



NOTIFICATION TO THE PARTIES

No. 2025/019

Geneva, 20 February 2025

CONCERNING:

TAJIKISTAN

Consultation with range States on a proposal to
include *Hyaena hyaena* in Appendix I

1. This Notification is being published at the request of the Government of Tajikistan.
2. In accordance with Resolution Conf. 8.21 (Rev. CoP16) on *Consultation with range States on proposals to amend Appendices I and II*, the Government of Tajikistan wishes to consult range States.
3. Accordingly, the Government of Tajikistan requests range States to provide any available information on the conservation status (distribution, population size, structure, and trends), and on legal domestic and international trade of specimens, parts, and derivatives, as well as information on illegal trade (seizures and confiscations).
4. All range States are invited to submit their responses to this Notification **by 31 March 2025**, directly to the CITES Management Authority of Tajikistan (and not the CITES Secretariat), by email to: shahlo.azizbekova@mail.ru and citesstripedhyena@gmail.com.

Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

Postal address:
CITES Secretariat
Palais des Nations
Avenue de la Paix 8-14
1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

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CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS FOR AMENDMENT OF APPENDICES I AND II

A. Proposal

Include *Hyaena hyaena* in Appendix I

B. Proponent

Tajikistan

C. Supporting statement

1. Taxonomy

- | | | |
|-----|----------------------|---|
| 1.1 | Class: | Mammalia |
| 1.2 | Order: | Carnivora |
| 1.3 | Family: | Hyaenidae |
| 1.4 | Species: | <i>Hyaena hyaena</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) |
| 1.5 | Scientific synonyms: | None |
| 1.6 | Common names: | English: Striped Hyena
Russian: Полосатая гиена
Tajik: Кафтор
Persian: کفتار راهراه
Arabic: ضبع مخطط
Hebrew: צבוע מפוספס
Uzbek: Dulta
Turkmen: Syrtlan |
| 1.7 | Code numbers: | None |

2. Overview

The Striped Hyena (*Hyaena hyaena*) is currently listed as Vulnerable and Near Threatened on the IUCN Red List [AbiSaid et al 2015]. This classification is based on several criteria, including a significant population decline, a restricted area of distribution, and a small wild population. The species is also included in Appendix III of CITES at the request of Pakistan in 2014, which regulates international trade to prevent over-exploitation but is not sufficient given the current threats. The Striped Hyena faces numerous significant threats that have contributed to its declining population. Habitat loss is a major issue, as human activities such as agriculture, urbanization, and infrastructure development encroach on the natural habitats of the hyena. This leads to fragmentation and degradation of their living spaces, making it difficult for them to find food and shelter. Illegal trade is another critical threat¹. The Striped Hyena is often targeted for its body parts, which are used in traditional medicine and for other purposes [Hofer et al 1998, Thakur (2024)]. This illegal trade is driven by high demand and can have devastating effects on the population [In AbiSaid et al 2015 (G. Serra pers. comm. 2014)]. Additionally, the species is sometimes captured and sold as exotic pets, further exacerbating their decline. Given the small population size, even minimal levels of harvest or illegal trade can have significant impacts, as each individual counts towards the survival of the species [In AbiSaid et al 2015 F. Cuzin pers. comm. 2007]. The population trend of the Striped Hyena is decreasing, with mature individuals continuing to decline. This is particularly concerning as the species has a low reproductive rate, meaning that population recovery is slow. The combination of these factors makes the Striped Hyena highly vulnerable to extinction. Given these urgent conservation needs, this proposal aims to uplist the Striped Hyena to Appendix I of CITES. This uplisting is justified as the species meets the criteria of having a small wild population, a restricted distribution, and being

¹ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2287884X21000728>

significantly affected by trade. Appendix I listing would provide the highest level of international protection, prohibiting all commercial trade in the species and ensuring stricter enforcement measures.

Uplisting the Striped Hyena is consistent with Goal 2 of the CITES Strategic Vision 2021-2030 wherein “cases of uncertainty, either as to the status of a species, or the impact of trade, Parties commit to act in the best interest of the conservation of the species and aim to adopt measures proportionate to the anticipated risks to the species under consideration”.² By uplisting the Striped Hyena to Appendix I, we can address the urgent conservation needs of this species and implement more effective measures to protect it from extinction. This includes enhancing habitat protection, cracking down on illegal trade through stricter enforcement and international cooperation, and ensuring that any use of the species is sustainable and legal. The goal is to stabilize and eventually increase the population of the Striped Hyena, ensuring its survival for future generations. Once the population has recovered, we would be ready to consider downlisting the species to ensure that conservation measures remain appropriate and effective.

