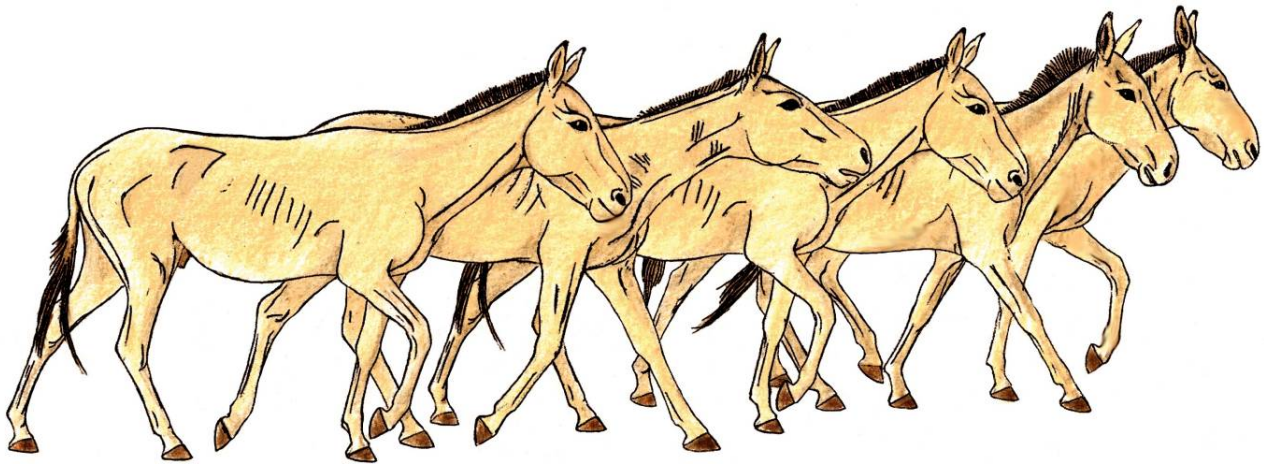


Landscape level research for the conservation of Asiatic wild ass in Mongolia

Report July 2009



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Photo: P. Kaczensky

**The Mongolian Gobi
– a unique and still largely intact ecosystem**

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES IN GREAT GOBI B SPA

PETRA KACZENSKY & CHRIS WALZER

July 2009



Within the framework of:

“Landscape level research for the conservation of Asiatic wild ass in Mongolia” funded by the Austrian Science Foundation (project P18624)

1. INTRODUCTION

Mongolia is an important stronghold of the Asiatic wild ass (*Equus hemionus*, khulan in Mongolian) and has a global responsibility to ensure their conservation. At the present time, Mongolia is anticipating the development of a commercialized agricultural sector that could cause a far greater intrusion of human activities into the Gobi environment than current pastoral livestock production. Development of other sectors of the Mongolian economy, especially mining and road construction, could also impact environmental security in general and habitat needs of the khulan and associated wildlife in particular. Thus the impact of habitat fragmentation and the presence of people and their livestock on wild ungulates has become a key research focus in Mongolia (Ito et al. 2005, Kaczensky et al. 2006).

For our research project “Landscape level research for the conservation of Asiatic wild ass in Mongolia” funded by the Austrian Science Foundation (project P18624) we selected three focal areas: Great Gobi B Strictly Protected Area (SPA), Great Gobi A SPA and the SE Gobi. The three areas vary in respect to habitat productivity and the intensity of human land use.

This summers’ focus was on collaring wild asses in Great Gobi B SPA with high temporal resolution GPS collars. In Great Gobi B SPA we also continue our research activities around the re-introduced Przewalski’s horse population (*Equus ferus przewalskii*) in part funded by a previous FWF project (project P14992). Further focus was on modelling wild ass survey data and understanding fission-fusion dynamics.

2. COLLARING WILD ASSES WITH GPS / STORE-ON-BOARD COLLARS

To deepen our understanding of small-scale movements and time budget relative to various habitat variables we deployed 10 GPS / store-on-board (SOB) collars on wild asses in 2007 and retrieved the units in 2008 (see reports 2007 & 2008). To our great frustration only 1 out of the 10 collars had performed as expected (Fig. 1; Kaczensky et al. 2009 submitted). The other collars had significant software problems and had deleted or corrupted the stored GPS locations (Kaczensky and Walzer 2009 submitted).

