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Workshop “Regional Practices on Sustainable Use in Hunting Territories and Protection of Wildlife”

1-3 September, 2015, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan

Summing-up of recommendations of the working groups

Introduction

The following recommendations are the summing-up of the joint work of the workshop “Regional practices on sustainable use in hunting territories and protection of wildlife” that took place 1 – 3 September 2015, in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.

All the participants were initially divided in three groups according to their interest. After thirty minutes’ discussion, members of each group were offered a chance to change group. The same procedure was repeated after a further fifteen minutes. This was done to ensure the possibility of each participant contributing to the discussion of each group and include their knowledge and expertise in the final recommendations.

The detailed reports on the working groups are attached to this document as Annexes I to III.

WORKING GROUP 1: Recommendations for wildlife management in Turkmenistan

- To elaborate and adopt the national strategy on the sustainable use of wildlife resources in Turkmenistan with engagement of a broad range of stakeholders in the discussion of this strategy;
- To ensure inclusion of up-to-date principles for the sustainable use of wildlife resources in the national strategy, including the engagement of local communities and private sector etc.;
- To harmonize the new Hunting Law (currently under discussion) with other related legislation;
- To increase public awareness about the importance of wildlife and its conservation;
- To evaluate existing hunting grounds and to establish a procedure for distributing management rights for these hunting grounds;
- To undertake anti-poaching measures through e.g. incentivizing and engaging local communities in the conservation and further sustainable use of wildlife;
- To develop the national wildlife monitoring system;



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- To promote regional and international cooperation (including on the key biodiversity conventions (CBD, Ramsar and possibly CITES, CMS));

WORKING GROUP 2: Mechanisms for regional cooperation in wildlife management in Central Asia

- To ensure regional data collection on species population trends based on up-to-date monitoring techniques (potentially based on national data bases as in Kyrgyzstan) with ensured regular peer review by the regional/international expert community;
- To increase attractiveness of this sector for young motivated professionals through various incentive mechanisms; exchange of experience among countries on the development of such incentive mechanisms;
- To conduct regular regional knowledge exchange meetings for professional in this sector;
- To establish regional cooperation in the training of wildlife managers in order to make the trainings more (cost-) effective;
- To undertake regional trainings for customs and border officers, including identification of trophies;
- To develop of short-term courses for community wildlife management trainings
- To conduct joint transboundary scientific research projects;
- To further develop the framework implementation mechanisms and hands-on solutions in the field of wildlife management, based on sustainability principles and contributing to the aims of Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD);
- To elaborate and adopt transboundary management plans for protected areas;
- To collaborate on control of origins of trophies and derivatives in the new Customs Union;
- To ensure regional collaboration in awareness-raising and media campaigns about Sustainable Wildlife Use;
- To further identify possible donors and partners that can assist in implementation and capacity-building (e.g. Klaus Toepfer Fellowship Programme, relevant US State Department Programs)

WORKING GROUP 3: The role of different stakeholders (e.g. community-based organizations, NGOs, scientists etc.) in wildlife management in Central Asia

- To update the existing legal framework so that it allows engagement of the private sector and local communities in wildlife management;



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- To ensure that the existing legal framework is in accordance with modern principles of wildlife management and, especially, clear mechanisms for allocation of management rights and benefit-sharing schemes are in place;
- To support the development of local self-governing institutions that in future among other things may take a lead in wildlife management;
- To develop various short-term courses for wildlife managers and local rangers;
- To consider establishing a regional training centre for such courses, which will utilize expertise existing in the region;
- To support the process of local self-organization for conservation and further sustainable use of wildlife;
- To develop hands-on projects providing an immediate alternative to illegal use of wildlife, sources of income (handicraft, help with marketing local products etc.) for local communities;
- To encourage further engagement of donors, NGOs, academia and other interested stakeholders in supporting the above-mentioned activities;
- To establish standardized wildlife monitoring techniques that can be applied by community organizations
- To mitigate existing tensions between private sector and community organizations, where necessary;
- To increase awareness among external actors engaging in the support of sustainable use of wildlife and conservation in the region about different political situation in the countries and promote tailor-made solutions for each case.



