

DARVI DECLARATION: A declaration by the sacred sites Guardians and traditional cultural practitioners of the Pamir, Tien Shan and Altai Sayan biocultural mountain systems.

Darvi Sum, Khovd aimag, Mongolia,

10th of July 2014

INTRODUCTION:

On the auspicious day of the black horse of the mid-summer month in the year of the wooden horse, we, the Guardians of sacred sites and traditional cultural practitioners of the Pamir, Tien Shan and the Altai Sayan biocultural mountain systems, gathered on the foothill of the sacred mountain ‘Sutai Khairkhan’ in the Darvi Sum of Khovd Aimag in Mongolia:

- Express our concerns regarding the speed of disappearance of traditional cultures, the interruption of intergenerational transfer and the erosion of the integrity of our ancestral landscapes,
- Recognize the special role that sacred mountains and cultural landscapes play in maintaining the biological and cultural diversity of the Earth,
- Reiterate the exceptional importance of further strengthening the unbreakable golden interwoven web of humans, nature and culture for the survival of humanity,
- Take responsibility for transfer of knowledge, values and relationships to the next generations,
- Recognize and emphasize the importance of participation of local and indigenous communities, including Guardians of sacred sites and traditional cultural practitioners in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

We call on Governments, the UNESCO World Heritage Committee and its advisory bodies, the IUCN World Heritage Programme and ICOMOS as well as other relevant international organizations to:

- Incorporate experience, initiative and knowledge of indigenous and local communities in the nomination process and management of World Heritage Sites.
- Pay special attention to maintaining continuous relationships with sacred sites that are at the core of the Earth’s biocultural landscapes.
- Recognize the right of indigenous and local communities to identify themselves

- Recognize the role of local and Indigenous peoples to independently identify Outstanding Universal Value and nominate properties to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee for subscription as World Heritage,
- Include the objects of special significance to Indigenous and local communities into Tentative Lists for World Heritage nominations at the level of their own nation-states,
- Support traditional institutions and customary laws of Indigenous and local communities in developing and implementing nomination files and management plans for World Heritage sites.
- Support the recognition and joint nomination of the sacred biocultural Altaian landscape as a trans-boundary mixed World Heritage site and Cultural Landscape
- Broaden the current boundaries of the World Heritage Site known as the “Golden Mountains of Altai”.
- Include the sacred mountain “Sutai Khairakhan”, the 108 sacred Delger springs of Darvi valley and one of the largest keregsurs of the planet “Zagal Baatar” in the World Heritage nomination in Mongolia.

COMMITMENTS:

We underscore that there can't be one single model of conservation for sacred sites and biocultural landscapes and that each Indigenous or local community protects them with a diversity of traditional and culturally unique methods. However, across this diversity, the core foundations for conservation of sacred sites are similar and based maintaining a relationship of deep respect, reciprocity and constant communications with sacred sites.

- ✓ We understand the importance of and commit to improving collaboration between Indigenous and local communities of the Pamir, Tien Shan and Altai-Sayan biocultural regions for the conservation of natural and cultural heritage.

The Altai is the cradle of humanity and a depository of memory of the Earth and her people. Over millennia, the Altai and our ancestors have been safekeeping and maintaining this rich cultural memory and knowledge. Altai plays an exceptional role in the development of human civilization and the geological configuration of the planet. The intangible aspects of the cultural and natural heritage of Altai are not only connected to the Indigenous and local communities - who inhabit the Altai today - but also form the spiritual foundations and identities of the many peoples who originated from Altai and spread around Eurasia.

- ✓ We appreciate and deeply value the unifying spiritual connections between our people and the biocultural landscapes with its powerful sacred sites, which we shall continue to revitalize through the regular conduct of ceremony.

Pamir Mountains:

Yodgor Odinamandov, Cultural Center Asha, Tajikistan

Tohidjin Gadamamadov, Akshoe Kuhiston, Tajikistan

Shavkmamad Pulodov, traditional singer, Tajikistan

Tien Shan Mountains:

Kamil Mamadaliev, epic singer Manaschi, Talas region, Kyrgyzstan

Dr. Savetbek Abdrasulov, philosopher, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

Sayan Mountains:

Tatyana Kobezhikova, Khakas shaman, Republic of Khakassia, Russia

Leonid Batanov, Buryat shaman, Ust-Orda Buryat District, Irkutsk Province, Russia

Andrey Obsholov, Buryat shaman, Ust-Orda Buryat District, Irkutsk Province, Russia

Altai Mountains:

Slava Cheltuev, Altai Shaman, Republic of Altai, Russia

Olga Erekhonova, traditional knowledge custodian, Republic of Altai, Russia

Erkemen Kunanakov, traditional singer, storyteller Kaichi, Republic of Altai, Russia

Larisa Alushkina, traditional knowledge custodian, Republic of Altai, Russia

Chagat Almashev, FSDA, Republic of Altai, Russia

Sh. Byambaa, Darvi Sum Chairman, Khovd aimag, Mongolia

L. Bazar, herder Darvi, Khovd aimag, Mongolia

V. Boldoo, herder Darvi, Khovd aimag, Mongolia

E. Batkhuu, herder, traditional arts master, Darvi, Khovd aimag, Mongolia

Ch. Nasanzhargal, head of the unit, Darvi, Khovd aimag, Mongolia

M. Dashdorzh, herder, Darvi, Khovd aimag, Mongolia

D. Nyamdagva, elder, traditional knowledge custodian, Zyynbyren, Selenge Aimag, Mongolia

P. Gansukh, herder, Darvi, Khovd Aimag, Mongolia

D. Shar, member of the unit, Darvi, Khovd aimag, Mongolia

Zh. Oyun-Erdene, sacred site guardian, Mongolia

Dr. L. Enkhsaikhan, historian, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

Ts. Altantsetseg, Altai Uv, Mongolia

B. Buyanbadrakh, Mongolian shaman, Chair of Altai Uv, Mongolia

D. Byambdorzh, Mongolian shaman, Mongolia