



# Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

Secretariat provided by the United Nations Environment Programme



## 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the CMS Scientific Council (ScC-SC1)

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### Progress Report on the Central Asian Mammals Initiative since its Adoption in November 2014

#### Introduction

1. [CAMI \(Resolution 11.24\) and its associated Programme of Work \(POW\)](#) were adopted by CMS Parties at the Eleventh Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP11) in Quito, Ecuador (4-9 November 2014). The overall goal of the Initiative is to improve the conservation status of large migratory mammals and their habitat in Central Asia by facilitating trans-boundary cooperation. Building on activities focused on single species (including existing Memoranda of Understanding/Single Species Action Plans and those in development), the POW comprises a list of high priority activities to address urgent and major threats faced by all or most of the species, including those not covered by other initiatives or legal instruments. The present document reports on the progress made in implementation of the CAMI POW since its adoption.

#### Activities under CAMI for the period from November 2014 until April 2016

##### *Mandate*

2. Since November 2014, CMS and cooperating partners have conducted and developed activities, such as international meetings of key stakeholders with resulting action plans, website development and small-scale projects, which contribute to achieving the following objectives of the CAMI POW:

- 1) objective 1.3.3 to “promote the knowledge and application of technical solutions” to reduce barriers to migration;
- 2) objective 1.4.6 “to create best practice policy guides” for issues that affect trans-boundary populations of wild animals in CAMI countries;
- 3) objective 1.7 to “strengthen trans-boundary cooperation”;
- 4) objective 2.2 “to address impacts from linear infrastructure and maintain landscape permeability” by developing mitigation measures;
- 5) objective 4 to raise awareness on Central Asian species and the threats they face.

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### ***Concluded Meetings***

3. To address the threats posed by barriers to migration, together with the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB), the associated Federal Agency for Nature Conservation and the Mongolian office of the German Development Cooperation Agency (GIZ) CMS organized the workshop on “[Implementing Wildlife-Friendly Measures in Infrastructure Planning and Design in Mongolia](#)” in August 2015. At this meeting the new Ulaanbataar Action Plan to guide the planning of roads and railroads was proposed and discussed with government representatives. This plan outlines how to modify existing transportation infrastructure in Mongolia and how best to develop new projects to ensure wildlife can pass freely.

4. In October 2015 CMS organized the [Third Meeting of Signatories of the Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of the Saiga Antelope \(Saiga MOU\)](#). The key outcome of the meeting is the review and adoption of a detailed set of measures to be implemented in the period 2016-2020 to facilitate the recovery of the saiga populations after the catastrophic die-off of May 2015. A report on the current conservation status of the species across all Range States was reviewed and adopted. In addition to moving the implementation of the Saiga MOU forward, the meeting also contributed to achieving further objectives of the CAMI such as reducing barriers to migration and combatting poaching for saiga and other species sharing the same habitat.

5. The CMS Secretariat participated in two international meetings, organized by other institutions in order to raise awareness, contribute to developing policy and management guidelines and to share their experience in conservation. During the conference on “[Regional Practices on Sustainable use in Hunting Territories and Protection of Wildlife](#)” in Ashgabad (Turkmenistan) in September 2015, a set of recommendations for wildlife management in Turkmenistan, including mechanisms for regional cooperation were developed with input from CMS. The meeting was organized by the GIZ within the EU Forest and Biodiversity Governance Including Environmental Monitoring (FLERMONECA) project.

6. As a participant in the international workshop on “[Nature Conservation in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia](#)”, organized by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) in February 2016, the CMS Secretariat shared its experience in nature conservation in the region. CAMI was presented as a promising regional initiative for Central Asia as it aims to focus limited resources on achieving the best possible impact for conserving migratory species.

### ***Projects***

7. Four completed and ongoing projects have been supported by CMS via Small Scale Funding Agreements and since the adoption of the CAMI (For a complete list of projects see Annex 1). These include small scale projects for coordination and strengthening regional cooperation for the conservation of the Snow Leopard and the Saiga Antelope, emergency response to the catastrophic saiga mass mortality event in 2015 and the translation of “Guidelines for Addressing the Impact of Linear Infrastructure on Large Migratory Mammals in Central Asia” into Russian.