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Annex I

Results of the working group 1

Recommendations for wildlife management in Turkmenistan

Prepared by Oleg Oleg Guchgeldiyev

Methodology of the group work

The main goal of the working group was to define the priorities of the sustainable wildlife management in Turkmenistan. The methodology included following steps:



Around 15 specialists took part in the work group, including representatives of the Union of Hunting and Fishermen of Turkmenistan (UHF), representatives from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, as well as international wildlife management experts.



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1. Ongoing activities and processes

- 1.1. The elaboration of a new Hunting Law is among the current activities in Turkmenistan in the field of sustainable wildlife use and management. The first draft of the law was prepared by experts and now submitted to the government for the revision. The next step includes amending the draft and opening it for further review by national experts and practitioners.
- 1.2. The preparation of the new concept paper on the development of hunting in Turkmenistan is in the pipeline of relevant national environmental agencies. The concept will set the strategic priorities of the sustainable use of wildlife in Turkmenistan.
- 1.3. Besides this, currently there is a need to make an evaluation of the existing hunting grounds and re-allocate management rights accordingly, not least because of increasing negative impact of climate change.
- 1.4. Poaching remains one of the key threats for the sustainable use and management of wildlife in Turkmenistan.
- 1.5. Participants also noticed the poor communication and inefficient cooperation among staff of the hunting concessions and protected areas. It was agreed that hunters could make a greater contribution to biodiversity conservation in Turkmenistan.
- 1.6. Participants also acknowledged the importance of the ongoing preparatory process of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAPs).

2. Actions for integration of the sustainable use of wildlife in the existing practices, the experience of other countries, useful for integration in the sustainable use of wildlife, and necessary support

- 2.1. There is an urgent need to develop a national strategy on the sustainable use of wildlife resources in Turkmenistan and to engage a broad range of stakeholders in the discussion of this strategy. There is a need to support the establishment of such dialogue. The strategy should also include the recommendations for the establishment of the mechanism of interstate scientific cooperation, especially on the matters concerning cooperation in Ust-Yurt Plateau (Northern Turkmenistan), Amudarya (Eastern Turkmenistan) and in the Caspian Sea region.
- 2.2. There is a need to include key principles of the sustainable wildlife management and use in the provisions of the new Hunting Law once it is under discussion. It is also important to provide a legal



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framework for initial engagement of the communities and private sector, and other relevant stakeholders in the sustainable wildlife management. Participants noticed that the experience of Tajikistan on organization of the international trophy hunting with the support of the local communities and hunters should be taken into consideration in the preparation of the new law. The experience of Kyrgyzstan with the community engagement in wildlife management can also be useful to consider.

Participants stressed that the support is necessary in:

- Engagement of all interested stakeholders in the development of relevant laws and strategies.
- Harmonization of the new hunting law with other existing legislation, including the development of bylaws.
- Public engagement in biodiversity conservation, including PR-campaigns.

2.3. There is also a need to conduct the evaluation of the existing hunting grounds to identify their current state, options for continuation to use these areas for hunting, possible re-allocation of management rights, as well as necessary habitat rehabilitation measures. UHF has recently conducted the inventory of existing hunting grounds and now there it is necessary to proceed with their evaluation. It is suggested to create a state agency responsible for this process.

2.4. In order to reduce poaching level and further progress towards sustainable use of wildlife it was suggested to engage general public and private sector in implementation of anti-poaching measures. The experience of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in using photo-traps, or even possible use of drones, to monitor the number of animals and obtain evidence of the poaching offenses may be useful. There is a need to support the development of the comprehensive wildlife monitoring system. Furthermore, the engagement of private sector in wildlife management can be also useful in combating wildlife crime.

