Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

Secretariat provided by the United Nations Environment Programme

UNEP

STAKEHOLDER MEETING ON THE CONSERVATION OF LARGE MAMMALS IN CENTRAL ASIA

Tuesday 23 - Thursday 25 September 2014, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

UNEP/CMS/CAMI/Doc.5

PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR THE CENTRAL ASIAN MAMMALS INITIATIVE (2014-2020)

1. Introduction

The vast and still largely interconnected ecosystems of the Central Asian region harbour a number of CMS-listed large mammal species, most of which are in decline due to poaching, illegal trade, habitat loss, degradation and fragmentation from mining and infrastructure development as well as from overgrazing by and competition with livestock and conversion to agriculture. CMS Parties recognized with Recommendations 8.23 and 9.1 that the populations of many Eurasian migratory mammals[1] are in a profoundly unsatisfactory state of conservation and that these ecosystems and their unique migration phenomena are a crucial area of action for the Convention. CMS is already working together with many Central Asian countries and organizations, inter alia through the Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) for the conservation of the Saiga antelope and the Bukhara deer and the Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of Argali. CMS policies also target the removal of barriers to migration and the building of transboundary ecological networks (Res. 10.3).

The Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI) has been developed under CMS to provide a common strategic framework for action at the international level to conserve migratory mammals and their habitat in the region. It aims at bringing together and harmonizing implementation of existing CMS instruments and mandates as well as initiatives undertaken by other stakeholders. A strong focus of CAMI is on promoting synergies between stakeholders and existing conservation frameworks, as well as on sharing communication and strengthening cooperation across borders and facilitating scaling up successes.

The initiative has so far produced the following:

1. An assessment of gaps and needs of migratory mammal conservation in Central Asia (Karlstetter & Mallon 2014), which included a stakeholder survey, online questionnaire and interviews in Afghanistan, China, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in February and March 2014, and national consultation meetings in Kazakhstan,

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1 A "migratory species" under CMS means "the entire population or any geographically separate part of the population of any species or lower taxon of wild animals, a significant proportion of whose members cyclically and predictably cross one or more national jurisdictional boundaries." (CMS 1979)

Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in May and June 2014 (see also UNEP/CMS/CAMI/Inf.1)

2. Based on the results of this assessment,

    a. A compilation of key actions that stakeholders identified as important for the conservation of migratory mammals across the region (published as UNEP/CMS/CAMI/Inf.2)

    b. A draft joint Programme of Work (POW), which is intended to be discussed, reviewed and finalized during the Stakeholder Meeting to Conserve Large Mammals in Central Asia, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan (23-25 September 2014)

The finalized POW will be submitted for consideration for adoption at the 11th Conference of the Parties to CMS in Quito, Ecuador (4-9 November 2014).

2. Taxonomic and geographical scope of CAMI

CAMI currently addresses 14 species, selected based on the following criteria[2]:

1. Listing on the Appendices of CMS:

    Appendix 1: Bukhara/Yarkand deer *Cervus elaphus yarkandensis* (also listed on Appendix II), wild *camel Camelus bactrianus*, wild yak *Bos grunniens*, snow leopard *Uncia uncia*, cheetah *Acinonyx jubatus*

    Appendix 2: Saiga *Saiga tatarica* and *S. borealis mongolica*, argali *Ovis ammon*, Mongolian gazelle *Procapra gutturosa*, goitered gazelle *Gazella subgutturosa*, kulan *Equus hemionus*, kiang *Equus kiang*

2. Other long-distance migrants of Central Asia not listed under CMS: chiru *Pantholops hodgsonii*

3. Species that have transboundary populations (today or possibly in future) and have more or less the same range as species listed above: Przewalski's horse *Equus caballus przewalskii*, Tibetan gazelle *Procapra picticaudata*

In the Central Asian region these 14 species occur in the following 14 Range States:

Afghanistan, Bhutan, China, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

3. Vision, Goal and Objectives of the POW

The POW developed under the CAMI aims to achieve the following Vision, Goal and Objectives:

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2 The standard taxonomic reference for mammals under CMS is Wilson & Reeder (2005).

Vision:

Secure and viable populations of migratory mammals that range across the landscapes of Central Asia in healthy ecosystems, are valued by, and bring benefits to, local communities and all stakeholders.

Goal:

To improve the conservation of migratory large mammals and their habitats in the Central Asian region by strengthening coordination and cross-border cooperation

Objectives:

1. To address main threats and issues currently not (sufficiently) covered by existing work programmes and stakeholders.
2. To guide planning and implementation of prioritized conservation actions on a regional scale.
3. To facilitate knowledge exchange, communication and the promotion of synergies.
4. To support implementation, coordination and resourcing of the CAMI.

4. Structure of the draft POW

The draft POW (Table 1) is structured around the Goal and Objectives. Actions identified under each Objective have been developed based on the outcomes of the assessment process to guide the discussions at the Stakeholder Meeting to Conserve Large Mammals in Central Asia, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan (23-25 September 2014) and make best use of the limited time available.

5. Implementation, coordination and financing

Responsibility for implementing the POW lies with the Governments of the range countries and other relevant stakeholders engaged in the region, including the private sector, to take concerted national and international action. The POW outlines priority activities directed at a range of various stakeholders according to their responsibilities, mandates and interest to work in collaboration for the conservation of the species and their habitat.

Given the limited human and financial capacity at the CMS Secretariat, in addition to the Officer for Central Asia, outside support for the technical coordination of the implementation of the POW is needed. Such coordination arrangements have already been made for CMS instruments such as for the Saiga MOU where the Secretariat maintains official responsibility for administration of the MOU but the technical coordination is provided by two NGOs. A similar arrangement exists for the CMS Concerted Action on the Sahelo-Saharan Antelopes. These examples provide potential models for coordination of the CAMI (or parts thereof) but a wide range of possible arrangements is thinkable, including species-based and issue-based approaches. Interested organizations are encouraged to submit their expression of interests to the CMS Secretariat.

Effective implementation also depends on sufficient financial resources being made available for migratory mammals both nationally and internationally, from a variety of sources. Target 16 of the draft CMS Strategic Plan for Migratory Species (SPMS) addresses "the mobilization of

adequate resources from all sources to effectively implement the SPMS" and the POW itself should be used as a tool for active fundraising.

6. Revision, monitoring and evaluation

The present POW covers the period of 2014 to 2020 in line with the triennial cycle of the CMS Conference of the Parties. A revision of the assessment of gaps and needs of migratory mammal conservation in Central Asia and the POW should be undertaken in 2020.

Table 1. Draft Programme of Work

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4">Vision:

Secure and viable populations of migratory mammals that range across the landscapes of Central Asia in healthy ecosystems, are valued by, and bring benefits to, local communities and all stakeholders.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Goal:

To improve the conservation of migratory large mammals and their habitats in the Central Asian region by strengthening coordination and cross-border cooperation.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Objective 1. To address key threats and issues currently not (sufficiently) covered by existing work programs and stakeholders</td></tr>
<tr><td>Action</td><td>Activity</td><td>Responsible</td><td>Timing</td></tr>
<tr><td>1.1. Reduce illegal hunting and trade</td><td>1.1.1.

1.1.2.

Etc.</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>1.2. Reduce pressure from overgrazing and livestock competition</td><td>1.2.1.

1.2.2.

Etc.</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>1.3. Mitigate negative impacts from industry and infrastructure development</td><td>1.3.1.

1.3.2.

Etc.</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
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1.4. Promote good governance of natural resource management	1.4.1. 1.4.2. Etc.		
1.5. Integrate human needs in conservation measures	1.5.1. 1.5.2. Etc.		
1.6. Improve scientific knowledge	1.6.1. 1.6.2. Etc.		

Objective 2. To guide planning and implementation of prioritized conservation actions at a regional scale

Action	Landscape and Species	Activity	Responsible	Timing
2.1 Enhance protection and connectivity of priority landscapes and corridors	E.g. Ustyurt plateau (KZ, UZ, TKM): Saiga, Goitered gazelle, Wild ass	2.1.1. 2.1.2. Etc.		
	E.g. Pamir (AFG, CN, KG, TJ): Argali, Snow leopard, etc.			

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	E.g. Tibetean plateau			

Action	Activity		Responsible	Timing
2.2. Strengthen transboundary cooperation between Range States	2.2.1. 2.2.2. Etc.			
2.3. Recommend appropriate instruments (CMS and/or other) for the conservation of CAMI species	2.3.1. 2.3.2. Etc.			

Objective 3. To facilitate knowledge exchange, communication and the promotion of synergies				
Action	Activity		Responsible	Timing
3.1 Make key material available to all (including translation where appropriate).	3.1.1. E.g. Establish an online data storage system/ CAMI data library. 3.1.2. Etc.			
3.2 Produce and/or make available best practice guidelines/ handbooks.	3.2.1. 3.2.2. Etc.			

Action	Activity	Responsible	Timing
3.3. Promote joint activities between stakeholders to avoid duplication of efforts and foster joint learning.	3.3.1. 3.3.2. Etc.		
Objective 4. To support implementation, coordination and resourcing of the CAMI			
Action	**Activity**	**Responsible**	**Timing**
4.1 Establish a coordination mechanism for CAMI	4.1.1 4.1.2. Etc.		
4.2 Establish coordination mechanisms for species/ groups of species and/ or threats and issues (e.g. working groups/ committees, NGO or individual-led, ad hoc, etc.)	4.2.1. 4.2.2. Etc.		
4.3 Develop a reporting mechanism to monitor and evaluate progress on POW implementation	4.3.1. 4.3.2. Etc.		
4.4 Leverage funding for POW implementation.	4.4.1. 4.2.1.		

	Etc.		