8. In response to the saiga mass mortality in May 2015 and at the request of Kazakhstan, the CMS Secretariat dispatched an emergency mission with experts from the Royal Veterinary College of the University of London and the Food and Agriculture Organization. The experts assisted with post-mortem examinations, data collection and evaluation to determine the cause of saiga mortality. The emergency mission developed into an international research project, funded by the UK Government’s Natural Environment Research Council and involving 6 organizations: the Royal Veterinary College of the University of London, Kazakhstan’s Research Institute for Biological Safety Problems (RIPBS), the Association for the Conservation of Biodiversity of Kazakhstan (ACBK), Oxford University, Bristol University, the Swedish Agricultural University at Umea, and the UN’s Food and Agriculture Organization.

9. In March 2016, the CMS Secretariat has initiated the process of English-Russian translation of the “Guidelines for Addressing the Impact of Linear Infrastructure on Large Migratory Mammals in Central Asia”, which were developed by international experts within the FLERMONECA project to reduce the impact of transportation infrastructure on migrations. Translating these important policy and planning guidelines from English into Russian helps to overcome a further obstacle to CAMI implementation, the language barrier.

### ***Activities to further raise awareness***

10. The CMS Secretariat aims to raise awareness and to provide a platform for regional and international cooperation through the CAMI. In April 2016 the CMS Secretariat has arranged to participate in [Minex Central Asia 2016](#), taking place on April 19-21 in Astana, Kazakhstan. This forum is one of the largest regional events for the mining industry, bringing together government regulators, private companies, financiers and associated service companies from 23 countries. The aim of CMS at the forum is to raise awareness of the impact of mining and related transportation infrastructure on Central Asian mammals and to inform participants about science-based mitigation measures. CMS Secretariat will be represented in this forum by colleagues from Kazakhstan’s largest nature conservation NGO, the Association for the Conservation of Biodiversity of Kazakhstan, ACBK. CMS and the ACBK are the first and the only environmental organizations to participate in Minex Central Asia. Thus, the Secretariat aims to pave the way for the establishment of a constructive dialogue with the industry.

11. To raise awareness of the general public through the cyber space and to provide a platform for conservation workers, a new [CAMI web site](#) has been launched by CMS. The web page contains not only news, images and general information on Central Asian mammals, but also materials for professionals, such as meeting documents, guidelines and recommendations.

### **Conclusions and outlook**

12. Since the adoption of the CAMI, implementation of the POW has been initiated by a number of successful activities focused on strengthening transboundary cooperation and aiming to reduce barriers to migration, raise awareness of Central Asian migratory species both globally and regionally, as well as to strengthen national capacity for wildlife management in general, and in cases of mass mortality events in particular.

13. In addition to improving international cooperation, there is a need to dedicate more attention to implementing CAMI POW through projects in the field. For this, resources need to be mobilized, as outlined in CAMI POW. In addition, two of the key obstacles to CAMI implementation are poor knowledge on migratory species and lack of reliable data.

14. Therefore, more action involving the international scientific community is required to collect new data and to synthesize available knowledge on: 1) migration routes; 2) options to reduce barriers to migration 3) understanding the impact of climate change and 4) innovative approaches to reduce poaching. CMS is dedicated to further address these issues through, inter alia, the Scientific Council.

**List of Projects Supported by the CMS with Relevance to the CAMI in the period November 2014-April 2016**

<b>Implementing partner</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>Closing Date</b>	<b>Dealing with</b>	<b>Funding source</b>
<b>FFI (Fauna &amp; Flora International)</b>	1-Oct-12	31-Dec-14	Supporting Tajikistan to lead on transboundary Cooperation on Snow Leopards	UNEP
<b>SCA (Saiga Conservation Alliance)</b>	23-Apr-15	22-Apr-16	Coordination of implementation of the Saiga MOU	The German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety
<b>Royal Veterinary College of the University of London, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)</b>	21-May-15	22-Apr-15	Emergency mission of veterinary experts to aid in data acquisition and analysis after the catastrophic mass mortality event of Saiga Antelopes in May 2015	UNEP/CMS Secretariat
<b>External consultant to be selected</b>	20-March-16	ongoing	Translating the policy and planning guide “Guidelines for Addressing the Impact of Linear Infrastructure on Large Migratory Mammals in Central Asia.” to Russian	The German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety