

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES  
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA

Sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties  
Bangkok (Thailand), 3-14 March 2013

## CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS FOR AMENDMENT OF APPENDICES I AND II

A. Proposal

To transfer *Tetraogallus caspius* (Caspian snowcock) from Appendix I to Appendix II, in accordance with provisions of Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev CoP15) Annex 4 precautionary measures A1 and A2a/b.

*Tetraogallus caspius* was listed in CITES Appendix II on 1 July 1975 as part of a group of Galliformes species.

The species does not meet the biological criteria for listing in Appendix I, laid out in Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev CoP15) Annex 1. The population size of this gamebird of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Turkey and Turkmenistan is estimated to be 10,000 to 50,000 individuals, which equates to 6,700 – 33,000 mature individuals (BirdLife International 2012), hence does not meet criterion A. The species has a very large range (314,000 km<sup>2</sup>) (BirdLife International 2012) and thus the species does not meet criterion B. The population trend of the species seems to be decreasing, but BirdLife International (2012) do not believe that the decline is sufficiently rapid to approach the thresholds for listing as a threatened species, i.e. it is projected to have <30% decline in the next 10 years or three generations, and so does not meet criterion C. *Tetraogallus caspius* is listed by the IUCN as being of 'Least Concern' globally, but is regarded as 'Vulnerable' within Georgia.

In accordance with the precautionary measures contained in Annex 4 of Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev CoP15) for the transfer of species from Appendix I to Appendix II, *Tetraogallus caspius* is not in known demand for international trade, nor is its transfer to Appendix II likely to stimulate trade in, or cause enforcement problems for, any other species included in Appendix I. As expected, no legal trade of the species has been recorded since its listing in Appendix I in 1975, but illegal trade is not known to be a significant problem. Its transfer to Appendix II, with monitoring of any impact of trade on the species for at least two intervals between meetings of the Conference of the Parties, will allow an assessment of any international trade that may be stimulated by its downlisting.

B. Proponent

Switzerland\*, as Depositary Government, at the request of the Animals Committee (prepared by New Zealand)

C. Supporting statement1. Taxonomy

- 1.1 Class: Aves  
1.2 Order: Galliformes

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\* The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat or the United Nations Environment Programme concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.

- 1.3 Family: Phasianidae
- 1.4 Species: *Tetraogallus caspius*
- 1.5 Scientific synonyms: none
- 1.6 Common names: English: Caspian Snowcock  
 French: Tétralogalle de Perse  
 Tétralogalle de la Caspienne  
 Perdix des neiges de la Caspienne  
 Tetras des neiges de la Caspienne  
 Spanish: Perdigallo del Caspio  
 Tetragallo del Caspio  
 Gallo lira del Caspio  
 Gallo salvaje del Caspio  
 Perdiz real del Caspio
- 1.7 Code numbers: A-214.003.054.006

## 2. Overview

*Tetraogallus caspius* is found in the mountains of southern and eastern Turkey, Armenia, southern Georgia, Azerbaijan, northern Iraq, northern and central Islamic Republic of Iran, and southern Turkmenistan. It was listed in CITES Appendix II on 1 July 1975 as part of a group of Galliformes species. The species is classified as of 'Least Concern' on the IUCN Red List (BirdLife International 2012), but is classified as 'Vulnerable' within Georgia.

The Periodic Review of the Appendices, as currently agreed by the Parties, is designed to review species already included in the Appendices to determine whether their listings continue to be appropriate, based on current biological and trade information and utilizing the provisions in Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP12) on Criteria for amendment of Appendices I and II [see: AC20 Document 10 (Rev. 1)]. At the 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Animals Committee (Lima, 2006) *Tetraogallus caspius* was one of 18 species of Galliformes chosen to be reviewed between CoP13 and CoP15.

At AC25 (Geneva, 2011), to help facilitate the review of the remaining 16 species of Galliformes under the Periodic review process, an Intersessional Periodic Review Working Group was created to address these Galliformes species. The United States approached the World Pheasant Association for their assistance in undertaking these reviews. Species accounts were compiled using information readily available from the BirdLife International species assessments for the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Red Data Lists and the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) trade database. These accounts were then circulated to members of the IUCN-Species Survival Commission / World Pheasant Association Galliformes Specialist Group who had particular knowledge about the species.

The final species accounts were presented in an Annex to AC26 Doc 13.3.1. At AC26 (Geneva, 2012) the Animals Committee studied the information provided and recommended that *Tetraogallus caspius* should be transferred from Appendix I to Appendix II (see AC26 WG1 Doc 2).

## 3. Species characteristics

### 3.1 Distribution

*Tetraogallus caspius* is found in the mountains of southern and eastern Turkey, Armenia, southern Georgia, Azerbaijan, northern Iraq, northern and central Islamic Republic of Iran, and southern Turkmenistan.

### 3.2 Habitat

Temperate and upland grassland, and bare stony and rocky areas with scattered scrub, between 1800 m and 4000 m above sea level.

### 3.3 Biological characteristics

It nests in a bare ground scrape and lays 6-9 greenish eggs, which are incubated only by the female. Its diet consists of seeds, legumes, and other plant matter. It forms small coveys when not breeding.

### 3.4 Morphological characteristics

A large (55-65 cm) stocky partridge-shaped gamebird. Males have a grey crown and hind-neck with a broad grey stripe running vertically from the base of the bill to the upper breast contrasting with the otherwise white chin, throat and fore-neck. Small white stripe in front of the eye. Body plumage is dark grey and the breast has small black spots and is paler grey than under parts. The flanks have this chestnut stripes. The tail is blackish. Females are duller than males with smaller spots on upper parts, fewer and less distinct breast spots, and the whitish areas on the sides of the neck are smaller (Madge & McGowan 2002).

