

APPENDIX 3. TOWARDS DEVELOPMENT OF A CASPIAN SEAL CONSERVATION ACTION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN (SCAMP)

1. INTRODUCTION

A preliminary draft for a Caspian Seal Conservation Action and Management Plan (SCAMP) is presented here for discussion. It is suggested that SCAMP be drawn up in the form of a regional Agreement as a Protocol of the 2003 Framework Convention. The Agreement would best be implemented by a regional Caspian Seal Conservation Network (CSCN) which would be accountable to the national governments of the contracting Parties to the Convention and thus to the Convention itself.

This discussion document first highlights the most relevant sections of the Convention. Next a draft Agreement is drawn up, with a preamble based on existing knowledge obtained mainly by the former ECOTOX project and by the newly completed aerial surveys of the breeding Caspian seal population on the northern ice-field in the winter of 2005 and 2006 by the Caspian International Seal Survey (CISS) team (see main body of this report). Finally the draft SCAMP is presented in tabular form.

2. FRAMEWORK CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT OF THE CASPIAN SEA, 2003

The 2003 Framework Convention, now signed and ratified by all five Caspian littoral States, established the most appropriate context for a region-wide Agreement on the Conservation of Seals (ACS) and a Caspian seal conservation action and management plan (SCAMP). The full text of the convention may be downloaded from The Caspian Environment programme website or from:

http://www.crudeaccountability.org/docs/convention_text_en.pdf

and the most relevant sections of the convention for seal conservation are re-iterated below.

Article 5. Principles

- (a) the precautionary principle, by virtue of which, where there is a threat of serious or irreversible damage to the Caspian Sea environment, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent such damage;
- (b) 'the polluter pays' principle, by virtue of which the polluter pays the costs of pollution including its prevention, control and reduction;
- (c) The principle of accessibility of information on the pollution of the marine environment of the Caspian Sea according to which the Contracting Parties provide each other with relevant information in the maximum possible amount.

Article 14. Protection, Preservation, Restoration and Rational Use of Marine Living Resources

1. The contracting parties shall have particular regard to the protection, preservation, restoration and rational use of marine living resources and shall take all appropriate measures on the basis of the best scientific evidence available to:

- (a) develop and increase the potential of living resources for conservation, restoration and rational use of environmental equilibrium in the course of satisfying human needs in nutrition and meeting social and economic objectives;
- (b) maintain or restore populations of marine species at levels that can produce the maximum sustainable yield as qualified by relevant environmental and economic factors and taking into consideration relationships among species;
- (c) ensure that marine species are not endangered by over-exploitation;
- (d) promote the development and use of selective fishing gear and practices that minimise waste in the catch of target species and that minimise by-catch of non-target species;
- (e) protect, preserve and restore endemic, rare and endangered marine species;
- (f) conserve biodiversity, habitats of rare and endangered species, as well as vulnerable ecosystems.

A Caspian regional Agreement on the Conservation of Seals (ACS) to fulfil the objectives of Article 14 of the Convention needs to be developed and agreed by all five littoral states. This is a pre-requisite for the development of an Action Plan (SCAMP) and is considered below. The Agreement should be drawn up as a protocol to the Convention, as provided for in Article 24 of the Framework Convention.

Article 24. Adoption of Protocols

1. Any Contracting Party may propose protocols to this Convention. Such protocols shall be adopted by unanimous decision of the Parties at a meeting of the Conference of the Parties. Protocols shall enter into force after their ratification or approval by all the Contracting Parties in accordance with their constitutional procedures, unless the protocol does not envisage a different procedure for adoption. Protocols shall form an integral part of this Convention.

2. The text of any proposed protocol shall be communicated to the Contracting Parties by the Conference of the Parties at least six months before the meeting of the Contracting Parties at which the protocol is proposed for adoption.

3. A DRAFT CASPIAN REGIONAL AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF CASPIAN SEALS

A prerequisite for developing a Caspian SCAMP is a multilateral Agreement on the Conservation and Management of Caspian Seals, according to the parameters expressed in Article 14 of the Convention. A model for the agreement is suggested here, based on similar agreements elsewhere.

