



Sihlwald and Gattikon, May 12th 2022

To the members of the
ITG - International Takhi Group

Minutes of the General Assembly of the ITG for the year 2021

Tuesday, May 10th 2022, 6:05 — 7:00 pm by zoom and at Bahnhof Buffet Olten, Room Hilari, 4600 Olten

Present: Reinhard Schnidrig, Christian Stauffer, Rebekka Blumer, Anita Fahrni, Honorary President Thomas Pfisterer, Ruth Baumgartner, Klaus Robin (Guest)

Present by Zoom: Franziska Peter (Guest) and Maximilian Benataf (Zoo Berlin)

Excused: Karin Hindenlang, Sven Hofmann, O. Ganbaatar, Jörg Beckmann (Zoo Nuremberg), Prague Zoo

President Reinhard Schnidrig welcomes the members of the International Takhi Group, especially the Honorary President Thomas Pfisterer and is pleased about the presence of Franziska Peter and Klaus Robin as guests. Franziska Peter actually is working in Val Müstair in Switzerland and is willing to reflect on a closer engagement for ITG. Klaus Robin, former director of the Swiss National Park and co-founder of the organization for the conservation of the bearded vulture will give a presentation on this topic after the meetings of the General Assembly (GA) and of the Friends of the Takhi.

The agenda of the General Assembly of the ITG for the year 2021 is accepted.

1. Approval of the minutes

The minutes of the General Assembly of the ITG of May 17th, 2021 concerning the year 2020 are accepted.

2. Annual report 2021 of the President

The President goes through his annual report 2021 (see www.savethewildhorse.org), which is divided into the foreword and 5 chapters. Selected topics are briefly listed as follows:

– Foreword with important topic from the last year:

- The main topic concerns the new administration building. The planning, which was initiated in the fall of 2020, was continued and completed successfully in 2021. Recently the plans were accepted by all important institutions, the Ministry, the local authorities and the German Development Bank (KfW), which provides the main funding. Thanks are due to Lena Michler and her father Franz Michler, who, as an



architect, provided expert support for the planning with his office and sponsored the master plan. The detailed planning was contracted out by ITG. The costs for this can be seen in the presentation of the finances (see item 3).

– **The horse and its habitat:**

- At the end of 2021 350 takhi were living in the GGB-reserve. The goal of around 1000 reproductively active takhi is still a long way off. The current situation, however, gives reason for hope that this goal can be reached within a few years. However, the current and future population requires a change in the method of monitoring for takhi and other wildlife species. In the case of the takhi, it is no longer the individuals but the harems that should be recorded.

– **Cooperation with political authorities and research:**

- Despite the difficult times (Covid pandemic), a lot of networking has been done, intensive and constant contacts with the ITG office in UB and the Ministry were maintained as well as with the individual research projects. Also with the two other takhi reintroduction projects (Hustai Nuruu and Khomintal) there was active contact through the ITG office in UB.
- The water monitoring project was successfully continued and completed. 10 water sources were protected and provided with information boards and a map with water points of the GGB was created.
- The doctoral thesis of Lena Michler is progressing well. The interface that Lena Michler has in her work between nomads, ecology and species conservation is valuable and will now be elaborated in detail in socio-economic projects with the aim of a win-win situation for all.

– **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 by Lena Michler and Mirjam Wuersch. They deserve a big thank-you for this immense work.
- Again with a lot of competence and spirit, three issues of Takhi Post in 2021 were produced by Peter Kistler and Rebekka Blumer, on the topics of climate change, the new administration building in the Gobi, as well as the future of the biosphere reserve Gobi B. And recently the Takhi Post was produced for the 30th anniversary of the reintroduction project, again competently thought through and narrated by Peter Kistler on the state of the project and looking ahead. A great job - heartfelt thanks!

– **The association ITG**

- From the minutes of the board meetings, it can be seen over time that many activities accompany the ITG over the years, such as the political cooperation with the ministry and the local aimags as well as the further development and implementation of the



management plan. Other projects arise ad hoc and recently the strategy 2022 - 2030 was developed, to be adopted in 2023. It aims to prepare ITG to hand over the project to the Mongolian authorities in the coming decade.

- At the end of 2021, the ITG association consists of four organizations (Wildnispark Zürich Langenberg; Wildpark Bruderhaus Winterthur; Prague Zoo; Nuremberg Zoo) and ten individual personalities, who also form the board (Reinhard Schnidrig, president; Christian Stauffer, vice president; Rebekka Blumer, treasurer; Ruth Baumgartner, Actuary; Sven Hoffmann, Legal Advisor; Anita Fahrni, Associate; Karin Hindenlang, representative of the Wildnispark Zürich Langenberg; 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 and by Yondon Gansukh as Research Associate.
- In a workshop, three meetings and various discussions in working groups, the Board dealt in 2021 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;
 - Development of a new ITG strategy 2022 – 2030;
 - 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 pasture ecology, water management and Takhi - domestic horse hybridization;
 - Cooperation with other Takhi reintroduction projects in Mongolia;
 - Maintenance and further development of the infrastructure in the protected area in the Gobi;
 - Develop the know-how and capacity of the Gobi B Protected Area staff;
 - Further development of the of the ITG office and its activities in Ulaanbaatar.
- **Finances:**
 - In 2021, income of CHF 166'008.00 was generated through contributions from members, donations and support from foundations. Considerable contributions were received from the Jean-Pierre and Sonja Siegfried Foundation, the Temperatio Foundation and a foundation in Zurich. The Friends of the Takhi was able to make a substantial contribution in favor of the ITG.
 - The Friends of the Takhi was able to make a substantial contribution of CHF 38'000 in favor of the ITG.
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- The President thanks the Board of the ITG and in particular Rebekka Blumer and Christian Stauffer for the fact that despite the difficult time during the Covid pandemic, the projects and the funding could be continued successfully, so that the ITG can remain active today and proceed as planned.

