



Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

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Agenda item 17

SEVENTH MEETING OF THE
CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
Bonn, 18-24 September 2002

DATE, VENUE AND FUNDING OF THE EIGHTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

1. Each of the last two meetings of the Conference of the Parties to CMS has been hosted by a Party to the Convention -- the sixth meeting having been hosted by South Africa, in 1999, and the present meeting by the Federal Republic of Germany. It is hoped that this positive trend will continue into the future. Parties are encouraged to host meetings of the COP in order to raise the profile of CMS outside of the traditional United Nations meeting venues. Apart from making the Convention and its objectives better known in different parts of the world, there are both political and economic advantages to countries that host the conference. These may be measured in terms of recognition and support for conservation initiatives in the host country, as well as immediate financial benefits for the local economy of the meeting venue.
2. According to Article VII, paragraph 3, of the Convention, meetings of the Conference of the Parties should take place at intervals of no more than three years, unless the Conference decides otherwise. In the past, it has been recommended that meetings be scheduled at intervals of roughly 2½ to 3 years in order to help maintain momentum. This is considered to be the minimum time needed by the Secretariat to deal with its mandate, which includes servicing the regular cycle of meetings of the Standing Committee, Scientific Council and associated working groups, and for CMS Parties to demonstrate progress in the implementation of the measures agreed at a given COP. In keeping with these guidelines, the Secretariat recommends that the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties be held around mid-2005.
3. The CMS Strategic Plan (1994) recommended that, whenever possible and appropriate, consideration should be given to holding meetings of Parties to CMS Agreements in association with the main conference. There may be economies of scale and other advantages if the conference were hosted by a Party situated in a region which would also be a suitable venue for hosting a meeting of one of the Agreements already concluded or currently being developed under the Convention. CMS and AEWA have hosted consecutive COPs and MoPs (Meetings of Parties) twice in a row, and there may well be other Agreements to which this model could be applied.
4. A list of basic obligations to be assumed by the host country of a meeting of the Conference of the Parties is attached at Annex 1. At the time of writing, no Party to the Convention had responded to the Secretariat's request to indicate interest in hosting the Eighth Meeting.

Action requested:

Should a single offer to host COP8 be received before or during the forthcoming meeting, the Conference of the Parties is invited to consider and, as appropriate, accept the offer by way of a resolution. Should more than one offer be forthcoming, the Conference of the Parties is requested to instruct the Standing Committee to decide, at its earliest convenience, on the most suitable venue from the offers received. Otherwise, should no suitable offer be received from a Party, the Standing Committee may be instructed to decide, after consultations with the United Nations Environment Programme, on the most appropriate alternative United Nations venue.

Indicative obligations of the Host Government in relation to hosting a Meeting of the CMS Conference of the Parties

The Meeting of the Conference of the Parties may be organized away from an established United Nations venue (typically, Nairobi or Geneva) when a Government issues an invitation to hold the meeting within its territory and agrees to defray the actual additional costs directly and indirectly involved. If such an invitation is made, then a Host Government Agreement is essential. This serves two main purposes: first, to formally state the additional direct costs that the Host Government will contribute to the CMS Trust Fund account, and second, to formally state the privileges and immunities applicable to participants, staff and observers of the meeting, and arrangements for timely issuance of visas, as necessary, for those attending the meeting.

Direct costs are defined as:

- costs of travel, terminal expenses and subsistence of substantive staff and conference service staff, including short-term freelance staff such as interpreters, report writers, editors, typists
- communications costs
- administrative support (5% of the total cost)

This differential forms the basis of the costing which is set out in the Host Government Agreement and which the Host Government will pay to CMS.

Indirect costs that must be met by the Government include, but are not limited to:

- provision of a suitable premises (to accommodate plenary sessions for up to 300-400 delegates, committees, working groups etc.), including interpretation facilities for English, French and Spanish (as a minimum)
- equipment (eg. networked computers, industrial photocopiers, telephones, fax, e-mail etc)
- utilities and supplies
- local personnel
- availability of suitable accommodation for delegates
- access to medical facilities
- access to transport
- police protection

Once a decision has been made by the Conference of the Parties (or Standing Committee) to accept the offer of a Party to host the COP, following a careful review of the offer(s) of intent in which the above-mentioned points are addressed, the procedures governing the elaboration of a Host Government Agreement (HGA) are as follows:

1. The Secretariat sends a formal letter to the proposing Government, including an outline of the HGA, and giving a general explanation of the costs to be borne by the Government;
2. The Government must then agree, in principle, to incur the stated direct and indirect costs;
3. The Secretariat determines the precise conference requirements: number of sessions, duration, languages, number of participants, documentation needs etc.
4. The Secretariat requests the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON) to prepare a draft costing of the elements for the Host Government Agreement;
5. The Secretariat assesses the financial implications and sends the draft costing to the Government for initial comments and discussion;
6. Joint planning mission by representatives of conference services and Secretariat staff;
7. The Secretariat finalizes the HGA in joint negotiation with the Host Government;
8. The Host Government transfers funds to cover the additional direct costs to the CMS Trust Fund account;
9. The Secretariat prepares and submits statement of expenditure to the Host Government after the meeting and upon liquidation of all liabilities.