Challenge Report
Team Sea B

Background
Challenge Report
Presentation
Team Members
The 20th ASEF Summer University (ASEFSU20) was held from 15 August – 3 September 2016 across China, Mongolia and the Russian Federation on the theme “Gateways to Asia and Europe: Connectivity by Land, Sea and Air”. 47 participants representing 45 ASEAN partner countries joined the 3 week educational journey and solved real-life challenge scenarios on the topics of connectivity and transportation linked with 4 major transportation modes: 1) road, 2) rail, 3) maritime, and 4) air.

The route included Beijing, Harbin, Vladivostok, Chita, Irkutsk and Ulaanbaatar, and each of the 6 cities visited focused on a different facet of connectivity. Participants attended lectures, trainings and workshops on the specific topic and also simultaneously explored it hands-on through site visits to historically important locations, transportation hubs and commercial centres.

The participants, carefully chosen from 8,222 applicants, developed business plans, mobile applications, social media strategies, policy briefs and promotional materials on the 9 following challenges:

- Safe transportation of cultural artifacts
- Accessibility to public transport for physically disabled people
- Green logistics
- Spread of infectious diseases through increased air traffic
- Security at railways
- Sustainable ecotourism
- Frameworks on the management of autonomous underwater vehicles
- Combat of human trafficking at major transportation hubs
- Enhancing the visibility of the ASEM Transportation Ministers’ Meeting (ASEM TMM).

Organised by the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), the ASEFSU20 journey was made possible due to the joint efforts of many partners involved in this project: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, Beijing Jiaotong University, Harbin Institute of Technology, Vladivostok State University of Economics and Service, Transbaikal State University, Irkutsk State University, Mongolian Youth Federation and Ulaanbaatar Railway Joint Venture Company. The project was also supported by the Far Eastern Federal University, Russian Railway Tours, UNICEF, Heiko Seibel Fotographie, Fraport AG, Subnero, Safehouse Foundation, Chester Beatty Library, the European Network on Independent Living among many others.
Challenge
Team Sea B

#sea #biodiversity #connectivity
A pioneer in global conservation initiatives, the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) has been “protecting the future of nature” for over 50 years. It has made its mark in 100 countries and has close to 5 million supporters globally. WWF works on issues concerning climate, food, fresh water bodies, oceans and wildlife. It serves to “conserve nature and reduce the most pressing threats to the diversity of life on earth”.

Combat the environmental degradation at Lake Baikal arising from an increase in human connectivity: tourism.

#sea #biodiversity #connectivity
Lake Baikal is the world’s oldest and deepest freshwater lake. The 3.15 million-ha lake is situated in the south-eastern part of Siberia, and contains 20% of the world’s total unfrozen fresh water. (UNESCO, “Lake Baikal.”) Its pristine waters are home to a plethora of endemic flora and fauna and the lake houses 27 islands, most of which are uninhabited. (“Lake Baikal – World’s Deepest Lake.”)

As a UNESCO World Heritage Site, it is no wonder that the Lake Baikal, also known as the “Galapagos of Russia”, attracts throngs of tourists annually. In 2010, it hosted nearly half a million tourists, a 60% increment from the previous year. (Liesowska, “Stark warning about the impact of rising numbers of tourists polluting pristine waters of Baikal,” The Siberian Times.) Whilst most tourism was domestic, the number of global tourists has also risen significantly and hit 147,000 in 2014, an 85.5% increment from the preceding year. (Golovina, “Chinese tourists eager to visit Baikal,” Russian Beyond the Headlines.) The increments in both domestic and global tourists have benefited the economy of the region significantly. The travel and tourism industry alone generated 6.0% of Russia’s GDP in 2013. (“Benchmarking Travel & Tourism in Russia: GDP,” World Travel & Tourism Council.)

However, the increase in tourism in the region also poses a threat to the environment and the diaspora of the flora and fauna in Lake Baikal. It has caused the amount of waste bilge, oily and faecal waters to mushroom, through for example irresponsible littering of plastic materials. (Liesowska.) The implications are dire. The rampant pollution might lead to an extinction of native seals and fish. (“Annual Report 2014/2015,” Global Nature Fund.) Moreover, the frequent, unregulated tourist boats cause emissions that compromise the air quality. (“Lake Baikal,” Pacific Environment.)

The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) serves to preserve the environment, flora and fauna at the Lake Baikal with sustainable measures. These measures ensure that there is a balanced coexistence between tourist visits – an illustration of increased human connectivity – and environmental protection.

