

Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species

Annual Report

1. Darwin Project Information

<i>Project Ref. Number</i>	12/028
<i>Project Title</i>	Using saiga antelope conservation to improve rural livelihoods
<i>Country(ies)</i>	Russia & Kazakhstan
<i>UK Contractor</i>	Imperial College London
<i>Partner Organisation(s)</i>	Host country team leaders: Institute of Ecology & Evolution (Russia), Institute of Zoology (Kazakhstan). International partners: Fauna & Flora International, IUCN European Sustainable Use Specialist Group.
<i>Darwin Grant Value</i>	£118,790
<i>Start/End dates</i>	April 2003 - March 2006
<i>Reporting period</i>	1 st April 2003-31 st March 2004, First Annual Report
<i>Project website</i>	http://www.env.ic.ac.uk/research/rrag/Darwin.htm
<i>Author(s), date</i>	E.J. Milner-Gulland, 30 th April 2004

2. Project Background

The project is located in two saiga range areas, Betpak-dala in central Kazakhstan, and Kalmykia in southern Russia. The project was conceived as a response to the rapid reduction in saiga populations, caused by illegal hunting for meat and horns. It builds on a decade of scientific collaboration between the project partners, and extends our work into practical conservation action. The project aims to address the fact that little is known about the socio-economic drivers of poaching activity, the extent of poaching and the livelihoods of local people in saiga range areas. Without this fundamental information, conservation interventions are difficult to target effectively. We also aim to address the fact that long-term monitoring of saiga populations has weakened recently due to a lack of funding, and that there is a critical need for more quantitative and less invasive monitoring procedures. There is a requirement for an agreed set of ecological monitoring procedures to form a basis for future assessment of saiga population status. We are also addressing the issue that saiga management is not necessarily currently set up in the most effective way to ensure that local communities buy into it; this is addressed by helping to restructure conservation actions, by analysing the current level of awareness that local people have of the saiga management problem, and working to raise the profile of saiga conservation in the host countries and internationally. Finally we are addressing the issue that there is a lack of trained young researchers in the region able to carry saiga conservation research into the future.

3. Project Purpose and Outputs

Purpose: To save the critically endangered saiga antelope from extinction and support impoverished rural communities by building a framework integrating saiga conservation and sustainable use of natural resources with communities' needs and aspirations.

Objectives: ● To assist the governments of Kalmykia (Russia) and Kazakhstan to set up SMAs for immediate conservation action and (eventually) sustainable use of the saiga antelope. ● To involve rural communities in saiga conservation, scientific monitoring and sustainable use through a warden scheme, and hence ensure local support for and participation in saiga conservation. ● To conduct assessments of alternative livelihood opportunities for local people, as a step towards relieving rural poverty and dependence on unsustainable resource use. ● To act as a flagship for community-based conservation of natural resources in the region. ● To assist range states in developing an international strategy for saiga conservation, that leads to the recovery of the species. ● To put in place a saiga monitoring scheme, and use its results in high quality scientific research on the linkages between human activity and reproductive success. ● To share expertise between scientists in saiga range states and train young scientists in conservation, ecology and social research techniques.

See Table 1 for outputs. The outputs and operational plan have not changed over the year. However, we have several proposed changes for year 2:

a) Based on our research findings this year, we feel that a change of emphasis is required with respect to the methods by which the Saiga Management Authority in Kalmykia is developed (see below). We have also de-emphasised the final goal of having a sustainable hunting scheme, in favour of a clearer conservation message. This is in response to the continuing poor status of the saiga antelope, and to the results of attitude surveys among local people.

b) Given our success in obtaining matching funding, we can refocus some of our efforts. We have obtained matching funding from INTAS (European Union) for a 3 year research project starting April 2004, based in Kalmykia and the Ustiurt population of Kazakhstan. The project is on the reproductive ecology of the saiga antelope, so will complement and strengthen the scientific component of the Darwin project. Given this, we will be able to shift the Darwin project's focus in the next two years; in Kalmykia we can concentrate more on support for saiga management and public awareness (for the latter we have also received matching funding from PTES, see below), and in Kazakhstan we can extend our scientific work from one population (Betpak-dala) to include the Ustiurt population. This is important because the Ustiurt population is transboundary, and is the focus of our work towards obtaining future international funding, such as from GEF (see below).

c) We have also decided that the appropriate partner from IUCN should be the Antelope Specialist Group (ASG) rather than the European Sustainable Use Specialist Group (ESUSG). Both the ASG and the ESUSG participated in the Almaty meeting, with the ESUSG giving us the benefit of their expertise on sustainable use projects elsewhere. However now we require a shift of emphasis towards conservation action, which the ASG is very well equipped to help us with. The representative of the ASG (David Mallon) is highly qualified for the job and is keen to work with us.