The experience of Tajikistan in trophy hunting with involvement of local hunters and the experience of Kyrgyzstan in engagement of private sector in the sustainable wildlife management can be applied in Turkmenistan.

Participants also agreed that the business elements could be brought in the following components:

- a. Taxidermy
- b. Interest clubs (elite clubs)
- c. Establishment of special units (centers) that will buy wildlife products

The cost-benefit analysis of the proposed business measures is needed to evaluate their feasibility. Analysis and harmonization of the existing legislation to allow engagement of the private sector in the sustainable wildlife management is also essential.



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In addition to the poor monitoring system, participants acknowledged low fines for violation of wildlife use rules. The evaluation of the real costs of wildlife use and related fines is necessary. Furthermore, there is a need to revise and strengthen conservation measures. For this engagement of local communities in conservation might be of crucial importance together with stricter fines and penalties for violation of existing legislation.

In the table 1 below the working group results are documented in the table format.



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Table1. Results from working group № 1 «Recommendations for wildlife management in Turkmenistan»

Processes and ongoing activities	Actions for integration of the sustainable use of wildlife in the existing practices	Experience of other countries	Necessary support
The strategy on the sustainable hunting	Development of national strategy		Engagement of the broad range of stakeholders in the discussion of the strategy and laws
	Mechanism of interstate scientific collaboration		Cooperation in Ust-Yurt, Amudarya, and the Caspian Sea
Discussion of the hunting law	Inclusion of the sustainable wildlife management principles in the new hunting law		Engagement of the broad range of stakeholders in the discussion of the new hunting law
			Analysis and harmonization of the new hunting law with existing legislation
	International trophy hunting, with involvement of local hunters (Tajikistan)		
	Strengthening the public engagement in the decision-making processes over wildlife use	Include public in the biodiversity conservation (Kyrgyzstan)	Public engagement in biodiversity conservation, e.g. including (PR-campaigns)
Re-allocation of hunting grounds, environmental changes due to the climate change	Conduct the evaluation of hunting grounds		Establishment of a state committee for wildlife management
Poaching	Strengthening the public engagement in decision-making processes over use of wildlife	The experience of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in using photo-traps, or even possible use of drones, to	Strengthening the system of wildlife monitoring



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		monitor the number of animals and obtain evidence of the poaching offense may be useful (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan).	
	Engagement of the private sector in wildlife management	International trophy hunting, with involvement of local hunters (Tajikistan) Engagement of the private sector in wildlife management (Kyrgyzstan)	
		Introduction of business elements: a. Taxidermy b. Interest clubs (elite clubs) c. Centers processing wildlife products	Conduction of the cost-benefit analyses of the proposed business measures
			Analysis and harmonization of the legislation to allow the engagement of the private sector
	Better communication between protected areas and hunting territories		
	Low fines		Revision of fines amount and conservation measures
			Changes of the legislation to increase fines and penalties for violation of wildlife legislation
National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs)			



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Annex II. Working Group 2

Mechanisms for Regional cooperation in wildlife management in Central Asia

Prepared by Andre Fabian

Approach for elaboration of working group results:

- In a first step the participants named ongoing relevant processes for Sustainable Wildlife Use / Management in Central Asia.
- In a second step participants identified needs/priorities, which they thought to be important/useful to be worked/exchanged on regionally.
- In the third step it has been briefly checked, which of the ongoing processes might be adequate for tackling the issues mentioned in step 2.
- Lastly participants looked at the possible/necessary support. The time constrains did not allow to extensively elaborate on this point, however, previous discussion provided enough information on this.

