

Assessment of the Status of the Tajik Markhor in Tajikistan



Tajik Markhor in Tajikistan

- **Restricted to small area of 1,200 sq km in SW Darvaz Range and Southern part of Hazratishoh Range**
- **Thought to be extinct in the Vakhsh Range**
- **Still Endangered despite + population trends**
- **1018 markhor recorded in 2012**
- **1300 markhor recorded in 2014**





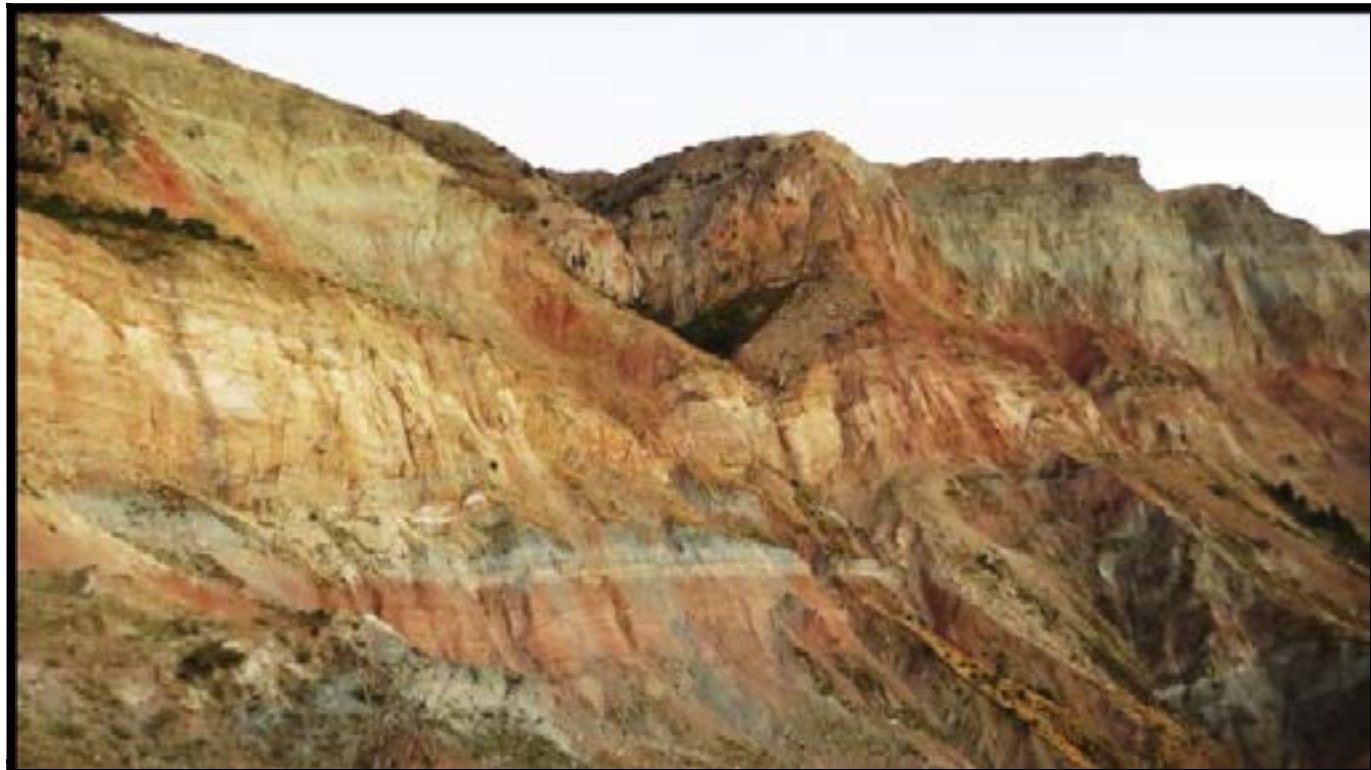
Ridges of the Vakhsh (left) and Surkhkuh (right) Ranges at Vakhsh river (Nurek Reservoir).



The western slope of the Sarsarak Range.

