

A SURVEY OF WILDLIFE TRADE IN RUSSIA

A TRAFFIC Europe report 1998

Executive Summary

The volume of wildlife trade in Russia and other countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) continues to remain very large since a phenomenal increase in this trade first began in 1990. The increase, prompted by political developments that led to a weakening of enforcement and reduced funds for conservation, has occurred without check. In many cases, the trade poses a direct threat to populations of rare and endangered wildlife, both native and exotic.

Recognising the problem of growing, uncontrolled wildlife trade in the former Soviet Union, TRAFFIC Europe carried out a survey of this trade in the Russian Federation in 1994 and 1995. The survey entailed interviewing or sending questionnaires to wildlife specialists in Russia and adjacent countries; analysing State documents and Customs information; and monitoring of the trade. The survey focused on wild fauna species, especially large mammals and, to a lesser extent, on birds and reptiles. The findings provided baseline information on the situation in Russia and guided subsequent TRAFFIC and other conservation activities in the region. They also ultimately led to the opening of a TRAFFIC office in Moscow in April 1995.

Since that time, TRAFFIC has continued to monitor Russia's domestic trade in wildlife and its role in the international wildlife market. This report presents the findings from research during 1994 and 1995 and, in some cases, more recent developments in the country's wildlife trade.

Highlights of recent findings

Compared to the early 1990s, the legal and illegal wildlife market in Russia has become structured and more organized, with prices aligning for similar products and fewer amateurs involved in the trade. However, the market in the newly independent states in Central Asia continues to remain less structured.

While the wildlife traders and market structure have become more professional in Russia, state environment and enforcement agencies' actions against illicit harvest and trade remain very infrequent and have little influence on this type of activity. The period of

perestroika brought dramatic changes including the opening of state borders, weakening of Customs controls and reduced government funding for state services, including nature protection. Some wildlife control departments were disbanded while others have been unable to perform their functions, lacking funds for salaries, transport and equipment.

Despite being a Party to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) since 1976, the Russian Federation lacks legislation through which to confiscate exotic species of wild plants and animals once they have entered Russia. Once the enforcement net at the borders is surpassed, even smuggled wildlife can be traded freely and attempts by state agencies to intervene are rare. This shortcoming seriously undermines Russia's ability to regulate the trade of exotic, often threatened, species that are widely available in Moscow, St. Petersburg and other areas throughout the country.

In addition, since 1992, the Russian CITES Management Authority has been responsible for issuing CITES permits for wildlife shipments traded by all the countries of the former Soviet Union (except Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, and those countries which have since joined CITES: Belarus in 1995, Georgia in 1996 and Uzbekistan in 1997). The ability of the Russian Federation to carry out this administrative and management responsibility for such a vast region is hampered by a shortage of financial and human resources.

In all regions surveyed, most wildlife and wildlife products continued to be purchased by commercial dealers. The most common venues for selling wildlife products are local flea markets, which exist in most towns and big cities. Advertising in the local press is another important means of retailing wildlife. During the last quarter of 1995, TRAFFIC Europe–Russia found 289 such advertisements in the Moscow press alone, with 202 ads offering wildlife and 87 requesting specific animals. Parrots and primates were the most commonly offered. The most widely offered reptiles included crocodiles and pythons. In all regions, advertisements are posted on walls, usually near or in flea markets.

Moscow serves as Russia's capital for the country's trade in wildlife. In the city, wildlife is sold in a few specialised shops, through advertisements, at private exhibits, and principally, at the Moscow Bird Market. During 1994–1996, TRAFFIC Europe visited the market more than 30 times to access the trade. The monitoring revealed that the trade can be both open and covert, legal and illegal. It includes a wide variety of native and exotic species, from frogs to primates. It is also well organized and lucrative, with endangered

species such as the Salmon-crested Cockatoo *Cacatua moluccensis* selling infrequently but for up to US\$2500 each.

During the survey, TRAFFIC Europe-Russia noted at least 18 species of primates, seven species of birds of prey, three owl species, 50 Psittacine (parrot) species, over 90 species of reptiles, and 23 amphibian species offered for sale at the Moscow Bird Market. Among the most significant suppliers from abroad are Vietnam and Latin American countries such as Cuba, Nicaragua, Peru, Bolivia and Argentina. In Europe, The Czech Republic and Poland are the largest suppliers. Nearly all wildlife offered at the Bird Market entered Russian CITES Management Authority.

