for oversight and management of national parks in Canada, including tourism in parks. Overall, 45 percent of national park funds are spent on enhancing “visitor experience” (this includes education and awareness, both of the environment and of socio-cultural matters relating to indigenous communities). In some communities, which were subject to policies similar to Ecological Migration about 50 years ago in Canada, the government has given many subsidies – but social problems still remain. Now, in Canada, cultural heritage is recognized as being extremely important.

One local community that now is considered well-off is the Wemindji Cree community, on the shore of James Bay in northern Quebec Province. The main reason is that some local autonomy was given to them, together with financial resources from the extraction or use of natural resources (specifically, 28 percent of profit from the large hydro-power station built in their part of the province). Hunting is also allowed by local people at some times of the year; hunting by outsiders is allowed too, but only with purchase of expensive licences.

Establishment of the first Herders Cooperative in Yushu Prefecture (Qingmei Randing)

The Kegawa Herders Cooperative was recently established, and also recognized by the Civil Affairs Bureau of Zhiduo County in May 2010. This development was the outcome, in part, of ideas and lessons learned from the study tour organized by Plateau Perspectives and co-hosted by People Centred Conservation, Mongolia (PCC Mongolia) in September 2008. Similar ideas were presented and discussed afresh during the workshop with input and guidance from Lkhamdulam (Lkhamaa) and Badamlyan (Batma), two of the invited presenters, with long experience in herding communities from South Gobi, Mongolia. In the case of the local Cooperative, situated in Lari Village of Zhiduo County, the two main livelihood resources are animal husbandry and (potentially) community-run ecotourism. Local handicraft products are also being produced, at trial level, for income generation. A partnership between grassland-based community members and people who relocated to the new “ecological migration” village is presently being developed, to assist both parties.

The cooperative began with only eight families, but now it already has a membership of 24 local families. Beyond handicrafts, community ecotourism is also being trialed in the village area, but more planning and preparations are still needed. For such tourism ventures, it

was suggested that interest-free loans may be available (from county tourism bureau) for the start-up phase of development. The plan now for the cooperative is to develop and demonstrate successful community tourism, as a model for others to follow in the future. Strong support was indicated in the workshop by the Tourism Bureau, first for this kind of community tourism venture, and second for starting a network of supportive stakeholders to cooperate and further assist each other in the development of responsible ecotourism in Yushu Prefecture.

From the “Nomad Love & Hope Association” in Zhiduo County (Dongzhou)

With regard to tourism development, the question is asked: How can we attract visitors, and meet their needs/desires? What experiences can be offered to draw ecotourists? It is also noted that Globalization, which is the source of most new tourism possibilities, also can lead to a loss of cultural values and lifestyles, and from this some people are losing their confidence. Reviving certain aspects of local culture is therefore important, not only for tourism, but for all aspects of community development. The rate of urbanization is now rapid and severe, Tibetan language is being lost, and some cultural norms are being lost. Community ecotourism can present an opportunity to raise local standards of living, but at the same time as it may negatively impact local culture and self-esteem. Therefore, there is also the significant challenge to protect local culture. But, if local culture is properly seen as “the soul of ecotourism” – then ecotourism can also be used to help build self-esteem and confidence in local communities.

Challenges and solutions from experiences in Mongolia’s South Gobi (Lkhamaa & Batmaa)

Batmaa –

“When we started, we didn’t know what to do, we were nervous about it, and we thought people just wanted to see us like in an ‘animal park’ ... and as we weren’t sure what to do, we exchanged ideas and discussed with the international development project, and had some trainings about tourism and how to be a tourist guide, as well as trainings about how to improve souvenir product making, etc.

We were lucky to work with this kind of project, since previously there were some other projects in our area that had a goal of alleviating poverty, yet they only helped middle-income families; this project helped local communities really define their own needs.

Among our tourism resources, we wanted to show more than just our lifestyle; so we also developed some events, for example how we train horses. We also coordinate with local hotels/lodges or tent hotels, and they help guide us in what we develop, and include us in their visits and itineraries.

Some of the events we organized for tourism have even become social events, too. Some families in our community, who cannot reach the regional centre for the annual festival, do come now to our local community festival; and they get some income too from the event. In addition, young horsemen gained pride as tourists appreciated their lifestyle; this raises the confidence and pride among our young herders.

We recognize and appreciate now that we have a unique culture and can be proud of it. We have observed that it is good to wear national clothes. Even though we cannot speak English and communicate with the tourists, because we can attract them with our clothing, we can communicate more!

Sometimes tour operators come with city guides, and they often try to speak on behalf of the community about their lives; but we need to have better communication with the city tour guides and translators so that good and more accurate communication takes place.

As the first community-run tourism operation in Mongolia, we became quite well known; many people therefore came to our area as study tour, and I (Batma) have also been up North to tell my story there too, about starting community tourism. Also, the government and park people feel it is good if they work with good leaders in the community; because when you start a new activity, or work in a new community, you need good leadership.

We also worked with park administration, including the involvement of volunteer rangers from the community; 10 years ago, even though the Gobi Gurvan Saikhan was a protected area, we still did illegal hunting; but now we realize that if we keep our area better, we will have more opportunities. So we exchanged our guns for binoculars and video cameras! We actually know now that we really like our livestock and herding lifestyle, and our fast horses; that if you want to continue herding livestock, we need good pasture; and that to have good pasture, we need to care for nature.

Now when we organize workshops, it is more the herders who do the talking, with project staff and government people listening to us talking. We now have capacity to express our feelings. And we can also identify our needs, and then ask for support from government.

Everything was not easy at the beginning; it took some time to show that we can serve the tourists. We initially had some restrictions from the government (e.g., they said “you might kill the tourists,” and other questions of safety). It took quite a long time to get confidence and respect from the government. Some community members also resisted being involved with the tourism industry, because they felt “we have been herders for ever” and they did not want to try something new (they wanted to maintain their old identity). But time shows that it is possible to develop and implement a good community tourism venture.

At the beginning, when we saw some new income, we then also became greedy and we thought we could bypass tour operators, encouraging tourists to come straight to us (and thus not sharing profits with travel agencies). But we realize now we shouldn't pursue that approach. And I see in your case, as I listen to your experience, that the government is investing a lot into infrastructure and you also have so many tourism attractions in your area; so you have many advantages over us, too.

In many ways, I assume that you are very much like we were, but more advanced and some of you with English language – so I have good hope, and wish you the very best in all your endeavours!”

Lkhamaa –

“Regarding the Herders Network in Mongolia, we worked with six local community tourism projects, and it was their initiative to develop the network; my role was the marketing. The network worked well at the beginning, taking trips from one community point to another, traveling 2000 km over 7-10 days. We tried to sell to tourists the network's itinerary (we made of visits to all 6 communities in the network). At first this worked well, but later we found we needed to know more about tourism markets. The interests of tourists changed over time, some communities simply held less interest for the tourists, and 2000 km was felt to be too far to travel... We thus learned it was good to define the role of NGOs and the role of different stakeholders in tourism. The role of NGOs is especially to help build cooperation between tour operators and community groups. Building cooperation between different groups is probably the most important contribution, for example linkages between tour operators and communities, and also between the different local communities.

How projects start work with local communities is very important too, and a participatory approach is critical. We must listen much more to local voices. The greatest thing about community-run tourism is that, through such work, local leadership skills develop. Even if you don't continue to work in tourism for long into the future, still there are skills that have been learned by the community, and these can be used in any future community project. These are some of the lessons we have learned!”

5. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF ECOTOURISM IN YUSHU

Following the national direction to further develop and promote ecotourism (see, e.g., <http://env.people.com.cn/GB/13474611.html>), Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture also is actively pursuing the development of ecotourism as part of a comprehensive strategy to help the local Tibetan people and economy recover after the devastating earthquake of 14 April 2010. However, such development should be guided so that it can benefit the most people possible, as well as maintain and protect environmental resources. The present workshop aided the discussion of these important topics, and in finding possible solutions and promoting sustainable and equitable ways forward. Several key comments and suggestions from the workshop are presented below.

Ecotourism must be understood to include not only **the environment**, but also **local people** and **local economy**. It is important to have such a common agreed definition.

Community-based tourism products should be developed as well as regional tourism products or sites. Regional policy should promote/support community tourism.

Additionally, **ecotourism can benefit everybody** in the communities, not just those directly involved in tourism – through community payments by operators (an **access fee**) – this means that even more remote communities that suffer most, for example from wildlife conflict, can receive payments/benefits from tourism development. This type of access fee is separate from, and in addition to, direct payments for services.

From a marketing perspectives, **the entire prefecture** – not just Yushu/Jiegu town – should be promoted as a unique and special destination. The town is just the main **gateway** through which people (visitors) access the region. Attractive **signage** (e.g., billboards at airports; see example signage, on page 10) should be developed, too.

To develop region tourism that benefits communities, **community cooperatives** will be extremely important. For an example, see the cooperative in development in Lari village, Duocai township, Zhiduo County. The concept of community associations for local economic development is well developed in Mongolia (see Gobi project review) with direct and tangible benefits for local herder communities and for nature. **Policies** should be supportive of the development of more cooperatives in Yushu prefecture, and some distribution of **financial support** (grants) should also be considered.

Because a large part of Yushu prefecture is situated within a national nature reserve, new methods or approaches for **better integration and cooperation** between local communities, government, and the nature reserve must be found. This will include common agreement on **what forms of ecotourism** to be supported (what activities, numbers of visitors, sites to develop, etc.) and which companies should be prioritized with government support (to ensure most economic benefit remain locally, i.e. to limit leakage). An **accreditation system** for Yushu tourism enterprises will be necessary.

Accreditation for ecotourism is important, and will soon come to the whole country. But in the meantime, government (particularly the Tourism Bureau) should adopt an approach of encouraging a triple-“bottom line” — **economy, ecology, and culture**. This means that we should not just accept that cheapest is best (from tour operators’ perspective, when buying from local people, markets, communities); or that largest financial turnover or largest numbers of tourists promised by tour operators are best (with respect to registering/approving new travel companies). Support should instead be given particularly to the development of **new local companies**. In fact, it should be made relatively easier for local companies to begin operations; and conversely requiring from outside companies more investment *into local communities* (not just that they show a large sum of money in their bank account, or show profit statements, etc.). Companies should also agree to support local community development and community conservation initiatives. That is, external companies, if approved, should be able to meet some pre-determined, pre-agreed minimum standard of **Corporate Social Responsibility** – promising significant long-term returns to people and nature.

Overall, the tourism experience in Yushu prefecture should be based not only on several selected “tourist sites” but also on **landscapes and regions**, particularly in connection with local communities that develop and promote (with the assistance of the tourism bureau and tour operators) their own unique packages. These packages may include some common elements in all or nearly all communities – e.g., staying with local families (homestays) – but, significantly, each local community should also choose to develop something unique, depending on **unique local circumstances**. For example, one community may focus on a horse trek, another on a glacier tour, another on bird watching in a special (beautiful) valley, etc.

Further development and implementation of the above recommendations for tourism in Yushu may be assisted by the creation of a “**Yushu Tourism Network**” – with membership controlled through a process of accreditation (with minimum standards for tourism operations). Founding members could include, for example:

- Yushu Tourism Bureau
- Sanjiangyuan National Nature Reserve
- Plateau Perspectives Canada
- Kegawa Herders Cooperative

In developing rural (community-based) tourism in Yushu, several **travel routes** could be established/encouraged, which connect to several community tourism products (this follows the experiences learned in Mongolia).

In the context of the nature reserve, it might be possible to build linkages between community cooperatives, with their respective community development and wildlife conservation projects, with tourism programs – for example, developing **community tourism based on wildlife conservation** with visitors serving as volunteers for wildlife monitoring and conservation. This could help meet the needs of both tourism developers (including local communities) and nature reserve management authorities.

Examples of new tourism “signage” from Ladakh, India.



WELCOME TO THE LAND OF THE SNOW LEOPARD

Ladakh, the land of many passes, is home to many threatened and endangered wildlife. These include the Snow Leopard, several species of large and small mammals, birds and beautiful wild plants.

COME ENJOY NATURE - RESPONSIBLY!



Asiatic ibex
(Capra ibex ibex)



Ladakh Urial
(Ovis vignei vignei)



Tibetan Argali
(Ovis ammon hodgsoni)



Tibetan Wolf
(Canis lupus chanco)



Tibetan Red Fox
(Vulpes vulpes montanus)



Black-necked Crane
(Grus nigricollis)



Bar-headed Geese
(Anser indicus)



Lammergeier
(Eypetrus barbatus)



Delphinium cashmerianum



Rheum webbianum



Contact us for details on areas you can visit, permits, rules and regulations:
Department of Wildlife Protection, Leh, Govt. of Jammu & Kashmir, Badami Bagh, Skara, Leh - 194101, Ladakh.
Tel: (91) (01982) 252171. www.wildlifeladakh.com. www.leh.nic.in.

Content & Design - Group for Nature Preservation and Education (GNAPE), Chennai.

Airport exit - 7ft x 7ft

WELCOME TO TSO MORIRI

CHANGTHANG WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

Bar-headed geese are one of the world's highest flying birds (upto 33,382 ft). In Asia they migrate from Siberia, over the Himalayas, to Ladakh and southern India. They arrive at Tso Moriri (an important breeding ground) in early May and stay till early October. They nest on the ground, preferably on islets, and lay 2-8 eggs.

Other birds / animals seen at Tso Moriri



Ruddy Shelduck
(Tadorna ferruginea)



Great-crested Grebe
(Podiceps cristatus)



Brown-headed Gull
(Larus brunnecephalus)



Tibetan Sandgrouse
(Syrrhaptes tibetanus)



Common Redshank
(Tringa totanus)



Little Owl
(Athene noctua)



Tibetan Wild Ass
(Equus kiang)



Pika
(Ochotona curzoniae)



Mountain Weasel
(Mustela altaica)



Bar-headed Geese
(Anser indicus)



Contact us for details on areas you can visit, permits, rules and regulations:
Department of Wildlife Protection, Leh, Govt. of Jammu & Kashmir, Badami Bagh, Skara, Leh - 194101, Ladakh.
Tel: (91) (01982) 252171. www.wildlifeladakh.com. www.leh.nic.in.

Note - National Parks are notified Protected Areas under the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972 and Jammu & Kashmir Wildlife (Protection) Act 1978 (Amendment 2002). Any illegal activity, non-permit entry, smuggling or removal of wild plant and animal material from the park is punishable under Indian Law.

Content & Design - Group for Nature Preservation and Education (GNAPE), Chennai.

Changthang WLS- Tso Moriri 5ft (w) x (h) 4ft

6. DOCUMENT ANNEXES

Annex 1. Opening talk (Marc Foggin)

On behalf of Plateau Perspectives Canada, together with Qinghai Normal University, I want to express our pleasure at seeing so many partners from Yushu, and elsewhere, here with us today.

