



IUCN SSC ASG Position Statement on the Intentional Genetic Manipulation of Antelopes

Ver. 1.0 (30 April 2015)

1. Introduction

The IUCN SSC Antelope Specialist Group (ASG) is concerned by the use of intentional genetic manipulation (IGM) of antelopes to create modified phenotypes such as novel coat patterns or enlarged horns, conducted for amenity, ecotourism, live trade and/or hunting purposes.

ASG fully supports the principle of sustainable use of wildlife and other natural resources, including appropriately managed game ranching and hunting, in accordance with:

- the *Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines* of the Convention on Biological Diversity, 1992 (<https://www.cbd.int/sustainable/addis.shtml>);
- the *Policy Statement on Sustainable Use of Wild Living Resources* of IUCN, 2000 (<http://povertyandconservation.info/en/biblio/b1391>);
- the *Guiding Principles on Trophy Hunting as a Tool for Creating Conservation Incentives* of IUCN SSC, 2012 (http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/iucn_ssc_guiding_principles_on_trophy_hunting_ver1_09aug2012.pdf);
- WCC Resolution 3.093, 2005: *Application of the IUCN Sustainable Use Policy to sustainable consumptive use of wildlife and recreational hunting in southern Africa* (https://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/wcc_res_rec_eng.pdf)

2. Definitions of IGM

IGM may comprise:

- Manipulations between taxa:
 - Hybridizing two different species, either indigenous or exotic;
 - Crossing two different subspecies or strains, either indigenous or exotic.
- Manipulations within taxa:
 - Selective inbreeding to exaggerate the prevalence of some characters;
 - Cloning;
- Combinations of manipulations.

3. Purpose and extent of IGM

- The purpose of IGM is to supply private collections, trophy hunting enterprises and other commercial operations and is expanding:

- Growing in magnitude with a continuously increasing number of (i) facilities involved, (ii) number of antelope species and individuals subject to IGM & (iii) private and public sales;
 - Increasing diversity with a continuously growing number of newly created morphs.
- Antelopes modified by IGM are extensively spread:
 - Most modified antelopes are translocated to other wildlife facilities in or out their original range country or range;
 - IGM antelopes are mostly held behind fences which cannot be regarded as 100% wildlife proof, with a risk of escapes to neighbouring areas including into the wild.

4. Impacts of IGM

The actual and potential impacts of IGM of antelopes comprise:

- Direct threat to biodiversity by risking the survival of indigenous taxa, i.e. genetic pollution by dilution of indigenous taxa;
- Distortion of natural processes of evolution;
- Homogenization of taxa at national or regional scale and globalization of taxa at the global scale;
- Weakened resilience or reduced adaptive capacity to environmental changes, such as health hazards, ecosystem transformation, or climate change;
- Reduced reproductive fitness;
- Other unknown impacts.

5. ASG Statement

The IUCN SSC Antelope Specialist Group:

- Considers that IGM of antelopes incorporates many risks and ignores the precautionary principle;
- States that IGM of antelopes for commercial or amenity purposes makes no contribution to the conservation of biodiversity at global, regional, national and local levels;
- Opposes all IGM of antelopes for commercial or amenity purposes, with particular reference to (i) hybridization of different species, (ii) crossing of different subspecies and (iii) selective inbreeding of a population.

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