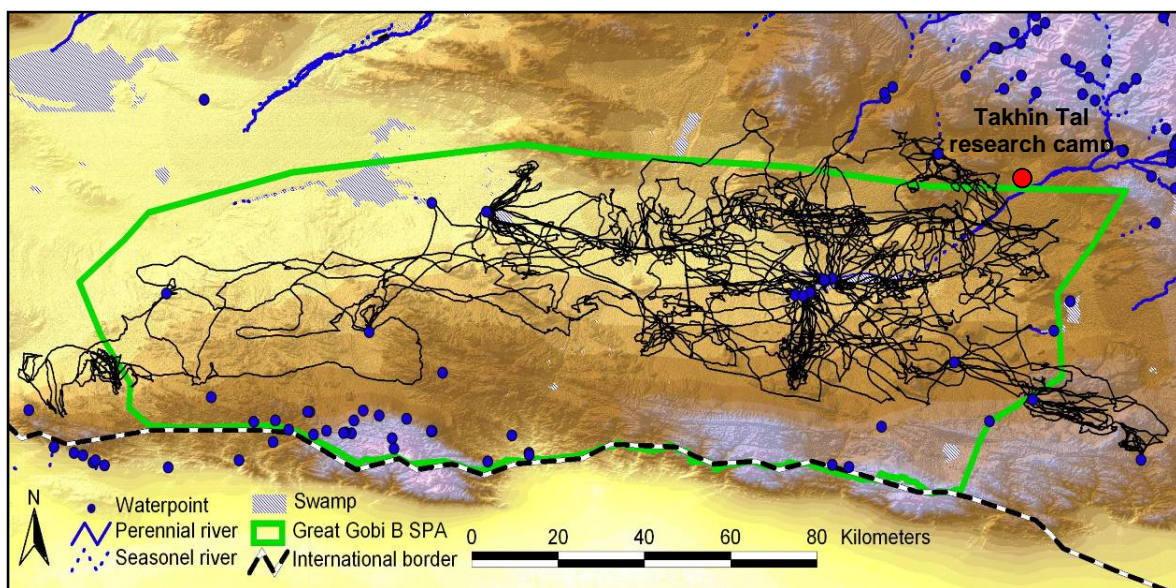


Fig. 1: Movements of a female wild ass monitored by a GPS SOB collar with 15min intervals from July 2007 until July 2008.

This summer we deployed 7 collars with an updated software configuration (FIWI, SOB) and 7 collars produced by a commercial company (Vectronic Aerospace GmbH, Berlin, Germany). All collars were again designed to collect and store GPS position every 15 minutes over a 12 months period. To allow collar retrieval, we equipped all collars with pre-programmed drop-offs (CR-2a, Telonics, USA) which were programmed to open on the 20th July 2010. Previous data has shown that most khulans move to the eastern part of the Great Gobi B SPA in June/July making retrieval somewhat simpler.

To capture wild asses we used the previously described chase method with our specially adapted jeep (roll-over bar, double shock absorbers and reinforced springs), that has proven the most efficient method to dart Asiatic wild asses in open terrain (Walzer et al. 2006; Fig. 2). Within 5 days we captured and radiocollared 8 mares and 6 stallions between the two water points *Chonin Us* and *Toodog Us* in the eastern half of the Great Gobi B SPA (Tab. 1, Fig. 3 & 4).



Fig. 2: Darting wild asses from jeep in Great Gobi B SPA in July 2009.

Table 1: Wild asses captured in Great Gobi B SPA in July 2009

#	Date	Time	XCO	YCO	Sex	Age	Collar brand	VHF frequency	Break away	Comments
1	20.07.09	11:30	93.14302	45.39721	male	5-6	FIWI - 6	150.540	20.07.10	single, many bite marks
2	20.07.09	12:35	92.98132	45.38997	female	5-6	FIWI - 3	150.420	20.07.10	with yearling
3	20.07.09	14:50	93.24042	45.42294	male	3	FIWI - 4	150.460	20.07.10	together with 2 others
4	21.07.09	11:30	93.44603	45.24129	female	8	FIWI - 1	150.340	20.07.10	with foal, in a group of 20
5	21.07.09	13:05	93.39861	45.25412	male	7	Vectronics - 6447	150.250	20.07.10	in a group of 6-7
6	21.07.09	15:40	93.41131	45.24893	female	15	Vectronics - 6446	150.798	20.07.10	with yearling, in a group of 5
7	21.07.09	17:30	93.39598	45.34372	female	4	Vectronics - 7020	151.700	20.07.10	in a group of 200
8	22.07.09	12:00	93.54962	45.35881	female	15	FIWI - 2	150.380	20.07.10	with yearling, only those two
9	22.07.09	13:15	93.46478	45.34112	male	15	Vectronics - 6441	151.250	20.07.10	single
10	22.07.09	16:20	93.45066	45.25359	male	12	Vectronics - 4958	151.800	20.07.10	in a group of 3
11	23.07.09	12:20	93.40840	45.22712	female	8-9	FIWI - 5	150.500	20.07.10	with yearling, in a group of 5-6, seems to have been the lead animal
12	23.07.09	13:45	93.34038	45.25498	female	2-3	Vectronics - 7376	151.850	20.07.10	in a group of 3
13	24.07.09	13:50	93.42906	45.26435	female	9-10	Vectronics - 6284	151.750	20.07.10	in a group of 10
14	24.07.09	15:00	93.31252	45.30680	male	12	FIWI - 7	150.620	20.07.10	single

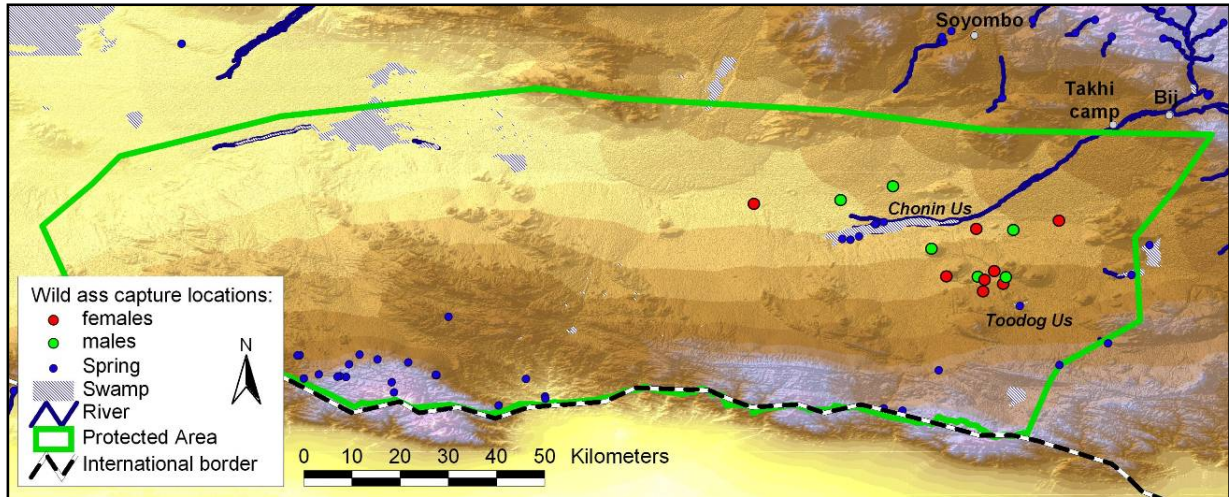


Fig. 3: Map with wild ass capture locations in July 2009.



