

Third meeting of the signatories to the Memorandum of Understanding concerning the Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable use of the Saiga Antelope. Tashkent, Uzbekistan. 26-29 October 2015.

**Paul Hotham**

**Director Eurasia Programme  
Fauna & Flora International**



# FFI and Saiga conservation

- Focused on the Ustyurt Plateau and Saiga
  - Last 5 years partnerships and relations with:
    - Forestry and Hunting Committee of Kazakhstan
    - Dog Training Centre of the Customs Control Committee of Kazakhstan
    - Association for the Conservation of Biodiversity of Kazakhstan (ACBK)
    - State Committee for Nature Protection Uzbekistan
    - PACT
    - UNDP Uzbekistan
    - Institute of Zoology
    - Convention on Migratory Species
    - Imperial College London
    - Royal Veterinary College London
    - The Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute, USA
    - Frankfurt Zoological Society (FZS)
    - Saiga Conservation Alliance (SCA)
    - Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
    - Makor K9 & Battleborn K9 teams USA
    - ... and many others to whom I apologize for not being able to reference here
- Funding support
- USAID
  - Darwin Initiative
  - Disney Conservation Fund
  - Halcyon Land and Sea
  - Morris Animal Fund
  - Mohammed Bin Zayed Cons' Fund
  - Wild Invest

# Біз кииктерді әлі де құтқара аламыз! Мы ещѐ можем спасти сайгаков!

• Improve the ecological and social scientific understanding of the Ustyurt landscape.

• Reinforce the capacity of state agencies involved in the conservation of the Ustyurt.

• Engage with and support local communities to participate positively in conservation while improving the quality of their life.

• Engage with the private sector to mitigate their impact on the Ustyurt landscape.



Қазақстан Республикасының табиғи ресурстар және экология министрлігінің Сайгақтарды қорғау және олардың мұніздерімен және етімен саудасын шектеу туралы Заңының Осы тыйым салу шарттарын бұзу 3 жыл мерзімге дейін бас бостандығының шектелуімен немесе мүлкі тәртібінің сол мерзімге бас бостандығының анықталуымен жағаланатын Қазақстанның Республикасының Қылмыстық Кодексінің 290 - бабы

Сайгақтарды қорғау және олардың мұніздерімен және олардың етімен саудасын шектеу туралы Заңының Осы тыйым салу шарттарын бұзу Қазақстан Республикасында заңсыз және қылмыстық болып табылады. Сайгақтарды қорғау және олардың мұніздерімен және олардың етімен саудасын шектеу туралы Заңының Осы тыйым салу шарттарын бұзу Қазақстан Республикасында заңсыз және қылмыстық болып табылады.

Нарушение данного запрета наказуется ограничением свободы на срок до 3 лет или лишением свободы с конфискацией имущества.

Министерство природных ресурсов и экологии Республики Казахстан

# Results

## Knowledge

- Built scientific knowledge to inform activity
- Baseline ecology surveys
- Baseline social surveys
- Saiga movement surveys
- Climate impact assess'
- Carbon value assess'
- Saiga die off support
- Rangeland survey
- Assessed border fence and rail infrastructure
- Saiga trade research

## Motivation

- Improved operating environment & supporting conservation
- Awareness raising
- Eco-youth clubs created
- Eco-youth club exchange
- Football tournament
- Saiga day supported
- TB ranger event
- MERC established
- Engaged business

## Capacity

- Increased capacity
- Assessed ranger and customs' needs
- Provided equipment
- Provided training
- TB ranger event
- Supported Saigachy Reserve designation
- Provided sniffer dogs to customs

## Overarching outputs / outcomes

- Landscape scale view and approach promoted
- Ustyurt was more visible on the conservation agenda
- Sniffer dogs active at border crossing points – first seizures
- Strengthened ranger team (Aktobe) operating on the Ustyurt
- Mobile ERC providing opportunities to local people
- Rangers are more aware of the practices, challenges and issues they share with rangers in other range states
- Good understanding of saiga movement which has informed infrastructure development mitigations
- High level support and some movement towards transboundary cooperation
- First discussions with corporate business encouraging

## Issues

- Border fence obstructing saiga movements
- Infrastructure development – mining/oil, road, rail developing with little mitigation for saiga or landscape integrity
- Lack of policy and national planning approaches to manage the Plateau at the landscape scale
- Illegal trade in saiga antelope horn continues
- Nascent transboundary cooperation on conservation, which needs to be supported to further develop
- Need for more robust engagement of local actors, including local communities, to gain their support for conservation
- Ustyurt saiga numbers continue to plummet due to poaching

## The future / follow-up

- Continuing to focus on the Ustyurt, with partners, we will:
  - Build more robust enforcement capacity
  - Further address the illegal trade in saiga
  - Expand the sniffer dog programme in Kazakhstan
  - Continue to seek mitigations of linear barriers
  - Support further transboundary rangers meetings
  - Monitor saiga movement on the Plateau
  - Support the MERC and establish a further centre
  - Support further research and solutions to Saiga mass-die offs
  - Seek to strengthen development controls at landscape scale
  - Engaging positively with corporates businesses ...



Thank you  
...to you all for your  
tireless hard work and  
commitment