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MIGRATORY
SPECIES**

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**PROPOSAL FOR THE REMOVAL OF
THE BUKHARA DEER (*Cervus elaphus yarkandensis*)
FROM APPENDIX I OF THE CONVENTION***

Summary:

The Government of Uzbekistan has submitted the attached proposal for the removal of the Bukhara deer (*Cervus elaphus yarkandensis*) from Appendix I of CMS.

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**PROPOSAL FOR THE REMOVAL OF
THE BUKHARA DEER (*Cervus elaphus yarkandensis*)
FROM APPENDIX I OF THE CONVENTION**

A PROPOSAL

The Bukhara deer (*Cervus elaphus yarkandensis*) is currently listed on CMS Appendices I and II. The Government of Uzbekistan proposes to remove the Bukhara deer from Appendix I of CMS.

B PROPONENT

Republic of Uzbekistan

C. SUPPORTING STATEMENT

1. Taxonomy

1.1 Class Mammalia

1.2 Order Artiodactyla

1.3 Family Cervidae

1.4 Genus, species or subspecies, including author and year

Genus – *Cervus*

Species – *Cervus elaphus yarkandensis* (according to CMS list of protected species)/*Cervus hanglu* Wagner 1844 /previously *Cervus elaphus* Lydekker 1758 according to IUCN

Subspecies – *Cervus hanglu bactrianus* L / previously *Cervus elaphus bactrianus* Lydekker 1900.

1.5 Scientific synonyms *Cervus hanglu bactrianus*, *Cervus elaphus bactrianus*

1.6 Common name(s), in all applicable languages used by the Convention

English: Bactrian Deer, Bactrian Red Deer, Bukhara Red Deer, Central Asian Red Deer

French: Cerf de Bactriane, Cerf de Bactriane , Cerf du Turkestan, Cerf rouge du Turkestan, Cerf Rouge Du Turkestan

Spanish: Ciervo Asiatico, Ciervo Bactriano

2. Overview

The Bukhara Deer is found primarily in the riparian (tugai) forests of Central Asia. As the largest herbivores in their ecosystems, Bukhara Deer have a profound effect on vegetation dynamics by dispersing seeds and regulating plant growth. Moreover, it is estimated that around 30-50% of the population migrate in search of better habitats, where they frequently cross-national borders of Central Asian countries.

3 Migrations

3.1 Kinds of movement, distance, the cyclical and predicable nature of the migration

Bukhara deer migrations are not a primary feature of their behavior but are triggered by environmental conditions like droughts and floods that force them to seek better habitat along riverbanks and floodplains. Seasonal migrations from riparian forests to the deserts are usual

in spring, depending on the phase of vegetation development – but they are of short distance. However, their limited and fragmented populations mean that natural migration between areas is often hindered, especially in case of important population growth and necessity to expand the area. Annual migrations are estimated to be around 30-50% of populations, with some crossing national borders.

Two forms of local migrations can be considered as typical for the Bukhara deer:

- (1) spring migrations from the riparian forests to the deserts for grazing, as in spring ephemeral vegetation starts to develop earlier in the deserts, than in the forests. During this period deer leave their usual home ranges for several days, and then return.
- (2) migrations to the new riparian forests for expanding the area inhabited by the population, in case of a high population density.

3.2 Proportion of the population migrating, and why that is a significant proportion

Majority of Bukhara deer populations are distributed in transboundary river valleys. A lot of deer habitats are replaced by fields (e.g. about 90% of riparian forests in Amudaria river valley), thus populations are located in limited in area suitable sites. Any variations in ecological conditions, as well as population growth and necessity to expand the area, cause migrations, mostly transboundary. Thus migrations should be considered more or less regular for are at least 80-90 % of Bukhara deer populations.

