

## V. The Intangible Heritage List of UNESCO

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Since ratification of the UNESCO Convention 13 intangible cultural heritage elements were inscribed on the UNESCO Lists from Mongolia, including 7 of them on the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity and 6 of them on the UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding.

### 1. The Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

#### (1) The Traditional Music of the Morin Khuur

##### 1) Heritage information

- **Local name:** Морин Хуур Morin khuur /Horse-head fiddle/

- **History, background:**

The two-stringed fiddle Morin khuur has figured prominently in Mongolia's nomad culture. String instruments adorned with horse heads are attested to by written sources dating from the Mongol empire of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The fiddle's significance extends beyond its function as a musical instrument, for it was traditionally an integral part of rituals and everyday activities of the Mongolian nomads.

- **Area:**

The heritage is popular in the provinces of Uvs, Bayan-Ulgii, Khovd, Zavkhan, Khuvsgul, Arkhangai, Bayankhongor, Uvurkhangai, Umnugobi, Dundgobi, Dornogobi, Sukhbaatar, Gobisumber, Selenge, Khentii, Darkhan-uul of Mongolia.

##### 2) Relevant information

- **Year of inscription:**

Incorporated in 2008 in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (originally proclaimed as the Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2003)

- **Community involvement:**  
The Morin khuur players throughout of Mongolia actively involved in the activities for the safeguarding and developing traditional Morin khuur music
- **Preservation association members:**  
Ministry of Education, Culture and Sciences, Mongolian National commission for UNESCO, Research Institute of Culture and Arts, Mongolian National Center of Cultural Heritage, State ensemble of Morin khuur, prominent morin khuur players, heritage bearers, practitioners and communities involved.
- **Activities:**  
3 years Project on the Safeguarding of the Mongolian traditional music of Morin khuur, implemented in 2004-2007 with the financial support from Japan Funds-in-trust and coordination by the UNESCO Office Beijing.
- **Project activities include:**
  - Field research on Morin khuur
  - National Consultative Meeting
  - Preparation and development of training materials and curriculum design
  - Regional trainings of Morin khuur teachers
  - Morin khuur trainings in local provinces
  - Organization of a Morin khuur festival
  - DVD, VCD production of Trainings and Festival

During 2006-2014 successfully implemented the National Program on “Mongolian Traditional Folk Long Song and Horse-head Fiddle”:

- **Funding:** 831.6 million tugrugs
- **Beneficiary:** About 10.000 traditional heritage bearers and practitioners and concerning community, groups and individuals
- **Activities:** Various meetings, seminars, apprenticeship trainings, and workshops for the concerning bodies, researches, performances, festivals, documentation, publications and others.

### 3) Practitioners

Ethnic groups of Mongolia, mainly Khalkh and Bayad, Khoton, Buriad, Zakhchin, Durvud, Torguud, Altain uriankhai, Dariganaga, and Tuva uriankhai people inhabiting throughout the territory of Mongolia hold the tradition up to now.

### 4) Relevant events

Special occasions, festive events, holidays, festivals, social practices, various labor and household rituals and events

## 5) Explanation

A prominent musical expression among nomadic Mongolians, the Morin khuur is an integral part of rituals and everyday activities. Distinct in sound, this two-stringed fiddle is characterized by its long neck bearing a carved horse head, reflecting the all-important cult of the horse among the nomad communities.

The design of the morin khuur is closely linked to the all-important cult of the horse. The instrument's hollow trapezoid-shaped body is attached to a long fretless neck bearing a carved horse head at its extremity. Just below the head, two tuning pegs jut out like ears from either side of the neck. The soundboard is covered with animal skin, and the strings and bow are made of horsehair. The instrument's characteristic sound is produced by sliding or stroking the bow against the two strings. Common techniques include multiple stroking by the right hand and a variety of left-hand fingering. It is mainly played in solo fashion but sometimes accompanies dances, long songs (Urtiin duu), mythical tales, ceremonies and everyday tasks related to horses. To this day, the morin khuur repertory has retained some tunes (tatlaga) specifically intended to tame animals. Owing to the simultaneous presence of a main tone and overtones, morin khuur music has always been difficult to transcribe using standard notation. It has been transmitted orally from master to apprentice for many generations.

Over the past forty years, most Mongolians have settled in urban centres, far from the morin khuur's historical and spiritual context. Moreover, the tuning of the instrument is often adapted to the technical requirements of stage performance, resulting in higher and louder sounds that erase many timbral subtleties. Fortunately, surviving herding communities in southern Mongolia have managed to preserve many aspects of morin khuur playing along with related rituals and customs.

## 6) Information resource

- Report of the 'Project on the Safeguarding of the Mongolian Traditional Music of Morin khuur',
- UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Website,
- Relevant documents in the Center of Cultural Heritage and Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO,
- Guidebook series 'Culture & Arts in new circumstances',
- Reports of the "National Programs on ICH".

## 7) Safeguarding projects

Project on the Safeguarding of the Mongolian Traditional Music of Morin khuur National Program on “Mongolian Traditional Folk Long Song and Horse-head Fiddle”:

## 8) Survey study project carried out by scholars

Intensive field research was undertaken in 2005 under the ‘Project on the Safeguarding of the Mongolian traditional music of Morin khuur’ in order to obtain updated information on diverse forms of Morin Khuur and its master players. The Field research extended and updated the existing archive of the Morin Khuur tradition and its master players.

Following field surveys conducted on the Mongolian Intangible cultural heritage and its bearer within the umbrella of the Joint cooperation Project for Establishing a Safeguarding system for intangible cultural heritage in Mongolia:’ Implementation of the UNESCO Program ‘Living Human Treasures System’ in Mongolia’:

No	Aimags (provinces) name	Region	Date
1	Khovd, Uvs and Bayan-Ulgii	Western	November 15 - 29, 2008
2	Khentii and Dornod	Eastern	June 25 - July 8, 2009
3	Bulgan, Uvurkhangai	Central	July 25 - August 2, 2009
4	Khuvsgul	Northern	August 5 - 15, 2009
5	Selenge and Orkhon	Northern	August 5 - 15, 2009
6	Central aimags, Dundgovi, Dornogovi, and Govisumber	Central & Southern	August 22 - 31, 2009

- **Key implementers:**
  - Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO
  - Center of Cultural Heritage
- **Co-implementers:**
  - Mongolian Cultural Studies Association
  - Local Culture and Arts Departments
  - MELS film studio

## 9) Awards received

- Morin khuur is honored as the State Grand King Instrument
- The Mongolian Presidential Decree No. 17 on the Veneration and Promulgation of the Morin khuur was issued in February 11, 2002

## 10) Safeguarding measures

- The Mongolian Presidential Decree No. 17 on the Veneration and Promulgation of the Morin khuur, February 11, 2002
- The Mongolian Presidential Decree No. 20 on the Establishment of the National Instrument Orchestra of the Mongolian State, February 16, 2005
- 'Project on the Safeguarding of the Mongolian Traditional Music of Morin khuur' 2004-2007
- National Program entitled 'Morin khuur and Urtiin Duu' for the years of 2005-2014, approved by the Ordinance No.43 of the Prime Minister of Mongolia in March 9, 2005
- National consultative Meeting entitled 'Safeguarding and Developing of the Traditional Heritage of Morin Khuur, follow-up Recommendation addressing to the governmental and nongovernmental organizations in all levels, general public, youth and children, March 15, 2006
- Organization of the Grand Performance consisted of 800 Urtiin duu singers and 800 Morin khuur players for the 800th Anniversary of the Great Mongol Empire, and 85th Anniversary of the Public Revolution National Grand Festival Naadam in July 11, 2006.
- Since 2010, annually organizing the International conference-festival on Morin Khuur.

## (2) Urtiin Duu : Traditional Folk Long Song

### 1) Heritage information

- **Local name:**Уртын Дуу Urtiin Duu (Long Song)

- **History, background:**

Widely believed to have originated 2,000 years ago, the Urtiin duu has been recorded in literary works since the thirteenth century. Performances and compositions of Urtiin duu are closely linked to the pastoral way of life of the Mongolian nomads on their ancestral grasslands. A rich variety of regional styles has been preserved until today, and performances as well as contemporary compositions still play a major role in the social and cultural life of nomads living in all over Mongolia, and some in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Republic, located in the northern part of the People's Republic of China.

- **Area:**

The Long Song is widely throughout the territory of Mongolia, and found almost in all the provinces, including Central province, Orkhon, Khentii, Bulgan, Uvs, Bayan-Ulgii, Khovd, Zavkhan, Khuvsgul, Arkhangai, Bayankhongor, Uvurkhangai, Umnugobi, Dundgobi, Dornogobi, Gobisumber, Selenge, Sukhbaatar, Darkhan-uul of Mongolia.

### 2) Relevant information

- **Year of inscription:**

Incorporated in 2008 in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (originally proclaimed as the Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2005)

- **Community involvement:**

The community involvement covers a wide range including the professional singers and folk performers as well as the concerned NGOs, researchers throughout Mongolia. Relevant stakeholders show great effort in the activities for the safeguarding and developing the Long Song tradition.

- **Preservation association members:**

Ministry of Education, Culture and Sciences, Mongolian National commission for UNESCO, and Mongolian National Center for Intangible Cultural Heritage, prominent singers, heritage bearers, practitioners and communities involved.

- **Activities:**

Within the framework of the 10-year National Program 'Morin khuur and Urtiin Duu', training workshop for the local specialists and chiefs in charge of culture and arts field was organized in 2005 by the Ministry of

Education, Culture and Science. Also, Urtiin duu teacher preparatory trainings were held at the University of Culture and Arts, Culture Institution, and Music and Dance College and 60 people were conferred certificates to teach Urtiin Duu and Morin Khuur. Moreover, a number of trainings, workshops, contests, performances and other events have been organized on the Morin Khuur and Urtiin Duu in all the provinces of Mongolia. For instance, performance of 300 morin khuur players and 300 urtiin duu singers was held in the Dundgobi province, while a performance of 80 morin khuur players and 80 urtiin duu singers was held in Zavkhan province. These are the few examples of the activities and effort taken for the safeguarding and enhancement of the heritages of Morin Khuur and Urtiin Duu, under the frame of the National Program 'Morin Khuur and Urtiin Duu'.

### **3) Practitioners**

Ethnic groups of Mongolia, mainly Khalkh and other ethnic people inhabiting throughout the territory of Mongolia hold the tradition up to now.

### **4) Relevant events**

Special occasions, festive events, holidays, festivals, social practices, various labor and household rituals and events. In general, Urtiin Duu is an inseparable part of the everyday life of the nomadic people.

### **5) Explanation**

The Urtiin duu or 'long song' is one of the two major forms of Mongolian songs, the other being the short song' (bogino duu). As a ritual form of expression associated with important celebrations and festivities, Urtiin duu plays a distinct and honored role in Mongolian society. It is performed at weddings, the inauguration of a new home, the birth of a child, the branding of foals and other social events celebrated by Mongolia's nomadic communities. The Urtiin duu can also be heard at the Naadam, a festivity featuring wrestling, archery and horseracing competitions.

The Urtiin duu is a lyrical chant, which is characterized by an abundance of ornamentation, falsetto, an extremely wide vocal range and a free compositional form. The rising melody is slow and steady while the falling melody is often intercepted with a lively rhythm. Performances and compositions of Urtiin duu are closely linked to the pastoral way of life of the Mongolian nomads on their ancestral grasslands.

Widely believed to have originated 2,000 years ago, the Urtiin duu has been recorded in literary works since the thirteenth century. A rich variety of regional styles has been preserved until today, and performances as well as contemporary

compositions still play a major role in the social and cultural life of nomads living in Mongolia and in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Republic, located in the northern part of the People's Republic of China. Since the 1950s, urbanization and industrialization have increasingly superseded traditional nomadic lifestyles, leading to the loss of many traditional practices and expressions. Parts of the grasslands where tradition-bearers used to live as nomads have fallen victim to desertification, causing many families to shift to a sedentary way of life where many classical themes of Urtiin duu, such as the praise of typical nomads' virtues and experiences, lose their relevance.

## **6) Information resource**

- UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Website
- Relevant documents in the Center of Cultural Heritage and Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO
- Guidebook series 'Culture & Arts in new circumstances'
- Papers of the ICH researchers
- Reports of the National Programs on ICH

## **7) Safeguarding projects**

- Within the framework of the 10-year National Program entitled 'Morin Khuur and Urtiin Duu', variety of projects has been undertaken in national and local levels. For instance, in order to disseminate and propagate the Long Song among the general public and young generations, a number of Long song competitions, contests in honor and/or memory of the outstanding and prominent long song singers. A monument was erected in memory of Norovbanzad, the best Mongolian long song singer of the twentieth century, at her birthplace, in the province of Dundgobi. Moreover, an open-theatre for folk art has been established in the place 'Ikh Gazryn Chuluu', in the province of Dundgobi.
- Since 2007, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science has started selecting and awarding the organizations implementing the 'Morin Khuur and Urtiin Duu' National Program with great success. In addition, it started identifying and awarding the persons bearing the outstanding and unique heritage of Long Song to raise their social reputation and recognition while disseminating the Long song.
- Following the proclamation of the Long Song as the Masterpiece of Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity, Mongolian and Chinese Joint Committee on the Management of the Safeguarding of the Mongolian Folk Long Song was established in 2007. The Joint Committee planned a number of activities aiming to safeguard and rescue the Long song tradi-



tion, as well as propagate and transmit the heritage both in Mongolia and China.

- During 2006-2014 Mongolian Government successfully implemented National Program on “Mongolian Traditional Folk Long Song and Horse-head Fiddle”:

#### 8) Survey study project carried out by scholars

- The Mongolian-Chinese Joint survey engaging the respective bodies to rescue the Long Song tradition preserved in the 2 countries has been conducted since 2007.
- Following field surveys conducted on the Mongolian Intangible cultural heritage and its bearer within the umbrella of the Joint cooperation Project for Establishing a Safeguarding system for intangible cultural heritage in Mongolia: ‘Implementation of the UNESCO Program ‘Living Human Treasures System’ in Mongolia’:

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5	Selenge and Orkhon	Northern	August 5 - 15, 2009
6	Central aimag, Dundgovi, Dornogovi, and Govisumber	Central & Southern	August 22 - 31, 2009

- **Key implementers:**
  - Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO
  - Center of Cultural Heritage
- **Co-implementers:**
  - Mongolian Cultural Studies Association
  - Local Culture and Arts Departments
  - MELS film studio

#### 9) Awards received

The Mongolian Presidential Decree No. 134 on the Transmission and Dissemination of the Long Song. September 1, 2004

#### 10) Safeguarding measures

- The Mongolian Presidential Decree No. 134 on the Transmission and Dissemination of the Long Song. September 1, 2004

- The Mongolian Presidential Decree No. 20 on the Establishment of the National Instrument Orchestra of the Mongolian State, February 16, 2005
- National Program entitled 'Morin Khuur and Urtiin Duu' for the years of 2005-2014, approved by the Ordinance No.43 of the Prime Minister of Mongolia in March 9, 2005
- Organization of the Grand Performance consisted of 800 Urtiin duu singers and 800 Morin khuur players for the 800th Anniversary of the Great Mongol Empire, and 85th Anniversary of the Public Revolution National Grand Festival Naadam in July 11, 2006.

### (3) Mongolian Folkart of Khuumei

#### 1) Heritage information

- **Local name:** Монгол ардын хөөмэйн урлаг
- **History, background:**  
The history of Mongolian Khuumei dates back hundreds of years. The popularity of Khuumei among Mongolians has arisen as a result of close interaction between natural environment and human culture. Ethnomusicologists studying Khuumei mark it as an integral part in the ancient pastoralism that is still practiced today. This art has developed to mimic and imitate the sounds of animals, wind, and water. Therefore, Khuumei sometimes is called as the music of nature. The animistic world view of the Mongolians identifies the spirituality of objects in nature, not just in their shape or location, but in their sound and melody as well. The basis of Khuumei art is an imitation of sounds from mountain, forest and river, whistling of wind and melodious expression for caring and quieting animals and hunting wildlife. The Khuumei represents human physical capacity in place of musical instruments, in other words it is the Human-Music. The Mongolians used the human vocal organs to the high degree of level and developed the Khuumei art as a unique musical art.
- **Area:**  
Khuumei has been transmitted and developed with its original characteristics from generation to generations particularly in the provinces in Western region of Mongolia, namely, Bayankhairkhan, Asgat, Bayantes, Tes soums of Zavkhan aimag, Chandmani soum of Khovd aimag, Duut and Tsengel soums of the Uvs and Bayan-Olgii aimags and Ulaan-Uul soum of Khuvsgul aimag. The communities from neighbouring countries of Mongolia such as Tuva, Kalmyk and Buriat of Russian Federation, Inner Mongolian Autonomy of PR China share the Khuumei art with Mongolians, and according to the historical sources, they are the descendants

of native Mongol nomads in Central Asia. Community Communities in the aforementioned locations are the main bearers and are diverse in ethnography.

## 2) Relevant information

- **Year of inscription:** 2010
- **Community involvement:**  
The khoomei performers and practitioners throughout of Mongolia actively involved in the activities for the safeguarding and developing traditional art of Khoomei.
- **Preservation association:**  
A number of institutes, public organizations and NGOs, such as 'Mongolian Association of Khuumei performers', 'Foundation for the Studies on the Throat Singing Art and Heritage,'Blue spot' Khuumei training centre, 'Khuumei and Morin khuur training centre', and 'Khuurchiinkhan' are engaged in transmitting the Khuumei art with classroom training in close cooperation with the State Morin khuur ensemble, and other public and private ensembles.

## 3) Practitioners:

Identification of the Khuumei performers and practitioners in the territory of Mongolia from ancient to present times is as follows:

- **In Zavkhan aimag /province:** The son of Geser nobleman, a wellknown shaman Undur Kharchuu, who lived in the Bayankhairkhan soum /county/ in the area of Lake Oigon nuur and Mogoin gol river basin, was a prominent Khuumei practitioner. One of his descendants, Renchin. Yo, called as 'Flute voice' /1895-1948/ inherited his skills and transmitted it to Jigmed.U /1901-1999/. Jigmed. U handed down the Khuumei to his children, Khurelbaatar.J /1940-2000/, Tsend-Ayush.J /1940-1995/, as well as to the local fellows Danaajav.G and Gongorjav.B and his grandson Sandagjav.E, who is currently living in Ulaanbaatar city, the capital of Mongolia. Gaanjuur.B /1908-1965/, the eminent Khuumei singer from Bayantes soum transmitted his skills and knowledge of Khuumei to Tserendorj.P /1931-2007/, Namjilsuren.Ts. D.Davaa from Tes soum, G.Chimeddorj, B.Yavgaan from Aldarkhaan soum and B.Odsuren from Ulaanbaatar, respectively.
- **In Kovd aimag:** Chuluun /1930-1983/, Tsedee.B /1935-1987/, Sundui.D /1938-2002/ and Ganbold.T from Ulaanbaatar, Sengedorj.B, Tserendavaa.B, Davaajav.R from Chandmani soum, Tsogdelger.Ya, Khosbayar /currently in Germany/, D.Gantulga from Ulaanbaatar are the successors

of Dagva /1929-1978/ and Derem /1931-1980/, the well-known Khuumei masters. The Khuumei heritage has been transmitted through the outstanding skills of great masters, such as Purev /1936-1975/ and /Bayanbulag soum of Bayankhongor aimag/, Buyandelger.S /Uvurkhangai aimag/, to the famous practitioners, including Bazarvaani /Ulaanbaatar/, Zulsar.S /Ulaanbaatar/, Toivgoo .Ya /Uvs aimag/, Davaanyam.D /Tsagaan uul soum of Khuvsgul aimag/ and Bayarbaatar.B /Ulaanbaatar/.