Fig. 4: A) Wild ass with FIWI GPS SOB collar, B) Wild ass with Vectronic Aerospace GPS SOB Collar, C) Waking up minutes after the iv administration of the antidote.

3. A MODEL TO SIMULATE WILD ASS COUNTS IN GREAT GOBI B SPA

In May 2009 Petra Kaczensky went to the Institute of Biology, University of Bergen, Norway for 2 weeks to continue work with Stefanie Kramer-Schadt. Stefanie programmed a simulation model for counting wild asses in the Great Gobi B SPA. The program allows the import of the actual landscape features with a 100m resolution (slope, visibility based on the topography (viewshade), bush versus grass steppe; Fig. 5). The simulated ass population to be counted can be varied in size, the degree of clustering, the maximum herd size, and the probability of detecting a herd in relation to the perpendicular distance from the transect line. Transects may be imported as actual track driven in the field or parallel transect lines and visibility of herds may be reduced in the bush steppe. In addition, herds may be allowed to move from one observation day to the next based on the distribution of distances covered within 24 hours by radio-collared animals.

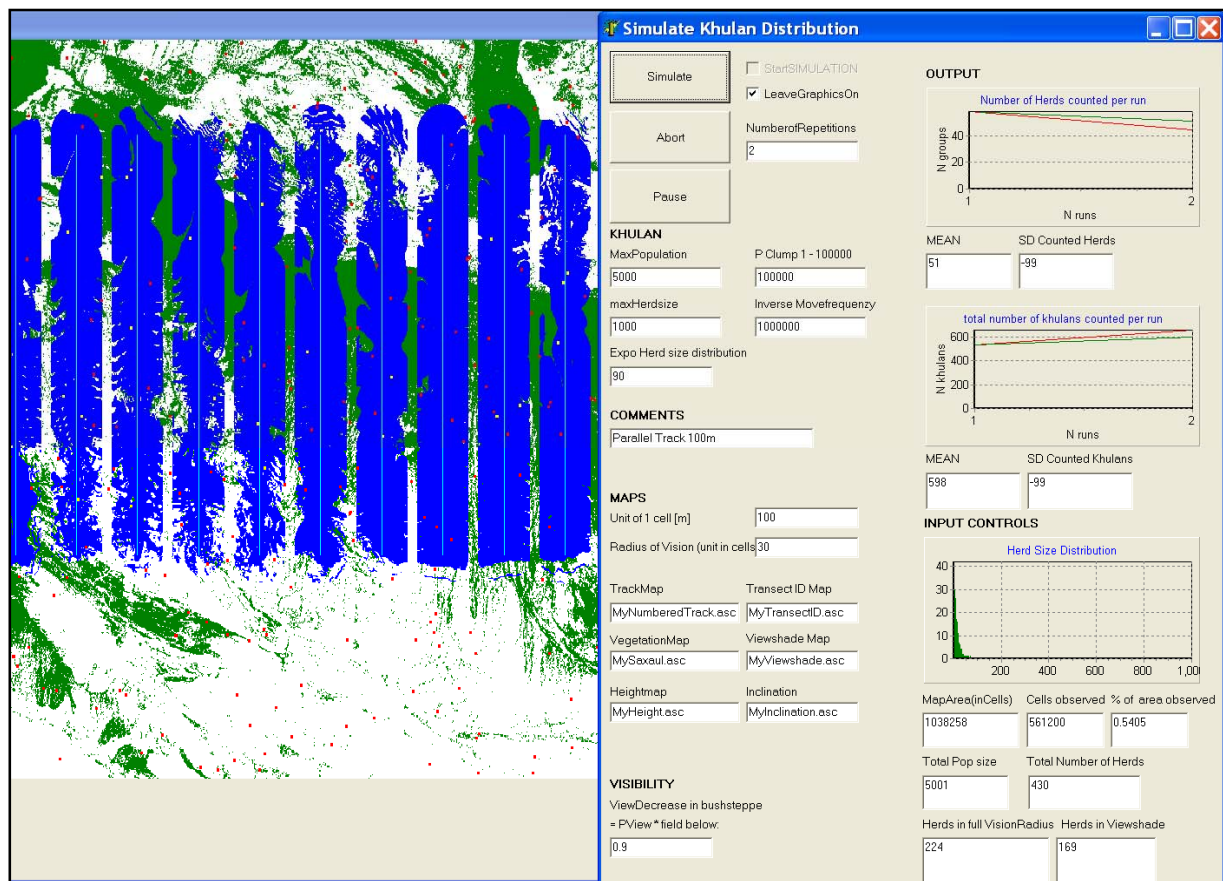


Fig. 5: Screenshot of the graphic and parameter page in the simulation model for counting wild ass in the Great Gobi B SPA by Stefanie Kramer-Schadt.

For each run (“survey”) the model records the group size, the perpendicular distance to the transect line, and the transect ID for each group counted. The parameters of each “survey” can be fed directly into program DISTANCE (<http://www.ruwpa.st-and.ac.uk/distance/>). The program also records for each simulated “survey” the actual population number, the actual number of herds, and the number of herds visible from the transect line (within 5 km and within view). With this new model we hope to get a better understanding for the most likely population size of the wild ass population in the Great Gobi B SPA by comparing model scenarios with real survey data from the last 6 years (Fig. 6).

