

PROJECTS REPORTING TEMPLATE FOR SAIGA-RELATED ACTIVITIES

This reporting template is designed to collate information on projects carried out by intergovernmental, international non-governmental and non-governmental organisations as well as academics and other experts working on any aspect of Saiga antelope conservation and sustainable use. Information will be compiled into a table for discussion at Saiga MOU meetings. The information will be used to: (1) monitor implementation of the [Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of the Saiga Antelope \(*Saiga spp.*\)](#) and the associated [Medium Term International Work Programme](#).

Please complete sections as appropriate and **return to the CMS Secretariat**.

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Project: Altyn Dala Conservation Initiative			
Country:	China	<input type="checkbox"/>	Turkmenistan <input type="checkbox"/>
Kazakhstan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Uzbekistan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Mongolia	<input type="checkbox"/>		International <input type="checkbox"/>
Russia	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Organisation / Contact details: Altyn Dala Conservation Initiative			
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<i>The Committee of Forestry and Wildlife of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Kazakhstan is a project partner but is submitting its own report.</i>			
Duration of project:	Ongoing from 2006		

Location(s) of main activity: Betpak Dala, Ustyurt and Ural saiga populations in Kazakhstan and Saigachiy complex Nature reserve, Uzbekistan				
Sub-species: <i>Saiga tatarica tatarica</i> * <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
<i>Saiga tatarica mongolica</i> * <input type="checkbox"/>				
Areas of work:				
Anti-poaching	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Habitat restoration	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Population monitoring	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Protected area management	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Ecological research	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Training & capacity-building	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Education and awareness	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Law enforcement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Alternative livelihoods	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trade issues	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Socio-economic research	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Captive breeding	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Range mapping	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Reintroduction/release	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Habitat research	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
For each box ticked, please provide brief details in the project summary box below				
Project Summary: 2021, 2022, 2023, Jan-July 2024				
<table border="1"> <tr> <td> <p>Planned Activities:</p> <p>Anti-poaching:</p> <p>1. Continue to build on the ranger training programme, for government adoption and national roll-out across all state protection organs.</p> </td> </tr> </table>				<p>Planned Activities:</p> <p>Anti-poaching:</p> <p>1. Continue to build on the ranger training programme, for government adoption and national roll-out across all state protection organs.</p>
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1* Note that CMS Parties have adopted Wilson, D.E. & Reeder, D.M. (2005) Mammal Species of the World. A taxonomic and geographic reference. Third edition. John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, USA as taxonomic reference for terrestrial mammals through [Recommendation 9.4](#) where *S. t. tatarica* is referred to as *Saiga tatarica* and *S. t. mongolica* is referred to as *Saiga borealis*.

2. Provide opportunities to rangers and wildlife protection staff for national and international learning on anti-poaching and wildlife patrolling
3. Improve patrolling by extending the roll out of SMART across the saiga's range.
4. Maintain the monitoring team at the Ustyurt Plateau.
5. Continue to protect saiga in the territory of the Ecological Park "Alty Sai"
6. Support the operationalization of the new Bokey Orda Reserve

Population monitoring:

1. Continue to be involved in the saiga aerial survey.
2. Continue monitoring calving, including health monitoring with veterinarian support.
3. Continue monitoring rutting aggregation (e.g. using drone).
4. Investigate potential for sustainable use of saiga antelopes.

Ecological research:

1. Continue telemetry of saiga antelopes of all three populations.
2. Continue support of disease research.
3. Upgrade management and security of biodiversity databases

Education and awareness:

1. Extend and maintain a network of saiga clubs at schools across the area of all three populations.
2. Produce new educational resources for local people
3. Work with local people at the Ustyurt and Betpak-Dala range through the Ustyurt ranger team and within "Alty Sai" Ecological Park.
4. Raise international profile of Altyn Dala Conservation Initiative

Socioeconomic research:

1. Conduct socioeconomic research of the communities around all saiga populations
2. Design projects that create real benefits for people and the ecosystem based on analysis of this research

Range mapping:

1. Continue saiga telemetry programme.
2. Keep up database for wildlife ground observations.
3. Analysis of existing data to determine the current state of the habitat.

Habitat research and conservation:

1. Continue research in valuable saiga habitats to identify key areas for protection.
2. Use telemetry data to identify conflicts between saiga migration and existing and planned linear infrastructure.
3. Support the application of mitigation hierarchy in the planning process of new objects.
4. Ensure mitigation of negative impacts of linear infrastructure on saiga and other wildlife.
5. Mitigate negative impacts of industrial use and natural resource extraction on saiga.
6. Habitat research for restoration planning
7. Understand carbon and climate importance of the Kazakh Steppe

Protected area management:

1. Extend protected areas network in the saiga range
2. Improve management plans of existing protected areas.
3. Support implementation of management plans.

Training & capacity-building:

1. Conduct training for protected area rangers and Okhotzooptom rangers (as needed).

Law enforcement:

1. Conduct training in species ID, situational crime prevention and CITES procedures for enforcement officers.
2. Strengthen regional capacity of state prosecutors and key Government agencies to CWT and support CITES compliance

3. Development and dissemination of law enforcement and ranger training modules and embedding within national training curricula

Trade issues:

1. Expand the programme of sniffer dogs for wildlife scents.
2. Promote regional cooperation on Illegal Wildlife Trade
3. Fight the legal status of advertisements from horn traders.

Achievements to date:

Anti-poaching:

1. Continue to build on the ranger training programme, for government adoption and national roll-out across all state protection organs.

- The existing training program for state rangers has been updated. Using the knowledge of national and international experts, and with a list of training topics that the Committee for Forestry and Wildlife agreed should be refreshed, we produced and successfully piloted new national professional training programs for state rangers, the Environmental Police, "Okhotzooptom", Committee of Forestry and Wildlife of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Committee of Fisheries of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan, trainers of the police and ranger academies. The training is in line with the best international experience, covering topics such as improving skills in countering wildlife trade, interaction of nature protection structures with different groups of people (communities, offenders, and poachers), IWT crime prevention strategy, first aid, de-escalation of conflict, survival in extreme conditions and terrain orientation, use of technology and equipment for prevention and suppression of offences and wildlife crime.

2. Provide opportunities to rangers and wildlife protection staff for national and international learning on anti-poaching and wildlife patrolling

- A special international trip to Tanzania was organized in 2022 for representatives of the Ministry of Ecology, Geology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Vice Minister), Committee for Forestry and Wildlife (Vice Chairman), 2 members of Okhotzooptom and ACBK, to learn about approaches to anti-poaching in the Serengeti national park. A lot of experience was shared and enhanced participants' thinking around topics of human-wildlife conflict, technology for anti-poaching and establishing control centers for ranger unit management.