4 Biological data (other than migration)

4.1 Distribution (current and historical)

The historical range of Bukhara Deer includes southern Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and northern Afghanistan. Within its historical area Bukhara deer can be found amongst the riparian forests that stretch along the Amu Darya and Syr Darya river valleys and basins from the Pamirs to the Aral Sea. In the 1960s many populations went extinct including those found in the river valleys of Syr Darya, Tedjen, Murgab, and Ili, and at the lower reaches of the Amu Darya. Some populations were partially restored in the 1970s through reintroduction programs. The subspecies now exists along a more contracted area of its former range.

Bukhara Deer occur now in 7 major populations and some additional local reintroduced groups, which are not considered as separate populations yet. Most of the populations are located in small subpopulations in the patches of riparian forests along the Amudarya river valley. Natural populations occur in the following areas along the Amudarya:

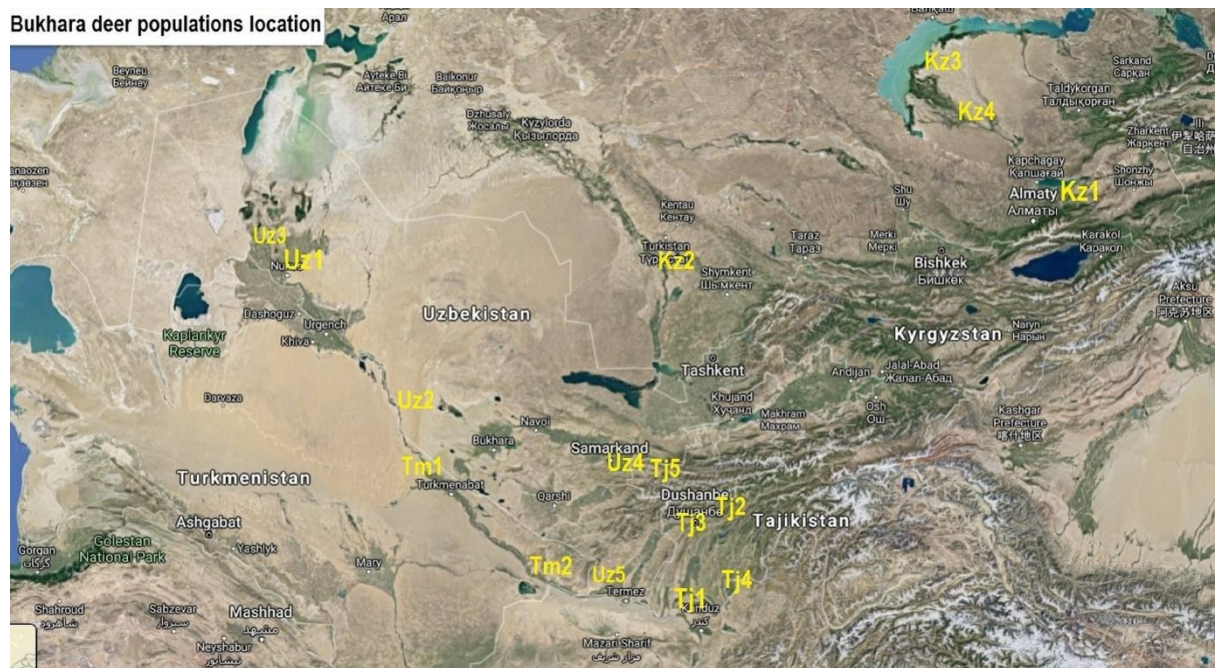
- Upper reaches: Tigrovaja Balka in Tajikistan (bordering Afghanistan); Djazguzer in Turkmenistan; along the entire Amu Darya floodplain from the border with Tajikistan to the border with Turkmenistan (128 km) in Uzbekistan;
- Middle part of Amudarya: Kyzylkumskii Nature Reserve in Uzbekistan and Amudarijinskii Nature Reserve and non-protected sites of riparian forest (seven in total) in Turkmenistan;

In the 1970s, Bukhara Deer populations had been reintroduced in the lower reaches of Amudarya (Badai-tugai) which is now a part of the “Lower Amudarya Biosphere Reservat (LABR)”, which includes a number of additional sites of riparian forests.

