



CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES

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Agenda Item 7.2

PROPOSAL FOR THE INCLUSION OF THE RED-FRONTED GAZELLE (*Eudorcas rufifrons*) IN CMS APPENDIX I

Summary

The Governments of Niger and Senegal have jointly submitted a proposal for the inclusion of the Red-fronted Gazelle (*Eudorcas rufifrons*) in CMS Appendix I at the 11th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP11), 4-9 November 2014, Quito, Ecuador.

The proposal is reproduced under this cover for its evaluation by the 18th Meeting of the CMS Scientific Council.

**PROPOSAL FOR INCLUSION OF SPECIES ON THE APPENDICES OF THE
CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF MIGRATORY SPECIES OF
WILD ANIMALS**

A. PROPOSAL: For the Amendment of Appendix I

Eudorcas rufifrons is proposed to be added to CMS Appendix I, on the basis of its decreasing population trends, throughout its range, and almost non-existent specific conservation actions taken for the species. The species is very little known, but it is thought that the majority of its dwindling populations live outside protected areas.

B. PROPONENT: Niger and Senegal

C. SUPPORTING STATEMENT

1. Taxon

- 1.1 Classis:** Mammalia
1.2 Ordo: Artiodactyla
1.3 Familia: Bovidae
1.4 Genus or Species resp. subspecies, including author and year
Eudorcas rufifrons (Gray, 1846)
1.5 Common name(s), when applicable
 English: Red-fronted Gazelle
 Français: Gazelle à front roux
 Spanish: Gacela de frente roja

Taxonomic Notes:

Treated in Wilson & Reeder (2005) as a polytypic species with five subspecies, *rufifrons*, *albonotata* (W. Rothschild, 1903), *kanuri* (Schwarz, 1914), *laevipes* (Sundevall, 1847), and *tilonura* (Heuglin, 1869) (Grubb, in Wilson & Reeder, 2005: 679). Three species are included in the Wilson & Reeder concept, *E. rufifrons* s.s. (with subspecies *rufifrons*, *kanuri* and *laevipes*) in the Sahel west of the Nile, the Eritrean Gazelle, *E. tilonura*, east of the Nile, and the Mongalla Gazelle, *E. albonotata* on the upper Nile (Groves & Grubb, 2011). The proposal encompasses the entire complex, in accordance with the CMS taxonomic reference, the third edition of Wilson & Reeder (Wilson & Reeder, 2005).

2. Biological data

2.1 Distribution (current and historical) - see also 5

This species formerly occurred throughout dry grasslands and sahelian bushlands from Mauritania and northern Senegal to the western side of the Nile River in Sudan, with Heuglin's Gazelle (*E. r. tilonura*) ranging east of the Nile between the southern part of the Red Sea hills in Sudan and the southern foothills of the Ethiopian massif in western Eritrea and north-western Ethiopia (East 1999; Scholte and Hashim 2013; Hashim 2013). It is likely to be extinct in Ghana. The Mongalla Gazelle, *Eudorcas rufifrons albonotata* inhabits the

flood plains and flat savanna grasslands in southeast Sudan, east of the Nile, but not reaching the Ugandan and Kenyan borders, and perhaps the Omo region in south-west Ethiopia.

2.2 Population (estimates and trends)

Red-fronted Gazelle populations have been reduced to scattered remnants over most of its range by illegal hunting, competition with domestic livestock and habitat degradation, and this reduction is estimated to be greater than 30% over the last three generations (15-18 years; IUCN 2008). Numbers are declining everywhere and the majority of the population resides outside of protected areas. If present trends continue, the Red-fronted Gazelle's distribution and numbers will probably decline further until its status becomes Endangered or Critically Endangered, e.g., at present less than 10% of its total numbers occur in populations which may be stable and none are known to be stable or increasing.

The available information on this species' numbers is based mainly on informed guesses. East (1999) produced an estimated total population of Red-fronted gazelle excluding the Mongalla gazelle of about 25,000, which includes an estimated 3,500-4,000 Heuglin's Gazelles. At the time of East's (1999) estimate, large numbers were believed to survive in Niger (ca. 4,000) and Mali (ca. 3,000) but far fewer remain now in both countries. Population trends are generally downwards. *E. r. tilonura* numbers in Eritrea have also declined sharply (Hagos Yohannes, Forestry & Wildlife Authority, pers. comm. 2013).

East (1999) guessed that the total population of Mongalla Gazelle could number 100,000, but numbers are known to fluctuate substantially in this area and the central parts of its range are particularly inaccessible. An aerial survey carried out by the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) in 2007 produced a population estimate for part of South Sudan of 278,000 (Fay *et al.* 2007).

2.3 Habitat (short description and trends)

Formerly widespread in a narrow band across the southern Sahel zone and savanna grasslands, woodlands and shrubland in the northern part of the Sudanian savanna zone. They range up to 1,400 m in the savannas of north-western Ethiopia (Yalden *et al.* 1996). It is able to adapt to human occupation of its habitat to some extent, e.g., it is known to re-occupy fallow land if sufficient cover is available. It occurs locally in small to moderate numbers in areas of largely unexploited rangeland.

The Mongalla gazelle (*Eudorcas rufifrons albonotata*) inhabits floodplain and savanna grasslands in Sudan (East 1999). This gazelle is adapted to following a nomadic annual cycle over the eastern Sudd floodplains, an ecologically peculiar region where extensive floods are followed by extreme aridity (Hashim, in press). During the wet season, the Mongalla Gazelle aggregates in high population densities with other migratory species such as White-eared Kob and Tiang (Hillman and Fryxell 1988).

2.4 Migrations (kinds of movement, distance, proportion of the population migrating).

Eudorcas rufifrons are known to make seasonal movements, although these are increasingly restricted by human settlement. Transborder populations occur between Burkina Faso, Niger, and Benin, between Senegal and Mali, between Niger and Mali, between Niger and Chad, and between Chad and Sudan.

3 Threat data

Competition with domestic livestock, and habitat degradation resulting from drought, overgrazing of livestock and clearance of land for agriculture.

3.1 Direct threat of threat of the population (factors, intensity)

Red-fronted Gazelle populations have been reduced to scattered remnants over most of its range by illegal hunting.

3.2 Habitat destruction (quality of changes, quantity of loss)

The species has suffered and still suffers from major habitat degradation resulting from drought, overgrazing of livestock and clearance of land for agriculture.

3.3 Indirect threat (e.g. reduction of breeding success by pesticide contamination)

Not known.

3.4 Threat connected especially with migrations

Not known.

3.5 National and international utilization

Not known.

4 Protection status and needs

IUCN Red List: Vulnerable A2cd ver 3.1

Approximately 15% of the total population of this species occurs in protected areas (East 1999), in particular W N.P. (Niger, Burkina Faso, Benin), Waza N.P. (Cameroon) and Zakouma N.P. (Chad) (East 1999; Scholte and Hashim 2013). Heuglin's Gazelle is protected in Dinder N.P. in Sudan, but East (1999) noted that it does not receive effective protection here, as the sites that it prefers are utilized intensively by camel herders who trespass into the park in the dry season and destroy the gazelle's favourite shade trees to feed their camels and goats.

The extension of effective protection and management to populations in areas such as Zakouma, Waza and Dinder National Parks is necessary. Development and implementation of land use plans which allow for the needs of wildlife outside protected areas in countries such as Chad and Sudan would also be of major benefit to many of the remaining populations of this species (East 1999).

A limited number of Red-fronted Gazelles are maintained in captivity, but without formal breeding programmes.

4.1 National protection status

Senegal: Animals fully protected (D. ARTICLE 36 code hunting and conservation). The hunting and capture, including by young people, are strictly forbidden throughout the territory.

Except the observations reported by local communities, very few studies inform about the abundance of the red-fronted gazelles. Except for the monitoring reports, only one recent study was conducted on this species (Layna, on 2011). The available information states that the species is in decline across its whole area of distribution in Senegal, because of the droughts which followed one another between the 70s and 80, the construction of the dam of Diama (continuous flooding of their ecological area by waters of the Senegal River), poaching, excessive pasture use, etc. The species occurs in the National park of the Birds of Djoudj in the North of Senegal; six individuals were reintroduced of which four in 1972 and two in 1979 (DPN, 2010). The work of Layna (2011) states that there is a single group in the park compound consisting of one male and three females.

At the level of the Reserve of Fauna of Ferlo Nord (RFFN), covering natural habitat of the red-fronted gazelles, the situation is very worrisome. Staff numbers vary between only 21-35 individuals (Layna, on 2011, Report RFFN, on 2012). The survival of the species is compromised if measures of preservation are not very quickly taken.

4.2 International protection status

Not known

4.3 Additional protection needs

Not known

5. Range States

Native:

Burkina Faso; Cameroon; Central African Republic; Chad; Eritrea; Ethiopia; Mali; Mauritania; Niger; Nigeria; Senegal; South Sudan, Sudan

Regionally extinct: Ghana

6. Comments from Range States

7. Additional remarks

8. References

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Explanatory notes

A. Definition of the proposal (species, sub-species or higher taxon; whether the entire or only part of the population should be included; whether inclusion in appendix I or II or in both appendices is proposed)

B. Official name of the Contracting Party submitting the proposal

C. A brief selection of the most important scientific data which explain and substantiate the proposal; these data may be gathered from technical literature or from reports which have so far not been published (indication of source). The proposals should contain the following details:

1. Taxonomy: the relevant scientific names as well as the names in those languages in which the official Convention text was drawn up;

2. Biological data

2.1 Description of the range, including changes in historical times as well as division of the overall range into reproduction, migrating and wintering (resting) ranges; add a map, if necessary;

2.2 Short quantitative characterization of the population (number, sizes, quantitative data from test areas) and its changes, including the population trend (extent and rate);

2.3 Short ecological characterization of habitats which are used by one or more animal species; indication of the most important structures of habitats which are responsible for the survival of the species during migration and in its wintering (resting) areas;

2.4 Description of the character of regular migrations, indicating the geographical extent of the population movements and including information on whether the entire or only part (which?) of the population undertakes regular migrations.

3. Threat data: Listing of factors - broken down into four groups - which are responsible for the species being endangered or for its poor conservation status; as far as factors 1 to 3 are concerned, it must also be specified whether these factors are operating in breeding, migrating or resting areas.

4. Apart from the legal conservation status in the various Range States and from information on international conservation (under other Conventions), concrete conservation requirements (4.3) should be listed which must be met in order to improve the conservation status of the species. Apart from providing direct protection to the population, proposals from the field of biotope conservation should be listed and explained (if necessary).

5. Listing of States where the occurrence of species has been proved (indicating, perhaps, whether these are breeding, migrating or resting ranges).

6. It is necessary to consult, as far as possible, experts and/or nature conservation authorities of the other Range States before the proposal is submitted and to give a brief outline of their comments upon the proposal on this format. These data make it easier both for the Scientific Council and for the Conference of the Parties to take the necessary decisions.