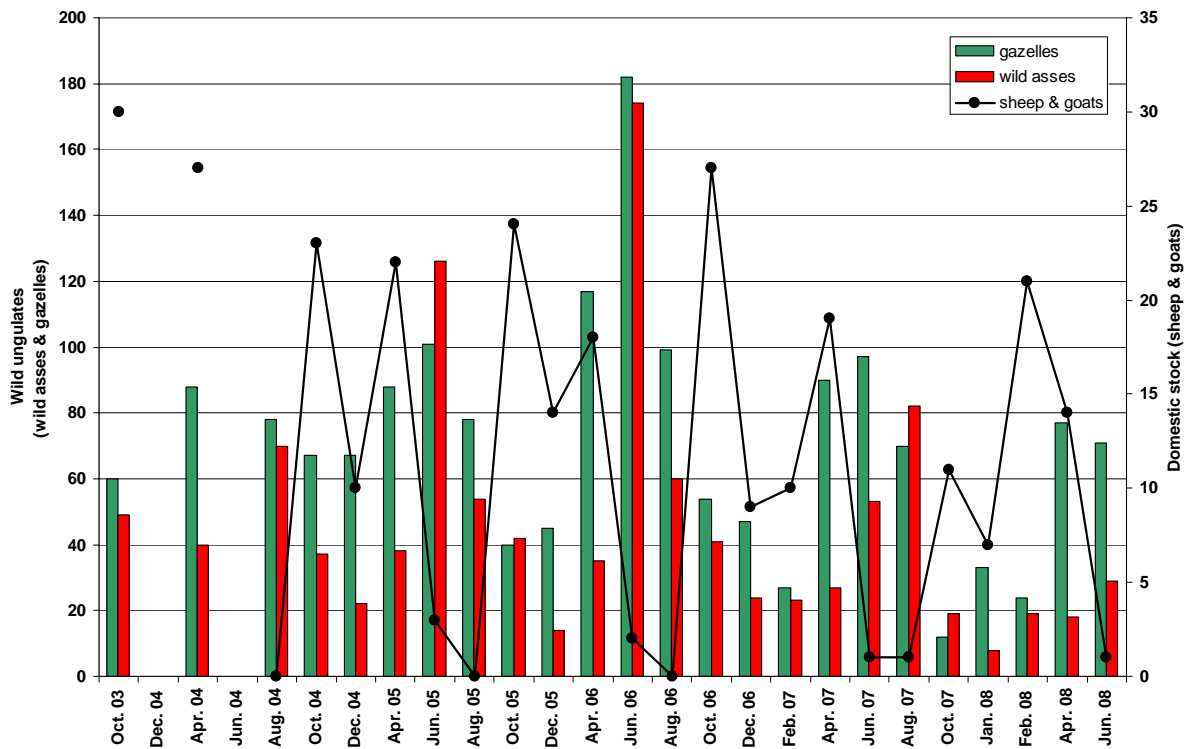


Fig. 6: Number of wild ass and gazelle herds encountered during 24 all park counts between October 2003 and June 2008.

4. EXPLORING KNOWLEDGE DISSEMINATION AS A SELECTIVE FORCE FOR AGGREGATION: PRELIMINARY RESULTS FROM MODELLING WILD ASIATIC ASSES

Joanna Bryson, from the department of Artificial Models of Natural Intelligence, University of Bath, United Kingdom is interested in the mechanisms explaining fission-fusion societies and thus became interested in our work on Asiatic wild asses of the Gobi.

Aggregation is a costly strategy for any species, because individuals must compete for resources such as food, shelter and mating opportunities. For reasons ranging from increased vigilance to cooperative mobbing of aggressors, living in a group can provide benefits as well as costs. The question is whether we now understand all the costs and benefits of aggregation. In the present work we have determined new potential costs as well as benefits. We have done this through examining available data and simulating hypotheses on the social behaviour of Asiatic wild asses *Equus hemionus*. The present work stems from two research questions:

1. We (Kaczensky and colleagues) are looking for a mechanism that could explain the exceptional ability of Asiatic asses to exploit unexpected resource bonanzas in the form of transient oases caused by rainfall.
2. We (Bryson and colleagues) are also looking for a separate selective pressure to explain the two different scales of aggregation seen in species with fission-fusion social structure.

A fission-fusion (FF) society is characterised by more than one level or size of aggregation. A party is a relatively small group which tends to travel together. A community or troop can also be defined, but in some species it is not clear that the entire community ever aggregates at the same time. Parties may converge (fuse) and large parties may split (fission), or individuals may swap between parties. Wild Asiatic asses appear to exhibit FF with flexible party composition.

5. PRZEWALSKI'S HORSE POPULATION STRUCTURE

The Przewalski's horse population in and around Takhin Tal suffered the loss of 12 P-horses (5 adult mares, 2 adult stallions and 5 foals from 2008) due to the harsh winter conditions. However, these losses were already compensated for by the birth of 25 foals of which 22 were still alive by mid July 2009. Another 4-6 foals are expected to be born later this year. As of July 2009 a total of 144 P-horses, organized in 12 harem groups and several bachelor groups, roam the park (Tab. 2). With the population growing and the horses becoming more shy, individual identification especially of bachelor stallions and assignment of foals to the correct mares is becoming increasingly difficult.

Table 2: Overview of Przewalski's horses in Great Gobi B SPA as of July 2009.

Name	Sex	ZB-Nr.	Birthdate	Age	Origine	Dam	Sire	group	Name	Sex	ZB-Nr.	Birthdate	Age	Origine	Dam	Sire	group
Zagal group (9 adults, 4 foals)									Khuchit group (10 adults, 1 foal)								
Zagal	stallion	3720	24.04.97	7	Gobi B	3035	2866	Zagal	Khuchit	stallion	3320	16.06.99	10	Langenberg	2254	1374	Khuchit
Khokhoo	mare	2984	19.11.96	12	Langenberg	1359	1374	Zagal	Misheel	mare	3084	28.05.97	12	Tachin Tal	1977	1159	Khuchit
Soir	mare	3045	31.03.97	12	Langenberg	2018	1374	Zagal	Erdene	mare	3040	19.02.98	11	Rotterdam	1633	1429	Khuchit
Dorothee	mare	3230	06.06.99	10	Tachin Tal	3035	2503	Zagal	Maral	mare	3387	23.05.00	9	Tachin Tal	3038	2363	Khuchit
Sormuus	mare	4393	13.06.04	5	Gobi B	3363	3066	Zagal	Kherlen	mare	3391	26.05.00	9	Tachin Tal	3035	2363	Khuchit
Khatlan	mare	4751	21.05.06	3	Gobi B	3230	3069	Zagal	Saran	mare	3823	09.04.03	6	Tachin Tal	2645	2363	Khuchit
Bambi	mare	5020	03.06.07	2	Gobi B	3045	3069	Zagal	Tumen	mare	4822	30.06.06	3	Gobi B	2748	3069	Khuchit
Simba	stallion	5048	20.06.07	2	Gobi B	2984	3069	Zagal	Erhsaran	mare	5017	03.06.07	2	Gobi B	3084	3166	Khuchit
Sonor	stallion	5131	10.05.08	1	Gobi B	4393	3069	Zagal	Ariuka	mare	5087	08.07.07	2	Gobi B	3803	3166	Khuchit
Dorothee's foal	mare	15.05.09	0	Gobi B	3230	3720	Zagal	Suld	mare	5160	01.06.08	1	Gobi B	3823	3166	Khuchit	
Sormuus's foal	mare	15.05.09	0	Gobi B	4393	3720	Zagal	Misheel's foal	?	26.05.09	0	Gobi B	3084	3320	Khuchit		
Soir's foal	stallion	20.05.09	0	Gobi B	3045	3720	Zagal										
Khokhoo's foal	?	03.07.09	0	Gobi B	2984	3720	Zagal										
Tayan / Zandan group (11 adults, 5 foals)									Jonon? Group (4 adults, 1 foal)								
Tayan	stallion	3066	24.04.97	12	Tierpark Berlin	1431	2041	Tayan/Zandan	Jonon?	stallion	4392	13.06.04	5	Gobi B	3387	2911	Jonon?
Zandan	stallion	3166	28.05.98	11	Tachin Tal	2398	1818	Tayan/Zandan	Sogoo	mare	2586	01.12.92	16	Australien, Dubbo	974	787	Jonon?
Imj	mare	2748	02.08.94	15	Schwerin	1436	1236	Tayan/Zandan	Sorja	mare	3415	13.06.00	9	Salzburg	2017	1433	Jonon?
Mongon	mare	3273	06.05.99	10	Winterthur	2483	1742	Tayan/Zandan	Mogoi	stallion	4961	11.05.07	2	Tachin Tal	2586	2363	Jonon?
Orkhon	mare	3430	15.07.00	9	Tachin Tal	2645	2363	Tayan/Zandan	Sogoo's foal	?	05.07.09	0	Gobi B	2586	3441	Jonon?	
Oroo	mare	3755	24.05.02	7	Gobi B	2787	1818	Tayan/Zandan									
Kheren	mare	3803	28.07.02	7	Gobi B	2712	2866	Tayan/Zandan	Hubsugul group (18 adults, 3 foals)								
Harz	mare	4313	02.05.04	5	Gobi B	3045	3069	Tayan/Zandan	Hubsugul	stallion	3233	21.05.97	12	Langenberg	1320	1374	Hubsugul
Buman	mare	4503	29.04.05	4	Gobi B	2748	3069	Tayan/Zandan	Beltes	mare	3047	15.04.97	12	Ahaus (D)/WPL	1987	1118	Hubsugul
Hirs	stallion	5169	12.06.08	1	Gobi B	3375	3066	Tayan/Zandan	Zur	mare	3301	06.06.99	10	Köln (D)/WPL	1022	1852	Hubsugul
Samar	mare	5170	14.06.08	1	Gobi B	3803	3066	Tayan/Zandan	Shandas	mare	3312	11.06.99	10	Ahaus (D)/WPL	2946	1852	Hubsugul
Harz's foal	?	09.05.09	0	Gobi B	4313 3066 / 3166	Tayan/Zandan			Nergui	mare	3708	26.04.02	7	WPL	2018	2805	Hubsugul
Orkhon's foal	?	11.05.09	0	Gobi B	3430 3066 / 3166	Tayan/Zandan			Mandhai	mare	3730	13.05.02	7	Winterthur (CH)	1897	1742	Hubsugul
Kheren's foal	?	18.05.09	0	Gobi B	3803 3066 / 3166	Tayan/Zandan			Tolbo	mare	3807	30.06.02	7	Wien (A)	2173	2444	Hubsugul
Buman's foal	?	09.06.09	0	Gobi B	4503 3066 / 3166	Tayan/Zandan			Zoboo	mare	3811	19.10.02	7	Stuttgart (D)	1767	2480	Hubsugul
Mongon's foal	?	22.07.09	0	Gobi B	3273 3066 / 3166	Tayan/Zandan			Audi	mare	4688	09.04.06	3	Gobi B	3047	3233	Hubsugul
									Altai	mare	4690	16.04.06	3	Gobi B	3312	3233	Hubsugul
									Surd	mare	4778	30.05.06	3	Gobi B	3807	3233	Hubsugul
