

Preparation for the
Workshop “Midterm Review of the Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI)”
16-19 April 2018, Vilm, Germany

Questions for Government Representatives

First and Last name: **Nodir Muminov**

Position: **Head of the Inspection for Control on Protection and Use of Biodiversity and Protected Areas**

Organization: **The State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Uzbekistan**

Country: **Uzbekistan**

1. Please name the main activities of your Government since 2014, which implement the CAMI Programme of Work (POW) with respect to CAMI species found in your country (please name projects and money spent, if possible).

- In Uzbekistan, more than 1000 Bukhara deer live in protected areas (Lower Amudarya State Biosphere Reserve - about 900 individuals; Zarafshan National Natural Park (previously Reserve) - 21 individuals; Kyzylkum National Reserve - about 100 individuals). Protection of these areas is at a good level, with a system in place.

- The saiga lives on the Ustyurt plateau and in the adjacent territories of the Amu Darya delta and the dried bottom of the Aral Sea. The population does not exceed 500 individuals. In order to organize regional protection of the saiga, on 22nd July 2016 the Government of Uzbekistan Decree No. 238 established an integrated (landscape) reserve on the border with Kazakhstan on an area of 628,300 hectares (strictly protected area) and 219,800 hectares (buffer zone). The reserve is staffed. Employees are provided with the necessary vehicles, cordons and field equipment.

- Kulan and Przewalski's horses live mostly in a semi-free environment in the Bukhara specialized nursery “Dzheyran”, where Goitered Gazelles are also bred. The latest survey, conducted on October 1-2 2017, showed that 985 gazelles, 125 kulan and 24 Przewalski's horses live there. Each year, funds from the state budget are allocated for the maintenance of the nursery, purchase of feed and other purposes. In addition, funds are currently being allocated to create infrastructure for the development of domestic and foreign ecotourism in the nursery territory. Goitered gazelles and kulan are also found in the wild. Seasonal visits of the kulan to the southern Ustyurt from the border regions of Turkmenistan have been observed, with an expert estimate of 100-150 individuals in the population. Goitered gazelles live on the Ustyurt plateau, in the Kyzylkum desert and adjacent areas, in the Karshi steppe and in some parts of Surxondaryo region. The total number of gazelles in Uzbekistan is 9000-10000 individuals. Protection is carried out by inspectors from the State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

- The snow leopard lives in the Western Tien-Shan (Ugam, Pskem, Chatkal ridges) and Pamir-Alay (Zaamin, Turkestan and Gissar ridges). Snow leopard monitoring and

conservation is carried out on the territory of the Gissar State Reserve, Chatkalskiy State Nature Reserve, Ugam-Chatkal Reserve and Ugam-Chatkal State National Wild Nature Park. The population is estimated at 50-80 individuals according to expert assessment. The following measures are used to protect the species:

- Reduction of poaching on the snow leopard and its prey (Siberian ibex, Menzbier's marmot, red marmot);
- Conservation of the snow leopard, its prey and ecosystems within the framework of the joint UNDP/GEF and Goskomecology project “Sustainable natural resource and forest management in key mountainous areas important for globally significant biodiversity”;
- Participation in the work of GSLEP;
- Development of a program and action plan for snow leopard conservation in Uzbekistan for 2019–2029.

2. Please name your Government’s priorities for conservation action on the CAMI species occurring in your country (name 3-5 priorities). Which objectives on CAMI POW do they address?

- In two protected areas (the Lower Amudarya State Biosphere Reserve and the Zarafshan National Natural Park) there are nurseries for breeding Bukhara deer. In the Bukhara specialized nursery "Dzheyran", work has also begun on breeding Bukhara deer (currently contains 1 male, 2 females). Work to initiate saiga breeding in the “Dzheyran” nursery or on the territory of the complex landscape reserve “Saigachy” is planned.

- Strengthening the capacity of the PA inspectors to work effectively to curb cases of illegal hunting and trade (saiga, snow leopard and prey). Strengthening interdepartmental cooperation on data exchange and conservation of CAMI species (1.1. Illegal hunting and trade);

- Optimization and expansion of the protected area network in the habitats of the snow leopard, goitered gazelle, kulan (2.1. Snow leopard and argali (mountain ecosystems); 2.3. South-west region);

- Involvement of local communities, customs and border guards in the protection of saiga, snow leopards, Bukhara deer and kulan (1.5. Human needs/community engagement in conservation);

- Optimization of the monitoring system for snow leopards and their prey taking into account new methods and technologies; introduction of a single monitoring system for the republic (1.6. Scientific knowledge);

- Strengthening cross-border cooperation with neighboring countries on the protection of the following species during their seasonal movements: saiga (Kazakhstan), snow leopards and mountain ungulates (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan), Bukhara deer, kulan (Turkmenistan), illegal trade and exchange of monitoring data (1.7. Transboundary cooperation 2.1. Snow leopard and argali (mountain ecosystems); 2.3. South-west region; 2.5. Bukhara deer).

3. Are you aware of any emergencies or urgent threats currently affecting CAMI species in your country or which are very likely to affect the CAMI species in your country in the near future (extreme weather conditions, disease outbreaks, infrastructure plans, ongoing construction, mining, changes in legislation etc.)?

- As a result of the fence built by Kazakhstan on the border with the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2012, as well as the railway built on the territory of Kazakhstan in 2014-2015, the migration of the Ustyurt saiga population to Uzbekistan almost stopped, and therefore their number in Uzbekistan drastically dropped. In 2016, the obstacles were partially eliminated on Kazakhstan's side, and passage routes were created along the border fence. Perhaps due to favorable weather conditions and a sufficient forage base in the territory of the Republic of Kazakhstan, in 2016-2017 there was no observed saiga migration to Uzbekistan.

4. Please identify 3 major challenges that make implementation of CMS and CAMI difficult in your country.

- Challenges to the effective protection of endangered animal species include the vast territories they inhabit and a limited number of inspectors, who have insufficient equipment.

- Some areas that are home to endangered animals lack the status of a protected area.

- Degradation, fragmentation and loss of animal habitats (due to agricultural development of territories, development of the mining industry etc.).

- Weak interdepartmental coordination of conservation activities (for example, the protected areas in which the snow leopard lives belong to different departments);

- Insufficient public awareness about environmental legislation and nature protection. Low involvement of local people in nature conservation.

5. If possible, provide recommendation(s) for CMS (or other relevant stakeholders) to promote implementation of CAMI and thus conservation of the respective species in your country.

- Assisting in acquiring saigas for breeding in nursery and semi-free conditions (possibly by exchanging them for kulan or goitered gazelles contained in nurseries) from nearby countries for subsequent reintroduction on the Ustyurt plateau.

- Strengthening cross-border cooperation in snow leopard range states at the level of responsible state environmental organizations, scientific institutions, protected areas, security agencies involved in border protection and suppressing illegal trade of animals and plants, local communities (development and signing of MoUs, joint action plans).

- Development of a unified monitoring program for the snow leopard and its prey, in order to obtain comparable data within selected snow leopard landscapes.

- Attracting international experience to enhance the effectiveness of snow leopard protection (e.g. through the introduction of a SMART patrol system).
- Organizing exchange visits for the staff of reserves, environmental and scientific organizations.