



CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES

UNEP/CMS/Saiga/MOS4/Outcome 1

Original: English

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING CONCERNING CONSERVATION, RESTORATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF THE SAIGA ANTELOPE

FOURTH MEETING OF THE SIGNATORIES TO THE
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING CONCERNING
CONSERVATION, RESTORATION AND SUSTAINABLE
USE OF THE SAIGA ANTELOPE

Russian Federation, Online, 28 – 29 September 2021

MEDIUM-TERM INTERNATIONAL WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE SAIGA ANTELOPE (2021-2025)

(To support the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of the Saiga Antelope (*Saiga spp.*))

MEDIUM-TERM INTERNATIONAL WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE SAIGA ANTELOPE (2021-2025)

Long-term vision: To restore saiga populations to the point that sustainable use can again be envisioned.

Overall goal: That all saiga populations show an increasing trend or their decline is halted over the next five years.

Achievement of this goal is to be assessed through a time-series of population estimates made using appropriate methods, accompanied by an estimate of the associated uncertainty.

	Measures to be taken	Urgency ¹	Timescale ²
	Range-wide measures		
1.0	Implementation		
1.1	Ensure that all saiga populations and the Range States have appropriate resources to implement the MOU.	1	A
1.2	Encourage all potential partner and cooperating organizations to support the CMS MOU by contributing to the implementation of the Medium-Term International Work Programme.	2	A
1.3	Encourage the saiga research and conservation community to regularly exchange project information and progress reports through the e-bulletin <i>Saiga News</i> and the online Saiga Resource Centre, facilitated by the organizations implementing the technical coordination of the CMS MOU.	2	A
1.4	Encourage all countries with an interest in saiga conservation, including trading, consumer and captive-population holding countries to engage with and support the CMS MOU.	2	A
1.5	Clarify phylogenetic relationships in the genus <i>Saiga</i> to inform the implementation of international conventions and facilitate appropriate action.	2	A
1.6	Develop national saiga conservation Action Plans, align them with NBSAPs and share them with others through the CMS Secretariat and the Saiga Resource Centre.	2	A
1.7	Encourage all Range States that are Parties to CMS or CITES to participate in the National Legislation Programme of CMS and, as appropriate, the National Legislation Project of CITES.	2	A

1 Urgency: 1 - Urgent (crucial for preventing population extirpation). 2 - Important (necessary for stabilisation of numbers). 3 - Useful (will contribute to population restoration).

2 Timescale: A - Immediate (1-2 years). B - Medium-term (5 years).

	Measures to be taken	Urgency¹	Timescale²
1.8	Encourage Range States, relevant end-user countries and the conservation community to engage with the CMS MOU and its coordination mechanism, including reporting to CMS, CITES and the Saiga Resource Centre, to support implementation.	3	A
1.9	Encourage national CMS MOU contact points and CITES Management Authorities, responsible for liaison with counterparts in other range States and cooperating organizations, to exchange information and technical expertise on saiga conservation.	3	A
1.10	Encourage all saiga antelope Range and consumer States to join CITES and CMS.	1	B
1.11	Coordinate conservation efforts and promote cooperation between all stakeholders in the saiga range.	2	B
1.12	Encourage Range States, China and other consumer countries, to conclude and implement bilateral cooperative agreements on matters of mutual interest to support the MOU's implementation.	2	B
1.13	Encourage Range States to coordinate their research and monitoring efforts in order to maximize the synergies between them, where appropriate using standardized, comparable, internationally recognized methods.	2	B
2.0	Anti-poaching		
2.1	Develop and, if necessary, update national anti-poaching strategies, with a focus at the population level in order to maximize effectiveness of patrol deployment and intelligence-gathering.	1	A
2.2	Strengthen anti-poaching units and where needed establish more, for the protection of all saiga populations in all Range States, including where appropriate complementing state anti-poaching units with voluntary rangers from local communities.	1	A
2.3	Enable protocols and agreements between relevant Range States to be applied at the operational level, by supporting and facilitating transboundary exchange and communication between enforcement officers and rangers to strengthen protection of saigas across shared borders.	2	A
2.4	Strengthen national capacity and legislation, where appropriate, to support improvements in detection, processing and prosecution of offenders, including measures to avoid conflicts of interest.	2	A
2.5	Improve the prestige, capacity, social security and coordination of, and provide relevant training for, local and national law enforcement and nature protection officers and other officials, at all levels, where appropriate.	2	A
2.6	Improve legal protection of informants who provide information about poaching incidents.	2	A
2.7	Monitor and measure anti-poaching efforts and impacts, and use these analyses to inform improved anti-poaching strategies.	2	B
3.0	Sustainable use and trade		
3.1	Encourage research aiming to understand and reduce the demand for and quantity of saiga horn used in traditional Asian medicines, including market surveys, both on the ground and online, in Range States, consumer and trading countries.	1	A
3.2	Ensure that all Range States, and saiga trading and consumer countries, make saiga conservation and trade issues a priority and allocate funding for the implementation of the MOU and its Medium-Term International Work Programme.	1	A