									Ynzagahan	mare	4855	25.08.06	3	Gobi B	3811	3233	Hubsugul
									Shandast	stallion	4856	01.09.06	3	Gobi B	3301	3233	Hubsugul
									Khaan	stallion	5054	25.06.07	2	Gobi B	3312	3233	Hubsugul
									Shuudan	mare	5055	25.06.07	2	Gobi B	3807	3233	Hubsugul
									Aptek	stallion	5161	01.06.08	1	Gobi B	3047	3233	Hubsugul
									Surguuli	mare	5190	01.07.08	1	Gobi B	3708	3233	Hubsugul
									Altaiayan	mare	5201	15.07.08	1	Gobi B	3807	3233	Hubsugul
									Mandhai's foal	?	April 2009	0	Gobi B	3730	3233	Hubsugul	
									unknown mare's foal	?	June 2009	0	Gobi B	?	3233	Hubsugul	
									unknown mare's foal	?	June 2009	0	Gobi B	?	3233	Hubsugul	
									Bosoo group (5 adults)								
									Bosoo	stallion	3750	21.05.02	7	Gobi B	2398	1818	Bosoo
									Tschandaga	mare	2130	11.05.91	18	Askania Nova	600	1159	Bosoo
									Bokhoo	mare	4787	03.06.06	3	Gobi B	2984	3069	Bosoo
									Taniya	mare	5018	30.07.07	2	Gobi B	4234	3361	Bosoo
									Henzee	mare	5089	30.08.07	2	Gobi B	2130	1818	Bosoo
									Arslan2 group (4 adults, 1 foal)								
									Arslan2	stallion	4321	06.05.04	5	Hustai	2703	1857	Arslan2
									Yyil	mare	2712	17.04.94	15	Oberwil	486	1772	Arslan2
									Od	mare	2645	23.04.94	15	Prag	1847	1135	Arslan2
									Tenger	stallion	5231	21.04.08	1	Gobi B	2645	2363	Arslan2
									Od's foal	mare	27.05.09	0	Gobi B	2645	3821	Arslan2	
									Unknown stallion group (2 adults, 1 foal)								
									Unknown stallion	a stallion from the bachelor group							
									Zorgol	mare	3383	20.05.00	9	Winterthur	1892	1742	Unknown stallion
									Zorgol's foal	?	21.06.09	0	Gobi B	3383	?	Unknown stallion	
									Bachelor Tsast group (7 adults)								
									Tsast	stallion	3888	12.06.03	6	Gobi B	2398	1818	Bachelor Tsast
									Erk Hul	stallion	3710	19.04.02	7	Hustai	1970	2619	Bachelor Tsast
									Tsombon	stallion	4308	29.04.04	5	Gobi B	3194	3066?	Bachelor Tsast
									Zegst	stallion	4352	25.05.04	5	Gobi B	3332	1818	Bachelor Tsast
									Doroo	stallion	4356	27.05.04	5	Gobi B	3375	3066	Bachelor Tsast
									Ganzaga	stallion	4417	24.07.04	5	Gobi B	2921	1818	Bachelor Tsast
									Bohon	stallion	4535	27.05.05	4	Gobi B	2141	1818	Bachelor Tsast
									Bachelor Magnai group (17 adults)								
									Magnai	stallion	3426	02.07.00	9	Rotterdam	2671	2040	Bachelor Magnai
									Rotary	stallion	3724	12.05.02	7	Hustai	2692	1891	Bachelor Magnai
									Oosama	stallion	3608	11.09.02	7	Tachin Tal	2586	2363 or 1818	Bachelor Magnai
									Kharaatsai	stallion	3881	06.06.03	6	Gobi B	3230	3069	Bachelor Magnai
									Sansar	stallion	4314	02.05.04	5	Tachin Tal	2645	2363	Bachelor Magnai
									Bundan	stallion	4404	02.07.04	5	Gobi B	3391	2911	Bachelor Magnai
									Arslan	stallion	4405	07.07.04	5	Tachin Tal	1669	2363	Bachelor Magnai
									Huleg	stallion	4500	27.04.05	4	Tachin Tal	2786	2363	Bachelor Magnai
									Bars	stallion	4511	09.05.05	4	Gobi B	3430	3069	Bachelor Magnai
									Azaa	stallion	4529	21.05.05	4	Gobi B	3230	3069	Bachelor Magnai
									Burd	stallion	4533	25.05.05	4	Gobi B	3040	2911	Bachelor Magnai
									Agsam	stallion	4559	24.06.05	4	Tachin Tal	2586	2363	Bachelor Magnai
									Sooton	stallion	4593	08.10.05	4	Tachin Tal	2948	3233	Bachelor Magnai
									Taij	stallion	4731	09.05.06	3	Gobi B	3383	2911	Bachelor Magnai
									Sumber	stallion	4815	24.06.06	3	Gobi B	3045	3069	Bachelor Magnai
									Matar	stallion	4824	02.07.06	3	Gobi B	2940	3069	Bachelor Magnai
									Janjin	stallion	5065	04.07.07	2	Gobi B	3387	2911	Bachelor Magnai
		</															