I think we will have a very good time this week, with **new learnings, new relationships**, and – it is my personal hope – also some new **concrete directions** agreed for improved future development of community tourism in the Yushu area, coming out of this time, this workshop, here together.

As you can see from the people sitting in this room, not only do we have opportunity to learn from experiences of development of community tourism elsewhere in China as well as from Mongolia, from Canada, and elsewhere in the world; in this meeting, we also now have opportunity to join together with representatives from nearly all of the different groups that are most affected by tourism development – all the different key stakeholders – and this is a rare opportunity in China, as it is in most parts of the world.

Why should we focus on “tourism development” now? Why tourism development in Yushu? There are three main reasons.

First, tourism in a region has potential to bring many benefits, but it also the potential to transform an area, a village, or a community negatively. The consequences, both good and bad, will be long-lasting.

Secondly, the province and the prefecture – Qinghai Province, and Yushu Prefecture – have already for several years been seeking to develop and promote tourism in their area; and we, a Canadian organization, want to partner with you, our friends and colleagues in the province, in those areas of work – that is, in community development as well as environmental conservation – that you feel are important for your future. We come as partners, and are glad to join with you in the important dialogue about development of tourism in the Yushu area.

Thirdly, following the terrible earthquake that affected the Yushu region in April 2010, not only does the town need to be rebuilt, but also the local economy and many people’s livelihoods. For many people in Yushu, tourism will be a part, directly or indirectly, of their future. We therefore want to help in this way, too – in promoting forms of tourism development that will bring most benefit to the most people in Yushu Prefecture, to help them recover from the earthquake.

Finally, I want to thank our colleagues from Qinghai Normal University again for working with us, as co-hosts, to make this strategic meeting, this discussion workshop, possible.

Now, although we can sit and listen to presentations for some of the time ahead, and learn from experiences of other people in China and elsewhere; it is in fact only with all of our active involvement, participation and discussion over the next three days that this meeting will succeed.

Now, once more, welcome, and thank you all for coming!

Annex 2. Workshop participants

Government of Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture

Yiqing	Yushu Foreign Affairs
Wang Dongmei	Yushu Prefecture Tourism
Xu Chaowei	Yushu County Tourism
Suonan Duoqing	Yushu County Tourism

Invited Advisors from Mongolia and United Kingdom

Lkhamdulam (Lkhamaa)	PCC Mongolia	lkham5@yahoo.com
Badamlyan (Batmaa)	Community leader	
Douglas MacMillan	University of Kent	D.C.MacMillan@kent.ac.uk

Representatives from local Tibetan herding communities

Shiamba Chumpel	Muqu village leader
Aozhou	Jiongqu village leader
Angluo	Lari village leader

Sanjiangyuan National Nature Reserve

Basang Lamao	Management Bureau
Renzin	Suojia Station Leader

Local cooperatives, associations, etc.

Dongzhou	Nomad Association	
Qingmei Randing	Herders Cooperative	15809764332
Tsultrim Dargye	Kunpen Vocational Training	khampayak@yahoo.com

Tour Operators

Tashi Phuntsok	Travel Wild Tibet	travelwildtibet@gmail.com
Tsering Kyil	Travel Wild Tibet	
Bill Lindeman	Tibetan Connections	climbingyak@gmail.com
Fan Wenbin	Cailunduo, Huzhu Beishan	13897383969
Zhaxi Cuomao	Tour guide in Yushu	

Independent participants

Zhangli	Workers & Farmers Party
Chen Zhengui	Workers & Farmers Party

Qinghai Normal University

Yang Hui	Foreign Affairs Office	13997278552
Chen Kelong	Geography & Life Sciences	
Wang Wenying	Geography & Life Sciences	wangwy0106@yahoo.com.cn
Gao Xiaohong	Geography & Life Sciences	
Hou Guangliang	Geography & Life Sciences	hg120@163.com
Huang Yunma	Geography & Life Sciences	huangyunma2007@yahoo.com.cn

Plateau Perspectives Canada

Marc Foggin	Director	foggin@plateauperspectives.org
Gongbu Zhaxi	General Manager	gongbu@plateauperspectives.org
Yixi Songbao	Project Officer	
Ngoya Drolma	Accountant	
Huting	Manager	

Media

Wu Guangyu	Xinhua News
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Other

At different times, up to 20 students from Qinghai Normal University were also in attendance.

Annex 3. List of formal workshop presentations

Presentation 1:

Ecotourism: Global Perspectives (Douglas MacMillan) page 13

Presentation 2:

Community-Led Natural Resource Management and Conservation in Mongolia's Southern Gobi Region: Processes, Impacts and Lessons Learned (Lkhamaa) page 16

Presentation 3:

Community run tourism network in the Gobi, Mongolia (Batmaa) page 21

Qinghai Normal University
Workshop on Eco-Tourism

Eco-Tourism: Global Perspectives

Prof. Douglas C. MacMillan
DICE, University of Kent, UK



The Tourism Industry

Tourism is the largest industry in the world
and is still growing:

- Over 300 million people employed
- Produces over 15% of global GDP

In many developing countries tourism now
rivals/exceeds traditional industries



The Tourism Industry

- Ecotourism is the fastest-growing sector of the market
- Premium fees for specialist services and products provided by eco-tourism providers
- There are usually higher costs – standards of accommodation, equipment, animal welfare



Unique Selling Points (USPs)

- i) Gives financial incentive to conserve nature
- ii) Generates revenue for conservation
- iii) Source of income for poor communities in/near protected areas
- iv) Opportunities for educating tourists and capacity building for communities



What is behind the rise in ecotourism?

- i. Nature on TV and other Media
- ii. Anecdote to western 'industrial' society
- iii. Wealthy and active retired people
- iv. Demand for active challenging holidays



Tourism in Kenya

Late 1970s: Hunting banned and tourists invited to '*Come shooting in Kenya with your camera*'

By 1990s, tourism was Kenya's largest industry and 80% of tourist considered to be 'ecotourists'.



Eco-Tourism Industry: Consumers

Who are they?

- Experienced travellers
- Highly educated
- Middle-aged to elderly
- Middle class
- White



Eco-Tourism Industry: Suppliers

Who are they?

- Well financed western corporations (e.g. in Africa)
- Collaborations between communities /individuals /government
- Difficult for individuals - start up costs high



Out of £1000 spend on a 1 week holiday

Source Country

£100 on Travel Agents Commission

£300-400 to Tour Operators

Host Country

£300-400 to Tour operators

£100-£300 spend locally (less than £100 to local community)



Leakage depends on....

- local ownership of businesses
- range of local suppliers
- remoteness of the area
- type of holiday experience



Other economic realities

- the limited opportunity for economies of scale to be achieved
- Local providers have limited bargaining power as they are small operators
- Some providers lack commercial experience and knowledge



Positive aspects of ecotourism

- Creates jobs in remoter, poorer areas where there are few alternatives
- Generates foreign exchange: tourism main source in many developing countries
- Government Revenues through tourist taxes and on saleable goods and services



Negative aspects of ecotourism

- Seasonality
- Vulnerable to crises and disasters
- High start up / infrastructure costs
- Can create economic dependence
- Can affect the socio-cultural stability of the community



Leakage depends on....

- local ownership of businesses
- range of local suppliers
- remoteness of the area
- type of holiday experience



Reduce leakage through...