### 3.5 Role of the species in its ecosystem

This species has a useful role in seed dispersal.

## 4. Status and trends

### 4.1 Habitat trends

Information is not readily available.

### 4.2 Population size

The size of the population is estimated to be 10,000 to 50,000 individuals, which equates to 6700 to 33,000 mature individuals (Birdlife International 2012).

### 4.3 Population structure

It breeds in pairs, but forms small coveys or flocks outside of the breeding season.

### 4.4 Population trends

The overall population is suspected to be slowly declining but BirdLife International (2012) do not consider that the decline is sufficiently rapid to approach the thresholds for Vulnerable under the population trend criterion (>30% decline over ten years or three generations).

### 4.5 Geographic trends

Information is not readily available. Within Georgia, the population at the edge of the species' range is believed to be very small, but there is no information about trends in this population.

## 5. Threats

Threats to the species are predominantly habitat degradation from over-grazing and over-hunting throughout most of its range (Birdlife International 2012)

## 6. Utilization and trade

### 6.1 National utilization

Adults and juveniles caught for human subsistence on a national level.

### 6.2 Legal trade

No legal trade in this species has been recorded since it was listed in Appendix 1 in 1975 (Tables 1a and 1b). Note that commercial trade would not be permitted for Appendix I species, and so the lack of existing trade does not necessarily indicate a lack of future demand for international trade.

<b>Table 1a: <i>Tetraogallus caspius</i></b>		
<b>CITES reported trade (sources = all) during 1975-1999 and 2000-2010 (all terms and units combined).</b>		
<b>Term</b>	<b>Total 1975-1999</b>	<b>Total 2000-2010</b>
(no trade)		
Source: UNEP-WCMC CITES Trade Database. Accessed on January 5, 2011. Gross Exports/Imports. In most cases, the unit value is the number of specimens.		

<b>Table 1b: <i>Tetraogallus caspius</i></b>		
<b>CITES reported trade (source = wild [W]) during 1975-1999 and 2000-2010 (all terms and units combined).</b>		
<b>Term</b>	<b>Total 1975-1999</b>	<b>Total 2000-2010</b>
(no trade)		
Source: UNEP-WCMC CITES Trade Database. Accessed on January 5, 2011. Gross Exports/Imports. In most cases, the unit value is the number of specimens.		

### 6.3 Parts and derivatives in trade

No parts or derivatives have been recorded in trade.

### 6.4 Illegal trade

Information is not readily available, but not believed to be significant. There have been no examples of legal trade nor confiscations in Georgia since

### 6.5 impacts to look-alikes

Males and females are similar to *Tetraogallus caucasicus* from the Caucasus Mountains of Georgia, Azerbaijan and extreme southwest Russia, except that in the hand they have a grey hindneck and cheek stripes rather than rusty, and spots on the upper breast rather than chevrons or scalloping, but juveniles are harder to distinguish (Madge & McGowan 2002). Also similar in general appearance to *T. altaicus*, and *T. himalayensis*, but in the hand, adults and juveniles are easily distinguished by plumage differences (Madge & McGowan 2002). All of these look-alike species are classified as of 'Least Concern' by IUCN (BirdLife International 2012).

The Tibetan snowcock *Tetraogallus tibetanus*, the only other snowcock listed in Appendix I of CITES, is clearly identified by its plumage features, especially its white flanks with longitudinal black stripes and lack of white on the primaries.

### 6.6 Actual or potential trade impacts

Information is not readily available.

## 7. Legal instruments

### 7.1 National

Information is not readily available.

### 7.2 International

This species is listed on CITES Appendix I and EU Annex A.

## 8. Species management

### 8.1 Management measures

Information is not readily available.

### 8.2 Population monitoring

Information is not readily available.

### 8.3 Control measures

Information is not readily available.

### 8.4 Captive breeding and artificial propagation

There are no records of this species in captivity in Europe in the WPA database (31 July 2012), and ISIS (31 July 2012) records no captive individuals in ISIS institutions; however, both databases rely on voluntary submission of records.

### 8.5 Habitat conservation

The species is found in five Important Bird Areas in Armenia, five in Azerbaijan, four in Georgia, six in Turkey and one in Turkmenistan. In the Islamic Republic of Iran the species is found in five protected areas and one wildlife refuge.

## 9. Information on similar species

Other species of *Tetraogallus* are similar but readily separable in the hand (see Section 6.5, and Madge and McGowan (2002) for further details).

## 10. Consultations

This proposal was based on a rapid review of 16 species of Galliformes by the World Pheasant Association. Their account was circulated to members of the IUCN-Species Survival Commission / World Pheasant Association Galliformes Specialist Group who had particular knowledge about the species, before being considered by the Animals Committee at AC 26 (Geneva, 2012). The proposal was sent to the Scientific and Management Authorities of the seven range States (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Turkey and Turkmenistan) on 17 August 2012 for comment. By 24 September 2012, Georgia responded to this request and its information has been included in the proposal.

## 11. Additional remarks

## 12. References

BirdLife International (2012) Species factsheet: *Tetraogallus caspius*. Downloaded from <http://www.birdlife.org> on 31 July 2012.

CITES trade statistics derived from the CITES Trade Database (see: [www.unep-wcmc.org/citestrade](http://www.unep-wcmc.org/citestrade)), UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme) World Conservation Monitoring Centre, Cambridge, UK.

ISIS (2012) International Species Information System species holdings. Downloaded from <https://www.isis.org/Pages/findanimals.aspx> on 31 July 2012.

Madge, S.; McGowan P. 2002. Pheasants, partridges and grouse: A guide to the pheasants, partridges, quails, grouse, guineafowl, buttonquails and sandgrouse of the world. Princeton University Press, Princeton.