These changes were agreed at the Almaty meeting in early April, hence we have not had time to discuss them with the Darwin secretariat. They are relatively minor changes in focus rather than major shifts in activity, so should not pose a problem.

4. Progress

Brief history of the project

The project started in April 2003 with a project launch meeting held in Elista, Kalmykia. At the meeting we discussed our work plan in detail, with particular emphasis being placed on the agreement of detailed methodologies for the ecological and socioeconomic fieldwork. We also launched the project publicly, having meetings with the Kalmykian Minister for the Environment and interviews with the local press. In May 2003, ecological fieldwork was carried out in the two areas, including transect counts in the birth areas (Kalmykia) and population counts in Betpak-dala. Socio-economic fieldwork was carried out in June-July in both locations. Public awareness materials were developed and distributed over the entire year, particularly in Kalmykia. In November-December, ecological fieldwork was carried out in both locations, to assess saiga behaviour during the rutting period, and this was followed by further socio-economic surveys in Kalmykia. Throughout the year we have conducted both high-level meetings (including with the Minister for the Environment, President and Prime Minister of Kalmykia) and local-level activities such as school visits and training of National Park rangers. In March-April 2004, a workshop was held in Almaty, Kazakhstan, which combined discussions of approaches to sustainable use of wildlife with an internal project review day in which we assessed progress against the project timetable, and discussed future plans. This also allowed us to reflect on the positive and negative aspects of our work, and to build links with collaborative partners. The workshop attracted substantial local and international press interest, as the project has throughout the year.

Progress against baseline timetable

In general we feel that much progress has been made in the first year of the project. As shown in Annex 1, we have not experienced any slippage in our timetable, and if anything are progressing ahead of schedule in some areas. The one area in which our activities are not proceeding as originally planned is in the recruitment of village wardens to monitor saiga and poacher activity. This is because our socio-economic research suggested that this would not be a successful conservation strategy. Local villagers will not be prepared to act openly as saiga wardens for fear of retribution from poachers. In our April 2004 meeting, a number of alternative strategies were suggested, including a confidential “crimestoppers”-style phone number for individuals to report poaching activity. We also have concluded that concentrating on public awareness, raising the general public’s concern for saiga conservation, will be more effective than designating individuals as saiga wardens. This will be combined with more support for the institutional structures of saiga conservation, particularly the Chernye Zemli Biosphere Reserve in Kalmykia.

Additional outputs and activities, other than those listed in Table 1 include: 1) In the last few years, the Department of Game Hunting Management in Kalmykia has carried out helicopter surveys of saiga antelope numbers and has shot female saigas for fertility studies. Both of these damaging activities have been halted on the basis of our project’s recommendations. 2) The project’s Russian team suggested that 2004 be named “Year of the Saiga” in Kalmykia; a special decree to this effect has been signed by the President. 3) Our project activities have been filmed by TV crews from France and from Moscow; both of these films will be widely shown next year. The Russian film crew was supported by the National Park Fund and IFAW. 4) We have started work on a comprehensive saiga website, which should be live next year (in collaboration with Russian Biodiversity Conservation Centre, WWF-International and the Large Herbivore Foundation). 5) We ran a drawing competition with a saiga theme for children from all schools in Kalmykia (joint with Ministry for Education and Department for Natural Resources, co-funded by the People’s Trust for Endangered Species). 6) We

signed a Memorandum of Understanding on joint activities for saiga conservation with three partners in Kazakhstan (Okhotzooptom, Institute of Zoology and Kazakhstan National Agrarian University) and international partners WWF and Frankfurt Zoological Society.