Survey Area

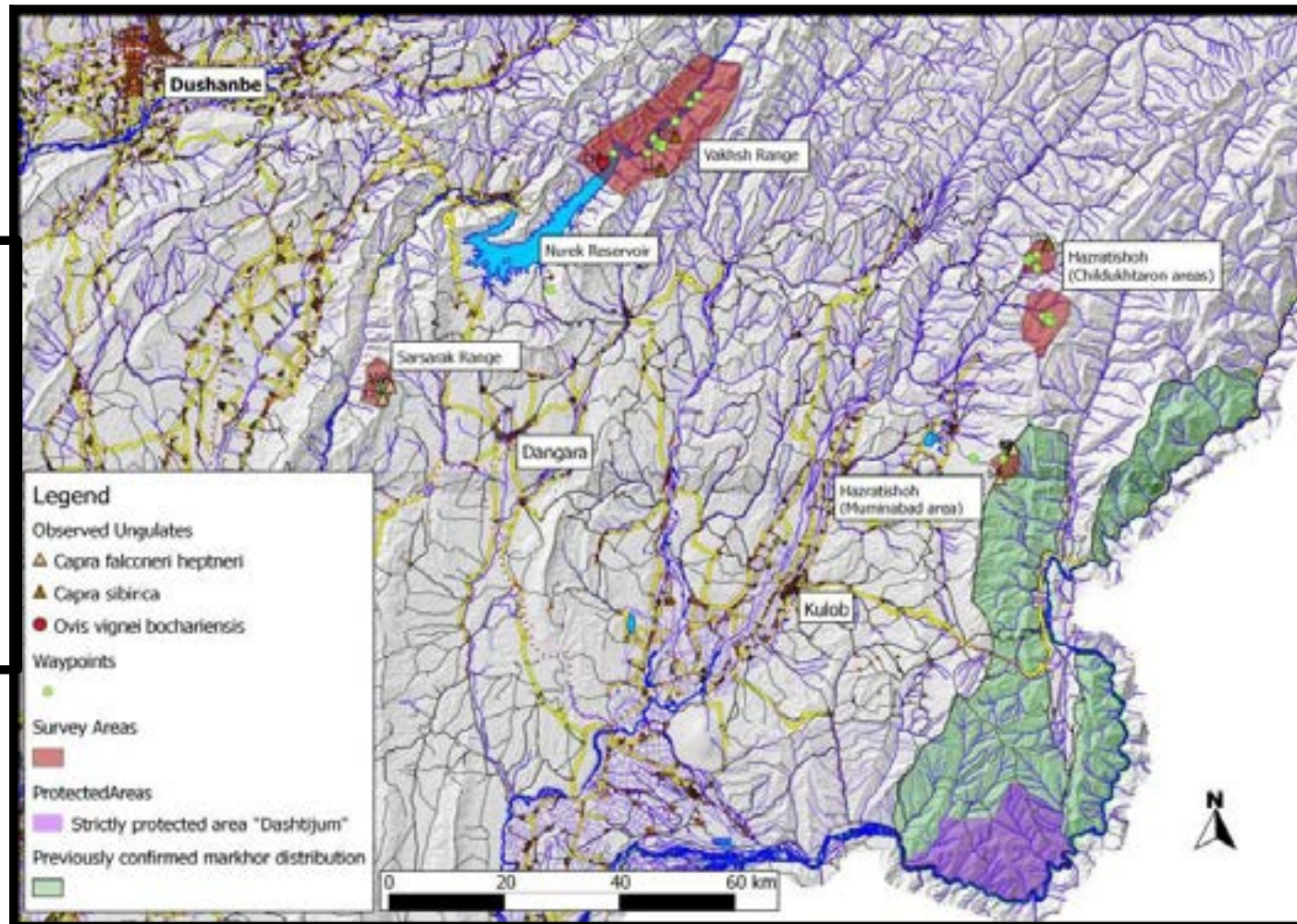
**Cliffs in the
North-western
branches of the
Hazratishoh Range.**



Objective of the Survey

- 2014 received reports of markhor in the Vakhsh Range
- Survey was to determine the presence of the markhor
- To assess the potential of its conservation in this area
- Determine population size and structure
- Assess the general suitability of the habitat

Map showing the surveyed area, locations of mountain ungulates observed and the previously known markhor distribution in Tajikistan.



