

**THIRD RANGE STATE MEETING OF THE CMS  
CENTRAL ASIAN MAMMALS INITIATIVE (CAMI)**

*24 – 26 June 2025, Tashkent, Uzbekistan*

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UNEP/CMS/CAMI3/Doc.7

**REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT**

*(Prepared by the Secretariat)*

**Summary:**

This document reports on progress to implement Resolution 11.24 (Rev.COP13) on the Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI) and its associated Programme of Work (2021-2026) during the intersessional period.

## REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT

### Background

1. The Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI) was established at the 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP11) to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) in 2014 (Resolution 11.24). The overall goal of the Initiative is to improve the conservation status of large migratory mammals and their habitats in the region by strengthening coordination and cross-border cooperation, while addressing major threats.
2. CAMI includes a comprehensive Programme of Work (POW), which is being updated regularly. The POW was revised by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of Range States to the Initiative held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, in 2019. CMS COP13 subsequently adopted the revised POW 2021-2026 as an Annex to Resolution 11.24 (Rev.COP13), and endorsed CAMI as an integrative approach, building on a regional programme that identifies synergies based on common geography, interests and species, to enhance cooperation and coordination at the local, regional and international level, to minimize institutional overlap and to improve implementation of CMS and its instruments. The POW provides concrete conservation actions for the 15 CAMI species<sup>1</sup> covered by CAMI that occur in 14 Range States<sup>2</sup>.
3. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of Range States to CAMI is organized by the CMS Secretariat in cooperation with the Ministry of Ecology, Environmental Protection and Climate Change of the Republic of Uzbekistan in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 24-26 June 2025 with financial support from the Central Asian Mammals and Climate Adaptation (CAMCA) project funded by the International Climate Initiative (IKI) of the Government of Germany.

### Implementation of the CAMI Programme of Work since 2020

4. Since February 2020, the CMS Secretariat has organized nine meetings, prepared or initiated five studies and raised funds for the implementation of two projects under the International Climate Initiative of the German Government (IKI) as part of efforts to implement the CAMI POW. The activities of the Secretariat are explained in more detail below. All the activities described below were implemented as part of the Agreement between the CMS Secretariat and the International Nature Academy (INA) of the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN), with funding from the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV) – with the exception of two IKI projects, the Consultative Meeting on the Saiga Antelope and two studies: 'Transboundary Conservation Hotspots for the Central Asian Mammals Initiative' and 'Report on the Situation of the Cheetah in Iran (*Acinonyx jubatus venaticus*)'. The funding sources for these activities are indicated in the text below.

<sup>1</sup> CAMI species: Argali (*Ovis ammon*), Asiatic Cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus*), Asiatic Wild Ass (*Equus hemionus*), Bukhara Deer (*Cervus elaphus yarkandensis*), Gobi Bear (*Ursus arctos isabellinus*), Goitered Gazelle (*Gazella subgutturosa*), Kiang (*Equus kiang*), Mongolian Gazelle (*Procapra gutturosa*), Persian Leopard (*Panthera pardus saxicolor*), Przewalski's Horse (*Equus ferus przewalskii*), Saiga Antelope (*Saiga spp.*), Snow Leopard (*Uncia uncia*), Urial (*Ovis vignei*), Wild Camel (*Camelus bactrianus*), Wild Yak (*Bos grunniens*).

<sup>2</sup> CAMI Range States (CMS Parties in capital letters): AFGHANISTAN, Bhutan, China, INDIA, the Islamic Republic of IRAN, KAZAKHSTAN, KYRGYZSTAN, MONGOLIA, Nepal, PAKISTAN, the Russian Federation, TAJIKISTAN, Turkmenistan and UZBEKISTAN

