CAMCA
Central Asian Mammals and Climate Adaptation

CAMCA

Building Resilience for Wildlife and Communities in the Mountains of Central Asia

22–23 October 2025,
Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic

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CAMCA Conference Report

Building Resilience for Wildlife and Communities in the Mountains of Central Asia – Results and Upscaling of the Central Asian Mammals and Climate Adaptation (CAMCA) Project

22–23 October 2025, Hyatt Regency, Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic

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Introduction

The Building Resilience for Wildlife and Communities in the Mountains of Central Asia conference, held on **22–23 October 2025** at the Hyatt Regency in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic, brought together more than 80 representatives from protected areas, government agencies, international organisations, local and national media outlets, community representatives, and civil society organisations working in Central Asia. The event marked a major milestone in the **Central Asian Mammals and Climate Adaptation (CAMCA)** project, implemented under the **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)** and the **Convention on Migratory Species (CMS)**, with support from the **German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV)** through its **International Climate Initiative (IKI)**.

The conference provided a platform to share lessons, tools, and results developed through CAMCA, focusing on how Central Asian countries can strengthen the resilience of mountain ecosystems and the communities that depend on them. Over two days, participants discussed practical ways to integrate climate change adaptation into wildlife conservation, strengthen ecological connectivity across borders, engage local communities, and mobilise sustainable financing.

Structured around a combination of presentations, panel discussions, and interactive sessions, the meeting produced a series of shared recommendations for scaling up CAMCA's approaches at national and regional levels. These include advancing **ecological corridors**, **community-based management**, **climate-informed planning tools**, and **innovative finance mechanisms** to ensure the long-term sustainability of conservation outcomes.

The conference concluded with the adoption of the **CAMCA Statement**, affirming the willingness of participating countries-Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Tajikistan-to continue collaborating on climate-resilient protected area systems that support ecological connectivity, climate-smart grazing management, and community resilience & adaptation. The discussions also set the stage for presenting CAMCA's lessons at the **15th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS COP15)** in 2026.

This report provides a comprehensive summary of the key discussions, outcomes, and recommendations from this conference. It reflects the collective efforts of all partners and participants to translate knowledge into action and continue cooperating in the mountains of Central Asia.

Day 1: Setting the Stage – Project Updates and Technical Sessions

Opening Remarks

(Day 1, 09:30–10:00)

The opening session set the tone for how Central Asia can strengthen the resilience of its mountain ecosystems and communities in the face of accelerating climate change. High-level representatives from the governments of Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Tajikistan, together with international partners from Germany, UNEP, and the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), underscored a shared vision of cooperation, scientific exchange, and sustainable adaptation.

Mr **Almaz Musaev**, Deputy Minister of Natural Resources, Ecology, and Technical Supervision of the Kyrgyz Republic, welcomed participants and highlighted the importance of regional collaboration to safeguard the biodiversity and livelihoods of Central Asia's mountain regions. He described the Ak Ilbirs Ecological Corridor, spanning approximately 800,000 hectares, as a national achievement that also offers a model for transboundary conservation. *"Only through cooperation, knowledge exchange, and joint action,"* he said, "*can we achieve real results in conserving biodiversity and building resilient communities".*

Representing Kazakhstan, Mr **Daniyar Turgambayev**, Chairman of the Forestry and Wildlife Committee, spoke about the tangible impacts of climate change already affecting the region, including land degradation and loss of habitat. He emphasized the role of ecological corridors as "vital lifelines for migration that ensure the genetic diversity and stability of ecosystems," noting that their importance "multiplies under climate stress." He called for stronger integration of science, policy, and community engagement to ensure conservation efforts deliver lasting socio-economic benefits.

Mr **Yokub Ashurov,** of the Committee for Environmental Protection under the Government of Tajikistan, reaffirmed his country's commitment to the principles underlying CAMCA's activities. He outlined Tajikistan's progress, including the establishment of the Yaghnob National Park and the development of climate-resilient protected area management plans. He credited the CAMCA project with "deepening understanding of climate impacts on key migratory species such as the snow leopard, argali, and Bukhara deer," and expressed appreciation to the German International Climate Initiative and UNEP for their ongoing support.

In her address, Ms **Monika Lenhard**, German ambassador to the Krygyz Republic commended Central Asian countries for their expanding regional cooperation in responding to climate challenges. She reminded delegates that "the theme of this conference could not be timelier," citing recent data from the World Meteorological Organization showing record increases in global carbon dioxide levels. She underlined Germany's continued support through its International Climate Initiative (IKI), which has invested six million euros in the CAMCA project to strengthen resilience and biodiversity conservation in the region.

Speaking on behalf of the UN Environment Programme, Ms **Aidai Kurmanova**, Head of the UNEP Central Asia Office, emphasised the growing momentum of regional integration on environmental issues. She linked CAMCA's achievements to UNEP's broader mandate on climate, nature, and community resilience, noting that "the project has shown how ecosystem-based approaches can help nature itself adapt to climate change, while generating tangible economic benefits for mountain communities." She also referenced Tajikistan's upcoming proposal to the UN Environment Assembly for a global resolution on mountains and glaciers, highlighting the region's leadership in bringing these issues to the international agenda.

Finally, Ms **Clara Nobbe**, Head of the Terrestrial Species Team at the Convention on Migratory Species, praised the collaboration among partners and the commitment shown by participating governments. She drew attention to one of CAMCA's outputs, the Central Asian Mammals Migration and Linear Infrastructure Atlas, describing it as "an interactive tool to integrate wildlife conservation into infrastructure planning in a rapidly developing region." She underscored that the project's success lay not only in scientific achievement, but also in its practical application to conservation and planning across borders.

Together, the opening statements framed a unifying message: that resilience in Central Asia's mountains depends on strong regional partnerships, community engagement, and science-based solutions. Speakers highlighted the CAMCA project as a model for linking biodiversity conservation with climate adaptation, demonstrating that ecological and social resilience must advance hand in hand.

Keynote Address

(10:00:10:30)

"The Future of Mountain Ecosystems under Climate Stress" – GRID-Arendal

The keynote presentation explored the paradoxical nature of mountain ecosystems: elevated both geographically and within global policy frameworks, yet profoundly vulnerable to the accelerating impacts of climate change. Delivered by **Paige Hellbaum Eikeland** (GRID-Arendal), the address traced the historical and scientific context of mountain conservation, linking it to the evolving global sustainability agenda and to the achievements of the CAMCA project.

The keynote began by recalling that mountains have been part of the international environmental agenda since the 1992 Rio Conference, which enshrined sustainable mountain development as a priority in Chapter 13 of the Rio Declaration. This early recognition placed mountain ecosystems on equal footing with other global environmental challenges, such as climate change and desertification. Despite this prominence, mountains remain threatened and vulnerable, facing glacial retreat, land degradation, and biodiversity loss at unprecedented rates.

Describing mountains as both "the water towers and biodiversity islands of the world," the keynote underscored their global significance. Although they occupy only a quarter of the Earth's terrestrial area, mountain regions harbour around 85 percent of the world's amphibian, bird, and mammal species. Many vital crops, medicinal plants, and genetic resources trace their origins to mountain ecosystems.

Drawing on new analyses developed by GRID-Arendal and UNEP, the keynote presented emerging evidence on "climate velocity" - the rate at which climate zones are moving upslope compared to how fast species shift their ranges to adapt. The address warned that "most mountain regions are experiencing climate zones shifting faster than species can follow," creating a pressing need for more connected, climate-smart conservation planning.

The presentation also highlighted significant data gaps. Only 17 to 19 percent of mountain land is currently under protection, and nearly 40 percent of the world's major mountain ranges lack any formal protected area. The speaker argued that conservation strategies must go beyond expanding protected areas, emphasising the creation of ecological corridors that connect habitats across elevation gradients and national borders. Such corridors, as demonstrated through CAMCA, provide species with the flexibility to adapt to shifting climates while sustaining ecological integrity.

A central theme of the keynote was the importance of integrated approaches that balance conservation, climate adaptation, and local livelihoods. The speaker called this the "both–and" approach - moving away from trade-offs between nature protection and development and instead designing solutions that achieve both. The CAMCA project exemplified this approach by combining species vulnerability assessments, the Protected Area Vulnerability Assessment (PAVA) tool, and community-led pasture management initiatives that promote biodiversity-friendly livelihoods such as beekeeping and ecotourism. It was noted that "the resilience of local communities in and around protected areas is linked to both the health of the surrounding ecosystems and the availability of economic opportunities."

Looking to the future, the address painted both a warning and an opportunity. Projections show that by 2100, an area of land equivalent to the combined size of Nepal and Finland will be ice-free, with severe consequences for ecosystems and communities. Yet even as glaciers retreat, new landscapes - including lakes, wetlands, and post-glacial ecosystems - will emerge, offering potential new climate refugia. The speaker stressed the need for early action to document and protect these disappearing and evolving environments before they are lost to degradation or invasive species.

The keynote concluded with a call for renewed commitment to regional cooperation, scientific innovation, and inclusive governance. The speaker urged participants to "see mountains and lowlands not as competitors for attention or resources, but as connected systems - linked through water, biodiversity, and shared futures." In that spirit, the CAMCA project was presented as a transformative approach in how transboundary collaboration can strengthen the resilience of people and nature across Central Asia's iconic mountain ranges.

High-Level Panel Discussion & Project Summary

(11:00-12:30)

Moderated by Ms Aidai Kurmanova, UNEP

The late-morning session focused on one of the most tangible outcomes of the CAMCA project - the creation of ecological corridors as a cornerstone of climate-smart conservation across Central Asia. Framed as both a scientific and socio-ecological innovation, the discussion highlighted national experiences from Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Tajikistan, underscoring how ecological connectivity can serve as a practical instrument for resilience in mountainous landscapes.

Opening the session, Ms **Aidai Kurmanova**, Head of UNEP's Central Asia Office, introduced the theme, noting that ecological corridors represent "legally recognised, scientifically grounded, and effectively managed territories that ensure the movement of wildlife and the resilience of ecosystems." She emphasised that these corridors are not abstract concepts, but essential infrastructure for climate adaptation in the region. The panel included Mr Almaz Musaev of Kyrgyzstan, Mr Daniyar Turgambayev of Kazakhstan, and Mr Yakub Ashurov of Tajikistan, with a framing presentation by Mr **Maarten Hofman**, Programme Officer at UNEP Vienna.

Ecological Connectivity: A Regional Vision

In his remarks, **Mr Hofman** set out the ecological and political rationale for developing connected networks of protected and managed areas across Central Asia. He explained that "as the climate shifts, species must move up, down, or elsewhere - and when landscapes are fragmented, we trap them, removing their main tool for adaptation." Protecting entire functional ecosystems, rather than isolated protected areas, is therefore critical.

He outlined UNEP's approach, which integrates ecological data, local knowledge, and climate projections to design corridors that maintain habitat connectivity and community livelihoods simultaneously. These networks of protected areas and corridors, he stressed, must be viewed as "interconnected resilience units" spanning national borders, supported by policy and inclusive governance.

Mr Hofman also reminded participants that the CAMCA project is in its final phase, having been implemented since 2021 under Germany's International Climate Initiative (IKI). The project's goal, he said, was to strengthen the resilience of flagship mountain and migratory species - including the Snow Leopard, Argali, Ibex, Maral, Brown Bear, and Bukhara Deer - and to integrate climate-smart wildlife management into policy and planning at national and regional levels.

National Perspectives: Progress and Challenges

Representing **Kyrgyzstan**, Mr **Almaz Musaev**, Deputy Minister of Natural Resources, Ecology and Technical Supervision, described how his country has institutionalised the concept of ecological corridors through new legal provisions. The Aq Ilbirs Corridor connects key protected areas - Khan Tengri, Sarychat-Ertash, and Naryn - into a single conservation landscape. Mr Musaev praised local authorities and communities for embracing the initiative, describing it as "a first but decisive step towards building a network that supports both wildlife and sustainable land use."

From **Kazakhstan**, Mr **Daniyar Turgambayev**, Chairman of the Forestry and Wildlife Committee, provided a detailed overview of national biodiversity planning. He announced that Kazakhstan's Concept for Biodiversity Conservation to 2035 had been finalised, setting a goal to expand protected areas to 34 million hectares, or 30 percent of the national territory. Kazakhstan has already created four ecological corridors and is exploring transboundary ones, particularly along the Ustyurt Plateau with Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, and in the Altai region with Russia, China, and Mongolia. Mr Turgambayev stressed that the success of such corridors depends on local participation and careful land-use negotiation, noting that "protection regimes must be realistic and developed with the people who live within them."

Mr **Yakub Ashurov**, Director of the State Agency for Specially Protected Natural Areas under Tajikistan's Committee for Environmental Protection, underlined the ecological and social importance of connectivity in his country's predominantly mountainous terrain. While Tajikistan does not yet have established corridors, he explained that plans are under development to link existing protected areas and to embed the corridor concept within national biodiversity policy. He described ecological corridors as "vital for maintaining biodiversity, supporting livelihoods, and fostering regional cooperation."

Toward Transboundary Collaboration

During the discussion, participants and audience members raised practical questions about governance and land use within corridors. Issues included how to manage areas with overlapping economic activities, how to harmonise national legal frameworks, and how to secure community cooperation. Kazakhstan's experience demonstrated that most ecological corridors coexist with active land users through flexible management arrangements, but participants acknowledged the need for clearer governance mechanisms and possible recognition of corridor management as a distinct institutional function. Mr Hofman responded that "corridor implementation relies on coordination across sectors - from energy and infrastructure to agriculture and water - and requires shared political commitment."