Project achievements

The project has developed new and rigorous methods for ecological surveys of saiga birth and rutting behaviour. These methods were agreed by the team at our meeting in April 2003, and were trialled in Kalmykia this year. We have refined the methods following these trials, and this year we are implementing them in both populations. The birth area methods include carrying out line transects through the birth aggregation, recording the GPS location, age and sex of all calves encountered, presence of a twin, presence of placentas and dead calves. These transects are repeated daily to obtain data on the temporal and spatial development of the birth aggregation. During the rut, we observed individual behaviour, including interactions between a focal individual and others of either sex, as well as herd size and age-sex composition. During the rest of the year in Kalmykia, rangers recorded details of all sightings of saigas and poaching activity; this will contribute to our understanding of saiga behaviour throughout the year. This is not possible in Kazakhstan where the herds are dispersed over a wide area rather than being centred around a protected area.

Our training programme has concentrated on on-the-job training of rangers and young scientists participating in our research and conservation activities. This is key to developing a cadre of well-qualified people able to continue the project's work after it finishes. We have also carried out substantial public awareness work, and have analysed the attitudes of local people towards saigas. This has included research on livelihood alternatives to saiga poaching, which will contribute to a report for governments planned for year 2. Our approach is to engage local society at all levels, from the prime minister, through practitioners such as the Department of Game and Hunting Management, to local schoolchildren. We have also worked towards project continuation by developing partnerships with other organisations, and obtaining substantial matching funds (see outputs table).

One of our key exit strategies was to help in the development of a Global Environment Facility project based around the saiga as a keystone species. Project partners Fauna and Flora International worked over the year towards this goal, and a major step forward was taken at the first year meeting in Almaty. This was attended by representatives of both UNEP and UNDP-Almaty, who agreed to work together over the next few months to develop a GEF proposal based on our project's groundwork.

Significant difficulties

Our major difficulties in Russia were with money transfers, as described in the 6 month report of October 2003. These have been overcome with the help of IFAW.

One of our key objectives is to build regional partnerships through the exchange of ideas and expertise between team members in Russia and Kazakhstan, and through the comparison of results. This has happened effectively at the two major project meetings, but there has been little communication otherwise. This has mostly been due to personal difficulties experienced by Dr Ukrainsky, who was carrying out the social survey work in Kazakhstan. In order to improve this, we have decided that the key Kalmykian team member working on the socio-economic surveys last year (young scientist Nataliya Balinova) will join the Kazakhstan team this summer, to give direct input to their research. Dr Ukrainsky has also, thanks to the INTAS grant, been able to recruit a young scientist to work alongside him for the project.

This will substantially strengthen the Kazakhstan team's capacity for active involvement. Communications should anyhow improve in the second year, as the project focus shifts more towards simultaneous activities in the two places, rather than independent trialling of the methodology, and as team members get to know each other better.

Project enhancements

The project activities include revision of the ecological and socio-economic monitoring techniques as part of the work plan. This is to ensure that the monitoring tools handed over at the end of the project are as robust and rigorous as possible. Based on our first field season (concentrating on Kalmykia) we have made minor adjustments to our techniques, which we will be trialling in Kazakhstan this year. We have also refined our plan of action based on the first year's results (for example in our approach to village wardens; see above), as a direct result of our monitoring strategy.

Work plan for Year 2

April 2004. Aerial survey of saiga population (BD).

May 2004: Repeat saiga birth area monitoring procedure, assess its effectiveness and revise as necessary (KM & BD).

June-Nov 2004: Consultation of local people and officials on alternative income-generating activities (KM & BD). Public awareness and education activities, at all scales of society from ministerial to schools (KM & BD). Continued monitoring of saiga population status by rangers (KM).

July 2004: Carry out attitude surveys and socio-economic research in Betpak-dala, followed by public awareness and education activities in these areas.

Aug 2004: Monitor and assess ranger training in KM.

Sept 2004: 18 month project progress meeting (Elista).

Dec 2004: Repeat saiga monitoring exercise, rutting areas (KM & BD). Kazakhstan study will be carried out primarily in Ustiurt, due to the matching funding from INTAS.

Jan-Mar 2005: Prepare reports on framework for sustainable hunting scheme and options for alternative income generating activities and present to Governments, NGOs and other stakeholders.

5. Actions taken in response to previous reviews

Not applicable.