Exports of wildlife from European Russia, Ural, the Baltic countries, Belarus and Ukraine are destined mainly for Western Europe, particularly Germany, the Czech Republic, Finland, Greece and Poland as well as Turkey and some Arabic countries. The main destinations for wildlife and wildlife products from the Russian Far East are South Korea, China, Japan, Singapore, Taiwan, Germany, Italy and France.

Mammals

Russia and other CIS countries continue to be significant suppliers of protected or threatened wildlife for export markets, notably traditional East Asian medicine. Medicinal wildlife exports include products from Siberian Tiger *Panthera tigris altaica*, Siberian Elk *Alces alces*, Saiga Antelope *Saiga tatarica*, Leopard *Panthera pardus*, Brown Bear *Ursus arctos*, Siberian Musk Deer *Moschus moschiferus* and others. Prices for some wildlife species collected and exported for medicinal purposes to China and other Asian countries seemed to have decreased in recent years.

Hunting pressure is increasing on many populations of animals, with some populations fast decreasing and some species' habitats becoming fragmented. Among the species affected, in all or parts of their ranges, are Siberian Elk, Brown Bear, Saiga Antelope and Siberian Musk Deer.

Walrus ivory and the skins of Tiger, Brown Bear, Polar Bear *Ursus maritimus* and Asiatic Black Bear *Ursus thibetanus* are also traded. Skins and furs of large predators and bear gall bladders are reportedly the most widely sold mammal products, while Siberian Musk Deer pod is traded only within the deer's range. Saiga Antelope horn and walrus ivory are traded within the species' ranges and in Moscow, a huge market with many foreign customers.

The fur trade is ongoing. It involves Lynx *Lynx lynx*, Wolverine *Gulo gulo*, Sable *Martes zibellina*, Marten *Martes martes*, Mink *Mustela lutreola* and other fur-bearing species.

Foreign trophy hunters are increasingly travelling to Russia and other CIS countries. In many cases, they are now allowed by these governments to hunt in what were formerly protected nature reserves, or zapovedniks. Wild sheep and goats *Caprinae*, many of which are threatened or rare, are particularly sought after by hunters travelling from Western Europe, North America and other regions.

Birds

In terms of the level of illicit collections and trade, falcons and other birds of prey are of concern in Russia and other CIS countries. An apparently increasing number of smugglers from Turkey, Iran and Middle Eastern countries target Saker Falcon *Falco cherrug*, Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* and Golden Eagle *Aquila chysaetos*.

Other rare birds of prey actively sought are White-tailed Sea Eagle *Haliaeetus albicila*, Northern Goshawk *Accipiter gentillis* and Northern Eagle Owl *Bubo bubo*.

In 1992–1995 it became a fashion in the West to keep eider ducks in captivity and in recent years, Russia has become a supplier of eider ducks to the international zoo market. Steller's Eider *Polistria stelleri* and Spectacled Eider *Somateria fischeri* are in greatest demand. Zoo-trading companies have offered to fund zoological research in exchange for eider eggs, a deal that some specialists have accepted. Both species are candidates for listing in the Red Data Book of the Russian Federation.

There is also concern about recent exports of Steller's Sea Eagles *Haliaeetus pelagicus*, a very rare species that breeds only in coastal eastern Siberia. The species is listed in the Red Data Book and is subject to international wildlife trade controls. During 1980–1995, fewer than 30 of these sea eagles were exported. In 1995, however, 11 were exported legally by one company to several countries in Europe. Additional collection and exports are likely to be approved by the government, which will require careful monitoring.

While the largest group of birds in trade is undoubtedly Passiformes songbirds, most specialists report that the conservation status of the species involved is not of concern and trading levels may have actually decreased in recent years.

Reptiles and amphibians

The collection and trade in reptiles and amphibians continues to remain of great concern, with the scale of this activity on the increase. Monitoring of the Moscow Bird Market, the centre of the city's trade in many wild plants and animals, indicated a significant increase in the share of exotic species on offer. On site prices for reptiles and amphibians are not high, rather the profitability of this trade is maintained because of the increased number of animals.

In 1995, Horsfield's Tortoise *Testudo horsfieldii* from Central Asia continued to be widely available. The other most commonly traded reptiles were Banded Newts *Triturus vitatus*, rat snakes *Elaphe* spp., Central Asian Cobras *Naja oxiana* and sand vipers *Vipera* spp.