Integrating CAMCA Results into Regional Action

After a short, animated video showcasing project results, **Mr Hofman** provided a detailed overview of the CAMCA project's structure, methods, and outcomes. He explained how data on protected areas, species, and community vulnerabilities to climate change informed the creation or implementation of tools designed to assess vulnerability to climate change for communities (through a survey instrument developed by WWF called *ClimateCrowd*), for species (through Species Vulnerability Assessments, or SVA, also developed by WWF) and for protected areas (through a tool developed in CAMCA called Protected Area Vulnerability Assessment or PAVA). He noted how these tools can be integrated into national biodiversity strategies and regional programmes, such as under the Convention on Migratory Species.

He also outlined community-based measures piloted across 26 mountain communities, including reforestation, pasture restoration, ecotourism, and alternative livelihoods, such as beekeeping and agroforestry. Education and outreach were central to CAMCA's approach, with training provided to teachers, journalists, and protected area managers with the aim of building local ownership and raising awareness.

Mr Hofman concluded his presentation by emphasising the next steps: mainstreaming ecological connectivity into land-use planning, scaling up the use of climate-resilient management tools, and maintaining regional momentum through continued cooperation. "We need to think of ecological corridors as both natural and social infrastructure - systems that connect ecosystems, communities, and economies across borders," he said.

Closing Reflections

The morning sessions closed with a consensus that ecological corridors have become an important element of Central Asia's emerging climate adaptation strategy. The CAMCA project provided a forum to assemble an evidence base and practical tools to make these corridors operational. The panellists agreed that regional collaboration, underpinned by shared data, harmonised legal frameworks, and community participation, is the path forward for scaling up connectivity and resilience in the mountains of Central Asia.

Parallel Session 1: Community Engagement in Climate-Resilient Wildlife Management

(14:00-15:00)

Moderated by Mr Murat Jumashev, Director, CAMP Alatoo Public Foundation

Speakers:

- → **Mr. Azamat Kenzhebaev** – Director, Department for Wildlife Conservation and PAs, Ministry of Natural Resources, Ecology and Technical Supervision, Kyrgyz Republic
- → **Mr. Mirzonazar Mirzoev** – Tajikistan (Community-based hunting experience)
- → **Mr. Bobur Makhmudov** – National Biodiversity Expert, IUCN
- → **Ms. Fariza Adilbekova** – Secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS)

Session Objectives

The session aimed to explore and compare different models of community engagement in biodiversity conservation and wildlife management, link them to the CMS Principles of Community Engagement and CAMI-level guidelines, and identify recommendations for strengthening community participation across Central Asia.

The Case for Community-Led Conservation

This session explored how community participation can serve as a foundation for climate-resilient wildlife management across Central Asia. Mr. **Murat Jumashev** opened the session by outlining the importance of community engagement for climate-resilient wildlife management, emphasizing that people living near protected areas are both the main stewards of ecosystems and among the most climate-vulnerable groups. He presented five main models of community engagement currently practiced in Central Asia:

1) Community participatory management – where communities take part in joint decision-making and monitoring.
2) Community co-management – involving shared responsibility between state agencies and NGOs.
3) Community-dominant management – community-led initiatives with strong local ownership.
4) Community-based hunting – where regulated hunting supports conservation and livelihoods.
5) OECMs and other emerging models – including locally managed areas and micro-reserves that complement formal protected areas.

Mr. Jumashev linked these approaches to the CMS Principles of Community Engagement and CAMI-level guidelines, underlining that such frameworks provide a practical foundation for standardizing participatory management across the region.

He further noted that, under the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework 30×30 target, achieving 30% coverage solely through traditional protected areas would be unrealistic. Therefore, integrating Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) into national conservation systems is vital. He highlighted Kyrgyzstan's recent legislative progress in recognizing community-initiated protected areas and micro-reserves, which empower citizens to take the lead in conservation efforts.

Community-Based Hunting in Tajikistan

Mr. **Mirzonazar Mirzoev ,** director of the Tajikistan Nature Foundation, presented the GIZ-supported community hunting management model (2008–2012), which successfully involved former hunters and poachers in wildlife protection. This model increased populations of target species and improved community welfare. Local resource management institutions were created and trained in population monitoring and quota planning.

Mr Mirzoev noted that these community hunting groups evolved into self-sustaining NGOs and have since diversified their income through wildlife observation tourism. "When local people see tangible benefits, conservation becomes a choice, not an obligation," he said.

However, challenges such as limited management capacity, lack of political support, and competition with commercial operators persist. To scale up this model, political backing and income diversification for communities are essential to reduce dependence on hunting revenues.

OECMs: Expanding Recognition of Community-Managed Areas

Mr. **Bobur Makhmudov** highlighted that many areas in Central Asia perform conservation functions without formal protected area status. Recognizing them as OECMs would help achieve the CBD 30×30 commitment. "Many landscapes already maintain biodiversity in practice, even if they lack formal status," he noted. He emphasized the need for methodological clarity, donor and governmental support, and cross-sectoral cooperation between conservation bodies, NGOs, and communities.

OECMs can include community-managed pastures, local reserves, and other traditional land-use systems that deliver measurable conservation outcomes. He highlighted ongoing IUCN initiatives to map and verify pilot OECM sites, noting that over 500,000 hectares are expected to be identified across the region under the IKI-funded "One Health" project. Challenges include legal recognition, limited resources, and the novelty of the concept, but national interest is growing rapidly.

Experience from Kyrgyzstan: Micro-Reserves as a Model

Mr **Azamat Kenzhebaev**, Director of the Department of Biodiversity Conservation at Kyrgyzstan's Ministry of Natural Resources, presented Kyrgyzstan's experience with micro-reserves as a successful community-based model. Since 2025, each region of the country has established micro-reserves to conserve species such as the Aigul flower in Batken, the Sievers apple in Ala-Buka, and Macrothomia in Issyk-Kul. These areas are registered as official protected sites and managed by local residents, enhancing environmental awareness and local responsibility.

The approach demonstrates how bottom-up initiatives can complement state-led conservation efforts. **Mr Kenzhebaev** observed that "local people are the primary guardians of nature - when they lead protection efforts, results come quickly." The ministry plans to expand this model nationwide, with several new reserves and community-managed sanctuaries already proposed.

International Frameworks and CMS Principles

Ms **Fariza Adilbekova** of the CMS Secretariat outlined how the Convention's principles of community engagement align with the region's conservation priorities. She shared the findings of a CMS study on community participation in migratory species conservation. She emphasized that engaging local communities is essential for long-term wildlife protection. The CMS Principles highlight the need to: ensure community rights to land and resources; promote fair benefit-sharing through eco-tourism and sustainable hunting; strengthen community capacity for monitoring and governance; integrate traditional knowledge; and encourage cross-border collaboration between communities. These principles are directly relevant to the Central Asian context.

Ms Adilbekova noted that "local institutions are not just beneficiaries, but essential partners in safeguarding migratory species," adding that empowering them with equitable rights and access to sustainable income opportunities is fundamental to achieving durable outcomes.

Open Discussion: Balancing Interests and Incentives

Participants from the floor raised questions about transparency, financing, and the challenges of balancing conservation with economic development. Potential conflicts of interest between state authorities, private entities/businesses, and community-based organisations over revenue control were highlighted. Responding, Mr. **Rustam Khamimov** (Kazakhstan) and **Mr. Kenzhebaev** (Kyrgyzstan) emphasized that transferring management responsibilities to communities requires strong anti-corruption safeguards and transparent financial systems.

Foreshadowing another parallel session to be held later that afternoon, the need for **sustainable financing** was brought up several times. Participants discussed the potential of eco-tourism, beekeeping, and small-scale enterprises as viable alternatives to extractive livelihoods, while cautioning against unmanaged tourism. **Mr Mirzoev** and Mr. **Ormon Sultangaziev** highlighted the lack of tourism regulations, such as rules on drone usage and visitor behaviour, and visitor capacities to avoid stress on fragile ecosystems.

Kyrgyz Deputy Minister **Almaz Musaev** noted that communities bear conservation costs without receiving fair compensation, "if local communities do not share in the benefits, conservation efforts will ultimately fail." He urged the development of fair financial mechanisms that will ensure that revenues generated from natural areas return to the communities that protect them.

The discussion closed on a note of optimism. As one participant remarked, "once communities become partners in conservation, not subjects of it, resilience becomes real." The session's recommendations were adopted for inclusion in the next day's "Vision 2030" dialogue.

Parallel Session 2: Transboundary Corridors – A Closer Look

(14:00-15:00)

Moderated by Mr Maarten Hofman, UNEP Vienna

Speakers:

- → **Mr. Stefan Michel** - UNEP consultant
- → **Mr. Talant Turdumatov -** Ministry of Natural Resources of the Kyrgyz Republic,
- → **Mr. Bakytzhan Zhumanov** - Deputy Director of the Almaty Regional Inspection under the Forestry and Wildlife Committee
- → **Mr. Yokub Ashurov** - Committee for Environmental Protection of Tajikistan

Session Objectives

The session explored opportunities for establishing a Kazakh–Kyrgyz transboundary ecological corridor, building on national experiences and shared objectives of the CAMCA project. Representatives of government agencies, international organisations, and scientific partners discussed the ecological feasibility, governance needs, and political prospects of advancing connectivity across borders in the Inner Tien Shan.

Linking Landscapes and Policies across Borders

The session explored opportunities for establishing a Kazakh–Kyrgyz transboundary ecological corridor, building on national experiences and shared objectives of the CAMCA project. Representatives of government agencies, international organisations, and scientific partners discussed the ecological feasibility, governance needs, and political prospects of advancing connectivity across borders in the Inner Tien Shan.

Opening the session, Mr. Maarten Hofman emphasised that ecological connectivity across national borders is one of the most effective tools for addressing the fragmentation of mountain ecosystems under climate change. Corridors, he noted, allow species to move in response to shifting climatic conditions “across elevation and political boundaries,” ensuring ecosystem resilience.

Mr. Hofman highlighted global and regional frameworks that can guide transboundary connectivity planning, including:

- The CMS Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI)
- The IUCN Connectivity Conservation Guidelines
- The Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Programme (GSLEP)

These frameworks provide complementary guidance on corridor design, governance, and international cooperation.

The Kazakh–Kyrgyz Corridor Concept

Mr **Stefan Michel**, a UNEP consultant, presented the preliminary concept for a Kazakh–Kyrgyz transboundary corridor. He described the proposed area as extending through the inner Tien Shan, linking key habitats for flagship species such as the Argali, Snow Leopard, Maral, Tien Shan Brown Bear, and Ibex. He also discussed the potential for the corridor to benefit other species, including Eurasian lynx (*Lynx lynx*; another CMS-listed species) and wolf (*Canis lupus*). The corridor, he explained, aligns closely with priority transboundary regions already identified under the CAMI framework and with national conservation targets. Mr. Michel described a combination of analytical tools used:

- Species distribution modelling
- Satellite data analysis
- Least-cost path modelling to identify feasible wildlife movement routes

He emphasised that much of the proposed corridor overlaps with existing protected areas in both countries, reducing the need for new land allocation. "Our task is not to create new barriers of bureaucracy, but to connect what already exists," he remarked. He underlined that corridor design must incorporate land-use practices, such as grazing, and ensure early participation of local communities. In addition, he reviewed the current institutional arrangements in both countries to identify options for coordinated governance.

National Experiences and Legislative Frameworks

Kyrgyz Republic

Mr. **Talant Turdumatov**, Ministry of Natural Resources of the Kyrgyz Republic, presented national experience in establishing ecological corridors.

Key points included:

- Legal provisions for ecological corridors were introduced in 2018, with detailed regulations adopted in 2021.
- Two corridors are already operational:
  - The Chatkal corridor, connecting multiple protected areas.
  - The Ak Ilbirs corridor, covering over 800,000 hectares in Naryn Region.
- The Ak Ilbirs corridor was supported by the CAMCA project through scientific mapping and extensive community consultations.

Kyrgyz representatives emphasised that ecological corridors function as "living conservation networks", integrating biodiversity needs with local livelihoods. Rules on permitted and prohibited activities are now codified by government decree, providing clarity for land users.

Kazakhstan

Representing Kazakhstan, Mr. **Bakytzhan Zhumanov**, Deputy Director of the Almaty Regional Inspection under the Forestry and Wildlife Committee, shared national experience in corridor planning.

He noted:

- Kazakhstan has designated eight ecological corridors, with four now operational.
- Corridors link major protected areas across steppe and mountain ecosystems.
- However, legislative gaps remain:
    - Corridors are often created by decisions of regional governors (akimats).
    - Governance, enforcement responsibilities, and management plans are not fully formalised.

Mr Zhumanov explained that "corridors are recognised legally, but their governance remains incomplete", as existing laws assign land and wildlife responsibilities to different agencies. He also highlighted infrastructure development as a major challenge, with highways and railways fragmenting historical migration routes of species such as saiga and goitered gazelle. Stressing the need to integrate ecological connectivity into transport and regional planning. "We must ensure that infrastructure planning and ecological connectivity go hand in hand," he said.

Tajikistan

Mr. **Yokub Ashurov**, Committee for Environmental Protection of Tajikistan, provided further regional context. While Tajikistan has not yet legally formalised ecological corridors, many migratory routes are supported through national parks and protected areas, such as Karakul, Beshai Palangon (Tigrovaya Balka), and Yagnob.

