

Strengthening the Network of natural World Heritage in Central Asia, the Russian Federation and the Caucasus

– Capacity Development and Situation Analysis

Proceedings of a Workshop organised by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) in cooperation with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) November 13th - 17th, 2010

Editor:
Barbara Engels



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
1. Introduction	3
1.1 Background of the meeting	3
1.2 Objectives of the meeting	3
1.3 Participants	3
1.4 Results and Outputs of the meeting	4
2. Conclusions	5
2.1 General Conclusions	5
2.2 Site specific conclusions	7
3. Recommendations	8
4. Annexes	10
ANNEX 1: Programme	10
ANNEX 2: List of participants	13

The organisers would like to express their great thanks to Prof. Shukurov for his illustrations which can be found in this report.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of an expert meeting on “Strengthening the Network of natural World Heritage in Central Asia, the Russian Federation and the Caucasus – Capacity Development and Situation Analysis” held at the International Academy for Nature Conservation, Vilm, Germany from 13th to 17th November 2010. The meeting was organized by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) with funding from the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) as an integral part of their work on Natural World Heritage and in close cooperation with IUCN.

1.1 Background

The World Heritage Convention is an important intergovernmental conservation instrument. It provides a strong umbrella for and constitutes a strong commitment for the world's most valuable protected areas. Despite important achievements there is widespread agreement that the full potential to secure and expand the benefits of the Convention remains unrealized. One limiting factor is that the procedures and actual and possible contributions of the Convention are often not sufficiently known. Along with others, IUCN and BfN have the objective to contribute to the promotion of the Convention proactively. In several regions, efforts are underway to encourage more effective support to the Convention, to develop capacities and networks and to jointly develop a more systematic approach to World Heritage at the regional levels. Increased capacities will also enable IUCN to cooperate with regional experts for the purpose of evaluations of new nominations and monitoring of existing properties.

It is recognized that especially the Russian Federation; Central Asia and the Caucasus region have great potential for new nominations, improved management of existing properties and better exchange and networking. The workshop has the objective to bring together experts from these regions as an opportunity to train them and to jointly reflect on and analyse the current situation and the way forward from a nature conservation perspective.

1.2 Objectives of the meeting

The workshop focused on the IUCN expert processes on World Heritage and aimed at training new and updating existing experts from Central Asia, the Russian Federation and the Caucasus on nominations, IUCN evaluation and monitoring processes. It also covered a reflection on improving IUCN performance. Moreover, the meeting included analytical aspects in terms of how we can best promote World Heritage as a conservation tool in the region. In addition, the workshop was used to discuss current nomination processes from the region.

1.3 Participants

The meeting brought together 25 experts on World Heritage from Central Asia, the Russian Federation and the Caucasus, including existing evaluators, desk reviewers, focal points for WH and IUCN World Heritage experts. Identifying potential participants, special emphasis was put on involving both GO and NGO actors from the region which are involved in World Heritage issues. A list of participants is included in Annex 2.

1.4 Results and Outputs of the meeting

The workshop produced the following outputs:

- This workshop report
- A CD-ROM containing all background information and presentations of the workshop, included in this report.

The workshop provided a training opportunity on key terms and concepts of World Heritage, all related formal processes and procedures, and allowed for a better understanding of IUCN's role as an Advisory Body (see Programme in Annex 1). The workshop included several working group sessions on regional World Heritage matters, especially on on-going nomination projects (including transnational projects such as the "West Tian Shan", Extension of the "Golden Mountains of Altai" and "the Caspian Forests") and contributed to advance these projects. An interactive "hands-on" training session on the instrument of the International Assistance Requests (introduction to the format, to specific requirements etc.) also provided a framework to further discuss priority action in these on-going initiatives.

The workshop should be seen as a starting point to build up a regional network of experts which will help to further promote World Heritage in the region and will serve as pool of experts for further capacity building and expertise in the region.