	Measures to be taken	Urgency¹	Timescale²
3.3	Encourage Range States and saiga trading and consumer countries to comply with CITES decisions and recommendations relevant to saiga antelopes.	2	A
3.4	Encourage all Range States, and saiga trading and consuming countries to report seizures or confiscations through appropriate channels as part of annual reporting to CITES and Interpol and encourage trading partners to do the same.	2	A
3.5	Encourage all Range States that are Parties to CITES to achieve a Category 1 rating for their CITES implementing legislation.	2	A
3.6	Encourage countries trading in saiga parts and derivatives to establish internal market controls e.g. through registration, control and monitoring of stockpiles, including confiscated products; labelling of parts and products; registration of manufacturers and traders; and verifying the source and legality of saiga products in trade, learning from experiences with marking and identification of wildlife parts and derivatives.	1	A
3.7	Seek opportunities for training and cross-border cooperation in CITES implementation, identification of saiga products and techniques for countering illegal trade.	1	A
3.8	Improve collaboration amongst Range States to halt illegal trade in saiga parts and derivatives by further harmonizing legislation and strengthening its implementation (including work with judiciary and prosecutors) and enhancing cross-border enforcement and training.	2	A
3.9	Encourage cooperation between in-situ conservationists and the Asian medicine industry for promotion of saiga conservation, restoration and sustainable use, including information sharing and financial support.	2	B
3.10	Initiate research on the feasibility, conditions and requirements for sustainable use of specific populations of saiga antelopes, taking into consideration all relevant factors including disease and mass mortality events, sustainable harvest levels, population thresholds, demographic structure of populations, socioeconomic aspects, compliance with CITES regulations (e.g. Non-Detriment Findings), capacity to monitor and control utilisation and trade, and ability to identify and trace saiga derivatives in trade.	2	B
3.11	Use in future activities the outcomes contained in the CMS report "Sustainable Use of Saiga Antelope: Perspectives and Prospects", when appropriate.	1	A
3.12	Establish or strengthen strict and transparent national control mechanisms for saiga parts and derivatives from confiscations, natural mortality or sustainable use in Range States and consumer countries including proper methods for marking, registration and storage of specimen, which are safe against misuse and are built on international best practice.	1	A
3.13	Involve all stakeholders, including representatives of local communities, in the planning process for national systems of sustainable use of the saiga antelope.	2	A
4.0	Work with local people		
4.1	Strengthen the involvement of different stakeholders in saiga conservation, and encourage local involvement in, and support for, saiga protection.	1	A