3. Improve patrolling by extending the roll out of SMART across the saiga's range.

- Collaboration with UNDP Kazakhstan has resulted in the formation of a community of SMART specialists in Kazakhstan. The aim of this community is to improve the SMART approach for nature protection and monitoring, and to present SMART to organizations and Protected Areas that have not yet begun to use this system. SMART is actively used by ACBK in the Ustyurt Monitoring Team, Ecological park "Alty Sai", and Alibi equid reintroduction center. The ADCI has supported the introduction of SMART in 12 state protected areas in Kazakhstan, including the new Bokey Orda Reservat.
- The Irgiz-Torgai State Nature Reserve is one of the best examples of a Protected Area that uses SMART. The reserve staff have completed 2 full annual cycles of implementing SMART, which is very significant. In September 2022, the reserve hosted an international meeting to exchange experience of SMART implementation for patrolling and monitoring biodiversity in protected areas in Central Asia. Representatives from Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan took part in this event.
- Through support for training and the provision of equipment and ongoing technical and logistical support Saigachiy reserve in Uzbekistan has been implementing SMART since 2023.

4. Maintain the ranger group at the Ustyurt Plateau.

- The Ustyurt Monitoring Team (UMT) continues to be an independent mobile personnel unit of ACBK, covering vast areas of the Ustyurt region throughout the year, conducting joint poaching prevention raids with government agencies such as Okhotzoprom, the Police and regional Territorial Inspectors. Raids include preventative interviews and vehicle inspections.
- UMT has been collecting saiga related data throughout the year including important data about the influence of the Shalkar-Beyneu railway, inspection of the border fence between KZ and UZ, and others.
- Camera traps have been installed in key saiga habitats that can collect data on vehicles of potential poachers

5. Continue to protect saiga in the territory of the Ecological Park "Alty Sai"

- Alty Sai Ecological Park is a 343,500-ha hunting area leased by ACBK for protection, wildlife monitoring and support of Altyn Dala's projects within the Betpak Dala saiga range. It is patrolled by three ranger units collaborating on joint poaching prevention raids with government agencies such as Okhotzoprom, the Police and regional branch of the Committee of Forestry and Wildlife. Raids include preventative interviews and vehicle inspections. In a 2022 raid, poachers with 56 saiga horns and 8 saiga carcasses were detained.
- In November 2021, ACBK hunting area team trialed 15 AudioMoth acoustic sensors on the territory of the Altybay and Saga hunting areas to see if it would enhance patrolling effectiveness. The first tranche of data was received at the end of the year but unfortunately it was not a successful pilot and has since been ceased.

6. Support the operationalization of the new Bokey Orda Reserve

- The Altyn Dala Conservation Initiative has supported the operationalization of the Bokey Orda Reservat by providing protected area staff with equipment, training (in SMART and others) and support with ecosystem research for the development and implementation of robust management plans.
- Staff of the Bokey Orda Reservat have been invited to participate in work that aims to help them adopt best practice techniques for effective, evidence-based patrolling to reduce poaching of saiga in their native habitats. The main aim is to promote effective collection, analysis, and use of ranger patrol data to inform management decisions for Saiga conservation in Kazakhstan.
- Extensive equipment has been provided to the Bokey Orda Reserve to enable delivery of the site management plan and other monitoring requirements, including satellite phones, vehicles, monitoring equipment, safety equipment, office equipment and other.

Population monitoring:

1. Continue to be involved in the saiga aerial survey

- ACBK was responsible for the aerial census and ground monitoring in April 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 and this has allowed consistent monitoring of population size for all three of Kazakhstan’s saiga populations. A standard methodology was applied each year, thereby providing consistent and reliable results.
- Saiga aerial census results in 2024 showed that numbers had reached 2,833,600, a 47.9% annual increase across Kazakhstan. On December 11, 2023, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) announced the transition of the Saiga tatarica from the "Endangered" category to the "Near Threatened" category on the international Red List.

	2021	2022	2023	2024
Betpak Dala	285,000	489,000	745,300	1,150,000 (54.3% increase from 2023)
Ural	545,000	801,000	1,130,000	1,620,000 (43.4% increase from 2023)
Ustyurt	12,000	28,000	39,700	63,600 (60.2% increase from 2023)
Total	842,000	1,318,000	1,915,000	2,833,000 (47.9% increase from 2023)

2. Continue monitoring calving, including health monitoring with veterinarian support.

- During calving time, ground monitoring is carried out to identifying places of mass calving, followed by a walking survey of the territory. Most calving aggregations were located correctly each year, based on telemetry data. Annual surveys of calving areas help to evaluate trends in reproductive success.
- Calving was successful each year, with no cases of disease recorded. However, in May 2024, the Saiga calving peak in Aktobe, West Kazakhstan and Kostanay region (covering the habitats of all three populations in the country) occurred earlier than usual - from 5 to 8 May. Prior to calving, flooding in the Kostanay region and in Western Kazakhstan had a significant impact on the landscape of the territory, many natural depressions were still filled with water, which created natural barriers to the migration of saigas

and contributed to the fragmentation of herds. Also, flooded areas significantly hindered the survey of the territory and the search for calving sites.

3. Continue monitoring rutting aggregation using drones.

- annual surveys of rutting areas help to evaluate reproductive potential of the population. We make use of drones to efficiently direct on-the-ground fieldwork where saiga are present.
- Rutting research showed males have increased significantly over the reporting period, with observations of huge rutting accumulations particularly in the Betpak Dala and Ural regions.

4. Sustainable Use of Saiga Antelopes

During a fast-changing and unstable situation with the growth in numbers of saiga and reported conflicts with farmers in Kazakhstan, we have engaged in various ways with key stakeholders to help ensure saiga are sufficiently protected and decisions on their future are taken based on science and evidence.

- In 2022, we have prepared a briefing document about CITES and sustainable use that was sent to the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Ministry and CFW) as well as a briefing document based on the CMS report “The sustainable use of saiga antelopes: perspectives and prospects” to inform the CFW and remind them of key actions to take before any sustainable use can be planned. We have also provided a draft workplan towards sustainable saiga use in line with the CMS report. By challenging plans by the government to start culling saiga in autumn 2022 publicly, we helped to create wide, public protest, leading finally to the abandonment of these plans.

- In 2023, the ADCI was actively involved in preparation of a Government-initiated, CMS-lead workshop in May 2023 “Identifying solutions to human-wildlife conflict involving Saiga Antelopes in Kazakhstan.” to discuss human-saiga conflicts and sustainable saiga use. The outcome was the “Strategy for the Conservation and Management of Saiga Antelopes in Kazakhstan” which, if implemented correctly, would present a clear way forward for the management and use of saiga to benefit conservation of the species, steppe grassland ecosystems, and people across Kazakhstan.