The context for conservation and management of the Caspian seal is an enclosed water body surrounded by five littoral states, now politically independent from each other. The entire seal population is thought to migrate freely throughout the Caspian, and is therefore the common responsibility of all five countries. This situation, although unusual, is not entirely unique. Precedents for effective agreements and conservation action plans exist in the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM) agreement on seals in the Baltic Sea (HELCOM Recommendation 9/1 (1988) - Protection of Seals in the Baltic Sea Area) and the Wadden Sea agreement (1991) under the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS).

HELCOM (Baltic Marine Environment (Helsinki) Commission) is the governing body of the Helsinki Convention (1974 and 1992), details of which may be accessed from <http://www.helcom.fi/>. HELCOM Recommendation 9/1 (1988) introduced the plan for

Protection of Seals in the Baltic Area. The Baltic situation resembles the Caspian in that (a) the body of water is enclosed (although not totally), (b) the northern part freezes in the winter and is used for breeding by both the ringed seals and grey seals, and (c) there is a history of commercial seal hunting by independent littoral states, some of which were part of the former Soviet union. The Helsinki Convention has been signed and ratified by all nine littoral states (Russia and eight EU states: Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Sweden, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland) and also by the EU. The seal protection recommendation includes the ringed seal (*P. hispida*), the grey seal (*H. grypus*) and the harbour seal (*P. vitulina*).

The Wadden Sea Seal Agreement, details of which may be accessed from <http://www.waddensea-secretariat.org/management/SMP/seals.html>, was enacted on October 1, 1991 as the first agreement, as defined in Article 4, of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS, Bonn Convention, 1979). The Seal Agreement was concluded between the countries adjacent to the Wadden Sea - Denmark, Germany and The Netherlands - with the aim to cooperate closely in achieving and maintaining a favourable conservation status for the common seal population of the Wadden Sea. The seal species involved are harbour and grey seals. The Wadden Sea is not enclosed (being the southern part of the North Sea) and is not ice-bound, but seals were formerly hunted commercially.

Draft of multilateral agreement on the Conservation of the Caspian seal

This draft Agreement, or Protocol under the Framework Convention, is modelled on a combination of the HELCOM and Wadden Sea agreements

RECOGNIZING that seals are an irreplaceable component of the Caspian ecosystem, are intimately linked with other components, and are of great importance as indicators of its condition;

RECOGNISING that the population of the Caspian seal (*Phoca caspica*) is currently declining

CONCERNED by the conservation status of the population, which has been reduced to the lowest level ever recorded

CONCERNED that annual quotas are issued for the legal hunting of seals in the face of a declining population.

CONCERNED about recurrent large-scale mortalities

CONCERNED about high levels of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) in Caspian seals, which may be causing the reduced fertility observed, and immune suppression leading to increased susceptibility to infectious disease.

CONCERNED about the numbers of seals taken as incidental by-catch and by killing both in nets and in the vicinity of fishing operations

CONCERNED about the possible impact of *Mnemiopsis* on the density of prey for Caspian seals

CONCERNED about the possible impact of over-fishing on the density of prey for Caspian seals

RECOGNISING that seals are wildlife species and should as such, as an integral part of the natural ecosystem, be conserved, managed and utilised in a sustainable way

RECOGNISING that the Caspian seal moves freely within the Caspian, and therefore that the conservation of the seal is a common responsibility of all five countries bordering the Caspian

AWARE that seal hunting was formerly an important economic activity in the northern part of the Caspian

RECOGNISING that particular issues, such as the hunting of seal pups and seal-fisheries interactions, may have a local bias within the region

ACKNOWLEDGING that seal hunting is not considered to be a solution to declining fish stocks or seal-fisheries interactions, and may have detrimental effects on population size and the long term survival of the species.

CONVINCED that seals play an important role as biological indicators on the effects of certain types of marine pollutants, in particular POPs

WITH A VIEW to improving the conservation status of the Caspian seal through an agreement with all of the Caspian littoral States that they will together exercise common jurisdiction over the full range of the seal population, using transparent procedures, and act together to improve its conservation status.