#### **4) Relevant events:**

Khuumei art is popularly performed and practiced during the social celebrations, ceremonious and festive events, as well as official occasions. Khuumei is even closely attached to the everyday life of nomadic herders of the concerned communities in the rural areas of Mongolia, featuring wide performance range, from herding the livestock to lulling the baby to sleep. Moreover, Khuumei associates on melody, motion and philosophical aspects with variety of other Mongolian folk oral and intangible heritage, such as heroic epic, blessing, praising, hymn, folk long song, shaman rituals, as well as the folk instruments including Morin khuur /horse head fiddle/, tovhsuur /a lute-like instrument/, ikel /fiddle-like instrument/ tsuur /3 holed reed instrument/ and etc.

#### **5) Explanation**

Mongolian folk art of Khuumei is an outstanding heritage representing the Mongolians' contribution to the cultural heritage of humanity. Khuumei is a type of unique music art created, maintained and recreated by the Mongolian people from generation to generation and is one of the key cultural identities of the Mongols. It is a distinct music art in which the performer produces two or three simultaneous pitches, by manipulating the resonances created as air travels from the lungs, passing the vocal folds, to the lips to produce a melody. The guttural or laryngeal sounds with the help of mouth, speech organs (throat and tip of the tongue) as well as chest cavity, gullet, nasal cavity, and palate become a music art of Khuumei, which creates ornamental melody and sound, by whistling and tuning its base melody at the same time. The history of Mongolian Khuumei dates back hundreds of years. The popularity of Khuumei among Mongolians has arisen as a result of close interaction between natural environment and human culture. Ethnomusicologists studying Khuumei mark it as an integral part in the ancient pastoralism that is still practiced today. This art has developed to mimic and imitate the sounds of animals, wind, and water. Therefore, Khuumei sometimes is called as the music of nature. The Khuumei art has been developed in connection with epic telling melody, shamanic calling and tune of the wooden tsuur by recreating and enriching each other in close cohesion and harmony. Khuumei vocalization has been preserved in the tunes of these folk genres. The wonder of

the Khuumei art is that its simultaneous melodies-overtone. In this way the Khuumei is a phenomenon which differentiates from other folk arts based on human vocal organs. This is the reason of calling the Khuumei performer as 'Human-Music'.

## **6) Information resource**

Relevant documents from the Center of Cultural Heritage and Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO

Reports of the National Programs on ICH

## **7) Safeguarding projects**

To safeguard these elements, the Government is implementing long and medium-term programs nationwide. In the framework of implementing these programs, the provinces and soums have elaborated sub-programs and are undertaking the relevant activities. The President issued decrees "To honor and develop the Morin Khuur", "To develop traditional archery", "To transmit and propagate the Urtiin Duu" and "To develop the art of Mongolian Khuumei", which aimed to safeguard these traditional elements. These decrees were announced to the general public who were highly supportive of them.

The Government had constituted legal empowerment aimed at safeguarding and promoting the social functions for ICH, and implemented the 'Mongolian State Cultural Policy,' 'Endorsement of the Millennium Development Goals-based Comprehensive National Development Strategy of Mongolia' and the 'Law for Protection of Cultural Heritage.' Greater attention was given to increase the involvement of bearers in safeguarding ICH. Currently, there are more than 30 NGOs in Mongolia actively working in the field of safeguarding and promoting ICH and its bearers.

Within the framework of the implementation of the National Program 'Mongol Khuumei' (2008-2014) a number of decisive actions and activities for the promotion and enhancement of the Khuumei have been taken, including the international and national symposiums, seminars, meetings, festivals, variety of contests, workshops and etc.

As the National Program 'Mongol Khuumei' expanded the framework with more measures on Khuumei such as conduction of field studies and researches, identification, documentation and registration of the Khuumei practitioners, heritage bearers and learners.

For the last six years, the activities of research and analysis were carried out in conformity with the Convention's ideology and objectives. The governmental and

non-governmental organizations, cultural and scientific organizations have conducted more than 30 events of academic, theoretical and practical conferences, symposiums and seminars at the national, regional and international levels.

There are new proposals of programs and projects for improvement and facilitation for the accessibility of the information and materials being kept in the archive of the Center of Cultural Heritage are being elaborated at present.

#### **8) Survey study project carried out by scholars**

The survey studies on Khuumei are conducted by wide range of stakeholders, such as foreign and domestic individual researchers, khuumei performers, research institutes and other interested bodies.

#### **9) Awards received**

Mongolian Presidential Decree on the Promotion and Development of Khuumei Art (2006)

#### **10) Safeguarding measures**

Ratification of the UNESCO 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and the Mongolian Presidential Decree on the Promotion and Development of Khuumei Art (2006) and the National Program 'Mongol Khuumei' (2007) demonstrate the national-level effort for keeping the Mongolian folk art of Khuumei under the state patronage, dissemination and promotion of Khuumei as well as strengthen the Khuumei studies and researches.

### **(4) Naadam - Mongolian Traditional Festival**

#### **1) Heritage information**

- **Local name:** Монголын уламжлалт баяр: Наадам
- **History, background:**

The Mongolian Naadam, known also as Eriin gurban naadam (three manly games in English), has a long history and been celebrated with respects among Mongolian ethnic groups for centuries. The Mongolian Naadam is a national festival consisting of mainly three traditional competition games of horserace, wrestling and archery that all represent oral traditions, folk performing arts, social practices, traditional knowledge, and craftsmanship features. Thus, Naadam is very unique for Mongolians and does not exist among other nations and ethnic people. Mongolians follow special rituals and practices inherited from ancient time, while they wear unique costumes, use distinctive attires and gears, and sing special ritual praise eulogies, songs and melodies. Moreover, winning wrestlers, archers and

race-horses are appraised with praise eulogies, songs and rewarded titles. Everyone is allowed and encouraged to participate Naadam nurturing own satisfaction voluntarily that represents genuine democratic and freedom nature. Originally, Mongolian Naadam had purposes to celebrate public and civil big and small event and serve as entertainment festival, yet its role has changed and expanded throughout historical stages as competition to challenge strengths and courage of military cavalries, entertain and cheer public atmosphere, public ceremonies to represent national solidarity and during state affairs, and also recreational festival. During civil events such as worshipping sacred mountains, religious events, weddings and setting up a new ger, people organize Naadam within a small scale. The traditional society usually encourages popularity of Naadam among the general public and allowed become a real festival of ordinary people. Area Currently, Naadam is found popular only within Mongolia, in particular the central and western regions and having preserved its originality and integrity in these areas. Outside Mongolia – for instance, in the Buryat and Kalmyk regions of Russia and Inner Mongolian Autonomous Republic of China – traditional customs of Naadam have been celebrated occasionally and in some areas almost disappeared. Mongolian Naadam has flourished in central and western regions of Mongolia and become relatively more popular than other areas. In the countryside of Mongolia, rural people currently celebrate Naadam with its genuine originality and integrity intact. Community Communities in the aforementioned locations are the main bearers and are diverse in ethnography.

## 2) Relevant information:

- **Year of inscription:** 2010
- **Community involvement:**  
local stakeholders, including Naadam heritage bearers, and representatives from wrestling, archery and horse trainers' professional associations have been interviewed and actively involved in the activities for the safeguarding of Naadam. The Mongolian National Wrestling Federation, the Mongolian Horse-trainers' Federation and the Mongolian Archery Federation, their members, wrestlers, archers and horse trainers have participated and contributed to develop safeguarding plans.
- **Preservation association:**  
The Mongolian Archery Federation has upgraded its rule and procedures and been implementing planned reform actions such as supporting and providing incentives to craftsmen making bows and arrows, training



young archers and enhancing scholarship discipline of transferring archery to next generations.

The Mongolian Horse-trainers' Federation is implementing activities to strengthen the legal framework for ensuring safety of racehorse riding children, regularizing national level tournaments, creating incentives to remunerate horse-trainers' achievements and organizing public awareness campaigns.

The Mongolian National Wrestling Federation focuses on comprehensive strategic activities, including preserving integrity of the Mongolian traditional wrestling; transferring it to next generations; promoting and advocating wrestlers' social security, health, labor safety and well-being; creating traditional wrestling study disciplines and developing relevant scientific research studies.

### **3) Practitioners**

Overall population from all Mongolian ethnic groups, including wrestlers, archers, horse trainers, horse rider children, all artists performing various cultural forms, governmental and non-governmental organizations, schools and culture management institutions, equipment production factories, employees of private entities, herders, scholars, experts, members of wrestling, archery and horse-race professional associations, activists, audience and fans, ordinary people etc. Mongolian Naadam is confined to the Mongolian nationality and was originated among Mongols. Mongolian Naadam is open and public festival celebrated by all people so that the coverage of participating communities, groups and individuals appears extensively broad. In recent years, wrestling and archery specialized schools, training courses and clubs have emerged and spreading in relation to urban culture and civilization that the number of craftsmen and artists who make traditional clothing and related tools of above sports games, is have been growing fast and actively.

### **4) Relevant events**

Mongolian Naadam is the largest public festival which consists of traditional competition games including wrestling, horserace and archery that they all employ specific ceremonies, unique rituals, and costumed clothing, accessories, attires and gears. Special ceremonies and rituals of archery, wrestling and racehorse games which of them has the distinct ritual oral poetry: eulogies praising the winner-wrestlers and horses, benedictions, blesses and exciting dictum 'Uukhai' praising hitting the target soon. Mongolian Naadam possesses inseparable relations with Mongolian traditional folklore art forms adorned with Mongo-



lian traditional long songs and morin khuur music (horse-headed violin). At the opening of Naadam long songs such as 'Tumnii ekh' and 'Khuur magnai' are often performed, and during festival competition wrestlers perform the 'Eagle dance' and horse-riding children sing special song 'Giingoo', jokeys' cry for encouraging the race horses.

Mongolian Naadam in itself has preserved a bulk of traditional knowledge and social practices, since Mongolian Naadam is a festival inseparably linked with rituals based on nature and the universe, and five common types of livestock, with social practices respecting the sky, the Earth and water, and with celebrating labour and household related events and anniversaries.

Craftsmanship plays a key role in Mongolian Naadam. The wrestling requires special costumes, including a hat, zodog (shirt without a front side), shuudag (shorts) and boots that all have aesthetic meanings and purposes. Horse-riding children normally wear bright-colored, bigger-sized and light shirts and pants decorated with traditional patterns. Archers also wear special clothes suited for shooting arrows to the target. All these clothes and gears are made by traditional craftsmen and with traditional technology.

### **5) Explanation:**

Mongolian Naadam bears distinct representation of nomadic civilization of Mongols who migrated throughout Central Asia's vast steppe and practiced five-type livestock herding that is typically acknowledged as 'nomadic culture' worldwide. Mongolian Naadam is a unique traditional festival do not exist in or among any other nationalities/countries in the world. Mongolians enjoy to look forward to upcoming Naadam events while practicing splendid customs and hospitality, such as preparing specifics, wondering who will win the wrestling and whose horses will win, ensuring household arrangements, wearing traditional costumes, producing plentiful food and drinks and offering them to visitors on Naadam days. Naadam has been refined and reformed constantly throughout different stages of history and social relations. However, its true nature and structure have not nearly almost changed with its specific rituals, practices and styles all intact. Eventually, Naadam has prospered greatly by attracting Mongols' wills and solidarity, becoming popular throughout all social strata, and being an extraordinary national festival. In modern days, Naadam has earned a national festival to remark anniversary celebration of people's revolution of July 11, 1921 each year. The day July 11 is proclaimed as the Day of national Naadam and celebrated throughout the country from soum to aimags. Naadam represents distinct features of Mongolians' nomadic culture and tradition, with expression of their unique cultural characteristics and images to become an identity of Mongolian people to the outside world. Naadam appears as valuable heritage property and

exclusive social factor to recognize the original source and foundation of the Mongolian nation state, to strengthen national solidarity and patriotism pride, and to respect the Motherland, sovereign independence and the State of the nation.

## **6) Information resource**

Relevant documents from the Center of Cultural Heritage and Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO.

Annual reports of related NGO's and Associations

## **7) Safeguarding projects**

In recent years, the Mongolian National Wrestling Federation, Mongolian Horse-trainers' Federation and Mongolian Archery Federation have taken certain measures based on procedures and resolutions issued from their respective congresses. The Mongolian National Wrestling Federation (MNWF) was established in 1990 and has making efforts to realize its objective to develop the traditional wrestling for two decades. This most renowned NGO of Mongolia closely cooperates with the authorities and general public in regards to developing the Mongolian traditional wrestling, its originality and integrity and ensuring its continuity in transferring to young generations. The MNWF has its rule, congress, conference and executive board with permanent functions, while enhancing its activities and structure through 25 reform actions. For instance, MNWF has built the Wrestling Palace with 2,500 seats which currently provides broader opportunities to organize Naadam festival wrestling tournaments all the year around. The Mongolian Horse-trainers' Federation has elaborated policy statements on developing the Mongolian traditional horserace and been implementing the policy throughout the country. To mention some activities implemented in recent years, several national tournaments have been organized and regularized, horse-trainers' incentive and reward system has been created, a procedure on ensuring safety and health of racehorse-riding children, and historical evolution and future trends of the traditional horserace have been studied. The Mongolian National Archery Federation (MNAF) have resolved to organize the National Festival every four years and included *uriankhai*, *buryat* and *khalkh* ethnic archery types as individual forms. Consequently, traditional archery diversity has been developed effectively. In addition, separate associations of *uriankhai* and *buryat* archery have been established and operating to implement policy on developing these traditional archery types. As a result of the policy on developing the traditional archery implemented by the Mongolian National Archery Federation since 1990s, the national archery-team championship tournament has been organized annually since 1992 so that many aimags (10-12 aimags) have had archery teams. The

National Archers' Federation obtained membership in the WTAA, while being committed to study and advertise Mongolian traditional archery types further.

### **8) Survey study project carried out by scholars**

The survey studies on Naadam, particularly on the components thereof, the Wrestling, Archery and Horse-race have been conducted by wide range of stakeholders, such as foreign and domestic individual researchers, research institutes and other interested bodies.

### **9) Awards received**

Mongolian Presidential Decree on Developing the Traditional Archery (2002)

### **10) Safeguarding measures**

In 2003, the State Parliament of Mongolia adopted the "Law on National Naadam Festival" aimed at regulating and safeguarding the transmission, and the organizational activities of the nationwide celebration of Mongol Naadam. This Law serves as the legal basis for safeguarding and promoting Mongol Naadam. Thus, greater attention is now given toward the Mongol Naadam, which is celebrated at the highest organizational level nationwide and conducted in accordance with the traditional manner and rules. In this way, the viability and sustainability of Mongol Naadam is ensured. Representatives from governmental and non-governmental organizations are equally included in the constitution of the National Committee for organizing the Naadam Festival and its sub-committees. The three hearth-stones of Mongol Naadam - wrestling, horseracing and archery - are organized in a comprehensive manner and in conformity with traditional customs and manners.

- **Wrestling:**

With the aim of regularizing the wrestling competitions for improving wrestlers' skills, and to transmit and develop the sport of national wrestling, a Competition of 'DurvunUuliinKhishig', A Favor of Four Mountains (surrounding the capital city) was newly established and added to the wrestling competitions of Mongol Naadam and TsagaanSar (Lunar Month) Festivals. Accordingly, the State now organizes six National Wrestling Competitions every year.

In addition, the seasonal 'National Wrestling Festival' is now being held on a regular basis. In the framework of the 'National Wrestling Festival', a series of wrestling competitions are being organized, including 'Youth Wrestler,' 'Wrestling of all Mongolians,' 'Wrestling of Soum Titled Wrestlers,' 'Wrestling of Aimag Titled Wrestlers' and 'Wrestling of State Titled

Wrestlers.’ These serial wrestling competitions are pleasing to the general audience and wrestlers, and greatly contribute to improving wrestlers’ skills and wit, and regularize their preparation for the next level competition.

The ‘National Wrestling Association of Mongolia’ is conducting a coordinated set of activities to popularize wrestlers – the main bearers of Mongolian Wrestling – in order to fairly value their success, and respect and acknowledge their labor. For instance:

- to reward titles at each bout;
- to provide wrestlers over the age of 45 with a state pension;
- to celebrate the wrestlers’ success/title;
- to provide the winning wrestlers with government and sponsors’ incentives;
- to increase rewards for winning wrestlers;
- to rank the wrestlers with their success.

The ‘National Wrestling Association of Mongolia’ has established an annual registration and information database to capture and ensure the preservation of the tradition of Mongol Naadam, to develop the Mongolian wrestling, and to track the titles and names of winning wrestlers at each bout in National Wrestling Competitions. The lists are:

- list of State-titled wrestlers currently alive (for each title);
- list of State-titled wrestlers over the age of 45 to be included in a system of State pension;
- list of wrestlers under the age of 50 for ranking them with their success;
- list of wrestlers for ranking at the aimag-titled and army-titled wrestlers with their success;
- consensus of all competitions held within that year.

The projects of “Creation of a National Wrestling Field in Every Soum and School Provided with Relevant Accessories” and the “Wrestling of all Mongolians” are being implemented at the national level in order to disseminate the tradition of Mongolian wrestling. The activities are being undertaken with aim of developing and broadening information on Mongolian wrestling to a scholarly level. In the framework of the above objective, the books titled “Encyclopedia of Mongolian Wrestling” and “Terminological Dictionary of Mongolian Wrestling” are being drafted involving more than 20 wrestling researchers and experts in this work.

In September 2011, the “Wonder of Mongolian National Wrestling” competition was organized in Ulaanbaatar with participation of 6016 wrestlers which will be recorded in the Guinness World Book of Records. The event significantly contributes to the advertisement and popularization of Mongolian wrestling worldwide.

Now in its 19th year, the National Wrestling Association of Mongolia has published a magazine titled ‘Bukh’ (wrestling) and continues to promote, advertise and disseminate information on Mongolian wrestling. The serial book ‘Mongol Naadam’ continues to be published every year.

- **Archery:**

In recent years, governmental and non-governmental organizations, relevant communities, groups and individuals of practitioners have been actively working to safeguard and develop archery and the traditional craftsmanship of bow and arrow making - an inseparable element of intangible cultural heritage of Mongolians.