Your Mission: Your mission is to assist the WWF by crafting out-of-the-box, creative solutions like apps, campaigns, policy recommendations, environmentally-friendly initiatives, etc., to help mitigate and eventually overcome this problem.
Further Reading

Information on Lake Baikal:

1) Lake Baikal.
http://lakebaikal.org/

2) “Lake Bikal Pollution.” TED Case Studies.
http://www1.american.edu/ted/baikal.htm

http://pacificenvironment.org/-1-79

4) “Lake Baikal.” UNESCO.
http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/754/


Information on the effects of tourism on the environment:


http://www.ajeep.com/AJEEPR_Vol.%201,%20No.%208,%20September%202013/ENVIRONMENTAL.pdf

3) “Benchmarking Travel & Tourism in Russia: How does Travel & Tourism compare to other sectors?” World Travel & Tourism Council.
http://www.wttc.org//media/files/reports/benchmark20reports/country20results/russia%20benchmarking%202013.pdf

REPORT

Combatting the environmental degradation at Lake Baikal arising from an increase in human connectivity - tourism.

Lake Baikal - the world’s oldest and deepest freshwater lake and a UNESCO world heritage site - has been attracting an ever-increasing number of tourists. This is posing a threat to the environment and diaspora of the flora and fauna in the lake.

The Issue
This is a very complex problem as there are multiple aspects and stakeholders involved and requires solving several different problems, including the following:

- Tendency of tourists to litter and lack of regard for environmental issues
- Absence of facilities for garbage and sewage disposal and waste management
- Lack of economical incentives for private and public sector to invest
- Little or no funding for long term projects and lack of transparency and accountability in the funding disbursement
- Lack of clarity regarding the roles and responsibilities of each actor for the environmental conservation and development efforts for Baikal

Proposed Solutions
To address the problems stated above, some of our recommendations include:

- Implementing a holistic strategy for waste management that includes recycling waste locally by financially incentivizing waste collection and setting up infrastructure for waste disposal such as containers on site, as well as exporting waste utilizing the Trans-Siberian connection with China.
- Organizing a solution oriented economic forum for Russian and foreign enterprises in the region where they present the problems and the necessities of the region, discuss innovative ways to address them, and the state guarantees to create a conducive environment for enterprises
- Introducing tourism tax, ensure sound urban planning and build the necessary infrastructure to promote ecotourism, targeting tourists who are interested in ecotourism and not mass tourism,
- Creating an efficient administrative system of penalties and control based on strong rule of law to hold tourists accountable for their actions should they damage Baikal’s ecosystem. This will be done in two ways:
  - For tourists requiring visa, there will be a segment in the visa application including the rules and penalties
  - For tourists not requiring visas, information on the rules will be provided in multiple languages in tourist information centers, and trains, bus stations, airports (in flight magazines etc.) will also have the information

Concluding remarks
The proposed measures that do not require a significant amount of funding – such as the administrative and legal matters - can be initiated in the short term. The interventions that touch upon the hard infrastructure and involve transforming the overall image of Baikal should be implemented in the long run.
Saving Lake Baikal

Pitch: Combatting the environmental degradation at Lake Baikal arising from an increase in the human connectivity: tourism

Sohara MEHROZE SHACHI (Bangladesh), Dessislava KOVACHEVA (Bulgaria), Maxim KHOMIAKOV (Denmark), Iacopo ADDA (Italy), Evija BELANINA (Latvia), Ekaterina SOKOLOVA (Russian Federation)
Contents

• Challenges of Lake Baikal
• Waste management
• Funding and transparency
• Strategy for tourism
• Case study on urban planning
• Conclusion / Feasibility
Lake Baikal is facing challenges

• Increase in tourism and associated pollution
• Poor recycling infrastructure
• Lack of governmental support
• Lack of garbage collecting facilities
• Lack of incentives for local government to enforce good behaviour
• Disengaged stakeholders
“The waste recycling in the region is not profitable”

Ms Inna Abarinova, Deputy Minister for the Natural Resources of the Irkutsk Oblast’
22.04.2016
Dealing with waste

• Different options for different types of waste
  • Plastic
  • Metals
  • Cardboard/Paper
  • Glass

• Need for sustainable and financially viable path to recycling
  • Case study from Denmark
  • Manage waste in the region
  • Exploit favourable conditions to export waste by train to China
Case Study from Denmark: Incentivising collection of waste

- Introducing a minor added fee (envirofee) to all packaged beverages in plastic, metal or glass

- The fee is determined by the volume of the container and is usually quoted as 5-10% of retail price prior to added fees

- This system encourages collection of waste by locals and creates financial incentives in the form of savings as well as a more sustainable society
Managing waste locally

• Does the Baikal region produce enough recycling waste to satisfy economically viable recycling conditions in terms of plant utility?