## Meetings

5. The Secretariat and BfN INA jointly conducted an online workshop from 20-22 October 2020, bringing together experts and Signatories to the Memorandum of Understanding concerning the Conservation and Restoration of the Bukhara Deer (Bukhara Deer MOU). Originally planned as a Meeting of Signatories (MOS), it was conducted as an expert workshop due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the absence of several government representatives. The participants discussed and endorsed the Programme of Work for the Bukhara Deer 2021-2026, the overview report on MOU implementation and a new reporting format for the MOU. WWF Russia was commissioned to prepare the documents for the meeting. The Secretariat facilitated the review of [the documents](#) and their adoption by the Signatory States via postal procedures.
6. The 4<sup>th</sup> MOS to the Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of the Saiga Antelope (Saiga MOU) was organized by the Secretariat, in cooperation with the Russian Ministry of Natural Resources and Ecology, online, on 28-29 September 2021. The Saiga Conservation Alliance (SCA) was commissioned to prepare an overview report on the MOU implementation. Saiga MOS4 adopted the [Medium-Term International Work Programme for the Saiga Antelope 2021-2025](#) (MTIWP) and the report on [Sustainable Use of the Saiga Antelope: Perspectives and Prospects](#), commissioned by BfN INA for the CMS Secretariat and authored by a group of experts under the lead of the SCA. All meeting outcomes can be accessed [here](#).
7. In line with Decision 13.131 of COP13, a multi-stakeholder Intersessional Working Group (IWG) was established by the CMS Scientific Council to address the impact of infrastructure on migratory species and their habitats. In relation to the CAMI POW, the IWG recommended updating and promoting the implementation of the Central Asian Mammals Migration and Linear Infrastructure Atlas and [the Guidelines for Addressing the Impact of Linear Infrastructure on Large Migratory Mammals in Central Asia](#). The outcomes of the meeting are reflected in Document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.3.1.
8. The 1<sup>st</sup> Range States Meeting for the Persian Leopard was held in Tbilisi, Georgia, from 20-22 September 2022, with logistical support from the Caucasus Nature Fund. The meeting reviewed and endorsed [the Range-wide Strategy for the Conservation of the Persian Leopard](#), which the IUCN Cat Specialist Group had been commissioned to prepare. The meeting documents can be accessed [here](#). The following Range States were officially represented: Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Turkey and Uzbekistan (online). The Islamic Republic of Iran and Armenia participated online for one of the three days of the meeting due to challenging situations in their countries at the time. The finalized Strategy is contained in [UNEP/CMS/PL-RS1/Outcome](#).
9. In response to a request from the Government of Kazakhstan, and in line with the MTIWP for the Saiga MOU (2021-2025), the CMS Secretariat organized the Consultative Meeting, '[Identifying solutions to human-wildlife conflict involving Saiga Antelopes in Kazakhstan](#)', in cooperation with the Forestry and Wildlife Committee of Kazakhstan, the Association for the Conservation of Biodiversity of Kazakhstan (ACBK) and UNDP Kazakhstan. The meeting was funded by the Government of Germany and UNDP Kazakhstan. The meeting, which took place in Astana, Kazakhstan from 25-27 May 2023, aimed to develop a strategy for the conservation and management of Saiga Antelopes in Kazakhstan, with a particular focus on alleviating the human-wildlife conflict resulting from Saiga herds entering agricultural areas.