- Due to the enormous public pressure, the government of Kazakhstan decided in September 2023 to cull Saiga to reduce their number, thereby mitigating the conflict with local farmers at the saiga range. The culling started in both the Ural and the Betpak-Dala population on October 10th and lasted until December 10th. The ADCI expressed its disagreement with this decision through direct contacts of ACBK with the ministry and through the group of international experts. A position Statement of the NGO partners of the Altyn Dala Conservation Initiative on the sustainable harvesting of Saiga antelope in Kazakhstan was prepared and published on the Altyn Dala website. Our main concerns were that Saiga would be disturbed before and during the rut, which would potentially affect reproduction. The extension of the culling until the end of the year or even further could be avoided, but it was resumed on January 10th until February 10th.

- According to the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, around 43 000 saiga antelopes were culled in 2 populations in 2023-2024. The approach for saiga “use” was tested and many issues in this process were understood. There were a lot of veterinarian issues that should be solved; saiga carcasses were transported for a long distance to the meat processing factories as a result carcasses were deteriorating and not processed. Local people were involved as hunters and carcass handlers. However, there were a lot of people from villages in the saiga range who were strictly against culling. Even farmers suggested that this is not what they wanted – they needed compensation for the losses to their farms.
- Besides all this, in the period from November 6-10, 2023, the 77th meeting of the CITES Standing Committee (SC) was held in Geneva (Switzerland). ACBK’s Executive Director, Vera Voronova, attended this meeting as part of the official delegation of Kazakhstan. The delegation was given an opportunity to talk about success in saiga conservation in Kazakhstan and issues that Kazakhstan faces now (saiga-farmers conflict).
- During CMS CoP14 in 2024, the international expert group, including members of ADCI had a meeting with Kazakhstan representatives to discuss the current status of the developed Strategy. The Government confirmed that the Strategy is not used because of lack of finances. The expert group agreed to start thinking about fundraising for some urgent actions from the Strategy. Also, the experts advised not to apply for the removal of zero export quota at CITES CoP 2025 as it’s too early. Kazakhstan doesn’t have several important aspects of legislation in place to receive support from CITES parties.
- In April 2024, during a meeting with local people, the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan said that he will reverse the decision and prohibit the removal of saiga, which are symbols of the Kazakh steppe.
- After this, the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources found itself in a difficult situation, as without political will from above, they cannot develop and test approaches for the sustainable use of saigas and implement large parts of the strategy. As part of the international expert group, we have discussed several times what to do in this situation and have agreed on a list of most urgent steps towards the implementation of the strategy and setting up a proper system of sustainable use during a meeting scheduled for September 2024.

Ecological research:

1. Continue telemetry of saiga antelopes of all three populations.

- Activities supporting telemetry work (which is mentioned below under Range Mapping) include recording and mapping of all observations of saiga during monthly SMART patrolling, aerial surveys, data collection from camera traps which have been installed to gain extra information on saiga behaviour and presence of other species.

2. Continue support of disease research.

- In 2021 ACBK sent the Standard Operating Procedures for disease outbreaks to the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources formally. An official response stated that The Ministry supports the initiative to implement these Procedures however it requires the solution of a number of organizational, technical

and financial issues with the participation of interested state bodies. We continue to engage on this issue whenever an opportunity arises.

3. Upgrade management and security of biodiversity databases

- During 2022 we worked to identify existing biodiversity data and databases, analyse existing types of data, its storage and security. Recommendations and best practice was implemented.

Education and awareness:

1. Extend and maintain a network of saiga clubs at schools across the area of all three populations.

- In partnership with the Saiga Conservation Alliance, we have successfully sustained our Saiga Friends Clubs across schools and communities throughout the saiga ranges in key villages (Shalkar, Akkaiym, Baikadam, Borsy, Baitursynov).

- Activities during this reporting period included:

- “Saiga Day” Festivals

- Field trips for schoolchildren and their caregivers to various key places in the region to learn about the flora and fauna of their native land through hands on activities

- Specific lessons and lectures on the topics "Saiga. General information and biological features" and "Modern methods of wildlife studies. Drones. Camera traps".

- In June 2024, a field internship for 3rd-year students (aged 20) was organized at Alty Sai Ecopark. The main objective was to familiarize students with the methods of SMART app work in the field.

2. Produce new educational resources for local people (Both of these are being distributed to school libraries and at events across the saiga range.)

- ACBK’s book "The Steppe Animals of Kazakhstan" is in print

- A children’s magazine "Akboten" (“Saiga”) in Kazakh language was produced.

3. Work with local people at the Ustyurt, Ural and Betpak-Dala range through the Ustyurt ranger team, within “Alty Sai” Ecological Park and during outreach and engagement work in Ural.

- All ADCI Ranger teams are comprised of local people, who learn the skills required and the motivations needed to protect and restore their steppe wildlife. In turn they conduct meetings with local community leaders, governors and residents of the villages around key saiga habitats and have done so throughout the reporting period

4. Raise the international profile of the Altyn Dala Conservation Initiative

Participating in international meetings, congresses and workshops from the political to the most operational levels is something the ADCI has prioritised over the reporting period. We have supported Kazakhstan’s participation as part of national delegations, as well as presenting our work directly. Some of the events are:

- May 2022: 2nd Asian Parks Congress (Sabah, Malaysia). Connectivity and transboundary conservation and effective protected and conserved areas.
- June 2022: Vera Voronova participated in the CMS Intersessional Working Group (IWG) on linear infrastructure. Key questions connected with saiga migration and barriers for the goitered gazelle's migration
- December 2022 in Montreal, Canada: 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. During this CoP ADCl was awarded as a UN World Restoration Flagship (together with 9 other Restoration Projects selected around the World).
- April 2023 London: the Whitley Fund for Nature (WFN) was awarded Albert Salemgareyev from ACBK — a prestigious award for his conservation work with the saiga antelope in Kazakhstan
- November 2023 Ashgabat: Regional Workshop on Conservation of Migratory Species in Central Asia: effects on transboundary cooperation in protected areas. Discussions around our work creating crossing points for migration of ungulates and other mammals through border fences
- December 2023 Dubai: CoP28 UN Climate Change Conference side event “Climate benefits of large-scale conservation and restoration of steppe grassland ecosystems”; Vera Voronova also presented achievements and challenges from Altyn Dala Conservation Initiative at a side event organized by the UN Decade for Restoration focused on a few flagships.
- February 2024 Samarkand: CMS COP 14, Vera Voronova, ACBK's CEO was a part of Kazakhstan's official delegation. With our strong support, a successful side event took place “Recognising and Building on the Success of Transboundary Cooperation on the Recovery of Saiga Antelope in Central Asia”, in partnership with the Committee of Forestry & Wildlife of the Ministry of Ecology & Natural Resources of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The governments of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Mongolia were represented along with representatives from ADCl and SCA. This was followed by a saiga networking event for a wide spectrum of organisations working on saiga conservation across the region and beyond.
- Representatives of the Governments of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan signed the Memorandum for Cooperation on Conservation of Wildlife on Ustyurt Plateau. ACBK supported this by preparing officials adequately for this decision to be made.
- ACBK staff members made presentations in the following relevant side events:
 - “Implementing the CMS Central Asian Mammals Initiative: Lessons and Plans from IUCN's SOS Central Asia Initiative” (IUCN)
 - “Connecting the Landscapes of Central Asia –Opportunities for Managing Transboundary Landscapes and Climate Change Impacts” (GIZ)
 - “An Introduction to the Global Initiative on Ungulate Migration”, New frontiers for ecological connectivity: from policy to implementation” (CLLC)