In 2002 the President of Mongolia issued a decree “To Develop Traditional Archery.” The State Great Khural adopted the “Law on National Naadam Festival” in 2005. The Government issued a decision to include courses on traditional archery in the programs of general education and higher education institutions. The Mongolian National Archery Federation established archery training courses and clubs in aimags and soums. As a result, every aimag and soum created their own team of archers. With the aim of reviving, developing and disseminating archery, the Mongolian National Archery Federation, concerned archers, groups and individuals are implementing serial nationwide activities to build the practice of Archery in aimags and soums. Bows and arrows and other relevant accessories are being provided; exhibitions organized, archery performances and trainings are held, and books published on archery and marksmen.

The successful participation of Mongolian archers in the International Festival of Traditional Archeries greatly contributed to advertising Mongolian traditional archery to the World. Their presentation at the Festival with the theme of “Mongol Naadam” also contributed to promoting mutual respect among other cultures. Since women and children started to take part as participants in archery, and the winning male and female archers rewarded with the title of ‘State Marksman,’ the extent of archery was broadened and its content was enriched. Since the scope of archery at the

National Naadam Festival was extended, the style and forms of bow and arrow are being enriched as well, with bows of different size and patterns for different purposes and usage (men, women and children of different ages). In 2006, a stadium was built for Mongolian National Archery. With the aim of popularizing and acknowledging those who promote this cultural practice, craftsmen are designated as 'bearers' and are registered in the List of 'ICH Bearers' approved by the National-Committee for identifying ICH and its Bearers; in addition, certificates are awarded from the Ministry.

- **Race of Swift Horses:**

The Federation of Mongolian Horse Racing Sport and Trainers announced the year 2011 as a year to strengthen and improve their sub-committees in aimags and soums. In the framework of the above objective, the Federation is organizing consultative meetings in each aimag with the involvement of local horse-trainers and horse race activists. The Federation has built its press office and started publishing the magazine called “DelkhinMoriton” (Horsemen of the World) as a source of information for the general public which introduces and advertises race horses and horse-trainers’ technique, skill and activities. According to the rules of titles given to swift horses, stallions and horses of all ages at the national and regional competitions that win once are awarded the title of ‘TumniiEkh;’ stallions and horses of all ages that win 2-3 times are awarded the title of ‘Dayan TumniiEkh;’ stallions and horses of all ages that win more than 4 times are awarded the title of ‘DarkhanTumniiEkh;’ horses under the age of four that win or come in first 5 places several times are awarded the title of ‘IDER TumniiEkh;’ winning stallions and horses above 4 years of age at the Grand Competition of Selected Swiftest Horses are awarded the title of ‘ManlaiTumniiEkh’ and horses of same age that win twice at the same competition are awarded a title of ‘DarkhanManlaiTumniiEkh.’

Horse trainers of winning swift horses at national and regional competitions are awarded the title of ‘UlsiinAldartUyach’ (State Honored Horse Trainer), ‘UlsiinTodManlaiUyach’ (State Leading Horse Trainer), ‘AimginAldartUyach’ (Aimag Honored Horse Trainer) and ‘SumiinAldartUyach’ (Soum Honored Horse Trainer).

At present, the representatives of non-governmental organizations including the National Wrestling Association of Mongolia, the Mongolian National Archery Federation, the Mongolian Traditional Archers’ Federation, the Federation of Mongolian Horse Racing Sport and Trainers and their

sub-committees in aimags and soums are actively and effectively working towards promoting, safeguarding, transmitting, developing and disseminating the Mongolian Naadam Festival, a complex expression of intangible cultural heritage and traditional customs of Mongols. These representatives are fully collaborating with competent bodies in managing and safeguarding the Mongolian Naadam Festival including working with state and local governmental organizations of all levels, with the Ministry of Health of Mongolia, and with relevant experts and scholars.

## (5) Falconry

### 1) Heritage information

- **Local name:** Бүргэдээр ан хийх уламжлал, Шувуулахуй.

- **History background:**

The practices of taming the raptors as falcon, hawk and eagle and training them for the hunting purposes is an ancient tradition practiced today among many countries of the world.

There is a history that our ancestors practiced with falconry and venerated the white falcons for their banners. The main form of the Falconry, the living tradition of hunting with eagle is still being kept in its original form as an inseparable part of the customs, oral expressions and associated rituals of the Kazakh ethnic group in western Mongolia. The fact is the living tradition of the Falconry is a proud and valuable example of enriching the intangible cultural heritage of humanity and cultural diversity with its unique colors and manners.

Among Kazakhs, the eagle is considered as a benevolent and friendly animal protecting from harms and blessing with long life to its owner. Falconry or the custom of hunting with eagle is associated with not only hunting but with traditional customs and rituals, festive events, contests and competitions as well. There are two main techniques for taming and training the eagle: a) catching a wild eagle, or b) taking the fledgling from its nest. Falconers develop a strong relationship and spiritual bond with their birds, and strong commitment and care is required to train, handle and fly the falcons.

- **Area:**

Eagle Hunting is practiced primarily by the Khazakh minorities in Bayan Ulgii Province -Western area, by Mongolians in Central area – Ulaanbaatar city.



## 2) Relevant information

- **Year of inscription:**

In 2008, the multi-national countries including United Arab Emirates, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Republic of Korea, Mongolia, Morocco, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Syrian Arab Republic have nominated the “Falconry, a living human heritage” for inscription on the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. In 2010, UNESCO has officially inscribed the “Falconry, a living human heritage” on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

- **Preservation association members:**

Ministry of Education, Culture and Sciences, Center of Cultural Heritage, Mongolian Falconry Association, Mongolian Burkut (Eagle) Association, heritage bearers, practitioners and communities involved.

- **Activities:** Twice a year conducted the Eagle festival, Falconry Open day on 16th November.

Also following activities were carried-out:

- Field research on Falconry
- National Consultative Meeting
- DVD, VCD production of Trainings and Festival

## 3) Practitioners

Ethnic groups of Kazakh people and members of the Mongolian Falconry Association, Mongolian Burkut (Eagle) Association.

## 4) Relevant events

Special occasions, festive events, holidays, festivals, social practices

## 5) Explanation

Falconry is practiced along the migration routes used by falcons for thousands of years. Thus falconry is mainly found within these traditional migration flyways and corridors that run from north and east Asia and north Europe through Mediterranean Europe, the Middle East and the Caspian Sea countries to North Africa, and from North America, south to Central and South America.

Falconry is the traditional art and practice of keeping, training and flying falcons to take quarry in its natural state, and has been practiced for more than 4000 years. It is one of the oldest relationships between human and bird. It probably evolved in the steppes of Asia, and spread via cultural and trade links to other countries. The falcon and her prey have evolved together over millions of years;



their interaction is an age-old drama. The falconer's task is to bring the actors together on nature's stage.

Falconry as intangible cultural heritage is integrated into communities as a social recreational practice and a means of connecting with nature. Originally a way of obtaining food, falconry has acquired other values over the centuries, and is identified with camaraderie, sharing, and expressions of freedom. Nowadays falconry is practiced by people of all ages in local communities in more than sixty countries.

Falconry has its own set of culturally-shaped traditions and ethics; while falconers come from different backgrounds, they share universal values, traditions and practices. Falconry is transmitted from generation to generation as a cultural tradition by a variety of means, such as mentoring, learning within families, or formalized training in clubs.

Falconry provides modern man with links to nature and strengthens local identities. It is an important cultural symbol in many countries. The modern practice of falconry aims at safeguarding not only falcons, quarry, and habitats but also the practice itself as a living cultural tradition.

#### **6) Information resource**

- UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Website
- Relevant documents in the Center of Cultural Heritage
- Annual reports of the related NGO's and Associations

#### **7) Safeguarding projects**

Project on the Documentation of the Falconry, 2015 by Center of Cultural Heritage

#### **8) Survey study project carried out by scholars**

Last 6 years was undertaken intensive survey studies on Falconry are conducted by wide range of stakeholders, such as foreign and domestic individual researchers, practitioners, research institutes and other interested bodies.

#### **9) Awards received**

In 2012, by Mongolian Presidential Decree named the falcon as the national bird of Mongolia. All citizens and organizations have been urged to treat the bird as a symbol of Mongolian history, culture and ideology of protecting nature, and to implement various measures for saving falcons. Since the era of Chingis khaan Mongolians have cherished falcons and considered it a symbol of braveness and power. The bird is related to Mongolian history nomadic lifestyle and emperors.

## (6) Traditional craftsmanship of the Mongol ger and its associated customs

### 1) Heritage information

- **Local name:** Монгол гэрийн уламжлалт урлал, зан үйл
- **History background:**

For thousands of years, nomadic herders of Mongolia roamed across the country-side from season to season. Dry, windy areas close to rivers are best for summers while areas away from river-bank wind and close to mountains or hills are best for winter stays. In the country where pasture always was and still is a public domain, the herders moved freely to the best locations for the season. With this lifestyle of freedom of movement and pastoral animal husbandry was invented the national dwelling called the 'Mongol ger'. It is a round structure of easily dismantle-able walls, polls and a round ceiling covered with canvas and felt, tightened with ropes. The ger was designed to be light enough for Mongolian nomads to carry, flexible enough to fold-up, pack and assemble, sturdy enough for multiple dismantling and assembling as well as easy for regulating temperatures within. Over many centuries the mongolger was modified into a perfectly aerodynamic structure which can withstand Mongolia's fierce spring winds ranging up to 18-20 meter/sec. It can be dismantled in half an hour and assembled in an hour by a small family with 2-3 adults. The Mongol ger has many varieties. The most common "5-wall ger" consists of five lattice segments forming a circular wall, a door, a toono (round window ceiling), two bagana (columns that hold the toono), and 88 uni(long poles that connect wall lattices and toono which forms the roof of the ger). There are also several accessories attached to the ger.
- **Area:**

The main region of traditional ger craftsmanship is the central region of the country, located in the south of Khangai mountain. The region includes the territory of several soums of Uvurhangai province, namely, Hujirt, Kharhorin, Bat-Ulziit, Uyanga and Arvaiheer. Besides this main area of craftsmanship, up to 10 families craft mongol gers in dozens of provinces of Mongolia.

Housing in a ger is quite common all over Mongolia. Besides Mongolia, craftsmanship of ger exists with its own distinct features in the neighboring regions of Central and Inner Asia, namely, the Mongols of Inner Mongolia, Qinghai in China, Buryatia and Kalmukia in Russia, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan.

## 2) Relevant information

- **Year of inscription: 2013**
- **Community involvement:**

The bearers, craftsmen and their communities and associated NGOs are concentrated in Bat-Ulzii, Uyanga, Kharkhorin, Arvaikheer and Khujirt soums of Uvurkhangai aimag and in Ulaanbaatar city.
- **Preservation association members:**

Ministry of Education, Culture and Sciences, Center of Cultural Heritage, The bearers, craftsmen and their communities and associated NGOs are concentrated in Bat-Ulzii, Uyanga, Kharkhorin, Arvaikheer and Khujirt soums of Uvurkhangai aimag and in Ulaanbaatar city.
- **Activities/ Safeguarding measures:**

Currently, trainings on transmitting the element are still under developed therefore we plan to collaborate with aimag, soum and city level cultural organizations to promote local initiatives on the matter.

Since 2010, National Commission and the Cultural Heritage Center, initiated a database of ger-craftsmanship and associated information. In 2013, minister of Culture, Sport and Tourism approved in the decree No A/41 the latest list of National Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage, where the element is included. Government of Mongolia identified safeguarding of cultural heritage as the top priority in the culture policy and issued and started following the inscription of the two important policy papers namely “Mongolian Government Culture Policy” and “Develop strategy of arts and culture based on the Millennium Development Goals of Mongolia”. Within the year of 2013, the ministry is planning to improve the “Law on protecting cultural heritage”, develop a new “Law on the representation of culture of traditional knowledge” and to improve legal frameworks of the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage.

The Ministry is promoting activities to publicize and spread best practices of ger craftsmanship, identify and select bearers of the element to issue a prize, protect knowledge and skills of the selected craftsmen, and promote their initiatives and practices which contribute the national sustainable development. Moreover, conducted research and revived designs of Mongol imperial ger palaces and established a ger palace for state ceremonies in the capital, and a ger cultural palace for multi ethnicity in Khovdaimag.

The bearers, craftsmen and their communities and associated NGOs are concentrated in Bat-Ulzii, Uyanga, Kharkhorin, Arvaikheer and Khujirt soums of Uvurkhangai aimag and in Ulaanbaatar, where they craft and organize in formal apprenticeship trainings to teach and transmit the element.

- **Practitioners:**

Currently, in Uvurkhangai province 385 families and groups practice ger craftsmanship including 80 in Hujirtsoum, 15 in Kharhorin, 200 in Bat-Ulziit, 20 in Uyanga and 70 in Arvaiheersoum.

#### **4) Relevant events**

Special occasions, festive events, holidays, festivals, social practices, various labor and household rituals and events

#### **5) Explanation**

The traditional Mongol ger is usually a product of multiple individuals. Craftsmanship of the Mongol ger is a traditional household enterprise involving the labor of a household or a neighborhood where men are engaged in woodcarving while women and men are painting, sewing and stitching, felt-making etc.

There are specialized craftsmen for various parts of the ger. For example, some craftsmen specialize in making the matching wood parts of the ger, while the others specialize in painting and ornamental carving of the ger elements, and ger furniture. Others specialize in the cutting, sewing, stitching of covers, wall curtains and floorings. And some specialize in making large, overly ornamental, festivity gers only. The main craftsmen of the ger are those who do the ger wood parts. They work according to traditional methods and technology, meticulously crafting the wooden elements to precisely fit the others. The most time-consuming part of the work is making the toono and the lattice wall of the ger. The craftsmen select the wood very carefully, using water and fire to add flexibility to the wall. They employ only the best quality leather to hold the lattice together. Traditionally, the ger craftsmen are also herders themselves and make gers according to orders. When a craftsman is busy with a ger order, he and she asks his or her neighbor or family members to take care of his animals temporarily. Therefore, the craftsmen did not separate their lifestyle from regular herding lifestyle. The busiest time for a craftsman is summer—prior to the most popular wedding season, autumn. However, they prepare woods during the winter time while the trees are dormant.

## 6) Information resources:

- Relevant documents in the Center of Cultural Heritage.
- Related research documents carried-out by scholars.

## 7) Survey study project carried out by scholars

Last 10 years was undertaken intensive survey studies on Mongol ger are conducted by wide range of stakeholders, such as foreign and domestic individual researchers, practitioners, research institutes and other interested bodies.

Latest research studies include:

L. Batchuluun (Sc.D) has published a book titled “Patent system of felt crafts” based on research studying traditional felts as the main inventory material used in crafting gers.

B. Daajav (Ph.D) conducted a research on “Traditional structures and shapes of Mongolian ger”.

M. Molomjamts (Ph.D) has conducted academic research titled “Research on designs of ger wooden structures”.

L. Ganbaatar (Academician of Chingis Khaan’s World Academy) has designed a “Uujim (Spacious) Ger” model which embraces the consolidated traditional and modern features of the Mongolian ger craftsmanship.

B.Baatarkhuu (PhD) carried-out a research on Mongol Ger and has published a book titled ‘Encyclopedia of Traditional Mongolian Ger’

## (7) Mongolian knuckle-bone shooting

### 1) Heritage information

- **Local name:** Монгол шагайн харваа
- **History, background:**

Mongolians revere certain parts of bones of their domestic livestock animals and use them in their religious rites, plays and traditional games. One such popular team-based game is knucklebone shooting. Knucklebone Shooting is a widely spread cultural heritage throughout Mongolia and have been transmitted since the ancient time through traditional competition of “Shagain Toirom”. “Shaigain Toirom” means a local competition of Knucklebone. Players flick thirty domino-like marble tablets on a smooth wooden surface towards a target of sheep knuckle-bones, aiming

to knock them into a target zone. Each shooter possesses their own (arrow, chair, etc.) adjusted shooting tools and instruments especially made by hand and wear costumes embossed with distinguished characteristics depending on their rank and merits. All the equipment is made by traditional craftsmen. Its technique demands high levels of endurance and accuracy. Singers communicate their opinions to the shooters by singing traditional Knucklebone Shooting melodies and songs. Each competition's opening and closing ceremony has several specific rituals. National competitions tournaments involve 400-600 shooters; there are 30 or more competitions per year. Shooters build their own communities depending on their interest and affinity. This community is recognized as part of the cultural heritage. According to established rules teams consist of six to eight men, among which one or two have to be youngsters. Team members are tied by unbreakable internal bonds and follow clear ethical rules of mutual respect and dignity. A senior member who possesses well ethical and traditional knowledge and experiences will become the team leader. The Association is the principle representatives of bearers, preserving and promoting this heritage and ensuring continuous training and transmission of knowledge from senior to younger shooters.

- **Area:**  
The ancient tradition of competing with Knucklebone Shooting has been preserved and practiced till present day in Dundgobi, Dornogobi, Umnugobi, Uvurhangai, Khentii, Selenge and Bulgan aimags (provinces).

## 2) Relevant information

- **Year of inscription: 2014**
- **Community involvement:**  
Currently, there are over 6000 shooters who are the members of Mongolian Association of Knucklebone Shooting and are ensuring its continuity and development. About 800 professional and amateur teams participate in seasonal and annual regional and local tournaments. The primary unit bearing responsibility for preserving, training and transmitting the practice, its ethics, customs and rituals is a freely formed community or team of knucklebone shooters. The team is a small community bound together with ethics and customs of the tradition and recognized among people in their locality which enriches the organization, soum or aimag's fame through the practice.
- **Preservation association members:**  
Center of Cultural Heritage, Mongolian Association of Knucklebone Shooting

### **3) Practitioners:**

Today the Knucklebone Shooting is developed and expanded in each Mongolian provinces and regions. The tradition of Knucklebone shooting is also practiced among Mongolian community who creates their own competitions and units in United-States, Korea, France, Belgium, United-Kingdom and Russian Federation. A single unifying core of all Knucklebone Shooters of Mongolia is the Mongolian Federation of Knucklebone Shooting venue in the capital city of Ulaanbaatar.

### **4) Relevant events**

Special occasions, festive events, holidays, festivals, social practices

### **5) Explanation**

Practitioners of knucklebone shooting of different regions and localities are unified people as a group or community according to their own interest and efforts. They express themselves through their cultural heritage and they recognize the tradition of knucklebone shooting and its associated customs, oral tradition and craftsmanship as part of their cultural heritage and are aware of their commitment and responsibility toward the inheritance and development of the element. Thus provides bearer communities and groups with sense of identity and continuity. Knucklebone shooting is a community involved team entertainment competition. Therefore, it provides a favorable environment in which each member contributes to the team's success, social wellbeing and development of individuals by supporting and learning from each other. The tradition of Knucklebone shooting brings team members with different backgrounds closer to one another, encourages their interaction and reverence towards elders and among each other and improves their social respect and cohesion. Further, the element provides its members with consciousness to revere the traditional manners, customs and rituals inherited from previous generations. The social and cultural function of the tradition of knucklebone shooting was the same as above and is still kept the same today.