RECALLING the 2003 Framework Convention for the protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea and notably its Article 5 on general principles and Article 14 on Protection, Preservation, Restoration and Rational Use of Marine Living Resources

HAVE AGREED as follows:

1. The Convention Parties shall cooperate closely with a view to achieving and maintaining a favourable conservation status for the Caspian seal population.
2. Implement coordinated monitoring programmes on seals, especially on population size, population trend and population structure, reproductive and mortality parameters, health condition and impacts on seal populations from fisheries including by-catch. Regional scientists intend to lead and coordinate this work through a Caspian Seal Conservation Network in the coming years. Data collected will be transparent, will be published in international, peer reviewed journals, and will become available to the Convention Partners, national and international institutions and all relevant conservation and management authorities, and the general public in the Caspian region.
3. Develop a Seal Conservation Action and Management Plan (SCAMP) based on internationally peer reviewed¹ scientific studies and monitoring programmes on the population, health and ecological status of the Caspian seal.

¹ International peer review should conform to internationally accepted academic standards for peer review and should include review by scientists from outside the region with no competing interests.

4. Research should be carried out on seal migratory movements throughout the Caspian and use of key habitats throughout the year.
5. Research should be carried out on the population genetics of Caspian seals to identify the stock structure genetic subdivisions that may need to be accounted for in management plans.
6. Research should be carried out on the impact of industrial shipping and other commercial activities on seal habitat, particularly breeding habitat.
7. Implement, where appropriate, coordinated conservation of seals dispersed across national administrative regions or international territorial boundaries.
8. Research should be carried out on the impact on seals from fisheries activities and develop an efficient reporting system on damages to fishing gear and catches caused by seals.
9. Develop and implement mitigation measures to reduce by-catch and damage, such as modification of fishing-gear and scaring devices, based on existing knowledge.
10. Establish appropriate protected areas for seals where necessary.
11. All hunting (for commercial or scientific reasons or to protect fisheries) should be banned at least until the population is demonstrated to be recovering.
12. Research on seals will be carried out only using methodology that meets modern international scientific and ethical standards.
13. If legal hunting should be resumed when populations are deemed to be healthy at a future date, the following principles should be implemented:
 - i) Taking must occur in accordance with the humane principles of animal welfare.
 - ii) Taking should be supervised and regulated by the responsible wildlife management authority.
 - iii) Taking of seals may not jeopardise the conservation of seal stocks.
 - iv) Taking should be coordinated with neighbouring countries managing the population involved.
 - v) The numbers of seals taken in a specified area should be based on internationally reviewed scientific information on the seal population.
 - vi) Taking should be organised in a way that serves the needs of monitoring programmes in terms of relevant data and tissue samples being supplied to the Caspian Seal Conservation Network.
 - vii) Permission for taking should be issued individually by the management authority.
 - viii) Permission should be issued for a specific number of individuals and within a specified time of the year.

- ix) Annual reports on individuals taken should be presented to the Convention Partners, the appropriate coordinating body (The Caspian Seal Conservation Centre Network), and should be made available publicly.
- x) Convention Partners will continue to assess the condition of the Caspian seal population and will implement when appropriate coordinated conservation measures of seals on the basis of the most up to date peer reviewed information.

4. DRAFT CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE CASPIAN SEAL 2006-Onwards

1. Agreement area: The concerned Agreement area is the Caspian Sea

Explanatory note: The measures of the Seal Conservation Action and Management Plan (SCAMP) are outlined according to the following scheme.

Seal Agreement	Required effort and objectives	Action 2006-Onwards
The objectives and obligations of the Agreement itself	The objectives and the individual activities and measures that need to be undertaken to achieve the objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The activities and measures which multilaterally and/or of each Caspian littoral State shall implement in addition to the seal protection measures which already exist in the given State, in order to fulfil the Agreement • A Caspian Seal Conservation Network (CSCN) shall be established with a Centre in each of the Caspian littoral States working with the approval of each State Government • The CSCN will consult with an international team of specialists to determine and develop the necessary conservation measures and programme for research and monitoring
2. CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES		
<p><u>Habitats</u></p> <p>1. The Parties shall take appropriate measures for the protection of habitats. They shall pay due regard to the necessity of identifying, creating and maintaining a network of protected areas, on land, sea and ice throughout the Caspian and of ensuring the preservation of areas which are essential to the maintenance of the vital biological functions of seals.</p>	<p>It will be necessary: To identify and create protected areas and to take appropriate measures, i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to ensure that the protected areas cover the main birth, nursery, resting and foraging areas of seals and ensure that the measures cover a sufficient proportion of seals in all seasons in all parts of the Caspian; • to ensure that designations of seal protected areas are based on well-defined criteria of critical habitats 	<p><u>MULTILATERALLY</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define habitat and diet requirements for the different age groups. • Take appropriate measures to survey and identify seal breeding and resting sites in all seasons in all areas within the jurisdiction of each Caspian State. • Take appropriate measures to identify foraging areas, habitat and diet for juveniles and adults in all seasons in all areas. <p><u>KAZAKHSTAN and RUSSIA</u> Take appropriate measures to identify areas within which the highest densities of breeding seals are most likely to occur;</p> <p><u>MULTILATERALLY</u> Develop measures to define protected areas and define restricted activities within these areas. Define any remedial measures required to restore habitat.</p>