6. Partnerships

As discussed above, we had communications difficulties with one partner in Kazakhstan, which we are taking steps to resolve. The development of methodologies was joint with all teams, ensuring everyone had ownership of the research plan. UK team members have carried out joint fieldwork with the Russian teams, this has ensured that there is a good working relationship between the young scientists on the project; this is important for capacity-building. Because senior team members in the UK and host countries have worked

together for many years, there is already a strong professional and personal bond between them, which enables them to sort out difficulties easily.

We have collaborated particularly with the project run by WWF-Russia in Kazakhstan, as envisaged in our original proposal. We have also worked to establish links with UNEP and UNDP, to catalyse a longer-term effort for saiga conservation. We are also working on strengthening links with the Chernye Zemli Biosphere Reserve in Kalmykia, using it as our central focus in strengthening saiga conservation, and with Okhotzooptom, the saiga management authority in Kazakhstan.

A key aim for next year is to build links with local NGOs, particularly in Kazakhstan where there are many active environmental organisations. Through project partner FFI, we are hoping to support grassroots conservation action in the saiga range areas. However we are leaving this action until after our socio-economic research this summer, as in order to obtain useful results, we wish to carry out the research separately and prior to starting public awareness and local action campaigns.

7. Impact and Sustainability

As mentioned above, we have been instrumental in substantially increasing awareness of the issues in Kalmykia, and have received Presidential support for our work in the region. We have promoted the project's aims locally through a variety of media (see Table 2), particularly the local newspapers. Our social research found that people's primary sources of information were local newspapers and local TV, hence we have been targeting these outlets particularly. The fact that our campaigns have penetrated widely is evidence of increased local interest. The evidence for improved capacity is in the ability of rangers to carry out research activities as part of our project. The exit strategy for the project is already being put into place, including training up young scientists, obtaining matching and continuation funding, and encouraging national and regional initiatives for saiga conservation. For example, we are still working towards the coming into force of a Convention on Migratory Species treaty on saiga conservation, agreed in 2002 by the range states, but not yet signed.

8. Post-Project Follow up Activities (max 300 words)

Not applicable (first year of project only)

9. Outputs, Outcomes and Dissemination

Outputs are described in Table 1, and additional outputs in section 4. As also described above, a change of emphasis was decided upon based on the results of our first year of research. Our progress against the planned outputs is as follows:

April 2003: Project planning meeting held in Elista, Kalmykia (KM). *Done* Develop monitoring protocols and attitude survey questionnaires. Consultation with authorities on legislative frameworks. *Done*

May 2003: First saiga monitoring exercise in birth areas (KM). *Done*

June-July 2003: Livelihood assessments (KM *Done*) and attitude surveys in villages in saiga summer range (KM & BD *Done*). Workshops in participating villages in saiga summer range, discussions with village heads on selection of village wardens (KM). *Not done, because*

attitude surveys suggested that a village warden scheme would be counterproductive (see above for reasons and for alternative actions taken).

June-July 2003: Initial development of educational materials. *Done*

September 2003: 6 month project progress meeting (KM). *Done* Exchange of ideas between project partners. *Only partly done, see above.*

Oct-Nov 2003: Workshops in participating villages in saiga winter range, training of village wardens (KM). *Not done, see above.*

Dec 2003: First saiga monitoring exercise in rutting areas (KM & BD *Done*). Training of rangers and setting up SMA infrastructure (KM *Partly done - focus was on ranger training, strengthening Chernye Zemli reserve and liaison with government bodies*).

Jan-Feb 2004: Livelihood assessments (KM) and attitude surveys (KM & BD) in villages in saiga winter range (*Done ahead of schedule*). Public awareness and education campaign in winter range (KM & BD *Done*).

March 2004: Project meeting, exchange of experience and results (Almaty). *Done* Workshop on lessons from previous sustainable use projects elsewhere. *Done* Report back to stakeholders on progress. *Done at meeting and throughout year.*

Dissemination

Dissemination activities are listed in Table 1 and discussed above. We have made a substantial effort to reach out to local audiences in Kalmykia, through the production of materials which are locally appropriate such as desk calenders, pocket calenders and posters. We have also worked to ensure substantial media coverage. This will receive a boost next year when the 2 film crews finish their work, because both have agreed to provide free copies of their films for transmission on local networks.

