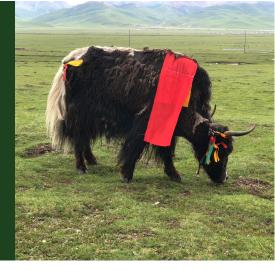# Strengthening incentives for improved grassland management in China and Mongolia

Key details

Location
China, Mongolia

Duration
Start Sep 2015   **End** Dec 2020

Budget   AUD 1,799,646

Commissioned organisation
The University of Queensland

Partners
Australian National University; Charles Sturt University; Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences; CSIRO Ecosystem Sciences; Inner Mongolia Agricultural University; Ministry of Food and Agriculture of Mongolia; Ministry of Science and Technology; Mongolia University of Life Sciences

Project Leader
Colin Brown - University of Queensland

ACIAR Research Program Manager
Dr Anna Okello

Program   Livestock Systems

Project code   ADP/2012/107

Overview

This project improved grassland management practices and pastoral livestock systems in China and Mongolia through research into the incentives driving these systems and the design of incentive-based policies.

China and Mongolia have over 520 million ha of inter-connected grasslands that support the livelihoods of more than 5 million low-income pastoral households. These grasslands provide various ecosystem services, from improving air and water quality to acting as a carbon sink.

Growing concerns over the condition of these grasslands have prompted the Chinese government to invest in grassland-management programmes and grassland incentive payment schemes. In Mongolia,

policy-makers, concerned about the resilience of herders and grasslands to adverse climatic events, seek information on the management systems and the impact of alternative policy and institutional settings needed to sustain grasslands and pastoral livelihoods.

The similarities and contrasts between the two countries provide a larger context in which to test ideas and principles for managing grasslands and improving pastoral livelihoods that have wider application throughout east and central Asia.

Project outcomes

- Greater capacity to undertake grassland research in China, Mongolia and Australia thanks to the cross-fertilisation and exchange of ideas among grassland scientists from diverse disciplinary backgrounds in all three countries.

- Strengthening of inter-disciplinary skills and capacity in China and Mongolia, and links between biophysical and economic capacity.

- Contributions towards advancing ecosystems service research and its application to some of China's most important natural resource-management issues.

- Socioeconomic benefits for communities through identification of improved livestock/grazing systems and market channels.

- Indirect trade and other benefits to Australia.

- Positive impact of improved grasslands and livestock and grazing systems on the environment and other ecosystem services, including those related to wind and soil erosion, water resources, biodiversity and greenhouse gas emissions.