10. The Secretariat and BfN INA jointly conducted a Technical Workshop for the Asiatic Wild Ass on the Isle of Vilm, Germany, on 26 June - 1 July 2023. Originally planned as a Range State Meeting, it was conducted as an expert workshop due to the absence of several government representatives. Participants developed the [Range-Wide Action Plan for the Asiatic Wild Ass](#), which was further adopted by the Range States via postal procedure. In addition, on the last day of the meeting, the participants discussed possibilities to advance transboundary conservation of the Asiatic Wild Ass and other migratory species in its habitat.
11. The 3<sup>rd</sup> MOS of the Bukhara Deer MOU took place in Almaty, Kazakhstan, on 10-11 September 2024 and was organized by the Secretariat in cooperation with the Forestry and Wildlife Committee of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Kazakhstan, with financial support from the CAMCA project funded by IKI of the German Government. The Signatory States adopted the [Work Programme for the Bukhara Deer 2025-2032](#) that, in accordance with [Decision 14.167 \(d\)](#), follows a new approach and focuses on activities of special relevance for one or more populations of the species whereas threats impacting and activities addressing not only Bukhara Deer, but also other species covered by CMS CAMI are planned to be included in the next CAMI POW for 2026-2032.
12. The Range State Meeting on the Implementation and Revision of the International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Argali (*Ovis ammon*) took place in Almaty, Kazakhstan, on 12-13 September 2024 and was organized by the Secretariat in cooperation with the Forestry and Wildlife Committee of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Kazakhstan, with financial support from the CAMCA project funded by the German IKI. Argali Range States adopted the [Action Plan for the Conservation of the Argali 2024-2032](#), which, also in accordance with [Decision 14.167 \(d\)](#), focuses on activities of special relevance for one or more conservation units of Argali.
13. The Memorandum of Cooperation for Wildlife Conservation on the Ustyurt Plateau was signed by all three Range States—Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan—and was developed with input from the CMS Secretariat, GIZ, and the Michael Succow Foundation (MSF). The First Meeting of the Parties to the Memorandum, co-organized by GIZ, the Michael Succow Foundation (MSF), ACBK, and the CMS Secretariat, and hosted by the Government of Kazakhstan, took place on 11–12 March 2025 in Astana, Kazakhstan. During the meeting, the CMS Secretariat facilitated the revision and endorsement of the Ustyurt Roadmap. The Roadmap outlines a coordinated and comprehensive set of activities to implement the Memorandum, aimed at addressing key threats to migratory species and ensuring their long-term conservation across the Ustyurt Plateau.
14. The 5<sup>th</sup> MOS of the Saiga MOU took place in Astana, Kazakhstan, on 12-14 March 2025 and was organized by the CMS Secretariat and hosted by the Government of Kazakhstan with the organizational support from the Secretariat. ACBK in collaboration with the Frankfurt Zoological Society (FZS) and SCA was commissioned to prepare documents for the meeting. The Signatory States adopted the [Medium-Term International Work Programme for the Saiga Antelope \(2025 – 2030\)](#), which, also in accordance with [Decision 14.167 \(d\)](#), focuses on activities of special relevance for one or more populations of Saiga.

## Studies

15. In 2019, the CMS Secretariat published the study, '[Transboundary Conservation Hotspots for the Central Asian Mammals Initiative](#)', prepared with funding from the Government of Switzerland, and endorsed by the [2<sup>nd</sup> Range States Meeting of CAMI](#). In 2021, the CMS Secretariat commissioned an extension of the study with funding from BMUV and the Government of Switzerland to include the species added to the Initiative by COP13 (Gobi Bear, Persian Leopard and Urial) as well as additional CAMI Range States, which had not been included in the first version of the study due to financial constraints. The updated study identified 39 transboundary areas between 14 CAMI Range States. The study was updated at the Technical Workshop for the Asiatic wild Ass and sent for review of the Range States in two languages as per Decision 14.170 b) and c). The study was again updated at the two Meetings in Almaty and is now [published on the CAMI Website in English](#). A Russian version is to be published as soon as the update is translated.
16. In October 2022, a study entitled '[Potential for Community-based Wildlife Management of CAMI Species](#)' was commissioned by the Secretariat jointly with the BfN INA. The study explores the feasibility of applying community-based wildlife management approaches in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, with the aim of improving the long-term conservation of Saiga Antelope, Argali Sheep, Snow Leopard and Bukhara Deer. The study was launched at a webinar on Community Participation in the Conservation of Migratory Species on 30 January 2025.
17. At the 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the CMS Scientific Council (July 2021, online), an Intersessional Working Group on the Asiatic Cheetah was established, in line with activity 8.1 of the [CAMI POW](#) (8.1: *To support and contribute to an analysis of knowledge gaps based on scientific evidence, specifically: c) Provide robust evidence and information to stakeholders, particularly regarding status, distribution and threat*). The Working Group was mandated to consider options for the recovery of the Asiatic and North-East African Cheetah, as set out in its Terms of Reference ([UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC5/Outcome 7](#)), and to report to the Sessional Committee at its 6<sup>th</sup> meeting on its findings to inform a Decision by COP14.
18. As per the Terms of Reference, a *Report on the Situation of the Cheetah in Iran (Acinonyx jubatus venaticus)* and a *Report on the Situation of the Cheetah in the Horn of Africa (Acinonyx jubatus soemmeringii)* were prepared by the IUCN Cat Specialist Group, with funding from the Government of the United Kingdom (UK). The *Report on the Situation of the Cheetah in Iran* has not been published and the Working Group meeting could not be held. However, in order to advance the process, the *Report on the Situation of the Cheetah in the Horn of Africa (Acinonyx jubatus soemmeringii)* was provided to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Range States of the Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative (ACI) for review (CITES-CMS/ACI2/Doc.3, Annex 1) and as basis for discussion on illegal trade in *A. j. soemmeringii* as required in the ACI POW and CITES COP19 Decisions.
19. In October 2024, BfN commissioned a study, 'Identification of Funding Options for the Implementation of the CAMI', for the Secretariat to implement Measures 31.1 and 31.2 on Funding of the CAMI POW 2021-2026. The report evaluates and identifies financing instruments that might be suitable for implementing the CAMI POW and provides targeted suggestions to stakeholders on suitable financing mechanisms.

