

Initial Results – Study on Drivers of Forest change in Mongolia

Based on draft report

Ulaanbaatar, October 2015

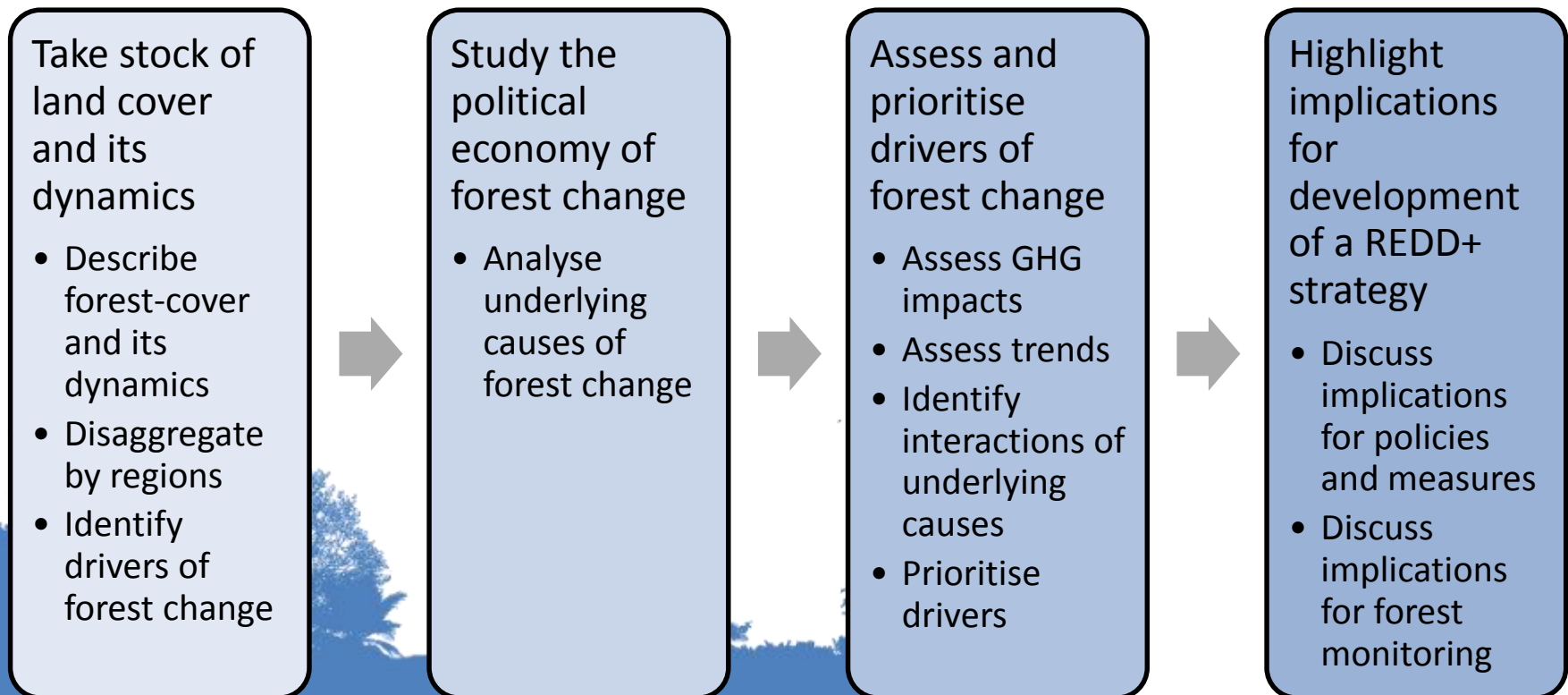
1. Background to the study

- Supported by UNDP (part of UN-REDD Programme), to support development of national REDD+ strategy.
- Forest change = decreases and increases in forest cover and condition
- Team includes: Till Neeff, Independent Consultant; Chimidnyam Dorjsuren, Munkhuu Undraa, Lamjav Dorjtseden, Mongolian Forest Research Association; and Zagdaa Narangerel, Environmental Information Centre.
- Study began in May 2015; initial results presented at workshop in Ulaanbaatar in October 2015.
- Validation in November 2015 (?)