- Increasing spend per visitor in local area
- Local ownership of businesses
- Growing the local economy
- Introduce local rather than national taxes



Concluding Remarks

Ecotourism is not a panacea

There are opportunities that cannot be ignored

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING





Project
"Conservation and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources"
Gobi Component

Objective
To enable local communities to use and conserve natural resources sustainably - in close cooperation with government agencies and the private sector

Project Region

Implemented by
New Zealand Nature Institute
Initiative for People Centered Conservation

Funded by
gtz
German Technical Assistance

Natural Resources and Conservation Values

ecological, natural history and cultural, human history

Gobi Gurvan Saikhan
-The Three Beauties of the Gobi-
National Park

Wildlife (Argali, Ibex, Snow Leopard)
Endemic Plants
Paleontological Sites
Desert and Semi-Desert Ecosystem

Cultural Landscape
Cultural and Spiritual Values
Prehistoric and Historic Sites

Livestock Genetic Resources
Traditional Resource Management Systems

Strategy

- Facilitating Community Organization and Stakeholder Consensus on sustainable, collaborative management of NR
- Strengthening local institutions and collaboration
- Developing enabling policy framework

Approach

Participatory
People centered
Process oriented

Participatory Learning and Action
for Project Design, Implementation and Evaluation

- Facilitating analysis of problems and opportunities
- Understanding local livelihoods and local peoples' perceptions
- Facilitating community initiatives, mobilizing local potential



- Facilitating Analysis of:**
- Natural Resources – uses and trends
 - Socio Economy – livelihood analysis
 - Institutions and Conflicts
 - Problems and Opportunities



Participatory Analysis - Findings
Lack of coordination and weak (government) institutions for sustainable resource use, and of effective conservation

Perceived lack of institutions for resource management and coordinating herders movements



Self-Help to improve NRM and Livelihoods

Challenges

- After 1990, for the first time in Mongolian history, herders operating individually.
- Increase in herding households and livestock in 1990s
- Massive losses of livestock and livelihoods in early 2000s
- Private herds on state owned, collectively used land
- Young Institutions for Resource and Park Management
- Policies and legislation being developed

Challenges

Mongolia's grasslands (and Protected Areas) are a vast territory to manage

Spatial and temporal variability of non-equilibrium ecosystem requires local and collective management, and mobility

Community Based and Collaborative Management of Natural Resources in Mongolia

Opportunities

Long history of common property resources and local resource management.

Tribal organization and large tribal herds.

Pasture resource management (of allocated territories) by local herder groups since 13th century.

Traditional knowledge on livestock and grazing management.

Self-help to improve sustainable Resource Use + Livelihoods

→ Emergence of Community Organizations



Based on customary institutions and norms, adapting to new socio-economic and political framework

Strengthening Community Organizations

Success Factors – Lessons Learned by Community Leaders

Community has agreed on and established:

- Leader and Council
- Objectives and Norms
- Community Fund and Community Center

Elders support the Initiative of **Younger People**

Men are supportive of **Women** who lead community activities



over 80 Community Organizations formed in 3 provinces (Aimags)



- Scaling up through self-organization.
- Community Organizations in some districts (Sums) established umbrella organizations (associations).
- Community Organizations are registering as legal entities.
- Accepted by local government as local institutions for NRM.

"Functional Participation"



Impacts of Community Organization

Environmental
Economic
Social

The Economic and Environmental Impacts of Community Organization and Collective Action as perceived by local communities




"Living standard of families has improved"
"Jobs were created for unemployed women"

"Pasture land is used properly"
"Use of trees and bushes as fuel wood has decreased"
"Illegal taking of falcons has decreased"

The Social Impacts of Community Organization and Collective Action
as perceived by local communities

“Other organizations are interested to cooperate with us”
“Equality (of rural women) with men and city women has increased”
“Education of community members has improved”
“It became easier to receive health service”




“Communities can influence the government”

Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation

Community-defined Indicators to measure Environmental, Economic and Social Impacts



Planning Tool for Community Activities

Local Appropriate Technology Development to save Fuel Wood

Fuel efficient dung stoves

Solar energy




Briquettes and presses




Peoples' Strategies for Sustainable Livelihoods

Collective Action
Value Addition
Income Diversification
Credits to Households from Community Funds






Lessons learned locally are relevant for policy and regional strategy formulation on:

- Pasture Management and Land Tenure
- Protected Area Management
- Wildlife Management

Also for:
Rural Finance
Local Governance




Changes in regulatory and institutional framework - introduced or under discussion

- Recognition of Community Organizations as NRM institutions
- Contracting with Community Organizations to transfer land/resource rights
- Tax incentives for collective action on sustainable NRM and conservation
- Introduction of new Protected Area category “Community Conserved Area”?



Lessons Learned

Livestock herders' need and initiative to develop sustainable pasture management, and their strategies of collective management and mobility were driving community organization and collaboration



Lessons Learned

Community organization has triggered better governance

- through experiential learning about good governance while building strong community organizations
- Communities have a voice and are recognized partners



Lessons Learned

The poorest households have driven development of strong community organizations

The poorest communities contributed most to resource conservation and restoration



Lessons Learned

Women have taken a leading role in organization and facilitation



New Zealand Nature Institute
Initiative for People Centered Conservation

Thank you for your attention



Sabine Schmidt, with the Project Team and the Livestock Herder
Communities of Mongolia's Southern Gobi

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Enabling Communities to
protect Biodiversity and
overcome Poverty through
sustainable Resource Use
and equitable Benefit
Sharing

New Zealand Nature Institute
Initiative for People Centered Conservation

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New Zealand Office
Harbour City Tower, Suite 320, 29 Brandon Street, PO Box 2515, Wellington,
New Zealand.
Fax ++64-4-4723114
ipecon@nzni.org.mn



Community run tourism network in the GOBI, MONGOLIA

TAVAN ERDENE

Location: Umnugobi aimag, Bayandalai soum, Bayan bag Ulaan tolgoi

Main objective:
Nature conservation and sustainable livelihoods

Attractive Site:
The bearded vulture, "Volyn Am" in Mongolian, has given the valley its name. "Volyn Am" means "Vulture Gorge".

Volunteer rangers keep the area clean and safe

Our environment friendly and customer oriented service include :
Ger camp, Horse and Camel riding with experienced guide, Handicraft, unique traditional dairy products

You will hear the cackle of the rare Altai snow cocks and see Laemmergeier, Black Vulture, Steppe Eagle etc..

Visitors see the permanent ice, the endemic plants and impressive wildlife

URAN DOSH COMMUNITY

Location: Uuurhangai aimag, Baruum Bayan Ulaan soum, 3rd bag Zuun Bogd Mountain Valley

Main objective:
Nature conservation and use right of natural resources and improve livelihoods through working together

37 member households

Products and services:
Guided walks, Dairy products, horse and camel riding

Tourism site: Desert valley with poplar trees and mineral water spring, wildlife, traditional livestock herding

MALCHDIIN URTOO

- **ÏYUT CAMEL POLO**

MALCHDIIN URTOO

- **Äïiäyíý ìäë-íú àiüäðäë òàðóéèäð**

MALCHDIIN URTOO

- **Saikan Dush**

Khuren Khad spring

MALCHDIIN URTOO

- Өөдэлдээ 90%



Өөдэлдээ 90%

MALCHDIIN URTOO

- Бичигт
- Historical heritage
- Petroglyphs



MALCHDIIN URTOO

- **SUCCESS FACTORS**
- WORKING TOGETHER
- ONE NUKHURLUL ONE PRODUCT
- EVERYONE CONTRIBUTES WHAT HE CAN



MALCHDIIN
URTOO

THANK YOU

Annex 4. Presentations by local herders (with summary of discussions)

Muqu village leader, Shiamba Chumpei

Shiamba –

“I cannot speak Chinese, so will talk in Tibetan. But according to what I have heard this morning and all the presentations and discussions, it seems like a beautiful dream! It is like a dream, because we have heard about Environmental Protection, including Ecotourism, as far back as 1998. We have heard the theories for a long time, but we are to be the practitioners, and we live in very high altitude and a difficult environment, it is remote too, and we are not sure how to put the theory into practice.