A forthcoming Environmental Code is expected to introduce provisions for ecological corridors and incorporate relevant international conventions. Ongoing work includes mapping migration routes and integrating them into protected area planning.

CMS Perspective

Ms. **Clara Nobbe,** Head of the Terrestrial Species Team at CMS, reiterated the Convention's commitment to supporting regional cooperation. She noted that during the recent CAMI Range States meeting in Tashkent, countries jointly mapped priority transboundary regions, including the Inner Tien Shan shared by Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and China.

Potential next steps include:

- Joint scientific surveys.
- Harmonisation of corridor management regimes.
- Cross-border monitoring using CMS–CAMI tools such as the Linear Infrastructure Atlas.
- Exploring memoranda of understanding or joint management committees.

UNEP Perspective

Mr. **Matthias Jurek,** Programme Management Officer at UNEP Vienna, stressed that successful connectivity requires scientific planning, political commitment, and financial resources. Drawing on UNEP's experience from the Alps and Carpathians, he noted that "successful connectivity begins with shared intent, codified through agreements, and sustained by practical cooperation." Highlights include:

- The value of cross-sector working groups linking biodiversity, transport, and energy authorities.
- Early integration of "green infrastructure" into development plans.
- The need for innovative financing (GEF, GBFF, green bonds) to support corridor implementation.

He concluded that "regional collaboration must bridge policy, science, and finance if it is to translate ecological connectivity from maps into reality."

Parallel Session 3: From Local Assessments to National Policy

(15:30-16:30)

Moderated by Mr Mirzo Mirzoev, Tajikistan Nature Foundation

Speakers:

- **Mr. Nikhil Advani** – WWF US
- **Ms. Salamat Djumabaeva** – CAMP Alatoo Public Foundation

Session Objectives

Session 3 examined how local climate-vulnerability assessments, community insights, and management effectiveness tools from the CAMCA project can guide national policy and strengthen resilience in mountain ecosystems. The discussion focused on scaling up practical instruments such as PAVA, Climate Crowd and Pasture Use Planning to support climate-resilient management of protected areas and pastures across Central Asia.

Tools for Understanding Climate Vulnerability

This session explored how to bridge the gap between local-level data and national policy planning through a standardized toolbox. The discussion highlighted the value of participatory assessments and evidence-based management in strengthening climate resilience across ecosystems and communities.

Opening the session, **Mr Mirzoev** explained that the CAMCA project had implemented and piloted several complementary tools across Central Asia to assess climate impacts on people, ecosystems, and institutions. These include Climate Crowd, which captures community-level observations and coping strategies; and PAVA, designed to help protected area managers identify vulnerabilities and plan adaptive responses.

Dr Nikhil Advani, Senior Director for Climate, Communities and Biodiversity at WWF-US, presented the Climate Crowd and PAVA tools.

- PAVA (Protected Area Vulnerability Assessment) identifies climate-vulnerable protected areas, prioritizes adaptation measures, and estimates associated costs.
- Climate Crowd captures community observations on climate impacts, ensuring that local knowledge informs management decisions.

Climate Crowd

Objectives of Climate Crowd: 1) Incorporate community observations about droughts, precipitation changes, shifts in vegetation productivity, and land-use pressures. 2) Ensure that management decisions respond to real experiences and priorities of local people.

This global initiative has collected more than 5,000 community interviews across 40 countries, including nearly 260 within the CAMCA project sites in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. Communities consistently reported declining rainfall, droughts, and shifting seasonal patterns as major threats, often leading to coping strategies such as changing crops, altering livestock practices, or expanding land use.

Dr Advani cautioned that such adaptive responses can inadvertently increase pressure on nature: "When communities are struggling to cope with climate impacts, they may turn to activities that degrade ecosystems. Understanding these linkages is key to designing interventions that support both people and wildlife." Climate Crowd gathers this local knowledge to help co-design nature-based solutions, such as ecotourism, beekeeping, or sustainable pasture management, that build resilience while reducing ecosystem stress.

Protected Area Vulnerability Assessment (PAVA)

Objectives of PAVA: 1) Helps managers rank protected areas by climate vulnerability, 2) Defines specific adaptation measures, and 3) Involves rangers and PA staff in data collection, ensuring accuracy and place-specific relevance.

The Protected Area Vulnerability Assessment (PAVA) tool was developed by the CAMCA partnership to evaluate the sensitivity and adaptive capacity of protected areas. PAVA assesses factors such as climate exposure (droughts, wildfires, floods), ecosystem sensitivity, management capacity, and connectivity. It is designed to be simple, participatory, and actionable. "Rather than predicting 2100 climate scenarios, this tool helps park managers act today-on what's within their control," he explained. The first pilot was conducted in Kyrgyzstan's Khan-Tengri National Park and will soon be piloted in Tajikistan.

Ecological Corridors as a Best Practice for Integrated Land Use

This part of the session was presented by Ms. **Salamat Dzhumabaeva** (CAMP Alatoo), who highlighted that effective climate adaptation in mountain ecosystems requires strong cross-sector collaboration. She stressed that climate-resilient management depends not only on scientific assessments, but also on coordinated land-use planning that brings together environmental, agricultural, and pasture authorities.

The ecological corridor between Khan-Tengri National Park and Naryn State Reserve in the Kyrgyz Republic was presented as a strong example of how ecological connectivity can be aligned with sustainable pasture management. Spanning around 800,000 hectares, the corridor connects forest and pasture landscapes across four districts and introduces a new land-use regimes and most important one is - livestock grazing must not remove more than 60% of vegetation biomass, ensuring that at least 40% remains available for wild ungulates such as argali and ibex.

This requirement is critical, because an ecological corridor on a map does not guarantee connectivity in practice unless the pasture users themselves apply climate- and biodiversity-sensitive grazing rules. Therefore, the corridor has become an instrument for cross-sector planning, bringing together not only the Ministry of Natural Resources but also the Ministry of Agriculture and local pasture committees, particularly in this example. Ensuring that these grazing rules are integrated into local pasture management plans is essential for maintaining habitat quality and reducing competition between domestic livestock and wildlife.

Discussion: From Tools to Transformation

Climate Crowd and PAVA

The ensuing discussion focused on how such local tools can inform policy and planning beyond the environment sector. Participants agreed that PAVA and Climate Crowd provide accessible and practical frameworks for decision-making, complementing existing national data systems. Representatives from environmental authorities emphasised that these tools could be used to design climate-smart management plans for protected areas and to strengthen reporting under the UNFCCC and CBD frameworks.

A common challenge identified was the limited capacity and funding to maintain these tools after project completion. Suggestions included creating revolving funds for local monitoring, integrating tools into government data platforms, and ensuring technical training for park managers and community specialists.

Grazing Management in Ecological Corridors

Participants also highlighted cross-sectoral linkages. Pasture degradation was recognised as not merely an environmental issue but one affecting water, agriculture, and tourism. Experts proposed integrating biodiversity data into the land-use planning systems of both the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Economy and linking it to spatial databases on infrastructure and natural resource use. Enforcement of grazing restrictions was also discussed as a potential challenge in remote areas.

A key challenge raised by participants was how to verify whether these grazing regimes are actually being followed. This requires practical tools to assess grazing impact, specifically the ability to measure how much biomass remains after livestock use. To address this, CAMP Alatoo piloted a rapid biomass assessment method in 2025 together with local communities and the Ministry of Natural Resources of the Kyrgyz Republic. The method was applied immediately after the grazing season and enabled communities and government specialists to determine whether the “minimum 40% biomass remaining” requirement had been met.

This approach strengthens adaptive management, supports more accurate calculations of carrying capacity under climate change, and demonstrates how ecological corridors can function as effective, community-supported conservation instruments rather than just spatial designations.

The session closed with **Mr Mirzoev’s** observation that “data collected by communities and rangers is not just local knowledge-it is national evidence. Turning it into policy is the next frontier for climate resilience.”

Parallel Session 4: Financing Pathways for Wildlife and Climate Resilience in Central Asia

(15:30-16:30)

Moderated by Ms Fariza Adilbekova, Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) Secretariat

Speakers:

- **Ms. Miragul Kochkorova, Project Coordinator "Biodiversity Finance Initiative", UNDP Kyrgyzstan**
- **Mr. Zairbek Kubanychbekov, Director, Ilbirs Foundation**
- **Mr. Koustubh Sharma, International Coordinator, Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Program (GSLEP)**

Session Objectives

This session addressed one of the most pressing and recurrent questions emerging from the CAMCA project: how to ensure the sustainability of conservation and climate adaptation efforts once project funding ends. The discussion centred on innovative financing mechanisms for biodiversity and ecosystem resilience, drawing from the CMS study I*dentification of Funding Options for the Implementation of the Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI)*, UNDP's BioFIN programme, and national experiences in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

The session brought together representatives from governments, development agencies, conservation NGOs, and the private sector to exchange experiences and outline pathways for scaling up financing for biodiversity and climate resilience across the CAMCA countries.

Setting the Scene: The Funding Challenge

Opening the session, Ms **Fariza Adilbekova** introduced findings of the *Report on the Identification of Funding Options for the Implementation of the Central Asian Mammals Initiative* commissioned by the International Academy for Nature Conservation of the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation for the CMS Secretariat. This report emphasizes that long-term ecosystem resilience requires moving beyond traditional grants toward diversified public, private, and blended financing solutions aligned with global biodiversity and climate frameworks and highlights the need for platforms that enable countries to design, test, and scale instruments such as biodiversity credits and conservation trust funds.

Ms Adilbekova emphasised that sustainable financing requires flexible mechanisms balancing the interests of multiple stakeholders - governments, investors, communities, and conservation organisations. The report reviewed over ten potential financing instruments, including traditional grants, payments for ecosystem services, green bonds, and biodiversity credits. One case study from Mongolia, supported by UNDP's BioFIN initiative, was presented as an example of how pasture-use payments and local funds can simultaneously improve rangeland management, reduce overgrazing, and increase local revenues.

National Experience: Institutionalising Biodiversity Finance

Ms **Miragul Kochkorbaeva**, National Coordinator of the BioFIN initiative under UNDP Kyrgyzstan, provided an overview of the programme's work to quantify biodiversity financing needs and integrate them into national planning. BioFIN operates in more than 130 countries worldwide, and in Kyrgyzstan has supported the development of the biodiversity and ecosystem component of the Green Economy Programme, as well as financing frameworks for the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan.

Ms Kochkorbaeva outlined several ongoing initiatives:

- A new **ecosystem service fee** under development with the Ministry of Economy to channel a portion of resource-use revenues into conservation budgets.
- The creation of **public–private partnership models** for protected areas and forest enterprises (*leskhozes*) to diversify income sources.
- The design of a **National Environmental Trust Fund**, aimed at providing long-term, predictable financing through pooled contributions from government, private sector, and donors.

She explained that the trust fund is conceived as a multi-partner mechanism under UN auspices, following tested models from other countries. "This is not just a grant platform," she said. "It will include investment windows for piloting new instruments such as biodiversity credits, blended finance, and green bonds. Our goal is to view biodiversity financing not as expenditure, but as investment in national natural capital."

Community-Level Innovation and Sustainable Livelihoods

Mr **Zairbek Kubanychbekov**, Director of the Ilbirs Foundation, shared experience from Kyrgyzstan's community-based microprojects under CAMCA and earlier initiatives. He stressed that sustainable financing must start at the grassroots level, where conservation is linked to livelihood benefits.

Community-led initiatives, such as regulated trophy hunting, beekeeping, sea buckthorn cultivation, and ecotourism, have provided alternative income while supporting wildlife protection. A portion of revenues from these activities is channelled back into local conservation funds, ensuring reinvestment in ecosystem management.

“Every project needs an economic backbone,” he noted. “Otherwise, when external funding ends, the activity ends. By reinvesting part of the profits into community conservation, we create a self-sustaining cycle.” Former poachers, he added, have become beekeepers and wildlife guides, demonstrating how economic incentives can transform attitudes and behaviours.

Insurances Schemes as a Finance Instrument for Biodiversity Conservation

Participants explored whether insurance schemes could play a role in supporting biodiversity conservation in Central Asia. It was noted that BIOFIN Kyrgyzstan is not yet working with insurance-based mechanisms, and although state insurance companies operate in the country, they currently do not offer products tailored to biodiversity conservation.

Panellists highlighted that, globally, insurance is increasingly being used to mitigate human–wildlife conflict—for example, compensation schemes for elephant-related damages in Sri Lanka or for big cat incidents in parts of Latin America, where households receive support following verified cases. While no comparable instruments exist in the Kyrgyz Republic at present, participants agreed that such schemes hold considerable potential for future development in the region.

Toward Blended and Regional Financing Models

Dr **Koustubh Sharma**, International Coordinator of the Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Programme (GSLEP), provided a regional and global perspective. He discussed the growing relevance of blended finance models that combine public, private, and philanthropic capital. Drawing parallels with India’s corporate social responsibility (CSR) legislation, which channels 2% of company profits into social and environmental projects, he suggested exploring similar policy frameworks in Central Asia.

Dr Sharma also outlined GSLEP’s vision for a Central Asian Resilience and Conservation Fund, which could unite multiple initiatives under one platform - including the proposed Kyrgyz Trust Fund, BioFIN, and CMS-related mechanisms - to mobilise diverse sources of capital. He highlighted the success of small endowments supporting ranger programmes, noting that such models, if scaled, could provide reliable long-term funding for conservation.

He concluded that "true sustainability lies in turning conservation into a value proposition - one that blends economic, ecological, and cultural assets."

