

Dear Sir or Madam:

The individuals who have signed this letter are active environmental research scientists, educators and conservationists working in Mongolia with Mongolian scientists and involved in the educational training of Mongolian university students and conservation practitioners. We are all very much involved in helping to understand and assist in the protection of Mongolia's environment, and have been very impressed with the country's goals of environmental protection.

We have recently learned of the death of a conservation ranger Lkhagvasumberel (Sumbee) Tumursukh, who worked with the Snow Leopard Conservation Foundation, a partner of the international Snow Leopard Trust, an individual who many of us knew to be a highly conscientious and effective individual enforcing the laws and guidelines for protected areas of Mongolia. We have been told that Sumbee's body was found in Lake Hövsgöl where many of us carry on research and that his death was likely to be ruled a suicide by drowning. We find it very difficult to understand Sumbee's death as a suicide. He was a young (27 years old), very energetic individual who was very enthusiastic about his work, and highly respected for his efforts. He was also planning to study in England in January.

Our concern emanates from the knowledge that Sumbee had been attacked on at least three occasions during the past two years by individuals who were very alarmed over what we suspect to be Sumbee's attempt to enforce laws related to protecting specific areas and threatened and endangered species. Sumbee apparently had been warned by these individuals to leave the Gobi and not to return. When he continued his work in the Gobi, he was assaulted and stabbed with a knife but managed to escape his captors.

Without a thorough investigation and transparent reporting, we believe that Sumbee's death will become an issue in future perceptions of security for people working or intending to work in conservation biology in Mongolia. These include individuals protecting and conducting research and Mongolian and International funders associated with research and conservation programs at Lake Hövsgöl or in the Gobi or elsewhere. Ultimately this could harm the growth of domestic and international tourism in Mongolia. We implore you to fully investigate the circumstances surrounding Sumbee's death so that the truthful and complete story can be shared with all concerned.

The list below of international scientists support the concerns voiced in this letter. We would greatly appreciate learning how you think this investigation can progress.

Respectfully signed by

Members of the International Scientific and Conservation Community working in Mongolia:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Goulden, Clyde E.	Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University, USA
Jensen, Olaf	Rutgers University
McIntosh, Bob	
Allen, Brant	UC Davis
Casper, Brenda	University of Pennsylvania
Chandra, Sudeep	University of Nevada
Cook, Joseph A.	University of New Mexico
Free, Chris	Rutgers University
	Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University, USA
Gelhaus, Jon K.	
Gilroy, David	
Hartman, Kyle	West Virginia University
Hayford, Barbara	Wayne State College
Hogan, Zeb	University of Nevada, Reno
Horwitz, Rich	Drexel University
Hrabik, Thomas	University of Minnesota - Duluth
Kessler, Mimi	Arizona State University
Krabbenhoft, Trevor	
Lauenroth, William K.	University of Wyoming
MacRae-Crerar, Aurora	University of Pennsylvania
Mead, Jerry	Drexel University
Mercado, Norman	University of Arizona
Montagne, Clifford	Montana State University
Morse, John	Clemson University
Olson, Kirk	University of Minnesota - Duluth
Putnam, Aaron	Columbia University
Putnam, David	University of Maine at Presque Isle
Pyron, Mark	Ball State University
Reading, Richard	Denver Zoo
Spence, Laura	Sterling College

Waldman, John	Queens College
Williams, Stephen E.	University of Wyoming
Nelson, Riley	Brigham Young University
Ojima, Dennis	Colorado State University
Baron, Jill	Colorado State University
Mitchell, Myron	Syracuse University
Grundler, Michael	University of Michigan
Paltsyn, Mikhail Yurievich	Syracuse University
Pfeiffer, Martin	University of Bayreuth
	Panthera, New York, New York, United States of America
Bayrakcismith, R.	Wildlife Conservation Society
Olson, K.	
Whitten, T.	
Souris, Anne-Camille	Association Goviin Khulan
Watters, Rebecca	
Farrington, John D.	
Brad Rutherford	Snow Leopard Trust
Richard D. Kortum	East Tennessee State University
Rodney Jackson	Snow Leopard Conservancy
	Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Program
Koustubh Sharma, PhD	Institute of Botany, Academy of Science, Czech Republic
Liancourt, Pierre	