



**BE OUR  
CHAMPION!**

## **Central Asian Mammals Initiative: Saving the Last Migrations**

### **Understanding the Challenge**

Central Asia hosts the largest intact and still interconnected grasslands worldwide. Central Asia is also home to some of the most spectacular and ecologically important mammal migrations in the world. Under the name of “Serengeti of the North”, the vast deserts, grasslands and high mountains of this region allow large animals to roam freely. From the Khulan which migrates in massive herds covering thousands of kilometres in just a few weeks, to the Bactrian Camel which uses stored fat in two humps on its back for journeys of up to 75 kilometres a day across rocky massifs, arid deserts and vegetated plains and the Mongolian Gazelle whose annual journeys between rutting and birthing seasons can range over 32,000 square kilometres. While the expanse, remoteness and difficult terrain of the region have still left large parts mostly untouched by modern civilization, migratory mammals are in decline. Poaching, illegal trade, habitat loss, infrastructure developments, oil and gas exploration and mineral extractions, as well as disease, and climate change challenge their very existence, with some species having undergone dramatic population reductions in recent decades. Saiga Antelopes for instance declined by 95 per cent in ten years due to excessive poaching and trade in the species’ meat and horn while the Asiatic Cheetah, which once raced across the region now clings on to survival only in pockets of habitat which are under pressure from overgrazing and droughts. With many of these charismatic creatures threatened, calls are growing for cross-border conservation!

### **Moving from Decision to Action**

CMS has strengthened its efforts in Central Asia to conserve these iconic mammals, their habitats and the vital role they play for intact ecosystems. Parties to CMS have endorsed the Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI) and its associated Programme of Work which identified key actions and a road map to implement them. With this dedicated initiative, CMS aims to provide a framework to coordinate actions in the region and coherently address threats common to these animals.

### **Championing the Solution!**

CAMI is a tool which creates geographic synergies and cost-effective implementation of transboundary collaboration and joint conservation efforts. Encouraging alternative livelihoods including through generation of income deriving from sustainable trophy hunting on mountain ungulates ensures the participation of local communities in the conservation of these species. Removing barriers to migration through, for instance, the promotion of wildlife-friendly linear infrastructure is a key element to maintain connectivity for these animals in the face of growing developments. Long term commitment of countries and other stakeholders such as the private sector and local communities, including the provision of adequate financial and in kind resources are critical to the success of this initiative and the preservation of these animals.

More information can be found at: [www.cms.int/cami](http://www.cms.int/cami)



## MIGRATORY SPECIES CHAMPION PROGRAMME

### WE FLY, WE RUN, WE SWIM. HELP US KEEP MOVING

The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species and its associated agreements, altogether known as CMS Family, are concerned with the protection of migratory wildlife on a global or regional scale. Such work is largely subject to the voluntary financial income that the Secretariats can generate, which is by its nature neither regular nor predictable.

The *Migratory Species Champion Programme* aims to promote initiatives developed under the CMS Family and encourage their sustainable support. The Programme has been designed to raise commitments to provide medium- and long-term resources for conservation actions so as to guarantee their timely planning and implementation.

#### Who can be a Champion?

*Champions* can be Governments, companies, organizations and individuals willing to make a financial commitment of at least three years for one or more specific CMS Family initiatives. Contributions could be made annually or as one-off payments. In-kind donations also qualify provided that they comply with requirements of this programme.

Becoming a *Champion* is more than being a donor. It is rather being an advocate for migratory species delivering support for their conservation beyond funding. *Champions* become part of the solution to big problems that concern them.

#### What can a Champion support?

The programme offers a portfolio of initiatives. Each initiative comprises a set of activities contributing to the implementation of a large programme targeting a species, a group of species or a cross-cutting issue.

#### Why becoming a Champion?

The Programme and its results are promoted on the dedicated page: [www.migratoryspecies.org/champion](http://www.migratoryspecies.org/champion)

Furthermore, *Champions* are acknowledged with certificates that testify their support to one or more initiatives.

Different categories of *Champions* are defined to recognize different levels of contributions. The scheme of categories is as follows:

*Champion* for annual contributions from €20,000 up to €50,000 over at least a three-year period;

*Champion Plus* for annual contributions of more than €50,000 over at least a three-year period;

*Champion Extraordinaire* for continuous support.

Engaging and awarding *Champions* are rolling processes undertaken by each Secretariat.

Ad hoc donors' events are organized in the margins of the CMS Family decision-making bodies to acknowledge existing *Champions*. The certificate and the associated publicity provide *Champions* with the opportunity to promote both nationally and internationally their commitment and support for the conservation of migratory species.