

BUKHARA DEER

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With input from:

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In accordance to the MOU and Action Plan on Bukhara deer conservation and restoration and CAMI, the most important components of the work are ensuring population growth in natural habitats, and reintroduction in suitable sites within the historical area of the species.

In Tajikistan the activities are supported by the Government of the country. Continuous population growth is registered in the major natural population in Tigrovaja balka (southern Tajikistan, bordering with Afghanistan) – according to the latest census there are 386 deer there. In Central Tajikistan in Ramit nature reserve BD population had been completely eliminated in 1990-th – while previously it had been permanently used as a resource of animals for reintroduction (e.g. in Karatchingil, Kazakhstan; Badai-tugai, Uzbekistan, etc.). In 2017 a new enclosure was built, and 10 BD were translocated from Tigrovaja balka. As a result of natural reproduction, the number of BD in Ramit is 18 animals in 2019.

In Uzbekistan the total number of BD already exceeds 2650: 2112 deer in Lower-Amudaria biosphere reservat (*Cornelis et al, 2020*) – seriously more, than the carrying capacity of the habitats. 120-150 deer live in Kyzylkumskii zapovednik (middle Amudaria; *Musaev e.a., 2016*), about 200 BD in upper Amudaria, on the border with Afghanistan and Turkmenistan (*M.G. Mitropolskii, oral communication*). Reintroduced population in middle and upper reaches of Zarafshan river, Zarafshan national nature park is about 100 animals, 24 deer in pens for future releases; and transboundary group of 60-150 BD, migrating from Uzbekistan to Tajikistan.

State Agency for nature conservation, with the support of various international organizations (Michael Succow Foundation, WWF) started preparation of deer translocation from Badai-Tugai – core area of Lower-Amudaria biosphere reservat - to Nazarhan riparian forest (50 km to the North, the second important cluster of the Lower-Amudaria biosphere reservat) and Khorezm sanctuary; pens for deer adaptation are already built. Potential for BD population development in these areas is very high.

In Kazakhstan development of the reintroduced population in the riparian forests of middle Syrdaria is on-going, there are 75 deer in free-ranging population in the Syrdaria-Turkistan nature park and its surroundings and 83 in the system of pens, for future releases. It is planned to translocate deer from the pens to far-away spots of riparian forests of Syrdaria, to advance BD population development for all Syrdaria valley.

On the base of private activities a group of deer was established in 2013 in game management entity Tasmuryr, middle reaches of Ily river – there are now about 40 BD.

The major BD population in Kazakhstan – Karatchingil and its surroundings – already exceeds 700 animals.

Population dynamics of BD in various sites in Kazakhstan in 2015-2019 (*E.R.Baidavletov*).

Name of the site, river valley		Number by year					Population growth in 2019 in % to 2015
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	
Almata oblast							
Karatchingil game management entity		350	500	600	630	640	+82,8
Surroundings of Karatchingil		50	90	90	70	75	+50,0
Ily-Balhash reservat		-	-	-	-	5	-
Subtotal:		400	590	690	700	720	+78,7
Turkestan oblast							
Syrdaria-Turkistan nature park and its surroundings	Syrdaria river valley (free ranging population)	49*	63*	70*	71*	75*	+53,0
	Turkestan breeding center	54	63	65	85	83	+53,7
Subtotal:		103	126	135	156	158	+53,3
Total:		503	716	825	856	878	+73,5

* - a part of animals in summer-autumn 2015-2019 expanded to the surroundings of the nature park

In the frame of Tiger reintroduction Programme in Ily-Balkhash region (Memorandum between WWF and the Government of Kazakhstan, signed in 2017), WWF has prepared enclosures for deer adaptation, and in December 2018 the first 5 deer were translocated from the Syrdaria pens to Ile-Balkhash reserve. They were released to nature in 2019, and 2 females were equipped with satellite collars. Females kept close to the pens for the first months, but in the middle of winter together with one of the males moved away 100 kilometers from the enclosure. At the beginning of 2020, 13 more females and 1 male from the Karatchingil were translocated for adaptation to the enclosures of the Ile-Balkhash reserve. Additional deliveries of significant numbers of animals are planned in subsequent years, and such capture in Karatchingil will not lead to a decrease of this population, but only to intensification of reproduction.

In the nearest years WWF is planning a project on BD translocation from Uzbekistan (Lower-Amudaria biosphere reservat) to various populations in Kazakhstan - Karatchingil, Ile-Balkhash reserve, Syrdaria-Turkistan nature park - for genetic exchange and reproduction improvement. A preliminary agreement on that is already achieved with Uzbek and Kazakh authorities.

There are no exact data from Turkmenistan, but data on stable numbers of BD population in the middle reaches of Amudaria (Kyzylkumskii) in Uzbekistan, which are directly connected with the left bank populations in Turkmenistan, we can estimate the numbers there to be not less than 100.

So, by the end 2019 total number of BD within the species area in Central Asia exceeds 3500 animals.