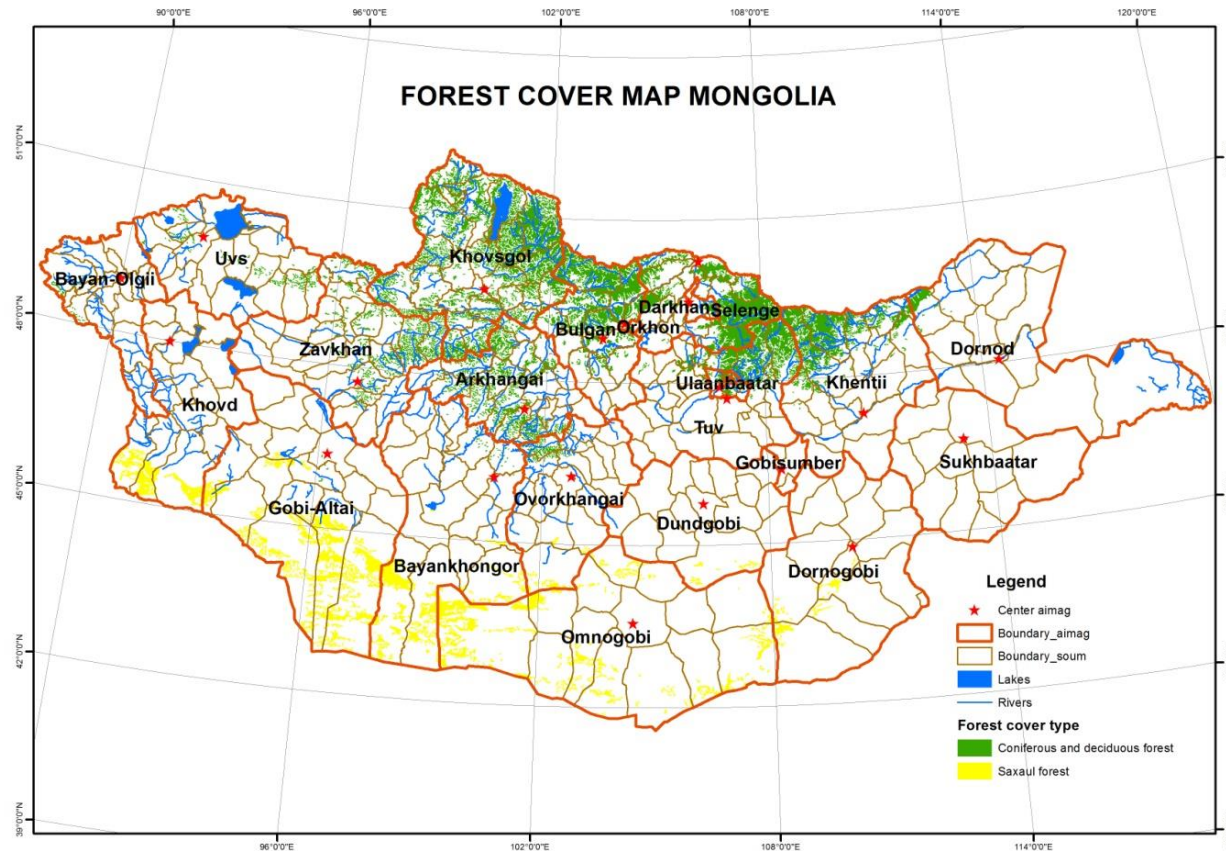
2. Methodology applied

- For understanding the drivers of forest change, the study relies on analysis of existing land-cover data(e.g. FRDC's forest taxation inventories, EIC land database).
- For identifying the causes of drivers, the study relies on a literature review and consultations with sector experts.



3. Initial results (DRAFT)

Mongolia's forests are deteriorating. The forest area at the end of 2014 was about 18 million ha. But since 2004, 37,000 ha (0.25%) of forest have been lost and further 71,000 ha (0.55%) have been degraded every year.



3. Initial results, cont.

- The key drivers of forest change are:
 - forest fires (-)
 - logging & clear felling (-)
 - pest control, tree planting (+)
 - deforestation by continued degradation (-)
 - Mining (-)



3. Initial results, cont.

Underlying causes of forest change include a range of factors

Demographic factors

- Population growth
- Urban expansion and urbanization

Economic factors

- Recent mining boom, fuelling economic growth
- Rural unemployment and poverty

Technological factors

- Low technical capacity for use of forest resources, restoration, and protection

Policy & institutional factors

- Low capacity for law enforcement
- Insufficient regulatory environment for forest protection
- Weak institutions in forest management

Cultural & socio-political factors

- Socio-political transition, unstable government agencies
- Lack of awareness and experiences for sustainable use of forest resources, restoration and protection
- Public interest in conservation
- Perception of forests as a public good (especially for herding)

Environmental factors

- Reduced rainfall and increased air temperature, drought

3. Initial results, cont.

Effective policies and measures should address the most important drivers of forest change in the provinces with highest activity levels (Dornod, Selenge, Tuv, Khovsgol and Khentii). Draft recommendations include:

- **Improved forestry practices, with a focus on sustainable management.** A broad development programme is needed, raising cutting volumes, reviewing licensing policies and amply developing technical capacity.
- **Upgrade technical capacities for forest management.**
- **Public education, for general public and decision-makers:** this is needed about the benefits of forest management, fire management, and the damaging effects of illegal logging and grazing.
- **Investment into ongoing government programmes for pest control and fire management** might show more immediate results.

4. Discussion questions:

- What do you think about the prominent drivers identified?
- What spatial data are available to show information on forest cover change?
- What about land cover change?
- What spatial data are available to show information about the *drivers* or *reasons* for that change?
- Tov and Khovsgol are considered priority aimags. What other data are available at the aimag level?
- How do you usually conduct a forest/land cover change analysis in Mongolia?

