

## PROJECT INFORMATION

### Nomination and Management of UNESCO World Heritage Natural Sites in Central Asia



Sayram-Ugam State National  
Nature Park, Uzbekistan

Source: Elena Osipova, IUCN

## Background

The largely arid ecosystems of Central Asia – steppes, deserts and mountains – host an exceptionally rich variety of native and endemic species, such as the Snow Leopard and the Saiga. However, habitat loss and fragmentation greatly threaten region's biodiversity. Increasing the coverage and connectivity of well-managed protected areas and World Heritage sites would be an effective way to protect it. Yet, there is a limited institutional and technical capacity to use the international instruments for designating new sites or improving the management systems of existing ones. This is particularly true for transboundary sites and shared ecosystems.

## Project details

The project has contributed to the conservation of sites with outstanding universal value in Central Asia by identifying priority sites for World Heritage nomination and building capacities to improve the overall management of sites in the region. As a basis, IUCN prepared the 'World Heritage Thematic Study for Central Asia' and announced it at the 43rd World Heritage Committee Session in Baku, Azerbaijan. An in-depth desk analysis followed by a consultative process including two regional workshops and a number of online consultations identified nine sites with potential for World Heritage, either as new nominations or extensions. To improve the capacity for designation and management of World Heritage in the region, a training workshop gathered 25 experts to assess threats and management effectiveness of three existing sites and to identify priorities for their conservation. Additionally, the manual 'Managing Natural World Heritage' was translated into Russian, to help managers in Central Asia understand and incorporate World Heritage concepts and processes into the management of World Heritage sites.

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**Beneficiary countries:** Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

**Duration:** 06/2017 – 10/2019

**Beneficiaries:** Competent national ministries and authorities for nature conservation

**Implementing organisation:** International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (ECARO)

**Project number:** 85307

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**Advisory Assistance Programme (AAP)**  
for environmental protection in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and other countries neighbouring the European Union – a programme of the Federal Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety

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