



Sihlwald and Gattikon, May 17th 2021

To the members of the
ITG - International Takhi Group

Minutes of the General Assembly of the ITG for the year 2020

Tuesday, May 4th 2021, 6:10 — 7:15 pm by zoom and at Hotel Amaris, Tannwaldstrasse 34,
4600 Olten

Present: Reinhard Schnidrig, Christian Stauffer, Rebekka Blumer Anita Fahrni, Ruth Baumgartner.

Present by Zoom: Sven Hoffmann, Jaroslav Simek, Irena Valaskova (Prague Zoo),

Excused: Honorary President Thomas Pfisterer, Karin Hindenlang, O. Ganbaatar, Thomas Rothlin (Wildpark Bruderhaus Winterthur) and Jörg Beckmann (Zoo Nuremberg)

President Reinhard Schnidrig welcomes the members of the International Takhi Group and is pleased that despite the current Corona pandemic, the General Assembly of ITG can be carried out, albeit partially by zoom.

The agenda of the General Assembly of the ITG for the year 2020 is accepted.

1. Approval of the minutes

The minutes of the General Assembly of the ITG of August 10th, 2020 concerning the year 2019 are accepted.

The president briefly reiterates important events in 2019, which are listed in the minutes of the General Assembly 2020:

- The Park enlargement - is a big success of the doubling in size of the Great Gobi B Reserve, which was approved by the Great Khural, the Parliament of Mongolia on May 2, 2019.
- The Transport - in spring when Prague Zoo again transported 3 takhi to Mongolia.
- The Renovation and modernization of the National Park House - the Installation in particular by bringing running water into the house for the kitchen as well as for showers and toilets are finished.
- The CAMI workshop in Ulanbaatar - the president took part
- The ITG workshop – took place at the beginning of the year

2. Annual report 2020 of the President

The President reports from his detailed annual report (see annex)-

Then the President goes through the annual report 2020 (see Annex), which is divided into the foreword and 5 chapters. Selected topics are briefly listed as follows:



- **Foreword with important topics from the last year:**

- In 2020 the Takhi number cracked the 300 mark. This is a huge success, and yet the future of this precious wild animal will remain precarious until it is sufficiently resilient to the greatest risks. These include water shortages and snowstorms, but also overgrazing and the transmission of pathogens through domesticated grazing animals. The rare primeval wild horse still needs us conservationists in order to recognize such dangers in good time and to develop strategies against them. And to implement this, it takes our commitment and financial resources.

- **The horse and its habitat:**

- At the end of 2020, 320 takhi were living in the reserve. The 300th takhi was born in Great Gobi B on June 11, 2020. The mother of the newborn foal is called Dorothee. Mare Dorothee was one of the precious animals that were born in the Great Gobi B (GGB) in the first few years after the resettlement began. It is named after the honorary member of the ITG, Dorothee Stamm.
- The expected last transport of another 4 wild horses from Europe, again organized by Prague Zoo, had to be canceled due to the global coronavirus pandemic and the associated travel restrictions.
- After the Mongolian parliament approved the expansion of the Great Gobi B protected area to 18,000 qm² in May 2019, its border line has now been re-marked and 20 information boards have been installed.
- A larger protected area also requires more staff to carry out the tasks at hand. In the second quarter of 2020, the administration of the GGB hired fourteen additional rangers on a fixed-term basis. The fact that these employment relationships were renewed in 2021 is a positive signal for the importance of the GGB within the Ministry of Environment and Tourism.
- Training and further education of the rangers were supported by the ministry, the administration of the GGB and the ITG office in Ulaanbaatar.

- **Cooperation with politics and research:**

- The contract with the Ministry of Environment and Tourism in Mongolia and the regular exchange with the Mongolian authorities are very important for the work of ITG in Mongolia. The new contract for 10 years with the Ministry MET has been signed. This is the 4th contract, with the last contracts having shorter terms. It is noticeable that, in contrast to previous contracts, the ITG has less say (as, for example, previously in the selection of the director of Gobi B) and that Mongolia, in particular the Ministry is taking on more and more responsibility, which we consider positive in order to get closer to the goal of handing over the project to Mongolia.
- At the end of January 2020, the ITG again organized a workshop in Switzerland on the implementation of the management plan in the GGB protected area, in the presence of four people from the Ministry of Environment and Tourism of Mongolia and the director of the protected area.



