



CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES

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FIRST MEETING OF THE SIGNATORIES TO
THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
CONCERNING CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION
OF THE BUKHARA DEER (*Cervus elaphus bactrianus*)
20 November 2011, Bergen, Norway
Agenda Item 6.0

EXPANDING THE GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE OF THE MOU: RECOGNITION OF AN ADDITIONAL RANGE STATE

(Prepared by the Secretariat)

1. The geographical scope of an MoU refers to part or all of the range of the species that the MoU targets. This, in turn is defined by Article I paragraph 1.f of the Convention, i.e. *the areas of land or water that a migratory species inhabits, stays in temporarily, crosses or overflies at any time on its normal migration route.*
2. The MoU concerning Conservation and Restoration of the Bukhara Deer (*Cervus elaphus bactrianus*) does not explicitly define its geographical scope. The text of the MOU only refers to four Range States, which have all signed the MoU in 2002, namely Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.
3. Following the recommendation of the Workshop on the Implementation and Coordination of the Saiga Antelope MoU and other CMS Instruments for Migratory Ungulates in Kazakhstan, held in February 2011 in Astana, Kazakhstan, the UNEP/CMS Secretariat looked into the possibility of recognizing Afghanistan as an additional range state and to involve the country into the conservation actions under the Bukhara Deer MoU.
4. Populations of the Bukhara Deer are thought to occur in northern Afghanistan, with their main distribution in the borderlands of the Amu-Darya river basin forming the border of Afghanistan with Uzbekistan and Tajikistan¹. The Bukhara Deer is thought to occur in the wetlands of the Amu-Darya near Imam Sahib in the Kunduz Province and the river islands of Darqad in Takhar along the Tajik border².
5. In its National Report, Uzbekistan *inter alia* mentions the existence of Bukhara Deer populations in the Aral-Paygambar (upper Amu-Darya) and in the Farmantepa (upper Zerafshan, bordering Tajikistan) regions. Bukhara Deer numbers in Aral-Paygambar, located at the border between Uzbekistan and Afghanistan, are estimated to be 140-180 animals,

¹ Bannikov, A. 1978. The present status of the Bactrian deer (*Cervus elaphus bactrianus*) in the USSR. Threatened deer: Proceedings of a working meeting of the Deer Specialist Group of the IUCN Survival Service Commission, pp. 159-172. IUCN, Morges, Switzerland.

² Habibi, K. 2003. Mammals of Afghanistan. Zoo Outreach Organization, Coimbatore, India, 168 + vi pp.

indicating that there are transboundary movements of this population into neighbouring Afghanistan.

6. Due to the precarious security situation in Afghanistan, there is a serious lack of information about the current status of Bukhara Deer in the country. Further research is urgently needed to obtain reliable data.

7. However, due to the potential importance of the Afghanistan habitat to Bukhara Deer, the Secretariat proposes to add Afghanistan as a Range State to the Bukhara Deer MoU. This would provide an opportunity for Afghanistan to restore its populations and to engage with the other Signatories in transboundary cooperation. Afghanistan could then consider signing the MOU at a time of its convenience.

Action requested:

The Signatories are requested to:

- a. Discuss and, if appropriate, endorse the proposal of the Secretariat to recognize Afghanistan as a Range State of the Bukhara Deer; and
- b. If adopted, the Signatories are invited to amend the MoU accordingly, to sign the amendment and to invite Afghanistan to become a Signatory to the MoU.