	Measures to be taken	Urgency¹	Timescale²
4.2	Monitor attitudes of local people towards saiga conservation activities and threats to saiga, using local-level social research including participatory community monitoring.	2	A
4.3	Recognize and encourage responsible behaviour by external stakeholders in the saiga range, including border guards, industry employees and managers in order to prevent negative impacts on the saiga population, either directly or through relationships with local communities.	2	A
4.4	Promote sustainable rangeland use to enable the cohabitation of people, livestock and saiga antelopes.	2	A
4.5	Expand current incentive-based and conservation-linked livelihood-improvement projects and develop new programmes in all appropriate parts of the saiga range.	2	A
4.6	Ensure that CMS National Contact Points take human factors and the needs and awareness of local people into account when developing and implementing saiga conservation measures.	2	B
4.7	Build on pilot projects for saiga-based tourism and, where appropriate, promote this as a useful approach to increase local engagement in conservation, and create incentives for local people to conserve saiga antelopes.	2	B
4.8	Explore options for a potential future sustainable use system with involvement of local people from the start, ensuring that benefits are created to incentivize local people to conserve saiga antelopes.	2	A
5.0	Awareness		
5.1	Develop and implement awareness-raising and training activities, and promote the dissemination of best practice examples, information materials, and workshop outputs for professional stakeholders involved in controlling illegal use of saiga.	1	A
5.2	Develop and implement awareness-raising campaigns for investors, companies and governments in Range States and elsewhere, whose activities, or the activities of whose employees, could negatively impact on saiga conservation.	2	A
5.3	Ensure local communities within the saiga range remain aware of the conservation and legal status of saigas.	2	A
5.4	Continue to develop, update and widely implement a range of educational activities and materials on saiga ecology and conservation for children in Range States.	2	B
5.5	Develop and implement awareness raising and behaviour change campaigns to reduce demand for saiga products in consumer countries.	2	B
5.6	Develop and widely implement awareness-raising campaigns, through all relevant media, to raise the profile of saigas at local, national and international levels.	2	B
5.7	Support and regularly update existing websites about saiga conservation, restoration and sustainable use, including the maintenance of the official CMS Saiga MOU website and the online Saiga Resource Centre.	2	B
5.8	Expand the distribution and profile of <i>Saiga News</i> , both in hard copy and in electronic version, at local level and through other national and international media.	2	B

	Measures to be taken	Urgency¹	Timescale²
5.9	Monitor the effectiveness of awareness-raising campaigns in changing the behaviour of relevant groups towards better saiga conservation.	2	B
6.0	Habitat and environmental factors		
6.1	Remove or mitigate barriers to saiga movement (fences, roads, railways and other linear infrastructure) in line with CMS guidelines on Mitigating the Impact of Linear Infrastructure and Related Disturbance on Mammals in Central Asia (Resolution 11.24) and internationally recognized standards IFC1 and IFC6.	1	A
6.2	Encourage government authorities, investors and developers to ensure that all proposed infrastructural, natural resource extraction, and other developments likely to impact saiga and its habitat are subject to a full Social and Environmental Impact Assessment (SEIA) and/or Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), following international best practice.	1	A
6.3	Collate and analyse information on saiga habitat and range use, present and past; identify key features, including habitat types used and the effects of anthropogenic factors, including climate change, and identify key habitats based on this analysis.	1	B
6.4	Analyse scenarios of likely future change in saiga distribution, range use, abundance, demography and threats due to climate change, infrastructure and other human factors, and recommend responses accordingly, through revisions to the MTIWP.	2	B
6.5	Facilitate exchange of data on saiga and saiga habitat among range states and stakeholders, using the Saiga Resource Centre if appropriate.	2	B
6.6	Develop integrated rangeland management plans including resource partitioning for key saiga sites.	2	B
7.0	Protected areas		
7.1	Enhance national protected area networks to benefit saiga, with particular emphasis on protecting key areas (birthing and rutting) and migration corridors, based on the recommendations from 6.3.	1	B
7.2	Establish and promote international cooperation in important transboundary saiga landscapes and where appropriate develop transboundary protected areas.	2	B
8.0	Population monitoring		
8.1	Carry out annual population surveys using appropriate methods, including modern non-invasive techniques, in order to obtain time series for all populations that have adequate power to detect whether the MOU goals have been met.	1	A
8.2	Carry out research on saiga movement and migration using appropriate technology (including satellite tracking and remote sensing), with a particular focus on improving understanding of the impacts of infrastructure developments and climate change, and environmental and land use change.	1	A
8.3	Review different monitoring techniques, and adopt 'best practice' methodologies for producing reliable estimates of saiga populations, including identifying appropriate sample sizes, timing, and frequency of counts to provide reliable baseline population data.	2	A

	Measures to be taken	Urgency¹	Timescale²
8.4	Carry out training and build capacity for biological sampling, transportation, storage and clinical diagnostics for researchers and government staff at all levels.	2	A
8.5	Develop and expand programmes of monitoring of saiga in collaboration with local people.	2	A
8.6	Carry out inter-disciplinary research on the health of saiga and other relevant species (including livestock) to inform mitigation, control, action and timely reporting of the health status of saiga and disease outbreaks or mass mortality episodes to the appropriate national and international authorities, the public and researchers.	1	B
8.7	Develop programmes for long-term monitoring of environmental factors and biological sampling from individual animals, including saiga, livestock and other wildlife (including potential disease vectors).	1	B
8.8	Carry out scientific monitoring of saiga populations, their demographic parameters, and their wider environment, including trends in sex ratio, mortality patterns, reproductive success, age structure, genetics, predators and competitors, in the context of environmental and land use change.	2	B
8.9	Provide training in standard monitoring techniques as appropriate and disseminate methods through publications and the Saiga Resource Centre.	2	B
8.10	Encourage use of comparable techniques and reporting standards in all Range States, data and report sharing where possible, and joint analysis in the case of transboundary populations.	2	B
9.0	Captive breeding		
9.1	Establish a registry of captive breeding facilities, with details on their purpose, the number of saigas held in captivity and their origin.	2	A
9.2	Promote the exchange of expertise in captive breeding, including study tours between captive breeding centres.	2	A
9.3	Support existing facilities in the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan, China and Ukraine and encourage them to follow established IUCN and WAZA guidelines and best practice for captive breeding and reintroduction.	2	A
9.4	Take into account the results of the international workshop on captive breeding for saiga conservation, held in Moscow in 2017.	2	A
9.5	Encourage research into behaviour, feeding, disease and other topics, using the ex situ populations.	2	B
9.6	Promote research to address challenges in the captive breeding of saiga antelopes, taking account of existing experiences and advice [see 9.5], and develop best practices guidance for saiga husbandry, management and transport.	2	B
9.7	Assess the feasibility of establishing captive breeding and reintroduction facilities in Mongolia, Uzbekistan or other parts of the present or former saiga range.	2	B
10.0	Health and disease		
10.1	Create national wildlife disease surveillance schemes for saiga antelopes, which include passive monitoring and standard operating procedures for disease outbreaks, and encourage governments to adopt these for other wildlife species as well.	1	A

	Measures to be taken	Urgency¹	Timescale²
10.2	Promote specific interventions to reduce risk of exposure and encourage elimination of Peste des Petits Ruminants virus from livestock populations sharing saiga habitat and in saiga regions through comprehensive/systematic livestock vaccination (through the global PPR eradication programme coordinated by FAO / OIE and national veterinary authorities).	1	A
10.3	Encourage further collaboration on haemorrhagic septicaemia research between governments and researchers across Range States and with international institutions.	1	A
10.4	Create an international working group on diseases affecting or threatening saiga across its range.	2	A
10.5	Raise awareness of health and saiga-relevant disease in saiga, other wildlife and livestock among stakeholders throughout the saiga range, including veterinarians, government agencies, rangers, local communities and researchers.	2	B
10.6	Encourage cooperation and communication transparency among technical health agencies on disease research results in free-ranging and captive saiga.	2	B
10.7	Monitor and control the disease risk to saiga associated with cross-border movement of livestock, their products and derivatives.	2	A
10.8	Carry out general health research on saiga, including regular monitoring of mortality such as during field missions at calving sites.	2	B
	<i>Population-specific measures</i>		
11.0	North-West Pre-Caspian region population		
11.1	Improve the effectiveness of law enforcement and anti-poaching activities in the saiga range, using modern methods.	1	A
11.2	Ensure research on the morphological and genetic diversity of the species to identify individuals, herds, and populations of saigas, impacts of climate change on saigas and their habitats, and effects of predators and diseases on saigas.	1	A
11.3	Conduct regular, scientifically robust monitoring and assessments of saiga population size and distribution, using non-invasive methods.	1	A
11.4	Carry out systematic work for the engagement of local people with saiga conservation through participatory monitoring, education, awareness raising, and sustainable livelihoods, including the development of ecological tourism, not causing harm to saiga.	1	A
11.5	Ensure the effective cooperation of state authorities and protected area managers to support the effective functioning of federal and regional protected areas located in the saiga range.	1	A
11.6	Ensure the development of a network of protected areas of federal and regional importance and activities to optimise nature use in in the saiga range to ensure protection of key saiga habitats in the Russian Federation.	1	B
11.7	Ensure the implementation of the strategy for saiga conservation in the Russian Federation and the roadmap (action plan) for saiga conservation and restoration in the Russian Federation.	1	B

	Measures to be taken	Urgency¹	Timescale²
11.8	Ensure the effective work of the saiga conservation and restoration expert section of the working group on conservation and restoration of certain rare and endangered wildlife species in the Russian Federation under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Ecology of the Russian Federation.	2	B
11.9	Improve the institutional capacity and effectiveness of the national and regional authorities responsible for saiga management, and strengthen their links with the CMS contact point, CITES Management Authority and other administrative units of the Russian Federation and internationally.	2	B
11.10	Support participation of and financial contributions from business organisations and NGOs in saiga conservation, research, and monitoring activities as well as in engaging local communities in saiga conservation.	2	B
12.0	Ural population		
12.1	Improve anti-poaching activities through close cooperation between wildlife protection services and other law enforcement agencies, involving local people.	1	A
12.2	Carry out research into the factors predisposing the population to mass mortality from disease including transmissible diseases from livestock, and implement mitigating measures based on the findings.	1	A
12.3	Implement measures to eliminate the negative impact of international border barriers on migrating saiga.	1	A
12.4	Strengthen public awareness and engagement activities, including particularly with respect to conservation value of saiga and disease control.	1	A
12.5	Strengthen cooperation between Russia and Kazakhstan for management of this transboundary population in the framework of existing and planned agreements.	2	B
12.6	Create a holistic monitoring programme to support saiga management decisions related to sustainable saiga use, including the contribution to the continued development of population models, collecting data on saiga distribution, population structure and threats, taking into account the trans-boundary nature of the population.	1	A
12.7	Develop a human-wildlife conflict mitigation scheme to make peaceful cohabitation of people with their livestock and saiga possible.	2	A
13.0	Ustiurt population		
13.1	Strengthen anti-poaching activity in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, including, where possible, the involvement of voluntary rangers from local communities and community-based NGOs, national and transboundary cooperation between relevant agencies such as inspectors, border guards, customs officers and police.	1	A
13.2	Make special efforts to build cooperation at the operational level between (currently) Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan to ensure effective anti-poaching and conservation actions for this transboundary landscape.	1	A
13.3	Support the recently established Integrated Saigachy (Landscape) Reserve, National nature Park "Southern Ustyurt" and other protected areas in Ustyurt, consider the possibility to create a protected area in Kazakhstan in the north and south Ustiurt and continue to consider expanding the protected area network, respecting ecological connectivity and ensuring support and engagement of local people.	1	A