Table 1. Project Outputs (According to Standard Output Measures)

Code No.	Quantity	Description
2	1	Aline Kuhl, project researcher, received MSc for her work "Saiga antelope conservation: why and for whom", based on her fieldwork for the Darwin Initiative in May-July 2003
4A	3	Two undergraduates in Kazakhstan on socio-economic survey techniques (2), One undergraduate in Kalmykia on saiga reproductive ecology
4B	6	
6A	17	Kalmykia: 2 school teachers trained to give lectures on saiga conservation, 12 rangers trained in public awareness, 1 young scientist trained in participatory research techniques, 2 young scientists trained in ecological survey techniques.
6B	8	
7	2	Methodologies for socio-economic and ecological fieldwork
8	21	E.J. Milner-Gulland (3), A. Kuhl (18)
11A	1	See Table 2
14A	2	April 2003, Elista, March 2004, Almaty. Both included an open day for stakeholders and an internal project review day.

15A	1	Press release in Kazakhstan (by British Embassy, March 2004)
15C	2	Press releases in April 2003 (by Imperial College) and April 2004 (by project members).
18A	2	In Kazakhstan
18C	5	5 in Kalmykia
19B	1	BBC world service, Almaty
19C	1	Kalmykia
20	2	Project vehicle, Kalmykia (£3622), equipment and uniforms for rangers (£2660).
23		Okhotzooptom (Kazakhstan) - £4000 for aerial surveys. WWF-Russia (Kazakhstan) - £43,123 matching funds for conservation activities in Kazakhstan. People's Trust for Endangered Species - £14,028 agreed for the year 2004 for public awareness activities. INTAS - £240,436 from April 2004 for 3 years for research on the reproductive ecology of the saiga antelope. IFAW - substantial contributions in kind, particularly in helping us to transfer money to Russia without incurring substantial charges. WCS- \$20,000 as a Research Fellowship for A. Kuhl's fieldwork (Oct 2003-Oct 2004). ESRC/NERC - £3000 tuition fees, A. Kuhl.
Other outputs for which I see no codes in the revised list:		
Public awareness materials	6	In Kazakhstan: poster (1000 copies); In Kalmykia: Pocket calendar (2000 copies), desk calendar (1500), poster (1000), leaflet (1500), pens (200).
Newspaper/magazine articles about the project in international press	4	CMS Bulletin 17, 16-17 Nature Australia, Summer 2003-4 National Wildlife, April-May 2004 National Geographic France, Jan 2004
Newspaper/magazine articles in local press	8	8 Newspaper articles about the project in Kalmykian local press.
Newspaper/magazine articles in national press	1	Kazakhstan (<i>Panorama</i> newspaper)
Publicity activities	1	Drawing competition for schools, Kalmykia
Presentations in host country	12	10 lectures on the project at Kalmykian State University, 2 talks on the project at local schools in Kalmykia
Presentations in UK	2	Lectures on the project to MSc conservation students at Kent (DICE) and Oxford universities

Table 2: Publications

Type	Detail
Journal	Milner-Gulland, E.J., Bukreeva, O.M., Coulson, T.N., Lushchekina, A.A., Kholodova, M.V., Bekenov, A.B., Grachev, Iu.A. (2003) Reproductive collapse in saiga antelope harems. <i>Nature</i> 422 , 135.
Conference proceedings	Grachev, Y.A., Bekenov, A.B. (2003) Problems of the saiga: status and perspective. Proceedings of international conference “Actual Problems in Ecology”, Karaganda, Dec 2003. p. 325-327. (in Russian)

10. Project Expenditure

Table 3: Project expenditure during the reporting period (Defra Financial Year 01 April to 31 March)

Item	Budget	Expenditure	Balance

There are no agreed changes to the budget.

Rent etc was not included in the original budget because it was subsumed under office costs. However, in the expenditure it has been clearer to separate these two budget lines out. Part of this is because our partner in Kazakhstan (Professor Bekenov) was Director of the Institute of Zoology at the time of our proposal. He has now retired from this post, hence there is a need to separate out the contributions to running his laboratory from those that are paid towards the running of the Institute of Zoology as a whole (this was not previously necessary).

Office costs also contain items such as paper and xerox machines which would have been under “printing” were they contracted out. Instead it was felt cheaper to purchase consumables for the office and carry out the work in-house.

