



## **Strategic Work Plan (2015-2019)**

Presented at the Fifth Meeting of the Coordination  
Committee for the Conservation of the Arabian Oryx,  
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# 1. INTRODUCTION

The General Secretariat for the Conservation of the Arabian Oryx (*Oryx leucoryx*) (GSCAO) Strategic Work Plan (2015-2019) presents the five year strategic action plan to assist member states in achieving the vision and long-term targets of the Regional Strategy for the Conservation of the Arabian Oryx (2007). This Work Plan is structured in three key sections:

- Section 2: “Where we are today”;
  - GSCAO Background and Activities;
- Section 3: “Where we want to be”;
  - GSCAO Regional Strategy Priorities and Objectives;
  - Strategic Work Plan (2015-2019) Priorities; and
- Section 4: “What we will do to get there”.





## 2. WHERE WE ARE TODAY

### 2.1 GSCAO Background

As per the recommendations of the first Abu Dhabi International Arabian Oryx Conference, held in March 1999 in Abu Dhabi, and following the Constituting Meeting held in the Sultanate of Oman on January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2000, the Coordinating Committee for the Conservation of the Arabian Oryx (CCCAO) was established. The CCCAO's mission is to support all initiatives to conserve and protect the Arabian Oryx, to agree regional criteria and standards, and to coordinate efforts between Range States. The General Secretariat for the Conservation of the Arabian Oryx (GSCAO) was established in October 2001 to coordinate the work of the CCCAO. It is hosted by the Environment Agency- Abu Dhabi (EAD) and is tasked with facilitating communication between Range States of the Arabian Oryx and encouraging them to implement the CCCAO's decisions and recommendations. At the third meeting of the CCCAO held in Wadi Rum, Jordan in May 2007, it was agreed that the EAD, alongside its partners in the Range States, would lead the development of the Regional Conservation Strategy for the Arabian Oryx, which was later finalized in August 2007 (the document of the Regional Strategy is available for download at [www.arabianoryx.org](http://www.arabianoryx.org)).

The vision of the GSCAO is:

**VIABLE, SUSTAINABLE AND FREE-RANGING POPULATIONS OF ARABIAN ORYX OCCUR IN NATURAL HABITATS ACROSS THEIR HISTORIC RANGE AND IN HARMONY WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES.**

## 2.2 GSCAO's Activities & Achievements

Over the past eight years, GSCAO has made progress in achieving the objectives of the Arabian Oryx Regional Conservation Strategy and Action Plan. Key achievements include:

- Organizing CCCAO meetings;
  - GSCAO has organized and funded the third and fourth meetings of CCCAO which were held in Jordan (May 2007) and in Syria (in 2010) respectively;
- Establishing regional disease surveys of Arabian Oryx collections in the Range States in (2011 and 2013);
- Organizing and funding a technical workshop on “Veterinary Management of Arabian Oryx in the Range States” 2011;
- Developing GSCAO’s website [www.arabianoryx.org](http://www.arabianoryx.org) to communicate the vision and mission of the CCCAO (2014);
- Defining the roles of national coordinators in the Range States (2014);
- Developing the Strategic Five Year Work Plan (2015-2019); and
- Developing the National Reporting format in 2015.

These initiatives have been instrumental in strengthening the role of the GSCAO as an information sharing and capacity building platform, however, more national level action is required if the Regional Strategy and

Vision is to be achieved. Member states are encouraged to play a more active role to foster information sharing, capacity building and knowledge transfer.

## **2.3 Challenges**

While the Regional Strategy provides a holistic conservation approach with multidimensional objectives, many of these objectives require actions at the national level in order for them to be achieved. National efforts and activities are essential for the implementation of the Regional Strategy. The success and realization of the Regional Strategy for the Conservation of the Arabian Oryx almost entirely depends on national level action: administration, legal frameworks, action plans, protected area management, wildlife law enforcement mechanisms and budgets to enable these key activities. This Strategic Plan seeks to share knowledge between Range States to assist in enabling states to achieve these actions.





## 3. WHERE WE WANT TO BE

### 3.1 GSCAO Regional Strategy and Objectives

The key purpose of the Regional Strategy is to coordinate support for achieving GSCAO's vision of viable populations of Arabian Oryx throughout the species' original home range across the Arabian Peninsula. In order to achieve this conservation vision, the Regional Strategy urges Range States to develop local conservation programs for the Arabian Oryx that support the species' survival, consistent with the Regional Strategy's stated objectives:

- Objective 1: Complete legislative processes in all Range States and enhance enforcement of wildlife law;
- Objective 2: Enhance and increase wild populations;
- Objective 3: Establish a species management plan;
- Objective 4: Secure public support for, and participation, in Arabian Oryx programs;
- Objective 5: Build adequate region-wide capacity for all aspects of Arabian Oryx conservation;
- Objective 6: Secure coordination between Range States; and
- Objective 7: Secure financial sustainability.



## 3.2 Strategic Work Plan (2015-2019) Priorities

Within the five year horizon of this Strategic Work Plan, GSCAO's overall objective is to have made recognizable and measurable progress against the eight objectives of the Regional Strategy.

As part of this strategy's development, both the GSCAO's technical advisors and managers of the Arabian Oryx conservation programs in the Range States prioritized initiatives consistent with achieving these eight objectives. Holistically, the initiatives seek to address two key challenges that were identified by stakeholders: the insufficient sharing of information, and limited technical capacity. Two new key initiatives have been proposed for the five year strategic work plan as a response:

- **1) Annual National Reporting.** The GSCAO has developed a national reporting mechanism to gather information from Range States annually on national initiatives and projects. This will enable GSCAO to become an information hub for Arabian Oryx conservation in the region.
- **2) Technical Capacity Building Workshops.** The GSCAO will facilitate three technical workshops over the next five years with the objective of enhancing Range State technical capacity. Member states are encouraged to play a more active role in the implementation of this strategic work plan by hosting these technical workshops.