Discussion: Bridging Policy and Practice

The panel discussion underscored the need for enabling legal and policy frameworks to accommodate emerging financial tools. Participants agreed that many countries face regulatory barriers to implementing instruments such as biodiversity credits or payments for ecosystem services. **Ms Kochkorbaeva** confirmed that Kyrgyzstan's Trust Fund aims to serve as a national platform to pilot and adapt such instruments, providing both grant and investment modalities.

Questions from the audience focused on the role of insurance in biodiversity financing, the use of ISO biodiversity standards, and the challenge of overcoming vested interests that resist subsidy reform or environmental taxation. **Ms Kochkorbaeva** acknowledged that political will and transparent communication are essential: "When proposing change, you must account for every stakeholder's interest. Solutions work only when benefits are visible and fairly distributed."

Emerging Recommendations

The session concluded with a set of draft recommendations to guide regional action and investment planning:

- **Pilot innovative financial instruments** such as biodiversity credits, green bonds, and payments for ecosystem services, following feasibility assessments in each country.
- **Embed biodiversity and climate financing** into national budgets and sectoral strategies, ensuring long-term institutional sustainability.
- Strengthen public–private partnerships and community-based enterprises that align livelihood generation with ecosystem protection.
- **Leverage international platforms** including the GEF, Green Climate Fund, EU Global Gateway, and bilateral donors to scale up CAMCA results.
- **Promote blended finance models** that combine public, private, and philanthropic funding under transparent, accountable governance.

The discussion closed with consensus that sustaining the CAMCA project's legacy depends on embedding its financial logic into national systems. As one participant summarised, "the next phase of conservation in Central Asia must be bankable - not in rhetoric, but in structure."

Summary of Parallel Session Outcomes

(16:30-16:50)

Moderated by Mr Matthias Jurek, UNEP Vienna

At the close of the day's technical sessions, rapporteurs from each of the four parallel discussions summarised the discussions and recommendations. These summaries demonstrated strong convergence across themes: the need for community inclusion, regional coordination, sustainable financing, and integration of climate and biodiversity priorities into national policy frameworks.

Session 1 – Community Engagement in Climate-Resilient Wildlife Management

Reporting on the first session, Mr **Murat Jumashev** highlighted that effective conservation in Central Asia depends on empowering local communities as full partners in managing natural resources. Recommendations included:

- Establishing **continuous dialogue platforms** between government, business, and community actors to build trust and cooperation.
- Developing **transparent benefit-sharing mechanisms** from the use of natural resources and ecosystem services.
- Promoting **joint management models** that balance the interests of the state, private sector, and local communities.
- Creating **incentive schemes for local conservation leadership**, such as annual recognition awards for successful community initiatives.
- Documenting and **communicating experiences internationally** with community-led protected areas and *Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs)* to inform national approaches.

The group emphasized that long-term project sustainability requires combining training, economic incentives, and local ownership to strengthen both conservation outcomes and community resilience. A complete list of recommendations that were evaluated by participants on Day 2 during interactive workshops is provided below.

Session 2 – Transboundary Corridors: A Closer Look

The second session focused on operationalising ecological connectivity across borders, using the proposed Kazakh–Kyrgyz transboundary corridor as a case study. Mr **Maarten Hofman** summarised the discussion, noting that governance systems, legal definitions, and management frameworks differ across Central Asian countries, yet the ecological challenges they face are shared.

Participants agreed that the next steps should include:

- Develop a joint roadmap for establishing the corridor, guided by CAMCA, CMS, and the Argali Action Plan.
- Establish a joint working group of technical and policy specialists from both countries.
- Integrate community perspectives and sustainable land use into corridor design.
- Align infrastructure planning with ecological connectivity, ensuring coordination between biodiversity and transport authorities.
- Prepare joint funding proposals with CMS, UNEP, and development partners to support implementation, monitoring, and capacity-building.

The summary concluded that transboundary cooperation offers one of the most promising routes for strengthening regional ecological resilience. A complete list of recommendations that were evaluated by participants on Day 2 during interactive workshops is provided below.

Session 3 – From Local Assessments to National Policy

Mr **Mirzo Mirzoev** presented the outcomes of the third session, which examined how local climate and ecosystem assessments can inform national strategies. Participants agreed that tools such as Climate Crowd, Protected Area Vulnerability Assessment (PAVA), and integrated grazing management provide practical, scalable insights for adaptive management.

Recommendations included:

- Integrating community-based and scientific data into national policy frameworks.
- **Promoting cross-sectoral and cross-ministerial collaboration**-especially between environment, agriculture, and land management agencies-to embed climate resilience in planning processes.
- **Adapting assessment methodologies**, such as pasture carrying-capacity models, to fit national contexts.
- Securing funding from international sources to sustain the long-term application of these tools.

The summary stressed that local knowledge and participatory data collection should be institutionalised as part of national decision-making systems, ensuring that "science from the ground up" directly influences policy. A complete list of recommendations that were evaluated by participants on Day 2 during interactive workshops is provided below.

Session 4 – Financing Pathways for Wildlife and Climate Resilience

The fourth group, moderated by Ms **Fariza Adilbekova**, reported on financing solutions for biodiversity and climate adaptation. The panel reached consensus on five priority recommendations:

1. **Pilot innovative financial instruments**, including green bonds, biodiversity credits, and payments for ecosystem services, based on country-level feasibility studies.
2. **Integrate biodiversity and climate finance** into national budgets and infrastructure plans to ensure long-term stability.
3. **Support community-based enterprises** and public–private partnerships that generate income through sustainable tourism, regulated hunting, or ecosystem services.
4. **Strengthen collaboration** with businesses, development banks, and financial institutions to leverage biodiversity financing initiatives and attract new investments.
5. **Align new funding proposals** with global mechanisms such as the GEF, Green Climate Fund, and EU Global Gateway to expand the CAMCA project's legacy.

The discussion following the main presentations further explored practical issues in implementing sustainable finance mechanisms in Central Asia.

Participants discussed the **National Environmental Trust Fund** in Kyrgyzstan as a platform for developing and piloting new financial instruments, including biodiversity credits and blended finance schemes. Ms **Miragul Kochkorbaeva** explained that the fund would operate through multiple "windows"-a grant facility for conservation projects and an investment facility to test innovative mechanisms. She emphasised that "the Trust Fund is designed to support not only conservation projects but also create the institutional and legal conditions necessary for long-term biodiversity finance."

The dialogue also touched on **political and social resistance** to biodiversity financing reforms. In response to questions about opposition from resource-based industries, **Ms Kochkorbaeva** cited the BioFIN initiative's work on "greening subsidies" by identifying and redirecting environmentally harmful state support measures. She noted that some subsidies-such as VAT exemptions on imported pesticides-were counterproductive and had to be revised despite lobbying pressures (in line with KMGBF Target #18). Success, she said, depends on "political will, transparent communication, and fair compensation for groups that perceive themselves as losing out."

A third topic focused on insurance as a financial instrument for biodiversity conservation. While Kyrgyzstan currently lacks insurance products targeted at ecosystem protection, participants highlighted global examples, such as wildlife-conflict insurance schemes in Sri Lanka and Latin America, which compensate farmers for damages caused by wildlife. These models were seen as potential tools for reducing human–wildlife conflict in Central Asia, particularly if adapted through state-subsidised insurance programmes.

In her concluding remarks, **Ms Adilbekova** underlined that blended finance and trust funds must involve collaboration across public, private, and civil society sectors. She encouraged countries to prepare project proposals under major global initiatives-including the Global Environment Facility (GEF), Green Climate Fund (GCF), and the EU's Global Gateway Initiative-to scale up CAMCA results in alignment with regional priorities.

Innovation, transparency, and political commitment are essential to transforming conservation financing in the region from project-based to system-based sustainability. A complete list of recommendations that were evaluated by participants on Day 2 during interactive workshops is provided below.

Closing Reflections – Day 1

(16:50-17:00)

Delivered by Mr Matthias Jurek, UNEP Vienna

Concluding the first day of the Building Resilience for Wildlife and Communities in the Mountains of Central Asia conference, Mr **Matthias Jurek**, on behalf of UNEP, thanked participants for their active engagement and summarised the shared spirit emerging from the day's discussions.

He reflected that as the CAMCA project approaches its final year of implementation; it has already achieved significant milestones and built a strong foundation for upscaling across Central Asia. The day's sessions-spanning community engagement, ecological corridors, data integration, and financing-had demonstrated how interconnected these themes are. "There are a lot of common messages across all four groups," he noted, highlighting that resilience requires both "national-level commitment for upscaling and local-level testing to build trust and solutions with communities."

Mr Jurek emphasised that progress depends on continued political willingness at both national and regional levels to carry forward the project's results. He encouraged participants to maintain CAMCA's collaborative spirit, describing it as neither top-down nor bottom-up, but "a true partnership across all levels-local, national, and transboundary."

Looking ahead, he invited delegates to bring the same momentum into the second day, which would focus on national pathways and opportunities for scaling tested approaches. He also shared logistical updates for the following day, including the afternoon's International Snow Leopard Day celebration, co-hosted with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Ecology and the Presidential Office.

In closing, **Mr Jurek** expressed gratitude to all speakers, organisers, and the CAMP Alatoo team for their efforts in coordinating the day's complex programme. He wished participants a restful evening, remarking that the day's exchanges had been "enriching, inspiring, and a clear testament to the power of cooperation across the mountains of Central Asia."

Day 2: Vision 2030 - A Resilient Central Asia for Wildlife & People

(09:45–10:45, Day 2)

Session 1: Opportunities for Change

Moderated by Dr Nikhil Advani, WWF-US
The second day of the conference was dedicated to formulating national and regional recommendations based on the three technical sessions from Day 1. It began with an interactive session that invited three country groups (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan), under the guidance of designated moderators, to identify opportunities for scaling up the CAMCA project's results within their countries. The purpose was to bridge the technical discussions from Day 1 with country-led action planning, focusing on feasible policy, management, and financing measures that could sustain and expand climate-resilient conservation efforts across Central Asia.

Introduction

Opening the session, **Dr Nikhil Advani** recapped the themes of the previous day's parallel sessions, noting that while the discussions had spanned community engagement, transboundary connectivity, financing, and local assessments, a strong thread of interconnection united them all. He explained that the morning would begin with short presentations from the moderators of three sessions-community engagement, sustainable financing, and local assessments-before participants divided into country groups to identify national priorities for implementation.

Dr Advani emphasised that this next stage was intended to turn recommendations into practical next steps: "Each country will now decide which of these approaches feels most relevant and actionable and outline how they could be advanced at home."

Country Group Work

Participants divided into national groups-Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Tajikistan-to identify the most relevant recommendations for their contexts and to outline how they might be incorporated into policy or project proposals. The group work served as a bridge between regional dialogue and country-specific planning, setting the stage for actionable follow-up after the project concludes.

Group Facilitators:

- KAZAKHSTAN
  Moderator: Artyom Khrokov – Notetaker: Fariza Adilbekova

- KRYGYZSTAN
  Moderator: Murat Zhumashev– Notetaker: Azamat Isakov

- TAJIKISTAN
  Moderator: Mirzonazar Mirzoev – Notetaker: Gulsara

Continuing the Conversation from Parallel Session 1: "Community Engagement in Climate Resilient Wildlife Management"

Mr **Murat Jumashev**, moderator of the session on community engagement, summarised the seven recommendations agreed on the previous day. He noted that community participation is not merely a social consideration but a cornerstone of effective climate-resilient wildlife management.

Summary Recommendations presented to participants:

1. Recognise and formalize community-based management models – including co-management, community-managed protected areas, and OECMs – within national legislation.
2. Promote partnership-based governance models that balance the interests of government, business, and local communities, strengthening trust and shared responsibility in nature conservation.
3. Document and share successful community-based natural resource management practices, including international experience in establishing and managing community-led protected areas and other participatory approaches, for application across Central Asian countries.
4. Invest in capacity building and training for local communities to enable their active participation in monitoring, decision-making, and adaptive management. Introduce incentive programs recognizing the best-performing communities and successful conservation practices.
5. Establish sustainable and transparent financial mechanisms – such as national and trust funds, and partnerships with donors and businesses – to ensure long-term community participation and effective use of conservation resources.
6. Ensure fair distribution of income derived from the use of natural resources and ecosystem services, creating systems of shared benefits and ongoing dialogue between government, business, and local communities.
7. Develop nature-based income opportunities – such as ecotourism, environmentally friendly production, collection and processing of non-timber forest products, and payments for ecosystem services – so that communities receive fair returns for their contribution to nature conservation.

Mr Jumashev concluded by stressing that these approaches have proven effective across pilot sites in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, but their continuation depends on policy recognition and long-term funding.

Country groups were then invited to assess the feasibility of these recommendations in their respective national contexts, identify priorities, and outline the next steps needed to pilot or expand them.

KAZKAHSTAN

Summary

Participants noted that community-based management approaches in Kazakhstan are still in the formative stage and largely implemented through isolated pilot initiatives. The group highlighted the importance of introducing legal mechanisms for co-management of protected areas and other natural territories, while ensuring transparency and participation of local communities in decision-making. Strengthening institutional partnerships between the government, business, and communities was identified as key to building trust and shared responsibility in conservation efforts. Participants emphasized the potential of developing nature-based enterprises, such as ecotourism and ecosystem service payments, as well as the need for clear benefit-sharing and financial mechanisms to sustain community participation.

Detailed Recommendations

Introducing community-based management mechanisms into Kazakhstan's legal and institutional frameworks.

