



**CONVENTION ON
MIGRATORY
SPECIES**

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Agenda Item 28.2

**PROPOSAL FOR THE CONTINUATION OF THE CONCERTED ACTION FOR SAHELO-SAHARAN
MEGAFUNA:**

**SCIMITAR-HORNED ORYX (*Oryx dammah*), ADDAX (*Addax nasomaculatus*), DAMA GAZELLE
(*Nanger dama*), SLENDER-HORNED GAZELLE (*Gazella leptoceros*), CUVIER'S GAZELLE
(*Gazella cuvieri*), DORCAS GAZELLE (*Gazella dorcas*), RED-FRONTED GAZELLE (*Eurdorcas
rufifrons*), AND BARBARY SHEEP (*Ammotragus lervia*) ***
LISTED ON THE APPENDICES OF THE CONVENTION

Summary:

The CMS Secretariat has submitted the attached proposal for the renewal and continuation of the Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna Concerted Action in accordance with the process elaborated in Resolution 12.28.

The proposal further recommends the inclusion of two additional species in the Concerted Action: the Red-fronted Gazelle (*Eurdorcas rufifrons*), and Barbary Sheep (*Ammotragus lervia*).

With this inclusion, the Concerted Action will focus on the conservation of the following eight species: Scimitar-Horned Oryx (*Oryx dammah*), Addax (*Addax nasomaculatus*), Dama Gazelle (*Nanger dama*), Slender-Horned Gazelle (*Gazella leptoceros*), Cuvier's Gazelle (*Gazella cuvieri*), Dorcas Gazelle (*Gazella Dorcas*), the Red-fronted Gazelle (*Eurdorcas rufifrons*), and Barbary Sheep (*Ammotragus lervia*).

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SAHELO-SAHARAN MEGAFUNA CONCERTED ACTION

(i). Proponent:

The CMS Secretariat¹

(ii). Target species, lower taxon or population, or group of taxa with needs in common:

Historically, the Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna Concerted Action covered the following six species: Scimitar-Horned Oryx (*Oryx dammah*), Addax (*Addax nasomaculatus*), Dama Gazelle (*Nanger dama*), Slender-Horned Gazelle (*Gazella leptoceros*), Cuvier's Gazelle (*Gazella cuvieri*), and Dorcas Gazelle (*Gazella dorcas*)².

Considering the overlap of distribution ranges of the six species, two additional species are recommended for inclusion³: Red-fronted Gazelle (*Eurdorcas rufifrons*)⁴, and Barbary Sheep (*Ammotragus lervia*)⁵

This addition will be in line with the vision of the Concerted Action, which aims in due course to cover all threatened large migratory mammals of the temperate and cold deserts, semi-deserts, steps and associated mountains of the Sahelo-Saharan region⁶.

(iii). Geographical range:

The Range States of the Concerted Action are: Algeria, Burkina Faso, Chad, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, South Sudan, Sudan and Tunisia.

(iv). Summary of Activities:

This proposal aims to renew the Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna Concerted Action under the new framework of Concerted Actions set by Resolution 12.28 on *Concerted Actions*. The Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna Concerted Action was first established in 1994 as the Sahelo-Saharan Ungulates Concerted Action. The Concerted Action was then reformulated as the Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna Concerted Action by [Recommendation 9.2](#) of the Ninth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CMS (COP9, Rome, 2008) (See Annex I for the History of the Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna Concerted Action). Activities under the Concerted Action will be continued to maintain and restore the Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna species.

The details of the planned activities for the intersessional period 2020-2023 are presented in section (i).

(v). Activities and expected outcomes:

A. Overall Expected Outcome

To maintain and restore Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna and their habitats through coordinated regional actions.

1 At the 19th Sahelo-Saharan Interest Group meeting held in May 2019 in Tunis, the CMS Secretariat presented the proposal to develop an updated Action Plan and to organize the Third Seminar for consultation with relevant stakeholders.

