

Mapping Transboundary Conservation Hotspots for the Central Asian Mammals Initiative



Report elaborated in 2019 with species list and Area of Interest based on CAMI Atlas; updated to include Himalaya regions of Pakistan and India and species listed by CMS COP13 in 2020, such as Persian Leopard, Urial, Gobi Bear, and CAMI species of the Himalaya region which do not occur in the Aol of the 2019 version (draft October 2021, latest corrections September 2024)

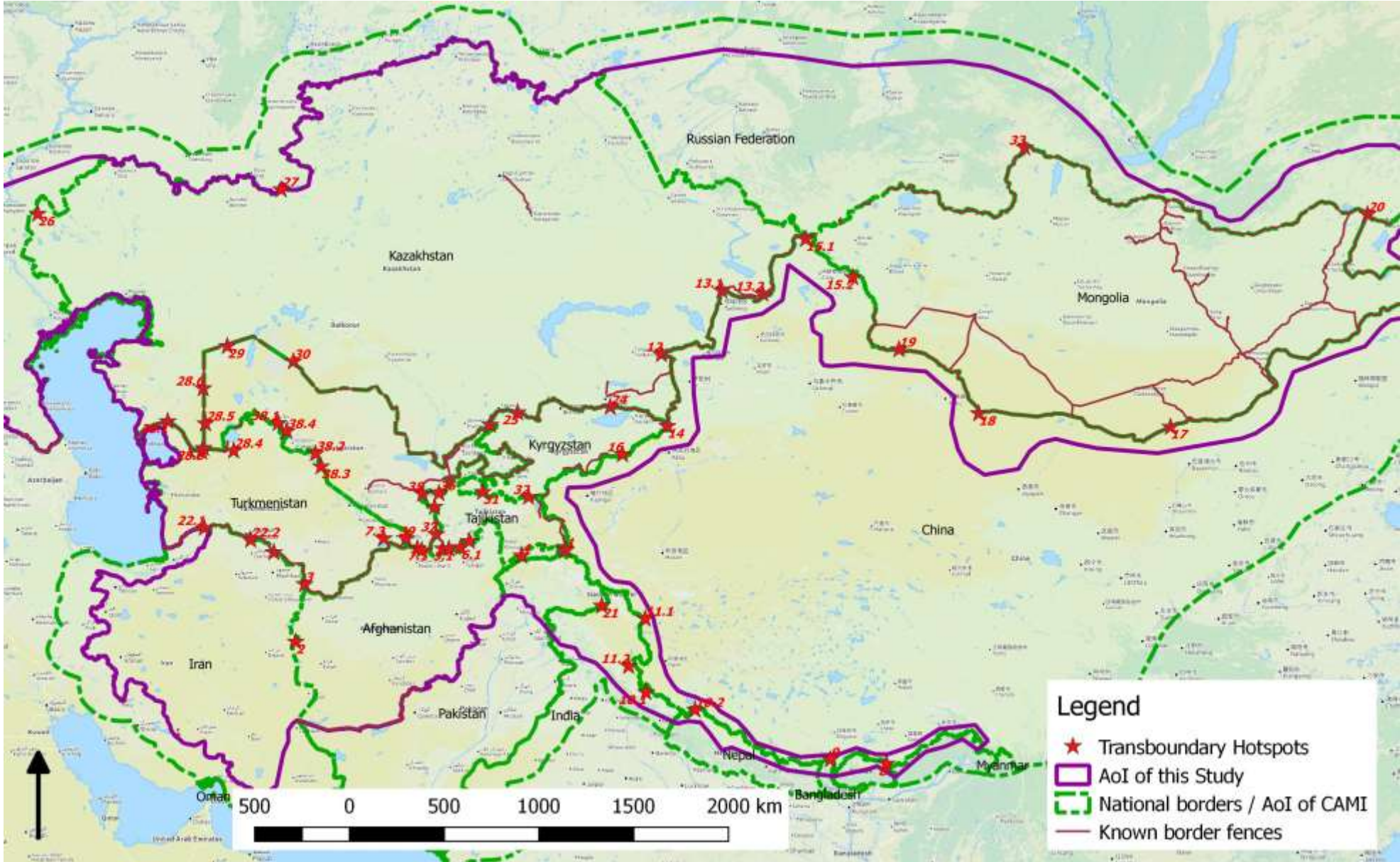
Working approach and methods

- 1) Identification of transboundary populations and areas:
 1. Identification of range states and transboundary populations
 2. Using range maps of target species to determine potential transboundary areas
 3. Consultation with range states, species focal points and other experts
 4. Potentially important transboundary areas for each species
 5. Threats and conservation needs within each transboundary area
 - 2) Initial prioritization under consideration of feasibility:
 1. Criteria
 2. Scores for each criterion
 3. Ranking by total score
 - 3) Elaboration of recommendations:
 1. Specific recommendations for each area
 2. General recommendations
- ⇒ A list of transboundary areas of high conservation significance for CAMI

Criteria for determining priority sites

- **The importance of the area** with regard to the number of CAMI species occurring in it and its importance for the population (e.g. regularity of occurrence, population sizes or densities, share of global or regional populations);
- **Potential for conservation success**, including recovery of small populations and the technical feasibility of rehabilitating populations and migrations;
- **The existence of problems**, which are to be addressed in a transboundary context;
- **The urgency** of intervention to prevent continuing declines or even local extinction of target species;
- **The feasibility of interventions**, which consists of several elements, like the economic feasibility and political willingness of actors of addressing barriers.

Identified sites – 39 “Hotspots” or Transboundary Conservation Units



Scores for ranking

| Criteria | | Score |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|--|
| Importance of the area | Number of species | Total number of confirmed target species |
| | Population status | 1 = occurrence irregularly or previously 2 = regularly 3 = substantial numbers |
| Potential for conservation success | | 0 = none |
| Existence of problems | | 1 = low |
| Urgency | | 2 = medium |
| Feasibility of interventions | | 3 = high |

