



CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES

Distr: General

CMS/SA-1/6
25 August 2006

Original: English

FIRST MEETING OF THE SIGNATORIES TO THE
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING CONCERNING
CONSERVATION, RESTORATION AND SUSTAINABLE
USE OF THE SAIGA ANTELOPE (*Saiga tatarica tatarica*)
Almaty, Kazakhstan, 25-26 September 2006
Agenda Item 8.1

NATIONAL REPORTING AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

(Prepared by the Secretariat)

National report format to monitor implementation of the MoU and Action Plan

1. MoU Paragraph 6 requests Signatories to provide a detailed report to the CMS Secretariat on their implementation of the MoU and Action Plan, and notes that the Signatories will determine the report format in consultation with the CMS Secretariat. The report format is to support the informational needs of the Signatories to effectively implement the MoU, as well as the reporting requirements of CMS and CITES.
2. A comprehensive draft national report format (CMS/SA-1/6/Add.1) has been developed by the CMS Secretariat with the assistance of the Antelope Specialist Group of the IUCN Species Survival Commission, and in consultation with the CITES Secretariat. If endorsed by the Signatories it would be used as the basis for future reporting under the MoU.
3. It is foreseen that the report format would provide a basis to make reports from the Signatories more consistent and information-rich, while making the information provided amenable to synthesis and analysis for the Secretariat's Overview Report.
4. The draft report format was developed primarily to measure implementation of the Action Plan. The various action points were grouped together by theme and questions were developed accordingly. The questions presented go beyond the scope of information already requested from CMS Contracting Parties for national reports to the CMS Conference of the Parties (COP), and the reports requested for the upcoming 54th meeting of the CITES Standing Committee (2-6 October 2006).
5. While the draft report format was developed for the use of Range States of *Saiga tatarica tatarica*, it was also recognised that information relevant to the other sub-species, *Saiga tatarica mongolica*, is also important for decision making processes at the species level within both CMS and CITES. For example, the CMS Scientific Council regularly keeps the conservation status of *Saiga tatarica* under review as part of its process to recommend migratory species for listing on CMS appendices to the CMS Conference of the Parties. *Saiga tatarica tatarica* is listed on CMS Appendix II.

6. *Saiga tatarica* was listed on Appendix II of CITES in 1995. The CITES Conference of the Parties therefore regularly keeps its conservation status under review. For example, the Animals Committee conducted a review of trade in the species in 1998, resulting in a 2001 Standing Committee recommendation to suspend importation of specimens of this species from Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation. More recently the 13th Meeting of the CITES Conference of the Parties adopted a series of decisions on *Saiga tatarica*.

7. CITES COP decision 13.30 urged Mongolia to participate in the implementation of those elements of the MoU Action Plan that are relevant to the conservation of *Saiga tatarica mongolica*. The draft report format was developed so that Mongolia could provide information on its conservation efforts regarding the sub-species.

8. Countries consuming Saiga products or involved in their trade are recognised by CITES and CMS as key players in Saiga conservation and sustainable use efforts. The draft report format provides the possibility for these countries to provide important information to the MoU process.

9. All signatory and non-signatory Range States of *Saiga tatarica tatarica* were asked to provide a national report using the draft national report format. All key consumer and trading countries of Saiga parts and derivatives were invited to the MoU meeting and asked to provide a national report as well.

10. As of 25 August 2006, the Secretariat had received reports from the two signatories, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, and from one non-signatory, Kazakhstan. The Ministry of Agriculture of the Russian Federation, the other non-signatory, had not yet provided its report. In addition, Mongolia's Ministry of Environment, which had signed the MoU as a collaborating organisation, provided information on Mongolia's efforts to conserve *Saiga tatarica mongolica*, while China's State Forestry Administration had also provided a national report on Saiga-related activities in its country.

11. The reporting response rate for countries participating in the meeting has been very good. The challenge for the future will be to maintain the response rate and broaden it, ensure the provision of good quality information, and make it easier for Signatories and others to contribute information which can then be input into the CMS on-line Information Management System (IMS) where it can be shared and used to produce various information products:

< <http://www.cms.int/species/index.htm> >.

12. A key overriding issue is avoiding duplication of reporting effort for CMS and CITES Parties. The two Secretariats will discuss this as part of the follow-up to the MoU meeting.