Seal Agreement	Required effort and objectives	Action 2006-Onwards
<p>2. The Parties shall preserve habitats and seals, within and outside protected areas, from undue disturbance or changes resulting, directly or indirectly, from human activities.</p>	<p>It will be necessary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that the seal protected areas are created in such a way that human impact on disturbance to the seal population is limited to a minimum. • To reduce disturbance by ice-breakers and other shipping 	<p><u>KAZAKHSTAN AND RUSSIA</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create seal protected areas within the ice-field where highest breeding seal densities most likely to occur. Use data from annual surveys to account for variation in ice conditions for seal protected area design. • Regulate shipping and other industrial activity so as to avoid protected areas and seal breeding areas as far as possible. <p><u>TURKMENISTAN</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create as appropriate new protected areas at seal haul-out islands and surrounding water. <p><u>AZERBAIJAN</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create as appropriate new protected areas at seal haul-out islands and surrounding water.
	<p>It will be necessary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To reduce the number of seals caught as by-catch and ensure that seals are not deliberately killed by fishermen 	<p><u>IRAN</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Release seals trapped in 'pareh' nets unharmed • Prevent deliberate killing of seals encountered during fishing operations such as kilka fishing <p><u>MULTILATERALLY</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take steps to prevent illegal setting of nets which may entrap and drown seals • Research ways of reducing seal by-catch in legally-set fishing nets
<p>3. The Parties shall identify areas of degraded habitat and explore possibilities for restoring such habitat or creating new habitat to compensate</p>	<p>It will be necessary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify haul-out areas for resting and breeding which were formerly used, but which are now not used, or used less than formerly • To identify seal foraging areas and determine extent of obstacles created by fishing nets, industrial installations, etc • Use data from other studies or monitoring programmes to identify areas where <i>Mnemiopsis</i> concentrations may be damaging stocks of fish which form part of the seals' diet 	<p><u>MULTILATERALLY</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chart, from historical records, sites used formerly and at present for seal haul-out, and indicate the causes for the current disuse; suggest remedial measures • Identify seal foraging areas by telemetry studies. Chart fishing nets, boats, industrial installations activity etc in those areas • Monitor seal diet seasonally, by means of analysing contents of seal scats collected from selected haul-out sites • Coordinate with regional <i>Mnemiopsis</i> monitoring programme to identify areas and stocks where <i>Mnemiopsis</i> impact may be severe, and determine whether these areas

Seal Agreement	Required effort and objectives	Action 2006-Onwards
		<p>and stocks coincide with important seal foraging areas and prey species.</p> <p><u>IRAN</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore possibilities for creation of artificial haul-out islands <p><u>AZERBAIJAN</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore possibility of creating channels to isolate seal haul-out sites from human land access
<p>Pollution</p> <p>The Caspian littoral States are determined to do their utmost to further reduce pollution of the Caspian Sea from whatever source with the aim of conserving and protecting the fish stocks and the food chain in the Caspian. To this end they shall endeavour to identify the sources of such pollution</p>	<p>It will be necessary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To use Caspian seals as indicators of the condition of the marine environment. • To co-ordinate with other environmental monitoring programmes within the Caspian Environment Programme concerned with POP pollution 	<p><u>MULTILATERALLY</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect blubber samples for analysis together with measurements of body length, blubber thickness and age from seals found dead from natural causes or in by-catch or from live sampling
<p>Overseeing</p> <p>4. The Parties shall take appropriate action to suppress illegal hunting and taking of seals.</p>	<p>It will be necessary</p> <p>To ensure the enforcement of the provisions of the agreement by an adequate management and overseeing system, which should – concerning all seal matters – be coordinated at state administrative agencies</p>	<p><u>MULTILATERALLY</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a region-wide agreement applicable to all Convention Parties, that disallows any deliberate injuring, killing or taking of seals without a permit being issued under the agreement, including enforcement of any existing relevant legislation in signatory countries • This agreement would include seals at haul-out sites, in seal-fisheries interactions and in scientific research • Establish overseeing of accessible seal reserves through the Caspian Sea guided by a common standard, to be developed by mutual agreement by CSCN • Establish a system to ensure there is no illegal hunting in the seal breeding areas • Enforce local laws on trade of wildlife products with respect to products derived from seals • Consider submission of Caspian seal for inclusion on CITES appendix I/II