Conclusions and recommendations

TRAFFIC Europe's project to examine trends in wildlife trade in the Russian Federation has highlighted a number of challenges and opportunities for conserving the country's rich wildlife resources. Russia imports and exports significant volumes of CITES-listed wildlife and is an important market for wild plants and animals and their products. The study has revealed that a wide domestic retailing of CITES species is virtually unregulated and that enforcement of the CITES provisions is often poor. While there is a great variety of CITES specimens imported from abroad, analysis of CITES documents showed no legal record for many of these imports. Government agencies charged with conservation, species protection and the regulation of hunting and trade lack funding and institutional capacity to monitor wildlife harvest and trade adequately. The situation is further hampered by a general lack of awareness of wildlife trade issues and by insufficient border and internal controls. These weaknesses need to be addressed and corrected.

1. The Russian Federation must enact CITES implementing legislation that fully integrates all CITES requirements into national legislation. Currently there is no legal basis for in-country control over CITES specimens once they have been imported into the country. At present, smuggled exotic species, if they are not listed in the Red Data Book of the Russian Federation, can be traded openly in the markets and shops with no legal recourse for authorities to regulate the trade or to control the legal origins of the specimens, even though this is a direct violation of CITES provisions.

2. The Russian CITES Management Authority (SCPE) should be allocated more resources for CITES implementation, necessary for covering such a vast country.

3. There should be clearly designated agency for the control over the wildlife trade within the country with enough personnel having rights for investigations.

4. The Russian CITES Scientific Authority should be separate from the Management Authority and it should be expanded to include wildlife experts from universities, institutes, NGOs and other sources, such as the Academy of Sciences.

5. Russian Customs and other enforcement personnel on the borders must be trained in the identification of CITES specimens and in enforcing CITES provisions.

6. Information on the conservation impacts of wildlife trade and CITES and Russian regulations should be produced and disseminated to wildlife traders and members of the general public.

7. The system for issuing CITES permits should be reviewed and streamlined to take account of the vast size of the country. CITES authorities should be able to communicate easily with regional authorities and Customs officers all over the country to validate the authenticity of permits, hunting licenses and other documentation, as needed.

8. Russia should establish an investigations and enforcement strategy that includes regular control of key market places, clear instructions of what is allowed and what is not under CITES and the applicable Russian legislation, information and training for inspectors and courts, penalties and fines for infractions to CITES and Russian legislation and a policy for the disposal of confiscated specimens. Russian CITES authorities should work more closely together on CITES enforcement issues with their counterparts in key wildlife markets, including the USA, EU, Japan, China and others.

9. The Russian CITES Management Authority should refrain from issuing CITES export certificates for wildlife that has been harvested in contravention to Russian or other CIS legislation (i.e. species listed in national Red Data Books or animals taken in zapovedniks or out of season).

10. The Russian government should establish species-specific management plans for species that are harvested in significant numbers for trade. For example, Brown Bear, Siberian Musk Deer, Saiga Antelope and other species' populations should be assessed to enable realistic hunting quotas and other management measures to be established.

OVERVIEW OF WILDLIFE TRADE IN THE CENTRAL ASIAN COUNTRIES

A TRAFFIC Europe report 1998

Executive Summary

The volume of wildlife trade in Central Asia has remained high since a phenomenal increase in 1990 and 1991 since the dissolution of the USSR. TRAFFIC Europe–Russia staff initiated a number of wildlife trade investigations in 1995 in the Central Asian countries of the former USSR: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tadjikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. TRAFFIC researchers interviewed wildlife experts, governmental officials, members of conservation NGOs and surveyed wildlife markets. The study revealed that a number of threatened species are poached and traded, while others are traded at levels which may not be sustainable.

Of the five countries reviewed by TRAFFIC, only Uzbekistan is a Party to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). The Russian CITES Management Authority is responsible for issuing CITES permits for plants and animals and their parts that are traded from Central Asia. All the Central Asian countries have state agencies responsible for setting hunting and harvest quotas, issuing hunting licenses and enforcing controls for use of wildlife in the field. Similarly, legislation to conserve wildlife resources has been enacted in all of these five countries.

CITES annual report data show that reported exports from the newly independent states in Central Asia reviewed in this study are destined predominantly for China and Japan, but also Russia, Czech Republic, Poland, Spain, USA, Mexico, Denmark, Canada, the Netherlands, Italy, Switzerland and Syria.

Trophy hunting

Wild Sheep and goats

In Kazakhstan, the most popular animals for trophy hunting are subspecies of Argali *Ovis ammon*. Foreigners began to hunt the threatened endemic Kazakhstan Argali *O. a. collium* in 1990 for trophies, which is the most popular subspecies of Argali among hunters. From 1990–1997, foreign hunters shot 75 Kazakhstan Argali and paid more than US\$900 000 for their trophies (US\$12 000/Argali).