Outside of the Amudarya river valley, reintroduced populations of Bukhara Deer can be found in the following areas:

- Zarafshan river valley in Tajikistan (reintroduced in 1970s) and Uzbekistan, Zarafshanskii Nature Reserve (reintroduced in 1990s);

- Ily river valley, Karatchingil (reintroduced in 1970s);
- Dashti-Dzum (mountainous region; introduced in 1970s); some animals still live in the area;
- Romit (mountainous region; introduced in 1970s; eliminated in 1990s); introduction re-started in 2017;
- Middle reaches of the Syrdaria river valley in the Turkestanii region (reintroduction during on-going);
- Ily-Balqash area (reintroduction initiated in the frame of WWF project in 2018; ongoing).



4.2 Population (estimates and trends)

Available information suggests that after the historic severe decline, the global Bukhara Deer population has been stable since 2002, and an increasing population trend has been continuously observed for all populations since 2011 till present. According to the best available monitoring data, which covers most Bukhara Deer populations, population numbers and trends are as follows (as milestones data for 2015/2019/2023 are given):

Tajikistan (400/550/800) – increasing (partly transboundary with Uzbekistan and Afghanistan)

Kazakhstan (800/930/1180) - increasing

Turkmenistan (100/200/230) – stable/increasing (partly transboundary with Uzbekistan and Afghanistan)

Uzbekistan (1500/2200/2400) – increasing / locally stable (partly transboundary with Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Afghanistan)

Afghanistan (+, on the border with Tajikistan, expanding the area of well developed population) – slightly increasing

Total number of free-ranging and captive-bred animals (for future releases in the sites) 2015/2019/2023: 2780/3900/> 5000 < including >150 in pens for future releases

The most important population growth is registered in Uzbekistan. In the most important areas deer number exceed the carrying capacity of the ecosystems, thus the increasing trend changed to stable.

4.3 Habitat (short description and trends)

Bukhara deer is the only true deer species that occurs in the arid zones of the Central Asian region. It prefers lowland habitats, avoids hills, and inhabits reed thickets and riparian forests along river valleys and streams from the Pamirs to the Aral Sea. The Bukhara deer inhabit riparian forested corridors – floodplain river valleys surrounded by desert habitats. Deer prefer riparian forests called tugais in arid regions which include stands of *Tamarix*, *Elaeagnus*, *Poplar*, *Hippophae*, communities of *Phragmites* and *Erianthus*. Their dominating tree species are various local species of Asiatic poplar, silverberry (*Oleaster*), locally with addition of various species of willows, important thickets of tamarisk on salted soils and with second vegetation layer from licorice, reed grass, variable vines which can form either a “park forest” or real jungles. Some groups of Bukhara deer inhabit reed bushes with very limited tree cover, or openings with plum-grass.

These are mostly 0.5-1 kilometer wide areas of woody and shrubby thickets that are found along desert rivers with some few sites of comparably large areas of riparian forests, e.g. in confluence Vakhsh and Piandj. In winter and early spring, deer may move into semi-desert habitats to feed on shrubs (e.g. *Haloxylon sp.*). Compared to other deer, Bukhara deer live in warmer and more arid environments. For instance, precipitation in its habitat is usually lower than 200 mm per year and air temperatures in the summer often exceeds 45°C (113°F). Because Bukhara deer have such narrow habitat preferences, there is little opportunity for individuals to disperse to other areas when their habitat is threatened.

For decades the major trend had been habitat destruction (forests on the most fertile lands in the arid zone were replaced by fields). During the latest years in an important part of the area stabilization of habitat area is registered, in some areas - habitat's restoration occurred.