Ranger monitoring of P-horse groups showed that all groups together covered 2,808 km² from January - December 2008 and 2,691 km² from January - July 2009 (Fig. 7). Because the Bij river has hardly been flowing beyond the village of Bij in 2009, all P-horse groups grazed rather far away from the Takhin Tal camp. A stallion group discovered a new water point south of Soyombo village (N of the SPA).

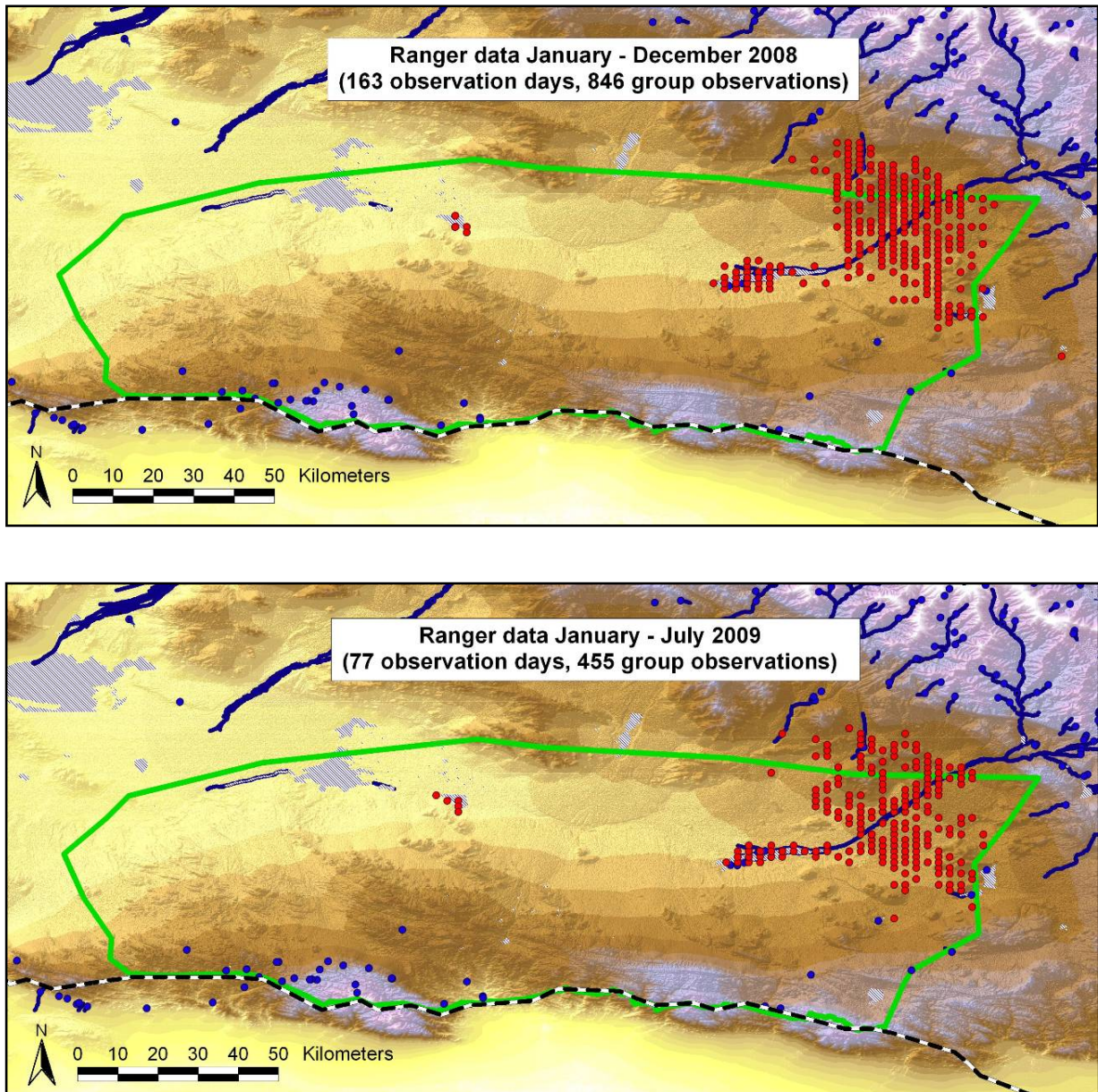


Fig. 7: P-horse locations based on ranger monitoring 2008 and 2009.

6. WEATHER CONDITION

The winter of 2008/2009 was rather long and cold in Takhin Tal (Fig. 8). In addition, a more or less continuous snow layer covered the Gobi from December until February. Average annual temperature was 2°C (July 2007-July 2008). The beginning of July brought some rain and the Gobi pastures were in moderate to good condition upon our arrival on 19 July.

