



**CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY
SPECIES**

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

Distr: General

UNEP/CMS/Saiga/MOS3/Report
Annex 5

7 December 2015

Original: English

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

Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 26-29 October 2015

**MEDIUM-TERM INTERNATIONAL WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE
SAIGA ANTELOPE (2016-2020)**

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

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE BY THE CMS SECRETARIAT

1. Pursuant to paragraph 2 of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) concerning Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of the Saiga Antelope (*Saiga* spp.), Signatories to the MOU are to implement the provisions of the Action Plan as a basis for conserving all populations of *Saiga* spp.
2. At each Meeting of the Signatories to date a Medium-Term International Work Programme (MTIWP) has been adopted for the next five years to support the implementation of the MOU and Action Plan. The MTIWP is intended to focus the work and resources of the Range States, the consumer countries, non-governmental organizations, as well as the saiga research and conservation community by agreeing areas of highest conservation concern that require urgent intervention. The MTIWP is further envisioned to form the basis for targeted fundraising nationally and internationally and should provide a guiding context for donor decisions. The MTIWP (2011-2015) was approved at the Second Meeting of the MOU Signatories (Ulaanbaatar 2010) and has now reached its end.
3. CITES Resolutions 14.91 (Rev. CoP16) and 16.96 request Range States and consumer countries to implement the work programme, while 14.93 (Rev CoP 16) and 16.98 request Range States and consumer countries respectively to provide information on their implementation actions to the online databases coordinated under the CMS MOU. Resolution 16.95 encourages Range States to communicate their priorities to the CMS and CITES Secretariats and to potential donors. Consuming and trading nations are encouraged in 16.97 to contribute financially to saiga conservation in the Range States, and in 16.99 to reduce consumption of saiga products and implement the recommendations of the Urumqi workshop on the conservation and sustainable use of saigas (September 2010).
4. The standard term of the MTIWP is five years. As with all action planning documents, regular review is an integral component, and activities are being updated periodically by the MOU's Meeting of the Signatories as the need arises to reflect new information or developments.
5. Each meeting of the MOU Signatories is expected to review implementation of the work programme to gauge progress made. Prior to each meeting, Range States, cooperating organizations and others in the saiga research and conservation community are asked to report on their activities as part of the national reporting and/or the project reporting processes using reporting templates endorsed by the First Meeting of the MOU Signatories in 2006.
6. Signatories to the MOU, cooperating organizations and others engaged in saiga conservation are also asked to upload information about activities relevant to the MOU, including photos and other media, to the online Saiga Resource Centre (SRC). The SRC also includes a database of saiga experts. The SRC is a key coordination mechanism for the MOU, as agreed at the Second Meeting of the Signatories in 2010, and highlighted in CITES decisions 14.93 (Rev CoP 16) and 16.98.

7. This draft revised version of the work programme has been produced by the IUCN Species Survival Commission's Antelope Specialist Group and the Saiga Conservation Alliance at the request of the CMS Secretariat. It is intended as a basis for the work of the Third Meeting of the Signatories to the MOU aimed at producing a revised version of the work programme for the period 2016-2020. Proposed changes with respect to the work programme for 2011-2015 are mostly based on an assessment of the current status of the species and individual populations, and of the implementation of the individual measures listed in the work programme since the Second Meeting of the Signatories in 2010. In this regard, it is recommended to examine the present document in conjunction with the Overview Report on conservation status and MOU implementation (UNEP/CMS/saiga/MOS3/Doc.6).

Action requested:

- (a) Review the draft Medium-Term International Work Programme, taking into account the MOU's provisions and national circumstances, and provide comments on how it could be improved if necessary.
- (b) Endorse the work programme and urge its implementation at national and international level.
- (c) Urge interested intergovernmental, governmental and non-governmental organizations to support its implementation where possible through financial and in-kind contributions.