PR work

During the reporting period, the Altyn Dala Conservation Initiative has improved communications impact for our work and the work of our partners and collaborators. Using new tools, we have enhanced our ability to communicate the work we do to protect and conserve saiga antelope and to have more public-facing opinions about how this should be achieved.

- We have a new website www.altyndala.org, which is regularly updated with blogs and has detailed information about the partnership and its aims
- We have an X account that is used on a regular basis to publish news and updates for our followers
- We have a LinkedIn account which is used on a regular basis to connect to the wider conservation sector
- ADCI Regularly contributes to Saiga News

We have supported the creation and dissemination of several important reports:

- February 2024 the report “An Assessment of Wildlife Trade in Central Asia” was produced in English and Russian and disseminated both in person at CMS COP14 and more widely. A broad overview of current trade in a number of species it also highlighted the contemporary understanding of the scope and scale of trade in Saiga across the Central Asia region.
- We have coordinated the development of CMS Report “Community Based Solutions to Wildlife Management”, which includes saiga antelope as a key species
- We supported the translation of the IUCN Guidelines on Human-Wildlife Conflict and Coexistence into Russian to enable the Government of Kazakhstan to be able to access the content more easily when considering responses to the conflict between saiga and farmers in West Kazakhstan

Socioeconomic research

1. Conduct socioeconomic research of the communities around all three saiga populations

- **Ural Population**
Since the establishment of the Bokey Orda Reserve in 2022, we have committed to comprehensive sociological surveying in the region, especially in connection to understanding areas of conflict between saiga and people in the Western Kazakhstan Region. Initially, a sociological survey in villages located near the new Bokey Orda State Nature Reserve’s territory was done to identify people’s attitude to the new PA, identifying any conflicts between saiga and local farmers.

Then, in 2023 a sociological survey was conducted in 4 districts of the West Kazakhstan region - Kaztalovsky, Zhanibeksky, Zhangalinsky and Bokeyordinsky to study the habitat of the saiga population in order to find ways to optimize their placement in the region and reduce tensions arising from conflicts between the

growing saiga population and agricultural producers. The work was carried out aimed to identify where conflict was arising around the use of water resources by both saigas and livestock. Through use of geospatial analysis of the studied territory based on geoinformation and remote methods, it was possible to find "hot spots", i.e. key territories of water use conflicts, factors of occurrence and ways to solve them. Interviews were conducted with 40 respondents, statistical data, stock material on the depth and mineralization of groundwater were gathered for further project implementation. Based on the results of a sociological study, a map of seasonal migration of saigas and recommendations of respondents to a social survey on resolving water use conflicts was compiled.

- **Saigachiy, Uzbekistan**

We are conducting social behavioural research to understand local communities perceptions of saiga and the drivers involved in poaching and illicit trade around Saigachiy Reserve in Uzbekistan. The principle goal is to strengthen regional capacity among social and behavioural science students, and their academic institutions, in how to develop and implement research related to conservation of Saiga.

2. Design projects that create real benefits for people and the ecosystem based on analysis of this research

- The sociological research on saiga-domestic livestock conflict complements the mapping of land use-land cover change and forms part of the framing of the development of scenarios of possible future land use under different development pathways (part of a new project funded by the Science for People and Nature Partnership – SNAPP). Further sociological surveys were undertaken in 2024 to identify pressures on local livelihoods, particularly pastoral agriculture, in the face of climate change as this is likely a key driver of future change in the landscape.

- In June 2024, we developed a report on key macro-economic drivers of change in the Ural landscape that will also feed into the scenario development work.

Range mapping

1. Continue saiga telemetry programme.

- Our saiga telemetry programme continues to provide invaluable data that we use and share with relevant agencies in Kazakhstan to promote enhanced anti-poaching work, protected area scoping and so on.

- In the reporting period we successfully tagged 48 saigas, but a lack of financial resources restricts us from expanding this work in a way that is required.

2. Keep up database for wildlife ground observations.

- *See section on Ecological Research above*

3. Analysis of existing data to determine the current state of the habitat.

- *Population monitoring – described under section 2 – also allows us to collect data on saiga habitat across all their ranges., which is kept in the database for biodiversity and used when designing conservation actions. E.g. proposing new Protected Areas.*

Habitat research and conservation

1. Continue research in valuable saiga habitats to identify key areas for protection.

- 2021 As a part of data analysis work Salemgareyev A. estimated the area of potential saiga habitats on the territory of the Republic of Kazakhstan by modeling them using the maximum entropy calculation method (MaxEnt). For modeling, data were used on the occurrences of these species in the territory of three saiga populations, collected in 2009-2020, as well as a set of spatial layers that reflect the habitat requirements of these species.

- The habitat models built by MaxEnt for the saiga have a relatively good ability to predict the probability of the species' habitats and were reasonably accurate: the AUC for the model was 0.806 ± 0.011 . Three variables made the greatest contribution to the formation of the model: the median vegetation index (MODIS NDVI) for April-June (32.3%), altitude (32.9%), average temperature (8.3%), distance to settlements (6.4%) and others (20.1).

- As shown by our model, the total area of potential habitats for this species in the Republic of Kazakhstan is about 746,423.9 km². At the same time, the total area of habitats occupied by the saiga in Kazakhstan at the present time is approximately 222,460 km².

- Approximately 23,980 km² of potential saiga habitats are located within the protected areas of the Republic of Kazakhstan, which is 3.2% of all potential habitats for the species, excluding reserves and ecological corridors.