- Thanks to virtual contact, important topics could be discussed timely with all partners in Mongolia and worldwide despite the corona pandemic.
- The research priorities developed at the 2017 ITG workshop were in principle also pursued in 2020. The study to improve water management in cooperation with the University of Khovd and the GGB administration was in full swing. In addition to three longer field work assignments, interviews were conducted with herders and three spring catchments were protected.
- Lena Michler worked on the evaluations for the study "Strategies for the cooperation of local herders and the protected area management of the Great Gobi B". However, field research was unfortunately not possible in the 2020 season. This makes the cooperation with the herders and their participation all the more important.
- The research project on hybridization, has come to a standstill due to the Corona pandemic, as work in the laboratory was only possible to a limited extent. The large ungulate point count also had to be postponed for a year or two.
- **Informing the public:**
 - Our website www.savethewildhorse.org, information brochures and the Takhi-Post in German, English and Mongolian provide information about the activities of the ITG association. The website was completely revised and relaunched in 2020.
 - In order to be able to organize the necessary funds to support wild horse conservation even in the difficult times of the pandemic, Peter Kistler produced an extra issue of the Takhi-Post in addition to the two regular brochures. A big thanks goes to Peter Kistler for his very well written brochures.
 - Despite the restrictions caused by the Corona pandemic, our team in Ulaanbaatar was committed to promoting environmental awareness. 10'000 copies of the children's book "Tuya's Trip" written by Anita Fahrni, ITG board member, were distributed to schools in UB and western Mongolia. In the meantime, another book on nature conservation and protected areas has been published.
- **The association ITG**
 - At the end of 2020, the ITG association consists of four organizations (Wildnispark Zürich Langenberg; Wildpark Bruderhaus Winterthur; Prague Zoo; Nuremberg Zoo) and ten natural persons, who also form the board of directors (Reinhard Schnidrig, president; Christian Stauffer, vice president; Rebekka Blumer, treasurer; Ruth Baumgartner, Actuary; Sven Hoffmann, Legal Advisor; Anita Fahrni, Associate; Karin Hindenlang, Associate; Miroslav Bobek, Representative of Zoo Prague; Jaroslav Simek, Representative of Zoo Prague; Lundeg Purevsuren, Representative of the Mongolian Government as Ambassador of Mongolia to Switzerland). The ITG Honorary President, Thomas Pfisterer, is invited to all board meetings as a guest.
 - The ITG office in Ulanbaatar is led by Batsukh Jamiyandorj as dedicated Executive Director. Batsukh is supported by Dalaitseren Sukhbaatar as Research Assistant in a 50% stint, Khandam Tserentjav for Marketing (until July 2020) and since January 2021 by Yondon Gansukh as Research Associate.
 - On the occasion of a workshop, two meetings and various discussions in working groups, the 2020 Board dealt with the following topics, among others:



- Cooperation with the political authorities and the relevant institutions of the state and the Aimags in Mongolia;
- Renewal of the cooperation agreement with the Ministry of Environment and Tourism of Mongolia;
- Implementation of the management plan for the protected area in the Gobi;
- Monitoring of the free-ranging Takhi population in the Gobi;
- Research priorities and research support, particularly in the areas of water management and Takhi domestic horse hybridization;
- Establishment of a socio-economic project with nomads in the vicinity of the protected area;
- Cooperation with other reintroduction projects in Mongolia;
- Maintenance and further development of the infrastructure in the protected area in the Gobi;
- Further development of the ITG office and its activities in Ulaanbaatar.

- **Finances:**

- Thanks to membership fees, donations and support from various foundations - Jean-Pierre and Sonja Siegfried Foundation, the Temperatio Foundation and a foundation in Zurich, as well as the The Friends - funds could be invested in the management of the protected area, the monitoring of the takhi and in research.

The ITG board accepts the annual report of the president by acclamation.

3. Annual financial report 2020

Invoice 2020:

Details are presented in the slides of the Annual General Assembly (see Annex). The comparison of 2020 and 2019 is presented.

ITG received contributions from members, donations including a substantial donation by one foundation and the support of foundations for a total income of CHF 189'076.05.

Expenses were lower than in the previous year due to the Corona pandemic. At the end of the fiscal year there was a nice profit of CHF 75'166.50. Details of expenses see Annex.

A big thank you goes to Karin Hindenlang, executive director of the Langenberg Wilderness Park for covering the costs of the 2020 workshop. A big thank also goes to Mirjam Wünsch, Estelle Paratte and Marie Herment for their great work in creating the new website of the ITG, which they did free of charge.

The report of the auditor Peter Haller is available.

Budget 2020:

Details are presented to the Annual General Assembly (see Annex):

Restrictions had to be made in the 2020 budget, as the uncertainty in the current corona situation is likely to lead to lower revenue and therefore probably not all



desired expenditures can be realized. In addition, some projects had to be postponed to 2021. 3 items are specifically mentioned, a) and b) are not financed yet:

a) Infrastructure costs and costs for the new administration center with CHF 33'180

b) research with point count with CHF 77'700 (which already has to be postponed from 2020 to 2021 and possibly further to 2022).

The costs for the socio-economic project for Lena Michler with CHF 48'000 are financed by a donator.

Overall, it is not entirely clear what will actually be implemented, as the Corona pandemic still exists.

The financial report and the balance of 2020, based on the auditory report by Peter Haller Treuhand AG from April 26th 2021 (Quote last sentence of the report: "Based on our review, nothing has come to our attention that causes us to believe that the financial statements are not in accordance with Swiss law and the company's articles of incorporation.") as well as the budget for 2021 are unanimously accepted and the great work of Rebekka Blumer is honored with acclamation.

4. Granting discharge to the ITG Board

The ITG board unanimously is granted discharge.

5. Budget and Approval of the activities 2021

2 major expenses are not yet funded, but they are included in the activity list.

- 1) Point count
- 2) Blue print planning that ITG was asked to support. ITG has agreed to finance this planning.

Details of the activity schedule are presented on the slides of the Annual General Assembly in the Annex. Since the year has long since begun, many activities are already underway. The president goes through the whole list of activities and points out some very important items:

- On item "renewal of agreement between ITG and MET" RS comments that ITG will not transfer any money as long as the contract is not signed.
- In addition, a strategy working group was formed, which aims to develop the strategy by 2030 to be able to hand over the project to Mongolia.
- A master plan for the new administration center was created. Meetings are held on a regular basis. Ganbaa, Batsukh, Rangers and Gansukh also have meetings in between the meetings with all stakeholders. Franz Michler (architect) has created a house master plan and a campus master plan each. The next step now is the tendering of the Blue Print Plan. This is done in 2 steps by first putting the plan into a form that can be confirmed by MET. Once the plan is approved, detailed design will be made and completed by the end of 2021. The construction will start in 2022.

The Covid pandemic is preventing us from doing some activities. This also affects the planned transport and meetings in Mongolia.



ITG participated in a conservation projects network international. ITG had a presentation there. Present were the President, Lena Michler and Ganbaa. There were some visitors. ITG has done one event. The aim is to find sponsors.

Prague Zoo has no amendments concerning the transport and other activities.

The activities are unanimously accepted

6. Agreement on the annual fee 2021 (CHF 500.00 / Euro 500.00)

The ITG board unanimously accepts the annual fee of CHF 500.00 / Euro 500.00 for zoos and organizations.

7. Elections

7.1 Re-election of the ITG – Board members.

7.2 Re-election of the ITG-President Reinhard Schnidrig

7.3 Re-election of the research officer Christian Stauffer

7.4 Re-election of the auditing agency Peter Haller Treuhand AG

All re-elections are confirmed. The president and the research officer Christian Stauffer are honored with applause.

8. Applications / requests from members

No applications have been submitted.

9. Varia

9.1 Report on latest news from Takhin tal:

Christian Stauffer:

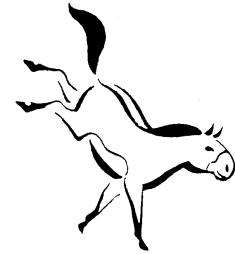
- There is a strong pressure from domestic animals on the pasture.
- High mortality was observed, especially among foals.
- 94 pregnant mares were observed.
- Follow up of deaths of Takhi was established with Prof. Dr. Jean-Michel Hatt. It is a very important topic. Meetings are well underway.
- The whole capacity building has started well under the leadership of Rebekka Blumer. MET and GGB need to work together and must be consensual. This has also started well.

Reinhard Schnidrig:

- He has a good impression of Gansukh (KFW) who appreciates and supports ITG's approach.

Rebekka Blumer:

- Due to the Covid pandemic, the office is working in homeoffice.



- Yondon, brings in the research expertise, is focused on the national Takhi program and on biodiversity.
- Batsukh is heavily involved in the administration center, working on grants, she received a negative decision on culture input from SDC; however, SDC has made many positive decisions in favor of ITG in the past.
- Lena Michler could then name 4 organizations that can be contacted instead of SDC; overall it should be noted here that the cooperation of Lena Michler both with the Board and with the office in UB runs very well and is very fruitful.

Sven Hofmann:

- Ganbaa reported that the gasoline is 50% more expensive; this is a political issue, because the ministry is responsible for such expenses. A strategic discussion is needed, as it is not a solution if ITG steps in and starts paying the difference.

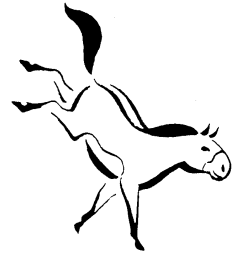
Rebekka Blumer adds: Some employees are currently stuck under quarantine due to Covid and cannot return to Takhin Tal. This means that fewer trips will be made. There needs to be a good clarification of the situation and then a decision by the Board on how to proceed.

9.2 The next General Assembly takes place on May 10th 2022.

For the minutes of the ITG - International Takhi Group

Reinhard Schnidrig
President of the ITG

Ruth Baumgartner
Actuary of the ITG



Appendix

- Annual Report in German (see www.savethewildhorse.org)
- Annual Report in English (will be published on www.savethewildhorse.org)
- Slides General Assembly May 2021 (see separate insert)



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