



# CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES

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FIRST MEETING OF THE SIGNATORIES TO THE  
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING CONCERNING  
CONSERVATION, RESTORATION AND SUSTAINABLE  
USE OF THE SAIGA ANTELOPE (*Saiga tatarica tatarica*)  
Almaty, Kazakhstan, 25-26 September 2006  
Agenda Item 8.3

## DRAFT MEDIUM TERM INTERNATIONAL WORK PROGRAMME

*(Prepared by IUCN/SSC Antelope Specialist Group and European Sustainable Use Specialist Group on behalf of the Secretariat)*

1. Pursuant to paragraph 2 of the MoU, Signatories are to implement the provisions of the Action Plan as a basis for conserving all populations of *Saiga tatarica tatarica*. The Secretariat's Overview Report (CMS/SA-1/5/Add.1) indicates that some progress has been made to implement the MoU and Action Plan even though the MoU has not technically entered into effect, as many Saiga-related initiatives pre-date the MoU's opening for signature on 23 November 2005.
2. The purpose of this note is to suggest a tool to help support the implementation of the MoU and Action Plan by focusing the attention of the Range States, the Saiga research and conservation community and the donor community on the areas of highest conservation concern that still require urgent intervention.
3. Drawing from the Action Plan, and based on the information submitted by Range States in their national reports, as well as the information provided by other interested organizations via the project reporting template and other available information, the Antelope Specialist Group (ASG) and the European Sustainable Use Specialist Group (ESUSG) of the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC), on behalf of the Secretariat, have developed a draft medium term international work programme whose activities could address areas of high conservation concern for the Saiga Antelope, as well as areas where the Action Plan's implementation has not been well-advanced to date. The vision guiding this exercise has been the ultimate restoration of Saiga Antelope populations to levels at which sustainable use is again possible.
4. The draft medium work programme is attached for consideration. If endorsed it would not only prioritise many of the activities of the Action Plan, it would assist in focusing limited international, national and other financial resources and capacity for the most immediate conservation impact. The work programme could also form the basis for targeted fundraising nationally or internationally and provide a context for donor decisions.
5. The draft work programme has been primarily developed in the context of the sub-species *Saiga tatarica tatarica*, because this is the MoU and Action Plan's scope of application. However, the work programme also reflects the understanding that similar

conservation needs also apply to *Saiga tatarica mongolica* as was recognised by CITES Decision 13.30 which urged Mongolia to participate in the implementation of those elements of the Saiga MoU Action Plan that are relevant to the conservation of its Saiga population. Therefore, the draft work programme references Mongolia specifically in some cases.

6. The activities presented in the draft work programme have been prioritised by urgency and timescale depending on the threats targeted and other conservation needs on the following basis:

**Urgency:** **1** – *urgent* (crucial for preventing population extirpation). **2** – *important* (necessary for stabilisation of numbers). **3** – *useful* (will contribute to population restoration).

**Timescale:** **A** - *immediate* (1-2 years). **B** – *medium-term* (5 years). **C** – *long-term* (up to 10 years).

7. As with the Action Plan, the medium term international work programme would not be intended to be prescriptive or mutually exclusive. It reflects the best advice available to SSC and agencies directly involved in conservation of Saiga. Range States would apply it in the context of their own national circumstances. In addition, it is hoped that the Saiga research and conservation community, and the donor community, would use it to guide their activities as a contribution to the MoU and Action Plan's implementation.

8. The term of the work programme is initially envisaged as 5 years. As with all action plans, regular review is an integral component, and activities can be updated periodically by the meeting of the Signatories as the need arises to reflect new information or needs.

9. Each meeting of the Signatories could review implementation of the work programme to gauge progress made. Prior to each meeting of the Signatories Range States, collaborating organisations and others in the Saiga research and conservation community would be asked to report on their activities as part of the national reporting and/or the project reporting processes.

**Action requested:**

The Signatories, and as appropriate other meeting participants, are invited to:

- Review the draft medium term international work programme, taking into account the Action Plan's provisions and national circumstances, and provide comments on how it could be improved if necessary.
- Endorse the work programme and urge its implementation at national level.
- Urge interested intergovernmental, governmental and non-governmental organisations to support its implementation where possible through financial and in-kind contributions.

**Draft Medium Term International Work Programme to Support Implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for the Saiga Antelope (*Saiga tatarica tatarica*) and Action Plan**