- In 2023 we continued to assess and analyse existing and new biodiversity data and used this to develop the management plan for Bokey Orda Reservat. We also began to assess land use and landcover change in the Ural population area. This is with the aim of understanding drivers of change in the landscape that will be used to identify possible future scenarios of landuse that may affect the quality of the steppe ecosystems and impact the saiga population.

- Preliminary work on identifying the vulnerability of key steppe species, including Saiga, to climate change began in June 2024. This will contribute to the design of an ecological network of sites for saiga (with Bokey Orda at its core) in West Kazakhstan that is resilient to future climate shocks.

2. Use telemetry data to identify conflicts between saiga migration and existing and planned linear

infrastructure; 3. Support the application of mitigation hierarchy in the planning process of new objects;

4. Ensure mitigation of negative impacts of linear infrastructure on saiga and other wildlife.

- Our saiga telemetry data is a very powerful tool in discussions with planners around infrastructure projects nationally and where external funding is required, internationally too.
- Since 2021, we have been involved with the Global Initiative for Ungulate Migration, the goal of which is to make animal tracking data and migration corridor maps not only public and accessible but integrated into environment agencies' and development offices' review processes. The migratory population of Ustyurt saiga is now one of 20 mapped populations available in the Ungulate Migration Atlas, a growing effort to document the world's ungulate migrations and make corridor maps available to conservation planners.

i) Roads

Road "Center West"

- This was a plan for a major highway straight across central Kazakhstan connecting China to the Caspian Sea. Results of our spatial analysis provided strong evidence that movement of the Betpak-Dala saiga population would be severely limited by paved roads.
- We ran a campaign against the building of the road, made connections with the Center for Large Landscape Conservation, the IUCN Infrastructure Specialist Group and experts from the Global Initiative for Ungulate Migration who all helped us to build our case against the road.
- The World Bank withdrew from the project. Ultimately, the highway project was not approved, in part due to economic reasons. Planners determined the proposed route wasn't financially feasible. However, this case illustrates the importance of animal tracking data, which offered empirical evidence of saiga movement and was an important tool in discussions with government planners and having a solid campaigning base.

"Zhezkazgan – Karaganda" Road

- ACBK is actively participating in the process of advocating for special crossings for saiga (and other wildlife) as well as in jointly developing technical suggestions for the construction of such crossings and the best places for them.
- ACBK was contracted by the World Bank to do an assessment and suggest mitigation measures for biodiversity during the modernization of the Zhezkazgan-Karaganda road section.

"Shalkar-Beyneu" Highway

In mid-2023 we understood that the Government of Kazakhstan was looking for investment in a road that will run parallel to the Shalkar-Beyneu railway (see below).

- ACBK sent an official letter to the EBRD and EU stating that the study included in this report doesn't take into account the risks for biodiversity and a proper assessment emphasizing the risks for Ustyurt saiga population is needed. Reply from the EU "Specific and comprehensive in-depth environment and social assessments, notably involving consultations with the relevant stakeholders, should be carried out once any investment project identified in the Study is developed, in accordance with international standards".

- ACBK received a request from a KZ construction company (KaZDorProject) with information that the feasibility study stage for the construction of the Shalkar - Beineu road, with a total length of 515 km, had begun. The request concerned the available information on the saiga habitats and migration routes on Ustyurt plateau. ACBK has provided all available data and made known that they are ready to cooperate in future. ACBK expressed its concerns that the automobile road will significantly influence Ustyurt saiga population migration routes and available habitats as the existing railway Shalkar-Beineu already impacted a lot.

ii) Border fences:

KAZ-RUSSIA

- In 2021 ACBK raised the issue of saiga migration being blocked from Kazakhstan to Russia. We installed several collars to obtain data for further analysis of this question. During the International Forum between Kazakhstan and Russia, ACBK also raised this issue and discussed possible opportunities for saiga migration and transboundary research. In 2023 we installed 20 collars on saiga in the Ural population in order to receive more data about their migration. In mid 2024 official dialogue between Kazakhstan and Russia was resumed. There was a joint field trip of the Kazakh Minister of Ecology, representatives of the Committee for Forestry and Wildlife, ACBK and Russian local authorities to discuss the current situation with saiga migration. ACBK presented all available data and showed the main patterns and places of saiga migration. A "Road map" was prepared and a commission was established to conduct a joint trip along the border to identify the places where the border fence should be modified to ensure saiga migration.

KAZ UZBEKISTAN

- In 2021, as a result of our advice, a section of about 11 km of the border fence had the bottom 5 rows of wire removed. During monitoring, we established and confirmed the fact of saiga migration through the border fence between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.
- In 2022 during routine monitoring of the fence, it was revealed a second row of fences had been additionally constructed in the Mangistau region, where there were no special places for wild animals to cross. The distance between the fences is about 100 m. According to border guards, the fence was installed because of regular damage of border structures and fences by domestic animals. At the moment the length of the double fence is 20 kilometers.
- To monitor the situation continually, we installed 19 camera traps on the border fences for long-term observations of wild animals. Of the 2 saiga females recorded by the camera traps, 1 crossed the border fence from Kazakhstan to Uzbekistan. This animal used the special crossing (with 5 bottom sections of wire removed). The other female saiga and 1 young male saiga moved along the border from the Kazakh side (without any attempts of crossing it). 1 male saiga moved along the border fence on the Uzbekistan side.

iii) Railways

- In 2015, the government constructed a major railway through central Kazakhstan, bisecting the Ustyurt population's range called the Shalkar-Beynau railway. Tracking data from before and after

construction illustrate how dramatically infrastructure can alter saiga movements, effectively cutting 100 kilometers off their migratory range. The Ustyurt saiga stayed north of the railroad and no longer accessed land in the southern extent of their migratory range, which before 2015 served as critical winter range during harsh conditions. Despite some bridges, underpasses and specially constructed crossings, few saigas have crossed the railway tracks to this date. We continue to monitor the most crucial section of the railway several times a year, we interview railroad workers, station staff and local people. In more recent years there have been sightings of saigas coming close to the railway, and only in 2023 the Ustyurt monitoring team saw around 10 individual saiga tracks continue across the tracks from the north side of the railway to the southern side.