### **6) Safeguarding measures**

Since 70's Knucklebone Shooting tradition and its practice has risen with more and more units and communities. These communities were voluntarily organizing independent activities and wished to establish a public organization that develops and promotes this tradition. Since its establishment in 1980 under the name of "Voluntary Bureau of Knucklebone Shooting", the Association has actively taken measures to safeguard the element and its associated customs and to ensure its viability. The Association organizes over 30 major nationwide tournaments annually. The titles of "Mighty par Excellence", "Genius par Excellence", "Par Excellence", "Winner par Excellence" are granted to the winners of Annual



Championship Tournament of Knucklebone Shooting. State titles had been granted to more than 300 winners and astute shooters in accordance with their ranks and merits. With the initiatives of central and regional sub-Bureaus, 30 or more annual competitions are traditionally held and organized by the association.

The more Knucklebone Shooting develops its activity more enlarges its amateurs and admirers. The current Tournaments at the National Naadam Festivals are crowded with audiences from festivities, admirers, foreign tourists and journalists. It is a clear sign of its development and extent. The main cause is due to the effort and sustained commitment of the Association's and its sub-Bureaus' as well as the reverence and support of practitioners and shooters themselves toward their traditional element.

The Government of Mongolia and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sciences have identified cultural protection as one of the main priorities in the concepts of cultural policy and adopted to implement the MDG – Based Culture and Arts Development Policy of Mongolia. In the framework of this policy, the initiatives are taken to support the safeguarding and developing Knucklebone Shooting and increasing its contribution to sustainable development. In 1998, under the Law on Organizing and Celebrating the National Naadam Festivity, the President of Mongolia declare the "Knucklebone Shooting" an official customary sport of the state and approved its merits, titles and awards. In 2000 and 2009, the establishment of the Grand-Pavilion for the Knucklebone Shooting at Central Stadium with the budget of 63.9 million tugrugs (name of Mongolian currency unit) is an expression of the State contribution and effort to protect and develop the element.

#### **7) Information resources**

- Relevant documents in the Center of Cultural Heritage
- Guidebook series 'Culture & Arts in new circumstances'
- Annual reports of the related NGO's and Associations

#### **8) Survey study project carried out by scholars**

Knucklebone shooting community based inventorying works have been implemented by the regional sub-Bureaus. Each shooter's been registered by: address, name, age, profession, years of practice, title...etc. The inventorying is updated each year by the regional sub-Bureaus then sent to the Association. Relevant research materials, audio and video recordings and photo of Knucklebone Shooting and its bearers are kept at the National Registration and Information Database and its Archive of the Center of Cultural Heritage. Registration of all other Knucklebone shooters and other relevant information and materials are kept at the Association.



## 2. The List of Intangible Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding

### (1) Mongol Tuuli : Mongolian epic

#### 1) Heritage information

- **Local name:** Монгол тууль
- **History, background:** The Mongolian epic is a unique oral traditional art genre which has great length of lyrics with from hundreds to thousands of verses and is narrated in Mongolian in special melodies. Traditionally, Mongolian heroic epic combines benedictions, eulogies, spells, idiomatic phrases, fairy tales, myths and folk songs, and thus are regarded as the best collection of Mongolian oral traditions and immortalized heroic history of Mongolian people. Epic singers are distinguished in prodigious memory, outstanding skills and talents and well-versed intelligence perform epic lyrics to the accompaniment of the traditional musical instruments such as morin khuur (horse-headed fiddle), tovshuur (national lute-like musical instrument), ekil and khuuchir, in compliance with special rituals and customary law. Therefore, the epic is a combination of performing arts of singing, vocal improvisation and musical composition coupled with theatrical drama elements. As epics were evolved over a span of many centuries, they mirror and reflect nomadic lifestyle and trans-human civilizations of Mongols as the 'living encyclopedia'. The Mongol epics remain a one of key factors of Mongol identity and continue to inspire Mongolians for protection of national cultural heritage.

Area Mongolian epics were spread all parts of Mongolia; western, eastern, northern, eastern and central regions. Currently, the range of distribution is limited only the western region, specifically Duut soum of Khovd aimag and Malchin and Naranbulag soum of Uvs aimag, in addition to Ulaanbaatar city.

**Table1. Range of distributions as of the middle of the XX century**

Aimags/ provinces	Khalkh epics traditions	Bayad epics traditions	Durved epics traditions	Uriankhai epics traditions
Arkhangai	-----			
Uvurkhangai	-----			
Khuvsgul	-----			
Uvs		-----	-----	

Bayan-Ulgii				-----
Zavkhan	-----			
Gobi-Altai	-----			
Khovd	-----			-----
Umnugobi	-----			
Dundgobi	-----			
Tuv	-----			
Dornod	-----			
Dornogobi	-----			
Bayankhongor	-----			
Sukhbaatar	-----			
Khentii	-----			
Selenge	-----			
Bulgan	-----			
Ulaanbaatar city	-----			

**Table2. Range of distributions as of nowadays**

<b>Aimags/ provinces</b>	<b>Khalkh epics traditions</b>	<b>Bayad epics traditions</b>	<b>Durved epics traditions</b>	<b>Uriankhai epics traditions</b>
Arkhangai				
Uvurkhangai				
Khuvsgul				
Uvs		-----	-----	
Bayan-Ulgii				-----
Zavkhan				
Gobi-Altai				
Khovd				-----
Umnugobi				
Dundgobi				
Tuv				
Dornod				
Dornogobi	-----			
Bayankhongor	-----			
Sukhbaatar				
Khentii				
Selenge				
Bulgan				
Ulaanbaatar city	-----			-----

## 2) Relevant information

- **Year of inscription: 2009**

- **Community involvement:**

While the Administration office of Khovd province appealed its local folk artists to get actively engaged and commit to the action for nominating the Mongolian epic, Mr. Seseer.Kh and Mr.Dorjpalam.A, the epic bards in Duut county in Khovd province came up voluntarily to the town of Khovd all the way from 70 km and met with the field research expedition team and provided them with important inputs on current situation and future safeguarding measures of the epic, as well as their story how they learned epic, facts on the rituals and customs related to epic that had never been recorded by the scholars before. The Theatre of the Khovd province, as well as the Administration office of Uvs province provided the field research team with automobiles for passing through more than 2000 km for the epic research. Also, local herders and epic performers Mr. Ankhbayar.N and Mr. Batzaya.J guided the field research team in the research areas, which was a noteworthy support for conducting the field research secure and safe in harsh winter weather. Epic singers inhabiting in different locations in Mongolia have vigorous will to be furtherly engaged in the activities for the safeguarding and promotion of the Mongol epic.

- **Preservation association members:**

Cultural and art specialists of Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, Institute of Language and Literature of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences, scholars and experts, local administrative bodies, NGOs, folk artists and individuals from Khovd province and Uvs province.

- **Activities:**

As a follow-up of the inscription of the Mongol Tuuli in the Urgent Safeguarding List, National Program to safeguard and promote the Mongol Tuuli was elaborated and successfully implemented by relevant bodies. Also in 2013-2016 with support of UNESCO Center of Cultural Heritage effectively carried-out project on the "Safeguarding and Revitalizing the Mongolian Traditional Epic".

- **Practitioners:**

'Uriankhai' ethnic epic performers Kh. Seseer (male, 75 years old), A. Baldandorj (male, 39 years old); A. Dorjpalam (male, 55 years old), N. Damdindorj (male, 52 years old), N. Ankhbayar (male, 38 years old), N.Namsrai (male, 28 years old).

- **Relevant events:**  
Special occasions, festive events, holidays, festivals, social practices, various labor and household rituals and events
- **Explanation abstract:**  
The Mongolian epic is one of unique oral traditions expressed in the Mongolian language developed by Mongols which has great length of lyrics with from some hundred to many thousands of verses and narrated in Mongolian to special melodies. In early days of human civilizations within the traditional social relations, Mongols worshipped natural Divine power and ancestors' spirits, and praised their blessed gifts and triumphs that eventually created the foundation to evolve heroic epics and myths. Along the historical processes of social relations, epics were becoming more sophisticated and complex while widely reflecting Mongols' nomadic culture, lifestyle, social behaviors, religion, mentality and imaginations. So, they had already found its classical form by the VI century AD. In doing so, talented artists born among people constantly improve epics traditions from generation to generation, while learning, performing and transmitting special techniques of epic singing within the Mongolian society and territory. In terms of thematic scenarios, Mongolian epic typically narrate past history of Mongolian people and of a nation state in heroic and poetic lyrics, while praising a courageous hero born from ordinary people who fight and defeat enemies to protect his people and state. The Mongolian heroic epic may be regarded as epics from other Central Asian nomadic people, such as 'Manas' from Kyrgyz, yet it has unique Mongolian 'nationality' characteristics and incomparable rich compilations of thousand rhythmic lines of lyrics. Currently, over 280 heroic epics, including biggest and most famous epics such as 'Geser', 'Jangar', 'Zul-Aldar Khaan', 'Uayn Mungun Khadaasan', 'Luu Mergen Khaan' and 'Taliin Khar Bodon' are registered. With its unique and outstanding characters, Mongolian heroic epic provides valuable contribution to cultural heritage of humanities from on behalf of Mongolian people. Epics performers' musical instruments are greatly respected and restricted to touch and put on inappropriate places. Epics melodies have combine several narrating techniques, singing heavy bass voice or ordinary voice with low and high tones, or reading as poetic as eloquently. Heavy bass tones are regarded as a type of *huumii* – another form of Mongolian folk throat-singing. Epics heroes are typically believed by Mongols as historical figures who would be their ancestors and lived in ancient times, and thus respected greatly as compared to other performing arts. Thus, it used to be strictly prohibited to learn epics incompletely or wrongly so that they had been preserved and maintained

with its original forms and features until the twentieth century and further survived up to date.

As Mongolian epics have lyrics with hundreds to thousands of lines, epic learners must have good memory, imaginative minds and determined commitment to master in epics for long time under epics tradition bearers' teaching and supervision. Learners must not learn epics word by word, follow strict rules not to change names of heroes and order of events. An individual who knows one or two epics are not regarded as 'epic singers'. Epic singers tend to transmit and learn within kinship circles, inherited from fathers to sons. Epics must be performed at special places at specific times. For instance, trained professional epics performers mainly perform heroic epics as the well-wishing symbol during social and public events, such as State affairs, wedding ceremonies, the naadam - a festivity featuring wrestling, archery and horseracing competitions, the event of cutting children's hair for the first time, going for hunting and worshipping sacred sites. There is a special epic performance for each of the ceremony. Some epics should not be performed in summer time. *Tovshuur* plays one kinds melody tones, while *morin khuur*, *ekil* and *khuuchir* can play variety of tones. Therefore, four-stringed *khuuchir* can play different tones suitable to express various events and scenarios expressed throughout one epic. For instance, the famous epic-performer *Luvsan* played about 170 tones to perform 'Bodi Wise King who conquered the Western Hemisphere'. In this regard, some scholars consider epics as one-performer's theatre. *Ts. Damdinsuren*, a renowned scholar stated 'Fairytale and epic performers used to perform drama, music and narrating books in tandem'. In ordinary households, epics were performed at nights when stars on the sky, but not at daytime. Several days earlier, the host will bring epic performer's *tovshuur* at home and put it at a holy place respectfully. Then, they invite the epic singer and make request which epic to be performed, while burning butter-candle light and sitting a table with food and drink. 'Erkh Nachin Khartsaga' will be performed for the family wishing to have a child; or 'Khan Kharanhui' for wellbeing without bad luck; or 'Bayan Tsagaan Uvgun' for wealth and long life. As Mongolian heroic epics last long hours, some epics are performed all night with occasional breaks and others are performed several nights. When performing epics, it is prohibited to go out or make noise. Social function of Mongol epics in Mongol communities is wide-ranging. Through the epics, Mongolians transmit their history and intangible cultural heritage elements to younger generation, so it is used as a cultural tool to hand down the rich historical and folklore knowledge and values, which strengthened the

awareness of national identity, national proud and national unity among Mongolians.

Also, Mongol epic play an important role for Mongolians on the upbringing of the youngsters. With the help of historical brave and courageous scenarios in the epics, Mongolians mature and develop consciousness and mentality on their younger generation to loving their history, land, culture and people of Mongolia, furthermore, to disseminate and develop them as well. Nowadays, the number of epic trainers and learners are decreasing and the quality of the training is getting unsatisfactory, due to declining numbers of epic singers, growing disinterest of young people, and lack of administrative and financial supportive provisions. This is why, with the gradual disappearance of Mongol epic, the whole traditional system of transmitting their historic and cultural knowledge through the epic is currently degrading.

- **Information resource:**

- Relevant documents in the Center of Cultural Heritage
- Guidebook series 'Culture& Arts in new circumstances'
- Activity reports of UNESCO project
- Survey study project carried out by scholars
- Reports of the National Programson ICH

Following field surveys conducted on the Mongolian Intangible cultural heritage and its bearer within the umbrella of the Joint cooperation Project for Establishing a Safeguarding system for intangible cultural heritage in Mongolia: 'Implementation of the UNESCO Program 'Living Human Treasures System' in Mongolia':

No	Aimags (provinces) name	Region	Date
1	Khovd, Uvs and BayanUlgii	Western	November 15 - 29, 2008
2	Khentii and Dornod	Eastern	June 25 - July 08, 2009
3	Bulgan, Uvurkhangai	Central	July 25 - August 02, 2009
4	Khuvsgul	Northern	August 5 - 15, 2009
5	Selenge and Orkhon	Northern	August 5 - 15, 2009
6	Central aimags, Dundgovi, Dornogovi, and Govisumber	Central & Southern	August 22 - 31, 2009

- **Key implementers:**

- Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO,
- Center of Cultural Heritage

- **Co-implementers:**
  - Mongolian Cultural Studies Association
  - Local Culture and Arts Departments
  - MELS film studio
  
- **Awards received:** Inscribed in the National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage In Need of Urgent Safeguarding of Mongolia in 2009
  
- **Safeguarding measures:**

The epic is a living oral expression that is crucial for the cultural identity of the Mongolian people and for the historical continuity of their nomadic lifestyle. The Mongolian epic plays an important role in the traditional education of younger people living in the communities where it is performed. Mongolian epic performers continue to attach great importance to performing the epic within traditional contexts and in sacred settings, and endeavor to transmit performing techniques to the younger generation in the manner learned from their ancestors.

Therefore, National Safeguarding Program of the Mongolian epic was developed from a careful analysis of urgent needs and long-term goals, emphasizes training young performers in order to sustain intergenerational transmission, while strengthening the status accorded to epics and their performers and revitalizing the traditional ritual contexts of performance.

Under the support of this Program the coherent set of safeguarding measures are implemented with aims to revitalize and safeguard the epic, ensure its viability and sustainability, such as conducting traditional apprenticeship-training courses, organizing various public events such as exhibitions, festivals or seminars.

During the last years following protection activities accomplished by the Government body, local government body and NGOs:

1. 2011-2012 we have organized local and nationwide competitions among the storytellers and bearers. Also evaluated their ability and repertory and granted and glorified them as disseminating their work.
  
2. 2011-2012 we accomplished the project of training apprentices based on traditional manner of senior singers' experiences in order to strengthen and encourage the epic performance and inherit the epic knowledge and talent into the future generations.

3. 2009-2012 we published several research based books which included study of epics, biography of famous epic story tellers and the epics that they used to tell, in order to study the art of epics in scientific way.

4. In 2011 organized a conference on epic study and biography of famous epic story tellers.

5. Organized some activities for "Apprentice training" which aimed to get financial support in order to increase social value of epic storytellers, to grant them, and to make them popular.

6. Produced documentary movie, television programs, published CD, photo exhibition about this topic through media in order to propagate, popularize and disseminate art of epic in the society.

- **In results of these projects implementation:**

1. Social knowledge about art of epic has improved and their participation of safeguarding epic has increased.

2. Number of the researchers and amateurs on art of epic increased. There were total 7 to 8 people registered in Mongolia as epic story tellers in 2009, by the time when we were making research to get register "Mongolian Epic" in UNESCO's Intangible cultural heritage in need of urgent safeguarding list. But now there are more than 20 talented people who got that official title "Epic Storyteller" and they are inheriting this scarce and precious heritage. They all represent the tribes called Urianhai, Bayad, Durvud and Khalha

3. Epic storytellers started to have more pride on what they inherited till today and they became more initiative to improve their ability and add on in their repertory.

4. Value of social view on art of epic has improved and number of the participants on local and national competitions about epic art has dramatically increased.



## (2) Mongol Biyelgee: Mongolian Traditional Folk Dance

### 1) Heritage information

- **Local name, if any:** Монгол ардын уламжлалт бүжиг: Биелгээ
- **History, background:** Mongol Biyelgee: Mongolian Traditional Folk Dance is an outstanding form among traditional performing arts of Mongolia, and regarded as the original roots and wellspring of Mongolian national dances, their core forebear, source of creativity, and heritage stock. Mongol Biyelgee is unique and distinguished art expression which has embodied and originated from the nomadic way of life of Mongols that expressed lifestyle, customs, traditions and spiritual practices through dancing elements. Mongol Biyelgee dancing movements are typically confined to small space inside the Nomad's dwelling-ger. This is performed while half sitting or cross-legged sitting, coupled with fist and hand opening and waving, stiff and swift movements of chest and shoulders, shrugging and shaking them, crossing legs, steps and walks, as well as flexible body movements involved in prevalence. Besides, there are movements such as sitting and bending forward and backward the head and chest with the back or shoulders. In doing so, biyelgee performers praise and dance imitating the expressions of their lifestyle, household activities, courage, love, prides and livestock to the accompaniment of morin khuur, ikel khuur, tovshuur, tsuur, coupled with ethnic costumes.
- **Area:** Bearers and performers of Mongolian folk dance 'Biyelgee' typically live in the remote areas in the western region of Mongolia, including Bulgan, Altai, Munhkhairkhan and Duut soums of Khovd aimag, and Malchin, Naranbulag and Tarialan soums of Uvs aimag that those folk artists make efforts to teach and transmit 'bielgee' by and large. However, the distribution of 'biyelgee' bearers and performers is only limited to over 20 indigenous / native inhabitants aged over 60-80 who live in above-mentioned areas.

### 2) Relevant information

- **Year of inscription:** 2009
- **Community involvement:** Several researches and studies have been conducted and records have been kept on the rare and precious heritage of Mongol Biyelgee prior to Mongol Biyelgee nominating action for the List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding. With the support by Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO, Mongolian Cultural Studies Association and Association of Mongolian National Arts and Folk Dance have conducted academic research on the intangible

cultural heritage and its bearers together with the relevant scholars and researchers in the rural far areas of Mongolia by the end of 2008. During the research, considerable measures have been taken, including, documenting and digitalizing the intangible cultural heritage and its bearers, mapping the heritage spread sphere, get the bearers' consents, opinions, aspirations, proposals and advises in written and recording versions. Comments, recommendations and suggestions of biyelgee bearers, individuals, organizations and researchers have been attached without unbridged edits. The main opinion expressed in those comments, recommendations and suggestions have proposed to organize trainings, carry out public awareness campaigns, conduct research studies, strengthen existing legal framework, and financial and administrative supports.