*(as at 4 September 2006)*

	Measures to be taken	Urgency <sup>1</sup>	Timescale <sup>2</sup>	AP Cross-ref	Progress made/ Comments
	<i>Range-wide measures</i> <sup>3</sup>				
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Implementation</b>				
1.1	Encourage the remaining Range States to sign the CMS MoU	1	A	3.1.1	
1.2	Develop national Saiga conservation Action Plans and integrate into NBSAPs	1	A	3.1.2	
1.3	Encourage all potential partner and collaborating organisations to support the MoU and Action Plan by contributing to the implementation of the medium international work programme	1	A	3.1.1	
1.4	Establish Saiga management authorities in Range States to coordinate conservation efforts and promote cooperation between all stakeholders	1	B		
1.5	Encourage the Saiga research and conservation community to regularly exchange project information and progress reports through the e-bulletin Saiga News and a future on-line reporting facility and e-library	2	A		
1.6	Consider extending the MoU to include the whole species	2	B		
1.7	Establish a coordination mechanism for the MoU to support implementation	3	A	3.3.1	
1.8	Designate national MoU co-ordinators responsible for liaison with counterparts in other Range States and with co-operating organisations, and improve exchange of information and technical expertise on Saiga Antelope conservation	3	B	3.3.2	
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Anti-poaching</b>				
2.1	Fund existing anti-poaching teams adequately to allow effective operation	1	A	1.6.3	
2.2	Establish and fund anti-poaching units in other parts of Saiga range beginning with Ural population; Mongolia; Uzbekistan	1	A	1.6.3	

<sup>1</sup> Urgency: 1 – urgent (crucial for preventing population extirpation). 2 – important (necessary for stabilisation of numbers). 3. – useful (will contribute to population restoration).

<sup>2</sup> Timescale: A- immediate (1-2 years). B – medium-term (5 years).

<sup>3</sup> May also be applicable to *Saiga tatarica mongolica*.

	<b>Measures to be taken</b>	<b>Urgency<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Timescale<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>AP Cross-ref</b>	<b>Progress made/ Comments</b>
2.3	Develop national anti-poaching strategies in order to maximise cost-effectiveness of patrol deployment	1	B	1.6.3	
2.4	Strengthen legal systems to ensure effective prosecution of offenders	2	B	1.6.5	
2.5	Provide appropriate training for law enforcement officers	2	B	1.6.3	
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Trade</b>				
3.1	Undertake activities to improve compliance with CITES provisions in the Range States, with a particular focus on Russia and Kazakhstan	1	B	1.6.3	
3.2	Encourage collaboration between the Range States and Asian Saiga Antelope consumer countries to combat illegal trade and ensure that any trade or use that takes place is sustainable and legal	1	B	1.6.3	
3.3	Provide training in identification and legal situation for customs and law enforcement officers	2	B	1.6.3	
3.4	Distribute identification manuals for Saiga parts and derivatives	2	B	1.6.3	
3.5	Review and if necessary strengthen legal and institutional measures concerning Saiga Antelope protection, control of poaching and illegal trade	3	B	1.6.5	
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Human Dimensions</b>				
4.1	Expand current incentive and alternative livelihood projects and develop new programmes in all appropriate parts of Saiga Antelope range	1	A		
4.2	Monitor attitudes to Saiga conservation activities and evidence of poaching using local-level social research	2	A	1.6.2	
4.3	Strengthen the involvement of different stakeholders in Saiga Antelope conservation & encourage local involvement in Saiga protection	2	A	1.6.6 2.3.3	
4.4	Develop a plan for sustainable rangeland use to promote cohabitation of people and Saigas	2	A	2.2.4 2.2.5	
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Awareness</b>				
5.1	Continue a high-profile mass-media campaign at regional, national and local levels, addressing Saiga Antelope conservation, restoration and sustainable use, and explaining the relevant challenges	2	A	3.2.2	
5.2	Continue to develop and distribute information and educational materials on Saiga Antelope biology and conservation aimed at tourists and local people	2	B	1.7.9 2.3.2 3.2.3	
5.3	Support and regularly update existing web-sites about Saiga Antelope conservation, restoration and sustainable use	2	B	3.2.4	

	<b>Measures to be taken</b>	<b>Urgency<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Timescale<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>AP Cross-ref</b>	<b>Progress made/ Comments</b>
5.4	Ensure continued funding for Saiga News	2	B	3.3.8	
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Mapping distribution</b>				
6.1	Collate information on Saiga Antelope habitat and range use, present and past; identify key features, including habitat types used and the effects of anthropogenic disturbance	2	B	2.1.1 2.1.2	
6.2	Record all information on GIS	2	B	2.1.1	
6.3	Analyse range use based on this information, and make conservation recommendations accordingly	2	B	1.3.1	
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Protected areas</b>				
7.1	Expand and enhance national protected area networks to benefit Saigas, with particular emphasis on protecting key areas (birthing and rutting) and migratory corridors	1	B	2.3.1	
7.2	Carry out a feasibility study on establishment of a transfrontier protected area in Ustiurt	2	B		
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Population estimation</b>				
8.1	Carry out annual censuses in all Range States including seasonal patterns and use	1	B		
8.2	Review different census techniques, and adopt 'best practice' methodologies for reliable counting of Saiga Antelope populations. Identify appropriate sample sizes, timing, and frequency of counts to provide reliable baseline population data. Provide training in standard census techniques as appropriate	2	A	1.2.1 1.2.2 1.2.3	
8.3	Obtain funding to ensure a time series of at least 5 years using new techniques for population estimation	2	A	1.3.3 1.3.4	
8.4	Encourage use of standardised techniques in all Range States for comparison and joint analysis	2	B	1.2.4	
8.5	Carry out regular monitoring of sex/age ratio in Saiga Antelope populations to determine trends in sex ratio, reproductive success and age structure	3	B	1.4.1	
<b>9.0</b>	<b>Captive breeding</b>				
9.1	Establish captive breeding facilities in Mongolia	1	A	1.7.4 1.7.7	
9.2	Assess the role of captive breeding in Saiga conservation and establish guidelines for its implementation	2	A	1.7.1	
9.3	Establish captive breeding facilities in other parts of the Saiga range and support existing facilities in Russia	2	B	1.7.4	
9.4	Resolve the issue of genetic distinctiveness of different populations	2	B	1.7.1	
9.5	Request change of current CITES recommendations on trade in Saiga to allow export of live animals from Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation	2	B	1.7.4	