We have 4000 people in four villages in our township/area. We have tried measures in environmental protection, set up trial locations, etc, but presently the local attitude is that we haven't yet really seen any benefit from environmental protection.

Tourism also is not an unfamiliar topic for us; but because of cultural norms, if we give a cup of yoghurt to guests, we are not used to asking for money! If provide accommodation, it is hard culturally to ask for something back! Therefore, in some instances, with tourism - instead of gaining benefit, we may even lose resources to the tourists! So for many years our activities to protect the environment have been 'charitable' because we have had costs but have not yet seen tangible benefits.

Regarding natural resources, our place is rich with authentic local culture, much wildlife too including snow leopard, Tibetan antelope, white-lipped deer, bears, wolves, etc. However, despite our rich culture and much wildlife, because of the distance and poor transportation, it is difficult to link with tourism endeavours. Local people have some discouragement too, with environmental protection work undertaken to date, so they are now shy to continue an active involvement in some projects. Even local houses are being destroyed by bears; so if our houses are not safe, neither would be tourism-related lodging. How can we therefore invest what we would need invest, to build up a tourism infrastructure?

Still, I'll repeat again: Now [this workshop] is like a dream. Thinking back to my hometown, it is almost impossible for another generation to have come this far in such a short period of time! We have a wide range of wildlife, and listening to the Mongolian presentations and how they have developed their tourism, I have some hope. They, too, had a level of under-development ... and now my hope for my hometown is to become a bit more like what has been mentioned in their situation. In our community, we also want to form a cooperative, to draw together our community members and to establish good new business opportunities.”

Suggestions coming out of Shiamba's ideas: [by MacMillan, Foggin]

- Develop a package for tour operators, for which they may give annual payment
- NGOs may provide support, perhaps also Tourism Bureau, to develop products
- Not all coop members need to be actively involved, but whole group can benefit
- Those members more involved in tourism would also gain some additional benefit

Shiamba –

“Two years ago, we had 50,000 RMB in a cooperative/community fund, and this was then supplemented by a group in Shanghai. Our cooperative now has 20 member families. Our initial ideas for the cooperative are to market local products and sell them at better price,

e.g. milk, wool, etc. But we are now facing many problems, including access to information and how to find business partners. Also, our members are so scattered, we have decided on some land management decisions (i.e., voluntary local relocation of some cooperative members) so that we can live closer together.

Sometimes it is hard to connect the 'concepts' and 'theories' being discussed here with practical realities...

I can talk for a whole day; but will keep short. Privatizing the grassland, this is the most severe problem/challenge in the Tibetan grassland area. It is creating conflict between people. We are now more vulnerable to snow disasters because we no longer have the ability to move, we have lost flexibility. Formal environmental protection measures also have been more of a closure to local communities, reducing their ability to utilize natural resources... How can we make such closure, or limitations, turn into more openings and opportunities for us? We have protected the wildlife, but now we are feeding them with our sheep [through depredation by wild animals such as wolves and snow leopard]! We would like to kill bears and wolves, but we no longer have tools/guns or permission to do so. We also have many wild ass in our area, which we have protected since 1998. But we need now to find some benefit from the environmental protection. Environmental protection has been negative, can we not now turn it to benefit?"

Foggin –

"I agree with much of what you, Shiamba, have said; and I think we should begin to move away from just strict environmental protection toward that of environmental *management*, particularly sustainable environmental management. And to help gain more benefit for local communities, ecotourism could begin to play a central role in the future."

MacMillan –

"There are two main problems: Cultural norms of not charging for hospitality, and the difficulty for some people/communities to participate in tourism due to remoteness. We should work together to overcome these. I suggest also that we consider two-tier payment; first to the community as payment by tour operators into a community fund; and second, to individuals more directly involved in tourism activities, for their additional efforts. The key to ecotourism is rewarding the community's involvement in good environmental management, not just a reward for participation in tourism per se."

Lari village leader, Angluo

Angluo –

"Thank you for the opportunity to talk about all these matters, I feel very privileged to come here and to learn about and talk about environmental protection, tourism development, etc. Thanks, many people are putting so much effort into this topic and area, a real thank you! Yushu, as we know, is famous for its dancing and its culture. I have come to this workshop, my eyes are being opened, I now am gaining a much better realization of what we can do; I recognize that we have rich culture, but don't yet fully know how to use these resources. In Tibetan we have a saying – we have snow mountains and much great scenery, but we also have a dilemma, i.e. remoteness and poor development are our main challenges.

Through this workshop, I now understand that we can actually use our local resources for community income generation, and through tourism we can even strengthen our culture. It is out of this workshop, that I have realized this.

From a community perspective, we have wishes and expectations, we would like support from provincial, prefecture and county government levels; and we would like some rights to try out our ideas, rather than simply be controlled by external factors or tour operators.

What resources do we have? We have, of course, so many legends of King Gesar in this area, including his main battle field, and the queen's (Dremo's) birthplace, and many other legendary places as well. We also have Gonsa Monastery. Local architectural style could be developed as tourist attractions too. And there is not only the story of King Gesar, but also many tangible sites too, including hand prints and foot prints; and other evidence of his existence in the county. These are high points that can be promoted.

The county also has Kegawa and other local sacred mountains, where protection has long been practiced. These could be famous attractions. Kegawa also has several lakes and an extensive array of wildlife species. Local natural resources are fascinating and may be of interest. Since 2007, we have actually started some protection, both of the mountain itself and of local wildlife in the area; Marc may be familiar with this. We also have started a new event – every year, on August 1st, we now have a community-wide religious festival.

Since last year, when I went on study tour [with Plateau Perspectives] to Xishuangbanna, in Yunnan Province, I realize that we have actually undertaken much environmental work; and since last year, I also realize we could actually make some profit based on our work, for example from wildlife protection. I now have some hope and even expectation, that in our area, we could soon in fact gain some profit or benefit through the tourism business.

Thanks to the excellent teachers in this workshop, who helped open my mind about how we could in the future begin to implement such projects or programs. Our local resources could benefit us for a long time. Thank you!"

Annex 5. Other important documents and resources

The Northwest Yunnan Ecotourism Association <http://www.northwestyunnan.com/>

Why Travel With Us

<http://www.northwestyunnan.com/strategies.htm>

Chinese version: <http://www.northwestyunnan.com/chinese/strategies.htm>

Ecotourism is one of the fastest growing markets of the tourism industry. But with many companies claiming to offer "ecotourism," how can you be sure that your travel experience is really helping the environment? When you choose one of our tours, you'll contribute through the following ecotourism principles:

Positive impact on nature conservation

- **Alternative income generation:** Through employment with community-based ecotourism companies, local villagers are able to earn much-needed income that replaces income earned through destructive activities such as charcoal-making, hunting, illegal logging and fishing.
- **Alternative energy and waste management:** Biogas, solar panels and in some cases wind or hydropower help reduce the strain on natural resources that tourism can bring to a community. Waste management policies are also a key component of the operations of each of our ecotourism companies.
- **Financial contributions:** All of our companies donate 10% of their net profit to a conservation and community development fund which provides financial support for community development and conservation projects in local areas. A Management Committee including NGO, government and community representatives oversees and approves all projects initiated with fund monies. Visitor entrance fees, conservation taxes and visitor donations are other ways your visit may help provide financial support.
- **Visitor management and impact monitoring:** To ensure that visitor activities do not have any significant negative impacts on the resources of the area, visitor management systems are being established that include zoning to control areas and numbers of tourists in certain areas, codes of conduct for ecotourists and for tour operators (see below), village ecotourism monitoring teams and enforcement regulations and mechanisms.