4.4 Biological characteristics

Major activity patterns of the Bukhara deer are similar to other deer species and subspecies. The most preferable sites for grazing can be plum grass areas with grass sod between, where permanent aggregations of deer can be seen, especially in autumn. The deer usually stay in small family groups, but for calving they leave the group and stay single in dense parts of the forests, returning to the group in a few days. Males usually live single, especially second half of winter when antlers are growing. During this period, they prefer reeds, even swampy reed – as velvets can be easily damaged in dense forests, while open forests do not present enough hiding conditions. To reduce the impact of blood-sucking dipterans and regulate heat exchange, deer use water and dust (loess) baths on hot days.

In winter, as resting areas, deer choose sites which are protected from the cold wind and where the deer can have a good field of vision. Typically, such beds are found in thinned riparian forest and tamarisk thickets. Snow cover is unusual in the habitat of Bukhara deer – or at least it is rare, never high and long-lasting. Thus, there are no special winter adaptations.

Bukhara deer visit water pools with fresh or slightly salted water throughout the year. As all red deer species, these deer swim well. Sodic soil points typically are not used by Bukhara deer in their natural habitats, which is most probably caused by receiving a sufficient amount of minerals from drinking water and from vegetation (for example, tamarisk, saltwort, etc.). In unusual conditions - in particular, mountains with low mineralization of water in rivers, or in captivity - additional mineral sources may be required.

Bukhara deer reach maturity between 1.5 and 2.5 years of age and a female is likely to produce several young at a rate of one per year through her lifespan. Calves are usually born around late spring, males leave the mother at 2-3 years, but maximum reproductive success is attained at 4-7 years.

In woodlands, Bukhara deer eat shrubs and tree shoots; however, elsewhere in its range the diet includes grasses, sedges and shrubs. Like all species in the family *Cervidae*, Bukhara deer have a four-chambered, ruminant stomach and lack a gall bladder. It is regular, that BD diet is very limited most of the year (e.g. when inhabiting reeds brushes). Differently from other deer subspecies, which use branches up to 15 mm thick, BD eat only branches up to 5 mm with less negative impact on forest development.

4.5 Role of the taxon in its ecosystem

The Bukhara deer plays a crucial role in its Central Asian ecosystem as a primary herbivore and a vital prey species for carnivores. As the largest herbivore, it influences the plant community through its grazing, which is essential for shaping the riparian and floodplain habitats. As the largest herbivore, it influences the types and abundance of plants in its environment through selective grazing. Its diet includes leaves, shoots, bark, grasses, and aquatic vegetation. High densities can impact forest regeneration by consuming seedlings and saplings. By consuming and metabolizing plants, the deer contributes to the nutrient cycling within its habitat.

5. Conservation status and threats

5.1 IUCN Red List Assessment on the species level: *Cervus hanglu* - Least concern

Brook, S.M., Donnithorne-Tait, D., Lorenzini, R., Lovari, S., Masseti, M., Pereladova, O., Ahmad, K. & Thakur, M. 2017. *Cervus hanglu*. *The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2017*: e.T4261A120733024. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2017-3.RLTS.T4261A120733024.en>

5.2 Equivalent information relevant to conservation status assessment

Overview Report on the Conservation Status and Implementation of the Bukhara Deer MOU and Work Programme for 2025-2032 of the MoU concerning Conservation and Restoration of the Bukhara Deer provide this information: <https://www.cms.int/meeting/third-meeting-signatories-bukhara-deer-mou-mos3#meeting-outcomes>

5.3 Threats to the population (factors, intensity)

Despite the stabilization and partial recovery of the Bukhara Deer populations over the last two decades, they are still facing major challenges such as poaching, predation by stray dogs, and grazing competition with livestock. However, degradation, fragmentation, and loss of their natural habitats represent the greatest threat for the long-term survival of the species. These factors may further restrain the growth of the populations due to local overpopulation, limited genetic exchange, and difficulties in recolonizing suitable areas.