The overspend on conferences etc was an oversight on our part at the time of submitting the budget. We had envisaged this budget line as being primarily for meetings with officials and local people. We did not include the cost of team members attending and hosting our project management meetings in the original budget. Because the teams come from 2 different countries it is actually a significant expense for them to attend these meetings.

11. Monitoring, Evaluation and Lessons

Monitoring in the past year

This year we have developed and trialled a scientific monitoring scheme for saiga ecology, which was expanded and revised for implementation this year; this was done collaboratively by the UK and host country teams. The monitoring scheme has already produced data on saiga status, demonstrating contribution to project purpose. These data will be published over the course of the project. This was the first year of attitude surveys among local people. When they are repeated later in the project, we will discover the project's impact and achievement in terms of raising awareness. We have held two project meetings, for which attendance records were kept. We have contributed to international conservation efforts through facilitating a meeting about potential GEF funding between UNEP, UNDP and government representatives, and through raising the profile of the saiga antelope in the local, national and international press. Our success in Kalmykia, in stopping damaging monitoring and hunting activities and getting 2004 declared the Year of the Saiga, demonstrate that the local Government is listening to, and acting on, our recommendations. We have produced an MSc thesis and 2 scientific papers in the first year of the project, with more to come.

Lessons learnt

One of our goals this year was to gain a deeper understanding of the institutional arrangements governing saiga conservation in the two countries, and how best to target our efforts in order to maximise our impact and effectiveness. As described above, our experience in Kalmykia suggests that a unified saiga management authority of the structure we originally envisaged would be politically difficult at the moment. However, a substantial proportion of Kalmykia's saigas is found within protected areas for all or part of the year. Hence our strategy is to engage fully with the managers of these areas, build their capacity for conservation, and engage local people through public awareness campaigns rather than direct involvement. To this end we are extending our collaboration and funding this year to include the adjoining Steppe Hunting Reserve as well as the Chernye Zemli reserve.

In Kazakhstan the situation is very different. Saigas are widely dispersed and a static protected area approach will not work. There is already a unified saiga management authority (Okhotzoprom) and the Kazakhstan government has invested substantial sums in saiga conservation this year, via Okhotzoprom and our project partners at the Institute of Zoology. Hence the infrastructure and government financial commitment are already present. Conservation actions in Kazakhstan are being carried out by our partner project (WWF). Hence in Kazakhstan we are aiming to play more of a scientific role, providing sound advice and monitoring expertise to support government actions. We are also planning to engage more fully with Okhotzoprom and with local NGOs, in order to ensure that our contribution to saiga conservation is maximised.

12. OPTIONAL: Outstanding achievements of your project during the reporting period (300-400 words maximum)

The project has had particular success in engaging the local and international media in highlighting the crisis that the saiga antelope is facing, and the need to include local people in finding solutions. We have had coverage of our work in a number of international magazines, including National Geographic France, Nature Australia and National Wildlife (USA). We have also had significant success in engaging the government of Kalmykia in our work, including having meetings with the President and the new Prime Minister to explain our work to them. The Minister for Natural Resources has been particularly supportive. As a result of our work the capacity of the Chernye Zemli Biosphere Reserve to protect its saigas has been significantly enhanced, damaging survey methods have been halted, and 2004 has been declared “Year of the Saiga” in Kalmykia. We have also raised significant matching funds, with grants for from the Wildlife Conservation Society, People’s Trust for Endangered Species and INTAS, while the International Fund for Animal Welfare has given us significant logistical support. These funds will enable us to ensure that the project catalyses further work and leaves a lasting legacy.

Annex 1 Report of progress and achievements against Logical Framework for Financial Year: 2003/2004