3. Species characteristics

The Striped Hyena is a medium-sized carnivore with distinctive black stripes on its body and legs. It has a robust build, a large head, and powerful jaws. The species is primarily nocturnal and scavenges for food, playing an important ecological role in ecosystems by consuming carrion and preventing the spread of diseases. Striped Hyenas are solitary or live in small family groups, and they have a wide range of vocalizations used for communication. The Striped Hyena has a varied diet that includes carrion, small mammals, birds, fruits, and insects. Its strong jaws and digestive system allow it to consume bones and other tough materials that other predators might leave behind. This scavenging behavior helps to clean the environment and reduce the spread of diseases. Striped Hyenas often follow herders, consuming the carcasses of dead animals, and they also follow large carnivores such as the Persian Leopard, and historically the Turanian Tiger, benefiting from the remains of their kills.

4. Status and trends

4.1 Habitat trends

The Striped Hyena's habitat is increasingly being encroached upon by human activities, leading to fragmentation and degradation. Urbanization, agricultural expansion, and infrastructure development are major factors contributing to habitat loss. Protected areas are crucial for the survival of the species, but these areas are often insufficient in size and connectivity to support viable populations. In many regions, the natural habitats of the Striped Hyena, such as savannas, grasslands, and semi-deserts, are being converted into agricultural land or urban areas. This habitat loss not only reduces the available space for the hyenas but also leads to a decrease in prey availability and an increase in human-wildlife conflicts.

4.2 Population size

The global population is estimated to be about 5,000 but not more than 10,000 mature individuals. Population estimates vary across regions, with some areas having critically low numbers. For example, in parts of North Africa and the Middle East, populations are highly fragmented and isolated. Accurate population estimates are challenging due to the species' elusive nature and nocturnal habits. However, field studies and surveys indicate that the population is declining in most parts of its range. Conservation efforts need to focus on improving population monitoring to obtain more reliable data [Akash et al 2021].

4.3 Population structure

The population is fragmented, with small, isolated groups. This fragmentation leads to reduced genetic diversity and increased vulnerability to local extinctions. The social structure of Striped Hyenas includes solitary individuals, pairs, and small family groups, which can complicate population assessments. Fragmentation of populations can result in inbreeding and a loss of genetic diversity, which can reduce the species' ability to adapt to environmental changes and increase the risk of

² <https://cites.org/sites/default/files/documents/COP/19/resolution/E-Res-18-03.pdf>

disease outbreaks. Conservation strategies should aim to enhance habitat connectivity and facilitate gene flow between isolated populations.

4.4 Population trends

The population is decreasing due to habitat loss, human-wildlife conflict, and illegal trade. Long-term monitoring data indicate a consistent decline in numbers, with some regions experiencing more rapid declines than others. Conservation efforts have been insufficient to halt or reverse these trends. The decline in population is particularly pronounced in areas with high human population density and intensive land use. Efforts to mitigate human-wildlife conflict, such as community-based conservation programs and compensation schemes for livestock losses, are essential to reduce retaliatory killings and support the recovery of hyena populations.

4.5 Geographic trends

The species is found in North and East Africa, the Middle East, Caucasus, Central Asia and the Indian subcontinent. However, its range is contracting due to habitat destruction, human encroachment, and active persecution. In some areas, the species has been extirpated, and the remaining populations are often confined to protected areas or remote regions. The contraction of the species' range is a significant concern, as it limits the availability of suitable habitats and increases the risk of local extinction. Conservation efforts should focus on protecting and restoring habitats, as well as establishing wildlife corridors to connect fragmented populations.

5. Threats

The primary threats to the Striped Hyena include habitat loss, human-wildlife conflict, and illegal trade. Hyena cubs are often captured by poachers and sold to private pet shops. Additionally, retaliatory killings by humans due to livestock predation further threaten the species. Other threats include poisoning, road accidents, and persecution due to cultural beliefs and superstitions [Frembgen et al 1998]. Habitat loss is driven by agricultural expansion, urbanization, and infrastructure development, which reduces the availability of suitable habitats and prey. Human-wildlife conflict arises when hyenas prey on livestock, leading to retaliatory killings by farmers. Illegal trade in hyena parts for traditional medicine and exotic pets compounds the decline of the species.

The illegal wildlife trade remains a significant threat to the striped hyena, with body parts being used in traditional medicine and for other purposes. This ongoing demand exacerbates the species' decline. "Until recently, the sexual organs and rectum of female spotted and striped hyenas were used in eastern Africa, Iran, Turkmenistan, and Afghanistan for love magic (Polak 1865; Mills and Hofer 1998)."