5.4 Threats connected especially with migrations

Threats connected with Bukhara deer migrations include habitat degradation, competition with livestock, poaching, and obstacles created by human infrastructure (for example, border barriers on state borders). Migration routes are particularly vulnerable to habitat loss and fragmentation, which isolates populations and increases competition for resources. Human

development and activity, such as road construction and urbanization, can block or impede migration, while poaching remains a persistent threat along the entire route.

5.5 National and international utilization

Afghanistan: Since 2006 all hunting of wild animals has been prohibited by Presidential Decree. The Taliban authorities have continued the hunting ban but enforcement appears to be weak.

Kazakhstan: Listed in the national Red Book. Hunting permits can be issued only by particular governmental decree following a special procedure, but there have been no legal hunts.

Tajikistan: Listed in the national Red Book, take from nature is possible only for scientific purposes; the government has not issued any permits for hunting but only for live capture for captive breeding and introductions.

Turkmenistan: Listed in the national Red Book. Hunting is prohibited.

Uzbekistan: Listed in the national Red Book, very limited trophy hunting has been permitted in recent years.

6. Protection status and species management

6.1 National protection status

Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan: Listed in the national Red Data Books

Afghanistan: Since 2006 all hunting of wild animals has been prohibited by Presidential Decree. The Taliban authorities have continued the hunting ban but enforcement appears to be weak (Ostrowski pers. com. 2024).

A number of strict protected areas are established in Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan especially aimed at Bukhara deer conservation. Special measures on reintroduction of Bukhara deer are implemented in suitable habitats within the historical area in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan.

6.2 International protection status

The IUCN Red List assessed *Cervus hanglu* at species level as Least Concern – LC (Brook et al., 2017). This assessment had been justified as follows: “The total population size is estimated at approximately 2,500 individuals, although no recent estimates have been obtained for the populations in China. Although the population in China is small and probably declining, this is offset by the increasing trend of the species in Central Asia, which represents the majority of the species’ population (approximately 75%). Numbers in India are very small, and thus are numerically not significant for determining species-level population trends. Its extent of occurrence (EOO) is >1,000,000 km² and although its area of occupancy (AOO) is not known, it is not likely to approach the threshold of <2,000 km² to qualify for Vulnerable or Near Threatened. To the best of our knowledge there is no continuing decline or extreme fluctuations in the EOO, AOO, area, extent and/or quality of habitat, number of locations or subpopulations or the number of mature individuals. This species is therefore listed as Least Concern.”

6.3 Management measures

Apart from being listed on CMS Appendices I and II, the Bukhara Deer is covered by the Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI) and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) concerning Conservation and Restoration of the Bukhara Deer (*Cervus elaphus bactrianus*), which is signed by the Governments of Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. It serves as a comprehensive framework to monitor and coordinate ongoing conservation efforts across the species habitat.

At the Third Meeting of the Signatories to the Bukhara Deer MOU, the Signatory States adopted the Overview Report and a new Work Programme for the Bukhara Deer for 2025-2032, tailoring conservation measures to each Bukhara Deer population. Cross-cutting activities concerning not only Bukhara Deer, but also other CAMI species will be included in the updated CAMI Work Programme (WP) for 2026-2032.

According to the Overview Report on the Conservation Status and Implementation of the Bukhara Deer MOU, as of 2024, the total number of the Bukhara Deer is estimated at 4,320-4,600 in the wild and 160 in captivity.

6.4 Habitat conservation

Habitat conservation for the Bukhara deer involves protecting and restoring its riparian forest habitats, primarily along the Amudaria and Syrdaria rivers, and establishing protected areas. Key strategies include combating poaching and illegal trade, restoring degraded habitats, creating protected areas like nature reserves, and reintroducing the deer into suitable wild environments. International and non-governmental organizations are collaborating with governments to implement these efforts.

Habitat protection and restoration:

Efforts focus on protecting the lowland riparian forests along the Amudaria and Syrdaria rivers, which are critical habitats for the deer. The creation of transboundary networks of protected areas is a long-term goal.