- **Preservation association members:**  
Mongolian Cultural Studies Association and Association of Mongolian National Arts and Folk Dance
- **Activities:**  
As a follow-up of the inscription of the MONGOL BIYELGEE: MONGOLIAN TRADITIONAL FOLK DANCE in the Urgent Safeguarding List, an action plan to safeguard and promote the Mongol Biyelgee was elaborated and successfully implemented by the relevant bodies.

### 3) Practitioners:

Mongol Biyelgee is one of the outstanding and precious intangible heritage of nomadic Mongolians, which have evolved and got developed among them over hundreds of years. However, it is currently nearly-extinct and as mentioned in the item C, there are just over 20 bearers of biyelgee dance tradition from given ethnic groups, who preserved the originality of biyelgee dance. Following practitioner's dance is determined to express the original characteristics of Biyelgee dance of Mongolia. In Khovd aimag, Mongolia: T. Tsembel, D. Usnee, Ts. Urjinbadam, G. Tsend-Ayush from Bulgan county (soum) (Torguud biyelgee dancers); T. Khorloo, N. Battulga, A. Norolkhoo, A. Enkhtaivan, E. Altankhuyag, Ch. Dorj, Sh. Otgonbayar from Altai soum (Zakhchin biyelgee dancers); P. Munguntsooj, B. Tserendulam from Munhkhairkhan and Duut soums (Uriankhai biyelgee dancers) In Uvs aimag, Mongolia: J. Khumbaa, M. Jalk, G. Lhagva (Bayad biyelgee dancers); A. Chuluun, G. Bayartai from Naranbulag soum (Durved biyelgee dancers); M. Balgan, M. Purevsuren, T. Arslan, U. Zinameder from Tarialan soum (Khoton biyelgee dancers) Mongol Biyelgee plays great role and shows high significance in the Mongolian culture with its integrated elements of domains of intangible cultural heritage, as well as the social functions.

#### **4) Relevant events:**

Special occasions, festive events, holidays, festivals, social practices, various labor and household rituals and events

#### **5) Explanation:**

Mongolian traditional folk dance 'Biyelgee' is originated and evolved among nomadic Mongols within small space of Mongol ger, nomads' neighborhood – saakhalt ail, yet nowadays fewer ethnic groups have preserved and maintained this rare and valuable heritage element.

Mongolian national dances, their core forebear, source of creativity, and heritage stock. In other words, 'Biyelgee' is a unique dancing/performing art which is associated with wide range of lifestyle expression, household labour, customs and traditions as well as spiritual characteristics of different ethnic groups through dancing elements. Biyelgee dancing movements are typically confined to small space inside the ger and thus performed while half sitting or cross-legged sitting, coupled with fist and hand opening and waving, stiff and swift movements of chest and shoulders, shrugging and shaking them, crossing legs, steps and walks, as well as flexible body movements involved in prevalence. Besides, there are movements such sitting and bending forward and backward to touch the ground with the back or shoulders in combination with above-mentioned movements. In doing so, biyelgee dancers perform to the accompaniment of morin khuur, ikel khuur, tovshuur, tsuur, coupled with ethnic costumes and so expressing innermost thoughts and mentality of nomads. Mongolian folk dance 'biyelgee' inevitably serves characteristic features and movement elements inherited and reflected in Mongolian modern dance arts which make 'biyelgee' unique and distinguished among the traditional dances of other nationalities in the world. Mongol Biyelgee is unique and distinguished art expression which has embodied and originated from the nomadic way of life of Mongols that expressed lifestyle, customs, traditions and spiritual practices through dancing elements. Therefore, Mongolian nomads, particularly ethnic groups of Western Mongolia are proud of Mongolian folk dance 'biyelgee' as the main component of their cultural heritage and unique arts accomplishment. Currently, those fewer bearers of this valuable heritage show strong commitment to spread this dance form within Mongolia, and to get worldwide recognition and approval, and also to transmit it to the next generation. Traditionally, Mongol biyelgee is transmitted to the younger generation by apprenticeship training, or by the home-tutoring method. In other words, it is transmitted within the family, clan or neighborhood, from parents to children, seniors to youngsters or so. As the society changes gradually over time, Mongol biyelgee also has been recreated and upgraded constantly. This can be seen on the Biyelgee movement elements, ethnic costume design and decorations. Mon-

golians typically dance 'biyelgee' during festive events such as weddings, naadam festivities, family and labor related practices or other social events for celebrating community happiness and entertainment purposes. These diverse contexts, in which Biyelgee is performed play significant role in the communities. During the labor or social festivities, feasts and celebrations, Mongolian ethnic groups get to express their identities in a peaceful way and get unified generally both in terms of families and ethnic groups. Because such events strengthen the mutual understanding among people and ensure their unity as one nation. For instance, during the wedding feast, it is a national tradition for Mongolians to sing all together, which encourage and exhilarate the people and strengthen their harmony. Also, Mongolians give aesthetic and physical right upbringing through the Biyelgee, so Mongol Biyelgee's significance and function among Mongolians are broad and various in range and in importance. 'Biyelgee' is performed while wearing special clothing and accessories which present specific features of traditional craftsmanship elements, such as color combination, artistic pattern and embroidery styles, knitting and quilting techniques, leather and skin arts, gold and silver jewelry makes of each ethnic group and community. These all make the 'Biyelgee' as an inseparable part of typical life and lifestyle of Mongolian people. As tightly linked with Mongols' traditional customs, mentality and language, 'biyelgee' undoubtedly provides an essential and positive factor to support and encourage community well-being and happy life by and large. The main objective of 'biyelgee' aims to symbolize the best and ideals of human relations so that it complies with concepts of Universal human rights, mutual respects of humanity, and sustainable development goals consistently.

## **6) Information resource**

- Relevant documents in the Center of Cultural Heritage
- Guidebook series 'Culture & Arts in new circumstances'
- Reports of the National Programs on ICH

### 7) Survey study project carried out by scholars

Following field surveys conducted on the Mongolian Intangible cultural heritage and its bearer within the umbrella of the Joint cooperation Project for Establishing a Safeguarding system for intangible cultural heritage in Mongolia: 'Implementation of the UNESCO Program 'Living Human Treasures System' in Mongolia':

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6	Central aimags, Dundgovi, Dornogovi, and Govisumber	Central & Southern	August 22 - 31, 2009

- **Key implementers:**

- Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO,
- Center of Cultural Heritage
- Co-implementers:
- Mongolian Cultural Studies Association
- Local Culture and Arts Departments
- MELS film studio

### 8) Awards received

Inscribed in the National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding of Mongolia in 2009

### 9) Safeguarding measures

As a result of Mongolia opening itself to the world and embarking on a new path of new development since 1990, national pride has been revived and so as favorable circumstances created to safeguard and maintain national traditional cultural heritage. The Mongolian Government has directed serious attention in this regard and Mongolians have also demonstrated initiative and efforts to develop their traditional unique identity features so that substantial measures have been taken to promote performing arts, social practices, rituals, traditional craftsmanship, knowledge and techniques; safeguard and maintain cultural heritage, including oral traditions and folk dance respectively. Importantly, the Mongolian State Great Khural passed 'Law on Cultural Heritage Protection', the Mongolian Government ratified UNESCO Conventions on safeguarding cultural heritage, the Mongolian President issued a Decree on promoting and developing traditional

culture of morin khuur, long songs and humii, while the Government has implemented 'National program for promoting traditional culture' and other initiatives, such as 'Morin khuur and long songs' action plans. In order to study Mongol Biyelgee: Mongolian Traditional Folk Dance and identify, register and motivate the bearers, there are considerable number of activities have been conducted. For instance, appointing research and publicity team for conducting field studies in the far rural areas in Mongolia, holding meetings among people on the further safeguarding of Biyelgee folk dance heritage, motivating and encouraging the Biyelgee bearers by organizing Biyelgee contests and competitions, holding academic conferences, seminars and workshops as well as publishing and distributing the relevant materials. As a result of sequent opinions, inputs and initiatives from the Biyelgee bearers, ethnic group representatives, scholars, researchers and NGOs on the safeguarding of the Mongol Biyelgee, 'National Program for Protection and Development of Mongol Biyelgee: Mongolian Traditional Folk Dance' was approved by the Government of Mongolia and successfully implemented.

## **10) Objectives**

The aim of the project is to revitalize and safeguard and transmit the Biyelgee.

### **11) The objectives are to:**

- Strengthen the research and establish registration-information database through a field-survey focusing on the current state of biyelgee;
- Improving the viability of the biyelgee by training new generation of performers, while also reviving traditional method of apprenticeship-training;
- Improving the capacity-building of the bearers, concerned NGOs, community-based organizations and professionals by involving in safeguarding measures;
- Raise the awareness among general public through production of media and;
- During the last years following protection activities accomplished by the Government body, local government body and NGOs:
- Organized local and nationwide competitions among the Biyelgee dancers and bearers. Also evaluated their ability, repertory and granted and glorified them as disseminating their knowledge. It is very important to signal the grand evolution in their repertory and capacity.
- Accomplished the project of training apprenticeship based on traditional teaching method of senior dancer's experiences in order to strengthen and support the bearers and community's heritage and knowledge to be transmitted to the future generations. Since then the Biyelgee dancer

and apprentice's number has increased. Since the inscription of the element on the UNESCO List of ICH, bearers and communities are more sensitive to transmit their knowledge,

#### **12) Overall effectiveness:**

- The local and governmental organizations, communities and bearers are more involved in its development projects
- The public participation has increased.
- The fact that we are promoting the Biyelgee to the public, bearers are acknowledged by Mongolian people and it helped to raise their social status. Also it attracts the younger generation to interest the art of Mongolian traditional folk dance Biyelgee to study and research subjects.
- Many Unions and Associations have been created and organize relevant activities in order to safeguard and protect the Biyelgee.
- It is very interesting to observe the need of this heritage in everyday life of Mongolians. Because Biyelgee is very demanded and present on every folk performing stages, in tourism sector, TV recording and on research subject. It became a very interesting heritage and continued to develop even more.
- The inscription of the element in the UNESCO Urgent needs of safeguarding List of ICH has pulled its development even faster than the other ICH elements. So then, we might say that its safeguarding measures are more advanced compared to others that insure its sustainability.

### **(3) Traditional Music of the Tsur**

#### **1) Heritage information**

- **Local name, if any:** Монгол цуур хөгжмийн уламжлалт урлаг

- **History, background:**

Tsur is one of the ancient traditional music of the Mongolians and is a rare and near-extinct one preserved by the end of the 20th century only among a few people of the Mongolian Uriankhai descent in Altai Region. Tsur has its origins in an ancient practice of worshipping the Earth, mountains, rivers and their respective guardian spirits by resembling the sounds unnatural for human beings. Tsur music belongs to the category of Mongolian folk music based on the combination of instrumental and vocal performance – a unique and rare phenomenon of blending the sounds simultaneously created by both the musical instrument and the human throat. Tsur is a vertical pipe-shaped wooden wind instrument with three holes acting as finger buttons. Despite the visible simplicity in shape it is the masterpiece of Mongolian musical heritage, reflecting the centuries-old tradition of creativity and ingenuity. Tsur has a unique



timbre inexistent in any other wooden wind instruments, as it is performed by touching the mouthpiece of a pipe with one's front teeth, creating a clear and gentle whistling sound, and simultaneously applying one's throat burden, producing a drone brass at the same time. Tsur music has an inseparable connection to the livelihood and customs of the Uriankhai Mongolians of the Altai Region, and has remained an integral part of their daily life.

- **Area:**

The Mongolian Altai Mountain Range is the birthplace of Tsur, one of the primordial musical instruments of the humankind, while the Mongolian people are its authors. Being one of the progenitors of wooden wind instruments, the Mongolian Tsur has carried its antique shape, performing methods, techniques, traditional repertoire and specific school of performance well into the advent of the 21st century, preserved only among a few people of the Mongolian Uriankhai descent in Altai Region. The Mongolian Uriankhai subethnic group of the Altai Region resides in the far western frontier of Mongolia, constituting the majority of the population in Duut and Munkh-Khairkhan Soums (Counties) of Khovd Aimag (Province), as well as living, in smaller groups, in Buyant, Altai, Bulgan, Altan-Tsugts Soums (Counties) of Bayan Ulgii Aimag (Province). Even among the Uriankhai Mongolians, only the descendants and apprentices of the late Paarain Narantsogt of Tsagaan Tug clan, residents of the Duut Soum (County), Khovd Aimag (Province) have thus far preserved the traditions of Tsur art. According to the eye-witness of the local elders, up until the 1950s every Uriankhai family has had a Tsur of its own and vast majority of Uriankhai Mongolian men could play Tsur. Unfortunately, as a consequence of the brief historical period spanning over the last six decades, which saw the negligence and animosity toward everything related to national heritage, folk customs, indigenous culture and religious faith, the Tsur tradition has faded, leaving the locals with no Tsur performer and no families possessing a Tsur.

## 2) Relevant information

- **Year of inscription:** 2009

- **Community involvement:**

The descendants of Narantsogt, and the 'Hunnic Tsur Performers' Association' NGO has participated in the field survey conducted in Bayan Ulgii, Khovd and Uvs Aimags (Provinces). In 2006 a pilot workshop on Tsur preservation and inheritance was held in Jargalant Soum (County) of Khovd Aimag (Province), Buyant Soum (County) of Bayan-Ulgii Aimag (Province) and Ulaanbaatar City, at the National Center for Intangible Cul-



tural Heritage, in which Mr. B.Naranbat, grandson of the late P.Narantsogt, Mr. Tseden-Ish, a senior Tsuur performer and his apprentice, Mr. A.Baldandorj offered their service as trainers. Members of Tsagaan Tug clan actively promote the public awareness campaign on Tsuur preservation, especially in broadcasting and mass media. Members of the Uriankhai Mongolian subethnic group of the Altai Region, including, in particular, descendants and apprentices of the late Paarain Narantsogt of Tsagaan Tug clan, all residents of the Duut Soum (County), Khovd Aimag (Province) constitute the last cradle of people preserving the traditions of Tsuur art. This group is a small community of ten, consisting of kindred people bound by the love for Tsuur performance and common concern for the continuation of the Tsuur performing traditions of Tsagaan Tug clan and motivated for the preservation and enrichment of the repertoire of the art of Mongolian Tsuur. In 2007 members of this group, along with the number of art scholars and cultural activists, founded the 'Hunnic Tsuur' NGO aimed at preserving and reviving the traditions of Mongolian Tsuur.

- **Preservation association members:**

Center of Cultural Heritage, Association of Hunnic Tsuur Performers

- **Activities:**

As a follow-up of the inscription of the TRADITIONAL MUSIC OF THE TSUUR in the Urgent Safeguarding List, an action plan to safeguard and promote the Mongol Tsuur was elaborated and effectively implemented by the relevant bodies.

### **3) Practitioners**

At present, the descendants and apprentices of the late Paarain Narantsogt of Tsagaan Tug clan, residents of the Duut Soum (County), Khovd Aimag (Province) have thus far preserved the traditions of Tsuur art. P.Narantsogt was a fifth-generation Tsuur performer, and today his sons N.Buyandelger and N.Erdenebaatar, his grandsons B.Naranbat, B.Zagdjav, M.Sukhnasan, B.Nemekhjargal, T.Erdenebaatar and B.Mungunsooj, and his granddaughters B.Bayartsetseg, B.Battsooj and B.Munkhchimeg have inherited their forefather's skills and repertoire and are striving for its preservation.

### **4) Relevant events**

Special occasions, festive events, holidays, festivals, social practices, various labor and household rituals and events

## 5) Explanation:

Tsuur is an extraordinary masterpiece of the Mongolian cultural tradition; it is included in the National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding of Mongolia in 2009. In the historical records mentioning the origins and evolution of musical instruments, Tsuur is referred to as 'the Mongolian Tsuur,' 'the Wooden Tsuur,' or 'the Hunnic Tsuur.' Tsuur originated among the ancient nomads populating the northern and southern slopes of the Mongolian Altai Mountains. Emulation of the nature's sounds paved the way for ultimate ascendance of musical instruments. Legend says that both Khoomei (throat singing) and Tsuur replicate the sounds of the waterfall and streams of the mountainous Eiven River, stemming from a glacier on the snow-capped summit of the Altai Range, producing majestic sounds. Tsuur is a vertical pipe-shaped wooden wind instrument with three holes acting as finger buttons. Despite the visible simplicity in shape it reflects the centuries-old tradition of creativity and ingenuity and conveys the magnificence of the nature, its mountains, rivers and its wildlife, rivaling the modern chromatic pipe instruments. Tsuur has a unique timbre inexistent in any other wooden wind instruments, as it is performed by touching the mouth-piece of a pipe with one's front teeth, creating a clear and gentle whistling sound, and simultaneously applying one's throat burden, producing a drone brass at the same time. Tsuur was initially made from a simple trunk of a plant stock. This ancient method made the first Tsuur easy to produce but also easily breakable, perhaps lasting a day at most. Hence a need to manufacture stronger and longer-lasting instruments, ready to perform during any season has emerged. Nowadays Tsuur is made of a branch of a larch tree or a trunk of a white bush, split along the length and carved with cavity inside, then the two parts joined and glued together, thus creating a pipe. In order to firmly attach the two pieces together a more sophisticated technology is applied, such as putting the pipe inside a thin skin of a sheep's or antelope's esophagus. Since antiquity the Uriankhai Mongolians regarded Tsuur as 'music of the spirit of the Altai Mountains,' revering it as a force to fend off evil from a household by keeping it at a prominent place near the altar. Tsuur was played on various occasions, such as appealing to the spirit of the Altai Mountains for hunting trophy, or for benign weather in case of eminent natural hardships, benediction for a safe journey or for weddings and other festivities. In a more distant past, Tsuur was even performed at state occasions. Tsuur has three-fold duties: to reflect one's inner feelings when traveling alone, to connect a human with the nature and to serve as performing art for spectators. Its repertoire possesses a multitude of folk pieces, which thematically can be classified as follows:

1. Reminiscent of the sounds of mountains and rivers, their majestic beauty: 'Streams of the Eiven River,' 'Praise to the Magnificent Altai Mountains,' 'Echoes of Mountains and Rivers,' 'Sagsay River,' 'Offerings to the Snow Capped Altai' etc.

2. Reminiscent of the local fauna: 'Pacing Bear,' 'Black Starlings' Mating,' 'Deer in High Alpine Grass,' 'The Deer's Roar' etc.

3. Reminiscent of the clops of horses or camels and in general, conveying the legends speaking of the nomads' affection to their livestock: 'Gaits of the Balchin Buckskin Stallion,' 'Cantering White Horse,' 'The Tale of the Grey Horse,' 'The Tale of the Beige Camel,' 'Pacing Horse' etc.

