

7. Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI) – Environment

Recently, Central Asian countries endorsed the 2026–2032 Work Programme under Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI) to protect 17 migratory mammals.

Overview of CAMI

Full Form– Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI)

Launch– Established in 2014 at COP11 of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) in Quito, Ecuador.

Parent Framework–CMS, also known as the Bonn Convention, aims to conserve migratory species across borders. Addresses threats arising from habitat loss, climate change, illegal hunting, and human activities.

Objective–Provides a regional framework to conserve migratory mammals through–

1. Transboundary conservation
2. Policy coordination
3. Capacity building

Geographical Coverage–

14 Range Countries– Afghanistan, Bhutan, China, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan.

Species Covered (17 Mammals)

Key migratory species under CAMI–Ungulates– Argali sheep, Asiatic wild ass, Bukhara deer, Goitered gazelle, Kiang, Mongolian gazelle, Saiga antelope, Urial, Wild camel, Wild yak. Carnivores– Asiatic cheetah, Eurasian lynx, Pallas’s cat, Persian leopard, Snow leopard, Gobi bear

Equines– Przewalski’s horse

Significance–These species often traverse international borders, making transboundary cooperation essential for their survival.

Key Features of CAMI

Regional Coordination–Strengthens conservation across shared ecosystems and migration corridors in Central Asia.

Programme of Work (PoW)–Identifies priority transboundary regions for conservation.

Outlines strategies for–

1. Anti-poaching measures
2. Habitat restoration
3. Monitoring and data collection

Collaborative Support–Technical and financial support comes from–

1. IUCN
2. CMS Secretariat
3. NGOs
4. National Governments

Focus Areas–Tackling habitat fragmentation, climate change, migration barriers, illegal hunting, and weak cross-border coordination.

Recent Developments (2025)

Commitments by Range States–Countries reaffirmed conservation priorities. Showcased success stories with Saiga Antelope, Bukhara Deer, and Persian Leopard.

Organizational Support–Fifteen organizations, including IUCN and national institutes, pledged support for PoW implementation.

Upcoming Updates–CAMI resolution to be updated at CMS COP15 in Brazil (March 23–29, 2026).

India’s Role in CAMI

Range Species in India–Snow Leopard, Argali sheep, and Kiang are found in India’s trans-Himalayan regions.

National Initiatives Alignment–India aligns CAMI objectives with–

1. Project Snow Leopard

2. Global Snow Leopard Ecosystem Protection Programme (GSLEP)

Contribution–India participates in transboundary ecosystem protection, anti-poaching measures, habitat management, and species monitoring.

Significance of CAMI

Transboundary Cooperation–Enhances regional collaboration for species that “know no borders.”

Ecological Connectivity–Promotes ecological linkages across mountain, steppe, and desert ecosystems.

International Commitments–Strengthens India’s and Central Asia’s commitment to–

1. Convention on Migratory Species (CMS)
2. Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 15 – Life on Land)

Capacity Building–Encourages scientific research, monitoring, and conservation education for migratory mammals.

Way Forward

Policy Integration–Align CAMI strategies with national and regional wildlife policies.

Community Involvement–Engage local communities in habitat protection and anti-poaching efforts.

Scientific Collaboration–Promote joint research, monitoring, and data-sharing among Range States.

Funding and Technical Support–Mobilize support from multilateral agencies, NGOs, and international donors for programme implementation.

Source– <https://www.downtoearth.org.in/wildlife-biodiversity/central-asia-comes-together-to-protect-17-shared-species-like-saiga-bukhara-deer-and-several-others>

