

# Communicating Conservation

Saiga News

The Saiga Resource Centre

*Tools for disseminating  
information and facilitating  
action*

# Saiga Antelope: issues of space & scale

- A historically common ungulate; transboundary, migratory
- A population crash:
  - Changing national conditions; international demand; local necessity
- A multi-partner response including local people; range states; consumer states and the wider world
  - Government Departments
  - NGOs
  - Research institutions
  - Passionate individuals
  - Local institutions
  - International businesses eg. oil and gas
  - The Memorandum of Understanding



# Creating information

- At all scales there are:
  - Lots of strategies being attempted
  - Lots of knowledge being generated (Research, Professional, Anecdotal)
  - Lots of useful lessons being learned
- Sharing information brings benefits:
  - Repetition of successes (and not of failure)
  - Capacity building
  - Cost saving
  - Camaraderie, friendship and mutual support



# A recognised need to share more

- Obstacles to conservation
    - *“Weak inter agency communication...”*
    - *“Weak exchange of information...”*
    - *“Weak international communication...”*
  - Options for enhanced synergies
    - *“...enhance existing and establish new inter agency communication...”*
    - *“...establish a communication platform and communication mechanism...”*
  - Mandate of CMS
    - *“Foster transboundary dialog”*
    - *“support communication and awareness raising”*
  - Physical barriers
    - *“Make Species and landscape specific knowledge available”*
    - *“Make maps available across levels”*
    - *“web based knowledge platform where information would be stored”*
  - Hunting
    - *“Improve inter agency communication”*
    - *“Promote information exchange across range, transit and consumer states”*
    - *“Sharing experiences and lessons”*
- Etc. etc. etc.

# Sharing is not easy!

- A dispersed and large network (who should you tell?)
  - Who is in the network
  - Who is interested
- Access to technologies (how can you tell people?)
- Language Barriers



# Saiga News

- Bi-annual non peer reviewed journal dedicated to Saiga
- Multilingual:
  - English, Russian, Chinese, Kazakh, Uzbek, Mongolian
- Includes
  - A Featured Article
  - Updates on projects
  - Media Coverage of Saiga
  - Articles
  - Interviews
  - Announcements



# Saiga News

- *A dispersed and large network (who should you tell?)*
  - *Who is in the network*
  - *Who is interested*
- *Saiga news is a central hub*
  - *It removes these barriers from the person looking to disseminate (or acquire) information.*
- *Access to technologies (how can you tell people?)*
- *Available online and in a printed format*
  - *The responsibility of distribution is also removed from the information owner*
- *Language Barriers*
- *Saiga news is published in 6 languages*

# Saiga Resource Centre

- Online information repository and conservation hub for saiga
- Multilingual:
  - English, Russian, Chinese, Kazakh
- Includes
  - Background (an introduction)
  - Latest News
  - Pictures, Videos, Literature
  - Education
  - CMS
  - Saiga News
  - Specialist Resources Section
  - Forum





# Saiga Resource Centre

An information repository:- A digital, free to access, library

## ○ Literature and Saiga News

- Scientific, practitioner targeted and popular printed literature
- Searchable (Saiga News a work in progress)
- Multi-lingual

## ○ Pictures and Video

- Catalogued visual Media
- Searchable
- Information on copyright and usage agreements
- Already drawing attention from outside the conservation field

# Saiga Resource Centre

An information sharing and conservation co-ordination platform

## ○ Forum

- Informal space for unstructured conversation on a range of topics
  - “General Saiga talk”, “Project updates & reports”, “Discuss Saiga news items”, “The Saiga MoU”, “CITES”

## ○ Specialist Resources

- Formal and password protected sub-section of the main site
  - Personal “Expert Profiles”:- a standardised format for sharing interests and skills
  - “Project Profiles”:- a standardised format for presenting information about ongoing and recently completed projects
  - “Official Documents”:- related to the CMS MoU, CITES, etc.
    - in development

# Saiga Resource Centre

- *A dispersed and large network (who should you tell?)*
  - *Who is in the network? Who is interested*
- *Saiga Resource Centre is a central hub*
  - *All information should be coming here*
  - *Specialist resources sections shows you who is in the network and who is potentially interested*
- *Access to technologies (how can you tell people?)*
- *Available online only*
  - *If you and the target recipient are connected to the internet your capacity to share knowledge, information and opinion in real time huge*
- *Language Barriers*
- *The Saiga Resource Centre is available in 4 languages with the capacity to have many more*

# Lessons to learnt: Saiga News

## Hard and Digital Copies

- Hard copies are expensive but reach people who would not otherwise have access to this information
  - A concerted strategy for getting copies into the hands of decision-makers is essential
  - Villagers also need copies! they are the front line of saiga conservation and VERY proud to see themselves and local events in an international publication

## Content

- Having all the languages is worth the effort and cost of translation
- It is very difficult to meet all of an organisations reporting requirements in a single format
  - Saiga news is not well suited to the donor community or general public
  - “Saiga Spotlight” as an alternative accessible digest
  - Saiga New can focus on providing the finer detail of saiga conservation and research

# Lessons to learnt: The SRC

## ○ Construction:

- Continuous team
- Developed in house vs. outsourced
- The SRC as a template for other MoUs

## ○ Maintenance

- The site is never complete
- Time and financial costs

## ○ Engagement:

- The site has been warmly received but is not being utilised
- People are busy and have established workflows, change has a investment cost
- Constant updates of content required to draw people in
- A SRC champion in every range state!

# Questions

- There are copies of Saiga News in Russian and English languages available for interested conference delegates
- I would be delighted to show interested delegates the Saiga Resource centre in more detail
  - You will be emailed a password to access the specialist Resources Section today
  - Please talk to me at any time if you require assistance

