

# Declaration

The Sessional Committee of the CMS Scientific Council, holding its first meeting in Bonn, Germany, from 18-21 April 2016,

*Noting* that several species of Central Asian mammals rely on interconnected and un-fragmented steppe, desert and mountain ecosystems for their survival;

*Recognizing* that the ability to migrate is in some cases an adaptation to the extreme weather conditions that may occur in these habitats;

*Further recognizing* that extreme weather conditions are causing additional stress to migratory mammals as they try to find accessible food resources often located at long distance to enable them to survive this harsh period of the annual cycle;

*Aware* that linear infrastructure including transportation and fencing can prevent migratory species from accessing suitable habitats, which naturally change in space and time;

*Acknowledging* the “Mongolian Standard MNS 6515: 2015”, which puts in place regulations for the construction of new roads and railways to allow the safe passage of wildlife, such as Mongolian Gazelles, Argali Sheep and the Asiatic Wild Ass;

*Recalling* CMS COP11 Resolution 11.24 on the Central Asian Mammals Initiative, which adopts the “Guidelines for Addressing the Impact of Linear Infrastructure on Large Migratory Mammals in Central Asia”;

*Recalling also* the Ulaanbaataar Action Plan, developed at the workshop on “Implementing Wildlife-friendly Measures in Infrastructure Planning and Design in Mongolia” in August 2015;

*Noting* that Mongolian Gazelles live mostly in small, scattered populations;

*Having received* reports of the mass die-off of Mongolian gazelles that occurred in winter of 2016 along the Trans-Mongolian Railway, caused by a combination of extreme weather conditions and the barrier effect posed by the railway;

1. *Commends* the efforts of the Institute of General and Experimental Biology of the Mongolian Academy of Science to collect data and report on the mass mortality of the Mongolian Gazelle to the Scientific Council through the Sessional Committee;
2. *Expresses deep concern* at the effect of the mass mortality on the viability of populations of the Mongolian Gazelle;
3. *Also expresses concern* that similar events might increase in frequency as a consequence of climate change, and that such heavy tolls might not be sustainable for many of the gazelle populations in Mongolia.