3. Conclusions

3.1 General Conclusions

As outcomes of the intensive discussion the participants noted the following main conclusions:

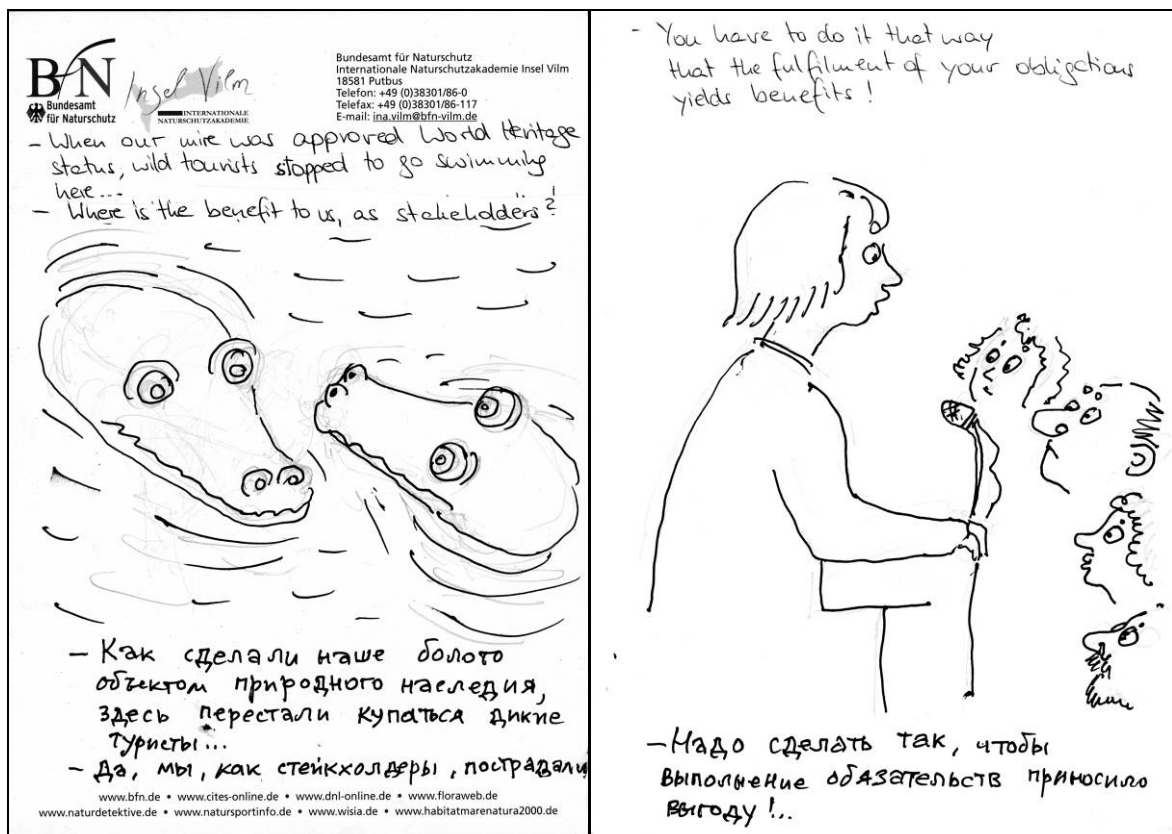
World Heritage Processes

- Timing matters: a) all WH processes need their time! b) World Heritage processes need to be flexible to the local and national needs and circumstances while considering the formal deadlines and provisions.
- Cooperation between World Heritage institutions on national level needs to be strengthened, various examples of successful arrangements (such as inter-ministerial working groups) exist. National processes for tentative lists are important processes as they provide an opportunity to involve a maximum of partners from science, NGOs and government institutions. Tentative lists are an important step to enhance quality of nominations as they can be used as a “screening” instrument. Tentative lists should be considered as initiative or process rather than desktop exercise. International Assistance through the World Heritage Fund can support these processes.
- (Sub-)regional exchange on and harmonization of Tentative Lists is urgently needed in the region(s). It was noted that no formal processes exist for this cooperation, but International Assistance can be used to finance these regional processes. Another opportunity for regional exchange are the meetings organized in the context of Periodic Reporting.
- The comparative analysis, the justification for OUV and the chapter on monitoring were noted as common weaknesses of nominations. Comparative analysis should be used as early in the processes (preferably already when Tentative Lists are set up, as the Comparative Analysis is the instrument to identify potential WH nominations).
- In the region, the question how to best involve science, NGOs and relevant governmental institutions in nominations is an important issue. The case of the re-nomination process in Bialowiesza Forest can serve as an example how the participation of different stakeholders in a nomination process can be achieved.
- Existing World Heritage instruments such as the World Heritage Fund were recommended as useful tools to enhance the use of World Heritage in the region.
- There is a need to identify possible benefits to the stakeholders in and around a World Heritage property. A clear communication of these benefits is needed in order to gain broader support for conservation.