13. The possibility may exist for MoU reporting to be undertaken on-line, and on a rolling basis. The national report format would be the foundation of this. CMS has developed a project proposal for its Agreements, including MoUs, to migrate to on-line reporting, modelled on the system already in place for CMS's Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia Marine Turtles MoU:

< <http://www.ioseaturtles.org/report.php> >.

The project, which has yet to be funded, would include the Saiga MoU.

14. In anticipation of this forthcoming work, it would be useful for the Secretariat to learn more about the national level process to develop national reports, including the sources of information used and any problems encountered in the process. The meeting may wish to discuss how the reporting process can be facilitated to make it less burdensome for Signatories and others.

15. The Antelope Specialist Group prepared the Overview Report on behalf of the Secretariat in part by drawing on the national reports. It will be asked to comment on the quality of the information presented in the national reports. The meeting may wish to discuss how the quality of information can be maintained or improved.

Project reporting template

16. There is a great amount of interest surrounding the Saiga Antelope. Many governmental and non-governmental organizations are already involved with various conservation and research projects that contribute to the implementation of the MoU and Action Plan.

17. A draft project reporting template (CMS/SA-1/6/Add.2) was designed and distributed to governmental and non-governmental organizations and individual experts to gain a better understanding of past, existing and planned projects for both Saiga sub-species. The actual individual responses received have been compiled and presented as a tabular summary (CMS/SA-1/Inf/6) for the benefit of the Range States and the Saiga research and conservation community. The actual responses are presented as a compendium for information purposes (CMS/SA-1/Inf/6/Add.1).

18. It is hoped that the tabular summary of project activities will provide the basis for the Saiga research and conservation community to better coordinate its activities and to develop a sense of partnership working together to contribute to the implementation of the MoU and Action Plan.

19. If a coordinator is identified and funded for the MoU (see agenda item 8.2) the tabular summary could be maintained on a regular basis and made available to the Saiga research and conservation community, with the intention that it migrate to an on-line environment which would allow project leaders to directly supply and update information on a rolling basis (see the information management section below).

20. The meeting may wish to provide comments on the draft project-reporting template. It may also wish to provide comments on the information contained in the tabular summary of Saiga-related project activities to ensure its accuracy and completeness.

Information management

21. A key step foreseen by the CMS Strategic Plan and CMS COP Resolution 8.5 (Existing and Future Agreements) is to make the information generated from CMS's specialised Agreement-related fora, including MoUs, available to the larger CMS process. The CMS IMS will be a key tool in disseminating this information.

22. The information from the CMS COP national reports provided by each CMS Contracting Party on the Saiga Antelope is already input into the IMS by the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC). But the CMS reporting format is necessarily less detailed than that developed

for the more specialised purposes of the MoU. In addition, reporting responses for the Conference of the Parties may not be high enough to ensure an accurate picture as to what is happening on behalf of the species, especially since only two of the MoU signatories, and one collaborating organisation, are located in Range States that are a Contracting Party to CMS. Therefore the MoU reporting process is central to developing a solid knowledge base on Saiga.

23. Furthermore, the MoU provides the potential to draw together more detailed information from the Range States about Saiga beyond that available in the national reports. The meeting may wish to consider, for example, the desirability of creating a register or projects database of all planned, on-going and completed projects and their outcomes. This could be a web-based system adapted from CMS's Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia Marine Turtles MoU (IOSEA) and directly updated on a rolling basis by the various Saiga project leaders:

< <http://www.ioseaturtles.org/projectdb.php> >.

The draft project reporting template discussed above (CMS/SA-1/6/Add.2) was derived from the IOSEA on-line template.

24. The IOSEA MoU also maintains an electronic library for reference materials, papers, PowerPoint presentations, educational materials and dates of interest:

< http://www.ioseaturtles.org/electronic_lib.php >.

25. The meeting may wish to consider whether something similar to this would be useful and should be developed for the Saiga MoU. The Antelope Specialist Group of IUCN and its members would be foreseen to be a key resource for materials and advice on what would be useful for the Saiga research and conservation community.

Action requested:

The Signatories are invited to:

- Consider the draft national report format, provide feedback on its usefulness and suggest any needed revisions in anticipation of its endorsement at the meeting.
- Consider the tabular summary of Saiga-related projects, provide feedback on its usefulness, accuracy and completeness, and provide comments on how to improve it and the draft project-reporting template.
- Identify and consider other reporting issues, as well as general information management issues, potentially relevant for the MoU and the ways and means to address them.