

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

24 – 26 June 2025, Tashkent, Uzbekistan

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**PROPOSAL TO INCLUDE THE STRIPED HYENA (HYAENA HYAENA) IN THE
PROGRAMME OF WORK 2026-2031 FOR THE CENTRAL ASIAN MAMMALS
INITIATIVE**

(Presented by Tajikistan)

A. Proposal

To revise Resolution 11.24 (UNEP/CMS/COP13) to include the Striped hyena (*Hyaena hyaena*) in the Programme of Work 2026-2031 for the Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI) of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS).

B. Proponent

Republic of Tajikistan.

C. Rationale for the Proposal

1. Taxonomic Note

The striped hyena (*Hyaena hyaena*) is a distinct species within the family Hyaenidae. It is not to be confused with other hyena species such as the spotted hyena (*Crocuta crocuta*) or the brown hyena (*Parahyaena brunnea*). The striped hyena is recognized for its unique black stripes on a greyish-brown coat and its role as a scavenger in various ecosystems.

2. Distribution

The striped hyena is distributed across North and East Africa, the Middle East, and parts of Asia. Its range includes countries such as Afghanistan, Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Georgia, India, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Syria, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Türkiye, Uganda, Uzbekistan, Western Sahara, and Yemen. The species inhabits a variety of environments, including savannas, grasslands, semi-deserts, open woodlands, and mountainous regions.

3. Population Size and Trends

The striped hyena is currently listed as "Near Threatened" on the IUCN Red List. Population estimates are rough and often outdated, suggesting there may be fewer than 5,000 individuals remaining. The species faces significant threats from habitat loss, human-wildlife conflict, and illegal hunting. Population trends indicate a decline in numbers across its range, with some areas experiencing more severe declines than others.

4. Migrations and Significance of Transboundary Populations

Striped hyenas make large seasonal movements in search of water and food, often crossing national boundaries. These migrations are crucial for their survival, especially in regions with extreme climatic conditions. Transboundary movements are significant for maintaining genetic diversity and recolonizing areas where the species has been extirpated. Notable transboundary populations exist between countries such as Iran and Turkmenistan, and between India and Pakistan.

5. Threats

The main threats to the striped hyena include:

- Habitat Loss: Due to agricultural expansion, urbanization, and infrastructure development.
- Human-Wildlife Conflict: Particularly with herders and farmers, leading to retaliatory killings.
- Illegal Hunting and Trade: Driven by demand for body parts used in traditional medicine and as exotic pets.
- Decline in Natural Prey: Resulting from overhunting and habitat degradation.
- Climate Change: Increasing aridity and changing environmental conditions may further reduce suitable habitats.

6. Expectations with Regard to Including the Species into CAMI

Inclusion of the striped hyena in the CAMI Programme of Work will enhance national and subnational conservation efforts and facilitate multilateral and bilateral activities. The species is threatened despite existing national protection laws. Collaborative efforts across range states can address cumulative impacts of threats more effectively. Inclusion in CAMI will support conservation actions such as habitat protection, anti-poaching measures, and the mitigation of barriers to migration.

D. Proposed Priority Activities in Relation to the Striped Hyena for Inclusion in the CAMI Programme of Work 2026-2031

1. Assessments and Action Plans

- Support CAMI Range States in gathering and updating data on range areas and populations of the striped hyena for national and IUCN Red List assessments.
- Assist CAMI Range States in including conservation of the striped hyena in national conservation strategies and action plans.

2. Hot Spots for Intervention and Conservation Activities

- Identify priority areas for transboundary conservation and collaboration.
- Assist in establishing and supporting a network of well-managed protected areas, including community-managed and transboundary areas.
- Explore options to address habitat loss through regulation of grazing, incentivizing conservation, and sustainable use of natural rangelands.

3. Research and Monitoring

- Develop systems for monitoring striped hyena range areas, population sizes, habitat suitability, and impacts of land use and climate change.
- Study migrations and connectivity between populations using methods such as DNA sampling and satellite telemetry.
- Investigate the role of striped hyenas in ecosystem health, particularly their contribution to disease control through scavenging, and promote their importance as a One Health species.