2 See Recommendation 4.5 (Nairobi, 1994) and Paragraph 1 of Recommendation 9.2 (Rome, 2008)

3 For further details of the discussion, see UNEP/CMS/COP13/Doc.26.3.4

4 Listed on Appendix I at COP11 (Quito, 2014)

5 Listed on Appendix II at COP9 (Rome, 2008)

6 Paragraph 1 of Recommendation 9.2 (Rome, 2008)

B. Proposed Activities

During the period 2020-2023, the following activities are proposed:

1. Conduct a stocktaking of past and ongoing activities in the region related to the conservation of Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna and their habitats;
2. Prepare an updated Action Plan for Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna;
3. Organize a Third Regional Seminar on the Conservation and Restoration of Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna;
4. Strengthen partnerships with relevant international and regional organizations as well as multilateral environmental agreements; and
5. Provide technical support to the Range States for the implementation of the updated Action Plan.

C. Expected Outputs

1. A summary report compiling submissions by the Range States and relevant stakeholders and highlighting gaps in actions for the conservation of the Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna;
2. An updated Action Plan for the Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna;
3. A report of the Third Regional Seminar;
4. A list of project concepts;
5. Documents demonstrating partners' commitments to the implementation of the Action Plan; and
6. Project proposals for the implementation of the Action Plan.

D. Description of the Activities

Activity 1. Conduct a stocktaking of past and ongoing activities

As a preparatory process for the development of an updated Action Plan for the Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna Concerted Action, the CMS Secretariat, together with the Sahelo-Saharan Interest Group⁷, is planning to initiate a stock-taking exercise of ongoing conservation activities in the region. The study is expected to provide an overview of the conservation activities in the region and will provide a baseline for the development of an updated Action Plan.

Activity 2. Prepare an updated Action Plan

An updated Action Plan for the conservation of Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna and their habitats will be developed, building on the existing Sahelo-Saharan Antelope Action Plan. This Action Plan was initially developed in 1998 and updated in 2003. Since then, there have not been any updates.

Since the last revision of the Sahelo-Saharan Antelope Action Plan in 2003, various status reports and action plans have been prepared for the species under the Concerted Action. In 2006, for example, the report on the conservation status of the six Sahelo-Saharan Antelopes was prepared under the Sahelo-Saharan Antelope Concerted Action. Subsequently, the following new species action plans have been prepared:

- a. IUCN (2014) Conservation Review of the Dama Gazelle (*Nanger dama*);
- b. Noé (2017) Plan d'Action Régional Addax et Gazelle Dama 2018 -2022 ; and
- c. IUCN (2018) Conservation strategy and action plan for Cuvier's Gazelle (*Gazella cuvieri*) in North Africa 2017-2026;

⁷ See <https://www.saharaconservation.org/Science/SSIG>

The updated Action Plan for the Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna will consider these existing action plans, incorporating the best available knowledge on the conservation status of the species.

To address multiple pressures having an impact on the survival of the Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna, including an ecosystem approach in the Action Plan may prove more effective than solely species-specific efforts⁸. Habitat restoration, in addition to habitat conservation, could also be part of the strategies to restore and conserve the species⁹.

Activity 3. Organize the Third Regional Seminar on the Conservation and Restoration of Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna

In line with the Agadir Declaration¹⁰ and the recommendations from the Scientific Council¹¹, a Third Regional Seminar will be organized so that the Range States, donors, academia, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders can review and provide inputs to a draft regional Action Plan.

It is envisaged that the Third Regional Seminar will provide an opportunity to identify priority activities and projects for the implementation of the updated Action Plan. Based on the project concepts identified at the Seminar, project proposals could be developed to facilitate implementation activities by the Range States and relevant stakeholders.

At the Third Regional Seminar, the Range States and other stakeholders may be invited to discuss the future directions of the Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna Concerted Action including its operational arrangements. Lessons could be learnt from existing Initiatives such as the Central Asian Mammals Initiative.

The Government of Morocco has offered to host the Third Regional Seminar.

Activity 4. Strengthen partnerships with relevant international and regional organizations, and multilateral environmental agreements

For the implementation of the Action Plan, cross-sectoral coordination and multi-stakeholder cooperation are crucial. Therefore, the Secretariat will work to strengthen partnerships with relevant organizations including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Development Programme, and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification for the development and implementation of the updated Action Plan.

