

Additional income from Yak-Wool – an alternative value chain?

5th Tashkent Water Security Lecture

Dr. Kristin Ramthun



NABU

Who we are and

What we do

What is NABU?

Who are we?

Founded in 1899, NABU (**Nature And Biodiversity Conservation Union**) is the oldest and largest environment association in Germany. It encompasses more than 875,000 members and supporters, who commit themselves to the conservation of threatened habitats, flora, and fauna, to climate protection and energy policy.

What do we want?

NABU would like to inspire people to get involved with nature. We want future generations to enjoy a world worth living in – one that offers a great variety of habitats and species as well as good air, clean water, healthy soil and as large a reserve of natural resources as possible.

What is NABU doing in Central Asia?



NABU and the context of GCAI

- Protection of endangered habitats and **establishment of protected areas** with focus on the snow leopard
- Implementation of the goals of **international conventions** and participation in the Conferences of the Parties
- Support ecosystem protection, in the context of **climate risks and adaptation to climate change** in Central Asia.
- Promotion of **sustainable forms of land use** and the development of regional and supra-regional **value chains**
- Establishment of **certification systems for the international marketing** of organic products (wool, dried fruits, tea)
- Support for the **implementation of regional action plans within the RAMSAR Convention**

THE PROBLEM

What is the problem?

Climate change, overuse and missing adaptations...



Before...



After...

THE SOLUTION

What might be a solution?

Yaks are more environmentally friendly than other grazing animals, as when they eat, they cut the grass without plucking it.

They cause far less trampling damage, protecting the vegetation and preserving the habitat for the snow leopard and its prey species, and even can defend themselves against attacks.

Their dung provides rural communities with fuel, thus preventing deforestation while enabling soil anchoring.

The yaks give high quality wool as possible additional income for herders.



Domestic Yaks in Kyrgyzstan

source: own picture

What might be a solution?

- a) yak wool, which has been used by the textile industry as an alternative to other fine animal fibers (merino, cashmere, alpaca).
- b) Among the most publicized properties of yak wool are its warmth, breathability, durability, and odor resistance, which were shown to outperform those of merino wool.
- c) having a vast potential to contribute to the welfare of the highland pastoralists.

→ **Feasibility study has been conducted in 2021 and 2022 in KGZ, TJK and MNG**



What might be a solution?



THE FUTURE IDEA

Plans for future projects in the field of sustainable yak wool production include:

- ✓ **capacity building** of yak herders in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan;
- ✓ facilitation of the further **development of the market** for sustainable yak wool products in Europe;
- ✓ support and promotion of **sustainability standards and certification** in the yak wool industry;
- ✓ design and implementation of **financing mechanisms for rangeland biodiversity conservation**,
- ✓ facilitation of the **exchange of know-how and best practices** in the yak industry among Central Asian countries.

→ ***Yak wool for economic, social and ecological sustainability***



To be continued...

Thanks a lot for listening!



NABU-Bundesgeschäftsstelle

Dr. Kristin Ramthun

Charitéstraße 3

10117 Berlin

Tel. +49 (0)30.28 49 84-0

Fax +49 (0)30.28 49 84-20 00

Kristin.Ramthun@NABU.de

www.NABU.de