



Sustainability Guidelines: Mongolia

You are about to embark on a wonderful trip to the country of Mongolia, known for its stunning natural beauty and wildlife. Your trip will show you all that Mongolia has to offer, leaving you with a great appreciation for this country.

Environmental Issues

Mongolia's natural beauty is, however, threatened by environmental issues. The main environmental struggles that Mongolia faces are the following:

- Limited natural fresh water resources
- Air pollution due to rapid urbanization and industrial growth
- Deforestation
- Soil erosion from wind and rain.

Environmental Initiatives

While these environmental issues may seem overwhelming, the country is taking steps to combat environmental effects.

The Northern Buddhist Association for Ecology and Development began in July 2005 and has developed twelve environmental initiatives that range from planting a tree for every momentous occasion in life to adding Buddhist ecology into secondary school curriculum in Mongolia. Issues on land were also addressed, including specific concerns about land laws and their impact on monastery land. The Buddhist monks hold rivers and mountains in sacred reverence and state laws often negate these beliefs and issue land permits on these rivers and mountains. The twelve issues include establishing an official ecological conservation days for the Buddhist community; developing Gandantegchenling Centre of Mongolian Buddhist as a model green monastery using environmentally friendly technologies; and training specialists in ecology and traditional conservation at Buddhist University. This is a very forward thinking group that is showing how sustainability can be achieved through a spiritual framework.

The Snow Leopard Conservancy protects approximately 800-1000 Snow Leopards that roam Mongolia. The Conservancy performs camera-trapping studies of Snow Leopards in the South Gobi Desert: this which provides images of the Snow Leopards as well as information on the urgency of identifying and protecting critical Snow Leopard habitats. The Conservancy obtains crucial data to maintain the preservation of this wild species and creating protection zones of the Snow Leopards' habitats.



A National Renewable Energy Program was developed in June 2005 by the Parliament of Mongolia to facilitate the wider use of renewable energy. The main objective of this program is to improve Mongolia's energy sector structure by increasing the percentage of renewable energy in the total national energy supply. By doing this, unemployment rates will drop as new jobs become available with the construction of renewable energy. The types of renewable energy are wind power and solar power.

As a visitor to Mongolia you can help mitigate the environmental perils of the country by conserving water as it is a precious commodity in this country. Wherever you visit in Mongolia, respect the natural environment to help preserve it for future generations.

Guide to Eco-Lodges in Mongolia

Three Camel Lodge, located in the Gobi Desert, was built to complement its natural surroundings and to utilize renewable energy sources--the lodge harnesses solar and wind power. Local artisans and workers crafted the roofs of the building in accordance with the canons of Mongolian Buddhist architecture without using a single nail. While the lodge was being built, a cooperative agreement which reflected a commitment to sustainable development and conservation of nature was initiated with the local government and National Park authorities. Three Camel Lodge also serves as a research facility and wildlife monitoring station. In the local community, the lodge funds and organizes nature conservation clubs that promote activities such as litter pick-up, cleaning and protecting mountain springs, planting native trees, and attending presentations by naturalists and scientists.