Kazakh state companies earned some US\$130 000 from selling hunting tours for Transcaspiian Urial *Ovis orientalis arkal* (LR) and Goitred Gazelle *Gazella subgutturosa* (LR) in 1992. Illegal hunting using spotlights has been reported in Kazakhstan.

Other wild sheep occurring in Kazakhstan include Altai Argali *O. a. ammon* (VU) (CITES Appendix II) (100 individuals), Tien Shan Argali *O. a. karelini* (VU) (800 individuals) and the endemic Kara Tau Argali *O. a. nigrimontana* (CR) (200 individuals) (CITES Appendix I). Trophy hunts for these threatened subspecies are not allowed by the government, however, hunting trips to hunt the critically endangered Kara Tau Argali *O. a. nigrimontana* have been offered in the USA and in Turkey for about US\$40 000 each.

In Kyrgyzstan, hunting is open to residents and foreigners. Marco Polo Sheep *Ovis ammon polii* (VU), a nationally protected species, may be hunted by foreigners for US\$13 000–15 000 each. During the 1993–1994 hunting season, the Russian Management Authority issued eight export permits. Kyrgyzstan strictly prohibits the hunting of Tien Shan Argali *Ovis ammon karelini* (VU) (CITES Appendix I), however, in 1991, a number of Tien Shan Argali were accidentally shot instead of Marco Polo Sheep. The present population of Tien Shan Argali is estimated at 7500 animals.

In Tadjikistan Marco Polo Sheep hunts cost US\$10 000–20 000 in 1995. Part of the permit fee is directed to the local reserve budgets, and is sometimes the only financial income in the whole district. This money was often spent on basic needs for local people rather than on improving control of wildlife trade or conducting censuses. During the 1993–1994 season, the Russian Management Authority issued export permits for 24 Marco Polo trophies from Tadjikistan.

Ban on hunting threatened species was reconfirmed in Turkmenistan in 1991. However, following the request from Turkeminstan authorities the Russian Management Authority continued to issue export permits for threatened species throughout 1994 and 1995. Licence fees for foreigners to hunt endangered Markhor and Bukhara Urial cost upwards of US\$20 000.

In Uzbekistan, the endemic Severtzov's Urial *O. orientalis severtzovi* (EN) is a nationally protected species. It occurs primarily in the Nuratinskiy zapovednik where its numbers are estimated at 1700–2200, or up to 70% of the world's population. Officially, hunting in the zapovednik is not permitted, although the government began allowing foreign hunters to hunt in these reserves in 1992 with an annual quota of five Severtzov's Urials that was reduced to two in 1995. Severtzov's Urial trophies can fetch from US\$10 000–20 000.

Other trophies

The Tien Shan Brown Bear *Ursus arctos isabellinus* (CITES Appendix I) is classified as threatened in the 1986 Red Data Book of Kazakhstan. Respondents estimated that 20–25 skins are illegally taken from Kazakhstan annually and exported to Germany and Pakistan.

In 1992, a German hunting party was reported to have permission to hunt Marco Polo Sheep and Snow Leopards in the Pamir mountains. The guided illegal hunt on Snow Leopard and Marco Polo Sheep was offered for US\$4000. Hunting of Marco Polo Sheep and Snow Leopards was carried out using military and state-owned helicopters. The General Director of the State Tadjik Forestry Association is reported to have offered a hunt targeting the nationally threatened subspecies of Tien Shan Brown Bear *Ursus arctos isabellinus* (CITES Appendix I) and Bukhara Urial *Ovis o. bocharensis*.

Opportunistic poaching

Hunting of North Persian Leopards *Panthera pardus saxicolor* was made illegal in Turkmenistan in 1993. One questionnaire respondent, who was offered six Leopard skins for US\$1000 each, believes that most of the Leopard skins come from zapovednik rangers, who receive poor salaries, equivalent to US\$10 per month, and poach what they can to supplement their incomes.

Hunting of Snow Leopards is strictly forbidden in the Central Asian countries of the former USSR. In Kazakhstan, however, several Snow Leopard skins were reportedly sold in Almaty to foreigners. In 1994–1995, there were about 10 skins sold for US\$3000–7000. In 1993, local newspapers published private sale advertisements for Snow Leopard skins. Illegal trade in Snow Leopard skins was also reported at the Kyrgyzstan–China border. During inauguration, President N. Nazarbayev appeared in public in traditional Kazakh coat with the collar made of the snow leopard fur.