4. Reflecting the inner feelings of a human, one's appearance, faith and other social stature: 'A Handsome Young Man,' 'Story of a Man and a Woman,' 'The Wedding Melody,' 'Call of the Spirits,' 'Offerings' etc.

Performing the Tsuur releases a unique timbre involving both human glottal and instrumental sounds; and as such, has a specific place among all wooden pipe instruments. It is therefore members of Tsagaan Tug clan cherish the cause of preservation of the Tsuur beyond their family interest as one of the rare heritage the Mongolian nation offers to human civilization.

## 6) Information resource

- Relevant documents in the Center of Cultural Heritage and Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO
- Guidebook series 'Culture & Arts in new circumstances'
- Reports of the National Programs on ICH

## 7) Survey study project carried out by scholars

Following field surveys conducted on the Mongolian Intangible cultural heritage and its bearer within the umbrella of the Joint cooperation Project for Establishing a Safeguarding system for intangible cultural heritage in Mongolia: 'Implementation of the UNESCO Program 'Living Human Treasures System' in Mongolia':

No	Aimag (province) name	Region	Date
1	Khovd, Uvs and BayanUlgii	Western	November 15 - 29, 2008
2	Khentii and Dornod	Eastern	June 25 - July 8, 2009
3	Bulgan, Uvurkhangai	Central	July 25 - August 2, 2009
4	Khuvsgul	Northern	August 5 - 15, 2009
5	Selenge and Orkhon	Northern	August 5 - 15, 2009
6	Central aimag, Dundgovi, Dornogovi, and Govisumber	Central & Southern	August 22 - 31, 2009

- **Key implementers:**
  - Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO,
  - Center of Cultural Heritage
  
- **Co-implementers:**
  - Mongolian Cultural Studies Association
  - Local Culture and Arts Departments
  - MELS film studio

## **8) Awards received**

Inscribed in the National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding of Mongolia in 2009

## **9) Safeguarding measures**

Tsuur music, a combination of instrumental and vocal performance, is an ancient form of Mongolian music with a unique sound.

Since the Hunnu dynasty, the Uriankhai Mongols of the Altai region in Western Mongolia have related Tsuur music to the spirit of the Altai Mountains, and revered it as a force to ward off evil from a household.

The forty known folk melodies and tunes of the Tsuur repertoire are transmitted by memory and are currently preserved by descendants and apprentices of the ancient nomads, that populated the northern and southern slopes of the Mongolian Altai Mountains. The traditional music of the Tsuur forms an important part of the Uriankhai Mongolian's relationship with their natural environment and a critical element in assuring their survival within it. It accompanies daily activities and animal herding as well as religious ceremonies and rituals.

Traditionally found among members of the Uriankhai ethnic group of the Altai Region, the Tsuur and its traditions are preserved today largely by the descendant of the late Paarain Narantsogt of the Tsgaan Tug clan, in Duut soum, Khovd province, in westernmost Mongolia.

Many long and short term projects have accomplished in last 7 years in order to identify the 'Tsuur' music bearers, register them, study, disseminate and transmit to the next generations. We did several series of works such as restoring 'Tsuur' music instrument art and its tradition in Altai Uriankhai tribe where it has originated and to disseminate this art to the other tribe and regions in order to urgent safeguarding the 'Tsuur' and its tradition and to create social environment which supports 'Tsuur' music and its players. The 'Tsuur' art could overcome its danger to vanish and getting stronger to continue exists, as a results of these works.

Bearers, communities and groups' involvement has a vital responsibility to protect the 'Tsuur' music art and these talented people who are the bearers actively working hard to transmit this art for the next generation, disseminate and restore this art at the same time to safeguard the tradition as it was from the beginning. Trainings about transmitting this tradition is conducted by two ways traditional apprenticeship training and classroom training. The trainings of this heritage have conducted in Duut and Jargalant soum in Hovd province, Buyant, Ulgii and Ulaanhus sum in Bayan-Ulgii province, Sumber soum of Gobisumber province, Orkhon province and in the capital city during the report period. These training have led by the famous 'Tsuur' player P.Narantsogt's offspring and his students. There are around 100 teenagers and young adults who have learnt or leaning how to play this instrument as a result of these trainings. Statistic shows that the number of 'Tsuur' players and its trainees have increased 9 times in last seven years.

We still need to continue what we are doing and increase the boundaries even there are such good results shown in a work of protecting the 'Tsuur' music and its tradition and create sustainability.

Consequently, in January, 2014 the Mongolian Government has decreed a National Safeguarding Plan of the "Traditional music of the Tsuur". The aim of the project is to revitalize and safeguard and transmit the Tsuur music.

#### **(4) Folk long song performance technique of Limbe performances - circular breathing**

##### **1) Heritage information**

- **Local name:**  
Монгол лимбэчдийн уртын дуу хөгжимдөх уламжлалт арга барил-битүү амьсгаа
- **History, background:**  
The "Folk long song performance technique of Limbe performers – Circular breathing" is a complex representation of technique and skill of performing with Limbe, which came to be considered as an art form through its centuries of continued development.  
For the long historic development of Limbe performance, Mongolians have created the technique of playing Limbe using circular breathing. The element comprehensively corresponds to the characteristics of the melody of Mongolian folk long song, particularly adequate for performing it with prolonged and melodic tune for its entire duration without pause.

Limbe and Morin khuur (Horse headed fiddle) are the main instruments that perform unilaterally the melodies of traditional folk long song or accompany its performance. While performing a folk long song, it is customary for Limbe performers to use the technique of circular breathing. Single stanza of folk long song continues approximately 4-5 minutes. Single song consists of 3-5 or more stanzas, which requires performance of the limbe to continue uninterruptedly 12-25 minutes.

Mongolians describe things unseen to one's eyes as 'bituu' meaning hidden. The technique is unrecognized from its performance. 'Bituu amisгаа' means 'hidden circle of breathing'. It is accomplished by breathing in through the nose while simultaneously blowing out through the mouth using air stored in cheeks in order to continuously play the Limbe without any interruption. The unique characteristic of the technique is embodied by the circular bond of continuous air flow by inhaling and exhaling simultaneously.

- **Area:**  
“Folk long song performance technique of Limbe performers – Circular breathing” is a unique heritage which has survived only among few apprentices of L.Tserendorj (1908-1989), the last renowned main representative of the element. Currently, the element is being practiced among 14 individuals in total, 5 in Ulaanbaatar city, 1 in Uvurkhangai, 2 in Zavkhan, 1 in Govi-Altai, 1 in Khovd, 1 in Umnugovi, 1 in Dornogovi, 1 in Tuv and 1 in Darkhan-Uul Provinces each.

## 2) Relevant information

- **Year of inscription:** 2011
- **Community involvement:**  
Members of the "Mongolian Association of Limbe Performers", including descendants and apprentices of generations of the late "Renowned and Honored Musician of Mongolia" titled Limbe Performer Tserendorj Luvsandorj(1909-1989).
- **Preservation association members:**  
Center of Cultural Heritage, Mongolian Association of Limbe Performers, University of Arts and Culture, College of Music and Dance.

## 3) Practitioners:

The survival of this traditional element until today is inevitably and largely due to the work and efforts of L.Tserendorj, M.Dorj and their apprentices. The groundwork to include the tradition of "Folk long song performance technique of Limbe

performers – Circular breathing" in the contents of professional educational programs was successfully done by the late Honored Limbe performer L.Tserendorj. The Limbe performers, D.Enkhtaivan (1955-1997), M.Badam (1950-2008), Galsantogtokh, P.Purevjav (1946-2009) and U.Batjargal are the second generation of skilled Limbe practitioners who have successfully inherited the technique from the elder Limbe performers. Today, the Limbe performer-teachers N.Jambaljamts, Ch.Davaajav, L.Altansukh, Ts.Tsevegsuren, M.Tsengelsaikhan and G.Nyamjantsan are the practitioners continuing the element. This traditional circular breathing technique of the Limbe performance is the most important and valuable element among these practitioners which signifies and identifies their significance and the cultural meaning within them. Currently, the frequency and extent of this traditional element's practice is not stable or steady, being limited by the only few numbers of contests or performances of individual artworks being organized among few Limbe practitioners.

#### **4) Relevant events:**

Special occasions, festive events, holidays, festivals, social practices

#### **5) Explanation:**

The Limbe is one of the ancient musical wind instruments of nomadic Mongolians. The limbe is a side-blown wind instrument, mostly made of hard wood or bamboo. It is considered as one of the valuable traditional musical instruments among Mongolians for its unique technique and characteristics such as producing euphonical melody, melisma, hidden tune associated with circular breathing, and its performing techniques of skillful and delicate movements of fingers and tongue. Over the long historic development of Limbe performance, Mongolians have created the unique technique of playing Limbe using circular breathing. Circular breathing technique of the Limbe performance is closely interconnected with the traditional mentality of Mongolians, traditional folk long song and the vast steppe. The circular breathing technique of the Limbe Performance comprehensively corresponds to the characteristics of the melody of Mongolian folk long song, particularly adequate for performing the folk long song with prolonged and melodic tune for its entire duration without any pause. Limbe is one of the main instruments that perform unilaterally the melodies of traditional folk long song or accompany its performance. While performing a folk long song, it is customary for Limbe performers to use the technique of circular breathing.

Limbe has the ability to comprehensively express and support the manifestation of folk long song, its slow pace and expansive wide ranging flow of melody. Its continuous melody serves as a support during the singer's pause for inhaling and thus enriches the song's melody as well.



'Bituu amisгаа' means 'hidden circle of breathing'. Performing with circular breathing is a complex technique of uninterruptedly continuing the activity of expelling the air stored in a mouth cavity to play the melody and at the same time inhaling air into the lungs through the nose and transferring it to the mouth cavity. The distinctiveness of the technique to circular breath lies in the ability of intentionally changing the normal way or process of breathing, thus creating the circular bond of continuous air flow by inhaling and exhaling simultaneously. The first step in mastering this technique of Limbe performance is to learn in the ability to inhale gently neither stopping the flow of blowing nor interrupting its tone of melody. The second step is to learn to play the Limbe with the ability to completely express the melody of traditional folk long song, its manifestation, philosophical view by perfectly possessing the technique of producing ornamentation, coloratura, melismaa and shurankhai (falsetto) which requires one's true endeavors and hard work, talent and sense of acoustics. In this sense, it can be concluded that the element "Folk long song performance technique of Limbe performers – Circular breathing" finds its true form or fulfilled from within the inseparable interconnection of circular breathing technique of the Limbe and its performance of folk long song.

The "Circular breathing" is a great achievement of nomadic Mongolians derived from their creativity, result of the exploration and necessity of their daily life. The origin and development of circular breathing is closely bound up with the skills and knowledge of ancient craftsmen or metalsmiths who specialized in gold and silver. Early Mongolian craftsmen used circular breathing techniques for crafting various decorative and ornamental items including valuable jewelries. In crafting such items, craftsmen were required to blow continuously to the flame through a pipe with needle like hole, in order to make the hard metal melt or soften. In that regards, the craftsmen had to blow gently to the flame through the pipe bitten in their mouth, continuing as long as possible. From such necessity of lifestyle, craftsmen have mastered the technique of circular breathing, creating a circular-like cycle of breathing, simultaneously inhaling through their nose while blowing without any pauses. It can be considered that the introduction of the circular breathing technique by craftsmen in the art of Limbe was a new and productive invention in its performing technique.

The traditional method of learning the simultaneous act of inhaling and exhaling has a coherent sets of training forms, ranging from elementary to advanced which include continuous blowing act at a candle light or a flame without extinguishing it and blowing through a straw into a glass of water.

The technique of circular breathing performance of the Limbe has valuable significance that could equally be practiced for other wooden wind instruments (Mon-



golian traditional wind instruments: Bishguur, Byalar, Hornpipe; nontraditional: Clarinet, Saxophone, Oboe, etc.) and is an outstanding example of musical performing techniques created by humanity, constituting one of the distinctive forms of intangible cultural heritage in need of urgent safeguarding.

This traditional element of "Folk long song performance technique of the Limbe performers-Circular breathing" has been handed down by and preserved among renowned Limbe performers: L.Tserendorj, L.Maam, M.Dorj. Nowadays, the second generation apprentices of these well-known Limbe performers are the main bearers and holders of this traditional art. But the existing few number of these bearers of the element has become the biggest concern for its further viability.

Currently, there is a high risk of possibility that the tradition of this element could disappear from its existence. One of the factors causing the element to disappear is inevitably the significance of decrease of current groups and individuals of artists and practitioners of traditional folklore in numbers and changes in the traditional repertoire. The main change of repertoire in traditional folklore has caused by the tendency to absorb classical or modern forms of view, and the predominance of western methodology in training system. Additionally, the intense globalization and urbanization changes are the factors causing to diminish the value and tendency towards intangible cultural heritage among general public, particularly among younger generations. Today, some of the urgent objectives for us are to promote, safeguard and transmit the element to the younger generations, to ensure its further existence and viability.

#### **6) Information resource**

- Relevant documents in the Center of Cultural Heritages
- Guidebook series 'Culture & Arts in new circumstances'
- Survey study project carried out by scholars
- Annual report of related NGO's and Associations

#### **7) Awards received**

Inscribed in the National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding of Mongolia in 2009

#### **8) Safeguarding measures:**

The Limbe is one of the ancient musical wind instruments of nomadic Mongolians. The limbe is a side-blown wind instrument, mostly made of hardwood or bamboo. For the long historic development of Limbe performance, Mongolians have created the technique of playing Limbe using circular breathing. The element comprehensively corresponds to the characteristics of the melody of Mongolian folk long

song, particularly adequate for performing it with prolonged and melodic tune for its entire duration without pause. Circular breathing technique of the Limbe performance is closely interconnected with the traditional mentality of Mongolians, traditional folk long song and the vast steppe.

Many long and short term projects have accomplished in last 4 years in order to identify the 'Limbe performances' bearers, register them, study, disseminate and transmit to the next generations.

During the report period was taken several protection activities accomplished jointly by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, Center for Cultural Heritage and Mongolian Association of Limbe performers with aims to revitalize and safeguard the element, ensure its viability and sustainability, such as conducting traditional apprenticeship training courses, organizing various public events such as exhibitions, festivals or seminars.

During last four years, we have organized several conferences on Limbe study.

Moreover, we made the documentary movie, television programs, published DVD and books about this topic through media in order to propagate, popularize and disseminate art of Limbe in the society.

Bearers, communities and groups' involvement has a vital responsibility to protect the technique of the circular breathing accompanying the "Traditional Folk Long Song" and these talented people who are the bearers actively working hard to transmit this art for the next generation, disseminate and restore this art at the same time to safeguard the tradition as it was from the beginning. Training about transmitting this tradition is conducted by two ways traditional apprenticeship training and classroom training.

The apprenticeship training of this heritage has conducted in Duut, Altai, Khovd, Munkhhairhan, Must, Tsetseg, Durgun, Tsetseg, Zereg and Jargalant soums in Khovd province - Western Mongolia, Dalanzadgad, Khankhongor and Tsogttsetsii soums in Umnugovi province - Southern Mongolia and in the capital city during the reporting period.

The classroom training being organized at the Mongolian Palace for Youth in Ulaanbaatar city, professional Institutes of the capital city, Ulaanbaatar, including the "National University of Arts and Culture", "College of Music and Dance", at the "College of Music and Dance" of Zavkhan Province.

Statistics shows that the number of Limbe performers and its trainees have increased 2 times in last four years.

We still need to continue what we are doing and increase the boundaries even there are such good results shown in a work of protecting the "Folk long song performance technique of Limbe performers – Circular breathing" and its tradition and create sustainability.

## **(5) Mongolian Calligraphy**

### **1) Heritage information**

- **Local name:** Монгол уран бичлэг
- **History, background:**

Mongols used numbers of different alphabets throughout of its history. Therefore, Mongolian cultural region is one of the earliest places developed calligraphy. Mongolian calligraphy is a 1000 years-old writing system that vertically connects continuous strokes together to create a word. Letters of Mongolian script have been created and taught by nomads from generation to generation. Whatever style it is written with, it is easy to read it if one knows the 90 letter forms that all read phonetically. Ancient nomadic Mongolians roamed in their vast territory and used simple oral descriptions to convey knowledge to each other.

Therefore, the letters of Mongolian scripts are meant to be taught and explained not only in written form but also orally. For example, there are six main strokes used in creating letters for Mongolian calligraphy. They are named as titim, shud, shilbe, gedes, num and suul which translate into English as head, teeth, stem, stomach, bow and tail respectfully. A herder mother could teach to her son on the pasture that letter "ba" is depicted as "stomach and bow", while letter "a" is depicted as "a tooth". This kind of oral depiction of letters was very useful during long dark winter nights when herders and their children could not enjoy sufficient light to do classes at home. They relied on oral stories, oral teachings and memorizing abilities to convey legends, knowledge and culture.

In modern, democratic Mongolia, free thinking artists and writers are developing the traditional Mongolian calligraphy in many different ways including quite artistic expressions as described at the beginning of this piece. The other three main uses are dictated by tradition and social needs for Mongolian calligraphy.

Firstly, the need for traditional accurate beautiful writing lasts for centuries. A meticulous depiction of each element of the script makes this writing very appealing and useful for accurate recording of important events. From ancient documents, it was evident that such writing was used for letters where Khaans and lords put their signatures on, books, treatises and even political statements like the declaration of independence of Bogd Khaan's government in 1911 etc. In modern days, this writing is used for

official letters, invitations, diplomatic correspondence and love letters. The best and most accurate writers of Mongolian calligraphy is invited to write on the graduation diplomas, family tree books, community award papers, provincial and government documents and books. Even though those, who can write accurate meticulous calligraphy, often don't get full time jobs to write calligraphy, they are very well respected in their extended family, their community and are often invited to weddings, family festivities, official ceremonies and so on.

Secondly, traditional Mongolian calligraphy is used for synchronic writing. Before typewriters, computers and audio taping, there were trained calligraphers who documented meetings, court hearings, and speeches by writing the Mongolian calligraphy in a 'shorthand' style. Because, those who can do synchronic writing would always have a well-paid full-time job, parents sent their children to "writing mentor" teachers from age 6-8. Such fast-writer's job existed for many generations and only with the development of technology, did such jobs disappear. Therefore, current synchronic-writers are only those who are employed at few offices like newspaper "Khumuun Bichig" (the only newspaper issued in old Mongolian script), "Script and culture center", and the Office of the President of Mongolia.

Thirdly, Mongolian calligraphy is used for emblems, coins and stamps in so called 'folded' forms. Those who can write round folded and square folded scripts are truly knowledgeable about Mongolian scripts. In order to write correct, but folded way, one must appreciate the unique dimensions of each letter so that the letter can be folded in small spaces making a whole word look like an exact round or exact square shape. While during Mongolian empire of 13-14th century, folded calligraphy was used for coins and government stamps, during the 15-19th centuries, these forms were used for religious ornaments, religious stamps and decorations on cloth, hat and book covers etc.