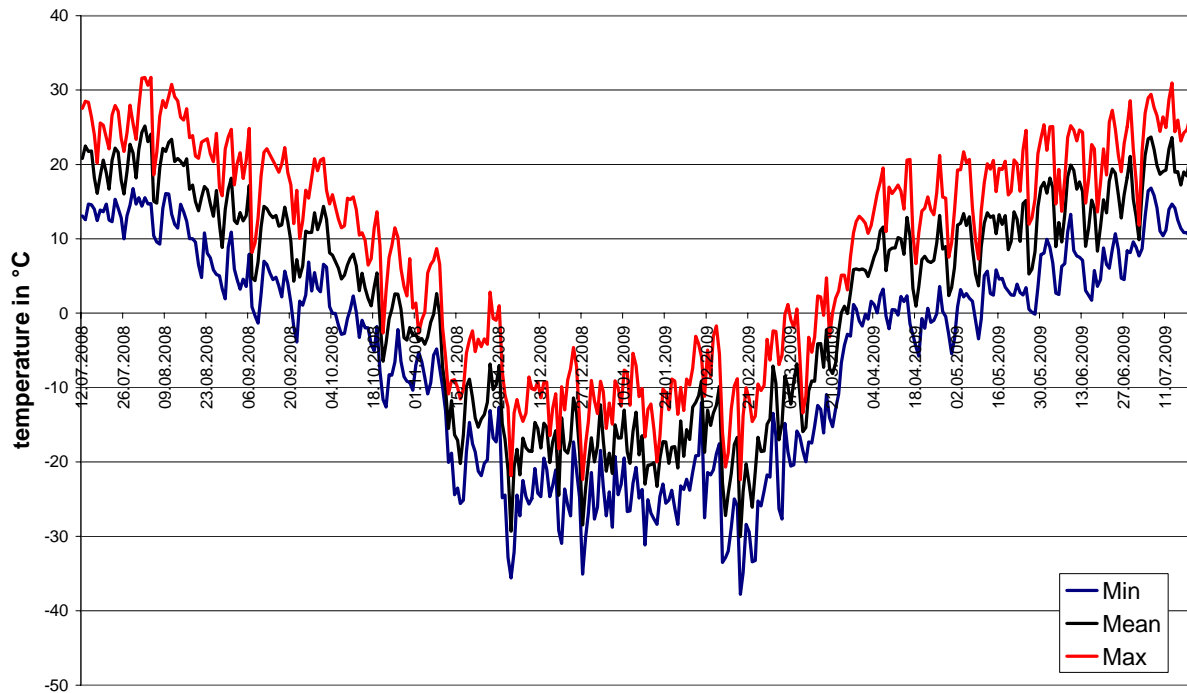


Fig. 8: Average daily temperatures in Takhin Tal from 12 July 2008 until 11 July 2009 (Hobo datalogger, Hoskin, Canada).

7. MISCELLANEOUS

7.1 North American Veterinary conference in Orlando Fl. USA (17-21 January 2009)

This spring Chris Walzer was invited to the North American Veterinary conference in Orlando Florida, USA to present several talks about the Przewalski's horse reintroduction and the wild ass research. This conference is probably the largest gathering of veterinarians in the world.

Walzer, C. *et al.* Conservation: Capture and satellite collaring of the Asiatic wild ass.

Walzer, C. *et al.* Importance of a transdisciplinary approach to Asiatic wild ass conservation.

Walzer, C. *et al.* Veterinary considerations in the reintroduction of the Przewalski's horse to Mongolia.

7.2 Zoos and Aquariums Committing to Conservation, Houston, TX, USA (23-26 January 2009)

Subsequent to the meeting in Orlando, Chris travelled to the Zoos and Aquariums Committing to Conservation conference in Houston, Texas. Here he presented a talk on behalf of the entire ITG team dealing with the revised and updated goals of the ITG.

Excerpt of the talk:

Walzer, C., P. Kaczensky, O. Ganbaatar, and C. Stauffer. Beyond success - The next 50 years for the Przewalski's horse in the Gobi region of Mongolia.

There is no consensus on when a reintroduction program is deemed successful. Clearly viewing the self-sustainable re-establishment of a population as a successful end-point is at best a short-term approach, constrained by time (today and now). Comprehensive interdisciplinary monitoring and research was and is the foundation for management strategies and decisions in this project. However, a self-sustaining financial base in conjunction with dedicated training and empowerment of local scientists and residents constitute essential prerequisites for the project's future. Defining success and thereby inferring an end-point can easily lead to complacency compromising species persistence. As others have stated the ultimate project objective must be a constantly re-evaluated state of population persistence without intervention.

7.3. Society for Conservation Biology (SCB) annual meeting in Beijing, China 11-17 July 2009

O. Ganbaatar, N. Enksaikhan, P. Kaczensky and C. Walzer attended the SCB meeting and gave talks about the research activities with Przewalski's horses and Asiatic wild asses. The meeting proved very productive as most colleagues working with Przewalski's horses and other large ungulates in Central Asia were present (Fig. 9 & 10).



Petra Kaczensky, Ralph Kuehn, Badamjav Lhagvasuren, Stephanie Pietsch, Weikang Yang, and Chris Walzer. Connectivity of the Asiatic wild ass population in the Mongolian Gobi.

Chris Walzer, Oyunsaikhan Ganbataar, and Petra Kaczensky. Living on the edge - Przewalski's horse Re-introduction into the Mongolian Gobi.

Oyunsaikhan Ganbataar, Namtar Enkhsaikhan, Namjid Altansukh, Petra Kaczensky, and Chris Walzer. Monitoring re-introduced Przewalski's horse in the Mongolian Gobi.



Fig. 9: A) O. Ganbaatar giving his talk on monitoring re-introduced P-horses, B) N. Enksaikhan in the plenary room.



*Fig. 10: P-horse experts at the SCB meeting in Beijing. Front left to right: N. **Bandi**- Hustain Nuruu NP, Mongolia; P. **Kaczensky** – University of Veterinary Medicine Vienna, Austria; L. **Boyd** - Washburn University, USA; B. **Munkhtuya** - Association pour le cheval de Przewalski TAKH, France & Mongolia; O. **Ganbaatar** – Great Gobi B SPA administration, Mongolia; back left to right: N. **Enkhsaikhan**, International Takhi Group, Mongolia; Q. **Cao** – Xinjiang Research Center for Breeding Przewalski’s horse, China; B. **Lhagvasuren**, Mongolian Academy of Science; P. **Moehlman** – IUCN Equid Specialist Group; T.Y. **Ito** - Tottori University, Japan; S. **Monfort** - Smithsonian’s National Zoo, USA; W. **Zimmermann** – Cologne Zoo, Germany; C. **Walzer** - University of Veterinary Medicine Vienna, Austria; P. **Leimgruber** – Smithsonian Institution, USA; M. **Zukosky** - Eastern Washington University, USA; D. **Hu** – Beijing Forestry University China.*

The post-conference workshop on Przewalski’s horses in Urumqi & Kalameili, China 18-21 July was cancelled due to the unrest in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region of China. We hope that our colleagues in Xinjiang are safe and that the meeting can be re-scheduled at a later time. At the SCB meeting, the Chinese, Mongolian and international research community clearly identified the need for a closer cross-border cooperation concerning wildlife conservation and research, with a special focus on wild equids.

8. RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Late 2008 / early 2009

- Kaczensky, P., V. Dresley, D. Vetter, H. Otgonbayar, A.C. Souris, and C. Walzer. *Submitted 2009*. Water use of Asiatic wild asses in the Mongolian Gobi. Exploration into the Biological Resources of Mongolia (Halle/Saale, Germany).
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