The goal is to ensure active participation of local residents in managing protected areas and to promote transparent data exchange between protected area authorities and local communities. Promising types of territories for inclusion in community-based management include protected areas, forestry's, forest protection agencies, and hunting enterprises. Promising mechanisms include establishing coordination (public) councils for protected area management, expanding local participation in hunting enterprises, and enabling direct involvement of community members as staff or co-managers.

To advance these mechanisms, it is necessary to review the existing Forest Code (which contains relevant but under-implemented provisions) and to study Kyrgyzstan's experience in engaging local communities in protected area management. (*Linked to Session Recommendation No. 1*).

Expanding partnership-based governance models for conservation and natural resource management.

At present, there are no clearly defined governance models for such partnerships. Coordination (public) councils could serve this function by expanding their mandate to include oversight of ecosystem services and community engagement. This may require revising their structure and proposing legislative amendments to formalize participatory management approaches. (*Linked to Session Recommendation No. 2*).

Documenting and sharing successful community-based natural resource management practices.

Such documentation is feasible but requires designating a responsible institution - either a government agency or a qualified NGO - to collect and disseminate successful cases and lessons learned, including relevant international examples.
(*Linked to Session Recommendation No. 3*).

Developing capacity-building and incentive mechanisms for local communities.

Implementation could be supported through grant mechanisms - both state-funded and international. Although Kazakhstan provides grants through national programs, they currently lack focus on community training and capacity building. It is recommended to explore options for dedicated grant lines for these purposes. Potential partners include the National Chamber of Entrepreneurs “Atameken”, which could facilitate engagement of the private sector in supporting local initiatives.
(*Linked to Session Recommendation No.4*).

Establishing transparent and sustainable financial mechanisms for long-term community participation.

Existing targeted investment instruments, such as forest-climate projects, could be adapted for community participation. Promising approaches include integrating environmental protection measures into Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) plans and assigning their implementation to local community representatives, coordinated by NGOs and Atameken. (*Linked to Session Recommendation No. 5)*

Ensuring fair benefit-sharing from the use of natural resources and ecosystem services.

The group highlighted the problem of misaligned stakeholder interests. Potential solutions include revising ISO and corporate responsibility standards to incorporate reinvestment and benefit-sharing with local communities and involving public foundations to develop transparent working mechanisms.
(*Linked to Session Recommendation No. 6*).

Developing nature-based income opportunities for local communities.

Currently, alternative income initiatives (e.g., in protected areas and hunting grounds) are supported by government, donor, and private funds but remain fragmented and insufficiently coordinated. Future efforts should focus on establishing targeted subsidies and benefits, developing PES (Payments for Ecosystem Services) mechanisms, and using successful models such as the "One Village – One Product" clusters promoted by Atameken, while creating conditions for the introduction of innovative technologies. (*Linked to Session Recommendation No. 7*).

KYRGYZSTAN

Summary

Participants noted that community-based approaches to biodiversity conservation are already functioning in the Kyrgyz Republic and supported by a solid legal framework, except for the co-management of Protected Areas. The group discussed the need to strengthen enabling legislation, clarify the concept of OECMs, and provide methodological guidance for engaging local communities more systematically.

Detailed Recommendations

Introducing co-management mechanisms into the legal framework of the Kyrgyz Republic's Protected Areas system.

Although co-management is already applied in practice, it is not yet legally recognized. Participants recommended formalizing this approach through amendments to existing legislation and related bylaws to ensure long-term legitimacy and accountability.
(*Linked to Session Recommendation No. 1).*

Develop official guidelines on community engagement in biodiversity conservation.

While various forms of community participation already exist, they are often implemented inconsistently. Clear national guidelines could help systematize existing practices, provide criteria for engagement, and clarify the roles and responsibilities of local stakeholders under current legislation. (*Linked to Session Recommendation No. 4).*

Document and analyse existing models of community participation and co-management.

A comprehensive review of existing approaches - both successful and challenging - would allow identification of best practices and areas requiring improvement. The results could serve as a basis for policy refinement and future programming. In addition, integrating these cases into global knowledge-sharing platforms, such as the Panorama Solutions platform, would help ensure broader visibility, peer learning, and replication of effective community-based models across regions.
(*Linked to Session Recommendation No. 3).*

Prioritize the introduction and contextualization of the OECM concept.

Since the concept of Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) is relatively new for the Kyrgyz Republic, it is recommended to prioritize awareness-raising and technical adaptation of this concept to the national context. (*Linked to Session Recommendation No. 1).*

Clarify criteria for recognizing OECMs and integrate them into national legislation.

Currently, there is limited understanding among government institutions regarding what qualifies as an OECM. The group recommended conducting an inventory of existing legislation and, if necessary, developing new legal provisions or the adaptation of existing international guidelines to national contexts to introduce OECMs.
(*Linked to Session Recommendation No. 1).*

Establish a national working group on OECMs.

To coordinate the process of adapting and institutionalizing OECMs in Kyrgyzstan, the creation of an interagency and multi-stakeholder working group was recommended, involving the Ministry of Natural Resources, NGOs, academia, and community representatives. (*Linked to Session Recommendation No. 2).*

TAJIKISTAN

Summary

Participants acknowledged that while community-based approaches to natural resource management hold significant relevance for Tajikistan, previous attempts to implement such models (e.g., hunting concessions) faced challenges due to insufficient legal frameworks and governmental support. Key recommendations focused on the urgent need to develop and enforce robust legal mechanisms that not only recognize but actively empower and protect local communities and their rights in conservation. Furthermore, discussions highlighted the importance of fostering participatory platforms through pilot initiatives, such as the Yagnob National Park advisory board, and ensuring governmental coordination to scale these models. Emphasized was the critical role of a long-term program for systematically studying, documenting, and adapting best practices. Finally, integrating biodiversity conservation and environmental education into school curricula and making it a mandatory component of local development plans, with vital NGO involvement, was considered necessary.

Detailed Recommendations

Strengthen and formalize community-based conservation models with robust legal and governmental backing.

Although there have been models where local communities rationally used natural resources – such as hunting concessions managed by local communities – this model did not fully take root due to a lack of sufficient legal framework and state support. Such models are highly relevant in the context of Tajikistan; therefore, for them to function effectively, it is essential to develop and enforce legal frameworks that not only recognize but actively empower and protect community-based management models, including community-managed protected areas, co-management arrangements, and Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) within national legislation. (*Linked to Session Recommendation No. 1).*

Securing Community Resource Rights and State Protection.

To successfully enhance local communities' participation in conservation, it is essential to clearly define and legally recognize land tenure and natural resource use rights, granting a significant portion of these rights to local institutions. The state must provide priority support and protection to such institutions against more powerful commercial entities competing for the same resources, offering legal and expert assistance where necessary. (*Linked to Session Recommendation No. 1).*

Fostering Participatory Platforms: State Coordination and Pilot Development.

Despite the mention of cooperation with local communities in the Law on Protected Areas, effective mechanisms for participatory models are currently lacking in Tajikistan. For the successful implementation of such approaches, working examples are critically important. Within the framework of the CAMCA project, a pilot initiative has been established, which is called the Yagnob National Park advisory board, which brings representatives of local communities and government bodies together to support Park management, so a foundation is being laid to demonstrate the effectiveness of such platforms. It will take time to evaluate their results.

In a broader sense, to scale up participatory management and partnerships, it is necessary for the government to take on a coordinating role, actively creating and supporting such platforms for dialogue and cooperation between government agencies, local communities, scientific institutions, and the private sector in the planning and implementation of conservation activities.
(*Linked to Session Recommendation No. 2).*

Establishing a Long-Term Program for Learning and Disseminating CBNRM Best Practices.

Indeed, systematic study, documentation, and dissemination of successful practices are crucial for activating and sustaining community participation in natural resource management. Best working examples should be applied, and the most suitable practices should be integrated into a long-term national development program, which is usually led by a dedicated working group responsible for researching, analysing, and adapting relevant international and regional best practices.
(*Linked to Session Recommendation No. 3).*

Integrating Biodiversity Conservation in education and local governance.

Fundamentally, environmental education and capacity building should be formally integrated into school curricula to foster long-term environmental stewardship. Concurrently, biodiversity conservation and sustainable natural resource management must become a prioritized and mandatory component of all municipal and regional development plans, where local NGOs are pivotal in facilitating these efforts, offering expertise in skill development, training, and technical support.
(*Linked to Session Recommendation No. 4).*

Continuing the Conversation from Parallel Session 3: "From Local Assessments to National Policy"

Mr **Mirzo Mirzoev**, moderator of the session on local assessments and national policy integration, presented the outcomes of the previous day's discussions on tools such as Climate Crowd, PAVA, and pasture management models.

Summary Recommendations presented to participants:

1. Integrate assessment results into national policy instruments. The findings from the project assessments should be incorporated into national strategies and policies to ensure that local-level data informs national decision-making.
2. Use PAVA, METT, and Climate Crowd together for comprehensive protected area management and planning. Combining these three tools ensures that management plans address both climate vulnerability and overall effectiveness while including community input.
3. Prioritize Intersectoral Coordination for Sustainable Pasture Management. Develop mechanisms for improved coordination between government agencies responsible for pasture management, forestry, water resources, tourism, and other relevant sectors. This could involve establishing interagency committees, developing joint management plans.
4. Integrate wildlife foraging needs into Pasture Management Plans. Ensure that all pasture management plans at the local and regional levels incorporate provisions for wildlife populations using the pasture carrying capacity assessment tools
5. Use the assessments to understand climate change impacts on local communities. The assessments provide valuable insights into how climate change affects livelihoods and ecosystems, helping to design more effective adaptation measures.
6. Incorporate community feedback into political and strategic documents. Engaging local communities and integrating their input will make policy measures more relevant, inclusive, and effective.
7. Use assessment results for sustainable pasture and land-use planning. Applying the data in land management helps balance ecological sustainability with the needs of local communities.

Mr Mirzoev concluded that these tools bridge scientific analysis and local practice, making climate resilience measurable and actionable: "When local observations and scientific data meet in the same plan, that's when management becomes truly adaptive."

Country groups were then invited to continue discussions as before - assessing the feasibility of applying recommendations and identifying priorities in their respective national contexts.

KAZKAHSTAN

Summary

Participants emphasized that assessment results and analytical tools developed under the CAMCA Project provide valuable data for improving the effectiveness of national strategies and land-use planning in Kazakhstan. However, they noted a persistent gap between local-level assessments and national decision-making frameworks. Strengthening coordination between sectors such as forestry, pastures, water management, and tourism is essential to ensure that data from local assessments can inform strategic planning. The group underlined the importance of adapting CAMCA tools - particularly PAVA, METT, and Climate Crowd - to national contexts, piloting them in key regions, and institutionalizing their use. They also stressed the need to integrate wildlife foraging needs into pasture management, to account for climate change impacts, and to involve communities more systematically in planning and monitoring processes.

Detailed Recommendations

Integrate local assessment results into national policy instruments.

To ensure that data generated at the local level informs national decision-making, it is recommended to develop a clear model for integrating assessment outcomes into state programmes and strategies. This includes linking local biodiversity and climate assessments with entrepreneurship development plans and community coordination councils. The proposal should be submitted to the authorized government body, with *NGOs and the National Chamber of Entrepreneurs "Atameken"* facilitating stakeholder engagement. This will help bridge the *existing gap between the scales of local assessments and national strategies. (Linked to Session Recommendation No. 1).*

Use PAVA, METT, and Climate Crowd tools jointly for comprehensive management and planning.

Kazakhstan already applies *interdepartmental coordination mechanisms* for protected areas, including the use of METT. It is recommended to pilot the combined use of PAVA, METT, and Climate Crowd tools to create an integrated approach that covers management effectiveness, climate vulnerability, and community participation. After pilot testing (1–2 years), the results should be submitted to the competent authorities for approval and nationwide adoption. *(Linked to Session Recommendation No. 2).*

Strengthen intersectoral coordination for sustainable pasture and land management.

To improve coordination among agencies responsible for forestry, pastures, water resources, and tourism, the group proposed establishing a *national interagency committee* or joint planning framework to align sectoral objectives. Existing *Basin Councils* for water management were highlighted as a practical model that could be replicated for pasture and land-use coordination at the government level. *(Linked to Session Recommendation No. 3).*

Integrate wildlife foraging needs into pasture management plans.

It is recommended to amend the *Law on Pastures* to include explicit provisions on accounting for the foraging needs of wild species. This should be supported by the development of a *methodology for assessing and documenting wildlife use of pastures*, with results incorporated into pasture management plans. The approach can build on existing regional experience where local communities already participate in pasture planning and data collection. *(Linked to Session Recommendation No. 4).*

Use assessment results to strengthen local climate-adaptation measures.

Assessment data should serve as a foundation for local adaptation planning by identifying how climate change affects livelihoods and ecosystems. It is recommended to include the requirement to *"take climate change into account"* to the rule of "whoever developed it implements it." in official planning procedures and to ensure that local authorities use assessment results to design and implement climate-resilient land-use measures. *(Linked to Session Recommendation No. 5).*

Institutionalize mechanisms for community participation and feedback.

Kazakhstan has existing *public participation channels* such as maslikhats and coordination councils, which can be strengthened to ensure meaningful community involvement in policy development. The group recommended clarifying how community feedback is collected, considered, and integrated into strategic and policy documents, ensuring transparency and accountability of the process. *(Linked to Session Recommendation No. 6).*

Apply assessment results for sustainable pasture and land-use planning.

