

56th Meeting of the Standing Committee

Bonn, Germany, 25 – 27 March 2025

UNEP/CMS/StC56/Doc.6

COP PRESIDENCY REPORT

(Prepared by the Government of Uzbekistan)

Summary:

This document provides a report on the achievements of the COP Presidency of the Government of Uzbekistan.

REPORT OF THE COP PRESIDENCY

From 12-17 February 2024, the Government of Uzbekistan hosted in Samarkand the Fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS COP14). This important event emphasised Uzbekistan's commitment to biodiversity conservation and natural heritage protection. The key milestone of the event was the approval of the Samarkand Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2024-2032, aimed at biodiversity conservation and fostering sustainable ecosystems among CMS member states.

It provided a unique opportunity to present the first-ever *State of the World's Migratory Species* report, new global recommendations on light pollution, and best practices for linear infrastructure to minimise impacts on migratory species.

COP14 also marked the launch of the One Health in Central Asia project, aimed at preventing the emergence and spread of zoonotic diseases. This €11 million IUCN project, supported by the German International Climate Initiative (IKI), will run for six years.

Along with nine other Parties, Uzbekistan was awarded for its contribution to enhancing ecological connectivity at the Migratory Species Champions Programme ceremony of the COP14.

Activities

In 2024, the Government of Uzbekistan, with the active support from scientific authorities and civil society implemented various initiatives contributing to global efforts to preserve migratory species and sustainably manage natural resources.

Uzbekistan expressed its commitment to contribute to the implementation of the Global Partnership on Ecological Connectivity (GPEC) launched during the CMS COP14.

Likewise, the Samarkand Resolution on the conservation of the snow leopard range was adopted.

The first Central Asian office of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) was established in Tashkent, which marked an important step in strengthening regional cooperation in the field of biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.

In 2025, the updated version of the Red Data Book of Uzbekistan will be published in accordance with IUCN Red List criteria and categories.

The Head of State declared 2025 the “Year of Environmental Protection and a Green Economy”, with a range of large-scale initiatives planned to conserve biodiversity, reduce pollution, develop renewable energy sources, and raise environmental awareness in society.

The Government of Uzbekistan adopted significant legislative acts aimed at regulating the keeping of wild animals, the organization of hunting farms, and the breeding of wild animals, as well as the protection of wild animals caught in unfavourable conditions.

The Government of Uzbekistan also developed a Draft Roadmap for 2024-2026, aimed at conservation and reintroduction of rare species of wild animals. Forty Turkmen kulans were reintroduced from Bukhara nursery to Ustyurt Plateau, with further monitoring of their adaptation to the new habitat.

Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan joined the Memorandum of Cooperation on wildlife conservation in the Ustyurt Plateau, aimed at joint efforts to preserve the plateau's ecosystem, including the reintroduction of endangered species such as the Asian cheetah, Saiga antelope, Indian honeycreeper, and Turkmen kulan.

The Memorandum established a Regional working group of representatives from Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, as well as the CMS Secretariat and the Succow Foundation, and developed a Roadmap to ensure the conservation of transboundary populations of wild animals and their migratory species on the Ustyurt Plateau. The first meeting of the signatories is scheduled for March this year.

Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the conservation of migratory birds of prey in Africa and Eurasia (Raptors MoU) under the CMS, designed to eliminate threats to migratory raptors breeding in the region and migrating through its territory.

In 2024, Djiltirbas Lake was included in the List of Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar List). The lake serves as an important habitat for rare bird species, including the White-headed Duck and Red-breasted Goose, and plays a key role in bird migration along the Central Asian Flyway.

Within the framework of the programme for the conservation of the population of Houbara Bustard, listed in the Red Data Book of Uzbekistan and in the CMS Appendix II, an annual release is conducted, aimed at increasing the number of bustards in their natural habitat.

The joint proposal of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan on the inclusion of Pallas's cat in Annex II of the CMS was approved by the Conference of the Parties and it has been elevated to the international level.

In 2024, Uzbekistan became a member of the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA), and joint activities are planned for the conservation and study of the snow leopard, Trans-Asian leopard and cheetah.

Uzbekistan actively promotes the objectives of the CMS on international platforms.

As part of these efforts, the Uzbekistan delegation and the CMS Secretariat hosted a side-event on the margins of the UN Environment Assembly 2024 "Nature knows no borders: CMS contribution to addressing the triple planetary crisis and outcomes of CMS COP14". The event provided an opportunity for UNEA delegates to learn about CMS priorities and contributions for addressing the triple planetary crisis, including the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF), tackling pollution and climate change, as well as promoting multilateralism and enhancing synergies.

Also, the Uzbek delegation participated in the Sixteenth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP16), which was held from October 21 to 1 November 2024 in Colombia where another high-level event has been conducted on the theme: "Nature Knows no Borders: CMS COP14 outcomes contributing to achieving the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework".

In its capacity as President of the CMS Conference of the Parties, the Government of Uzbekistan also hosted a high-level event at its Embassy in Berlin on 7 February 2025 to encourage non-Party states to accede to the Convention.

On 24-26 June this year, Uzbekistan is to convene the Third Meeting of the Range States to the Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI RS3) in Tashkent.

Notably, Samarkand will host the 20th Conference of the Parties (COP20) to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) from 24 November to 5 December 2025, marking the first time a Central Asian country hosts this prestigious event of global wildlife conservation.

Conclusions

The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) is a unique United Nations global agreement aimed at the conservation and sustainable use of migratory species and their habitats. In the face of increasing pressure on biodiversity, CMS plays an important role in implementing the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation, and realising sustainable development.

Uzbekistan's hosting of CMS COP14 and its extensive contributions to biodiversity conservation reflect its strong commitment to the protection of migratory species and the sustainable management of natural ecosystems.

The adoption of the Samarkand Strategic Plan for Migratory Species (2024-2032) represents a significant milestone in advancing global efforts to safeguard biodiversity, while the presentation of the first-ever *State of the World's Migratory Species* report and the development of new global recommendations on light pollution and linear infrastructure demonstrate Uzbekistan's proactive engagement in shaping international environmental policies.

The government's initiatives, including the reintroduction of Turkmen kulans, the expansion of wetland conservation efforts, and the enhancement of ecological connectivity through transboundary cooperation, further solidify its role as a regional leader in wildlife conservation. The signing of multiple memoranda of understanding with neighboring countries highlights its dedication to fostering collaboration in addressing environmental challenges.

In addition to practical conservation measures, Uzbekistan has taken significant legislative steps to regulate the management of wild animal populations, hunting practices, and habitat protection. The forthcoming publication of the updated Red Data Book of Uzbekistan in accordance with IUCN Red List criteria, will provide a critical foundation for future conservation strategies.

Meanwhile, Uzbekistan's continued engagement in high-level international conferences reflects its commitment to promoting the objectives of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals on the global stage.

Looking ahead, Uzbekistan remains dedicated to strengthening international partnerships, implementing progressive conservation policies, and enhancing scientific research to ensure the long-term protection of migratory species and their habitats. Through sustained cooperation with regional and global actors, the country will continue to play an instrumental role in advancing biodiversity conservation efforts and fostering ecological resilience in Central Asia and beyond.