In Tadjikistan, questionnaire respondents reported trade in Snow Leopard skins and Tien Shan Brown Bear *Ursus arctos isabellinus* skins. In the spring of 1995, one Snow Leopard skin was reported traded in a town market for US\$300–400. In the summer of 1995 at the market, two bear skins were exhibited, each worth about US\$120. In the same year, 10 Snow Leopard skins were confiscated at the border by Customs officers.

Uzbekistan's impoverished population has become even poorer after the breakup of the USSR. This human crisis has fuelled illegal hunting of sheep, goats and bears. State Game inspectors mentioned that local people hunt Tien Shan Brown Bear and Snow Leopard for the pelts, which they sell to foreigners.

Houbara Bustards

The Houbara Bustard *Chlamydotis undulata* is protected in Kazakhstan and listed in CITES Appendix I. The total population of Houbara Bustards in Kazakhstan is about 10 000 individuals. The government granted exceptional permission in 1993 for a Saudi Arabian sheikh to take 100 of these birds.

In Turkmenistan, Houbara Bustards were hunted during 1993–1995 by Arabian sheikhs. These hunts were sanctioned by the President of Turkmenistan. Hunting takes place throughout the year except during the bustard breeding season, generally from the first half of April until June. Sheikhs from Bahrain, Qatar and Saudi Arabia have visited Turkmenistan to hunt bustards since 1993. They often obtain hunting permits for 300–400 birds, but some experts have spoken of hunts totalling 2000–5000 bustards. Local zoologists recorded a dramatic decrease in the Houbara Bustard population in Turkmenistan, which they attribute to this unsustainable harvesting.

Illegal hunting of Houbara Bustards is reported to be common in Uzbekistan. Sheikhs recognising the demand for foreign currency have made charity donations in their attempts to hunt Houbara.

Trade in birds of prey

Investigators were repeatedly informed of illegal export trade in Saker Falcons with the UAE. Sheikhs offered donations to Kazakhstan to obtain permission to collect falcons. It is estimated that 1500 Saker Falcons were collected annually for export from Kazakhstan between 1992 and 1994. In early September 1995, TRAFFIC researchers noted approximately 300 birds from Central Asia available in Arabian markets.

Saker *Falco cherrug* and Peregrine *F. peregrinus* Falcons are nationally threatened and protected in Uzbekistan. Throughout 1991–1993, there was an increase in the demand for falcons in the UAE and Saudi Arabia. By the end of 1995, a trained falcon in Uzbekistan sold for US\$600–700. Uzbekistan is also a transit point for falcons coming from Turkmenistan.

Trade in reptiles and amphibians

In Kazakhstan, the most commonly traded species are Marsh Frogs *Rana arvalis* and Horsfield's Tortoise. From 1976 to 1993, 3 356 500 Marsh Frogs, were reported captured and traded in Kazakhstan for terraria, food for other captive animals and laboratory use.

From 1976 to 1993, 1 097 300 Horsfield's Tortoises were reported collected and traded in Kazakhstan. The period 1993–1995 was the most active trading period of tortoises between Central Asia, the USA and Japan. The tortoise population experienced a dramatic decline, most likely due to over harvesting which resulted in a decreased annual harvest from over 100 000 in the past, to the current 40 000 to 50 000. In 1993, the Russian CITES Management Authority issued permits to export 11 404 Horsfield's Tortoises from Kazakhstan to companies in Moscow and the Ukraine. Most tortoises were then exported to Spain (5400) and the Czech Republic (4000), followed by USA (1000), Japan (1000), and the Netherlands (4).

In 1994, permits were issued for the export of 23 686 Horsfield's Tortoises originating in Kazakhstan to the companies in Moscow and the Ukraine. Most tortoises were re-exported. In 1995, the Moscow-based company received permits to re-export 12 350 Horsfield's Tortoises..

In Uzbekistan, Horsfield's Tortoises destined for export to the West are collected within quotas. Demand for tortoises as pets in Russia, Ukraine and other CIS countries is met by illegal collectors. Large numbers of tortoises are smuggled out of the country, especially by trains but also by private cars. In 1993, the Russian CITES Management Authority processed export permits for 600 tortoises.