- **Area:**  
Mongolian calligraphy is widespread in all parts of Mongolia, among the Mongols in the regions of Inner Mongolia, Qinghai, Xinjiang in China, and in Buryatia and Kalmukia in Russia.

## 2) Relevant information

- **Year of inscription:** 2013
- **Community involvement:**  
Concerned individuals, government and non-government organizations and communities that practice and promote the art of Mongolian calligraphy are seriously worried about its continuing viability; they are con-

cerned about this element disappearing from Mongolian traditional culture and are fully conscious of and committed to their responsibilities for safeguarding, restoring and revitalizing this element.

"As" Calligraphy Center, "Federation of Modern Mongolian Calligraphers", "Script and Culture Center" and concerned individuals, representatives of calligraphy groups have gratefully supported and expressed their consent for this action and for any type of usage of calligraphy for the purpose of publicity and development of "Mongolian Calligraphy" worldwide.

- **Preservation association members:**

Mongolian Government, Center of Cultural Heritage, "Federation of Modern Mongolian Calligraphers," "Script and Culture Center"

### **3) Practitioners:**

Mr. Jalair Dovdon Batbayar of craftsmen families of Govi-Altai province and his followers are the practitioners who inherited Mongolian Calligraphy. The element is being practiced and developed by non-government organizations such as "As" Calligraphy Center, "Federation of Modern Mongolian Calligraphers," "Script and Culture Center" and concerned individuals.

Besides these organized communities, there are individuals who independently learn calligraphy and teach it to children in various children's development centers, schools and children's art centers.

### **4) Relevant events**

Special occasions, festive events, holidays, festivals, social practices, various labor and household rituals and events

### **5) Explanation**

Traditionally, the main way of teaching calligraphy from one generation to another was home mentoring. The traditional mentors selected the best of his students and trained them to be calligraphy writers. However, during communism, especially during the 1937-1940 Stalinist purges, thousands of mentors and traditional scholars were killed. Those who remained alive were banned from mentoring the younger generation. Soon after that, or around 1946, a new, Cyrillic script was adopted as the only eligible scripts therefore banning all the teachings of old Mongolian scripts and Latin lettering. Only in the 1970s, was the old Mongolian script re-introduced to scholars, allowing a limited number of classes in universities.

After the 1990 democratic changes, along with the revival of Mongolian identity, interest in traditional calligraphy reawakened. As a sign of such revival, the very

first non-communist political organization, the Democratic Union of Mongolia, used folded calligraphy as its main logo.

Today, literary scholars and calligraphers D.Batbayar, Sh.Choimaa, D.Battumur, D.Ganbaatar, B.Elbegzaya and G.Akim are playing significant roles in popularizing the Mongolian art of calligraphy. Even though there are thousands of Mongolians who learnt to read calligraphy via Education Channel of Mongolian national TV, it's almost impossible to teach beautiful writings skills through long-distance trainings. Therefore, those who create calligraphy art are very few.

#### **6) Information resource**

- Relevant documents in the Center of Cultural Heritage
- Guidebook series 'Culture & Arts in new circumstances'
- Survey study project carried out by scholars

#### **7) Awards received**

Inscribed in the National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding of Mongolia in 2013

#### **8) Safeguarding measures**

- In 2001, the Parliament of Mongolia passed and amended in 2014 a law on safeguarding Mongolia's intangible cultural heritage and established regulations related to identifying, documenting, studying, recording, reviving and disseminating our intangible cultural heritage. This law constitutes the legal basis for identifying: intangible cultural heritage of high importance to Mongolia; talented bearers who are at a high artistic level; and for studies and promotion of intangible cultural heritage.
- The element Mongolian Calligraphy is included in the National List of "Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding" in the territory of Mongolia, as designated by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science in 2010.
- Inclusion of teaching the Classical Mongolian script in general educational programs, the Mongolian President's decree, contests of calligraphy through newspapers and magazines and repeated exhibitions are exerting positive influences on society to understand and revere it. Creating open conditions for non-government organizations and individuals to create art works is also helping to revive this art form.
- The resolution of the Council of Ministers issued in 1990, on general learning of the Classical Mongolian script, and publication of textbooks on Classical Mongolian script for 7th and 8th grades of general education schools, which began introducing many forms of calligraphy to school children

- In 1989-1990, the prominent researcher and textologist of the National University of Mongolia, Dr. Professor Sh.Choimaa, taught 60 serial TV lessons on the Classical Mongolian script for the general public
- In 1992, "Khumun Bichig," the first newspaper since the end of the Socialist period to be written in the Classical Mongolian script, was published; it began to promote a tradition of Mongolian calligraphy
- In 1995, the decision to implement the "National Program of Mongolian Script" was made by resolution of the State Great Khural.
- In 1996, the very first training course for calligraphy was successfully organized and the graduates are today's famous calligraphers
- From 1997, the organization of an annual national contest "Beautiful Writer of Mongolia" by the "Khumun Bichig" newspaper was begun
- In 1998, the exhibition of Mongolian Calligraphy was organized among calligraphers and their followers as part of the "National Book Fair" in Ulaanbaatar at the Natsagdorj City Library
- In 1998, the "As" Calligraphic Center was founded in Ulaanbaatar. The Center organized its first exhibition of calligraphy and conducted the first studies and research of brush writing
- In 2004, the joint exhibition and seminar of Mongolian calligraphers was organized, discussing and evaluating the current status of Mongolian calligraphy and future tasks
- From 2006 the "Script and Culture Center" started to organize an annual exhibition called "Script and Culture" among young creative artists, during which the "Brush Skill" contest of calligraphy also started to be organized
- From 1992-2006, Jalair D. Batbayar presented his exhibitions "With One Drop of Ink," "With Three Drops of Ink," "Mongolian Tradition and its Restoration," and "Mongolian Calligraphy" within Mongolia and in Japan, the USA and Canada
- In 2007, the "Federation of Modern Mongolian Calligraphers" was founded.
- In 2003 the Mongolian Presidential Decree No105 proclaimed 1st Sunday of May as the National Day of Script and Culture.

## **(6) Coaxing ritual for baby camels**

### **1) Heritage information**

- **Local name:** Ботго авахуулах зан үйл
- **History, background:**

While elsewhere spring is a pleasant season for peasants, it isn't convenient for Mongolian herdsmen. The mother animals give birth to their young in a harsh and dusty spring, so there is a big risk of losing a mother or a baby animal.



Mongols have a variety of rituals relating to husbandry in traditional Mongolian society. One of them is a chanting ritual for a new-born baby animal and its mother. To chant is to stimulate, through the use of special words and melody, the adopting of a baby animal to a mother. There are different gestures, melodies and chanting techniques for the five types of livestock in Mongolia. Coaxing (*khuuslukh*) a camel is a ritual for a mother who rejects her baby; or for adopting an orphan baby to another female who has lost her baby, because only a suckling mother will have milk in harsh spring time. For the nomadic Mongols the camel milk has been not only the source of food and drinks in the severe Gobi Desert conditions, but also the basic means of preventing illness or for healing diseases. Therefore, the coaxing rituals originated from the everyday occurrence of the herdsmen and became one of the important elements of Mongolian folk knowledge and ritual. The performance of the ritual continues for a few hours at early morning or at twilight and requires a high skill of handling camels and a singing talent or skill for playing on a musical instrument such as the horse head fiddle or flute. Most herdswomen engage in techniques and methods of coaxing, but these techniques and methods aren't enough sometimes, for performing the ritual successfully. If there isn't a singer or musician in the family, the owner of the camels will invite a coxer or a few masters in coaxing and players of a musical instrument, from another place. In this case, the coaxing ritual will compose of a small performance by several actors: a singer along with a horse head fiddle, flute or mouth-organ players.

A mother is tied close to the calf, nearby to a yurt. A singer will begin gently their monotone song "khuus", "khuus" with a horse head fiddle or without any musical instrument. A mother will bite, savage or spit and show her ignorance to a calf at the beginning of the ritual. The coxer can change their melody, depending on the mother's behavioural reaction. Most musicians will perform the ritual traditional Mongolian -sad stories about camels-songs such as "Unchin tsagaan botgo", "Goviin undur" etc. The musician performs his play with different sounds of walking, running and bellowing of a camel and absorbs words into poems, songs and epochs. When a mother camel is being coaxed into accepting a rejected or an orphan calf, it is said to break into tears at the gentle sound of "khuus" and the enchanting melody of the horse head fiddle sung and played by someone skilled in the art of casting spells on animals.

In some cases, to perform the ritual more effectively herdsmen use additional techniques such as skinning a dead calf and covering the orphan camel calf with the hide, tying a mother together with a baby quite a far distance from the ger camp for the whole night, or soaking the calf in salt, saltpeter or in the mother's milk. Also it was common to place the ankle



bone of a wild sheep (there is a myth that wild ewes never reject their babies) around the neck of a mother or a calf. But nowadays it is very hard to find these anklebones, as wild sheep are enlisted to the endangered-species list. There is also an exotic remedy in the coaxing ritual where the mother is lead to a ger at twilight and shown the fire inside. (A camel can't enter a ger, because of its size.)

All participants in the ritual wear good clothes, remain attentive and focused, using their own psychic vision and imagination in the coaxing process, because the participants express their gratitude to gods of the camels, mountains and waters within the ritual. After finishing the ritual, a coaxer or small group of masters will be honored guests of the family. A person, who had performed coaxing rituals prosperously, will be invited again and again by the families in need of the ritual. When, where, how many times they have been invited - is the main criteria for evaluating the talent of a cultural bearer of this ritual. The evaluation is a prerequisite to their popularity in a society.

The coaxing ritual has been transmitted from generation to generation and been enriched by the exchange of camel herding knowledge between the herders of Umnugovi, Bayankhongor, Dundgovi provinces, which are the main territories of Mongolia's Bactrian camel population.

The knowledge and skills relating to the ritual's transmission occurs from parents and elders to youth, in home tutoring: Elders with long experience of herding, herdswomen with singing talent and the talented musicians, who can influence the camel's behaviour, are the main actors of the coaxing ritual.

The ritual acts as a symbolic medium for creating and maintaining the social ties of individual nomadic families and dependencies to the community, because it is one part of the traditional intangible cultural heritage of the relationship between man and livestock.

- **Area:**

There are few cultural bearers living in the South part Gobi area of Mongolia: such as in Govi-Altai, Bayankhongor, Uvurkhangai and Dundgovi province's few soums. Most cultural bearers are concentrated in Mandal-Ovoo soum, Khanbogd soum, Bulgan soum of Umnugovi province, Delgerkhangai soum, Dundgovi aimag, Bayanlig and Jinst soums of Bayankhongor province.

## 2) Relevant information

- **Year of inscription:** 2015
- **Community involvement:**  
Herders and practitioners from Govi-Altai, Bayankhongor, Umnugovi, Uvurkhangai and Dundgovi provinces.
- **Preservation associated members:**  
Center of Cultural Heritage, Local government, Mongolian University of Science and Technology.

## 3) Practitioners

There are a few individuals primarily concerned with "khuus" the coaxing songs for camels

1. Biziyagiin KHUUKHENDUU is 74 years, Dalanzadgad soum, Umnugovi province
2. Lkhagvaagiin MUNKHBAYAR is horse head fiddle musician. Dalanzadgad soum, Umnugovi province
3. Sambuugiin SUMAAJAV is a musician, recitation and traditional ode singer, Bayanlig soum, Bayankhongor province
4. Sh.TSEVEEN is a coaxer, Bayanlig soum, Bayankhongor province
5. G.DAANZAN is a coaxer, Bayanlig soum, Bayankhongor province
6. TS.DAGDULAM is a coaxer, Bayanlig soum, Bayankhongor province
7. Boriin BAYASGALAN is a coaxer, Jinst soum, Bayankhongor aimag
8. Ulziit BATJARGAL is a musician, recitation and traditional ode singer, Dalanzadgad soum, Umnugovi aimag
9. DAANYAM's family, herdsmen, Mandal-Ovoo soum, Umnugovi province
10. Batsaikhangiin TUVDEN, herdersman and horse-head fiddle player. Delgerkhangai soum, Dundgovi province
11. S.Tsenddoo's grandchildren six herders' family: Bor, Khayankhyarvaa, Masshbat, Ganbaatar, Itgelmaa, Togtokhsuren and Buyan-Ulzii.
12. Garamiin DADISUREN Deren soum, Dundgovi aimag.

## 4) Relevant events

Special occasions, social practices, various labor and household rituals and events

## 5) Explanation

The changes in the social and cultural environment have negative impact on the existence of the coaxing ritual. There are several economic, social, cultural impacts, which have influence on the disappearance of the ritual.

- Due to the penetration of new techniques and technologies into husbandry, the living standard of herdsmen is increasing. Infrastructure develop-

ment in the Gobi area has contributed to the increase in the numbers of cars, motorcycles and trucks in herdsmen' households. Most households have both a car and a motorcycle, or at least a motorcycle or a truck, therefore today camels are rarely used as a means for transportation or porting goods. Herdsmen now herd livestock by motorcycle. Therefore, young herdsmen have stopped using traditional sound signals such as huj, huug, duur duur, toor toor to pasture, graze and drive the camels while using motorcycles for herding. Instead of traditional tones that calm camels, there is the car's horn. Furthermore, herders are losing the traditional understanding relationship they had with camels and the behavior and the appearance of the non-tamed camels is changing. Untamed camels are aggressive and sometimes show fear of people.

- Development of the mining sector in Umnugovi aimag results in the migration of labour from rural areas attracting herdsmen away from husbandry; there can be a growing inequality in the wealth of the local residents as some of them enjoy the higher wages of the mining industry. This can also lead to social tensions.
- The performance of the coaxing ritual happens not often, because Bactrian camels give birth usually to just one calf in March or in April, after a gestation period of 13 to 14 months. Also, the rejection of a calf by its mother happens rarely.
- Herdsmen's children from between the ages of 6 to 18 years live in the soum or aimag centres in order to study at school, including during March – the time of the birth and calf-raising process. This overlapping of children's study time at schools and the birth of new-born calves is suppressing the possibility for children to participate in the coaxing ritual: for them to learn how to coax, or how to play the horse head fiddle or flute. The students have the possibility to live with their family for the three months of summer, instead of helping their parents looking after animals in winter or in the harsh spring. Most herdsmen's children who have studied for many years in urban centres don't want to return to their parent's home. They know well the difficulties of herding pastoral livestock, which is hugely dependent on the severe continental climate.
- There is a big demographic problem in the Gobi area, because of the decreasing number of young herders from year to year, and especially the decreasing number of young herdswomen. There is a new tradition between Mongolian families, to pay more attention to daughters than boys. A daughter will be sent to the city to study and they have more possibilities to live in big cities, therefore most girls don't return to the countryside. Some young herdsmen are faced with the problem of finding wives who have the skill of herding the camels. For example, there were 488

herdsmen' households in Mandal-Ovoo soum, Umnugovi aimag in 2003. The number of households had decreased 37.5 per cent from 488 to 305 in 2013.

- There has been big domestic migration from the Gobi area to urban centres during the last 24 years. One of the biggest reasons for herders to migrate was the loss of their livestock in winter blizzards and the lack of summer rain in the country from 1995 to 2005. Also during the transition period from a socialist planned economy to a market economy in the 1990s, thousands of herders migrated to urban areas looking for a new life.
- On the other hand, the ritual is self-contained, except over mentioned impacts. The coaxing ritual remains as one ancient technique of herding camels, because there are no analogous techniques for saving a new-born calf and mother's milk during the harsh spring of Mongolia. But some forms of the ritual, for instance coaxing by flute or by vargan are almost forgotten. A bearer Khuukhenduu resident of Khankhongor soum, used a vargan in 1996, for the last time. We have information that flute was used by bearers for coaxing ritual in Noyon and Sevree soums of Umnugovi aimags in the 1950s. We heard by word of mouth legend that Western Mongols had used tsoor (a national instrument) for the coaxing ritual. Nowadays Mongolian folk are losing their traditional roots formed by pastoral husbandry, these remain more and more as theatrical art rather than life practice.

## **6) Information resource**

- Relevant documents in the Center of Cultural Heritage
- Survey study project carried out by scholars

## **7) Award received**

## **8) Safeguarding measures:**

During last two years government organizations worked as a priority on policy regarding the safeguarding of cultural heritage. In accordance with the spirit of the conventions of UNESCO, they make efforts and initiatives to support heritage bearers and protect heritage elements through provinces, soums and city authorities and cultural institutions; and encourage and are fully committed to implementing further activities for reviving, preserving, safeguarding and transmitting the ICH elements of concerned communities and individuals.

The bearers with the knowledge of livestock husbandry and specific social practices are listed into the National List of ICH Bearers Possessing a High Level of Skill and Knowledge.

Within the framework for the Safeguarding of Cultural Heritage numerous actions have been undertaken. For instance, in 2014 amended the Mongolian Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage included provisions on ICH and in order to strengthen existing legal frameworks adequately, included the provisions for reviving, preserving, safeguarding and transmitting ICH with certain provisions included in the Constitution of Mongolia, Law on Culture of Mongolia, Law on Protecting Cultural Heritage and other relevant by-laws.

Conducted various workshops on protection and safeguarding to develop and strengthen the capacity building of cultural officers working for the safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage.

At the initiative of heritage bearers from Umnugovi and Bayankhongor provinces several programs on tradition, social practices and specific rituals, especially the "Coaxing Ritual for Baby Camels" were broadcast on regional and national television. Thus activities were financed from both national and regional budgets.

ICH elements and heritage bearers are explored and listed on a national ICH database and also all related documents are archived.

The following actions were taken by organizations and cultural heritage supporting individuals:

- During the last 2 years 4 lessons about the coaxing ritual were organized by N.Galiimaa and Yu.Boldbaatar between junior students of MUST (The Mongolian University of Science and Technology.)
- The School of Social Technology and MUST along with the Institute of Culture organized 2 conferences in 2007, 2008 on topic "Mongolian Traditional Relationship between Humans and Nature".

There are not any special works for coaxing rituals, except for a few documentary films. The documentary film "Eej aya" /Melody of Mother/ 1985 and Badraa. J., Khishigt. D., Donrov. B. "Ingen egshig" /Melody of the Mother-Camel/, 1986- both editions well-suited for an academic as well as a broader audience.

"The story of the Weeping camel ", 2003, a documentary film by Byambasuren Davaa and Luigi Falorni is about a family of camel herders, who are faced with a challenge – one of their camels has rejected its new-born colt. They decide to perform the traditional "Khoos Ritual" to help unite the mother and child. The film played important role for spreading a message about the coaxing ritual in Mongolia through the world.

### 3. Provisional inscribed items (to be examined)

#### (1) Traditional technique of making Airag in Khokhuur and its associated customs

##### 1) Heritage information

- **Local name:** Хөхүүрийн айраг исгэх уламжлал, холбогдох зан үйл
- **History, background:**

Mare's Airag is the fermented beverage from mare's milk. This ICH element includes a traditional method of making mare's airag, its related equipment and objects such as khokhuur (cowhide vessel or bag), buluur (churning paddle) and khovoo (kibble), and associated therewith social customs and rituals.