Seal Agreement	Required effort and objectives	Action 2006-Onwards
3. RESEARCH AND MONITORING		
<p>1. The Parties shall coordinate their research programmes and projects and their monitoring of the seal population to increase their knowledge of the biology and the habitat including harmful effects of human activities on the seal population to provide a basis for measures to improve its conservation status.</p>	<p>It will be necessary</p> <p><u>Research</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To establish an overview of recent and ongoing research projects on seals to ensure information exchange 	<p><u>MULTILATERALLY</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An inventory of recent, ongoing and planned research projects on seals in the entire Caspian Sea area should be compiled by CSCN • Develop and adopt a procedure for international peer review of seal research • All material and results used in conservation/management decision will be made publicly available • Respond appropriately to new findings on existing threats, or identification of new threats as determined by the research and monitoring programmes.
<p>2, They shall, in particular, monitor and coordinate their research on,</p> <p>(a) population trends, through regular aerial surveys of the winter ice-field as well as counts at haul-out sites throughout the Caspian</p> <p>(b) Health surveys of live seals, and seal population parameters, using non-lethal methodology</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To carry out a full survey of pup production on the winter ice-field as appropriate for the ice-conditions in each year according to internationally agreed methods • To follow closely the population trend of Caspian seals according to the scheme submitted by international specialists to the Caspian Environment Programme following from the first such survey in February 2005 • To carry out a regular health survey of the seal population according to internationally agreed methods • To identify laboratories where samples may be analysed to international standards 	<p><u>KAZAKHSTAN AND RUSSIA</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate the annual aerial survey of the breeding seal population on the winter ice field • Ensure that young scientists are fully trained in practical and theoretical methodology to continue the aerial survey in future years according to international scientific and ethical standards • CSCN to establish and maintain electronic records for all aerial survey results • Annual report of aerial survey to be prepared, through CSCN to international standards <p><u>MULTILATERALLY</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate a regular health survey of the seal population using modern methods • Ensure that young scientists are fully trained in practical and theoretical methodology to continue the health survey in future years according to international scientific and ethical standards

Seal Agreement	Required effort and objectives	Action 2006-Onwards
<p>(c) Counts of seals at non-iced haul-out sites throughout the Caspian at different seasons</p> <p>(d) Investigation of all causes of seal mortality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To carry out a counts at seal haul-out sites in non-iced areas of the Caspian, simultaneously with the annual winter survey and at other seasons • To describe, investigate and analyse all causes of mortality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSCN to establish and maintain electronic records for all health survey results • Arrange for samples to be appropriately collected, stored and sent to laboratories for analysis • Regular report to be prepared through CSCN. <p><u>KAZAKHSTAN, AZERBAIJAN, TURKMENISTAN</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate and carry out counts at seal haul-out sites In non-iced areas of the Caspian, simultaneously with the annual winter survey and at other seasons • CSCN to prepare records and store counts • CSCN to prepare chart of all non-iced haul-out sites in Caspian, each site given an ID name and number • CSCN to prepare annual report of seal numbers at each haul-out site; data to be integrated with results of annual survey, where appropriate <p><u>MULTILATERALLY</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic measurements and description of all seals found dead will be taken • Seals found freshly dead will be necropsied and samples taken for analysis of health status • The data from the above programme shall be maintained as electronic records and held by CSCN <p><u>AZERBAIJAN</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The long-standing programme of seal mortality monitoring on the N. Apsheron Peninsula shall be continued and extended to other areas • The data from the above programme shall be maintained as electronic records and held by CSCN