Management of World Heritage properties – Involving local stakeholders

- Involving local communities in World Heritage management is essential and various examples exist (case study Monte San Giorgio or The Wadden Sea for active stakeholder involvement).
- An omission to involve local stakeholders in nomination processes may lead to severe difficulties in management afterwards; possible solutions are the use of “local ambassadors” (mayors or traditional or religious leaders etc); important working areas to integrate local stakeholders are local resource use, sustainable tourism or education. The benefits that can be achieved from World heritage designation depend investments among other things. Benefits for local communities have to be generated in accordance with maintaining the integrity of the World Heritage site. There is a need to identify possible benefits to the stakeholders in and around a World Heritage property. A clear communication of these benefits is needed in order to gain broader support for conservation.
- Joint management approaches (for transboundary and/or serial properties): can be reached by defining joint goals and then be implemented in the national context on the basis of national provisions. Case studies for transboundary and serial management frameworks exist, but must be made known and accessible.
- Improving management of existing World Heritage sites is even more important than getting new sites inscribed. In the region the focus would be to get management plans ready and implement them.



The expert network

- The meeting presented a most useful opportunity for transnational exchange especially on on-going nomination initiatives. As meetings in the regional context are sometimes difficult to arrange (due to political difficulties), the meeting served as a valuable step for these nomination projects.
- The network of experts on Natural World Heritage from Central Asia, the Russian Federation and the Caucasus established at this meeting can function as an expert network further on (for bilateral advice, expertise in evaluation and monitoring processes). Participants expressed their wish to stay informed on World Heritage matters.
- We should politely but clearly point out that there is a PR process which could serve as a platform for regional exchange but "full potential remains to be realized"

3.2 Site specific conclusions

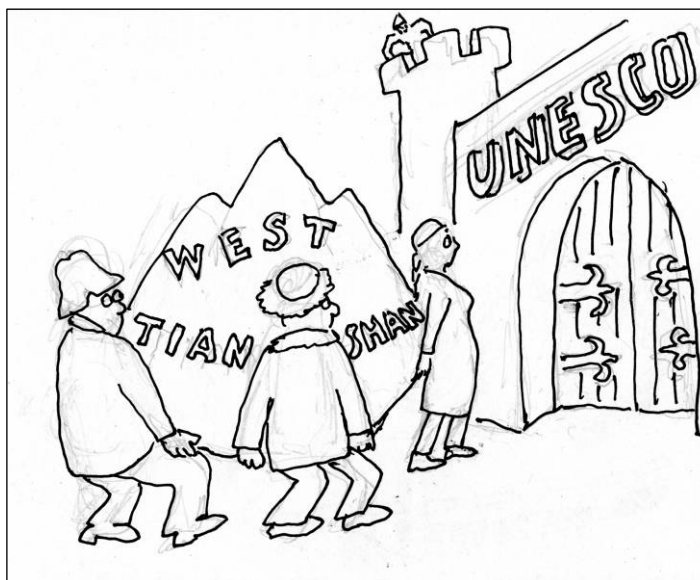
The workshop presented the opportunity for participants from the target region to further develop already existing nomination projects from the region.

Golden Mountains of Altai:

The discussions included the envisaged extension of the property in the Altai Republic of the Russian Federation named "Golden Mountains of Altai" (Russia) by Kazakhstan and Mongolia. It was noted, that there is an interest for nominating the part in China as well (listed on the national tentative list).