Positive impact on community development

- **Community employment and training:** Managers and employees of our companies are local community members who benefit directly through skills training such as nature guiding, hospitality services, business management and English language.
- **Community-owned and managed:** Our companies are owned and managed by local community members, enabling the community to direct and influence the development of tourism in their area, and keeping the majority of income earned within the community.
- **Community development financing:** A portion of profits generated through these itineraries goes to funding community development projects, such as micro-hydroelectricity, irrigation, education and health services. Community members determine what types of projects should be implemented.

Positive impact on preservation of cultural heritage

- **Increased cultural value:** By seeing the interest and enthusiasm that visitors have for learning about local cultural traditions and heritage, the value of this cultural heritage increases among community members. Our itineraries are designed to educate visitors about the local Naxi and Yi cultures and provide opportunities to directly experience some of the traditions and customs of these cultures.
- **Community vision guidelines and impact monitoring:** For the villages where our companies operate, a community vision has been discussed by community members to identify cultural traditions that they wish to preserve. With these guidelines in place, the impact of tourism on traditional customs can be measured and controls can be established if it is determined that tourism is having a negative effect on the local cultures. Tourist and tour operator codes of conduct help reduce the potential impact.

Codes of Conduct

http://www.northwestyunnan.com/codes_of_conduct.htm

Chinese version: http://www.northwestyunnan.com/chinese/codes_of_conduct.htm

Codes of conduct are critical to controlling the impact of tourism on nature and cultural resources. The Northwest Yunnan Ecotourism Association is establishing codes of conduct for any tourists visiting the area, as well as tour operators who operate in environmentally fragile areas.

Ecotourist Codes of Conduct

The Lashihai Watershed has been designated as a provincial-level nature reserve to protect the fragile ecosystems and wildlife of the area. Because of the fragility and importance of this Nature Reserve, all visitors are asked to follow this Code of Conduct so to ensure that the area's biodiversity and cultural heritage is protected effectively.

Environmental Conservation

- Tour groups visiting the nature reserve should not be over 10 people per group and should always be accompanied by a local guide.
- When you are in the Nature Reserve, please follow the regulations and laws of the Reserve:
 - Do not throw trash on the ground;
 - Do not take any "souvenirs" or specimens from the wild;
 - Put all trash in the designated places;
 - Do not cut or dig up trees or bushes;
 - Do not start any fires within the Nature Reserve.
- If you are a visitor coming to do research, training, or filming, please get permission from the Nature Reserve staff.
- Please respect our wildlife friends and do not disturb them and their habitat. Please turn off the engine of your vehicle when you are in the Nature Reserve.
- You can buy local products to help improve the lives of local people, but please do not buy endangered wildlife products such as fur, feathers, and leather.
- When you are watching the birds, please do not wear bright clothing, make loud noises or frighten or feed the birds. Please do not come within 100 meters of the birds.

Cultural Conservation

- Respect the local people and their customs and religion. Do not touch things before you get permission, and do not be loud and disrespectful in the village.
- Ask permission before you take pictures in the villages, especially when you take pictures of people.
- Respect holy and sacred places and do not touch or move religious objects.
- Giving to children only encourages begging. A donation to our Conservation and Community Development Fund is a more constructive way to help.
- Visitors who value local traditions encourage the local pride and maintain local cultures, so please show an interest in their culture and an interest in understanding their traditions.

Tour Operator Codes of Conduct

The following Tour Operator Codes of Conduct have been developed by the Northwest Yunnan Ecotourism Association. These Codes of Conduct provide guidelines for all tour operators operating in environmentally-sensitive areas of Northwest Yunnan, and are criteria used by the Northwest Yunnan Ecotourism Association in selecting specific tour operator partners.

- **Partners with Community-based Ecotourism Enterprises:** Supports community-based ecotourism enterprises in developing a sustainable business that contributes to conservation and community development. Subcontracts from small, community-based enterprises wherever possible and assists them in achieving the appropriate quality standards.

Where no community-based company is available, the tour operator directly employs people living in the areas being visited. Local community members may be employed to deliver all services to clients, including administration, guiding, transportation, meals, lodging and supplies.

- **Purchases Supplies from Local Community:** Creates additional benefits to the local community by purchasing as many products and services as possible from the community being visited. However, if the purchase of local products creates an unsustainable drain or impact on the local community's cultural or natural resources, then the operator will bring necessary goods from the nearest community outside of the protected area.
- **Supports Conservation and Community Development Financing:** Contributes a proportion of net profits to community conservation and development funds, and/or makes a direct financial donation to the communities being visited. Follows protected area guidelines for entrance fees and concession permits and encourages customers to make contributions to support conservation and community development projects.
- **Supports Authentic Cultural Exchanges and Respects Cultural Heritage:** Is aware of actual and potential impacts of tourism on cultural heritage and attempts to minimize these impacts through its own policies and practices. Exchanges with and exposure to traditional cultures should occur only in an authentic setting and with willing participants. Except in unique situations, "staged" performances by local villagers are not supported.
- **Monitors and Reduces Impacts on Natural Resources:** Is aware of actual and potential impacts of tourism on natural resources and attempts to minimize these impacts through its own policies and practices, including:
 - Disposing of waste and sewage properly using "best practices" available for each area (recycling, composting, etc.).
 - Reducing natural resource consumption created by tourists through use of renewable energy and/or fuel efficient motors.
 - Ensuring any use of local products or services for the purpose of tourism does not put an additional strain on the natural resources in the area.
- **Promotes Responsible Visitor Behavior:** Educates travelers before and during the trip on low impact travel and conservation compatible practices (including ecological and cultural sensitivity). Travelers practice low impact travel and conservation compatible practices while traveling, including the guidelines listed here, and operator will address an incompatible behaviors as they occur.

The operator will address any complaints or concerns raised by the local community about the behavior of visitors.

- **Adheres to Local Protected Area Tourism Guidelines and Policies:** Abides by all conservation rules and regulations established by any local, regional or national protected area management organizations or authorities. Advocates conservation and sustainable tourism by demonstrating exemplary behavior above and beyond any rules and regulations.
- **Monitors Impacts:** Is aware of and in compliance with the carrying capacity or visitor restrictions of a visited area. The operator keeps the number and behavior of tours/travelers compatible with the fragility of visited environments and works with protected area managers, the Association's partners and/or other local NGOs to implement impact monitoring plans when possible. The operator will self-monitor and reduce the number of tourists brought to an area if it sees there is a negative impact from tourism on the area's natural or cultural resources.
- **Contributes to Truthful Marketing of Ecotourism:** Partners with the Northwest Yunnan Ecotourism Association, local communities, government partners and other NGOs to help market community-based ecotourism enterprises. Includes these enterprises in its brochures and itineraries, and clearly explains the difference between ecotourism and nature-based tourism to potential customers.

