

## REPORT OF THE 4<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE CMS MULTI-STAKEHOLDER ENERGY TASK FORCE

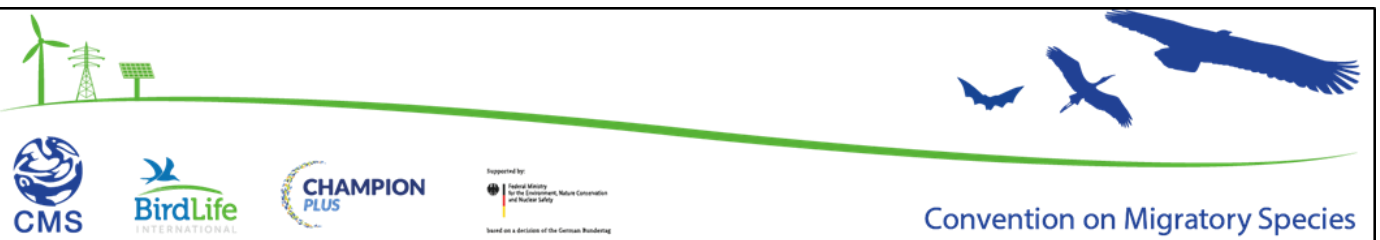


The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, through the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) were recognized as Champion Plus for their generous support and commitment towards Reconciling Energy Sector Developments with Migratory Species Conservation for the period 2018-2020. The Energy Task Force has been funded with the contribution granted by Germany under the Migratory Species Champion Programme.

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**4th Meeting of the CMS  
Multi-Stakeholder Energy Task Force (ETF4)**

*Paris, France, 19 – 20 September 2019*

ETF4/Meeting Report

**MEETING REPORT**



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The first day of the Fourth Meeting of the CMS Energy Task Force (ETF4) was held as a closed session for official ETF Members and Observers. The second day (not subject to this report) was held as an open information event with selected panelist presentations and discussions in the auditorium of the Musée National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris. The Programme of the Second Day is available via the ETF4 webpage: <https://www.cms.int/en/document/programme-meeting-day-2>

### **Agenda Item 1 – Welcoming Remarks**

The Chairperson of the CMS Energy Task Force (ETF), Mr. Osama El-Gebaly (Migratory Soaring Birds Project, Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency) began by welcoming participants to Paris. Mr. El-Gebaly mentioned some context for the meeting: Renewable energy objectives for 2035 and the threat to migratory species presented both opportunities to find innovative solutions and challenges. Synergetic cooperation between the CMS, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA) and others would be beneficial. This meeting was expected to achieve practical outcomes.

Mr. Tilman Schneider (UNEP/CMS Secretariat) thanked the Government of France and OREE for securing the venue, and the ETF Coordination, Mr. Ashton Berry and Ms. Noa Steiner for the great support in organizing this meeting. The CMS Secretariat was preparing the inputs for the COP that would be taking place in February 2020 in India, so the ETF meeting would be useful for providing input for that agenda. Mr. Schneider spoke about the connection of this task force to various organizations, countries and other stakeholders as well as to businesses and the private sector. He mentioned the importance of reconciling renewable energies with the conservation of migratory species, and in this connection, the importance of nature-based solutions and the role of biodiversity with a view to mitigating climate change. In the meeting, the participants would discuss what had been done already and what would be the next activities, so that each participant would leave the meeting with an idea of how to move forward, both by implementing existing frameworks but also based on the decisions made of what was most important.

Mr. Ashton Berry (Global Climate Change Programme Coordinator for BirdLife International and ETF Coordinator) introduced himself and thanked CMS and OREE for their support. Mr. Berry also thanked Ms. Noa Steiner (Birdlife International) for setting up the current meeting. He welcomed all participants to Paris and highlighted the meeting's theme of putting theory and planning into action.

The Chair then officially opened the meeting.

### **Agenda Item 2 – Adoption of the Agenda and Schedule**

The Chair asked the meeting to look at the provisional agenda and schedule and to raise any concerns or proposals for changes. All participants approved the agenda and schedule.

### **Agenda Item 3 – Reports on Implementation**

#### **3.1 Update on ETF Activities by the ETF Coordinator and Work Plan Implementation**

Mr. Berry provided a brief summary of ETF activities and work since the previous meeting in Egypt in 2018. More detailed information is available in [Document ETF4/Doc.2](#).

The ETF had been growing steadily and was looking to expand and welcome new members. The current composition was:

- 13 CMS Contracting Parties as members. A representative of the French Ministry of Environment and Energy, Mr. Michel Perret became a member during the current meeting.
- 5 Multi-lateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) as members of the ETF: CMS, AEWA, EUROBATS, the Ramsar Convention and the CBD.
- 8 international organizations and institutions, including inter-governmental organizations and networks, development banks and NGOs.
- 8 observers including both national and international organizations.
- A 'business pool' of interested companies was forming to allow the private sector to collaborate with ETF in various ways and take part in the implementation of the ETF workplan.

On 1 July 2019 a virtual meeting of the ETF had been held in preparation for this meeting. At that meeting the ETF members and observers had been invited to consult and comment on the draft meeting documents to be submitted to the 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CMS (COP13, scheduled to be held in Gandhinagar, India, 17-22 February 2020).

#### Website updates:

The ETF website had been updated with the addition of an extensive review of the scientific literature under the 'studies and publications' tab. Mr. Berry encouraged ETF members to contact the ETF coordination team if they had additional articles or documents to add, as well as share case studies and experiences – successful and not – for uploading to the ETF website. A tab would be available for that. A new tab would also be created where businesses could add their details to the website.