Seal Agreement	Required effort and objectives	Action 2006-Onwards
<p>(e) Carry out a study of seal diet, using non-lethal methods</p> <p>(f) Carry out a study of seal migration and local movement patterns</p>	<p>To develop a multilateral project on Caspian seal diet using non-lethal methods</p> <p>To develop a multilateral project on Caspian seal movements, foraging areas and migration patterns using telemetry systems and individual marking</p>	<p><u>IRAN</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The mortality monitoring project, started in 2000-01, shall be continued The data from the above programme shall be maintained as electronic records and held by CSCN <p><u>MULTILATERALLY</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop an otolith guide for Caspian fish Develop a project for investigating seal diet by (a) analysing faecal samples collected from haul-out sites and (b) analyse food remains from seals found dead due to by-catch and other causes. NB. No seals should be killed for the purposes of this study <p><u>MULTILATERALLY</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a tagging and tracking programme for Caspian seals using modern telemetry systems CSCN to develop and maintain electronic records storing all tagging and telemetry data CSCN to report on all results of all telemetry and marking results
4. TAKING AND EXEMPTIONS FOR TAKING		
<p>Taking</p> <p>1. The Parties shall prohibit the taking of Caspian seals</p>	<p>The taking of Caspian seals shall be prohibited by the Parties</p>	<p><u>NATIONAL LEVEL</u></p> <p>Implement provisions in appropriate form in national legislation</p>
<p>Exemptions for Taking</p> <p>2. The competent authorities may grant exemptions from the prohibition referred to in the first paragraph authorizing persons to take seals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In case of caring for a disabled animals in order to release them after recovery, insofar as these are diseased or weakened seals or evidently abandoned suckling seal pups. Seals which are clearly suffering and cannot survive may be humanely euthanized by a fully qualified veterinarian or biologist, provided (a) a 	<p>National Governments should be advised by CSCN through appropriate national and/or regional agencies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caspian seals should not be taken into captivity in order to carry out feeding or other experiments unless (a) stringent welfare conditions can be met and (b) the research is deemed to be (i) necessary for seal conservation, (ii) scientifically sound according to international standards 	<p><u>MULTILATERALLY</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSCN should meet to consider any such applications from national institutions CSCN should develop programmes to train young scientists in modern, non-lethal research concepts and methodologies, such as are used in western Europe and the US. Any exemptions for taking seals into captivity

Seal Agreement	Required effort and objectives	Action 2006-Onwards
<p>necropsy and tissue sampling is carried out and (b) no parts of the body are given for sale or monetary gain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For Institutions to be designated as educational aquaria for the public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no plans at present to initiate seal rehabilitation facilities, although this may be debated at a later date Seals should not be kept in public aquaria unless (a) modern stringent standards of animal welfare, display and educational criteria are met by the facility and (b) the facility is demonstrably in the regional public interest and serves a strong educational and conservation purpose 	<p>for research should be evaluated by CSCN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The behavioural ecology, known stranding pattern and prevalence of infectious disease (CDV) of Caspian seals mean that the seal is probably not generally a good candidate for rehabilitation programmes, although such a programme might be developed as a conservation, welfare and PR tool. A rehabilitation facility and public aquarium might be combined, if deemed to be appropriate by CSCN
5. PUBLIC INFORMATION		
<p>The Parties shall take such measures as may be required to make the general public aware of the conservation status of the seal population, of the content and aims of the Agreement, including the Conservation and Management Plan, to improve the conservation status</p>	<p>It will be necessary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To inform the public throughout the region to contribute to the continuous implementation of the Conservation and Management Plan (SCAMP) To recognise the fact that Caspian seals move throughout the Caspian Sea and are an integrated part of the Caspian Sea ecosystem, To ensure that the CSCN has qualified, full- or part-time public awareness officers To ensure that publicising information that could enhance the taking of seals will be avoided To ensure that the public knows when they disturb seals and how they can avoid it To ensure that the public knows what to do in the event of finding a live or dead seal on the beach 	<p><u>MULTILATERALLY</u> CSCN should establish and maintain a multilingual Caspian seal information website, as well as brochures, posters and leaflets to enhance public awareness</p>
6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS		
<p>a. national The implementation of the common Seal Conservation and Management Plan (SCAMP) in national measures including monitoring to be financed by the contracting Parties</p> <p>b. common The implementation of multilateral measures in SCAMP to be financed by (a) contributions from Contracting Parties, (b) research funding from international sources to be sought by CSCN with assistance and guidance from the Caspian Environment programme (CEP) and collaborating international scientists</p>		

