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The Independent News Service for Hunters Who Travel

A Conservation Success Story: Community-based Hunting in Tajikistan

Editor's Note: The Hunting Report supports conservation efforts worldwide as a means of preserving wildlife and wild areas. European correspondent Dr. Rolf Baldus has just returned from an ibex hunt in Tajikistan and provides an upbeat assessment of the programs there. For more background, see articles 3852, 3738, 3699 and 3075 in our database.

DATELINE: **Tajikistan**
SPECIAL REPORT



Dr. Rolf D. Baldus
Correspondent

Community-based wildlife management is a recent development in Tajikistan. It provides revenue to local people to motivate them to protect and use wildlife resources sustainably. Game management areas protected by families or associations of local hunters were first established in 2008. Revenue generated from guided hiking, game viewing, wildlife photography and hunting supports the work of local rangers and nature guides, and any surplus is invested into local projects.

The results of this approach are amazing. Poaching is virtually nonexistent, and wildlife populations are increasing, proving that community-based conservation programs that include hunting can support biodiversity and rural livelihoods at the same time. Neither the EU nor the US would have allowed the import of trophies from

the endangered markhor if these programs did not benefit the markhor population and the rural communities alike.

What You Can Hunt

Ibex: An ibex hunt in Tajikistan costs around \$5,000. The most favorable hunting period is from Sept. 1 to Feb. 28. Because of the need to acclimate to high altitudes, a seven- to 10-day hunt, including five hunting days, is usually necessary.

The community-based wildlife conservation areas that offer Siberian ibex hunts are located in the Pamir Mountains of Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Province, in Bartang Valley (Ravmeddara community conservancy) and in Wakhan (Darshaydara and Zong community conservancies), northern Alichur (Alichur community conservancy).

Markhor: A hunt costs \$110,000 to \$140,000. This year the quota consists of seven area-specific permits justified by the scientific monitoring results. The three hunting areas are managed by three local family-based organizations: M-Sayod (four permits), Saidi Tagnob (one) and Morkhur (two).

Marco Polo sheep: This year, for the first time, licenses were given to the Burgut community conservancy, which has a good population of these sheep.

This is the first community-based Marco Polo hunt anywhere. Hunt cost is \$40,000. This includes the permit cost payable to the government.

Wild boar: The best hunting periods are between late November and late February and in June during the mulberry tree fruiting time. Typically a one-week trip with four hunting days is recommended. Boar hunting is best in the province of Khatlon in the south: on the Muhofiz community conservancy and the Morkhur, Saidi Tagnob and M-Sayod family conservancies. Boar hunts cost between \$2,000 and \$4,000, depending on the number of hunting days and boars shot. These hunts can be combined with other hunts.

For more information, contact info@tajwildlife.com or visit www.wildlife-tajikistan.org.

An Ibex Hunt with the Burgut Hunting Conservancy

I had planned to hunt ibex for

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Dr. Rolf Baldus hunting on yakback in the Pamir Mountains of Tajikistan.



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