

SECOND RANGE STATE MEETING OF THE CMS CENTRAL ASIAN MAMMALS INITIATIVE (CAMI)

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ADMINISTRATION OF THE CENTRAL ASIAN MAMMALS INITIATIVE

(Prepared by the UNEP/CMS Secretariat)

Summary:

This document briefly summarizes the development of the Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI) and its linkages to the Concerted Action process under CMS and proposes a way forward to clarify the relationship between these two instruments. The document then outlines how species can be added to CAMI and proposes elements of an operational structure for CAMI to ensure political leadership during the intersessional periods.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE CENTRAL ASIAN MAMMALS INITIATIVE

Introduction

1. The importance of the Central Asian region for the conservation of migratory and nomadic mammals has been recognized by CMS Parties with the adoption of Recommendation 9.1 on *Eurasian Aridland Mammals*. With Resolution 11.24 *The Central Asian Mammals Initiative*, CMS Parties endorsed CAMI and its Programme of Work (POW) along with the Single-Species Action Plan for the Argali and the Infrastructure Guidelines for the Central Asian region.
2. Since its inception in 2014, a great number of activities outlined in the POW have been realized. A comprehensive overview on the status of implementation of the POW is provided in document UNEP/CMS/CAMI2/Doc.3 *Overview on Implementation*. An overview of all activities undertaken by the Secretariat is available in document UNEP/CMS/CAMI2/Doc.2 *Report of the Secretariat*.
3. The initiative was developed as an open framework to combine various mandates for the conservation of migratory mammals under CMS, to pool resources and make use of synergies. With CAMI more than six years old the current meeting is an important opportunity to review the Initiative's operation so far, analyze what went well, what were the challenges, what are the lessons learnt and what conclusions can be drawn for the future. This document as well as document UNEP/CMS/CAMI2/Doc.6 *Towards a New Programme of Work 2021-2026* is a contribution to this discussion.
4. The document first briefly summarizes the origin of the initiative and its linkages with the Concerted Actions process under CMS and proposes a way forward to clarify their relationship. The document then outlines how species can be nominated for inclusion into CAMI and proposes a light operational structure to ensure political guidance during the intersessional periods.

Concerted Actions and CAMI

5. CMS Parties laid the foundation for the CAMI with the adoption of Recommendation 9.1 *Eurasian Aridland Mammals* in 2008, which was adopted as a Concerted and Cooperative Action (see also UNEP/CMS/COP11/Doc.23.3.1/Rev.1 *Central Asian Mammals Initiative* for a comprehensive discussion and background about the mandates and objectives for developing the CAMI).
6. In 2017, CMS Parties adopted Resolution 12.28 *Concerted Actions* which outlines the process for designating species for Concerted Actions and provides a monitoring framework for the implementation of Concerted Actions by the Conference of the Parties and the Scientific Council.
7. Most species covered by CAMI are currently still designated for Concerted Actions (see Resolution 12.28 *Concerted Actions*). CAMI was developed to stimulate greater action for those species by linking it with other single-species instruments, e.g. the Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) concerning the Conservation and Restoration of the Bukhara Deer and the MOU concerning the Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of Saiga Antelopes, as well as the Single-Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Argali. The Initiative aims at addressing more effectively a number of important cross-cutting threats that affect most if not all of those species and amplify existing efforts.

8. At the 11th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP11, Quito, 2014), CMS Parties initiated a process to consolidate the Concerted and Cooperative Actions processes under CMS and established a formal process for proposing species for Concerted Actions. This process requires that all species not duly proposed for Concerted Action through the established process would be removed from the list of species designated for Concerted Actions.
9. Given the fact that CAMI has evolved as a separate regional initiative, covering a number of species through a comprehensive programme of work and independent monitoring, it does not seem necessary anymore also to have these species covered by the Concerted Action process of CMS. Instead, there is a risk of duplicating efforts and the Secretariat therefore recommends that no new Concerted Action should be proposed for the species currently or potentially covered by CAMI.
10. This consideration has several important implications, namely:
 - a) All species covered by CAMI will be removed from the list of Concerted Actions at COP13;
 - b) Rather than proposing a new Concerted Action for a species already or potentially covered by CAMI, countries should pursue their conservation aims and efforts through the CAMI framework;
 - c) Countries that consider proposing a species occurring in the CAMI region for Concerted Action are advised to propose the species to be added to CAMI rather than a separate Concerted Action for it;
 - d) Adding a new species to CAMI would not require a Concerted Action proposal, but would be dealt with within CAMI separately (see paras 12-14 below)
 - e) Countries can only propose a species to be included into CAMI if the species is either already listed on a CMS Appendix, or if they have submitted a proposal to list the species under CMS.
11. This approach would decouple the Concerted Action process and CAMI. Essentially, it means that all migratory mammal species occurring in the CAMI region (CMS-listed or proposed for listing) should be covered by CAMI instead of a Concerted Action.