Reintroduction programs:

The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) has led projects that release deer from captive breeding programs into protected nature reserves, such as the Zarafshan Nature Reserve in Uzbekistan, Syrdarya-Turkestan regional nature park in Kazakhstan and Ily-Balhash region in Kazakhstan. These reintroductions are vital for increasing population numbers and integrating with existing wild herds.

Combating threats:

Conservation plans include strong measures to combat poaching and illegal trade, which significantly impacted the species in the past.

International collaboration:

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) under the Convention on Migratory Species provides a framework for governments, NGOs, and scientists to coordinate conservation efforts across Central Asia.

Community involvement:

One aspect of the broader conservation plan is to provide economic incentives to local communities for responsible resource management, such as through ecotourism.

6.5 Population monitoring

Population monitoring is on-going in all populations and all countries of the species area obtaining every-year data of all population's numbers. Methods used for deer census included registration of traces of life activities, visual registration, acoustic counting of active stags during the rutting season, taking into consideration modifications of roaring; latest years – using photo traps. Some milestone figures are given in the table below, prepared by the regional species expert with participation of specialists of 4 countries of the Region in process of preparation to the Third Meeting of the Signatories to the Bukhara Deer MOU.

Table 1. Population trends of Bukhara Deer (Ahmad K., Pereladova O., et.al., 2025)

	Year	1999	2010	2015	2018	2019		2023	
						free-ranging	captive	free-ranging	captive
KAZ	Karatchingil/ Surroundings	80	350	400	700	715 ¹		610 ⁸ +110	
	Turkestan (Syrdarya)	0	18 (+22 in pens)	49 (+54 pens)	71 (+85 in pens)	75 ¹	83 ¹	171	46 ⁹
	Syrdarya breeding center								10
	Ily-Balkhash				5	5 ¹	12 ¹	220	
	Middle Ily (private)					40 ¹			25 ¹⁰
	Subtotal	80	390	800	>900	835	95	1101	81
TAJ	Tigrovaja Balka		>150		350	>350 (386 ²)		430	
	Romit				18		25 ²		16 ¹¹
	Dashti-Dzum				8-10?	8-10 ² ?			
	Sary-Khosor							11	
	Khutalon							64	
	Farkhor and Khamadony regions							80	
	Other territories				50?	50 ² ?			
	Zarafshan (upper reaches)		60-65		40-50	60-160 ³		200	
	Subtotal	?	210	400	>500	550	25	785	16
TKM	Middle reaches of Amudarya (7 sites)	30	60-70		112	120 ⁴		127	
	Djazguzer (Amudarya upper reaches)	~20	~50	130?	~50-100?	130 ⁵		>50-100 - >100 (?) ¹²	
	Subtotal	50	120	80?	~200	~250		~ 180-230	
UZB	Badai-Tuagai NR / Lower Amudarya BR	~100	517+30 in pens		1350- data of national report (or 2112 ^{**})	1500 - 1857 ⁶	18 ⁶	1566	17
	Kyzylkumskii NR	76	~130		120-150	140-150 ⁶		210	
	Other territories	~50	~140-180		200	~200 ⁶			
	Zarafshan (reintroduction)	9	~30-32 (+22 in pens)		100 (+24 in pens) +60-150	100 ⁶ +60 -150 ³	24 ⁶	155+200	31

Year	1999	2010	2015	2018	2019		2023	
					free-ranging	captive	free-ranging	captive
Khorezm national nature park								10
upper-Amudarya/Aral-Paigambar transboundary population							600-800 ¹³	
Subtotal	~190	~900	1500	>2000	~2000 - 2200	42	2731-2931	58
TOTAL	~350	1620	2780	3400-3500	~3735-3900	162	4847	155

Comments to the table:

60-150, 40-50 – figures in terracotta – most probably the same animals on the border of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, included in data for both countries

¹ – data of census completed in 2019 by the specialists of the Institute of Zoology, Kazakhstan, and by the staff of the Karatchingil game management enterprise;