5. Mitigate negative impacts of industrial use and natural resource extraction on saiga.

a) Energy

- In 2022, Vera Voronova, ACBK's CEO, was nominated and applied to join the CMS Energy Task Force as an Observer. This will allow for input on advocacy for reconciling renewable energy developments with the conservation of migratory species in Kazakhstan.

b) Research on Water (linear and point-based) to inform approaches to conflict mitigation between saiga antelope and people

- In order to identify the territory of conflicts over the joint use of water resources by saigas and livestock, a geospatial analysis was performed within 4 districts of the West Kazakhstan region (Kaztalovsky, Bokeyordinsky, Zhanibeksky and Zhalgalsky) based on geoinformation and remote methods in the ArcGIS. Statistical data were collected (livestock by rural districts) and maps of pasture load were compiled. Based on telemetry data (satellite monitoring via GPS collars), a map of the seasonal migration of the saiga population in the study area was built. Linear water bodies (rivers, channels) and point-based ones (wells, digs, dams and ponds), as well as wintering and paddock areas, have been digitized based on remote methods.

- Based on GIS modelling, we identified 90 hot spots of water use conflicts, of which 14 were recognized as priority due to high pasture load against the background of constant watercourses and insufficient wells (digs, ponds, etc.). Camera traps were installed at these sites near wells and digs to monitor the seasonal and daily migration of saigas, as well as to monitor the nature of their contact with local cattle.

- The results of the sociological study confirmed most of the sites discovered using GIS modelling, also allowed us to identify the geographical differentiation of problems in the study area. The results of this study will become the basis for identifying potential solutions to help reduce the pressure and competition on water resources between local farmers and the increasing saiga population in the region.

6. Habitat research for restoration planning

- In October 2023, a new project funded by the Endangered Landscapes & Seascapes Programme (ELSP) commenced in the western Kazakhstan region. During the reporting period, work started on

Objective 1 to develop a comprehensive Land Cover and Land Use (LCLU) map for the project area, identifying the historic changes in LCLU across the region and the key impacts of human influence.

7. Understand carbon and climate importance of the Kazakh Steppe

- In February 2024, we met with Qazaq Carbon co-founder Alim Sailybaev in Almaty. His initiative provides support to climate projects aimed at solving environmental problems and improving the well-being of local residents in regions with serious environmental degradation. Plan Vivo has invited us to join their newly formed Grasslands Working Group, which will support Plan Vivo's development of a new grasslands standard this year, and provide ADCI with the latest developments in this space.
- A carbon project developer, Cultivo, which is currently supporting the development of a BirdLife International-associated grassland restoration project in Argentina, has offered to provide a free scoping assessment of ADCI landscapes in Kazakhstan. The assessment will indicate carbon stocks and potential gains in the submitted landscapes. Two landscapes in central and west Kazakhstan were selected.

Protected area management:

1. Extend protected areas network in the saiga range; 2. Improve management plans of existing protected areas; 3. Support implementation of management plans.

Ural (Bokey Orda State Nature Reservat)

- A new protected area in the West Kazakhstan region was created by the Governmental Decree on 1st July 2022 – Bokey Orda State Nature Reservat (343040,1 ha) and Ashiozek State Nature sanctuary (314504,1 ha). The establishment was supported by our saiga movement data that evidenced the importance of this area for saiga ecology.
- During the reporting period we conducted scientific field research to understand the biodiversity baseline of the two areas. Research included botanical, soil, bird and small mammal surveys at 50 sample sites representing different habitats and land use types, including an e-DNA freshwater study. From these results, preparation work for the development of a Site Management Plan was carried out.
- In January 2023, a training program for Bokey Orda staff was agreed between all relevant stakeholders and ACBK staff conducted a series of practical workshops including "Features of the State Nature Reservat and State Nature Sanctuary. Legal aspects of the activities of the reservat and sanctuary – permitted and prohibited activities", "Suppression of illegal activities on the PAs territory, filling out Protocols, interaction with violators", "Maintenance of the Annals of nature. Mandatory reports of protected areas concerning the state of biodiversity", "Carrying out winter route accounting", "Use of equipment for the protection and monitoring of wildlife on the territory of the reserve" - binoculars, GPS navigators, cameras, weather station (data collection and processing). External hired medical staff conducted first aid training.
- A 5-year Management Plan for Bokey Orda Reservat was completed using a participatory approach and sent to the Reservat for final internal approval. After that it will be sent for official state ecological expertise and final approval by the CFW.

Betpak Dala (Alty-Sai EcoPark, managed by ACBK)

- In August 2023 a joint trip of ACBK and RSPB was held to the Alty Sai ecological park to get more information and understanding as to whether ACBK's hunting areas can become the first OECM in Kazakhstan. This assessment is now part of the SPACES project and will lead to a recommendation to government on ways to recognise and report OECMs in Kazakhstan

Uzbekistan - Saigachiy Integrated (Landscape) Reserve

- In 2024 work with rangers continued in Saigachiy Reserve analysis SMART reports and working with the rangers to identify equipment needs. Latest SMART reports from 2024 show a response to the first ever reports generated in 2023 identifying areas of high incursion risk and illicit activity. Work continues to support protected area management to analyse and use data collected to inform proactive management and patrolling decisions.

Training & capacity-building:

This section does not include SMART training, which can be found discussed in more detail in the section on Anti-Poaching.

1. Conduct training for protected area rangers and Okhotzooptom rangers (as needed).

General/ACBK staff training

- In 2021, to promote wider health and safety in the field, we organized two sets of training workshops for ACBK's field-based teams: (1) first aid training conducted by experienced paramedics and involved helping participants to develop action plans for addressing 20 different emergencies they could encounter in a field setting, and (2) conflict mitigation run by highly experienced law enforcement officers.
- Also in 2021 an internal training was held for ACBK field teams on the use of the ArcGIS software and the UAV devices.

Ural

- In 2023 an experience and knowledge exchange visit was organized for the Bokey Orda staff members. 3 people from the scientific department of the Reservat visited 2 PAs – Almaty State Nature Reserve (1 day) and Ile-Balkhash State Nature Reservat (4 days). The main aim was to show how different categories of Protected Areas work in Kazakhstan.
- Also in 2023, in Kaztalovka village, West-Kazakhstan region a training was organized for the staff of the scientific department of Bokey Orda State Nature Reservat on keeping the "Annals of Nature". An employee of the department of science of Almaty State Nature Reserve was invited to conduct this training. She explained the methods of keeping the Annals of Nature in protected areas, the basics and principles of biomonitoring and research.

- In 2024, a GIS training was conducted for 2 people from Bokey Orda Reservat in Astana. Training was conducted by ACBK staff who have been using ArcGIS and other GIS software for more than 10 years.

Betpak Dala

- In 2021, on the territory of Alty Sai EcoPark, a comprehensive training on completing administrative protocols on wildlife protection was conducted. In addition, briefings were conducted for new staff members on safety protocols, winter route counting, principles of work with SMART.

Ustyurt

- In September 2021, the Ustyurt monitoring team came to the territory of the Alty Sai EcoPark to exchange experience between the four ranger teams. Colleagues got acquainted with the peculiarities of the area and its wildlife, and methods of patrolling and management.