With the recent political instability in Afghanistan and generally across the larger region where several conflicts are ongoing, it is anticipated a significant increase in illegal wildlife trade, further endangering the striped hyena population across its entire global home range.

6. Utilization and trade

6.1 National utilization

The Striped Hyena is often hunted due to superstitious fears and its reputation for causing injuries to adults sleeping outside, snatching and killing children, and grave robbery. Many cultures view the Striped Hyena as a predator of livestock. Additionally, it is widely exploited for its body parts, which are believed to have medicinal or magical properties. These parts, such as bones, skins, and organs, are used in traditional medicine and as aphrodisiacs. This demand drives illegal hunting and trade, further threatening the species.

6.2 Legal trade

In many countries, legal trade in Striped Hyenas is prohibited due to their low numbers and status as a Red List species. There is limited legal trade, primarily for scientific and educational purposes, under strict regulations. Permits are required for the export of hyenas for scientific research, education, and conservation purposes. However, enforcement of these regulations is often weak,

allowing illegal trade to persist. Additionally, some sport hunting is possible in certain African countries where populations are healthy. In Morocco, the species is commercially hunted for use in traditional medicine, with various parts being used (especially the brain) and may fetch very high prices.

6.3 Parts and derivatives in trade

Body parts such as bones, skins, and organs are traded illegally. These parts are often used in traditional medicine, rituals, and as curios [Tourani et al 2012]. The illegal trade in hyena parts is difficult to monitor and control, as it often occurs in informal markets and through clandestine networks. Strengthening law enforcement and raising awareness about the legal protections for hyenas are essential to combat this trade.

6.4 Illegal trade

The illegal trade in Striped Hyenas is significant³, with cubs being captured and sold as exotic pets⁴. This trade is often clandestine and difficult to monitor, contributing to the decline of wild populations. The capture and sale of hyena cubs for the exotic pet trade are particularly concerning, as it removes individuals from the wild and disrupts social structures. Efforts to combat this trade should include stricter regulations, increased penalties, and public awareness campaigns.

6.5 Actual or potential trade impacts

The illegal trade has a severe impact on the population, contributing to its decline. The removal of individuals from the wild for trade disrupts social structures and reduces reproductive potential. The impact of illegal trade on hyena populations compounds other threats, such as habitat loss, persecution and human-wildlife conflict. Addressing these threats requires a comprehensive approach that includes law enforcement, community engagement, and habitat conservation.

7. Legal instruments

7.1 National

The Striped Hyena is protected under national laws in Tajikistan and many range countries. These laws vary in their effectiveness and enforcement, with some countries having stronger protections than others. National laws protecting the Striped Hyena include hunting bans, habitat protection measures, and penalties for illegal trade. However, the effectiveness of these laws depends on the capacity and commitment of wildlife protection agencies to enforce them.

7.2 International

The species is listed in Appendix III of CITES. The IUCN data on this species is outdated, and despite being considered a migratory species, it is yet to be listed in the CMS. There has been limited international focus and effort towards its conservation, and current measures are not sufficient to address the threats it faces. Striped Hyena is threatened with extinction and its status may be affected by international trade: therefore, uplisting to Appendix I is necessary to enhance its protection.

8. Species management

8.1 Management measures

Conservation programs for the Striped Hyena are lacking in many range countries. There is limited focus on habitat protection and conflict mitigation. Community-based initiatives, anti-poaching efforts, and habitat restoration projects are either insufficient or non-existent. Effective management measures, such as the establishment and maintenance of protected areas, community-based conservation programs, and initiatives to reduce human-wildlife conflict, are not adequately supported. Additionally, there are no significant efforts to improve the image of the hyena, which

³ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2351989423001087>

⁴ <https://drug2.ru/view199831.html?ysclid=m6g5r4kv859936386>

contributes to human-wildlife conflict. The available data on the Striped Hyena, such as the IUCN document “Hyaenas: Status Survey and Conservation Action Plan” from 1998, is very old, and there have been no significant updates or new research in recent years. There is a need for increased funding, capacity building, and stakeholder engagement to improve conservation efforts.

8.2 Population monitoring

Monitoring programs are limited and need to be expanded to provide accurate population data. Improved monitoring techniques, such as camera trapping and genetic analysis, are needed to assess population trends and inform conservation strategies.