West Tian Shan:

A nomination for serial transnational nomination of West Tian Shan is under preparation by three States Parties (Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kirgizstan) encompassing six component parts. Kazakhstan is expected to be the official "carrier" of the nomination. A trilateral meeting was planned earlier in 2010 in Bishkek but had to be suspended. At the beginning of working group discussions on the planned nomination, participants expressed the wish to meet the deadline of 1st Feb 2011. Further process of



discussion made it clear that a joint management approach is still missing. Whilst a trilateral declaration exists on a heads of state level; a specific plan/framework for management does not exist although five of the six components have an individual management plan. The plan for the one Uzbek component is under way to be completed in 2011. The workshop was used to clarify the status of the nomination dossier also on the technical level (maps, etc.).

Finally, participants noted that it was considered the most constructive way forward to allow for sufficient time to prepare the nomination (envisaged nomination for 2012) and to use the time to get the management issues solved.

Caspian Forests (Azerbaijan, Iran)

The Caspian Forests are included both on the Iranian and on the Azerbaijan national tentative lists. Both States Parties are currently working on and have expressed great interest in a nomination. An attempt to nominate a comparatively smaller part in Azerbaijan for World Heritage was unsuccessful. A joint nomination would present a great framework for cooperation on the conservation of this shared resource and such a cooperation would fully be in the spirit of the Convention. Participants used the workshop to discuss a possible joint nomination approach and advice was given to possibly use “independent” facilitators as IUCN or BfN for a more in-depth discussion.

Tadjik National Park (Tajikistan)

The site was already nominated in 2009 with the World Heritage Committee’s decision to defer the nomination. The present challenge for the States Party is to implement the specific recommendations by the Committee based on the IUCN evaluation for a revised nomination (improved management, revised boundaries, focus on two criteria). The workshop offered the opportunity to discuss these challenges with both IUCN and other experienced experts and to prepare the road map for the future work.

Saryarka – Steppe and lakes of Kazakhstan

The workshop discussed the possible extension envisaged for the inscribed property responding to World Heritage Committee request. IUCN has offered technical advice. The inscription of the property in 2009 has contributed to raising the profile of the area in the public awareness as well as to secure better funding (e.g. visitor centre built).

The current challenges of the property include the implementation of the management plan, securing long-term funding for the site and providing adequate tourism infrastructure and training for guides.

Bialowieza National Park (Poland)

The workshop discussed the joint re-nomination envisaged for the inscribed property by Poland and Belarus. During the workshop a case study was presented how this process is structured in the Polish part in order to involve stakeholders.

4. Recommendations

The workshop participants agreed on the following recommendations concerning World Heritage as a tool for conservation in the region:

- World Heritage should be more actively used as a platform for initiatives across countries, institutions and provinces.
- Stakeholders should carefully think about the convention objectives to find out how World Heritage can be better used to achieve conservation goals.
- A wider and updated thematic study on Central Asia considering new information is urgently needed including in Russian language to make it accessible for the stakeholders in the region.
- The Nomination Manual, Operational Guidelines and other material should be translated into Russian/Persian and other regional languages.
- States Parties should ask more actively for concrete support (to the World Heritage Committee, IUCN) and make use of World Heritage Fund (International Assistance Requests).
- There is a need for more capacity development and sustaining/enhancing the network.