Law enforcement

1. Conduct trainings in species ID, situational crime prevention and CITES procedures for enforcement officers.

- In October 2023, a "Crime scripting" workshop was organized in Kostanay city. State rangers from Okhotzooptom, territorial inspection, state protected areas as well as ACBK's hunting area rangers and Ustyurt monitoring team took part in it. Rangers from 3 saiga populations in Kazakhstan were present. Training was in the methodology of modelling strategies - "crime script". Crime scripts for 3 saiga populations in Kazakhstan have been initiated.

- Crime scripting has also been undertaken in Uzbekistan with communities around the Saigachiy state nature reserve with findings to be disseminated to the Ministry of Ecology, Environmental Protection and Climate Change.

- In February 2024, the second seminar on training in the methodology of modelling strategies "crime script" was held in Samarkand. During the seminar, issues of further research were discussed and a list of topics for possible sociological research within the framework of the project was prepared. Representatives of partners, donors and universities attended the seminar.

2. Strengthen regional capacity of state prosecutors and key Government agencies to CWT and support CITES compliance

- In May 2024, ACBK signed a memorandum of cooperation with the Academy of Law Enforcement Agencies under the General Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Kazakhstan to organise training events in order to improve the qualifications of specialists in the field of nature conservation and international wildlife trade and joint research.

- ACBK together with a group of experts has developed a course for advanced training on the application of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in Kazakhstan for law enforcement officers and border services directly or indirectly engaged in

environmental activities. The course was agreed with the Customs and Border Service. In August 2023, 28 people from the teaching staff of educational organizations of law enforcement agencies and the border guard service were trained in Almaty.

- In September 2023, ACBK held an international round table in Astana with the participation of representatives of law enforcement (prosecutors) and environmental agencies of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. 52 participants exchanged experiences on the application of the provisions of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in Central Asian countries, discussed gaps in national legislation.
- Support was provided to the CITES Management Authority in Kazakhstan for submitting a report on illegal trade for the CITES secretariat.
- A high-level delegation from Kazakhstan attended a saiga horn stockpiling workshop (Vice-Minister (N. Sharbiyev), Deputy Chair CFW (A. Kim), and Okhotzoprom. Steps were identified to begin workshops to plan stockpile management of Saiga horn. This event gave an opportunity for the high-level Kazakh delegation to speak with CITES Secretariat representative (Thea Carrol) and TRAFFIC Malaysia which started a project of saiga horns stockpile identification and marking in Malaysia.
- Updated CITES guidelines, and three posters on native species, exotic species and derivatives was developed for Uzbekistan. For the training in Uzbekistan, 200 copies were printed (100 copies in Russian and 100 copies in Uzbek languages); 30 copies of posters in Russian and 600 in Uzbek. After multiple requests from the Customs and other LEAs, the Institute of Zoology additionally printed 2000 copies (1000 copies in each two languages) of the CITES guidelines for further distribution among the Law Enforcement Agencies upon their request and during the training.
- In July 2023 in Uzbekistan, 56 participants (50 men and 6 women) from the Customs Committee, Custom Institute, the Custom office of Tashkent city and Toshkent-AERO, the Ministry of Ecology, Environmental Protection and Climate Change, and 13 Regional customs offices received training on the species identification of commonly trafficked species, CITES and crime scripting. The training was very well received with further training requested and the inclusion of the training in the curriculum of the Customs Service is being considered

3. Development and dissemination of law enforcement and ranger training modules and embedding within national training curricula

*See above in section on **Anti-Poaching***

Trade issues

- General
- A special Wikipedia page has been created on the problem of illegal trade - Illegal trade in wild species of animals and plants — Wikipedia (wikipedia.org)
- The Wikipedia web pages on saiga, Saker falcon and Central Asian turtle in Russian and Kazakh have been updated (a separate item about illegal trade has been added).

1. Expand programme of sniffer dogs for wildlife scents.

Throughout the reporting period, we have continued to work to train sniffer dogs and their handlers in Kazakhstan and surrounding Central Asian countries. Annual training courses and meetings have been conducted to share best practice regionally, train the dogs to identify contraband animals and derivatives and provide needed equipment for the animals and trainers to finesse their skills. Highlights of the period are:

- There were 2 arrests of saiga derivatives on the border with China at the Khorgos checkpoint in the amount of 112 and 205 horns. The first case was detained using a service dog whose training was supported by us in 2022
- An event was organized for dog-using law enforcement officers of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. The participants of the meeting presented approaches and results of work in their countries, discussed the possibilities of cross-border cooperation between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Representatives of the International Organization Working Dogs For Conservation, a leader in working with service dogs in the field of nature conservation in the USA, were invited to exchange experience
- In March 2023 a two-day practical workshop was held at the Cynology Center of the Agency on Financial Monitoring of Kazakhstan with participation of the representatives of the custom services of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Georgia and Czech Republic which use sniffer dogs to search for wildlife derivatives. The purpose of this event was to exchange experience in working with service sniffer dogs between the customs services of 6 countries and to train the Sniffer dog on the scent of derivatives. During the event, 3 service dogs from Kyrgyzstan were introduced to the smell of derivatives (bear paw and saiga horn) and all participants exchanged experiences and discussed basic practices in the use of service dogs.
- 7 sets of smell simulators to support dog training were transferred to the Cynological Center of the Border Guard Service. Then they will be transferred to border checkpoints to dog handlers of previously trained dogs for daily training.
- ACBK purchased equipment and materials (GPS dog training device (3 sets), dog transport containers (8), and dog supplies) for previously and new IWT - trained dogs of the Border Service Dog Training Centre.
- In August 2024 3 sniffer dogs were procured for the Uzbek Cynology Centre in Tashkent. These dogs will be trained on commonly trafficked wildlife scents including Saiga.

2. Promote regional cooperation on Illegal Wildlife Trade

- In 2023, a report on the assessment of the dynamics of wildlife trade in 4 Central Asian countries was prepared by TRAFFIC, based on data collected by ACBK and the Institute of Zoology of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan and Ecomaktab.
- In July 2023, the Ministry of Natural Resources, Ecology and Technical Supervision of the Kyrgyz Republic hosted a meeting in Bishkek of representatives of organizations involved in combating illegal trafficking of wild animal and plant species in Central Asian countries to strengthen cooperation between Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan in this area. The event drew 66 participants from across the region as well as representatives from the UK and Chinese Governments, the CITES Secretariat and the EU, among others.