4. Capacity-Building

- Develop training programs in wildlife conservation in partnership with relevant organizations for students and emerging conservationists.
- Launch annual or biannual wildlife conservation meetings for Central Asia as a continuous forum for wildlife conservation in the region.

5. Awareness Raising

- Promote the striped hyena as a flagship species for wildlife and ecosystem conservation in its current and former habitats.
- Raise public and decision-maker awareness and encourage conservation action by promoting the striped hyena as a symbol of local, subnational, and national identity.

6. References

- AbiSaid M. & Dloniak S. M. D. 2015. *Hyaena hyaena*. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2015: e.T10274A45195080. Downloaded from: IUCN Red List.
- Alam M. S., Khan J. A. & Pathak B. J. 2015. Distribution and status of the striped hyena (*Hyaena hyaena* Linnaeus, 1758) in Algeria. ResearchGate. DOI: 10.1111/1440-1703.12399.
- Hofer H. & Mills M. G. L. 1998. *Hyaenas: Status Survey and Conservation Action Plan*. IUCN/SSC Hyaena Specialist Group. Downloaded from: IUCN.

**PROPOSAL FOR THE INCLUSION OF THE STRIPED HYENA (*Hyaena hyaena*) ON
APPENDIX I OF THE CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF MIGRATORY
SPECIES OF WILD ANIMALS (CMS)**

A. PROPOSAL

Inclusion of the Striped Hyena *Hyaena hyaena* On Appendix I

B. PROPONENT

Tajikistan, the Committee for Environmental Protection under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan with the support of NABU and IUCN Hyena Specialist Group.

C. STATEMENT OF SUPPORT

1. Taxonomy

- 1.1. Class: Mammalia
- 1.2. Order: Carnivora
- 1.3. Family: Hyaenidae
- 1.4. Genus: *Hyaena hyaena* (Linnaeus, 1758)
- 1.5. Scientific synonyms: None
- 1.6. Common name(s), in all applicable languages used by the Convention:
 - English: Striped Hyena
 - Tajik: Кафтор
 - Persian: راهراه کفتار
 - Arabic: مخطط ضبع
 - Hebrew: מִפּוֹסָוּצָוּעַ (tzavoa)
 - Russian: Полосатая гиена
 - Uzbek: Dulta
 - Turkmen: Syrtlan

2. Overview

The Striped Hyena is a medium-sized carnivore that inhabits a wide range of environments across Asia and Africa, including savannas, grasslands, semi-deserts, open woodlands, and mountainous regions. Recognizable by its distinctive black stripes on a greyish-brown coat, the Striped Hyena plays a crucial ecological role as a scavenger, helping to clean the environment by consuming carrion and preventing the spread of diseases. It makes large seasonal movements in search of water and food due to extreme climatic conditions and the ecology of the species. Despite its ecological importance, the Striped Hyena faces numerous threats that have led to significant population declines and habitat fragmentation.

Currently listed as "Near Threatened" on the IUCN Red List, the Striped Hyena's population is based on very rough estimates, often derived from outdated literature or official sources with unclear methodologies. In reality, the population might be less than 5,000 individuals. The species is already included in Appendix III of CITES, which regulates international trade to prevent over-exploitation. Efforts are currently underway to uplist the Striped Hyena to Appendix I of CITES.

The primary threats include habitat loss and decline in natural prey due to agricultural expansion, urbanization, and infrastructure development, as well as illegal hunting and trade driven by demand for body parts used in traditional medicine and as exotic pets. Illegal hunting is often due to human-wildlife conflict (HWC) with herders or owners of watermelon crops. Additionally, the decline of natural prey sources, such as the Asiatic tortoise, has led to more

frequent HWCs as hyenas increasingly depend on livestock and agriculture. The Striped Hyena's range spans multiple countries, making international cooperation essential for its conservation. The species exhibits significant transboundary movements and depends on other large migratory species, such as leopards and historically, tigers in Central Asia, but still in India. The Striped Hyena predominantly lives close to nomadic communities in savannas, grasslands, semi-deserts, and mountainous regions, primarily depending on dead carcasses of livestock. It can follow herds for hundreds of kilometers and sometimes can predate on lambs (during lambing season).