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

3. Annual financial report 2021

Accounts 2021:

The comparison of 2021 and 2020 is presented. Details are presented to the Annual General Assembly (see www.savethewildhorse.org).

At the end of 2021, cash and cash equivalents amounted to CHF 115'383.32. ITG received contributions from members, donations including a substantial donation by one foundation and the support of foundations for a total income of CHF 166'008.00.

Expenditure amounted to CHF 174'018.80. At the end of the fiscal year there was a loss of CHF 9910.84.

The major differences compared to the previous year can be seen in the expenses for infrastructure and research. The amount for infrastructure includes mainly the implementation of the planning in Mongolia for the new administration building. In research, higher expenses resulted in particular from the sustainable cashmere project and the sustainable tourism project.

The report of the auditor Peter Haller is available and published on the website. Rebekka Blumer reads out the report of Peter Haller Treuhand AG, which prepares the bookings based on the submitted vouchers as well as the report. The ITG is responsible for the annual financial statements.

The President explicitly thanks Rebekka Blumer for her great and reliable work.

- The 2021 accounts and the report are proposed to the GA for acceptance and discharge of the Board. Acceptance and discharge are unanimous.

Budget 2022 (see www.savethewildhorse.org):

Details are presented to the Annual General Assembly:

This budget was prepared by Rebekka Blumer and discussed by the Board of ITG.

Details are presented to the Annual General Assembly:

Expected income: CHF 163'620.00.

Projected expenses: 282' 630.00. Infrastructure with renovation works on the national park house in Takhin tal represent a larger amount. The research with the point count, the costs for the socio-economic project, the bird monitoring and the disease monitoring represent a large part of the expenses. The realization of the projects depends on their importance and the available funds.



The minus results from the fact that the projects are decided, but the money for them has not yet been received or organised. Nevertheless, the projects will only be conducted if the necessary funds will be available.

Rebekka Blumer asks the GA for ideas how to organize more funds in order to securely finance the planned projects. Klaus Robin recommends to contact birdlife as well as the Vogewarte Sempach regarding the bird monitoring project.

The budget for 2022 is noted as presented and the enormous 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 2022

- 07-08 January: Workshop with ITG-Board; Batsukh, Yondon, Dalaitseren (ITG MN); Ganbaatar (GGB SPA); Boldbaatar, Enkhgerel (MET); Petra Kaczensky (Research Council); Lena Michler in Switzerland and via Zoom: This event is very valuable because of the direct exchange on various topics and for mutual understanding.
- Renewal of agreement between ITG and MET: There has been a contract with the Ministry of Environment and Tourism for 20 years, which regulates the responsibilities and competences and has to be renewed every 10 years.
- Finalize architectural design of new administration building located in Altai soum – support tender process where requested: The planning has been fully accepted and the tender for the construction work is pending. Unfortunately, there is still friction between the Aimag Khovd (location of the new administration center) and Gobi Altai (location of the old national park house) concerning the location of the administration and the location of the management. But the Ministry, KFW and ITG agree that there must be a new location for administration and management. However, the final decision of the new minister is still pending. The tenders must be international. Therefore, it is uncertain whether the “foundation stone” to the new house can be laid this year.
- Finalize genetic study: should be completed in 2022
- Point-count
- Zoning of the entire park (follow-up work due to enlargement): New central zone and less strictly protected zones.
- Socio-economic feasibility work: sustainable cashmere und eco.tourism projects
- Launch Takhi disease monitoring program (Veterinary Workshop): new planning is underway
- Defining ITG strategy for 2023-2030 including operational structure of foundation
- 30th Anniversary
 - Takhi Post special edition: May
 - Young researcher programme: Jan – June
 - Press conference in UB: 05 June



- Anniversary Wildpark Bruderhaus: 18/19 June
- Anniversary Wildnispark Langenberg: 26 June
- Launch National Takhi Programme; reception & scientific conference: August
- Naadam in Bij: August
- Veterinary Workshop: September

The activities are unanimously accepted.

6. Agreement on the annual fee 2022 (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

No elections are due.

8. Applications / requests from members

The request for an increase in membership dues was formally submitted late and will be scheduled for GA 2023.

9. Varia

There are no applications for varia.

The report on latest news from Takhin Tal will be presented on the occasion of the subsequent GA Friends of the Takhi.

The next General Assembly takes place on Tuesday May 9, 2023.

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 (see www.savethewildhorse.org)
- Slides General Assembly May 2022 (see www.savethewildhorse.org)