Species currently covered by CAMI

12. The current list of species covered by CAMI is shown in Table 1 below. Next to the twelve species listed on the CMS Appendices, three additional species were proposed during the development of the initiative as they either undertake long-distance movements (Chiru), have transboundary populations and more or less the same range as the CMS-listed species (Tibetan Gazelle, Chinkara).
13. While those species remain eligible for action under CAMI, as long as they are not formally listed on CMS Appendices, they have a low priority for action under CAMI. Therefore, no specific actions for those three species are included in the new POW 2021-2026 – until a Range State and CMS Party proposes the species for inclusion in one of the CMS Appendices at a COP.

Table 1. Species covered by the Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI)

	CMS Appendix	Species (scientific name)	Species (common name)	Instrument available within or outside CMS / Concerted Action
1	App. I & II	<i>Cervus elaphus yarkandensis</i>	Bukhara deer	Bukhara Deer MOU
2	App. I	<i>Camelus bactrianus</i>	Wild camel	Concerted Action
3	App. I	<i>Bos grunniens</i>	Wild Yak	Concerted Action
4	App. I	<i>Uncia uncia</i>	Snow leopard	GSLEP ¹
5	App. I	<i>Acinonyx jubatus</i>	Asiatic cheetah	Concerted Action
6	App. I	<i>Equus caballus przewalskii</i>	Przewalski's horse	-
7	App. II	<i>Saiga spp.</i>	Saiga Antelope	Saiga Antelope MOU
8	App. II	<i>Ovis ammon</i>	Argali	Concerted Action Argali Action Plan
9	App. II	<i>Procapra gutturosa</i>	Mongolian gazelle	Concerted Action
10	App. II	<i>Gazella subgutturosa</i>	Goitered gazelle	Concerted Action
11	App. II	<i>Equus hemionus</i> (includes <i>Equus onager</i>)	Asiatic Wild Ass	Concerted Action
12	App. II	<i>Equus kiang</i>	Kiang	-
Other long-distance migrants of Central Asia with a similar distribution as those listed on CMS Appendices and transboundary populations				
13	<i>Not listed</i>	<i>Pantholops hodgsonii</i>	Chiru	-
14	<i>Not listed</i>	<i>Procapra picticaudata</i>	Tibetan gazelle	-
15	<i>Not listed</i>	<i>Gazella bennettii</i>	Chinkara (Jabeer gazelle)	-

Proposing additional species for inclusion in CAMI

14. Apart from the Chiru, Tibetan Gazelle and Chinkara there are arguably additional species that share the same range as the CMS-listed species, such as the Urial (*Ovis vigneii*) or the Persian Leopard (*Panthera pardus*) which was listed on CMS Appendix II in 2017. Interest to initiate action for those species under CAMI has been frequently expressed at previous CAMI meetings.
15. In order to clarify the necessary steps to do so, the criterion for including species to CAMI should be whether the species is listed on CMS Appendices (see also para 13 above). In order for a species to fully benefit from activities under CAMI, i.e. for developing and implementing targeted conservation actions for that species as part of the POW, listing it under CMS is the required first step.

¹ Global Snow Leopard & Ecosystem Protection Programme

16. Therefore, if a species is already listed under CMS and it was not previously covered by CAMI, a Range State could propose adding this species to CAMI at a meeting of the Range States. The proposal should be discussed and approved at a Range State meeting and submitted to a CMS COP for adoption through amending Resolution 11.24. *The Central Asian Mammals Initiative.*
17. In order to propose a species to be included in CAMI, a Range State of that species would have to submit an official letter to the Secretariat, which clearly states
 - a) which species is proposed to be included into CAMI (specifying that it is already listed under CMS or proposed for listing at the next COP);
 - b) the rationale for the proposal and the expectations with regard to including the species into CAMI;
 - c) a set of concrete conservation measures that the country proposes for the POW and directed to the proposed species.

Monitoring

18. As the initiative developed further over the years and continued to gain momentum, it also became evident that more formal processes are required for a clear structure as well as for monitoring implementation without however losing its open and integrative partnership character and adding too much bureaucracy or heavy procedures.
19. In order to monitor progress in implementation, Range States will be requested one year before the end of the respective POW cycle (i.e. in 2025) to submit a concise implementation report outlining their activities to implement activities agreed to in the POW. The Secretariat will make those reports available and provide an analysis and overview on the status of implementation at the next meeting of the Range States.
20. Similarly, the Species Focal Points will also be requested to provide a short update on the situation of the species as well as trends and developments with regard to their conservation over the past five years to inform future discussions.

Political guidance

21. While CAMI benefits from a strong network of countries, species experts, scientists and NGOs, the Secretariat would like to propose establishing a structure to allow for a more official role of national governments in guiding the operations of CAMI during the intersessional period.
22. In order to do so, it is proposed that a Range State government take on the role of chairing the Initiative during the intersessional periods of meetings of COP (i.e. between the meetings of the Range States to be held every six years, in conjunction with the CMS COP cycle). A chair and a vice-chair should be elected at the meeting of the Range States in order to represent the Initiative and provide political guidance in consultation with other national governments on any matters that might arise.

Action requested:

23. The Meeting is invited to:

- (a) Take note of the information with regard to Concerted Actions;
- (b) Discuss and endorse the procedure of including species to CAMI;
- (c) Elect a Chair and a Vice-Chair for CAMI for the period 2021-2026.