The conservation of the Striped Hyena should be closely linked to the One Health approach, which recognizes the interconnectedness of human, animal, and environmental health. As a true scavenger, Striped Hyena plays a vital role in ecosystems by consuming carrion, which helps prevent the spread of diseases that could affect both wildlife and human populations. By maintaining healthy hyena populations, we can reduce the risk of disease outbreaks that could arise from decomposing animal carcasses. Protecting this species contributes to broader efforts to ensure ecosystem health and resilience, which in turn supports human health and well-being. By integrating Striped Hyena conservation into One Health initiatives, we can promote a holistic approach to health that benefits both wildlife and human communities.

Given these urgent conservation needs, this proposal aims to include the Striped Hyena in Appendix I of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals. Inclusion in Appendix I would provide the highest level of international protection, obligating member states to implement measures to protect the species and its habitats. Local governments would be better equipped to take care of the species if it is officially recognized by CMS in Appendix I, addressing bureaucratic issues that currently hinder effective conservation efforts. This would include enhancing habitat and prey protection, tackling poaching through capacity building, awareness raising, stricter enforcement, and international cooperation. The goal is to stabilize and eventually increase the population of the Striped Hyena, ensuring its survival for future generations and the One Health of wider landscapes, ecosystems, communities and nations.

3. Migrations

3.1. The Striped Hyena makes large seasonal movements in search of water and food, very often crossing national boundaries.

3.2. A significant proportion of the population undertakes these migrations, which are crucial for their survival in harsh environmental conditions, although with climate change, these movements will be even more critical for its survival.

4. Biological data (other than migration)

4.1. Distribution (current and historical):

The Striped Hyena is found across North and East Africa, the Middle East, and parts of Asia. Countries include Afghanistan, Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Georgia, India, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Syria, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Türkiye, Uganda, Uzbekistan, Western Sahara, and Yemen.

4.2. Population (estimates and trends):

The global population is estimated to be between 5,000 and 14,000 individuals, but recent data suggests there may be less than 5,000.

4.3. Habitat (short description and trends):

The Striped Hyena inhabits arid and semi-arid regions, savannas, and open woodlands. Habitat loss due to human activities is a significant threat.

4.4. Biological characteristics:

The Striped Hyena is primarily nocturnal and scavenges for food, it can also hunt small animals.

4.5. Role of the taxon in its ecosystem:

The Striped Hyena plays a crucial role in the ecosystem as a scavenger, helping to keep the environment clean by consuming carrion.

5. Conservation status and threats

5.1. IUCN Red List Assessment:

Near Threatened (IUCN Red List). However, this assessment is based on outdated information and literature. The most recent comprehensive assessment was conducted in 2015, and it relied heavily on data that are now several decades old. Since then, there have been significant changes in the species' habitat, population dynamics, and threats, which are not reflected in the current IUCN listing. For example, the population estimates used in the assessment are derived from studies conducted in the late 1990s and early 2000s, such as "Hyaenas: Status Survey and Conservation Action Plan" by Hofer and Mills (1998). These sources relied on even older Soviet literature, including:

Chernyshev, V.I. 1948. Poedanie plodov dzhidy pustynnymi zhyvotnymi [Consumption of oleaster fruits by desert animals]. *Priroda* (9): 69.

Chernyshev, V.I. 1958. Fauna i ekologiya mlekopitayushchikh tugaev Tadjikistana [Fauna and ecology of mammals in the tugais of Tadjikistan]. AN TadjhSSR, Stalinabad.

Flerov, K.K. 1935. Khishchnye zveri (Fissipedia) Tadjikistana [Carnivores (Fissipedia) of Tadjikistan]. In: Vinogradov, B.S., Pavlovskii, E.M., & Flerov, K.K. (eds.) *Zveri Tadjikistana* [Animals of Tadjikistan]. AN SSSR, Moscow-Leningrad, pp. 131-200.

Heptner, V.G. & Sludskii, A.A. 1992. Mammals of the Soviet Union, Vol. II, Part 2. Carnivora: hyaenas and cats. E. J. Brill, Leiden, Netherlands.