• Is there enough demand for the purchase of recycled materials/products?

• Does the government endorse the development of recycling industry, both financially and legally?

Proposed solution:

Conduct a feasibility study that addresses the viability from the following aspects:

- Legal
- Technical
- Financial
- Economical
Exporting waste abroad

• China is currently a globally leading actor in the import and transformation of recyclable waste products

• Take advantage of Trans-Siberian connection towards China. **Not only** is the location of the Baikal region suitable but a number of partially empty containers from West Russia regularly pass through the Trans-Siberian Railway Hub stations to China
Means to create waste disposal

• Plastic bottles get an added extra RUB, which will be returned upon delivering the bottle back to a store

• Bulk waste must be sent to a designated facility (metals, electronics, hazardous materials)

• Dedicated containers for plastic, cardboard and glass waste

Job creation + ecological preservation + higher profits = Win-Win!
Lack of economical incentives for private and public sector to invest

Proposed solution:
Organizing an *economic forum* for Russian and foreign enterprises in the region where they present the problems and the necessities of the region and the state *guarantees* to create a conducive environment for them.
Economic forum for the recycling industry stakeholders

• Vibrant topics of discussion + clear propositions from the government to the private sector = solution oriented forum

• The world best know-how suppliers from foreign countries should be incentivized to participate

• Concrete problems of the region should be tackled with innovative technologies

• Cooperative participation of the local administrations
Transparent environment for investors

• Attract International Financial Institutions and NGOs into developing projects at Lake Baikal to ensure transparency of disbursement of funds

• Clear definition of the responsibilities at the administrative level

• Review and update existing regulation on management of Lake Baikal based on the best international practices
Need for a coherent and inclusive strategy for tourism

• Define and promote image of Lake Baikal for ecotourism and spiritual journey

• Target certain tourists that fit the pattern

• Introduce tourism tax

• Develop appropriate infrastructure
Urban planning at the heart of sustainability

Projections demonstrate an increasing volume of tourists visiting the Lake Baikal. In 2020 it is expected that 1.5 mln tourists will visit the lake.

Proposed Solutions:
• Sound urban planning
• Sustainable plans (bus/car free town, no large hotels, camping sites, infra to market hikes/cycling, family holidays or spiritual journeys, etc.)
• Funding (cooperate with Irkutsk rather than compete; take advantage of interest from international investors)
Administrative measures to promote sustainable tourism at Lake Baikal

Create a legal framework and communication plan that defines how tourists need to behave at Lake Baikal.

Design a strategy how to control and enforce that tourists comply with the framework.

This can be done in two ways:

- For tourists applying for visa in Russian Federation, there should be a section in the application outlining rules and penalties.
- Provide information on sustainable tourism practices at Lake Baikal in tourist information centers, trains, bus stations, airports, museums, etc.
Conclusions/ Feasibility

• SHORT TERM:
  • Implement administrative/legal measures;
  • Organise Recycling Economic Forum – 2017 is the Year of Ecology!
  • Develop a marketing strategy

• MEDIUM TERM:
  • Feasibility studies for the implementation of the new recycling paradigm
  • Secure funding from private and public stakeholders

• LONG TERM:
  • Develop proprietary infrastructure
BTW: Who wants to catch Baikal water Pokemon?
20th ASEF Summer University (ASEFSU20)
Gateways to Asia and Europe: Connectivity by Land, Sea and Air

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Antoine Sohara works with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Bangladesh to promote environmental sustainability and development. She also leads the South Asia hub of Climate Tracker, the world’s largest network of youth journalists and activists working to promote environmental awareness. Furthermore, Sohara is the Vice-Curator of the Dhaka Hub of Global Shapers.

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Dessislava currently attends the RWTH Aachen University as a Ph.D. exchange student from the University of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy in Bulgaria. She has three years of experience in interior design and has led renovation projects. Dessislava focuses her Ph.D. research on the transformation of public spaces in historical city centres.

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Iacopo is a Research Assistant in Russian Studies at the Global Studies Institute of the University of Geneva. He also works on his Ph.D. dissertation on the historical evolution of the perception of the “yellow peril” in Eastern Russia. Iacopo previously studied International Relations, with a particular focus on the European Union, the Russian Federation and NATO, French and Russian history, current affairs, literature and the French and Russian languages.

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