3. Fight the legal status of advertisements from horn traders.

- Data collection and analysis of international wildlife trade activity in the public realm is underway. We collected 202 news items in the media on poaching cases for the period 2019-2024, received 43 Google Alerts by keywords. 314 items regarding the sale of derivatives of rare animal species on the OLX platform were discovered, 31 appeals were sent to the Police Department of the relevant region via e-government service. Data on detentions were received from the border service (8 cases) and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan (91 cases).

Reports / Publications / Information material:

a) General/ADCI related

At the end of 2022 we established a website and LinkedIn page for the Altyn Dala Conservation Initiative www.altyndala.org and <https://www.linkedin.com/company/altyndala/> which are spaces we use to share news and updates about our work and connect to other organisations and individuals to enhance the impact of our work.

In 2021 a major media campaign was carried out seeking to prevent the construction of the Centre-West road. This issue was raised 17 times in different types of media.

a) PUBLICATIONS

A new publication by ACBK, called *Steppe Animals of Kazakhstan* had a print run of 2000 copies in April 2023.

Saiga movement

Maarten J. E. Broekman, Jelle P. Hilbers, Mark A. J. Huijbregts, Salemgareyev A., et al. (2022). Evaluating expert-based habitat suitability information of terrestrial mammals with GPS-tracking data (May, 2022)

Marlee A. Tucker, Aafke M. Schipper, Tempe S. F. Adams, Nina Attias, Salemgareyev A. (August 2022). Behavioral responses of terrestrial mammals to COVID-19 lockdowns. Science Journal. <https://doi.org/10.5061/dryad.c59zw3rbd>

USAID. 2021. Final Report: Building a foundation for linear infrastructure safeguards in Asia. Authors: Ament R, Stonecipher G, Butynski M, Creech T, Clevenger AP, Neelakantan A, Gangadharan A, Krishna C, Bell M, Vilela T, Bonine K, Monga M, Van Epp T, Laur A, Breuer A, Parashar S, Weinheimer CG, Hoff K. U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Washington, DC.

TRAFFIC. 2024. An Assessment of Wildlife Trade in Central Asia Bakytbek Tokubek uulu, Louisa Musing, Amy Woolloff, Kanaat Musuraliev, Sanjar Kurmanov, Stephanie von Meibom S. <https://www.traffic.org/publications/reports/an-assessment-of-wildlife-trade-in-central-asia/>

Wildlife Health

Munib Khanyari, E.J. Milner-Gulland, Rodrigo Oyanedel, Hannah Vineer, Navinder J. Singh, Sarah Robinson, Albert Salemgareyev, Eric R. Morgan. Investigating parasite dynamics of migratory ungulates for sustaining healthy populations: Application to critically-endangered saiga antelopes *Saiga tatarica*. Biological Conservation. 2021.

Socio-Economics

Khanyari, M., Robinson, S., Morgan, E. R., Salemgareyev, A., & Milner-Gulland, E. J. Identifying relationships between multi-scale social– ecological factors to explore ungulate health in a Western Kazakhstan rangeland. *People and Nature*. 2021.

b) MEDIA FEATURES

- In 2021, a film crew from WildSpace Productions visited the Betpakdala population. They featured the saiga antelope in Episode 4 of a series called “Our Living World”, which premiered on Netflix on April 17th 2024
- In 2022, a film crew from Filmtank Productions visited the Betpakdala population. They featured the saiga antelope in a film called “The Arch Principle” part of a three-part series called “Save the Wild” for ARTE. It premiered in August 2023.
- In mid-October, a PBS film crew visited Western Kazakhstan to film saiga capture and collaring. ACBK staff supported them in the field. Available to view from April 2025
- In November - December 2023 a BBC film crew visited Western Kazakhstan to film saiga during rutting time. ACBK supported 3 people from BBC who are currently working on a series of films called "Home Asia" for National Geographic. For this support ACBK worked closely with Bokey Orda Reservat staff who also supported the BBC in the field. In 2023 it was a preliminary visit and filming. The work will continue in 2024, and will likely be available to view from the end of 2026.
- The explorer, columnist, writer Ryan Huling contacted ADCI to learn more about saiga antelope. He is writing a book “The hidden nations of animals” and wanted to include saiga, write more about this unique species. ACBK supported his field trip to West Kazakhstan region late November 2023, as well as provided all relevant information (literature, current knowledge and research connected with saiga). The book is due to be published early 2025.
- Podcast: Rewilding the World with Ben Goldsmith, Shining a Light on Kazakhstan’s Golden Steppe with Mark Day, October 4th 2023

Collaborators:

National, Kazakhstan

Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources

Committee for Forestry and Wildlife of Kazakhstan (CFW)

National Veterinary Reference Centre

Research Institute for Biological Safety Problems

RSE "Okhotzooptom" of the CFW

General prosecutor's office of the Republic of Kazakhstan

State Revenue Committee of the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Kazakhstan

The Ministry of Internal affairs

Border Service of the National Security Committee of the Republic of Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan Regional Dog Training Centre, Almaty
 Ministry of Education of Kazakhstan
 Institute for Zoology of Kazakhstan

International

Saiga Conservation Alliance
 Royal Veterinary College (UK)
 US Embassy in Kazakhstan
 British Embassy in Kazakhstan
 WCS Russia (in relation to SMART implementation in Kazakhstan)
 Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology
 University of Oxford
 TRAFFIC
 UNEP-WCMC
 SPUN Underground
 IUCN Infrastructure Specialist Group
 Center for Large Landscape Conservation
 University of Wyoming (for the Global Initiative for Ungulate Migration)
 Göttingen University
 University Münster
 BIK-F / University Frankfurt
 Senckenberg Society

Budget available: As the Altyn Dala Conservation Initiative has many different components, this figure is for the entire scope of Altyn Dala’s multi-partner operational activities: 1.6 million GBP

Current sponsors: Lucile Foundation, US Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement, Temperatio, Wyss Foundation, Prince Bernhard Fund for Nature, The German Agency for Nature Conservation (BFN), The Whitley Award, ELSP, SPACES, US Fish and Wildlife, Caspian Pipeline Consortium-K, CMS, Fauna and Flora, FZS, RSPB

Past sponsors: Wildlife Conservation Network, International Climate Initiative (IKI) (through the CADI Project), Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), Disney, the Frankenberg Foundation, BMU, UNDP/GEF, Saiga Conservation Alliance, ERG, Research institute for biological safety problems, Darwin Initiative, Gregor Louisoder Umweltstiftung, Food and Agricultural Organisation, GIZ, BMZ, WWF, Disney, CIM

Information contributed by: See contacts above plus Michele Bowe, Senior Ecologist – Kazakh Steppe Protected Areas, RSPB and Matt Lowton, Programme Manager for Wildlife Trade Eurasia, Fauna and Flora

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Other: