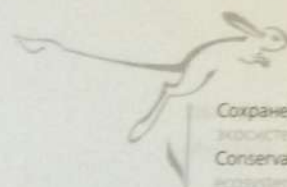


Степные и другие сообщения
Poster session and other abstracts



Сохранение степных и полупустынных экосистем Евразии
Conservation of steppe and semidesert ecosystems in Eurasia

An improved method for the aerial census of Saiga antelope (*Saiga tatarica tatarica*)

Улучшенный метод авиационного учета антилопы сайга (*Saiga tatarica tatarica*)

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More than 80% of the world's population of Saiga antelopes (*Saiga tatarica tatarica*) live in Kazakhstan. The size of the three populations in Kazakhstan has already been estimated for many years, starting in the 1950's. The method used is an aerial survey from a plane, using transect counts. The exact method has been amended several times throughout the years, but not since the end of the Soviet Union, mainly due to a lack in resources. In the framework of the Altyn Dala Conservation Initiative the used methodology has been reviewed by experts from Africa, resulting in recommendations for its improvement. These have been introduced step-wise during the last years towards a census which produces more reliable results. New technology has been introduced, better equipment contributed, the counting method improved in order to minimise errors. The results show that the old method seems to have underestimated the population size, what is a quite positive outcome for this endangered species. But also limitation of the used method became obvious, which will be important with a growing population size, presumably requiring further technical amendments.