Existing legal frameworks already refer to *sustainable natural-resource use*; however, operational guidance is needed to ensure that assessment data inform land-use and pasture planning in practice. The mechanism for incorporating results should follow the approach outlined in Recommendation No. 1, ensuring consistency across local, regional, and national planning levels. *(Linked to Session Recommendation No. 7).*

KYRGYZSTAN

Summary

Participants highlighted the importance of institutionalizing and scaling up CAMCA tools - particularly PAVA and the pasture carrying capacity assessment as practical instruments for improving land-use and conservation planning. The group also emphasized the need to integrate ecological corridor regimes into national land-management policies and to strengthen intersectoral coordination.

Detailed Recommendations

Finalize and institutionalize the PAVA tool as an official methodological guidance.

Participants recommended completing the PAVA (Protected Area Vulnerability Assessment) tool as a user-friendly manual, clearly defining its objectives and scope. Following finalization, the tool could be submitted to the Ministry of Natural Resources for consideration and potential approval by ministerial decree for national application. (*Linked to Session Recommendation No. 1 - Integrate assessment results into national policy instruments).*

Develop and standardize a tool for pasture-capacity and grazing-impact assessment.

The group emphasized the need for a practical tool to monitor grazing intensity and its ecological impact particularly within ecological corridors and adjacent pastures. Once developed and tested, the tool should be reviewed by the Ministry and considered for official adoption for use in all regions containing ecological corridors. (*Linked to Session Recommendation No. 4 - Integrate wildlife foraging needs into pasture management plans).*

Integrate ecological corridor protection regimes into sectoral land-management plans.

To maintain landscape connectivity and prevent habitat degradation, participants recommended that ecological-corridor regimes be integrated into regional and sectoral plans for land use, forestry, and pasture management. This would help align conservation and economic objectives at the planning stage. (*Linked to Session Recommendation No. 3 - Prioritize intersectoral coordination for sustainable pasture management).*

TAJIKISTAN

Summary

Tajikistan's discussions highlighted the need to bridge the gap between valuable local-level data and national policies. Key areas identified for improvement include centralizing and systematically utilizing environmental project data, institutionalizing proven assessment tools within the protected area system, and strengthening intersectoral coordination for sustainable pasture management, including updating the relevant legal framework. Furthermore, participants highlighted the importance of piloting and integrating specific tools to assess and incorporate wildlife foraging needs into management plans, ensuring that local data and effective methodologies directly inform and enhance national conservation and land-use policies.

Detailed Recommendations

Implementing evidence-based environmental policy by centralizing and utilizing project data.

Numerous environmental projects produce valuable information and data through various assessments and studies. The Committee for Environmental Protection (CEP) is uniquely positioned to capitalize on this, as its project coordination department possesses the mandate to request and access data from all projects implemented nationwide. This unit should proactively utilize its authority to establish a centralized system for the systematic collection, interpretation, and expert evaluation of these findings, ensuring their effective integration into national environmental policies and development programs. This approach will foster evidence-based decision-making, prevent data duplication, and maximize the impact of conservation efforts.
(Linked to Session Recommendation No. 1).

Institutionalizing Assessment Tools for Protected Area Management.

These tools must be fully integrated into the national protected area system, with clear legal approval, to mandate their regular application by Protected Area inspectors. This will enable not only better planning but also regular, data-driven evaluation of management performance and adaptive adjustments.
(Linked to Session Recommendation No. 2).

Strengthening Intersectoral Coordination and Legal Framework for Sustainable Pasture Management.

Pasture degradation is a pressing issue in Tajikistan, exacerbated by a lack of intersectoral collaboration. To address this, robust coordination for sustainable pasture use must be prioritized and institutionalized. Crucially, the Pasture Law requires an update to explicitly mandate and define effective mechanisms for intersectoral collaboration among government agencies responsible for pasture management such as Ministry of Agriculture Forestry Agency, Committee for Environmental Protection, Tourism, and other relevant sectors. This legal framework should create interagency committees, joint management plans, and facilitate integrated decision-making processes. *(Linked to Session Recommendation No. 3).*

Piloting and Integrating Wildlife Foraging Needs Assessments in Conservation Areas.

In Tajikistan, integration of wildlife foraging needs into pasture management can be done in conservation areas such as protected areas and forestry land, and it requires a practical, evidence-based approach. The assessment method from the CAMCA project developed by Camp Alatoo seems to be practical and effective. This tool must be piloted and tested in Tajikistan's PAs and other conserved areas where pasture use takes place. If effective, it should become standard practice, helping management identify and include wildlife foraging needs in their plans, thus balancing conservation with sustainable pasture use. *(Linked to Session Recommendation No. 4 & 7).*

Continuing the Conversation from Parallel Session 4: "Financing Pathways for Wildlife and Climate Resilience in Central Asia"

Building on the previous day's session on Sustainable Financing, Ms **Fariza Adilbekova** guided participants through a process to identify feasible financing and policy pathways to scale up climate-resilient conservation in each participating country.

Ms Adilbekova began by revisiting the regional recommendations that emerged from the Sustainable Financing for Wildlife and Climate Resilience session on Day 1, noting that financial innovation is a prerequisite for sustaining the momentum achieved by CAMCA. **Ms Adilbekova** stressed that while innovative finance mechanisms can create new opportunities, their success depends on initial investment and institutional capacity. "For these mechanisms to work," she said, "we need both the policy frameworks that make them legal and the start-up funding to make them practical." She noted that early-stage capital could be provided through collaboration with national development banks, private investors, and multilateral partners.

The discussion reaffirmed five regionally agreed-upon financing priorities that could underpin the next phase of biodiversity and climate action in Central Asia:

1. Pilot new financial instruments such as green bonds, biodiversity credits, and payments for ecosystem services based on feasibility studies to assess their potential and applicability in the Central Asian context.
2. Embed biodiversity and climate financing into national budgets, development, and infrastructure plans to ensure long-term sustainability.
3. Support community-based enterprises and public–private partnerships that generate income through sustainable tourism, regulated hunting, or ecosystem service markets.
4. Strengthen collaboration with the private sector, development banks, and global financial institutions to leverage their biodiversity financing programmes and attract new investments.
5. Position future proposals under global initiatives such as the GEF, Green Climate Fund, and EU Global Gateway to scale up CAMCA results and ensure alignment with regional priorities.

Ms Adilbekova emphasised that these recommendations were designed not as abstract goals but as entry points for action, enabling countries to embed CAMCA's results into long-term national strategies. "This is how we ensure that the results of this project live on-through policy, investment, and the continued leadership of each of your institutions." She highlighted that each country delegation would assess the practicality of these proposals in their own national contexts and define follow-up actions to support implementation.

KAZKAHSTAN

Summary

Participants noted that Kazakhstan already has several financial mechanisms relevant to biodiversity and climate initiatives, including green bonds and compensation payments under the Environmental Code. However, there is a need to develop methodologies, standards, and coordination mechanisms that would enable broader application of such tools. The group emphasized the importance of integrating biodiversity and climate financing into national budgets and infrastructure programmes, while promoting public-private partnerships and community-based enterprises focused on sustainable tourism, agriculture, and ecosystem-service markets. Strengthening collaboration with development banks and international funds such as the GEF, Green Climate Fund, and EU Global Gateway was identified as a key opportunity for scaling up CAMCA results and aligning with regional priorities.

Detailed Recommendations

Pilot innovative financing instruments for biodiversity and ecosystem services.

Kazakhstan already applies *green bonds* and has legal provisions for *payments for ecosystem services* within its Environmental Code. However, clear methodologies and implementing institutions are lacking. It is recommended to develop and approve national methodological guidance for applying these instruments and to identify an implementing agency. *Additional opportunities include introducing compensation payments for construction and operation under Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) frameworks and scaling up successful pilot projects,* such as the ecosystem-service payment mechanism implemented by *Samruk-Kazyna JSC*, which regulates water volumes at the Kapchagay HPP for drip irrigation.
(Linked to Session Recommendation No. 1).

Embed biodiversity and climate financing into national budgets and development programmes.

Environmental initiatives are already included in the *Biodiversity Conservation Concept* of Kazakhstan, yet scaling up funding requires a *more systematic approach* to identifying priority regions and incorporating them into development and infrastructure plans. It is recommended to expand the practice of environmentally oriented subsidies and grants to support *sustainable agriculture and land-use initiatives,* for example, promoting cultivation of climate-resilient or environmentally sustainable crops such as hemp. *(Linked to Session Recommendation No. 2).*

Support community-based enterprises and public-private partnerships generating sustainable income.

Government and private-sector programmes already provide some forms of enterprise support, but *targeted mechanisms for community-based initiatives remain limited.* It is recommended to develop consulting and training programmes coordinated by *Atameken*, to guide local enterprises in accessing subsidies, preparing business plans, and ensuring that their operations align with biodiversity and climate objectives. A list of *priority business activities* (e.g., sustainable tourism, beekeeping, ecosystem-service markets) should be developed to focus resources on viable and climate-resilient livelihoods. *(Linked to Session Recommendation No. 3).*

Strengthen collaboration with businesses, development banks, and global financial institutions.

Kazakhstan has extensive experience in implementing *internationally financed environmental projects*, creating a strong basis for expanding partnerships with development banks, global funds, and private investors. The group recommended *developing coordination mechanisms* between government agencies, financial institutions, and NGOs to leverage existing biodiversity-finance programmes and attract new investment portfolios. *(Linked to Session Recommendation No. 4).*

Position future proposals under global and regional funding initiatives.

Participants highlighted the need to *continue developing and submitting project proposals* to major global funding programmes including the *GEF, Green Climate Fund, EU Global Gateway,* and emerging regional facilities such as the *Korea Foundation.* Strengthening inter-institutional cooperation and maintaining strong project performance records were identified as prerequisites for attracting future investments and ensuring continuity of CAMCA-related initiatives.
(Linked to Session Recommendation No. 5).

KYRGYZSTAN

Summary

Participants emphasized that biodiversity finance should become an integral part of development planning and project budgeting. The group highlighted the importance of piloting ecosystem service payment schemes, supporting biodiversity-friendly agricultural practices, and exploring insurance mechanisms for human–wildlife conflict mitigation.

Detailed Recommendations

Integrate biodiversity-related scientific research funding into project budgets.

The group stressed that financing scientific and applied research on biodiversity conservation should be a mandatory and integral component of all project budgets in the environmental and natural-resource sectors. (*Linked to Session Recommendation No. 2 - Embed biodiversity and climate financing into national budgets).*

Prioritize land-use incentives for biodiversity-friendly practices.

Participants recommended that when allocating land for horticulture or agricultural use, priority should be given to land users who commit to biodiversity-friendly measures such as planting native or endemic tree and shrub species that enhance habitat quality. (*Linked to Session Recommendation No. 3 - Support community-based enterprises and public-private partnerships).*

Explore the establishment of an insurance mechanism for farmers affected by human–wildlife conflicts.

Given increasing cases of wildlife damage to livestock, the group proposed conducting a feasibility study to assess options for compensation or insurance schemes and piloting such mechanisms in selected regions. (*Linked to Session Recommendation No. 1 - Pilot new financing instruments, such as green bonds, biodiversity credits, or payments for ecosystem services).*

Pilot Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) mechanisms in the Kyrgyz Republic.

Participants recommended testing ecosystem-service payment schemes at the local level to assess their practicality, economic efficiency, and acceptance by communities. The results could inform broader national application. (*Linked to Session Recommendation No. - Pilot new financing instruments, such as payments for ecosystem services).*

***Introducing concessional loans for farmers adopting biodiversity-friendly practices*.**

The group suggested developing low-interest or preferential loan programs for farmers implementing biodiversity-supportive measures such as reforestation with native species, soil conservation, or sustainable grazing. (*Linked to Session Recommendation No. 4 - Strengthen collaboration with businesses and financial institutions).*

TAJIKISTAN

Summary

For Tajikistan, discussions emphasized the critical importance of diversifying and strengthening financing for biodiversity conservation. Participants emphasized the potential of sustainable tourism and well-regulated hunting as significant funding sources, stressing the need for transparent mechanisms to ensure these funds are effectively reinvested into conservation and community development, with active support for community-based enterprises and partnerships. To attract further investment, it was deemed crucial to enhance national capacity for developing compelling project proposals and managing funds according to international standards. Additionally, a strategic and proactive engagement plan with key financial partners, including development banks, global environmental funds, and the private sector, is necessary to secure new investments and align them with national conservation priorities.

Detailed Recommendations

Ensuring community benefits and conservation reinvestment from sustainable tourism and hunting.

Tajikistan possesses significant potential for sustainable tourism and well-regulated trophy hunting, activities capable of generating substantial funds for conservation, and which are already being utilized to some extent. To ensure these benefits effectively reach local communities, actively supporting community-based enterprises and public-private partnerships in these areas is vital. Crucially, transparent and robust mechanisms are essential to ensure that generated funds are effectively reinvested directly into conservation activities and community development initiatives that foster ecological health. Achieving this demands targeted governmental and stakeholder support, including strong legal and regulatory frameworks, dedicated community capacity building, facilitated market access, and a clear, mandatory conservation component integrated into all such ventures. *(Linked to Session Recommendation No. 3)*

Improve the capacity for proposal development and fund management.

We should invest in training and capacity building for relevant government agencies, local communities, and NGOs in developing compelling, feasible proposals that meet international standards. This includes expertise in financial planning, logical framework development, monitoring and evaluation, and reporting requirements of global financial institutions. *(Linked to Session Recommendation No. 5)*

Actively engage with key financial partners.