	<b>Measures to be taken</b>	<b>Urgency<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Timescale<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>AP Cross-ref</b>	<b>Progress made/ Comments</b>
	<i>Population-specific measures</i>				
<b>10.0</b>	<b>North-West Pre-Caspian population</b>				
10.1	A population estimate for the Saiga population, made using agreed methods at a suitable time of year that can form the basis for ongoing monitoring of population status	1	B	1.3.2	
10.2	A coherent and effective Saiga management authority, built on improved relations between the currently responsible departments	2	B	3.1.5	
10.3	Consolidation of funding to ensure ongoing support for conservation activities, particularly giving core funding for infrastructure and recurrent costs to the Saiga Breeding Centre, the Stepnoi Sanctuary (Astrakhan province) and the Chernye Zemli Biosphere Reserve	1	A	1.6.6	
10.4	Support for ongoing public engagement initiatives, which are currently at the pilot project stage	1	A	3.2.7	
10.5	International and national recognition for the achievements so far, which would be helped by Russia's Ministry of Agriculture signing the Saiga MoU	2	B	3.3.8	
<b>11.0</b>	<b>Ural population</b>				
11.1	Strengthen anti-poaching activity, based in a local town to ensure community integration and swift response	1	A	1.6.3	
11.2	Initiate public awareness and engagement activities, such as have been carried out in all other populations	1	A	3.2.7	
11.3	Build up an information base about Saiga distribution, population structure and threats, to act as a foundation for conservation planning	1	A	1.3.2	
<b>12.0</b>	<b>Ustiurt population</b>				
12.1	Strengthen anti-poaching activity in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan (year-round) and Turkmenistan (in winter)	1	A	1.6.3	
12.2	Institute a cooperation agreement between the three countries to ensure coordinated action	2	B	3.3.1	
12.3	Lobby oil and gas companies concerning their environmental responsibilities in infrastructural development and to obtain mitigation funding for Saiga Antelope and habitat conservation	2	A	1.6.1	
12.4	Obtain baseline information about the seasonal distribution and numbers of Saigas. For example - what proportion of the Saiga population over-winters in Uzbekistan and in Turkmenistan in a given year, and what determines this? How many Saigas stay in	1	A	1.3.1	

	<b>Measures to be taken</b>	<b>Urgency<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Timescale<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>AP Cross-ref</b>	<b>Progress made/ Comments</b>
	Uzbekistan year-round, and where? This information is fundamental to conservation planning				
12.5	Institute public engagement activities, including alternative livelihoods, population-wide, building on the small-scale pilots already in place	1	A	3.2.7	
12.6	Ensure that existing protected areas have funding to allow a minimum acceptable level of functioning and assess the need for further protected areas, including a feasibility study on establishment of a transfrontier reserve on the Ustiurt Plateau encompassing all three range states	1	A	2.2.3	
<b>13.0</b>	<b>Betpak-dala population</b>				
13.1	Ensure that the current protected area planning process is relevant to the Saiga's current and particularly its future needs. This includes obtaining information about past and current distribution and movement behaviour	1	A	2.2.3	
13.2	Strengthen anti-poaching efforts, targeting areas where Saigas are still present at particular times of year. Ensure that existing anti-poaching initiatives are fully funded to allow them to operate effectively	1	A	1.6.3	
13.3	Institute public engagement activities, including livelihood enhancement, population-wide, building on the small-scale pilots already in place	1	A	3.2.7	
<b>14.0</b>	<b>Mongolia population</b>				
14.1	Strengthen protection, including adequate funding for effective anti-poaching patrols and protected area management	1	A	1.6.6	
14.2	Establish a captive breeding facility to ensure the distinctive sub-species gene-pool is preserved	1	A	1.7.4	
14.3	Build local engagement in Saiga conservation through alternative livelihood enhancement and public awareness activities, including reduction in pressure from livestock	1	A	3.2.7	
14.4	A population estimate for the Saiga population, made using agreed methods at a suitable time of year that can form the basis for ongoing monitoring of population status	1	B	1.3.2	
14.5	Obtain baseline information about the seasonal distribution and numbers of Saigas	1	B	1.3.1	