



“Working within CITES for the protection and conservation of species in international trade”

North African Gazelles

Gazella dorcas, Gazella cuvieri, Gazella leptoceros

CoP14 Prop.10; CoP14 Prop.11; CoP14 Prop.12 (Algeria) Inclusion in Appendix I of *Gazella dorcas*, *Gazella cuvieri* and *Gazella leptoceros*

SSN VIEW: Support the Proposals

THE THREE GAZELLE SPECIES HAVE DECLINED DRAMATICALLY THROUGHOUT MUCH OF THEIR RANGE AND HAVE ENCOUNTERED DECLINE AND DEGRADATION OF HABITAT

The three species are listed in Appendix I of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) which includes species in danger of extinction. They are also all listed as species facing a higher risk of global extinction by IUCN: *Gazella cuvieri* is categorized as Endangered, *Gazella leptoceros* is classified as Endangered and decreasing, and *Gazella dorcas* is classified as Vulnerable or decreasing.

Populations for each species have shown significant signs of decline at the national level and range States have nationally reported to the CMS that :

- *Gazella cuvieri* is endangered in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia
- *Gazella dorcas* is extinct in Nigeria and Senegal; endangered in Morocco, Libya and Mauritania; probably endangered in Mali, Burkina Faso; probably vulnerable or endangered in Chad and Niger; vulnerable in Tunisia and Egypt; probably near threatened or vulnerable in Sudan, and probably vulnerable in Algeria
- *Gazella leptoceros* endangered in Egypt and in Mali; probably endangered in Algeria, Tunisia and Libya; in low numbers in Niger; rare in Chad; accidental in Morocco ; possibly extirpated in Sudan (CMS 2002 and CMS 2006)

Available estimates for the three species show that their populations are small. The degradation and the decline of the species’ habitat are also substantiated by available data:

Species	Available population estimates	Data on the degradation and decline of the species range/habitat
<i>Gazella cuvieri</i>	1450-2450 individuals: 600 to 1500 in Morocco, 300 to 400 in Tunisia and 560 in Algeria (a new survey in Algeria found that only 500 animals remained which would reduce this estimate) (CMS 2006)	<i>“The degradation and decline of habitats is mainly due to the continuous expansion of pastureland for livestock and the deforestation for agriculture or charcoal. As a consequence, the numbers have been severely reduced and the range fragmented.”</i> (CMS 2006)
<i>Gazella dorcas</i>	Nigeria: extinct; Senegal: extinct; Algeria: 619 ; Morocco: 500-1500; Egypt: 1,000-2,000 in rapid decline; Mali: 2,000-2,500; Ethiopia: little more than 500 specimens in the Afar region; Niger: 100; (Ali and Zeleke 2003 and CMS 2006)	<i>“Formerly common in its entire range, Gazella dorcas has entirely disappeared from many regions and been gravely reduced in numbers where it subsists. ...The species has suffered, though to a lesser degree than other sahelo-saharan antelopes, because of its greater ecological flexibility, from catastrophic droughts, degradation of pastures through overgrazing, cutting of woody plants and loss of optimal habitats to development pressures.”</i> (CMS 2006) <i>“The degradation of the environment, particularly through overgrazing and logging, diminishes food supplies which</i>

Species	Available population estimates	Data on the degradation and decline of the species range/habitat
		<i>can be critical in the summer and appears to be an important factor in the regression of the species.” (Cuzin 2003)</i>
<i>Gazella leptoceros</i>	Less than 2,500 animals, with sub-populations of no more than 250 mature individuals (Mallon& Kingswood 2001)	<i>“Gazella leptoceros leptoceros has vanished from most of its range in the Egyptian Western Desert. ... For Gazella leptoceros loderi there is no objective indication of range contraction. There are however incontestable signs of decreasing numbers.” (CMS 2006)</i>

TRADE REMAINS A THREAT TO ALL THREE SPECIES

The three species were listed in CITES Appendix III by Tunisia in 1976. This level of CITES protection has been insufficient to ensure that the international demand for parts and products is not detrimental to the survival of the species. North African gazelles are heavily and illegally hunted for their horns, meat and skins.

Levels of reported legal international trade in *Gazella cuvieri* and *Gazella leptoceros* remain relatively low: between 2000 and 2005, 24 live specimens of *Gazella cuvieri* and 36 live specimens of *Gazella leptoceros* were traded. However, illegal hunting of the species continues at levels which are likely to jeopardize the species and research shows that hunting is in part motivated by trade in horns, trophies and meat (Cuzin 2003).

Reported legal trade in *Gazella dorcas* is more substantial. Between 2000 and 2005, the sum of all reported transactions involved 1806 dorcas gazelles (1675 live specimens, 95 trophies, 10 bodies, 4 skulls, 6 bones, 2 skeletons, 3 skins, 1 horn and 10 specimens). Most dorcas gazelles involved in this trade are reported as coming from the wild (only 533 are reported as coming from ranching or captivity). Transactions can involve large numbers of *Gazella dorcas* at a time (i.e. Sudan reported a total of 1313 exports and re-exports of live specimens from 2000 to 2005; trade data for Sudan show that from 2000 to 2004, annual transactions of live specimens involved an average of 250 up to 352 animals, whereas in 2005, only 62 animals were exported; this could indicate a significant decrease in the population). Sudan is the main exporter of the species; Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar are main importers of the species. *Gazella dorcas* also remains heavily threatened by illegal hunts partially motivated by trade (Cuzin 2003).

Evidence of illegal trade in North African Gazelles and of a demand in their parts and products includes:

- mounted horns of *Gazella dorcas* found for sale on eBay;
- although data on illegal trade in *Gazella dorcas* are not available, several specimens are reported as confiscated in the UNEP/WCMC CITES Trade Database
- available reports mention that antelope meat is found for sale in the Middle East and that prices for the antelopes can “vary between US\$600 and US\$700” (Amir 2006)

Other reasons for concern include:

- all three species are still heavily threatened by illegal hunting. Illegal trade is almost impossible to monitor, but a prosperous black market in these species could well exist *Gazella leptoceros* is very similar in appearance to *Gazella dorcas* (CMS 2005) which implies that the existing market for *Gazella dorcas* parts and products could drive illegal trade in *Gazella leptoceros*

THE THREE GAZELLE SPECIES COULD BECOME EXTINCT WITHOUT ADDITIONAL CITES PROTECTION

The three gazelle species have a low reproductive rate: one litter of one or two fawns per year for *Gazella leptoceros* ; a single fawn per year for *Gazella dorcas* although twins have been reported in Algeria; one or two offspring per litter with one to two litters in one year if sufficient food and water are available for *Gazella cuvieri*. This low reproductive rate makes the three species particularly vulnerable to excessive exploitation and implies that the species could become extinct without further protection against international trade.

A listing of these species in Appendix I would lead to stronger enforcement measures in key importing States, resulting in closer monitoring of illegal trade presently almost impossible to trace. It would also assist range States in their efforts to control trade-motivated hunting of these species and lead to stronger implementation of national prohibitions of trade and hunting.

The three gazelle species satisfy the biological and trade criteria for inclusion in CITES Appendix I as per CITES Resolution Conf.9.24 (Rev. CoP13), Annex 1, A i), ii), v) and C i) and ii)). The increased protection provided by Appendix I is necessary to bring international trade in these species under control and ensure their long-term survival.