Develop a strategic plan for relevant agencies to regularly engage with specific development banks (e.g., World Bank, EBRD, ADB), global environmental funds (e.g., GEF, Green Climate Fund), and private sector organizations to establish partnerships and secure funding for biodiversity conservation projects. This engagement should focus on aligning project goals with the National Biodiversity Conservation priorities. This involves active participation in their events, workshops, and bilateral meetings to present national priorities and promote investment opportunities.
(Linked to Session Recommendation No. 4)

The CAMCA Statement: Working on Climate-Proof Protected Area Systems with Community Support & Sustainable Finance

(12:00–12:20, Day 2)

Facilitated by Ms Clara Nobbe (CMS Secretariat) and Dr Nikhil Advani (WWF-US)

The closing plenary of the CAMCA Project Conference brought together participants to endorse a single unifying message: the need to strengthen climate-resilient protected area systems through community engagement, climate-smart tools, and sustainable financing.

Ms **Clara Nobbe**, Head of the Terrestrial Species Team at the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), commended the countries and partners for their commitment and collaboration throughout the project. She emphasised that the CAMCA initiative had produced a range of practical instruments-such as the Protected Area Vulnerability Assessment (PAVA) tool and integrated community-based management models-that now serve as tested examples for scaling up across the wider CMS network.

Ms Nobbe noted that these results have significance beyond Central Asia. She announced that the upcoming **15th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species (COP15)**, scheduled for **March 2026 in Campo Grande, Brazil**, will include a resolution on climate change and decisions related to pastoralism. She encouraged the three participating countries to share their achievements from CAMCA at this global forum. "There is great potential for your work here to shape global policy-by integrating the CAMCA experience into the CMS climate change resolution and the forthcoming decision on pastoralism," she said.

She proposed that tools such as PAVA could be **piloted in other regions** and that the evidence and methods developed through CAMCA could inform **CMS Parties worldwide** on how to make protected area systems more climate-resilient, community-supported, and financially sustainable. "The lessons you have generated are not just relevant for Central Asia-they are globally significant," **Ms Nobbe** concluded.

Following her remarks, Dr **Nikhil Advani** thanked all participants on behalf of the organising partners. He confirmed that the **draft CAMCA Statement**-reflecting the collective recommendations and commitments discussed during the conference-had been circulated by email for final input. He invited participants to send any final feedback and confirmed that the statement would serve as the project's consolidated outcome, guiding the next phase of collaboration between the CAMCA countries and their partners.

In closing, **Dr Advani** invited Mr **Maarten Hofman** and **Ms Nobbe** to officially adjourn the meeting, thanking participants for their engagement and cooperation. Delegates were then informed that the next event, celebrating International Snow Leopard Day, would follow lunch.

Closing of the Conference

(12:20–12:30, Day 2)

Remarks by Mr Maarten Hofman, UNEP Vienna

Bringing the two-day conference to a close, Mr **Maarten Hofman**, expressed his gratitude to all participants for their commitment, insights, and contributions to the Building Resilience for Wildlife and Communities in the Mountains of Central Asia event.

He reflected on the meeting as *"a very successful and concrete exchange where we managed to get to the core issues that the CAMCA project set out to address."* Over the course of two days, participants engaged deeply with practical solutions linking biodiversity conservation, climate resilience, and community wellbeing. **Mr Hofman** commended the collaborative spirit that had characterised every session, describing it as "evidence that this project is not only producing results but also shaping a regional culture of cooperation and innovation."

On behalf of UNEP, **Mr Hofman** extended special thanks to the **Government of the Kyrgyz Republic** and the **Ministry of Natural Resources, Ecology and Technical Supervision** for co-hosting the event and for partnering in the upcoming International Snow Leopard Day celebrations. He also acknowledged the **Government of Germany** and its **International Climate Initiative (IKI)** for their steadfast support and funding of the CAMCA project and expressed appreciation to all project partners for their dedication over the past years.

He reiterated UNEP's commitment to continue supporting the three participating countries-Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Tajikistan-in advancing the approaches piloted under CAMCA, particularly on ecological connectivity, climate adaptation, and sustainable finance. *"Bringing these topics forward at the national level takes persistence and vision,"* he said. *"You've demonstrated both, and UNEP will continue to stand alongside you in taking this work further."*

Mr **Matthias Jurek** then thanked the organisers, facilitators, and the translation team for their professionalism and contribution to the event's success. He closed the conference with an invitation for participants to reconvene after lunch for the **International Snow Leopard Day** celebrations.

"Thank you all for your energy and ideas over these one and a half inspiring days," he said. "Let's carry this collaboration forward beyond this room and continue building resilience for the mountains of Central Asia."

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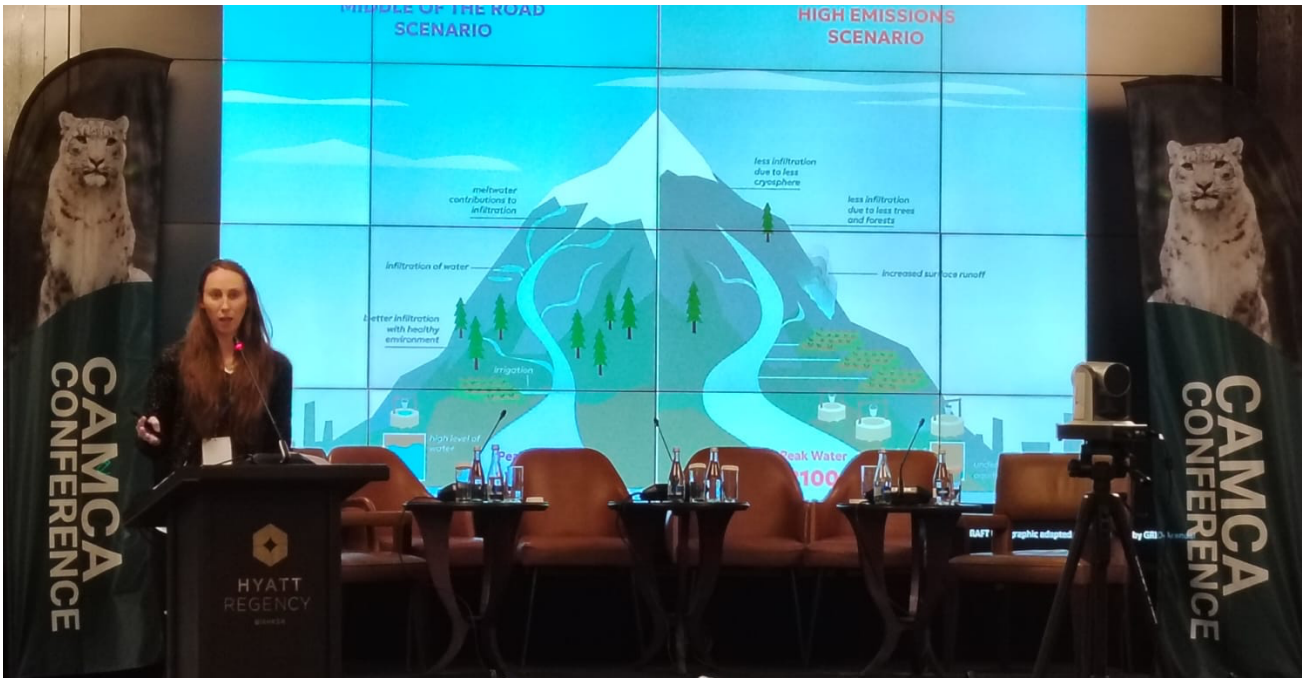
Северный и внутренний Тянь-Шань
Казахстанско-Кыргызский коридор
для диких животных


CAMCA CONFERENCE
HYATT REGENCY


SNOW LEOPARD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less infiltration due to less trees and forests
infiltration of water
increased surface runoff
better infiltration with healthy environment
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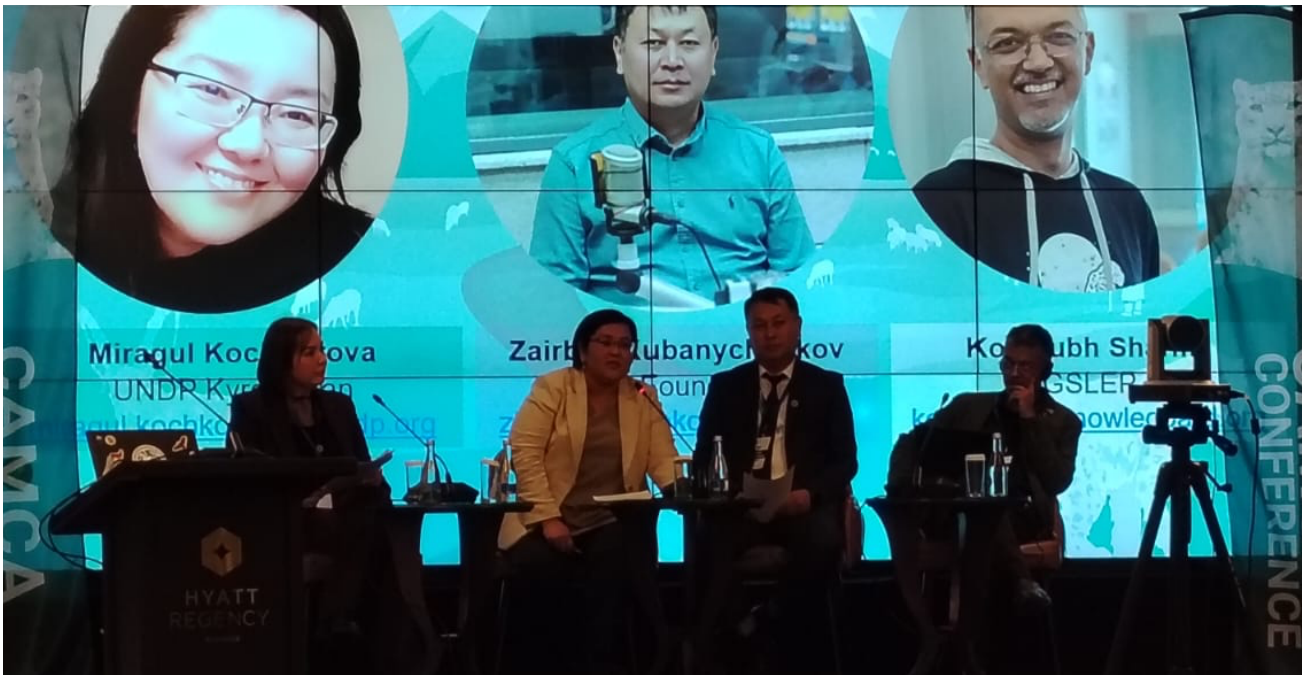
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РАБОЧИЙ ЛИСТ
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АРХАР
КОЗЕРОГ
СУРОК
ЭКОТУРИЗМ
ЗАЩИТА ДИКИХ ЖИВОТНЫХ
1 СНЕЖНЫЙ БАРС
УЧЕНЫЕ

MONOLOGUE OF MOTHER EARTH
(Dedicated to the Snow Leopard Day, organized by CAMP Alatoo)

МОНОЛОГ МАТЕРИ-ЗЕМЛИ
(Посвящается Дню снежного барса, организованному экологической организацией «CAMP Ала-Тоо»)

Mother Earth: Look around — how bright and fair the season glows, The nightingale sings, the field of colors grows. And on this day so full of grace and cheer,	**Мать-Земля:** Посмотри, какой прекрасный свет вокруг, Как птицы поют, как расцвел каждый луг. И в этот день, такой волшебный, ясный,
Together: We warmly greet all friends who gather here!	**Все вместе:** Мы вас приветствуем, друзья, тепло и страстно!
Mother Earth: Who gives life to people, beasts, and trees?	**Мать-Земля:** Кто жизнь дает всему живому — людям, зверям и травам?
Together: It is our sacred Mother Earth, indeed!	**Все вместе:** Святая Мать-Земля, родная наша слава!
Mother Earth: Who feeds each living soul with care?	**Мать-Земля:** Кто кормит нас и всех существ живых?
Together: It is our sacred Mother Earth, so fair!	**Все вместе:** Святая Мать-Земля — источник благ земных!
Mother Earth: Who gives her wealth from deep below, To make our lives and hearts aglow?	**Мать-Земля:** Кто богатства щедро дарит нам в недрах глубины?
Together: It is our sacred Mother Earth, we know!	**Все вместе:** Святая Мать-Земля — хозяйка тишины!
Mother Earth: Who paints the world with beauty's tone, And fills the air with nightingale's song?	**Мать-Земля:** Кто мир украсил дивной красотой, И пением соловья наполнил над рекой?
Together: It is our sacred Mother Earth, all along!	**Все вместе:** Святая Мать-Земля — источник красоты самой!
Mother Earth: She gives us joy, she makes us whole—	**Мать-Земля:** Она живое всё питает,
Together: She nurtures every living soul!	**Все вместе:** И лаской каждое существо венчает!
Mother Earth: She gives us rivers, pure and bright—	**Мать-Земля:** Она нам воды дарит, чистые, живые —
Together: Flowing from her heart, a gift of light!	**Все вместе:** Реки её текут, как песни родные!
Mother Earth: She bears the pain from humankind, Who often hurt, yet she stays kind—	**Мать-Земля:** Она терпит боль от людских обид, И всё равно прощает, всё щадит.
Together: Patient still, our Mother Earth divine!	**Все вместе:** Терпеливая Мать-Земля нас хранит!
Mother Earth: Let us cherish her, protect her grace—	**Мать-Земля:** Давайте её любить и беречь,
Together: Humanity, guard this sacred place!	**Все вместе:** Люди, пора разум вновь обречь!
Mother Earth: Do not pollute with careless hand—	**Мать-Земля:** Не мусорьте, не губите мой свет,
Together: Respect and love this gentle land!	**Все вместе:** Почтите Землю, храните завет!
Mother Earth: Leave behind your reckless ways—	**Мать-Земля:** Откажитесь от грубых привычек,
Together: Let kindness guide our coming days!	**Все вместе:** Пусть доброта станет вашим обличьем!
Together: Oh, blessed Mother Earth!	**Все вместе:** О, святая Мать-Земля!
Snow Leopards say: O wayward child of humankind, She still forgives — her heart is kind.	**Снежные барсы говорят:** О человек, дитя капризное Земли, Она прощает все твои грехи.
Mother Earth: I have forgiven you, my dearest ones, For where else could I turn or run? But think of what will come ahead, Of children's future, yet unsaid. Protect me now, before too late, Preserve your home, your planet's fate.	**Мать-Земля:** Я простила вас, мои родные, Как не простить мне вас, мои земные? Но вспомните, что будет завтра, Что скажут дети ваши завтра. Сохраните дом свой живой, Чтобы будущее было с любовью и весной.
Together: All right, Mother Earth! Now let us plant a tree for you — Let every color bloom anew!	**Все вместе:** Хорошо, Мать-Земля! Мы посадим дерево для тебя, Пусть расцветет оно, как раду- га твоя!
Mother Earth: My lovely children, words so pure, You give me hope, my heart's secure. A festival of Earth and light— May nature's joy shine ever bright! Fruits will ripen, blessings flow, Life will bloom — for you, you know. Tread softly, gently where you stand, For I shall live through every strand. The sky, the forest, and the sea, The crystal spring — all part of me. Rich treasures lie beneath my crust, But guard them well, oh child of dust! Harm not my soul, take only need, Oh humankind, beware of greed. And teach your children, one by one — To guard the Earth as their own sun.	**Мать-Земля:** Дети мои, спасибо вам, Вы доброту дарите небесам. Пусть праздник этот будет светел И мир природы будет вечен. Плоды созреют, льется свет, Живи, Земля, еще сто лет! Шагайте мягко, не грубо, не зря Я ведь живу в дыхании вашего дн Леса, реки, моря и небо — Все это я, и вам я верю. Богатства скрыты в глубине, Но сбережёте ли вы меня? Не разрушайте, не спешите бр Люди, научитесь меньше жела И научите детей с малых лет Беречь Землю, как самый святой завет!