**MEDIUM-TERM INTERNATIONAL WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE SAIGA ANTELOPE (2016-2020)
TO SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING CONCERNING CONSERVATION
MEASURES FOR THE SAIGA ANTELOPE (SAIGA SPP.)**

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
	<i>Range-wide measures</i>		
1.0	Implementation		
1.1	In order to minimise risks to the global saiga population, ensure that all saiga populations have appropriate investment towards achieving the MOU's goal.	1	A
1.2	Agree and approve protocols for routine monitoring and for emergency action in the case of a disease outbreak or mass mortality episode.	1	A
1.3	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
1.4	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, through representatives of the organizations implementing the coordination of the CMS MOU.	2	A
1.5	Encourage additional trading and consumer countries to engage in and support the CMS MOU.	2	A
1.6	Resolve the issue of genetic distinctiveness of different populations.	2	A
1.7	Develop national saiga conservation Action Plans, integrate them into NBSAPs and share them with others through the CMS MOU coordination mechanisms.	3	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 and the conservation community to engage with the international coordination mechanism for the CMS MOU, including national reporting to CMS 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	Coordinate conservation efforts and promote cooperation between all stakeholders in Range States and ensure sustainable funding.	1	B
1.11	Encourage all Range States to join CMS.	1	B
1.12	Encourage the Signatories, 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 update national anti-poaching strategies, with a focus at the population level (including transboundary populations), 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.	1	A
2.3	Strengthen national capacity and legislation to support improvements in detection, processing and prosecution of offenders, including measures to avoid conflicts of interest.	2	A
2.4	Improve the prestige, capacity 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
3.0	Sustainable Use and Trade		
3.1	Encourage research aiming to reduce the 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	Encourage Range States and consumer countries to comply with CITES decisions and recommendations.	2	A

	Measures to be taken	Urgency¹	Timescale²
3.3	Encourage all Signatories to report seizures or confiscations through appropriate channels and encourage trading partners to do the same.	2	A
3.4	All Range States that are members of CITES are encouraged to achieve a Category 1 rating for their CITES-related legislation.	2	A
3.5	Encourage countries trading in saiga products to establish internal market controls for saiga parts e.g., registration of stockpiles, labelling of parts and products and registration of manufacturers and traders, learning from experiences in China.	2	A
3.6	Seek opportunities for training and cross-border cooperation in CITES implementation, identification of saiga products and techniques for countering illegal trade.	2	A
3.7	Where feasible, include saiga conservation and trade issues into higher political agendas in order to raise the awareness of policy makers and ensure higher level political support for the implementation of the MOU and Medium-Term International Work Programme.	2	A
3.8	Encourage cooperation between in-situ conservation and the Asian medicine industry for promotion of saiga conservation and sustainable use, including information sharing and financial support.	2	B
3.9	Encourage all Range States to join CITES.	3	B
4.0	Work with local people		
4.1	Expand current incentive-based and conservation-linked livelihood-improvement projects and develop new programmes in all appropriate parts of the saiga's range.	1	A
4.2	Monitor attitudes to saiga conservation activities and evidence of poaching and trade using local-level social research including participatory community monitoring.	2	A
4.3	Strengthen the involvement of different stakeholders, including industry, in saiga conservation and encourage local involvement in, and support for, saiga protection.	2	A
4.4	Promote sustainable rangeland use to enable the cohabitation of people, livestock and saigas.	2	A
4.5	Ensure national contact points are responsible for integration of human factors and public awareness into policy implementation.	2	B
4.6	Build on pilots of saiga-based photo-tourism and promote this as a useful approach to increase local engagement in conservation.	2	B