The milking season for horses traditionally runs from mid June to early October. Daily milk yield of mares varies from 3 to 6 liters.

The basic traditional technique of making mare's airag consists of milking mares and cooling fresh milked milk, and repeatedly churning milk in a khokhuur with starter left inside to assist its fermentation. The liquid must be churned 5000 and more times to make good fermented blend of airag. Mare's milk undergoes fermentation by lactobacilli and lactic acid streptococci, producing ethanol, lactic acids and carbon dioxide. The airag - mildly alcoholic white beverage emits a delicious smell and its pleasant taste can make your mouth watery.

For making the khokhuur, first, the cowhide is soaked and hide's filament is removed, then it is dehydrated in the wind and fumigated. In such process, the cowhide turns to a white flexible leather. The khokhuur is made from this white leather and consists of mouth (orifice) neck, corner, body and cords. The buluur is long-handled wooden paddle which is used for churning airag in khokhuur and furnished with bored blade of board at the end. Khokhuur can hold 40 to 100 liters of airag.

Airag is used and served as a main and holy drink during various feasts and in making offerings and ritual blessings.

- **Area:**

Although the Mare's airag making tradition has been practiced everywhere in Mongolia between the Gobi Desert and the high mountains in the north, depending on natural (pasture) and geographical conditions and climate differences, the airag making in khokhuur is practiced basically in the steppe and mountainous grassland areas of central Mongolia. There is a core area of making mare's airag in khokhuur from which are dissemi-

nated second branches of airag making practices and tradition. This core area which stretches from north to south over 200 kilometers firstly, covers the Orkhon and Tuul rivers' valley, namely the territories of some soums of Arkhangai, Bulgan, Tuv and Uvurkhangai aimags (provinces). Secondly, core area covers the Ongi and Taats rivers basin, namely the territories of some soums of Uvurkhangai aimag. Second branches of communities – airag makers cover firstly, the Basin of Kherlen River, namely the territories of Khentii, Tuv and Dundgovi aimags; secondly, cover the Gobi zone, namely the territories of some soums of Dundgovi and Umnugovi aimags. In Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Bashkir of Russian Federation airag making tradition has occasionally been practiced.

- **Community:**

Traditionally the communities concerning mare's airag making tradition were all the nomadic herder's families throughout Mongolia. Therefore, it could be considered that the entire Mongolian nation is concerned with this tradition but main bearers and practitioners of this element now are Khalkha Mongol herders who mostly live in the central part of Mongolia. These nomadic people are the true custodians of the traditional knowledge and skills regarding the unique technique of making fermented mare's milk - airag in Khokhuur (cowhide vessel or bag) and also making the khokhuur. Those families who bear the traditional knowledge and skills of khokhuur making also concern with this group of people. A variety of socio-cultural entities such as local communities and co-operations of herders, airag makers, horse trainers, associations of long song singers, Morin khuur (horse-head fiddle) players, schools and others also are involved in and support airag making and transmit this national tradition.

- **Preservation associated members:**

- Center of Cultural Heritage
- Local Government
- Concerned NGO

## **2) Practitioners:**

Main bearers and practitioners are nomadic herders, in particular whose family has its own horses. They inherited by their parents not only a certain number of horses and mares, but also the related traditional practices and knowledge of airag making. This has kept the tradition alive for thousands of years till now.

In general, functions and duties are distributed among family members but nowadays this is not followed as exact rules. The main role is played by the male head



of the family: he is responsible for caring for and tethering horses and the quality of airag, and celebrating activities. But for milking mares and churning milk in the khokhuur are mostly the responsibility of women and children. These are intriguing cultural customs that revealed amazing and voluntary aspect of gender roles.

The knowledge and skills of the preparation and maintenance of the yeast for fermenting the first airag next year is specifically important. Otherwise goat yogurt or fermented millet, rhubarb or *Agriophyllum* may also be used as yeast. The making of khokhuur is one of the oldest branches of Mongolian traditional handicraft. These need a special knowledge and practices. The khokhuur and related equipment are made by skillful families or persons who possess the centuries-old knowledge and skills. Therefore, local communities of herders in certain area have several experienced, skillful and trustworthy families or persons who are bearers of such techniques of preparation and maintenance of yeast and khokhuur.

### **3) Relevant events**

Special occasions, festive events, holidays, festivals, social practices, various labor and household rituals and events

### **4) Explanation**

Mare's airag making tradition and airag itself encourage a peaceful and hospitable relationship between different communities of herders over thousands of years.

Mare's airag and airag making, and its consumption bear unique socio-cultural information that reflects and explains the essential characteristics of social relations of the communities of herders. In other words, in general, mare's airag and its consumption carry along a vivid tag of the cultural identity of the Mongol Nation. Mare's airag is a matter of honor for Mongolian people, for airag makers and its custodians in particular.

Foaming tasty airag has a unique dietetic value and is an important part of daily diet of Mongolians. It is nutritious and easily digestible beverage which contains different proteins, fat, minerals, A, C and some B vitamins and a sufficient amount of amino acids essential for human body. In addition, scientific studies reveal that it is very effective for curing various diseases such as tuberculosis, neurosis, anemia, arteriosclerosis and the decrease of gastric acid secretion and etc. Therefore, this medical beverage is today included in the menus of the numerous health resorts of the country.



During airag related events and various feasts and rituals Mongolians realize and practice the spirit of sharing and mutual respect. All the mare's airag brought from families to these events also are shared between all the participants and donated to people in need. Youths who practice airag making and participate in various rituals and feasts develop positive personalities such as hospitality, being friendly, caring to the elderly and modest, besides strength and courage.

Women accustomed to meet the guests and offer airag to them and take care that their cups are always filled. To serve no drink or to serve airag of poor quality is considered as an affront to the guests. Nowadays, such custom of hospitality is broadly used during visits of the foreign guests and tourists to Mongolian families of herders for introducing nomadic tradition and lifestyle. In such ways Mongolian airag greatly contributes to the mutual respect and kind relationships not only among local communities but among different ethnic groups and people of different nations and countries. Caring for horses and the tradition of airag making encourage and support the practices of nomadic pastoralism which has been shaped the sustainable land use and supported sustainable development of livelihood of nomadic communities.

Mare's airag is a symbol of happiness because Mongolians consider the white color as sacred. Mare's airag plays an essential role as symbolic beverage in the everyday life of herders as well as during the various social celebrations. Airag is broadly used in making offerings for sacred mountains and sites, and in airag libation rituals to honor the heaven and earth. There is a nice and famous custom of sharing airag during such social events. This custom boosts a cohesion among members of society and represents an important symbol of national solidarity.

## **5) Information resources**

- Relevant documents in the Center of Cultural Heritage
- Survey study project carried out by scholars
- Reports and documentation of the Airag Tour NGO

## **6) Safeguarding measures**

Constitution of Mongolia, Cultural Law of Mongolia and various other laws concerning protecting cultural heritage were issued and are in force. Mongolia in suitable position to safeguard this ICH element. In May, 2014 Mongolian Parliament amended "Law on Protecting Cultural heritage" with new article concerning safeguarding intangible cultural heritage.

In accordance with the spirit of the Conventions of UNESCO, Government and related public organizations make efforts and initiatives to support heritage bear-

ers and safeguard this heritage element through provinces, soums and city authorities and cultural institutions.

Since 2010, the National Center of Cultural Heritage, has initiated a database of the traditional technique of making airag in khohuur and its associated customs. In 2013, Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism approved in the decree No/A41 the latest list of National Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage, where the element is included.

The Ministry is promoting activities to publicize and spread best practices of the traditional technique of airag - making in khohuur, identify and select bearers of the element to issue a prize, protect knowledge and skills of the bearers, and promote their initiatives and practices, which contribute the national sustainable development.

The Government has been implementing various activities in close cooperation with local municipalities, NGOs' and the government. Activities are as follows:

- a) Investigation and research study of airag making tradition and airag itself
- b) Inventorying and documentation of ICH element's bearers
- c) Promotion the airag making and its bearers, and transmission activities
- d) Documentation and publication

The bearers, practitioners and their communities and associated NGOs are concentrated in core area of airag making. The Government in cooperation with local authorities have organized a informal apprenticeship trainings to teach and transmit the element.

Since 1995 have been revived various feasts and established many local communities related airag making. The Airag Tour NGO was established in 2010 and has been making efforts to revive and promote tradition technique of airag - making in khohuur and its associated customs and culture. Since then they have organized various airag related events, conducted a several studies and produced documentaries at the core field, such as Uvurkhangai, Arkhangai, Dundgovi, Bulgan and Tuv provinces.

Furthermore, the local municipalities are also eager to promote Airag through collaboration with the government and other local bearers, representatives of the communities, such as an expo and degustation of the best made "airag" throughout urban and rural areas, and made a tradition to organize it an annually. It's an important event to publicize and support communities and heritage bearers.

## (2) Mongolian traditional practices of worshipping the sacred sites

### 1) Heritage information

- **Local name:** Уул овоо тахих зан үйл
- **History, background:**

Worshipping practices of sacred sites in Mongolia have been developed in specific cultural space of nomadic lifestyle in the vast grassland steppe of Central Asia. One of the main characteristics of nomadic culture is its close relationship and harmony with nature and environment.

These practices, according to ancient shamanism, are based on belief in the existence of invisible deities of sky, earth, mountains, and all natural surroundings. Furthermore, Mongolians believe that these deities exist on the top of the mountain or any hill between sky and earth and choose these places as a sacred sites for the worshipping for and offerings to these deities. They pile up Ovoos in these places and perform worshipping rituals and ceremonies. All participants at the worshipping rituals ask a deity to bring a timely rain, to protect humans and livestock from natural disasters, and to bestow prosperity and blessings on the participants and local people of given areas.

In early times, sacred sites were worshipped with shamanic rituals and these wonderful traditions were later enriched with Buddhist teachings and rites. In a sense of respect and symbol and in geographical importance, sacred mountains, hills or the head of rivers in general have become as a cradle (centre) of the natural and cultural areas concerned and create a specific sociocultural space and a unique cultural heritage landscape.

These sacred sites are the symbol of cultural identity and spiritual cohesion of local people concerned and a sacred site for performing worshipping rituals and organizing important social events and ceremonies of given communities.

The worshipping rituals in Mongolia have originally been conducted by the kin group and later by the local and indigenous people of a specific areas and further by specific representatives of State authorities and interested people at national level.

The procedures and ritual order of worship ceremony are usually similar but some differences can be observed in regards to local customs and traditions. In different places, the people who lead worship ceremony are variously called as the owner of Ovoo or head of Ovoo. Those experienced people should be native and respectful people. In rare occasions, if a ritual is conducted in the way of shamanic tradition, a shaman leads this ritual ceremony. If it is a Buddhist ritual, a monk leads a worship ceremony.

The key organizer consults with respectful elders, the head of the Buddhist monastery or shaman about the time for conducting ceremony. Timing is determined in accordance with traditional astrology. Once the time is set up, the day of worship is publicly announced.

A worship ceremony is often conducted during the summer and/or autumn of the year.

In the early morning before sunrise, all participants, in their best dresses, carrying offering food and items, start to head towards the Ovoo together with their young children. Bringing young children to the worship ceremony allows the youngsters to learn the customs and traditions of the community.

Before starting the worship ceremony, varied colored ceremonial scarves are tied to the main wood that is placed in an Ovoo and a hand-made figure of the deity is placed on white cotton in front of the Ovoo. Offering food and items are also placed in front of the Ovoo.

Honorable guests, usually elders, sit in the north west direction of the Ovoo. If the State worship ceremony is performed, a state official opens the ceremony by reading an official decree issued for particular worship ceremony. Buddhist monks sit in the north east direction of the Ovoo.

There should be more than three monks. Monks should possess knowledge of how to recite (sutra) offering texts with the use of various musical instruments. Sometimes the elders recite offering texts.

Offerings including dairy products or cooked meats are placed in the east of the Ovoo. Various aromatic substances such as juniper's needle, wormwood and wild thyme are burned as a sanctification of the sacred site. The procedure of the ritual ceremony starts with invoking deities and nymphs to come to the offering site then followed by presenting various offerings to them.

After making offerings, participants of the ceremony make requests to deities and nymphs to grant richness in livestock and bestow success and prosperity on them. Monks chant sutras dedicated to this mountain and Ovoo. Meanwhile, an arrow called as bringer of auspiciousness is shot towards the sky and mark out any livestock animal as being consecrated to a divinity.

Following the ceremony, a festival of horse racing, wrestling and archery competition as well as singing and dancing takes place immediately. This tradition is highly considered as one of unique and humane intangible cultural heritage of Mongolia.

- Locals participate at sacred site worship ceremony on a voluntarily basis. The local elders personally teach younger people how to attend and behave at the worship ceremony. A sacred site worship ceremony

brings all community members together and builds a sense of community and solidarity.

- The worshipping natural environment creates more awareness among the people about interdependence between human beings and the environment and creates more respect for the nature. This is one of the best environmental protection methods that has been preserved by the Mongols since ancient time.
- The ritual procession is based on Mongolian folk beliefs, literature, poetry, song, dance, rituals, festive events and as well as handicrafts. Thus, the sacred site worship ceremony preserves those ICH elements through time. In sum, it is clear that worshipping practices of sacred sites have immeasurable value both in transmission of ICH and as a source of public education, identity and pride.

At the practical level, these practices play an important role in maintaining ecological balance and the preservation and protection of biological and cultural diversity. This heritage significantly contributes to the protection of our natural environment and wildlife as sacred and pristine.

- **Area:**

Some mountains in Mongolia have been worshipped by some ethnic groups and communities and local people from the ancient times including Bogd-Khan Mountain worshipped by khalkha people in Tuv Province, Otgontenger (khalkha people) in Zavkhan Province, Burkhan Khal-dun (uriankhai, khalkha and buriad people) in Khentii Province, Khan-Khukhii (durvud and khalkha people) in Uvs Province, Altan-Khukhii (myangad ethnic community) in Khovd Province, Subraga-Khairkhan in Arkhangai Province, Sutai-Khairkhan (khalkha people) in Gobi-Aitai Province and Dari (dariganga people) in Sukhbaatar Province. Currently, these mountains are officially recognized as the State worshipped mountains by the Decree of the President of Mongolia. In addition there are other major worshipped mountains at the local level including Bulgan, Ikh-Bogd, Khognokhan, Delgerkhangai, Khanbogd, Batkhaan, Delgerkhan, Khangai Owoo and Ulziit Khairkhan in different areas of Mongolia. The practice is also found among the Buryat Mongols in the Russian Federation and I MAR of PRC.

- **Community:**

These traditional practices were very popular among Mongols as a respectful public event. Though, all Mongolian people are concerned with this element in general but there are specific individuals who organize and

conduct the worshipping rituals in certain areas. For example, people mentioned below are some of them.

- Ts. Battulga, Gonsgoin kinship of Uriankhai ethnic group, native person of Sagsai soum (county) of Bayan-Ulgii province, leader of practitioners of worshipping rituals of sacred mountains "Five peaks of Mongol Altai", "Tsengel Khairkhan", and "Mountain Ezerleg" in Bayan-Ulgii province;
- G. Ernee, the key organizer for the worship ceremony of Sain mountain in Tub province;
- Prominent Buddhist leaders and monks play an important role in conducting the worship ceremony. The following Buddhist leaders are regularly invited to preside over the State and local worship ceremony.
- Venerable D. Chojamts, the head of the Center of Mongolian Buddhists, an abbot of Gandantegchenling Monastery
- Monk Sh. Soninbayar, State Honored Cultural Figure, senior trainer of the Centre for training a leader - practitioners of worshipping rituals of sacred mountains and sites; and
- Other Buddhist leaders and monks of local monasteries in different provinces.

- **Preservation associated members:**

- Center of Cultural Heritage,
- Foundation for the Protection of Natural and Cultural heritage
- Research and Information Center for Sacred Sites of Mongolia

## **2) Relevant events:**

Special occasions, festive events, holidays, festivals, social practices, various labor and household rituals and events

## **3) Information resources**

- Relevant documents in the Center of Cultural Heritage, Foundation for the Protection of Natural and Cultural heritage and Research and Information Center for Sacred Sites of Mongolia
- Survey study project carried out by scholars

## **4) Safeguarding measures**

Amendments of adding articles in 2010 and 2015 on protection of ICH to the Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage made by the Parliament of Mongolia have started to create the favorable legal environment for preservation and safeguarding of ICH in Mongolia. In accordance with the Convention, the Government of

Mongolia listed the traditional practices of worshipping sacred sites in the National List of ICH in Need of Urgent Safeguarding. Further, the preservation and safeguarding of this element is incorporated in the legal documents of the Procedures for the National Council for Identifying ICH and Its Bearers and the Regulations on Registering ICH and Its Bearers. Mongolian Government has elaborated and is going to implement "National Program for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage" in which the safeguarding measures for worshipping practices of sacred sites were included. Mongolian Government starts to carry out National Program to include and teach the compulsory lessons on the themes of Mongolian national and spiritual heritage including the worshipping practices in all the schools at each level. This program was approved and is being implemented nationwide.

In recent years, civil and religious communities, groups, NGOs and individuals have become active to take considerable measures to preserve, protect and revive the sacred site worshipping practices. In 2007, Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO and National Committee for ICOMOS and for MAB have successfully organized the 10th International Meeting of East Asian Biosphere Reserve Network under the title of "Protection of Sacred Natural Sites: Importance for Biodiversity Conservation". UNESCO Accredited NGO- Foundation for the Protection of Natural and Cultural Heritage has launched the "Introduction of UNESCO Living Human Treasures Program" in collaboration with relevant Korean organization. Under the Program, registration and documentation of worshipping practices and its bearers as well as collection of offering texts used for worship ceremony have been started.

NGOs, individuals and local communities have been making initiatives and efforts in the preservation and promotion of tradition of sacred site worship. Many temples and monasteries have been restored and favorable conditions have been created to conduct religious worshipping practices in local areas. These monasteries are reviving the worshipping rituals in localities where they are located.

Some major works done by the Research and Information Center for Sacred Sites of Mongolia are given below.

- With support from UNESCO, field research work for documentation of sacred sites and worship rituals, had been conducted in all Mongolian provinces in 2009-2013;
- A reference book titled Sacred sites in Mongolia is published and distributed to local communities for giving reference of peculiarities of concerned sacred sites and particular worship rituals;



- In collaboration with local communities and administrative offices, sacred sites were registered in 2009-2013. The total number of traditionally worshipped sacred sites is about 1 000;
- Conference on Importance of Sacred Sites for Protection of Cultural and Biodiversity is organized in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia on the 26th of Oct, 2009. Based on the presentations, papers delivered by conference participants, discussions and comments given at the conference, a book titled Importance of Sacred Sites for Protection of Cultural and Biodiversity is produced and distributed to the practitioners of worshipping tradition.