Additional Objectives

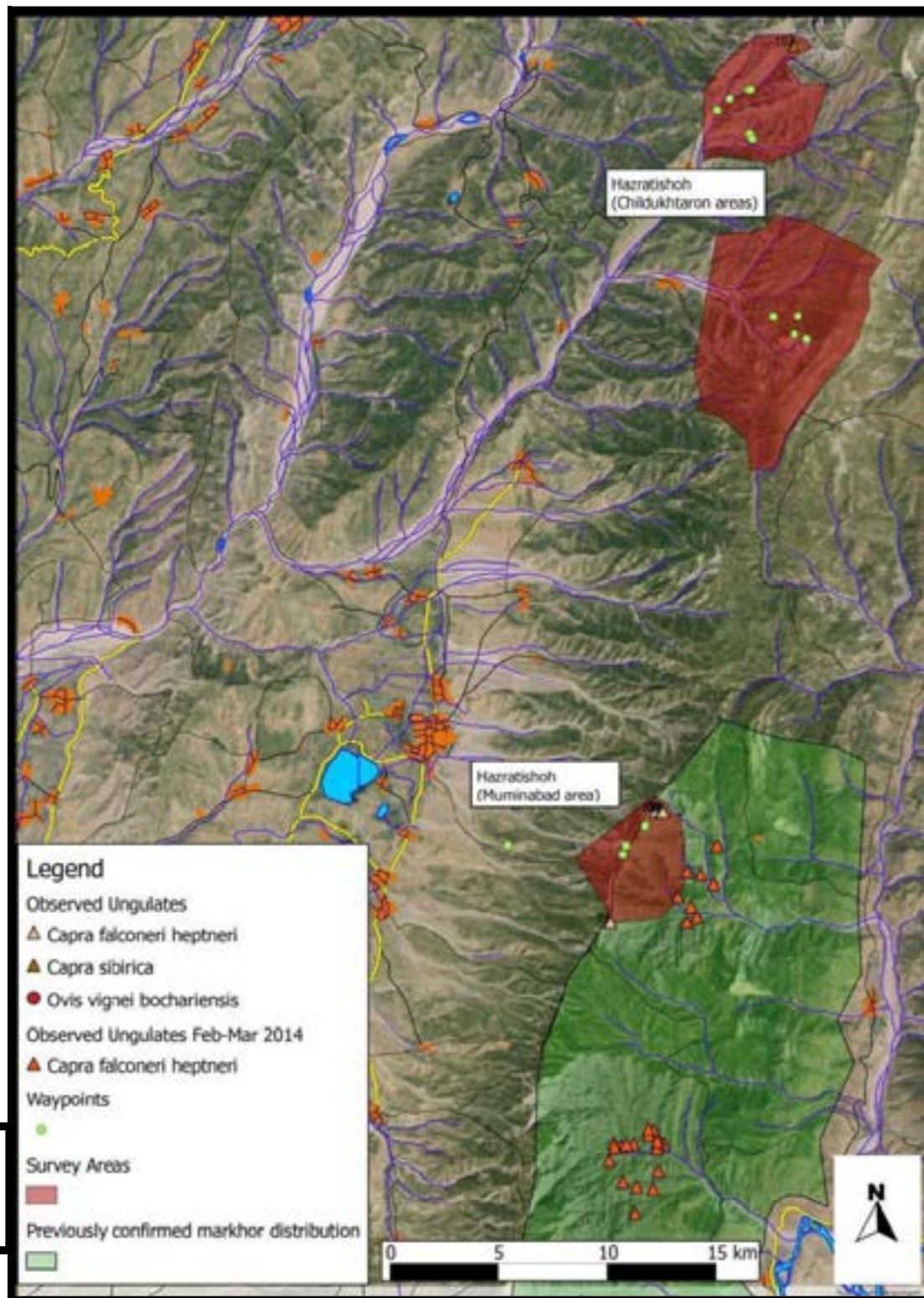
- Record observations of other species
- Gather information from local communities on the attitudes and knowledge towards markhor
- Determine their interests and readiness to participate in wildlife conservation



Results

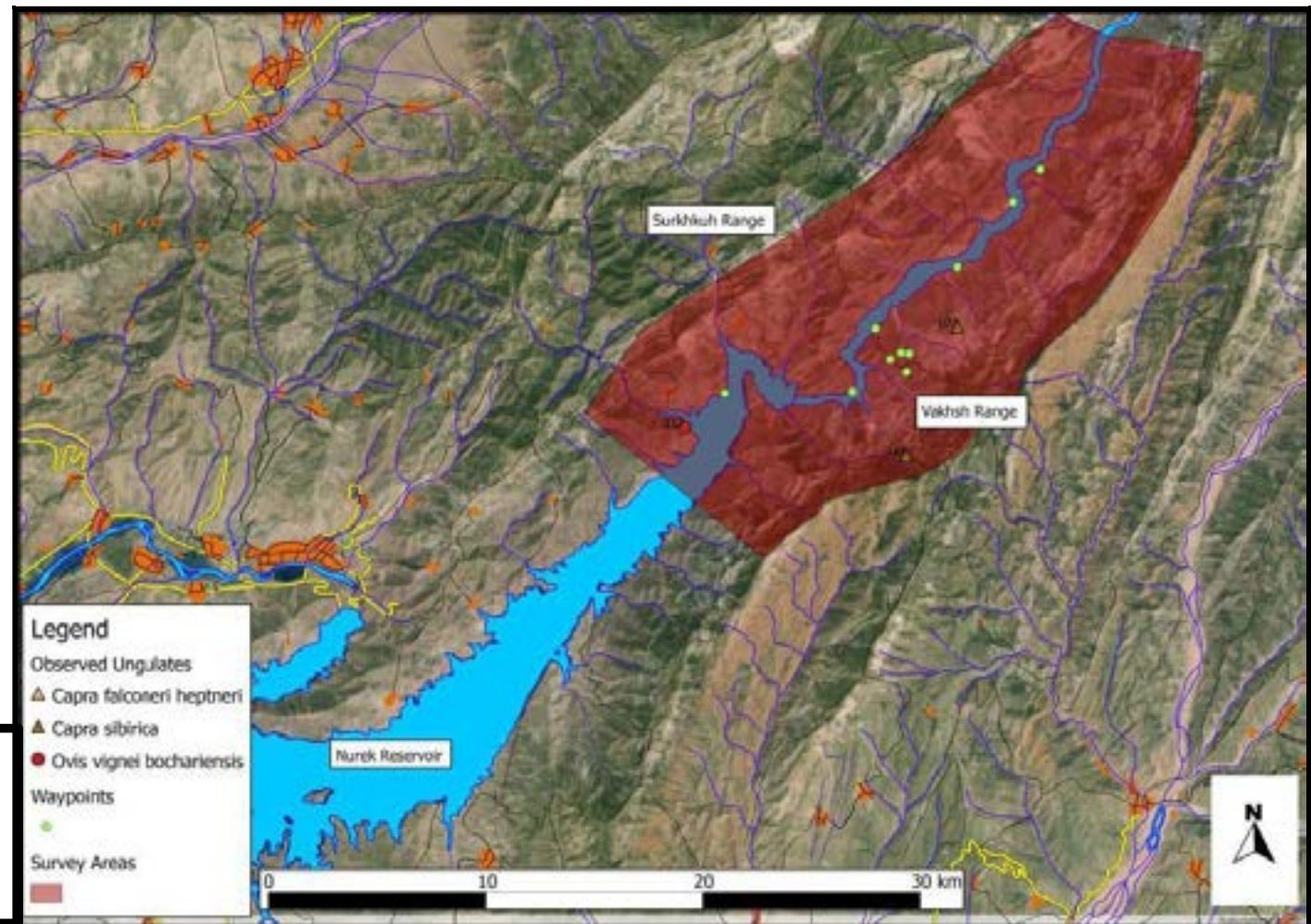
- In the Central Hazratishoh Range markhor were confirmed
- Habitat was suitable for markhor
- Western slopes were good for winter range
- Eastern slope provided suitable escape terrain
- Chukar partridge density in area is noticeably lower – possibly bird influenza
- Brown bear population increasing
- Siberian ibex and European wild boar observed

Map of searched areas
in Hazratishoh Range



Results

- In Vakhsh and Surkhkuh Ranges no markhor were observed
- Local villagers believed markhor were now extinct in this area since 2013
- Only one area was suitable for markhor with high cliffs
- Observed Asiatic ibex and Buchara urial

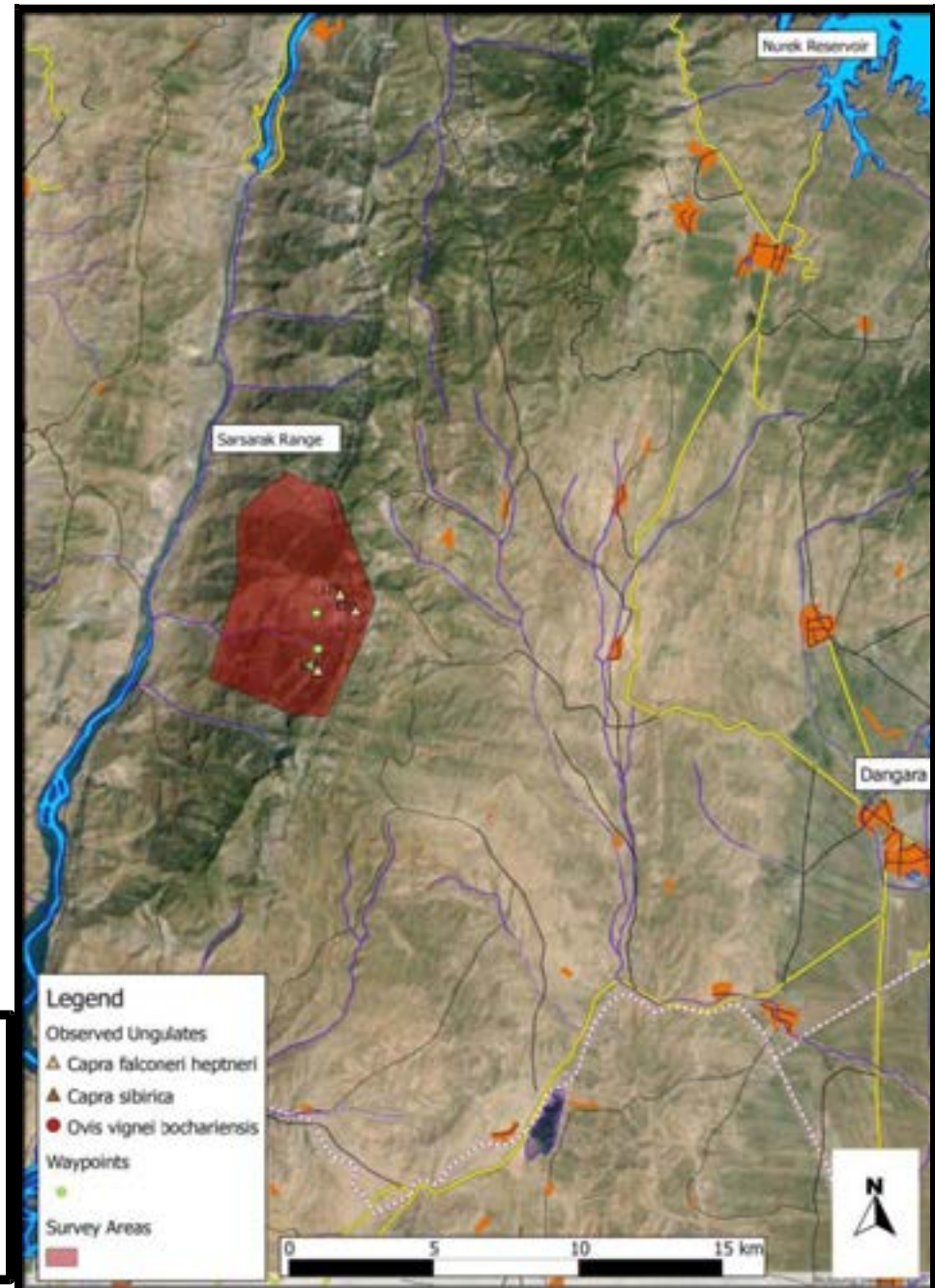


Searched areas in the Vakhsh and Surkhkuh Ranges.

Results of Sarsarak Area Survey (cont.)

- Markhor were observed – thought to have been extinct
- Skulls of markhor and urial observed at gravesites
- Habitat is very typical for markhor with sufficient vegetation and large cliffs

Observation area at Sarsarak Range with locations of markhor sightings



Results of Sarsarak Area Survey (cont.)

- Skulls of markhor and urial observed at gravesites
- Habitat is very typical for markhor with sufficient vegetation and large cliffs



Horns of urial and markhor in two graveyards in the Sarsarak area.



Results of Sarsarak Area Survey (cont.)



**Female markhor in
Sarsarak Range**



Future Actions

- **Focus activities on the Sarsarak Range with further survey's**
- **Involve the local traditional hunters in conservation activities, such as developing conservancies**
- **Meet with village leaders**
- **Identify people that could take the initiative to establish a community based NGO to manage a conservancy**



Field team