Activity 5. Provide technical support to the Range States for the implementation of the updated Action Plan

As soon as an updated Action Plan is developed under Activity 2 and endorsed by the Third Regional Seminar under Activity 3, the implementation activities will be initiated. The Secretariat will, working with Range States and relevant stakeholders, assist Range States in developing project proposals in line with the Action Plan. The list of project concepts identified under Activity 3 will help shape the project proposals, based on the needs identified by the Range States.

⁸ See UNEP/CMS/COP13/Doc.26.3.4 for further discussion

⁹ See UNEP/CMS/COP13/Doc.26.3.4 on *Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna* for further discussion

¹⁰ See https://www.cms.int/sites/default/files/document/ssa_agadir_declaration_e_0.pdf

¹¹ [UNEP/CMS/COP11/Inf.8 of 2014](#); [UNEP/CMS/ScC17/Report Annex II of 2011](#)

Other administrative and communication activities

In addition to the above three substantive activities, the Secretariat will provide administrative services including the organization of the Third Seminar, document preparation and regular communication activities such as the maintenance of relevant webpages on the Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna Concerted Action.

E. Monitoring and Evaluation

Progress will be measured and evaluated using success criteria (Table 1). Progress will be reported in line with the guidelines to the implementation of the Concerted Actions process¹².

12 UNEP/CMS/Resolution 12.28/Annex 1

Table 1: Summary of proposed activities under the Sahelo-Saharan Concerted Action (2020-2023)

No	Activity	Timeframe	Responsible organization	Objectives	Expected Outputs	Success criteria	Required amount	Proposed source of funding
1	Stocktaking of the past and ongoing activities in the region related to the Concerted Action	2020	CMS Secretariat	To map out the efforts for the conservation of relevant species in the region to identify gaps where further conservation efforts are needed.	A summary report compiling submissions by the Range States and relevant stakeholders and highlighting gaps	One report is prepared which summarizes past and ongoing conservation activities in the region	-	CMS Secretariat staff time
2	Preparation of an updated Action Plan	2020	CMS Secretariat in consultation with: Range States; and relevant stakeholders (IGOs, NGOs, academia, private sector)	To have a regional strategy for coordinated conservation actions on Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna in the region	An updated Action Plan	One updated Action Plan is endorsed by the Range States by 2022	US\$ 20,000	CMS Secretariat staff time Extra-budgetary funding
3	Organization of the Third Regional Seminar	2021	CMS Secretariat in consultation with: The Range States and relevant stakeholders (IGOs, NGOs, academia, private sector)	To have a technical review and to have a political endorsement of the Action Plan To identify priority project concepts to implement the Action Plan	A meeting report A list of project concepts	One Range State meeting is organized by 2023 One meeting report is prepared by 2023	US\$ 100,000	Extra-budgetary funding

4	Strengthen partnerships with relevant international and regional organisations, and multilateral environmental agreements	2020-2023	CMS Secretariat	To implement an ecosystem approach through cross-sectoral coordination	Documents demonstrating partners' commitments to the implementation of the Regional Action Plan	At least one partner recognizes or endorses the Regional Action Plan by 2023	-	CMS Secretariat staff time
5	Provide technical support to Range States for the implementation of the updated Action Plan	2020-2023	CMS Secretariat in cooperation with: International and regional organizations, funding agencies, academia, non-governmental organizations	To facilitate the implementation of the updated Action Plan as soon as the Plan is endorsed by the Range States	Project proposals	At least one project proposal is prepared by 2023	-	CMS Secretariat staff time

(vi). Associated benefits:

The renewed / updated Concerted Action will include activities aligned with an ecosystem approach, aiming to maintain or restore habitats for the Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna¹³. This approach will also benefit other species that share habitats in the region. For example, there are migratory birds that share their habitats with Addax and Dama Gazelle in Niger. These species include Rüppell's Vulture (*Gyps rueppelli*); Hooded Vulture (*Necrosyrtes monachus*); and White-backed Vulture (*Gyps africanus*), which are listed on the CMS Appendices.