9. Information on similar species

Spotted Hyena (*Crocuta crocuta*): This is the most well-known hyena species, characterized by its larger size, spotted coat, and social structure (living in clans). While both spotted and striped hyena are scavengers and opportunistic hunters, the Spotted hyena is significantly more social and often dominates carcasses, unlike the more solitary Striped Hyena. They also have different geographic ranges, with the Spotted Hyena largely absent from Asia.

Brown Hyena (*Parahyaena brunnea*): This species is smaller than the Spotted Hyena and has a grizzled brown coat. It is primarily a scavenger, exhibiting less social complexity than the Spotted Hyena but still more than the Striped Hyena. It is found in southern and eastern Africa, inhabiting a different range than the Striped Hyena.

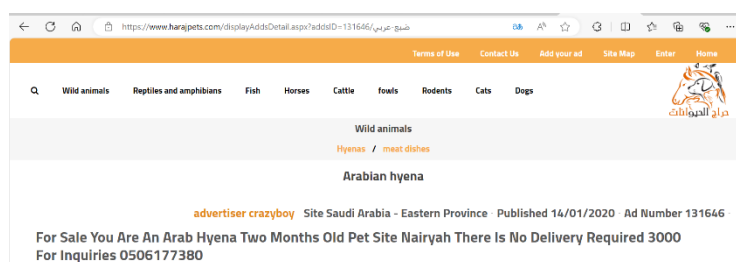
10. Consultations

Consultations were conducted with various stakeholders, including members of the IUCN Hyena Specialist Group (HSG) and the IUCN Cat Specialist Group (CAT). We also engaged with national and regional experts, as well as scientific institutions in Germany, Uzbekistan, and Georgia. Additional consultations involved non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as NABU, Conservation X Labs, and the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS).

11. Additional remarks

The evidence of illegal wildlife trade (IWT) involving striped hyenas is substantial and concerning. Various online platforms and social media groups have been found to offer striped hyenas and their body parts for sale. For instance, listings on Haraj, a popular classifieds website in Saudi Arabia, include offers for live striped hyenas. Additionally, websites like Wildberries and Magic Bazaar advertise products made from hyena musk, which is used as an aphrodisiac. Social media platforms such as Facebook also have groups where users can find and purchase hyena parts, including brains and teeth. These examples highlight the ongoing illegal trade and the urgent need for stricter regulations and enforcement to protect this vulnerable species.

Here are the links to the evidence provided:



[Haraj Listing 2](#)

Wild animals
Hyenas / meat dishes

For sale a hyena that is three and a half months old

Advertiser aqlam Site Saudi Arabia - Riyadh Province Published 27/04/2014 - Ad Number 204

For Sale A Hyena That Is Three And A Half Months Old In Riyadh With The Possibility Of Delivery To Any Area
In Saudi Arabia At The Expense Of The Buyer
For Inquiries, Please Call 0550222557

[Al-Quds Article](#)
[Facebook Post](#)
[Wildberries Listing](#)
[Magic Bazaar Listing](#)
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[Arab-Shop Listing 2](#)
[Instagram Post](#)
[Traffic](#)
[Russian animals online forum](#)
[Exoticanimalsforsale website](#)
[Russian social media post on OK.ru](#)

12. References

1. **AbiSaid, M. & Dloniak, S.M.D. 2015.** Hyaena hyaena. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2015: e.T10274A45195080.
2. **Akash, M., Dheer, A., Dloniak, S.M., & Jacobson, A.P. (2021).** "The faded stripes of Bengal: a historical perspective on the easternmost distribution of the striped hyena." *European Journal of Wildlife Research*, 67, 108. Retrieved from Springer.
3. **Frembgen, J.W. (1998).** "The Magicity of the Hyena: Beliefs and Practices in West and South Asia." *Asian Folklore Studies*, 57, 331-344. Retrieved from JSTOR.
4. **Hofer, H., & Mills, M.G.L. (1998).** Hyaenas: Status Survey and Conservation Action Plan. IUCN/SSC Hyaena Specialist Group. This action plan includes information on the threats from illegal trade and use in traditional medicine. Retrieved from IUCN.
5. **Thakur, M.S. (2024).** "Striped hyena: A misunderstood scavenger." This article discusses the threats to striped hyenas, including habitat degradation and illegal trade for traditional medicine. Retrieved from The Annapurna Express.
6. **Tourani, M., Moqanaki, E. M., & Kiabi, B. H. (2012).** Vulnerability of striped hyaenas, *Hyaena hyaena*, in a human-dominated landscape of Central Iran. *Zoology in the Middle East*, 56(1), 133-136.

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/mammals/facts/striped-hyenas>