1. Information collection on ongoing processes, which could be of relevance for regional cooperation on Sustainable Wildlife Use/ Management (in red

the processes which were seen as of directly relevant for the needs mention under point 2):

- The Framework Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea (the Teheran Convention)
- Program for the implementation of the protocol to save the Caspian Sea
- Interstate Commission on Sustainable Development (ICSD)
- The Central Asian Mammals Initiative (the CAMI/CMS)
- Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and ecosystem Services (IPBES) processes
- The Central Asian Regional Center of the Convention of Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Convention)
- The African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA)
- The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)
- The Eurasian Economic Community Customs Union
- The Shanghai Cooperation Organization



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2. Needs and priorities for further regional cooperation

- Regional data collection (potentially based on national data bases as in Kyrgyzstan) and regular peer review on the basis of a regional/international expert community in order to check the reporting on wildlife population
- Exchange on mechanisms of how to attract young motivated experts to the sector / regional incentive programs
- Regular regional knowledge exchange meetings for professional in this sector
- Joint transboundary scientific research projects
- Further development of the framework implementation mechanisms, hands-on instruments in the field of wildlife management, based on sustainability principles and contributing to the aims of Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD);
- Transboundary Management Plans for Protected Areas
- Regional cooperation in the training of wildlife managers in order to make the trainings more (cost-) effective.
- Short-term courses for community wildlife management trainings
- Regional trainings for customs and border officers
- Training on trophy trafficking
- Collaboration on control of trophies and derivatives in the new Customs Union (challenge for CITES)
- Regional cooperation on Media Campaigns for Sustainable Wildlife Use

Possible Support:

- Klaus Töpfer Fellowship Program
- US State Department programs
- Other donors...



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Annex III Working Group 3

The role of different stakeholders (e.g. community-based organizations, NGOs, scientists etc.) in wildlife management in Central Asia

Prepared by Natalya Yakusheva

Approach for elaboration of the working group results:

The discussion was built on the principle of brain-storming and participants were invited to provide their thoughts and answer the questions “What needs to be done to strengthen (additionally to the state institutions) the community and private sector engagement in wildlife management in Central Asia?”

The discussion formed around several problem clusters and participants offered various solutions to existing problems:

1. Legal framework

- To have a legal framework that enables engagement of wide array of interested stakeholders, including local communities, private sector etc.
- Adaptive character of the legislation;
- The objective principles for allocation of management rights must be ensured by the legislation;
- The clear benefit sharing scheme should be included in the law;
- If enforced properly the economy of competition will create regulating mechanisms, thus the laws should be flexible regarding concrete forms of engagement;
- General development of self-government that will help in strengthening the role of the community in the management of the resources;
- The corruption is hindering the implementation of the current laws, thus, there is a wider need to move towards clear and “corruption free” mechanisms;

2. Training programs

- Develop short-term training courses for private and community wildlife managers;
- Develop short-term training courses for rangers of the private and community-based organizations;
- To consider establishing the regional training center for the purposes mentioned above;
- To ensure the information and practical experience exchange among professionals in the region (e.g. forestry, wildlife) and their contribution to the training programs content;



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- There is a need of support from international donors, NGOs and expert community in development of training programs;

3. Engagement of local communities

- Need for clear incentives for local communities to participate in the wildlife management scheme;
- Support from various external stakeholders (donors, NGOs etc.) the process of self-organization of locals for conservation and further sustainable use of wildlife;
- Hands-on projects providing an immediate alternative, to illegal use of wildlife, source of income (handicraft, help with marketing local products etc.); support needed from various NGOs and donors;
- The need to establish standardized wildlife monitoring technique that can be applied by community organizations; support needed from the scientific community, NGOs etc.
- Mitigating some tensions between private sector and local-community organizations involved in wildlife management;

4. Engagement of international NGOs

- The need to account for the specific political situation in the concrete country.
- In case of “strong” state institution engagement into wildlife management, for international NGOs it is best to engage in lobbying and in case if necessary piloting projects to showcase the best practices and alternatives to the existing models;
- In case of “weak” state, it is best to directly engage with local communities and non-state actors to provide an assistance and support on the ground;