Furthermore, the Concerted Action will contribute to the UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030) while helping to restore the Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna.

(vii). Timeframe:

Timeframe for the above actions is set for 2020- 2030.

(viii). Relationship to other CMS actions:**A. Implementation of the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2030**

The Concerted Action will contribute to the achievement of Targets 7, 8 and 9 of the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species (2015-2030).

B. Synergies with the African Carnivores Initiative

At CMS COP12 (Manila, 2017), the CMS Secretariat was requested to establish the Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative through Decision 12.60. The Initiative includes the Cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus*), the African Lion (*Panthera leo*), the Leopard (*Panthera pardus*) and the African Wild Dog (*Lycaon pictus*).

As these species occur in the Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna Range States, it is expected that there could be synergies of conservation actions between the Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna Concerted Action and the Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative.

(ix). Conservation priority:

The Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna currently faces a catastrophic decline due to multiple threats such as unsustainable hunting, infrastructure development, agriculture expansion, urbanization, and resource extraction activities. The region also faces increasing challenges with security, compromising conservation efforts. This situation necessitates urgent action to address the cumulative impact of human activities on the Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna species and their habitats¹⁴.

¹³ See UNEP/CMS/COP13/Doc.26.3.4 for further discussion

¹⁴ See UNEP/CMS/COP13/Doc.26.3.4 for further discussion

Table 2: Summary of the conservation status of the eight species covered by the Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna Concerted Action

Species	Conservation Status
Addax (<i>Addax nasomaculatus</i>)	Critically Endangered A2cd; C2a(ii); D (IUCN 2016)
Barbary Sheep (<i>Ammotragus lervia</i>)	Vulnerable C1 (IUCN 2008)
Cuvier's Gazelle (<i>Gazella cuvieri</i>)	Vulnerable C2a(i) (IUCN 2016)
Dama Gazelle (<i>Nanger dama</i>)	Critically Endangered C2a(i) (IUCN 2015)
Dorcas Gazelle (<i>Gazella dorcas</i>)	Vulnerable A2cd (IUCN 2016)
Red-fronted Gazelle (<i>Eudorcas rufifrons</i>)	Vulnerable A2cd (IUCN 2016)
Scimitar-Horned Oryx (<i>Oryx dammah</i>)	Extinct in the Wild (IUCN 2016)
Slender-Horned Gazelle (<i>Gazella leptoceros</i>)	Endangered C2a(i) (IUCN 2016)

(x). Relevance:

Many of the large herbivores living in the Sahelo-Saharan region are nomadic and wide-ranging. People in the region are also traditionally nomadic, pastoral people, adapting to varying rainfall and the availability of grazing resources. Accommodating migration and mobility of both people and wildlife presents unique socio-political challenges for the region, particularly for transboundary movements¹⁵. Human and wildlife migration behaviour is key to efficient use of dryland resources¹⁶ and, thus, to the conservation and sustainable management of desert ecosystems.

The conservation of the Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna and their habitats requires regional cooperation. Coordinated policy and conservation actions are crucial for effective implementation of conservation and management measures.

With this understanding, the Sahelo-Saharan Antelope Concerted Action was initiated in 1994. The Concerted Action continues to be relevant for the conservation of the Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna and for this reason, a renewal of the Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna Concerted Action is recommended with this present document (See Annex I).

(xi). Absence of better remedies:

The Concerted Action has been in place since 1994 and has made significant progress in conserving the six species listed on the CMS Appendices. For example, under the Concerted Action, the Government of Chad started the successful reintroduction of the Scimitar-horned Oryx (*Oryx dammah*) in Chad with the assistance of the Government of Abu Dhabi as well as the Environment Agency Abu Dhabi and technical support by the Sahara Conservation Fund.

¹⁵ Durant, S. M., Wachter, T., Bashir, S., Woodroffe, R., De Ornellas, P., Ransom, C., ... & Baillie, J. (2014). Fiddling in biodiversity hotspots while deserts burn? Collapse of the Sahara's megafauna. *Diversity and Distributions*, 20(1), 114-122.

