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E.Altantsetseg: Hunting in State Specially Protected Areas Is Prohibited by Law



The prosecution service has launched the "Protected Nature — Our Future" advocacy campaign nationwide with the aim of preventing crimes and infringements against the environment and protecting public interests. The Khovd Province Prosecutor's Office has studied the incidence and resolution of crimes against the environment over the past 3 years. We spoke with E.Altantsetseg, supervising prosecutor in charge of protecting human rights and public interests at the Province Prosecutor's Office, about the incidence and resolution of the crimes predominantly committed in the province and the issues requiring attention.



How many crimes against the environment have been committed in Khovd Province? What types of crime are predominantly committed?

Khovd Province is a territory endowed with natural beauty and rich mineral resources. In particular, it is very rich in fauna and is home to many rare and very rare animals.

Owing to the characteristics of its territory, crimes against the environment are not decreasing. Crimes against the environment account for about 5 percent of all crimes.

Over the past 3 years, the Khovd Province Prosecutor's Office has supervised 79 cases of crimes against the environment. In 2026 alone, it supervised 36 cases, an increase of 80 percent over the previous year. Crimes of illegal exploration, use and extraction of minerals and illegal hunting account for 90 percent of all crimes against the environment.

More than 40 percent of crimes against the environment are crimes of illegal hunting. What are the causes and conditions for this type of crime?

Khovd Province has distinctive geographical features, and accordingly it is home to many rare wild animals. Its diverse ecological environments, including the high Altai mountains, Gobi steppe, rivers, lakes and wetlands, provide habitats for mountain and steppe animals such as argali, ibex, black-tailed gazelle and wild boar, as well as for waterfowl, migratory birds and fish species.

> Over the past 3 years, 32 crimes of illegal hunting have been registered in Khovd Province. Of these, the crimes involved the hunting of the following rare animals: wild boar in 9 cases, Altai osman fish in 6, argali in 5, black-tailed gazelle in 4, Altai snowcock in 3, ibex in 2, pelican in 1, greylag goose in 1 and marmot in 1.

Citizens are being investigated in connection with this crime for hunting animals included in the lists of very rare and rare animals and subsequently storing and transporting their meat and raw materials, selling them to others or buying them. In most cases, illegal hunting is committed for household needs or for profit.

In addition, limited awareness of which animals are included in the lists of very rare and rare animals, and limited understanding of and information about the legal liability for selling the organs and body parts of these animals, the consequences of the crime and the harm caused to nature and the ecology, contribute to the occurrence of these crimes.

Khovd Province has many state specially protected areas. How often does illegal hunting occur in these areas? What legal liability is imposed?

Most crimes of illegal hunting were committed in state specially protected areas. The state specially protected areas of Khovd Province include the Khar-Us Lake area state specially protected area, the Khukh Serkh Range Strictly Protected Area, the Tsambagarav Mountain, Myangan Ugalzat and Munkhkhairkhan Mountain National Parks, and the Sharga Mankhan, Altan Khukhii, Sutai Khairkhan and Bulgan River Nature Reserves.

In state specially protected areas, hunting without a permit not only rare animals but also common and widespread animals such as Mongolian gazelle and marmot constitutes the crime of illegal hunting under Article 24.5 of the Criminal Code.

In the permitted zones of specially protected areas, the hunting of animals is allowed for the purposes of regulating herd structure, reintroduction and research, as well as for eliminating sources of infectious disease.

> There are cases of citizens hunting in state specially protected areas and hunting animals included in the lists of rare and very rare animals, such as wild boar, argali and ibex. Under the Criminal Code, the crime of illegal hunting is punishable by a fine of 5.4 to 40 million MNT, restriction of freedom of movement for 1 to 5 years, or imprisonment for 1 to 8 years.

Furthermore, in addition to criminal liability, the law provides that, in accordance with the Law on Environmental Protection and the Law on Fauna, damage caused to fauna shall be calculated and recovered in a monetary amount equal to twice the ecological and economic value of the animal concerned, and that weapons and technical equipment used in committing the crime shall be confiscated as state revenue.

To mention, as a warning, one case in which the Province Prosecutor's Office issued an indictment and had it resolved in court: in November 2025, one wild boar and one argali, both included in the list of rare animals, were illegally hunted with a firearm without a permit in the "Tsagaangol" state specially protected area in Buyant soum, Khovd Province. The Province Prosecutor's Office issued an indictment in the case and transferred it to court.

> The court sentenced the offender to a fine of 7 million MNT, ordered the recovery of 55.7 million MNT for the damage caused to the environment, to be paid to the Environment

> and Climate Fund, and ordered the recovery of 4 million MNT, the value of the vehicle used to commit the crime, as state revenue.

Citizens mostly travel to specially protected areas for tourism purposes. In doing so, they should bear in mind that no wild animals of any kind may be hunted illegally in those areas.

How many cases of crimes against the environment have been resolved in court?

The Khovd Province Prosecutor's Office issued indictments in 29 cases involving 56 persons who committed crimes against the environment and transferred them to court for resolution. The court sentenced 21 persons to fines, placed 20 persons on probation without imposing imprisonment, sentenced 2 persons to restriction of freedom of movement and sentenced 1 person to community service. Of the citizens involved in these crimes, 66 percent had no regular employment.

Crimes against the environment, such as illegal hunting, illegal logging and illegal exploration and extraction of minerals, cause harm and damage to the environment.

In order to ensure compensation for damage caused by crimes against the environment, the elimination of their harmful consequences and the enforcement of coercive measures of confiscation of property and income, asset protection measures were taken during inquiry and investigation by seizing 21 items of equipment and vehicles worth 551.9 million MNT and restricting their transfer, and the court has ordered items, assets and income worth 149.3 million MNT to be confiscated as state revenue.

What measures is the Prosecutor's Office taking to reduce and prevent crimes against the environment?

The Khovd Province Prosecutor's Office is focusing on reducing and preventing crimes and infringements against the environment. In order to eliminate the causes and conditions contributing to such crimes and infringements, prosecutor's notices were issued and delivered to the Governor of Khovd Province and the Governor of Jargalant soum.

In addition, we work with local media outlets to provide information regularly in order to raise citizens' awareness and knowledge of caring for and protecting nature and the environment and to explain the legal consequences. We also regularly inform citizens by placing handbooks and posters on preventing crimes against the environment, such as illegal hunting and the illegal gathering of wild plants, on the information boards of government and non-governmental organizations and of commercial and service centres frequented by the public.

Finally, I would like to emphasize that citizen participation is very important in reducing crimes against the environment. I call on citizens not to engage in illegal hunting, to protect rare animals, to report illegal acts against the environment, to develop an environmentally friendly attitude and to be responsible citizens who care for the environment.

Эх сурвалж: https://prosecutor-en.greensoft.mn/post/3664