	Measures to be taken	Urgency ¹	Timescale ²
5.0	Awareness		
5.1	Continue an objective high-profile mass-media campaign at regional, national and local levels in both Range States and consumer countries, addressing saiga conservation, restoration and sustainable use, and explaining the relevant challenges, with a particular focus on local media outlets.	2	A
5.2	Continue to widely distribute information and educational materials on saiga biology and conservation aimed at local people, school children and decision-makers.	2	B
5.3	Support and regularly update existing web-sites about saiga conservation, restoration and sustainable use, including the creation and maintenance of the official CMS Saiga MOU website, and support of the online Saiga Resource Centre.	2	B
5.4	Expand the distribution and profile of <i>Saiga News</i> , both in hard copy at a local level and through other media, nationally and internationally.	2	B
6.0	Habitat and environmental factors		
6.1	Remove barriers impeding the movement of saiga antelopes or, if not possible, alter fences, roads, railways and other linear infrastructure to allow saigas to pass freely, in line with CMS Guidelines on Mitigating the Impact of Linear Infrastructure and Related Disturbance on Mammals in Central Asia (Resolution 11.24).	1	A
6.2	Support appropriate authorities and developers (industry, government) to ensure that all infrastructural and other development likely to impact saigas has a full impact assessment prior to implementation (including EIA and SEA), and that steps are taken to address any impacts on saigas, following best practice and a mitigation hierarchy (avoid, minimise, restore, offset), including producing saiga-specific guidance documents, following the internationally recognized standards IFC1 and IFC6.	1	A
6.3	Carry out research on saiga movement using appropriate technology (including satellite tracking and remote sensing), with a particular focus on improving understanding of the impacts of infrastructure and climate change.	1	A
6.4	Analyse range use based on this information, and make conservation recommendations accordingly, including for the potential expansion of protected areas.	1	A
6.5	Analyse scenarios of likely future change in saiga distribution, abundance, demography and threats in the light of climate change, infrastructure and human factors, and develop a plan for conservation interventions accordingly.	1	B
6.6	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 disturbance, including climate change.	2	B

	Measures to be taken	Urgency¹	Timescale²
6.7	Develop a system for archiving and exchange of information recorded on GIS, and explore the possibility of using the Saiga Resource Centre to facilitate this.	2	B
7.0	Protected areas		
7.1	Expand and 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 6.5.	1	B
7.2	Establish trans-frontier protected areas where appropriate, in the light of saiga distributions, based on the results of a full feasibility study.	2	B
7.3	Establish a network of ecological corridors in order to protect saiga populations during migration	2	B
8.0	Monitoring		
8.1	Carry out annual population counts using appropriate methods, including modern non-invasive techniques, in order to obtain a time series that has adequate power to detect whether the Goal has been met.	1	A
8.2	Carry out scientific monitoring of saiga populations, their demographic parameters, health and their wider environment, including trends in sex ratio, mortality patterns, reproductive success, movement patterns, age structure, predators and competitors.	1	A
8.3	Review different monitoring techniques, and adopt 'best practice' methodologies for reliable counting of saiga populations. Identify appropriate sample sizes, timing, and frequency of counts to provide reliable baseline population data. Provide training in standard monitoring techniques as appropriate.	1	A
8.4	Carry out inter-disciplinary ecological research to inform mitigation, control and action in the event of a disease outbreak or mass mortality episode.	1	A
8.5	Disseminate protocols and processes for taking environmental data at the landscape scale and biological samples from individual saigas, sample storage and clinical diagnostics, including training and capacity-building as required.	1	A
8.6	Encourage use of comparable techniques and reporting standards in all Range States, and joint analysis in the case of transboundary populations.	2	B

	Measures to be taken	Urgency¹	Timescale²
9.0	Captive breeding		
9.1	Determine the role of captive breeding and other ex situ methods for genetic preservation or reintroduction, and set guidelines on best practice, including approved facilities and reintroductions.	2	A
9.2	Maintain a central database or studbook for all captive populations and create structures and leadership for the database.	2	A
9.3	Promote the exchange of expertise in captive breeding, including study tours between captive breeding centres and research into existing issues and best practices.	2	A
9.4	Establish captive breeding facilities in Mongolia, Uzbekistan and other parts of the saiga range where appropriate, and support existing facilities in the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan and China.	2	B
	<i>Population-specific measures</i>		
10.0	North-West Pre-Caspian region population		
10.1	Develop and officially endorse a long-term programme and action plan to restore and protect the population	1	A
10.2	Improve the function and effectiveness of law enforcement and anti-poaching activities, using modern methods.	1	A
10.3	Create a Working Group under the Ministry of Natural Resources of the Russian Federation on saiga conservation and research.	1	A
10.4	Develop and implement a programme of saiga research, on issues including the current distribution, migration routes, population structure, genetic variation, habitat assessment and monitoring methods.	1	A
10.5	On the basis of the methodology mandated below conduct regular, scientifically robust, assessments of saiga population abundance and distributions.	1	A
10.6	Strengthen and expand public participation in restoration and protection of saigas, such as visitor centres at captive breeding centres and protected areas, participatory monitoring, education and sustainable livelihoods.	1	A
10.7	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	A

