ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN · 2026 оны 9-р сарын 10

T.Batjargal: The Main Cause of Steppe Fires Is Related to Human Negligence



Прокурорын байгууллагаас Хүрээлэн байгаа орчны эсрэг гэмт хэрэг, зөрчлөөс урьдчилан сэргийлэх зорилгоор “Хамгаалсан байгаль-Бидний ирээдүй” нөлөөллийн арга хэмжээг улсын хэмжээнд эхлүүлсэн. As part of the campaign, we spoke with T.Batjargal, supervising prosecutor in charge of human rights and the protection of public interests at the Dornod Province Prosecutor's Office, about the incidence and resolution of crimes against the environment.



The Dornod Province Prosecutor's Office has conducted a study of crimes against the environment committed in the province. Could you tell us about the circumstances of this type of crime?

The Dornod Province Prosecutor's Office studied the incidence and resolution of crimes against the environment set out in Chapter 24 of the Criminal Code, as well as their causes and conditions, from 2024 through the first 8 months of 2026.

The Prosecutor's Office supervised a total of 45 crimes against the environment: 25 in 2024, 10 in 2025 and 10 in the first 8 months of 2026. Illegal logging accounts for the largest share, 44 percent of all crimes against the environment, followed by illegal harvesting of wild plants at 26 percent, setting forest and steppe fires at 18 percent, and illegal prospecting, use and extraction of minerals at 9 percent.

Of the 34 cases involving 42 persons who committed crimes against the environment, which the prosecutor indicted and referred to court, the court imposed sentences on 40 persons. Of these, 9 had previously been held criminally liable.

What types of crime are predominantly committed in Dornod Province?

Our province has 14 soums in total, and the crimes committed vary between soums depending on territorial features, natural resources and other factors. For example, of the 19 cases of illegal logging, 18 were committed in the heavily forested Bayan-Uul Soum and 1 in Bayandun Soum. Illegal logging is mostly committed in the winter months, namely December and January.

Нэн ховор, ховор ургамал, тэдгээрийн үр, эрхтнийг зохих зөвшөөрөлгүйгээр, хуульд зааснаас өөр зорилгоор түүж бэлтгэсэн гэмт хэрэг гарч байгаагаас “дэрвэгэр жиргэрүү” ховор ургамал түүх гэмт хэрэг Хөлөнбуйр, Булган сумдын нутаг дэвсгэрт 8, 9 дүгээр саруудад үйлдэгдэж байна.

Owing to the territorial features of Dornod Province, the crime of setting forest and steppe fires occurs every year. Specifically, it occurs frequently during the dry spring and autumn seasons.

What are the causes and conditions of crimes against the environment?

Crimes such as illegal prospecting, use and extraction of minerals, hunting, logging and harvesting of wild plants are committed because citizens and the public have not developed an attitude of caring for and protecting the environment, do not understand or appreciate the consequences and harm of illegal acts, lack legal awareness and knowledge, and also out of a greedy desire to make easy, quick profits.

The crime of setting forest and steppe fires, in turn, is linked to the characteristics of the steppe region and is caused by citizens' carelessness and negligence, such as leaving ashes and cigarette embers in the open without fully extinguishing them, or failing to clean grass that has accumulated in vehicle exhaust pipes.

Among crimes against the environment, forest and steppe fires are the most harmful. How much damage and harm have crimes of setting steppe fires caused in Dornod Province?

Although the crime of setting forest and steppe fires under Article 24.7, Part 1 of the Criminal Code is committed through negligence, it causes greater damage and harm than other crimes because it poses a direct threat to human life, health, property and the environment. For example, crimes against the environment investigated over the past 2 years caused MNT 2.6 billion in environmental damage. Of this, the damage from crimes of setting forest and steppe fires alone amounted to MNT 2.5 billion, or about 97 percent of the total.

How many people were investigated in connection with crimes of setting steppe fires? What liability did the court impose?

5 cases involving 5 persons connected to crimes of setting forest and steppe fires were resolved in court, and legal liability was imposed. Of these, 1 was a local resident, while 4 were transients registered in other soums or localities who were passing through the area driving vehicles.

The court decided not to impose custodial sentences on these persons, instead placing them on probation for 1–2 years, applying coercive measures obliging them to notify the competent authority in advance when changing their place of residence or work or when traveling, and ordering them to compensate the damage caused.

To serve as a lesson to citizens and for prevention purposes, here is a summary of one of these cases: In 2024, in the territory of Bayandun Soum, Dornod Province, grass accumulated in the exhaust pipe of a vehicle driven by citizen N. and threw off sparks,

causing a steppe fire that resulted in loss of human life, burned 81.1 thousand hectares, and caused MNT 2.4 billion in environmental damage and MNT 739 million in damage to citizens' property. In this case, the prosecutor issued an indictment under Article 24.7, Part 1 of the Criminal Code (negligently setting a steppe fire) and referred it to court. The court found the citizen guilty of the crime and, without imposing a custodial sentence, placed them on probation for 1 year and 5 months, applied coercive measures imposing obligations, and ordered the payment of MNT 40.9 million, equal to 2 percent of the environmental damage caused, to the Environment and Climate Fund, and MNT 99 million to the victim's legal representative as compensation for psychological harm.

What should citizens pay attention to in order to prevent forest and steppe fires?

As the above case shows, it should be borne in mind that careless acts by citizens create the risk of steppe fires.

When traveling by vehicle in rural areas, drivers often blaze new tracks off-road. This not only degrades the soil but also causes grass and plants to accumulate in vehicle exhaust pipes, where they can ignite from the heat of the exhaust and create conditions for a steppe fire.

> Ойн тухай хуульд “түймрийн аюултай үе" гэж тухайн нутаг дэвсгэрт ой, хээрийн түймэр гарах байгалийн нөхцөл бүрдсэн хуурайшилт бүхий цаг хугацаа буюу жил бүрийн 3 дугаар 20-ны өдрөөс 6 дугаар сарын 10-ны өдөр, 9 дүгээр сарын 20-ны өдрөөс 11 дүгээр сарын 10-ны өдөр хүртэлх хугацааг хэлдэг.

When traveling through the steppe during the dry spring and autumn seasons, it is necessary to ensure that vehicles are in full working order and to prevent potential risks.

Therefore, to prevent this type of crime, citizens are advised to handle fire and flammable materials with care; not to discard fire, matches, cigarettes or ashes in the open but to extinguish them completely; to fit their vehicle exhaust pipes with spark arresters during the fire danger period; to avoid driving off-road through areas with heavy grass; and to check and clean grass and plants accumulated in exhaust pipes to ensure safety.

Эх сурвалж: https://prosecutor-en.greensoft.mn/post/3648