

Report from Kazakhstan

2010-2012

Kazakhstan did not sign the CAF Action Plan. Nevertheless, there were done a lot of activities towards the Action Plan major objectives during last 3 years, in 2010-2012. All these activities correspond to Ramsar Convention and CMS where Kazakhstan is a Party. The responsible agency for wildlife conservation and management in the country is the Committee of Forestry and Hunting of Ministry of Agriculture. The Committee collaborates actively with all relevant national and international agencies and organizations, including NGOs, like “Association for the Conservation of Biodiversity of Kazakhstan” (ACBK).

Two big GEF project aimed to conservation of wetlands and waterbirds were successfully completed: GEF/UNDP/Government of Kazakhstan “Wetlands Project” and GEF/UNEP/Government of Kazakhstan “Siberian Crane Project”. At the moment, 10 Kazakhstan’s sites with total area 3281398 hectares are included in Ramsar List, and 2 of them are designated in the last 2 years. These are “Ili River Delta and South Lake Balkhash” (976,630 ha) and “Lesser Aral Sea and Delta of the Syrdarya River” (330,000 ha).

All 10 designated Ramsar sites were monitored by Committee of Forestry and Hunting of Ministry of Agriculture, and 7 of them till 2010 - with support of GEF/UNDP Wetlands Project. Three of them are protected in State Nature Reserves, 1 - in State Nature Reservats, 2 - in State Nature Sanctuaries. With support of GEF/UNDP Wetlands Project, special computer information system “Wetlands” is elaborated and used for the project sites “Alakol-Sasykkol lake system”, “Korgalzhyn Nature reserve” and “Ural river delta” (included in 2009 in new “Akzhayik” Nature Reservat) . By the decree of Government of 05/10/2010, the protected area (Alakol State Nature Reserve) for Ramsar site “Alakol-Sasykkol lake system” was increased for 45505 ha and includes now 65217,9 ha. The state of ecosystems and biodiversity of Ily River Delta and southern part of Balkhash Lake were evaluated, the feasibility study for establishment here a specially protected area was done with WWF support. New “Altyn Dala” State Nature Reservat in dry steppe zone has been created by Decree of Government of Kazakhstan № 1496 on 26 November 2012. The area of Reservat is 489 766 hectares, including the Important Bird Area "Sarykopa Lake System" (52115 ha).

The “Rules for designation of wetlands as wetlands of national an international importance” are approved by decree of Government of 14/06/2010. “The list of wetlands of national and international importance” was approved by order of Minister of Agriculture of Kazakhstan of 26/04/2010; the list is the base for national cadastre of wetlands. The amendments for Kazakhstan legislation including appearance of term “Important Bird Area” were adopted by Government in January 2012.

In frame of above mentioned GEF/UNDP Wetlands Project, several local SSAPs were elaborated, approved by the Committee of Forestry and Hunting and implemented in Protected Areas involved in the SSAPs. In 2012, National SSAP for Lesser White-Fronted Goose was adopted. The SSAP was elaborated with active participation of ACBK and with support of AEWA, and will be implemented under leading of ACBK. AEWA supported Lesser White-Fronted Goose and other geese (and other waterbirds) surveys organized by ACBK in North Kazakhstan in 2010-2011. New 2-year project for conservation of migratory waterbirds in northern Kazakhstan supported by AEWA and implemented by ACBK was started in 2012.

In October 2010, ToT (Training of Trainers) was organized by ACBK in Astana in frame of “Wings over Wetlands” GEF international project, using the training modules prepared by the project and translated into Russian by ACBK, with participation of people from post-soviet countries and Iran.

Every year, single counts of wintering waterbirds were conducted by ACBK at several sites in south (Chardara reservoir, Badam reservoirs, Shoshkakol lakes), south-east (Sorbulak lakes, Kapchagay canyon) Kazakhstan, as well as were organized by AGIP consortium at Kazakhstan’s part of Caspian Sea. AGIP organizes monitoring of migratory waterbirds at Caspian Sea in spring and in autumn, too. Monitoring of breeding and migratory birds as part of routine research activity is included in work plans of all Kazakhstan’s State Nature Reserves, State Nature Reservats and State National Nature Parks. The reports are to be sent to the Committee of Forestry and Hunting. Institute of Zoology of Ministry of Science conducts autumn surveys of migratory landbirds at Chokpak Pass in south Kazakhstan - the major migration “bottleneck” in the country.

Now, the elaboration and creation of national data base for biodiversity data (cadastre) is in process, by order of Committee of Forestry and Hunting and with governmental funding; part of the cadastre with biodiversity data from Protected Areas is supported by new GEF/UNDP project.

Recommendations:

- organization of monitoring system for migratory and breeding waterbirds and key wetlands, including wintering sites;
- regular monitoring of migratory landbirds at bottlenecks;
- improvement of system of calculation of hunting limits by achievement of high-quality waterbird surveys with wide participation of hunters;
- continuation of current governmental policy for conservation of wetlands and development of Protected Area system, including improvement of site management;
- strengthening of public awareness on importance of migratory birds and Important Bird Areas as key sites for bird conservation.