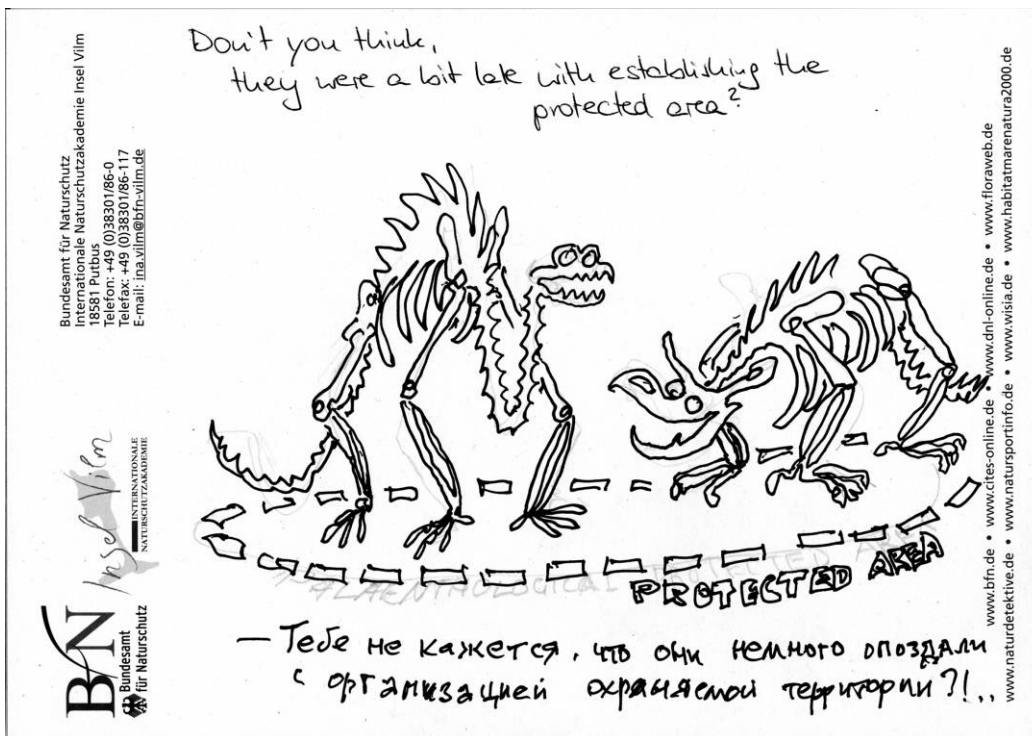
- There is a need for a more coordinated approach on national level (inter-ministerial) in all States Parties of the region.
- As on the state level, World Heritage is often led by the cultural sector, the “voice of Nature” should be raised in order to ensure participation of natural experts in regional World Heritage processes.

Specific Recommendations on the Caucasus:

- Many sub regional initiatives exists, but no systematic and/or comprehensive consideration of World Heritage in general is taking place. These should use existing initiatives as platforms as a cost efficient way to discuss and position World Heritage in the region. The Caucasus Biodiversity Council would lend itself to this purpose.
- National efforts to establish Tentative Lists and regional harmonization efforts are strongly recommended.

Specific Recommendations to the Advisory Bodies

- IUCN and ICOMOS should enhance collaboration during evaluations of mixed sites and cultural landscapes and communicate about it more clearly.
- A need for a basic training for evaluators has been identified.



4. Annexes

Annex 1: Programme of the workshop

Moderation: T. JÄGER, IUCN & B. ENGELS, BfN

Saturday, 13th November, 2010

- 18:45 *Registration and dinner*
- 19:30 Welcome by the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation
(G.STOLPE, BfN)
- Welcome
- Introduction to the workshop
(T. JÄGER, IUCN & B. ENGELS, BfN)
- Introduction of participants

Sunday, 14th November, 2010

- 07:30 *Breakfast*
- Opening and introduction: IUCN role and strategy on World Heritage**
- 09:00 IUCN role and strategy on World Heritage (T. JÄGER, IUCN)
- 09:45 Key World Heritage terms and concepts (T. JÄGER, IUCN)
- 10:30 *Coffee break and group photo*
- 11:00 Questions & Answers
Followed by discussion
- 12:30 *Lunch*
- 13:30 Guided tour of Vilm Island (G.STOLPE, BfN)
- 15:00 *Coffee break*

Overview of processes of the World Heritage Convention

- 15:30 Identification, tentative lists, nominations, evaluations and inscriptions
(T. JÄGER, IUCN)
followed by group work & discussion
- 18:30 *Dinner*
- 20:00 Informal get-together or additional working session

07:30 *Breakfast*

IUCN World Heritage Nomination and Evaluation process

09:00 Case studies on experiences in the nomination and evaluation process:
Natural Site (*TBA*)
Mixed Site
(*P. GALLAND, Consultant en Environnement et Développement*)
Cultural landscape (*C. WESTRIK, Westrik Consultancy*)

10:30 *Coffee break*

11:00 The nomination and evaluation process:

- Different steps and role of experts
- Specific situation in the region
- Current discussion on improving the expert processes in World Heritage

12:30 *Lunch*

**Improving the Evaluation process:
Training and discussion on possible improvements,
building up the expert network**

14:00 Case studies on experiences in the evaluation process (continued):
Extensions to inscribed properties: Case study Monte San Giorgio
(*A. TINTORI, Monte San Giorgio World Heritage Site*)
Serial properties (*B. ENGELS, BfN*)
Transboundary properties: Case study Bialowieza
(*R. KRZYSCIAK-KOSINSKA, Bialowieza National Park*)

15:30 *Coffee break*

16:00 Group work on case studies

17:00 Report back to plenary

18:30 *Dinner*

19:30 Informal get-together

Tuesday, 16th November, 2010

07:30 *Breakfast*

How to best promote World Heritage as a conservation tool in the region and how to best foster systematic approaches to assessing management effectiveness?