Reptiles and amphibians are widely traded in Turkmenistan. In Tadjikistan, a local expert reported that snake populations in the country will not survive continued extensive harvesting for venom. Populations of Levantine (or Blunt-nosed) Viper *Vipera lebetina* have significantly decreased in Tadjikistan due to over harvesting, to the extent that snakes used in serpentaria are now illegally imported. Venom sold for US\$1000–1200 per gram in 1992, but has reportedly since decreased in value. One thousand Horsfield's Tortoises were exported from Tadjikistan to Sweden in 1996.

Trade in plants

In Tadjikistan and Uzbekistan, wild plants are collected both for scientific and medicinal use and several companies are engaged in their collection. Soaproot *Allochrysa* spp. have been collected traditionally by residents for use in confectionery, local cuisine, traditional medicine, textile production, lacquer and cosmetics. These species are endemic to the mountain ranges of Central Asia and are internationally and nationally threatened.

In 1994, an Uzbek company and its partners from the UAE started large-scale collection and procurement of soaproot. Having been paid US\$0.05–0.1 per kg, villagers collected large quantities. The firm has been fined several times but continues to collect the threatened plant. Questionnaire respondents noted that in 1994, most of the human population living within the range of the soaproot was involved in its collection, which has resulted in a severe decline in its abundance. Another plant widely collected in Uzbekistan is rhubarb *Rheum* spp., the collection of which has intensified since 1991. In the early to mid 1990s, a family could earn US\$30–60 for the sale of a spring season collection. Local inspectors reported that it was impossible to control collection because the entire rural population was involved.

Conclusions and recommendations

Central Asia's native fauna and flora includes many species that are increasingly threatened by large volumes of legal and illegal collection and hunting for wildlife trade. In all countries reviewed, threatened and endangered species that had been strictly protected by Soviet legislation have begun to be used commercially. Little information exists about the level of reinvestment of these funds in conservation, and it has been reported often that few of the funds generated by foreign trophy hunting are actually spent on the conservation schemes for which they were intended. For many impoverished citizens, economic incentives in illegal wildlife trade outweigh alternative methods of meeting basic daily needs.

There are huge challenges that must be addressed if the conservation of wildlife and biodiversity are to be ensured in the region. In addition to extending and reinforcing a network of protected areas covering representative ecosystems and natural areas, governments must include the local people in the protection, exploitation and management of wildlife resources. The long-term future of the wildlife in Central Asia rests mostly with the local people who live with the unique fauna and flora. Through pilot projects at community level, means should be explored to enhance the assessment of resources, benefit sharing, self regulation and community-based management, which can encourage conservation

and sustainable development and provide incentives for legal trade. The national governments must support such initiatives and vastly improve their monitoring and control of harvest levels and trade in animal and plant species in the Central Asian countries of the CIS. International co-operation will be required to assist efforts in these countries. Well managed wildlife conservation programmes have the potential to conserve the region's unique assemblage of plants and animals, while generating a significant source of revenue for local communities and reinvestment in conservation that will prove more beneficial to these countries in the long term than the short-sighted policies that are currently in place in some areas.

1. The national governments of Central Asia should follow Uzbekistan in acceding to CITES in order to ease their national responsibilities for the protection, regulation and monitoring of wildlife in international trade. Once each of these countries becomes a Party to CITES, including Uzbekistan, it must designate a Scientific Authority that is separate from the Management Authority that issues the permits.

2. CITES Parties should carefully scrutinise all applications to import CITES specimens from the Central Asian CIS countries, and refuse those for which it appears that specimens have been acquired in contravention of national legislation or exported illegally. The CITES Secretariat, and the CITES Animals and Plants Committees should review the impact of the export of CITES specimens from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tadjikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan on their wild populations, and advise the CIS countries and Parties accordingly.

3. The governments of Central Asia, in co-operation with those in countries importing the wildlife from the region, need to place higher priority on protecting threatened native species. Each country could develop a profitable and sustainable trophy hunting industry based on sustainable hunting. Generated revenues should to be divided equitably between the local community and protected area agencies.

4. Foreign firms that sell hunting packages in these five countries should avoid or stop offering incentives to hunt endangered species unless there are clear conservation benefits. Companies that support legitimate tours in which hunting is conducted legally, and trophies exported legally, should apply pressure on companies circumventing these legal requirements to clean up their business practices that threaten wildlife.

5. International scientific and conservation communities should support initiatives to compile comprehensive and reliable data on

population, status and threats for threatened species in order to more accurately set hunting and trade quotas. Emphasis should be put on in situ pilot projects and local sustained management, utilisation and conservation efforts.

6. Captive breeding and artificial cultivation programmes should be developed for commercially attractive species.