## Projects

20. Implementation of the CAMCA project, funded by IKI and led by the UNEP office in Vienna, started in January 2021 and will be completed in 2025. The project aims to increase the resilience of mountain mammals and local communities to climate change and other related threats. The project covers three countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) and its target species include the CMS-listed Argali, Bukhara Deer and Snow Leopard, in addition to other large mammals not listed under CMS. The CMS Secretariat has one of the leading roles in the project, aiming, *inter alia*, to provide guidance on the interlinkages between habitat connectivity and resilience of migratory species to climate change, and to facilitate policy uptake of the project results at the regional level. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition of the Central Asian Mammals' Migration and Linear Infrastructure Atlas and its online version were developed with the financial support from this project.
21. The CMS Secretariat also joined an IKI grant application submitted in March 2021 under the lead of the Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN ECARO), aiming to enhance the One Health approach in the conservation of wildlife, including for CAMI-listed species in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. In 2023, the consortium received approval for its proposal, and the Secretariat is now in the process of finalizing the donor agreement with IUCN ECARO.

## Discussion and analysis

22. As set out above, a range of activities could be implemented since the adoption of the CAMI POW 2021-2026. This positive result is due to several important factors: a) Support of the Range State Governments; b) the long-standing cooperation with the German BfN/INA, which provides invaluable financial, technical and logistical support; c) the financial and the political support of the Governments of Germany, Switzerland and UK; d) technical support of some NGOs, such as ACBK, SCA and WWF, providing support to the Saiga MOU and the Bukhara Deer MOU implementation; e) support of advising experts serving as CAMI Species Focal Points and other IUCN SSC SG members; f) an active network of Range State Governments, scientists, other UN organizations and NGOs in which information can be exchanged, funds raised and collaboration enhanced.
23. Despite the support received, some key activities of the POW for which the Secretariat was responsible and for which no additional funding could be secured were not implemented. Time and funding were too limited to implement activities covering the entire CAMI region or more CAMI species.
24. As the number of species covered by CAMI increases, strategic planning to streamline implementation, focusing on cross-cutting issues that benefit multiple species, is necessary. Therefore, CMS COP14 adopted Decision 14.167 (d) that commissioned the revision of the CAMI POW with the aim of streamlining its actions to focus on cross-cutting activities that benefit multiple species and to reflect updated CMS mandates relevant to the region. Hence, a new approach to the CAMI Work Programme for 2026-2032 will be presented at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of Range States to CAMI.
25. While excellent policy guidance and technical tools have been created under CAMI by regional and international experts, their application in Range States remains a challenge. CAMI Range States and the CMS Secretariat need to develop a strategy for the uptake of such guidance by relevant actors.

Recommended actions

26. The Meeting is recommended to:
- Take note of the document.