09:00 Introduction to World Heritage as a conservation tool
- focus monitoring

09:15 Group work: Promoting World Heritage as a conservation tool

10:45 *Coffee break*

11:15 Group discussion:

- a) How can the expertise in the region be made more use of and be built up?
- b) How to best promote systematic approaches to assessing management effectiveness?

12:30 *Lunch*

Identification of needs for the region - Future organisation of the expert network

- 14:00
- Identification of needs for the region
 - Future organisation of the expert network

15:30 *Coffee break*

Next steps

16:00 Discussion

Conclusions and recommendations

16:30 Joint work on conclusions and recommendations

- Recommendations for enhancing the evaluation processes
- Recommendations for strengthening the processes and the application of the convention in the region

18:00 Evaluation and closure of the workshop (*BfN*)

18:30 *Dinner*

20:00 Farewell party (to be organised by participants)

Wednesday, 17th November, 2010

07:30 *Breakfast*

09:20 *Departure from Vilm (alternative: departure 07:25)*

Annex 2: List of Participants

Last Name	First Name	Institution	Country
Ahmedzadeh	Vugar	Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Protected Areas, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan	Azerbaijan
Amirgulashvili	Karlo	Georgian National Center for Environmental Protection -GNEC-	Georgia
Balbakova	Farida	WWF Kyrgyzstan	Kyrgyzstan
Bereznoi	Victor	Interpreter	Germany
Butorin	Alexey	Natural Heritage Protection Fund / Institute of Geography, Russian Academy of Sciences	Russian Federation
Dieterich	Tilman	NABU	Germany
Domashov	Ilia	NGO Ecological Movement "BIOM"	Kyrgyzstan
Engels	Barbara	Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN)	Germany
Farid	Morteza	Habitats and Protected Areas, Department of Environment	Iran
Galland	Pierre	Consultant en Environnement et Développement	Switzerland
Grigoryants	Aleksandr	State Biological Control (Gosbiocontrol) of State Committee for Nature Protection of the Republic of Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan
Ivanovski	Alexander	UNDP and Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning Integrated Project for Ecosystem Management of Prespa Lakes in Albania, Macedonia and Greece	Former Republic of Macedonia
Jäger	Tilman	IUCN	Switzerland
Krzysciak-Kosinska	Renata	Bialowieza National Park	Poland
Mehrdadi	Mehrasa	Department of Environment, Habitats and Protected Areas Bureau, Pardisan Eco-Park, Hakim Highway, Tehran, Iran	Iran
Mullova	Ludmilla	Interpreter	Germany
Bazarshad	Chimed-Ochir	Director WWF Mongolia Programme Office	Mongolia
Sadykova	Dana	Center for Introduction of New Environmentally Safe Technologies NGO	Kazakhstan
Shagiakhmetova	Gulshad	State Biological Control (Gosbiocontrol) of State Committee for Nature Protection of the Republic of Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan
Shukurov	Emil	NGO Ecological Movement of Kyrgyzstan "Aleine"	Kyrgyzstan
Stolpe	Gisela	Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN)	Germany
Strauss	Andrea	Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN)	Germany
Sultanishvili	Nato	Agency of Protected Areas, Ministry of Environment Protection and Natural Resources of Georgia	Georgia
Tintori	Andrea	Monte San Giorgio World Heritage Site and Università degli Studi di Milano	Italy
Tuleubayeva	Rystay	Ministry of Environmental Protection of Republic of Kazakhstan	Kazakhstan
Westrik	Carol	Westrik Consultancy	The Netherlands
Yusufbek	Yusufbekov	Deputy Head of State Agency on Protected Areas of the Committee on Environment Protection within the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan	Tajikistan