Other important documents about Ecotourism Development

- Guide Responsibly (brochure)
by Tibetan Village Project
- Travel Responsibly (brochure)
by Tibetan Village Project
- Leave No Litter (poster)
by Tibetan Village Project
- Guidelines for community-based ecotourism development
by WWF International
- Comparison of Ecotourism Policies and Implications for China's Ecotourism Development (生态旅游政策比较及其对中国生态旅游发展的启示)
by Suosheng Wang, Jinmoo Heo, Naoko Yamada and Suk-Tae Hwang
- Distribution of Economic Benefits from Ecotourism: A Case Study of Wolong Nature Reserve for Giant Pandas in China
by Guangming He, Xiaodong Chen, Wei Liu, Scott Bearer, Shiqiang Zhou, Lily Yeqing Cheng, Hemin Zhang, Zhiyun Ouyang and Jianguo Liu
- Ecotourism Management in China's Nature Reserves
by Wenjun Li and Nianyong Han
- Adaptation Management of Mountain Tourism Service: The Case of the Source Regions of the Yangtze and Yellow River
by Fang Yiping, Qin Dahe, Ding Yongjian, and Yang Jianping
- Gobi Project Review:
Improving Grasslands Management for the Benefit of People and Nature
by New Zealand Nature Institute *et al.*

BEFORE THE TRIP

- **Send trip preparation materials:** Tibet is a unique travel destination and requires some special considerations. It is highly recommended that you provide your clients with detailed information before they arrive.
- **Be clear on service terms and conditions:** This is MOST important. Make sure the itinerary, what's included and what's not and your company's terms and conditions are explained clearly to your customers.
- **Caution clients about foreseeable circumstances:** Always explain to your clients that Tibet is an adventurous place and the itinerary may change based on weather, road conditions or illness. Always have a good back-up plan in place.



- **Meet with your staff:** Cooks, drivers and guides to discuss the trip and make a list of all essential things that you will need. A standard pre-trip meeting can prevent any oversights and will improve everyone's travel experience.

DURING THE TRIP

- **Brief your customers on the day's itinerary** in advance and provide any relevant reading materials. Make sure your clients are well informed and know what is going on at all times.
- **Think through and make a list of things you need for each day.** Always be prepared for each day and plan ahead to make sure your clients experience is always positive
- **Check in with your clients at the end of each day.** For many customers, this is a once in a lifetime trip to Tibet. You must ask them how they are feeling and what you can do to make their trip even better.
- **Environment:** Many tourists do not know how to care for the environment. All guides must set a good example and show their customers how to deal with garbage, protect flora and fauna and interpret the ecosystem of the destination.
- **Culture is one of the main elements that attract tourists** and a tour guide's job is to provide an authentic Tibetan cultural experience and create appreciation and motivation to help protect and preserve Tibetan culture.

AFTER THE TRIP

- **Seek feedback:** If you have checked in with customers in each day, you should already have a good idea of how their trip went. However, it is a good idea to ask for customer's feedback before they leave. Using a written form is a good idea.
- **Build a customer contact list:** If you don't have some kind of a database already, create and maintain a list of customers that you have served in the past and also people that you have met who may become your customers or help you to spread the word about your company.
- **Maintain good relationships:** Networking and maintaining a good relationship with customers, staff, suppliers and hotels, etc. is the most important part of any business. Remember that you represent your company at all times you are out on a trip.

GUIDE RESPONSIBLY

WHAT NOT TO DO

- **Avoid tourist shopping:** Most foreign tourists do not like tourist shopping. They want to be free to choose shopping locations on their own. You need to put customer's interests first and think about the consequences of such business practices on local communities and culture.
- **Do not leave guests unattended or puzzled:** Unless customers tell you that they need a one or two hour nap, or wish to explore on their own, you should never leave them alone during the trip. You are paid to serve them, that is your job!
- **Never steal, lie or abuse anyone, especially clients:** Tibetans are known to have one of the most caring and compassionate cultures in the world. If you intentionally lie, steal or abuse people; it will affect everyone: customers, yourself, and your business and it will cause negative impacts on Tibetan people and culture in general.



WHAT TO DO

- **Communicate effectively:** Failing to communicate well often leads to misunderstanding and problems for guides and customers. Communicating effectively means making sure that both parties (you and them) understand each other clearly. Be patient and take the time to listen carefully and explain yourself clearly.
- **Be a good ambassador for Tibet:** As a tour service provider, you will have the most contact with your customers for the duration of the trip and you are a big part of their experience. What you say, how you behave and the service you provide will reflect not only on you but also on Tibet, its culture and people.
- **Support interests of local communities:** Employ local guides, horsemen or monks when ever possible. Pay them fair wages and share the opportunities around to avoid any conflicts.
- **Obey rules and regulations:** Make sure that tourists don't travel to areas without proper permits, stay in unregistered accommodation or do anything illegal.

This Responsible Tourism Initiative was created by Tibet Village Project and Chris Jones for the Tibet Ecotourism Project: an ongoing educational initiative through Columbia University, NYC.

GUIDELINES FOR RESPONSIBLE TOUR GUIDES



Tibet is a unique and special travel destination that needs your help. Ancient cultures and traditions, fragile mountain environments, rare and endangered flora and fauna are worth protecting for generations to come. As a guide in Tibet you can make a difference and ensure that tourism has a positive impact on the places you go and the people you meet.



Guiding tour groups is a valuable skill to learn. It is not always easy and can be a challenging job. Are you ready for the challenge?

**HOW TO RUN
AN ORGANISED AND
SUCCESSFUL TRIP**

HOW CAN I HELP?

There are a range of ways you can be a more Responsible Traveler.

- **Buy Locally:** Use a travel company that employs local guides and staff. Eat in local restaurants, buy handicrafts that are authentic and locally made. Don't be shy to ask directly about the source of the products you purchase.
- **Be open-minded and aware** that your cultural values may differ from locals. This may include different concepts of time, personal space and communication etc.
- **Make the effort to learn about local cultural sensitivities:** For example - wear full length trousers or skirts and modest tops that are not revealing. Avoid wearing shorts or short skirts and tops which bare shoulders. - Point with an open palm and not your index finger. - Avoid patting or touching children on the head.



- **Be sensitive when taking photos:** Ask permission before you photograph local people, and don't interfere during monastic ceremonies or private activities. Don't take photos of skyburial sites or in monasteries where photos are not allowed. Many monasteries request a fee for photography and it's always appropriate to make a donation.

- **Minimise your waste:** Carry reusable cups, plates, cutlery or chopsticks. Try to purchase produce which is not wrapped in plastic. Avoid using disposable plastic shopping bags.



- **Dispose of waste appropriately:** Most local villages don't have environmentally sound trash management systems. Pack your garbage out to larger towns or cities when it can be disposed of appropriately. If there is no toilet, dig a hole at least 25cm deep and bury human waste. Burn or bury toilet paper.
- **Make the effort to learn some local language.** Learning even a few words will break down cultural barriers and demonstrate your interest in local language and culture. You'll gain respect from locals and it's fun too!

WHAT NOT TO DO

Tibetans are generally very easy going and may not make it clear if you are behaving inappropriately. Here are a number of things you can easily avoid to ensure your presence is respectful and interaction with locals will have a positive long-term impact.

- **Never buy products made from endangered wildlife or endangered plants.**
- **Don't intrude on local people's homes, tents, land or private activities** (such as sky burials). Show respect for local's private property and personal space. Always ask for permission before entering private property or land.
- **Don't be disrespectful at religious sites or family homes** by wearing shorts or revealing clothing or kissing or touching intimately in public. Remove your hat and shoes unless instructed otherwise and don't step over people or people's legs - feet are considered dirty. Don't relax by putting your feet up on tables or chairs.
- **Don't swim in holy lakes, sit on holy objects** such as mani stones or walk on or step over prayer flags.

Continued on next page.....

TRAVEL RESPONSIBLY

CONTINUED.....

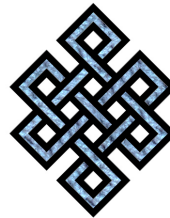
- **Don't encourage inappropriate begging** by giving large amounts of money to beggars, or sweets or pens to kids. Begging is accepted in Tibetan society and is part of Buddhist generosity practice so subtly giving a small amount is appropriate.
- **Don't create dependency on hand-outs:** Encourage self-reliance, if you want to help, donate to a trustworthy non-profit organization or charity and make sure locals are involved in the decision-making processes and that they are indeed the beneficiaries of your donation.
- **Don't hand out medicines without detailed and proper explanations of usage.** Often it is better to encourage the use of local medical care if available.
- **Avoid perceived political discussions or activities.** You may get yourself or others in trouble.
- **Don't break local laws and regulations:** Remember that you are a guest in Tibet. Make sure you have the correct travel permits - your travel agency and tour guide or host could be fined or may even lose their license if you break the law.



Being a Responsible Traveler will not only ensure you have a positive impact on local communities and the environment but will also enhance your travel experience.

SPREAD THE WORD

Communicate these Responsible Traveler guidelines to locals. Set a good example of environmental awareness and positively encourage your guide, drivers and other staff to do the same.



This Responsible Tourism Initiative was created by T.V.P and Chris Jones for the Tibet Ecotourism Project: an ongoing educational initiative through Columbia University, NYC.

TIBET

THERE'S NOWHERE ELSE ON EARTH QUITE LIKE IT.



Tibet is a unique and special travel destination that needs your help. Ancient cultures and traditions, fragile mountain environments, rare and endangered flora and fauna are worth protecting for generations to come. As a traveler in Tibet you can make a difference and ensure that your journey has a positive impact on the places you go and the people you meet.



Being a Responsible Traveler is not very hard, but it does require you to think about the way that you travel and the impact your actions have.

WILL YOU ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE OF BEING A RESPONSIBLE TRAVELER?

གན་སྒྲིག་ས་རུལ་བ་ག་ཚོ་ད་ལོ་ར་གྱི་ཡོད་དམ་?

- ཤེལ་དམ་ཆག་རྩོ་.....ལོ་1000000000ཚམ་ལོ་ར་གྱི་ཡོད་།
- སྒྲོག་རྫས་.....ལོ་1000ལོ་ར་གྱི་ཡོད་།
- རྩ་ཡང་གི་རིགས་.....ལོ་400ལོ་ར་གྱི་ཡོད་།
- ལྕགས་གྱིན་.....ལོ་40ལོ་ར་གྱི་ཡོད་།
- འགྲིག་ཤོག་རིགས་.....ལོ་20ལོ་ར་གྱི་ཡོད་།
- ནེ་ལོན་གྲོན་ཆས་རྫིང་བ་.....ལོ་10ལོ་ར་གྱི་ཡོད་།
- བལ་རིགས་གྱི་བཟོས་པའི་གྲོན་ཆས་རྫིང་བ་.....ལོ་4ལོ་ར་གྱི་ཡོད་།
- ཐ་མག་གྲོག་ལར་.....ལོ་3ལོ་ར་གྱི་ཡོད་།

ང་ཚོས་མ་འོང་པའི་ཆེད་ལའོ་ར་ཡུག་ལ་གཅེས་འཛིན་བྱ་དགོས་།

How long will litter last?

- Glass bottles -----1,000,000 years
- Batteries ----- 1000 years
- Aluminum cans -----500 years
- Tin Cans ----- 50 years
- Plastic bags -----20 years
- Nylon Fabric ----- 40 years
- Wool Socks ----- 5 years
- Cigarette butts ----- 3 years

Source : www.lnt.org

Protect our environment

垃圾会存活多久?

- 塑料瓶----100 万年
- 电池-----1000年
- 铝制品 -----500年
- 铁制品 -----50年
- 塑料袋 -----20年
- 尼龙织物-----40年
- 羊毛袜子-----5年
- 烟头 -----3年

保护我们的环境!

www.TibetanVillageProject.org



Annex 6. Closing remarks

Lkhamaa –

“Thank you for your invitation for us to come here, for a very enjoyable three days!

Yesterday, over lunch, we talked with our Tibetan friends, we felt very close. Every time I meet Tibetans I feel we have many similarities. The problems and issues are the same as we faced several years ago. In some ways, we are several years ahead of you (in tourism development, etc.), but in other ways, you have several advantages.

I’m very glad this workshop is happening now, it is happening at the very beginning of tourism planning, bringing together all the stakeholders. This is very important and I am glad it has been organized.

And I wish you all the best, with everyone’s efforts – I think the future is bright!”

Batmaa –

“I am happy to be here, too. Your herders’ life is very similar to our herders’ life. I am also happy that all the stakeholders are participating in the dialogue and this workshop. All are participating in the discussion about tourism development right from the beginning. And I agree that tourism development will not break or destroy the culture, and it doesn’t have to change herders’ lifestyle. That it won’t change their home, yak hair tent etc. – this is my hope.

I am very happy that everybody here is working together and wish you all the best in your future cooperation.”

Yushu Tourism Bureau (Wang) –

“First, I really want to thank Plateau Perspectives for providing such a good opportunity to learn and to meet so many friends and discover so many new sources about experiences in developing ecotourism. It is good to learn about these ideas, to provide a foundation for ecotourism in Yushu. What we learned in the workshop is good and will clearly contribute to the development of Yushu ecotourism in the future.

The ecotourism bureau always is looking for models to develop in the local context. This concept that we have discussed at length, of community based tourism, is a break-through for us. It is a very good idea for the direction of tourism development. Right now, we want to take all this information, which we have learned these days, back to Yushu and to have consultation and communication with all the varied stakeholders, to introduce the concept more widely. We will then have even more concrete results as outcome of this workshop.

There is not yet much tourism in Yushu, so now we have a blank sheet in terms of tourism. This presents us with an advantage; now is the beginning stage, and we can determine or direct the future. To hear from the community is very informative. We will take the voices we heard from the community and now incorporate them into the planning and developing of future directions and regulations. This discussion workshop is therefore very important; their voices and their participation are noted, and this has been very helpful to us. In the morning, one community representative said: Ecotourism sounds like a dream. Now it is our responsibility is to make this dream come true. We need to communicate, and also to cooperate together; and we will now take all these concepts and ideas back to leaders in Yushu to make the outcome possible, based on all of the concepts and ideas introduced and discussed in this workshop.

Lastly, thank you, everyone, and let's keep in touch and work together to bring tourism to reality and to bring about a more prosperous future.”

Qinghai Normal University (Huang) –

“Thank you, Plateau Perspectives, for giving such a good platform and opportunity to communicate with travel companies and with Douglas MacMilland, with Mongolian friends, and with local people and government; from this meeting we have learned many ideas and messages. Also, many of our students have learned a lot. The vice-president asked me to represent the University and the foreign affairs office in making this statement – thank you again!”

Plateau Perspectives (Foggin) –

Thank you, everyone, for your good participation and all that we have shared together.

Yushu Tourism Bureau (Wang) –

On behalf of all the Yushu participants at this meeting, welcome to come to Yushu!

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