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APPENDIX 1

JOINT STATEMENT OF INTENT ON THE CENTRAL ASIAN MAMMALS AND CLIMATE ADAPTATION (CAMCA) PROJECT

A Statement of Intent from the participants of the Conference "Building Resilience for Wildlife and Communities in the Mountains of Central Asia – results and upscaling of the Central Asian Mammals and Climate Adaptation (CAMCA) project" held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan on 22-23 October 2025, to promote climate-resilient biodiversity conservation and community development in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan

Supported by the conference participants: Representatives of national governments, national and international non-governmental organizations, intergovernmental agencies, academia and research institutions, representatives of local communities and protected area management representatives of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, and Tajikistan.

I. Preamble and Acknowledgment

Considering existing commitments under the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and its Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF), the Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC),

Recognizing the critical need to promote climate-resilient biodiversity conservation and community development to effectively address the interconnected challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss, and land degradation,

Recalling UN General Assembly Resolution 75/271 "Nature knows no borders: transboundary cooperation - a key factor for biodiversity conservation, restoration and sustainable use",

We, Participants of the Conference '*Building Resilience for Wildlife and Communities in the Mountains of Central Asia – results and upscaling of the Central Asian Mammals and Climate Adaptation (CAMCA) project*' (hereinafter – CAMCA Conference), recognize that the unique mountain ecosystems and flagship migratory mountain species of Central Asia are acutely vulnerable to accelerating impacts of climate change, including habitat degradation, impeded migration routes, and increased resource competition.

We affirm the foundational success achieved through the CAMCA project in building local, national, and regional capacity, strengthening protected area network resilience, developing climate-informed management tools (e.g. the Protected Area Vulnerability Assessment (PAVA) tool and the wildlife-friendly pasture management tool), and strengthening ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) measures with strong community involvement.

This Joint Statement of Intent formalizes our shared vision and commitment to elevate this work to the next level of transboundary cooperation, policy integration, and on-the-ground action for the long-term resilience of our natural heritage and the well-being of our mountain communities.

II. Declaration of Future Action

The Participants recommend deepening and accelerating the implementation of climate-informed conservation and sustainable development land management actions across the region, focusing on four interlinked thematic packages.

Under each theme, we commit to targeted activities across five critical areas: Policy Integration, On-the-Ground Implementation, Capacity Building, Education, and Communication.

For a detailed breakdown of suggested activities for each theme, please refer to **Annex A: CAMCA Statement of Intent – Implementation Suggestions**.

Theme 1: Protected Area Network Resilience

We commit to ensuring that observed and projected changes in weather and climate are integrated into protected area management planning processes (e.g. using the PAVA tool, the establishment of corridors, etc.). In addition, to further increase protected area resilience, we commit to proactively enable surrounding communities' participation in protected area management and integrate their climate change adaptation needs into protected area management planning processes. This will increase chance of sustained local support towards protected areas. Hence, our focus will be on institutionalizing the requirement for these climate-smart approaches and the integration of EbA measures for surrounding communities that support the effectiveness of the protected area networks. This is vital to securing the future of our most critical mountain habitats.

Theme 2: Climate-Smart Ecological Corridors

We understand that ecological connectivity between natural areas (including within and between our existing protected areas) is critical to ensure the resulting networks remain effective sanctuaries for biodiversity in a changing climate. Building on existing commitments, such as those identified in the Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI) of CMS, National Snow Leopard Ecosystem Protection Priorities, and other relevant frameworks, we commit to improving ecological connectivity between ecosystems within and between countries, and endeavour for a cross-sectoral adoption of biodiversity-friendly management approaches in these networks. This includes the official designation of climate-smart ecological corridors at the national as well as transboundary level, backed by governance and management models that include local communities. This shared commitment is essential to ensure flagship species like the snow leopard, Bukhara deer and argali, among others can adapt to climate-driven changes in their habitats.

Theme 3: Community Resilience and Adaptation

We recognize that the resilience of local communities in and around protected areas is intrinsically linked to the health of the ecosystems they depend upon, as well as to the availability of economic opportunities. Our focus will be on promoting diverse, biodiversity-friendly, and climate-informed alternative economic activities that reduce prevent mountain pasture degradation, human-wildlife conflict, and reduce livelihood vulnerability. For example, community-led nature-based ecotourism and other micro-enterprises that support conservation are promoted.

Theme 4: Climate-Smart Grazing Management

Unsustainable livestock grazing puts immense pressure on high-altitude wildlife habitats, threatens watershed health, and increases disaster risks such as drought, floods and mudflows. We are committed to scaling up the use of evidence-based, community-informed tools, such as the wildlife-friendly pasture management tool, to establish sustainable livestock numbers and grazing rotation, and facilitate pasture restoration inside and outside ecological corridors and protected areas.

Crucially, we intend to champion policy coherence reform aimed at adapting of grazing practices to address biodiversity conservation needs and sustainability of pasture ecosystems, supporting alternative income sources to encourage reduction in livestock numbers, increasing accountability for large livestock herds that contribute to overgrazing, and other measures that help to restore the ecological integrity of shared pastures for wildlife and responsible livestock owners alike.

III. Conclusion

We commit to a renewed spirit of cooperation and the mobilization of resources to incorporate these stated intentions in national strategies (including the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), National Adaptation Plan (NAP), Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), and Land Degradation Neutrality Targets (LDNs)), and regional strategies (including those on biodiversity conservation, sustainable land management and adaptation to climate change), translate them into tangible, measurable results that secure the biodiversity conservation and climate adaptation needs of Central Asia. We call upon all existing and potential international partners to join us in this vital endeavour to conserve the shared heritage and natural wealth of Central Asian mountains for future generations.

ANNEX A – CAMCA STATEMENT OF INTENT – IMPLEMENTATION SUGGESTIONS

This Annex details the specific recommendations across five critical activity areas (Policy Integration, On-the-Ground Implementation, Capacity Building, Education, and Communication) for each of the four thematic packages outlined in the Joint Statement of Intent.

Theme 1: Protected Area Network Resilience

Objective: To ensure protected area networks remain effective conservation tools by integrating observed and projected changes in weather and climate, as well as community adaptation needs into their management frameworks.

Activity Area	Recommendations
Policy Integration	Institutionalize national requirements for integrating climate change and community participation within protected area management, e.g. through mandating tools like PAVA for climate vulnerability assessment and realising community-based protected area management models (e.g., co-management agreements, community-led protected areas, OECMs) based on national legislation.
On-the-Ground Implementation	Scale up the implementation of the PAVA tool to new, non-pilot sites and implement adaptation measures identified through these assessments, with priority given to Ecosystem-based Adaptations.
Capacity Building	Conduct advanced, practical training programs for protected area staff, government or local community protected area management bodies on applying vulnerability assessment tools and effective monitoring.
Educational Materials	Develop, pilot and roll out specialized curriculum modules in local schools and vocational training centres on mountain species' and ecosystems' vulnerability to climate change, and climate-smart wildlife and protected area management principles.
Communication Activities	Produce and widely disseminate policy briefs, white papers, and detailed case studies on successful protected area resilience strategies to national decision-makers and regional bodies.

Theme 2: Climate-Smart Ecological Corridors

Objective: To safeguard ecological connectivity and migratory routes for flagship species and strengthen national and transboundary protected area networks, by establishing and officially designating a network of functional, climate-resilient ecological corridors.

Activity Area	Recommendations
Policy Integration	Further develop policy frameworks for national ecological corridor networks to increase ecosystem resilience; establish joint working groups to develop transboundary corridor designation and management processes for key ecological corridors, informed by national governance.

On-the-Ground Implementation	Use climate and species data to identify critical wildlife corridors at national and transboundary level; pilot targeted habitat restoration activities (e.g. improving grazing management, removing barriers, restoring water points) in bottlenecks, establish a corridor monitoring system, and harmonise monitoring in identified sites across borders.
Capacity Building	Provide specialized technical training to government agencies (including protected area staff, border and infrastructure development bodies) and local and community organizations on national and transboundary corridor planning, legal frameworks, and management (including monitoring).
Educational Materials	Launch public awareness campaigns and workshops in corridor-adjacent communities to explain the vital importance of migratory routes, the role local communities can play, and the risks posed by habitat fragmentation and climate change.
Communication Activities	Host regular inter-sectoral dialogues between relevant government ministries and sectors, such as finance, forestry, agriculture, or infrastructure/transportation to start developing cross-sectoral approaches for corridor implementation; host regular regional dialogues and technical working group meetings to coordinate transboundary efforts, utilizing existing platforms (e.g. CMS CAMI, GSLEP, etc.), sharing data (such as through the CAMI Infrastructure Atlas) and progress updates transparently among all three countries.

Theme 3: Community Resilience

Objective: To reduce livelihood vulnerability and human-wildlife conflict by promoting diverse, biodiversity-friendly, and climate-informed alternative economic activities.

Activity Area	**Commitment**
Policy Integration	Advocate for and integrate sustainable climate-smart, biodiversity-friendly livelihoods, such as community-based ecotourism, organic beekeeping, ecologically sustainable local natural resources use, agroforestry and other conservation-related enterprises, into local and regional economic development plans, as part of sustainable financing of conservation efforts.
On-the-Ground Implementation	Continue the successful implementation of EbA and other measures identified via Situation Models; and forge stronger links between these and the conservation of mountain mammals and their habitats.
Capacity Building	Deliver comprehensive vocational training for community members on climate-smart biodiversity-friendly livelihoods, including market chain development for sustainable ecotourism operations and other micro-enterprise. Conduct capacity-building for decision-makers in different sectors and local communities to enhance community involvement and contribution of local businesses to conservation.

Educational Materials	Develop user-friendly materials for communities on climate risk preparedness and establish a community of best practice for ecosystem-based adaptation and sustainable natural resource use.
Communication Activities	Systematically document and widely disseminate success stories and economic benefits derived from climate-smart alternative livelihoods through local, national, and international media channels and improve market access & visibility for biodiversity-friendly local products.

Theme 4: Continuing Climate-Smart Grazing Management

Objective: To reduce pressure on critical wildlife habitats by promoting evidence-based and community-informed sustainable grazing practices in and around Protected Areas.

Activity Area	Commitment
Policy Integration	Develop and support the adoption of national policy recommendations aimed at ensuring accountability and responsibility for livestock herders that contribute to overgrazing in mountain areas. Integrate the conservation status of flagship wildlife species as indictors of overall sustainability of land management, benefits for pasture health and biodiversity.
On-the-Ground Implementation	Scale up the implementation of the wildlife-friendly pasture management approach to new pilot sites, establishing and monitoring evidence-based grazing rotation and restoration/rehabilitation plans.
Capacity Building	Conduct intensive training sessions for local pasture management committees and agricultural extension workers on sustainable, climate-smart grazing techniques and the technical use of the wildlife-friendly grazing management tool.
Educational Materials	Integrate principles of climate-smart pasture management and ecosystem health into vocational training programs for livestock owners, veterinarians, and agricultural schools.
Communication Activities	Ensure all stakeholders, particularly local pasture committees and communities, have transparent access to data, maps, and monitoring reports generated by the pasture management tool to ensure accountability and support adaptive management.