	Measures to be taken	Urgency¹	Timescale²
13.4	Based on 6.1 and 6.2, require developers to carry out mitigation measures to minimise the impact of barriers on movement on the population, particularly border fences at the Kazakhstan-Uzbek border, the Shalkar-Beyneu railway section, the A380 Kungrad-Beyneu road section, as well as disturbance from infrastructure and other industrial development activities. Existing linear infrastructure, such as railways and roads, should be adapted to allow saiga to cross.	1	A
13.5	Continue research on the seasonal distribution and numbers of saiga and the status of their habitat, with a particular emphasis on the role of infrastructure and border fencing in constraining movement, and on the locations of, abundance, and threats to resident populations.	1	A
13.6	Encourage local communities and civil society organizations to support conservation activities on the Ustiurt Plateau, ensuring that local people have the opportunity to participate in, and to obtain benefits from conservation.	1	A
13.7	Develop and expand education and awareness raising, as well as community engagement and conservation-related income-generating enterprises.	2	A
13.8	Restore the ecological integrity of Ustiurt as a transboundary landscape by establishing transboundary ecological corridors and protected areas	1	B
13.9	Strengthen the implementation of the existing bilateral and/or trilateral cooperation agreements between Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan to ensure coordinated action to implement the agreements.	2	B
13.10	Include the Ustiurt population in a holistic monitoring programme in order to gain detailed data on the status of the population based on highest scientific standards, which allow conclusions for its conservation and future management.	2	B
14.0	Betpak-Dala population		
14.1	Strengthen anti-poaching efforts, targeting areas where saiga antelopes are particularly vulnerable, through close cooperation of wildlife protection services and other law enforcement agencies, and involving local communities, where appropriate.	1	A
14.2	Ensure that saiga antelope mitigation measures are taken when developing transport and other linear infrastructure in accordance with the principles of the mitigation hierarchy.	1	A
14.3	Continue and extend the monitoring of the health status of the population, especially at calving time.	1	A
14.4	Implement measures to eliminate the negative impact of international border barriers on migrating saigas.	2	A
14.5	Develop and implement a long-term research programme on saiga diseases including national and international expertise, and communicate results to local people and rangers as well as to the general public nationally and internationally.	1	B
14.6	Conduct public engagement activities, awareness-raising and community involvement in saiga conservation	2	B
14.7	Support effective management of protected areas and develop ecological corridors to ensure that the protected area network is relevant to the saiga's current and particularly its future needs, including in the light of climate change, agricultural and infrastructural development.	2	B

	Measures to be taken	Urgency¹	Timescale²
14.8	Implement activities under the agreement between the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Russian Federation and the Ministry of Ecology, Geology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Kazakhstan on the protection, reproduction and use of transboundary saiga populations (<i>Saiga tatarica tatarica</i>).	2	B
14.9	Develop and implement a holistic monitoring programme for the Betpak-Dala population to support saiga management decisions related to future sustainable saiga use, including the contribution to the continued development of population models, collecting data on saiga distribution, population structure and threats.	2	A
15.0	Mongolia population		
15.1	Enhance the protected area network by identifying new sites or upgrading existing sites, where appropriate.	1	A
15.2	Strengthen local engagement in saiga conservation and reduce conflict through livelihood enhancement and public awareness activities, including community rangers, educational initiatives and ecotourism.	1	A
15.3	Disseminate appropriate and clear information among local communities on wildlife diseases (the risk of spillover from livestock to saiga antelope) and the guidelines to report diseases to animal health authorities.	1	A
15.4	Continue research into the seasonal saiga distribution, with updated information on range, movement, reproduction, genetics and mortality, in order to inform conservation planning, with a particular emphasis on grazing overlap, competition, saiga health and disease transmission between saiga and livestock.	1	A
15.5	Continue to apply and improve the current standardised, robust approaches to population monitoring, in order to monitor population trends.	1	A
15.6	Carry out genetic research on Mongolian saiga using the latest technology, in order to ascertain its phylogenetic relationship to other saiga populations.	1	A
15.7	Encourage animal health authorities to vaccinate livestock in the saiga range against PPR to control the risk of transmission to susceptible wildlife.	1	A
15.8	Strengthen the capacity of law enforcement agencies to combat the illegal trade in saiga derivatives.	1	A
15.9	Strengthen protection, including adequate funding for anti-poaching patrols and effective protected area management.	1	B
15.10	Establish a facility to support reintroduction into historical parts of the range and ensure that the genetic diversity of the population is preserved, using best practice under IUCN guidelines.	1	B
15.11	Continue research into emerging threats including possible impacts of infrastructure, mining, climate change and disease, in order to inform conservation planning and mitigation.	2	B