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Progress and Achievements April 2003-Mar 2004	Actions required/planned for next period
<p>Goal: To draw on expertise relevant to biodiversity from within the United Kingdom to work with local partners in countries rich in biodiversity but poor in resources to achieve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The conservation of biological diversity, • The sustainable use of its components, and • The fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources 			
<p>Purpose To save the critically endangered saiga antelope from extinction and support impoverished rural communities by building a framework integrating saiga conservation and sustainable use of natural resources with communities' needs and aspirations.</p>	<p>1) Foundations of SMAs in place. 2) Saiga populations show evidence of stabilisation or improvement. 3) Building blocks for transboundary saiga conservation action in position. 4) Assessment of sustainable rural livelihoods completed and acted upon. 5) Rural communities fully involved in a saiga wardening scheme and actively participating in conservation of saiga antelopes.</p>	<p>1) We have clarified the role of SMAs in saiga management and improved the capacity of the CZ Biosphere Reserve. We have made substantial progress in engaging government in saiga conservation 2) The Kalmykian saiga population appears not to have declined in 2003, but population counts are unreliable (not carried out by us). In Kazakhstan the rate of population decline has slowed but not stopped. The counts in Betpak-dala showed a worryingly low population size, but may be underestimates due to extrapolation from a partial count. This year's counts will be more comprehensive and reliable. 3) The project team was instrumental in developing a potential GEF plan and facilitating discussion of it</p>	<p>1) Extend support from CZ reserve to adjacent protected area. Continue to engage governments. 2) Continue monitoring saiga populations in Kazakhstan, press for a rigorous population count in Kalmykia. 3) Support GEF proposers to the best of our ability. 4) Continue fieldwork on livelihood alternatives, research and write document for circulation to stakeholders at the end of year 2. 5) Involve rural communities in saiga conservation through awareness campaigns and engagement with schools and villagers. Maintain and improve our high local media profile.</p>

		between UNDP and UNEP. We have also obtained funding for a transboundary research project in Ustiurt which will help to engage Uzbekistan in our conservation efforts. 4) We are on track with the field data collection for this indicator. 5) We have carried out fieldwork and attitude surveys which will be built upon in subsequent years.	
Outputs			
1) Foundations of SMAs able to continue saiga protection.	1) Saiga rangers employed, equipment purchased, legal powers established.	We have supported rangers by providing training, salaries, a vehicle and field equipment. We have had extensive discussions about the way forward for saiga management	Extend the support to the adjacent Steppe Reserve. Continue to support CZ Reserve and to train rangers. Alter approach to SMA to focus on protected areas in Kalmykia and on support for ongoing government initiatives in Kazakhstan.
2) Trained rangers, wardens and young scientists to continue monitoring.	2) 2 young scientists, 6 rangers and 20 wardens trained in conservation and monitoring.	We have trained 20 people so far, see Table 1. However the focus has been on training rangers, as we have not appointed village wardens.	Training will continue and be substantially increased with the addition of another young scientist and undergraduates from the Kazakhstan National Agricultural University to the project. The undergraduates will participate in social surveys in Betpak-dala this summer.

<p>3) An understanding in the region of the philosophy and methods of community-based conservation.</p>	<p>3) Workshops held on lessons from elsewhere (yr 1) and from saiga project (yr 3). Educational materials for local people.</p>	<p>We held a workshop on lessons from elsewhere as part of our annual meeting in Almaty, April 2004. We have produced a variety of local educational materials, and have also discussed the philosophy of community-based conservation with government officials. There is a broad consensus of support for our approach.</p>	<p>The IUCN ESUSG input to the workshop was disappointing, and did not provide useful insights to the participants. We have replaced the ESUSG with the ASG in order to get more positive input from IUCN from now on.</p>
<p>4) Sustainable livelihoods for rural people.</p>	<p>4) Framework for a sustainable use scheme for saigas set up, eventually providing revenue and resource ownership to local communities. Assessment of alternatives done.</p>	<p>We have carried out attitude surveys in 2 villages in Kalmykia and 13 villages in Kazakhstan. We have carried out detailed livelihood surveys in 2 villages in Kalmykia. These studies will provide the data for an assessment of livelihood alternatives.</p>	<p>This year we will carry out detailed livelihood surveys in 2 villages in Kazakhstan. We will then prepare and distribute a report containing recommendations for livelihood alternatives. We are not currently advocating a sustainable use scheme for saigas, due to current political sensitivities.</p>
<p>5) Scientific research focussed on linkages between human activities and saiga ecology</p>	<p>5) Papers in scientific journals.</p>	<p>We have published one paper in an international journal (<i>Nature</i>), which generated a lot of press interest. We have also published an article in a journal in Kazakhstan.</p>	<p>As scientific data accumulate we will start to write up our work for publication in journals. We already have material for at least one paper on our first year's work in Kalmykia, which should be ready for submission at the end of year 2.</p>

Note: Please do NOT expand rows to include activities since their completion and outcomes should be reported under the column on progress and achievements at output and purpose levels.