



CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES

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TENTH MEETING OF THE
CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
Bergen, 20-25 November 2011
Agenda Item 19

BIRD FLYWAY CONSERVATION POLICY

(Prepared by the UNEP/CMS Secretariat)

1. A flyway can be defined as the entire range of a migratory bird species (or groups of related species or distinct populations of a single species) through which it moves on an annual basis from the breeding grounds to non-breeding areas, including intermediate resting and feeding places as well as the area within which the birds migrate.
2. A single flyway is composed of many overlapping migration systems of individual bird populations and species, each of which has different habitat preferences and migration strategies. From knowledge of these various migration systems, it is possible to group the migration routes used by birds into broad flyways, each of which is used by many species during their annual migrations.
3. Flyways are relevant to CMS because they can be the subject of Agreements, Memoranda of Understanding, Action Plans, partnerships and other coordination instruments. A flyway approach to the conservation of migratory birds allows many species that face the same threats and share the same habitats and migration routes to be covered, thus rendering conservation efforts more cost-effective both from a technical and financial standpoints.
4. CMS COP9 (Rome, 2008), adopted Resolution 9.2 which called for the establishment of “an open-ended working group on global bird flyways within the framework of the Scientific Council to act as a think tank on flyways and frameworks, and tasked with reviewing scientific and technical issues for conservation of migratory birds and their habitats and relevant international instruments, initiatives and processes, as the basis for future CMS policy on flyways and contributing to the work on the future shape of CMS”.
5. The open-ended Flyways Working Group (FWG) was established inter-sessionally in late 2009 under the framework of the Scientific Council. In addition to members of the Council, a call was made to key partners, conventions and initiatives to ensure broad coverage both in terms of expertise on bird flyway issues and geographical representation to the Working Group. The Chair of the FWG is Dr. Taej Mundkur, COP appointed councillor for Asiatic fauna and the Vice-Chair is Mr. John O’Sullivan COP appointed councillor for birds;

6. The FWG has undertaken three major reviews:
 - a. Existing administrative and/or management instruments for migratory bird flyways globally (Review 1). This report has been coordinated by Wetlands International under contract with the CMS Secretariat;
 - b. Scientific and technical knowledge of migratory bird flyways and conservation priorities, including major gaps (Review 2). This report has been coordinated by BirdLife International under contract with the CMS Secretariat; and
 - c. Policy options for flyway conservation and management to feed into the Intersessional Process Regarding the Future Shape of CMS (Review 3). This report has been done by Dr. Colin Galbraith under contract with the CMS Secretariat.
7. These reviews are tabled as documents UNEP/CMS/ScC17/Inf.4.1, UNEP/CMS/ScC17/Inf.4.2 and UNEP/CMS/ScC17/Inf.4.3.
8. Over the last two years, the FWG has provided updates to meetings of the CMS Standing Committee and Future Shape Group.
9. The FWG held one meeting in Edinburgh on 20-21 February 2011 at the kind invitation of the Government of Scotland. The main topics discussed during the meeting were the contents of Review 3 on policy options and the draft resolution on flyways to be presented to COP10. The report of the meeting is tabled as document UNEP/CMS/ScC17/Inf.4.4.
10. During its meeting in Edinburgh, the FWG agreed that there was a role for the Working Group to play in the next triennium, and therefore the Conference of the Parties may wish to consider retaining the Group for the triennium 2012-2014 until COP11.

Action requested:

The Conference of the Parties is invited to:

- a. consider the proposed draft Resolution on Global Bird Flyways; and
- b. consider the extension of the Flyways Working Group until COP11.