The technical capacity priorities are identified in the „what we will do to get there“ section below, coupled with a table identifying how these initiatives fit within the Regional Strategy objectives.



**4. WHAT WE WILL  
DO TO GET  
THERE**





## 4. WHAT WE WILL DO TO GET THERE

During 2015, the GSCAO will continue to communicate regularly with national coordinators, encourage the completion of national reports and the endorsement of the five year GSCAO strategic work plan, and regularly request feedback and input from member states on the supporting role that the GSCAO can play to enhance and contribute to conservation efforts. Member states are encouraged to actively participate by sharing their national level initiatives, and identify additional issues, challenges and priority areas and capacity building needs, as they arise.

A summary of the key technical initiatives (2015-2019) prioritised by members that the GSCAO will facilitate in order to achieve this strategic work plan - „what we will do to get there““, are:

- **Herd Management:** A technical workshop detailing the actual and best practices in herd management of Arabian Oryx collections will be planned for the third quarter of 2016. GSCAO is to organize three regional visits to Arabian Oryx collections in the Range States by 2019 to improve communication with member states and field researchers, and gather information on priority issues.
- **Genetic and small population management:** A technical workshop focusing on genetic aspects of Arabian Oryx Management in captivity and in the wild will be scheduled for the third quarter of 2016.



- **Disease and Other veterinary management aspects:** Disease survey reports for the years 2016 and 2019 will be published in 2017 and 2019 respectively. A 2018 technical workshop will address disease management.
- **Reintroduction and rehabilitation:** Case studies of reintroduction efforts of Arabian Oryx in the Range States will also be presented at the 2018 technical workshop.
- **Sharing and Publishing Reports:** Reports, guidelines and case studies to be published between 2015-2019 include: regional reintroduction case studies, studbook proposal, annual national reports, disease survey reports, regional collection management best practice recommendations, and an Arabian Oryx transportation guideline.

The sixth meeting of the CCCAO will be held in 2019.

The list of priorities, expected outcomes, lead actors and timeframes that form this five year work plan is presented in Table 1 (below), coupled with the priority's consistency to the Regional Strategy's objectives.

**Table 1. Work Plan (2015-2019) of the Coordination Committee for the Conservation of the Arabian Oryx**

Priority area	Relevant regional strategy objective	Investigated aspects of the priority area	Expected outcomes	Indicators	Lead actors	Funding	Timeframe
<b>Herd Management</b>	Objective 3: Establish a regional species management plan.	Best practices in herd management including individual tagging, nutrition, housing systems, staffing and logistics of Oryx collections compiled from the Range States.	Guideline report on best practices and minimum standards for herd management disseminated to Oryx collection managers in the range states.	Number of Oryx researchers and managers from Range States attending the workshop on herd management.  One report on current regional practices and recommendations in herd management published on <a href="http://www.arabianoryx.org">www.arabianoryx.org</a>	GSCAO/ national authorities of Range States/ national coordinators/collection managers, vets and scientific advisors.	To be obtained.	Technical workshop to be held in Q3-2016.  Regional population management report to be published in Q4-2019.  GSCAO visit to three member states by 2019.

Genetic and small population management	Objective 3: Establish a regional species management plan.	Genetic management of Oryx collections, breeding strategies. Regional exchange of animals. Record keeping systems. Assisted reproduction.	Enhanced understanding of the importance of genetic management. Online publication of key findings.	Proceedings of the workshop/ numbers of managers and researchers attending workshop. Numbers of countries following best practices in population management.	GSCAO/ national authorities of Range States/ national coordinators/ vets and scientific advisors.	To be obtained.	Technical workshop to be held in Q3-2016.
	Objective 5: Build adequate region-wide capacity for all aspects of Arabian Oryx conservation.	Various disease facing Arabian Oryx in the Range States. Biosecurity, biosafety and quarantine. Population control and ethical considerations.	Increase of contributions of Oryx collections in the Range States to the regional disease survey. Increased communication on disease occurrences between collection	Workshop proceedings published online. Numbers of veterinarians & researchers attending the workshops/ number of vets in national and regional	EAD advisors to the GSCAO/ Regional and national vets/ collection managers and private owners/member states.	To be obtained	Disease survey reports for 2016 and 2019 published. Technical workshop in Q2-2018.



Reintroduction and rehabilitation		Vaccination.	managers/online forum for vets actively used.	collections.			
				Number of publications on Arabian Oryx diseases.			
	Objective 2: Enhance and increase wild populations.	Public awareness and local people engagement/ post release monitoring/ ex situ/in situ relationship/ transportation guidelines/ carrying capacity/ habitat rehabilitation.	Oryx managers have full understanding of actual performance of reintroductions in the Range States.  Challenges and successes of reintroductions.	Workshop proceedings published online.	GSCAO/ national authorities of Range States/ national coordinators.		Technical workshop to be held in Q2-2018.
	Objective 4: Secure public support.	Definition of a „wild“ population.	Guideline report on transportation is published online and circulated to Range States.	Number of reintroduction projects in the region.	Government departments, local communities, IUCN.	To be obtained.	Case studies on regional reintroduction efforts presented at the 6 <sup>th</sup> meeting of the CCCAO in 2019.  Guideline report on transportation published in Q4-2018.





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