¹⁶ IIED (2013) Global public policy narratives on the drylands and pastoralism. Available from: <https://pubs.iied.org/10040IIED/>. (accessed 5 September 2013)

The Concerted Action has provided a unique framework for regional cooperation for the conservation of Sahelo-Sahara Megafauna over the past 25 years. The stakeholders have accumulated invaluable knowledge and experience under the framework. Alternative approaches to support regional cooperation, such as through regional projects, may not lead to a long-lasting cooperation mechanism. The continuation of the Concerted Action is, therefore, the best option to have long-term conservation planning and action on Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna.

(xii). Readiness and feasibility:

The Concerted Action has been in place since 1994. It is thus considered to be ready and feasible.

(xiii). Likelihood of success:

The proposed activities for 2020-2023 have a high possibility of success as they build on efforts under the Concerted Action since 1994. Possible risks for the activities include limited financial and human resources to conduct activities, as well as competing priorities and possible limited political will.

(xiv). Magnitude of likely impact:

Number of species under the Concerted Action: 8

Number of Range States: 16

Associated benefits and possible synergies: See section (ii) and (iv).B

Magnitude of impact:

The Concerted Action will develop an updated Action Plan, which will define the course of future conservation work under the Concerted Action. Future activities will be based on the Action Plan and identified priority activities. The level of impact will depend on the level of implementation of the Action Plan.

(xv). Cost-effectiveness:

Table 1 summarizes required financial resources for 2020-2023. It is more cost-effective to develop a shared Action Plan and implement the plan for coordinated conservation actions as it will reduce the possibility of duplication of efforts or uncoordinated actions across the Range States.

(xvi). Consultations - Planned/Undertaken:

At the 19th Sahelo-Saharan Interest Group meeting held in May 2019 in Tunis, the CMS Secretariat presented the concept of the development of an updated Action Plan and the organization of the Third Seminar for consultation with the Range States and relevant stakeholders.

In addition, the Third Regional Seminar will provide an opportunity for further consultation with Range States and relevant stakeholders in the region for the future directions of the Concerted Action. Through these consultative processes, it is expected that the updated Action Plan will set a shared regional vision and strategies for the conservation of the Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna.

HISTORY OF THE SAHELO-SAHARAN MEGAFUNA CONCERTED ACTION*

Year	Meeting	Main outcomes
1994	The Fourth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CMS in Nairobi, Kenya	Recommandation 4.5 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiation of the Sahelo-Sahara Ungulates Concerted Action covering six species: <i>Addax nasomaculatus</i>, <i>Oryx dammah</i>, <i>Gazella dama</i>, <i>Gazella leptoceros</i>, <i>Gazella cuvieri</i>, <i>Gazella dorcas</i>
1998	The Seminar on the Conservation and Restoration of Sahelo-Saharan Antelopes in Djerba, Tunisia	Djerba Declaration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adoption of the Sahelo-Saharan Antelope Action Plan
2003	The Second Regional Seminar on the Conservation and Restoration of Sahelo-Saharan Antelopes in Agadir, Morocco	Agadir Declaration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised the Action Plan Called for a third regional seminar
2006	-	The Sahelo-Saharan Antelopes- Status and Perspectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided updated conservation status for the six species
2008	The Ninth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CMS in Rome, Italy	Recommendation 9.2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Sahelo-Saharan Ungulates Concerted Action was reformulated as the Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna Concerted Action
2011	The Seventeenth Meeting of the Scientific Council in Bergen, Norway	Report of the Meeting (UNEP/CMS/ScC17/Report Annex II¹⁷) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Third Regional Seminar was identified as a top priority for the Concerted Action
2014	The Eighteenth Meeting of the Scientific Council Meeting in Bonn, Germany	Report of the meeting (UNEP/CMS/COP11/Inf.8¹⁸) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strongly recommended the Third Regional Seminar
2017	The Twelfth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CMS in Manila, the Philippines	Resolution 9.21 (Rev.COP12) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouraged an examination of the extension of the action area to the deserts of the Horn of Africa and associated biomes

*This list excludes project activities conducted under the Concerted Action to implement the Recommendations, Declarations and Resolutions.

17 See Section 2.1
18 See Annex 4