# APF Net Curriculum 3 INternational dialogue on forestry issues

## **Lecture 3 Global effective policies to promote SFM and Linkages between international, national, and local forest management policies Video 2**

## **Protecting forests to preserve livelihoods**

## **Transcripts Duration: 00:03:29**

(Male Narrator)

The pastures of the Mongolian steppe provide the fodder for nomadic livelihood that remains a major force in the national economy. Yet there are also sizable forests occupying 12% of Mongolia’s territory, less visible but no less vital to the survival of Mongolia’s people thanwildlife. Oyuntugs is on one of her regular missions to monitor and protect these forests. She is a forest user group arranger on the lookout for illegal cutting of trees or forest fires. Her role is part of a pilot project that is fundamentally changing how Mongolians interact with their forests.

(Oyuntugs, Forest Ranger)

Our attitude toward the forest has changed. Now we use it properly and treat it like our own

(Male Narrator)

As Mongolia’s economy has expanded, its forests have been shrinking. Greater demand for timber, human sparked fires, mining and overstocking of cattle have taken a toll on the nation's tree cover. But things are now improving through the efforts of people like Batjargal. He is the chairman of his local forest user group, a body of ordinary citizens who oversee the community's woodland resources.

(Batjargal, Chairman, Forest User Group)

We saw things were going wrong. Trees were logged illegally and streams and rivers started to dry up. So the local people wanted to establish a forest user group. It’s been 3 years since then.

(Male Narrator)

They're one of 15 pilot groups that have been established in five provinces across Mongolia, the first phase of a novel program supported by the FAO with funding from the government of the Netherlands. The participatory forest management program enables peoples whose lives are directly connected to forests to use and manage them. User group members receive training on forest assessment, mapping, management planning, fire prevention, and marketing of forest products. They then develop their own plan on a voting action. Protection efforts are showing signs of success. In project areas, illegal logging has essentially ceased. And herders feel they are no longer dependent on outside forces to protect their environment and their livelihoods.

(2 male narrators)

Before we didn’t have the feeling (of ownership). But when we faced crisis, our attitude changed. Now any member of the forest user group reports when he sees a suspicious vehicle. This means we are taking our full responsibility to protect the forest. When the forest is owned by us, everyone starts to be concerned about it.

(Male Narrator)

The pilot phase is now ending and the next step will be to scale out the project nationwide, giving more Mongolians a stake in the future of their forests.