

MEMORANDUM OF COOPERATION FOR WILDLIFE CONSERVATION ON THE USTYURT PLATEAU

between
Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Kazakhstan,
Ministry of Environmental Protection of Turkmenistan and
Ministry of Ecology, Environmental Protection and Climate Change of the Republic of
Uzbekistan.

Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Ministry of Environmental Protection of Turkmenistan, Ministry of Ecology, Environmental Protection and Climate Change of the Republic of Uzbekistan, represented by the undersigned and hereinafter referred to as 'Parties',

Emphasizing the special vulnerability, regional and global significance and high natural value of transboundary arid ecosystems and associated biological diversity, including wildlife, and in particular migratory species of wild animals,

Considering that the protection and maintenance of natural habitats is an important component of creating the conditions necessary for sustainable management of natural resources and mitigation of the negative effects of climate change,

Seeking to further develop and strengthen cooperation in the field of environmental protection and sustainable development of the countries of the region for present and future generations, as well as for the practical implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals,

Expressing its intention to consistently and on a long-term basis develop trilateral cooperation in the field of biodiversity conservation, especially arid natural ecosystems and, in particular, migratory species of wild animals,

Noting that Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan are Parties to the United Nations' Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (hereinafter referred to as CMS), the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (hereinafter referred to as CBD), the United Nations Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (UNESCO),

Relying on: CMS Resolution 11.24 on the Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI), adopted by the 11th Conference of the Parties, and the CAMI Work Programme contained therein, which aims to: Improve conservation of migratory large mammals and their habitats in the Central Asian region through enhanced coordination and transboundary cooperation; on the Joint Work Programme of the CMS and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (UNEP/CMS/StC52/Outcome 4 - CMS-CITES Joint Work Programme 2021-2025), the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) and CMS Resolution 12.11 (Rev.COP13) on flyways,

Further drawing on, where relevant, agreements and action plans developed by CMS relating to mammal and bird species found in Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, such as the following: the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA), Memoranda of Understanding: on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia (Raptors MOU), Regarding Conservation Measures for the Siberian Crane (Siberian Crane MOU), Concerning Conservation Measures for the Slender-billed Curlew (Slender-billed Curlew MOU); and Action Plans: African-Eurasian Migratory Landbirds Action Plan (AEMLAP), Global Action Plan for the Conservation of Saker Falcon (Saker GAP), Range-wide Conservation Strategy for the Persian Leopard;

Given the commitments of the Parties to conserve the transnational World Natural Heritage site "Cold Winter Deserts of Turan",

Taking into account the Regional Environmental Protection Program for Sustainable Development in Central Asia and other environmental initiatives at the regional level,

have agreed to sign the present Memorandum of Cooperation for Wildlife Conservation on the Ustyurt Plateau (thereafter 'Memorandum') as follows:

Article 1

The Parties shall cooperate in the conservation of fauna and, in particular, migratory species, on the basis of equality and mutual benefit, in accordance with this Memorandum and the national legislation of the Parties, as well as their international obligations under CMS, the CBD, the instruments of these Conventions and, where relevant, UNESCO.

Article 2

Cooperation under this Memorandum between the Parties shall be accomplished through the development and implementation of a Roadmap for Action to ensure the conservation of transboundary populations of wildlife and migratory species on the Ustyurt Plateau - building on existing commitments of Parties under CMS, CBD and UNESCO and, as set out in the CMS study "Identification of Transboundary Conservation Hotspots for the Central Asian Mammals Initiative" and its recommendations, the CAMI Work Programme contained in CMS Resolution 11.24 (Rev.COP13), CMS Resolution 12.11 (Rev.COP13), and other relevant CMS instruments for the conservation and sustainable use of migratory species of wild animals.

The Roadmap may include, but will not be limited to, the following:

- Coordinated monitoring, research and inventory of migratory species;
- Protection of migratory species and conservation of biodiversity;
- Creation of transboundary protected areas;
- Creation of migration corridors;
- Exploring opportunities for sustainable use of nature and ecotourism development;
- Education, training and capacity-building for experts;
- Consultations on the selection and application of modern and innovative technologies in the field of migratory species conservation;
- Coordinating and strengthening measures to combat illegal and/or unsustainable capture of migratory animals, including poaching and smuggling of wildlife and their derivatives;
- Holding joint scientific and practical seminars and conferences;
- Preparation of joint publications of scientific and popular science character;
- Measures to prevent habitat fragmentation and degradation
- Exchange of information on the fulfillment of obligations under existing bilateral and multilateral agreements;
- Attracting investments and raising funds for the implementation of relevant measures of the Roadmap;
- Other forms of cooperation may be agreed upon in the course of implementation of this Memorandum.

Article 3

The Parties shall promote the establishment and development of direct communication channels in the field of conservation of migratory species of wild animals between the authorized state bodies of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan, as well as between interested organizations authorized by the state bodies for the implementation of this Memorandum.

Article 4

Exchange of experience, information, research results, implementation of joint programs and projects and other forms of cooperation specified in Article 2 of this Memorandum shall be carried out in accordance with the current national legislation of the Parties on a mutually agreed basis.

Article 5

The Parties shall establish a joint task force to coordinate the implementation of this Memorandum within the framework of the current legislation of the Parties.

Article 6

Each Party shall bear its own expenses related to the implementation of this Memorandum within the limits of funds provided for by the national legislation of the Parties.

When sending representatives of the Parties to participate in joint scientific and scientific-practical seminars and conferences, as well as professional development courses for specialists of the relevant profile, all expenses shall be borne by the sending Party.

The Host Party bears the costs associated with the organization and conducting of the activities and welcomes assistance in obtaining the necessary financial or technical support for the implementation of the Memorandum and its Roadmap through the involvement of interested donors.

The Parties shall, to the extent possible, use Conventions and other international organizations, non-governmental and national organizations to mobilize resources to implement this Memorandum.

Article 7

This Memorandum shall not affect the rights and obligations of the Parties under other international treaties to which they are Parties.

The Parties undertake to protect the information provided in connection with this Memorandum from misuse in accordance with the national laws of the Parties.

The Parties hereby acknowledge that no mutual monetary obligations arising out of or in connection with this Memorandum shall arise between them.

The cooperation between the Parties, on the basis of which monetary obligations arise, shall be established by a separate written agreement between the Parties.

The Parties intend to participate in joint work to raise funds for the implementation of this Memorandum.

Article 8

This Memorandum shall enter into force on the date of its signature by the Parties and shall remain in force for five years. The term of this Memorandum shall be automatically extended for successive five-year periods unless one Party notifies all other Parties in writing through diplomatic channels of its intention to terminate this Memorandum at least six months prior to the expiration of this Memorandum.

If necessary, this Memorandum may be amended and supplemented by mutual agreement of the Parties. A request for changes to this agreement must be made in writing, giving Parties 6 months to consider the changes.

Article 9

The Memorandum may be amended and supplemented only in the form of a written addendum accepted by all Parties.

This Memorandum is drawn up in two copies in the English and Russian languages, each Party receiving one copy in each of these languages. The texts in both languages shall have equal force.

In case of any disagreement in the interpretation of the provisions of this Agreement, the Parties shall refer to the text in the Russian language.

Signed in Samarkand, 2024, in two originals in English and Russian languages.