Isakov, S.I., Khabilov, T.K., Davidov, G.S., & Sokov, A.I. 1988. Mammalia. In: Abdusalomov, I.A. (ed.) *Red Data Book of Tadjikistan*. Donish, Dushanbe, Tajikistan. (in Russian)

Sokov, A.I. 1988. *Red Book of the Tajik SSR: Rare and Endangered Species of Animals and Plants*. Dushanbe: Donish. 336 pp.

Stroganov, S.U. 1961. *Tigr v Srednei Azii* [Tiger in Middle Asia]. *Okhota i Okhotnich'e Khozyaistvo* (12).

Zarudnyi, N.A. 1917. *Letnyaya ekskursiya po Bukharskim vladeniyam* [Summer excursion in the Bukhara possessions]. *Turkest. Otd. I. Russkovo Geogr. Obshch.* 13(1): Tashkent.

These sources are no longer accurate due to ongoing habitat loss and other emerging threats.

5.2. Equivalent information relevant to conservation status assessment:

The conservation status was detailed in "Hyaenas: Status Survey and Conservation Action Plan" by Hofer, Heribert, and Mills, Gus (1998). There is no evidence that the situation has improved, and threats have decreased.

5.3. Threats to the population (factors, intensity):

Major threats include habitat loss, human-wildlife conflict, linear infrastructure, poaching, absence of large carnivores, climate change, diseases, and mostly direct persecution.

5.4. Threats connected especially with migrations:

The Striped Hyena faces threats during migrations, including habitat fragmentation and human-wildlife conflict.

5.5. National and international utilization:

The Striped Hyena is not widely utilized but faces persecution due to conflicts with humans.

6. Protection status and species management

6.1. National protection status:

Varies by country; some have legal protections in place while others do not.

6.2. International protection status:

Not currently listed in CMS Appendices. The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) lists the Striped Hyena under Appendix III, which needs to be updated as well.

6.3. Management measures:

Conservation measures include habitat restoration projects, anti-poaching efforts, population monitoring, and community engagement.

6.4. Habitat conservation:

Efforts are needed to protect and restore habitats, particularly in transboundary areas.

6.5. Population monitoring:

Regular monitoring is essential to track population trends and the effectiveness of conservation measures.

7. Effects of the proposed amendment

7.1. Anticipated benefits of the amendment:

Enhanced international cooperation, improved legislation and management, and increased funding for conservation efforts.

7.2. Potential risks of the amendment:

None identified.

7.3. Intention of the proponent concerning development of an Agreement or Concerted Action:

The proponent intends to develop a Concerted Action to ensure coordinated conservation efforts.

8. Range States

Afghanistan; Algeria; Armenia; Azerbaijan; Burkina Faso; Cameroon; Chad; Djibouti; Egypt; Ethiopia; Georgia; India; Iran; Iraq; Israel; Jordan; Kenya; Lebanon; Libya; Mali; Mauritania; Morocco; Nepal; Niger; Nigeria; Oman; Pakistan; Saudi Arabia; Senegal; Syria; Tajikistan; Tanzania; Tunisia; Turkmenistan; Türkiye; Uganda; Uzbekistan; Western Sahara; Yemen.

9. Consultations

Consultations have been held with relevant stakeholders, including NABU Germany, IUCN Hyena Specialist Group, and local NGOs.

10. Additional remarks

The inclusion of the Striped Hyena in the CMS Appendices is essential for its global population. Enhanced international cooperation and targeted conservation measures will help mitigate the threats facing this species and ensure its survival.

11. References

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- Saeidi E. & Moqanaki E. 2023. A case report of rabies in a striped hyena (*Hyaena hyaena*) in Qazvin Province of Iran. *ResearchGate*. DOI: 10.1111/1440-1703.12399.
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- Tourani M., Moqanaki E. M. & Kiabi B. H. 2012. Vulnerability of striped hyaenas, *Hyaena hyaena*, in a human-dominated landscape of Central Iran. *Zoology in the Middle East* 56(1), 133-136. Downloaded from: *Taylor & Francis Online*.
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