² - data from the State Department of Specially Protected Natural Territories (SDSPNT) of the Republic of Tajikistan

³- experts evaluation, data from surveys of border guards

⁴ – official National Report; surveys of the staff of the Amu-Daria nature reserve;

⁵ - official National Report; experts' estimations

⁶ - official National Report; census completed by national specialists and the staff of the reserves

⁷ - 2112** – results of census in 2019: Daniel CORNELIS, Valéry GOND, and Régis PELTIER (CIRAD), with participation of Elena KAN (KRASS), 8 January 2020. Mission report Estimation of Bukhara red deer (*Cervus hanglu bactrianus*) population in Lower Amudarya State Biosphere Reserve

⁸- large groups of deer were translocated Ily-Balhash, so the new population was established – but it didn't cause decrease of the base Karatchingil population

⁹ – 10 animals translocated to a new Syrdarya breeding center, a large group released to surrounding riparian forests of Syrdarya river valley

¹⁰ – Private hunting game company because of the decreasing of population keeps 25 deer in the big enclosure.

¹¹- 8 animals from Romit were translocated to Sary-Khosor

¹² – no exact data, although special project was completed - problems with border permissions for the researchers, some data was collected by interviewing border guards; but this is a part of upper-Amudarya/Aral-Paigambar transboundary population, so the number of deer can be important according to census in Uzbekistan

¹³- Previously there was no data for this site – transboundary territory, problems with permissions to access the border area. In 2023 census was conducted.

7. Effects of the proposed amendment

7.1 Anticipated benefits of the amendment

Existing legislation in the Range States is sufficient for protection of Bukhara deer. But in the recent situation, just strict protection is not an optimal way in a lot of sites. Additional measures are needed for animals' translocation to new suitable sites, including transboundary translocation for reintroduction. There are various obstacles for natural migrations, both anthropogenic - such as habitats destruction and fragmentation, and natural – e.g. climate change and desertification. Simplified procedures of deer translocation from overpopulated areas (e.g. Lower Amudaria Biosphere Reserve) to suitable habitats will allow to (a) initiate development of new populations in suitable ecosystems, (b) prevent destruction of ecosystems caused by overpopulation, (c) prevent mortality of deer from epizootics, very probable in high density populations, and (d) mitigation of human-wildlife conflicts. In all these cases removal of Bukhara deer from Annex 1 will simplify bureaucratic procedures and open possibilities for various activities (including those listed under 'additional remarks'), useful for the species, ecosystems and local communities.

Removal of Bukhara deer from Annex 1 will not create contradictions with IUCN Red List as *Cervus hanglu* is listed as “Least Concern” on the species level mainly thanks to the positive trend of *C.h.bactrianus* subspecies, while the other two subspecies are still very rare and really threatened. Neither contradiction with CITES will occur, as procedures of CITES would be completed for the species anyway.

7.2 Potential risks of the amendment

One of the potential risks of the Removal of Bukhara deer from Annex 1 is in increasing number of applications for various forms of commercial use of deer – but without well-developed background – and applications for trophy hunting. Those risks are prevented, as Bukhara deer continue to be included in the IUCN Red List and National Red Data Books of the Range States, as well as CITES species lists. So all activities with animals will need to be preceded by special expertise and control.

7.3 Intention of the proponent concerning development of an Agreement or Concerted Action

Memorandum of Understanding concerning conservation and Restoration of the Bukhara Deer under CMS already exists and is functioning since 2002. A new Work Programme for the Bukhara Deer for 2025-2032, tailoring conservation measures to each Bukhara Deer population is adopted by all Range States. Cross-cutting activities concerning not only Bukhara Deer, but also other CAMI species will be included in the CAMI WP for 2026-2032. CMS and Species Focal Points are authorized in all range countries. New Work Programme for the Bukhara Deer **(2025-2032), developed during the third meeting of the Signatories, and adopted by all Range States, include a lot of transboundary activities, e.g.** develop and agree on bilateral agreements and transboundary protected area management plans with the view of creating transboundary protected areas.

8. Range States

Republic of Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Republic of Tajikistan, Republic of Kazakhstan, Afghanistan

9. Consultations

The Third Meeting of the Signatories to the Bukhara Deer MOU took place in Almaty in 2024 with participation of responsible authorized national authorities and national experts of all subspecies' Range States (except Afghanistan – not a signatory state). the Signatory States adopted the Overview Report and a new Work Programme for the Bukhara Deer for 2025-2032, tailoring conservation measures to each Bukhara Deer population. Cross-cutting activities concerning not only Bukhara Deer, but also other CAMI species intend to be included in the next CAMI Work Programme for 2026-2032. Uzbekistan asked the opinion of the Range States about potential removal of Bukhara deer from Appendix I of CMS. Range States expressed support, although it was noted that measures should be taken not to harm small populations, e.g. in Turkmenistan. The proposal was again presented at the Third Meeting of Range States to CAMI, taking place on 24-26 June 2025 in Tashkent. There were no objections from Range States on this proposal.

The Bukhara Deer Work Programme 2025-2032, adopted and approved by all Range States - Signatories to the Bukhara Deer MOU – include, among others, the following activities:

9.1. Agree on a common position of the Range States regarding the delisting of Bukhara Deer from Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) Appendix I and prepare a joint proposal for the 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP15).

9.2. Consider changing the national legal status for enabling sustainable hunting in suitable areas in the context of population control and for creating incentives for protection from poaching and for coexistence of local communities and Bukhara Deer outside of protected areas.

9.3. If Bukhara Deer is delisted from CMS Appendix I, consider in appropriate areas the introduction of sustainable hunting in the context of population control and for creation of incentives for protection from poaching and coexistence of farmers and deer outside of core zones (UZB).

9.4. Study the feasibility of community-based wildlife management for creating ownership and deriving benefits from ecotourism and, if the species is removed from CMS Appendix I, introducing hunting to offset costs of living next to deer (UZB).

10. Additional remarks

The Third Meeting of the Signatories to the Bukhara Deer MOU pointed out a set of Additional measures, not covered by the Work Programme, which can be useful both for overall species development, as well as for socio-economic development of local communities of the Range States. Those measures concern evaluation of options and risks of extractive use of Bukhara Deer and development of a sustainable use approach.

10.1. Sustainable extractive use of Bukhara Deer was not included in the Work Programme, neither actual use nor the assessment of options and risks, with the exception of considering farming for velvet antlers. Currently, the species is listed in Appendix I of the CMS, which does not allow taking, with very few exceptions limited in time and space (CMS Convention text, Article III). Accordingly, Bukhara Deer is legally protected in all Range States and no hunting permits are regularly issued.

10.2. During the last years, the government of Uzbekistan has issued a small hunting quota and during the hunting season 2023/2024 an outfitter posted a photograph depicting a US hunter with a Bukhara Deer stag shot in Uzbekistan. While such hunting tourism targeting trophy stags does not directly impact population size and cannot contribute to the resolution of local overpopulation problems, it could create incentives for conservation of Bukhara Deer and its habitats. Hunting for removal of larger numbers of Bukhara deer to manage local population size, reduce human-wildlife conflicts and as sustainable use option, is not yet considered in any Range State.

In 2022 the CMS Secretariat jointly with the International Nature Academy of the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) commissioned the study "[Potential for Community-based Wildlife Management in Central Asia](#)". The study, elaborated by Frankfurt Zoological Society and launched by CMS in January 2025, included the Bukhara Deer as one of the species for which the potential of the approach was assessed. The study explores different options of non-extractive and extractive sustainable use. One of its recommendations to Bukhara Deer Range States was to consider delisting Bukhara Deer from CMS Appendix I and maintaining it only on Appendix II in accordance with the listing criteria and the current conservation status of the subspecies, e.g. to enable CBWM with extractive use in the future.

11. References

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