- Scores assigned based on available knowledge, but in some extent subjective
- Difficulty in objectively assigning scores for areas with several species:
 - combined scores instead of
 - summing up scores for each species (which would have resulted in very high weight of species number)

| Priority rank | Total score | Sites ID and name |
|---------------|-------------|--|
| 1 | 18 | 18 Trans-Altai Gobi |
| 2 | 17 | 28 South-western Ustyurt |
| 3 | 16 | 17 South Gobi 10 Western Trans-Himalaya 11 Changthang and Spiti 22 Kopet Dagh |
| 4 | 15 | 14 Khan Tengri Region |
| 5 | 14 | 15 Altai 19 Jungarian Gobi 26 Ural Steppe |
| 6 | 13 | 3 Badghyz |
| 7 | 12 | 1 High Pamirs 4 Wakhan 9 Khangchendzonga-Sikkim Plateau 16 Inner Tian Shan 30 Aral Sea/Western Kyzylkum Desert |
| 8 | 11 | 12 Jungarian Alatau 13 Tarbagatay/ Saur Ranges 20 Daurian steppe 21 Eastern Karakoram 38 Lower Amu Darya |

In the draft new POW 2026-2031 expanded and revised approach:

- Include habitats of additional species listed by CMS COP14 (Pallas' Cat and the Eurasian Lynx).
- CUs selected based on the following criteria:
 - their transboundary nature;
 - the importance of each CU for the conservation of the respective species and the
 - total number of CAMI species (plus above mentioned two species) occurring there;
 - alignment with Range State obligations under other conventions;
 - existing priority areas for biodiversity conservation;
 - the need and urgency for implementing conservation action in each CU;
 - the requirements for implementation of CMS instruments and mandates, as well as other existing agreements and transboundary projects; and
 - the political feasibility of implementing transboundary cooperation to enhance conservation of the CU, including the **number of CMS Parties** participating.

Proposed Transboundary Conservation Units of high priority/potential for consideration in the CAMI POW

- 1 Southwestern Ustyurt (Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan)
- 2 Eastern Ustyurt (Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan)
- 3 Kopetdag (Iran, Turkmenistan)
- 4 Western Tian Shan (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan)
- 5 Aral Sea / Western Kyzylkum Desert (Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan)
- 6 Khan Tengri region (China, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan)
- 7 Trans-Altai Gobi (China, Mongolia)
- 8 Jungarian Gobi (China, Mongolia)
- 9 Western Trans-Himalaya (China, India, Nepal)
- 10 High Pamirs (Afghanistan, China, Pakistan, Tajikistan)