	Measures to be taken	Urgency¹	Timescale²
10.8	Implement activities to restore and protect saigas by supporting and improving the work of existing breeding centres and other institutions, and creating new ones; including developing methods for saiga reintroduction and acclimatisation to the wild.	2	A
10.9	Develop a methodology for non-invasive monitoring of saigas, including methods for censuses, evaluation of population structure and habitats, as well as the impact of predators.	1	B
10.10	Work with local and federal authorities to optimize the network of federal and regional protected areas located in the saiga range, taking into account the current situation, and future environmental change and population shifts.	2	B
11.0	Ural population		
11.1	Improve the function and effectiveness of law enforcement and anti-poaching activities.	1	A
11.2	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
11.3	Strengthen public awareness and engagement activities	2	A
11.4	Build up an information base about saiga distribution, population structure and threats, to act as a foundation for conservation planning and taking into account the trans-boundary nature of the population.	2	A
11.5	Strengthen cooperation between Russia and Kazakhstan for management of this transboundary population	2	B
12.0	Ustiurt population		
12.1	Strengthen anti-poaching activity in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, including national and transfrontier cooperation between relevant agencies such as inspectors, border guards, customs officers and police.	1	A
12.2	Establish new protected areas based on the results of 12.2, respecting ecological connectivity (for example in southern Ustiurt), and complete the reorganization of the Saigachy reserve in Uzbekistan.	1	A
12.3	Based on 12.2, require developers to carry out mitigation measures to minimise the impact on the population of barriers to movement, particularly the Kazakhstan-Uzbekistan border fence, as well as disturbance from infrastructure.	1	A
12.4	Continue research on the seasonal distribution and numbers of saigas 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 in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan.	1	A

	Measures to be taken	Urgency¹	Timescale²
12.5	Strengthen the implementation of the existing bilateral and/or trilateral cooperation agreements between Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan to ensure coordinated action	1	A
12.6	Develop and expand public engagement activities, including education, public awareness and conservation-related income-generating enterprises.	2	A
12.7	Ensure public access to information on planning, and implement mitigation measures and compensation for saiga and habitat conservation, in collaboration with infrastructural developers (including oil and gas companies and road/rail developers).	2	A
13.0	Betpak-Dala population		
13.1	Strengthen anti-poaching efforts, targeting areas where saigas are particularly vulnerable. Ensure that existing anti-poaching initiatives are funded as necessary and that they operate effectively, including offering an incentive scheme for rangers. Consider higher fines for poaching as a reaction to the mass die-off event in May 2015.	1	A
13.2	Ensure that transport and infrastructural development is carried out with due regard to saiga conservation.	1	A
13.3	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	A
13.4	Continue and extend the monitoring of the health status of the Betpak-Dala population, especially at calving time.	1	A
13.5	Institute public engagement activities, including livelihood enhancement, awareness-raising and involvement in saiga conservation, population-wide, building on the activities already under way.	2	A
13.6	Continue to implement 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
14.0	Mongolia population		
14.1	Strengthen protection, including adequate funding for anti-poaching patrols, improved protected area management and identifying and implementing grazing reserves.	1	A
14.2	Build local engagement in saiga conservation through livelihood enhancement and public awareness activities, including community rangers, educational initiatives and ecotourism.	1	A

	Measures to be taken	Urgency¹	Timescale²
14.3	Continue research into the seasonal distribution, with the updated range, migration, reproduction, genetics and mortality of saigas, in order to inform conservation planning, with a particular emphasis on grazing overlap, competition, saiga health and disease transmission between saigas and livestock.	1	A
14.4	Build on progress in developing robust approaches to population monitoring, so as to develop an ongoing monitoring programme that can detect population trends over time.	2	A
14.5	Establish a captive breeding facility to support reintroduction in historical ranges and to ensure that the genetic diversity of the population is preserved.	2	B
14.6	Carry out research into potential threats to population viability in the future, including possible impacts of infrastructural and other development and climate change, in order to inform conservation planning and mitigation.	2	B