#### Sustainable technologies:

Highlights from the Bonn conference workshop on decentralization of renewable energies included a description of some innovative technologies for cleaning solar panels without the use of water. It was still an ongoing development. The ETF could be active on this front, of reviewing and communicating new technologies to minimize environmental impacts. The use of local water supplies to clean solar panels had a huge impact on habitats and local communities - as is the case for example in Morocco.

#### Events and further milestones for the implementation of the ETF workplan:

- The 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the ETF had been held on the margins of CBD COP14 in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, on 16 November 2019. A report on the meeting can be accessed via the [ETF website](#).
- Another side event was held at COP14 on 18 November 2018, titled "Connected solutions for a connected world: mainstreaming biodiversity conservation across conventions, landscapes, and sectors through migratory flyways". This side event was organized by the Government of Egypt, BirdLife International and the CMS Secretariat.
- The ETF Coordinator delivered a presentation on the Mitigation Hierarchy at the Rio Convention Pavilion, at COP24 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Katowice, Poland in December 2018. The focus of the presentation was on how the Mitigation Hierarchy relates to the ETF and the reconciling of renewable energy development with the conservation of migratory species.
- The Climate Action Network (CAN) – a group of 1,300 NGOs globally (of which BirdLife is a member) – set up an Energy Working Group in 2018. The ETF coordinator became a member of this working group and successfully integrated biodiversity and migratory bird species considerations into renewable energy development, which is now part of the CAN Energy group position statement on renewable energy. In addition, a large number of NGOs were now aware of the work of the ETF.

- The CMS Secretariat highlighted the activities of the ETF at the workshop on ‘Minimizing the Impacts of Power Lines on Birds’, held in Ostrava, the Czech Republic on 29 May 2019.
- In June 2019, the ETF Coordinator attended the Bonn Climate Change Conference, where he contributed to several CAN Energy Working Group meetings and networked and distributed promotional materials on the ETF. During the Bonn conference, the Coordinator attended the *CSO capacity-building workshop on energy and decentralisation in Africa* organized by Germanwatch, Bread of the World, and the High Atlas Foundation, where he promoted the ETF and enabled the expansion of the ETF’s civil society networks in Africa.
- Conference on Wind Energy and Wildlife Impacts (CWW), 28 August 2019 in Stirling, UK: Ms. Noa Steiner, BirdLife International and part of the ETF coordination team facilitated, in conjunction with the British Society for Ornithology, a workshop titled ‘Standardization of collision mortality data for birds and bats - towards the creation of a global database’. The workshop highlighted the benefits of standardized monitoring protocols and databases to better understand cumulative impacts on a flyway scale amongst others, as well as identifying barriers and potential solutions towards national and global databases. A workshop summary would be compiled and would be distributed to ETF members, to inform the ETF’s future work on this issue.
- IUCN workshop 2 – 6 September 2019 was attended by the ETF coordination team from BirdLife International. The intention of the workshop was to define new IUCN guidelines for Mitigating Biodiversity Impacts Associated with Solar and Wind Energy Infrastructure.

Mr. Berry asked the meeting for any comments or questions.

Mr. Mohammed Shobrak (Saudi Wildlife Authority, Saudi Arabia) expressed interest in learning about the technology to clean solar panels without water, given the large solar programmes planned in Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Berry replied that he was both impressed with the new, recent technologies, and concerned about implementation. Solar was the next big target for ETF after wind, and the European targets for energy from renewables are very ambitious presenting many challenges and thus the ETF must act very quickly to be on top of all the fast changes and suggest solutions that integrate migratory species’ considerations.

Mr. Shobrak expressed the view that the ETF website could be a good vector to spread information about new technologies to allow people to see what is available.

Mr. Berry re-iterated that this was a very recent development and that the material would be incorporated over the coming year 2020 under the ETF website.

Mr. Robert Adamczyk added his concern about some solar infrastructure being built in sensitive areas, such as wetlands, as they are on flat land and often ideal for solar. This is not always recognized as a problem by regulators and industry.

### **3.2 Reports from Members and Observers on Key Achievements and Challenges**

The Chair invited the participants to conduct a round of introductions. A list of the participants of the meeting is available on the [ETF website](#). Some points surfaced during the round regarding achievements and challenges.

Mr. Adamczyk mentioned how constructors usually requested finance late in the stage of the project development – often projects have already received permits, so there is little time for manoeuvring room for the bank to influence project design and monitoring. Then the dilemma for the investor is whether to become involved in a project where their intervention may or may not improve the situation.

Mr. Shobrak mentioned the difficulty in obtaining data from companies in Saudi Arabia. They are working on legal ways to obtain access to this data so they can learn from experience on a range of things, such as how to manage infrastructures, in particular with regards sandstorms in the desert, but also more generally on environmental impacts and effectiveness of mitigation measures. Following efforts in this area, they have successfully, and for the first time, been able to conduct a review of wind farms. Environmental protection measures were often implemented to attract investors, but the challenge was to ensure quality. Finally, a challenge they face regarding Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) on powerlines is that some solar companies feel that the issue of related infrastructure is not directly linked to their project.

Ismail Ameen Ehab, (New and Renewable Energy Authority NREA, Egypt) spoke of the successful implementation of 'shutdown on demand' using radar for wind farms along the Red Sea coast, as well as doing evaluations and monitoring. From the beginning, they have been working closely with BirdLife to achieve this outcome and wish to present this lesson on the benefits of cooperation. By using radar technology, the Egyptian government avoided fixed shutdowns and thus could greatly limit energy loss, while also greatly minimizing the impact on birds. In Egypt, there are also now pre-conditions to approve transmission line projects.

Mr. Rudolf Specht (German Federal Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation, and Nuclear Safety) reported that in Germany, following a decision to renounce nuclear power, the massive development of renewable infrastructures is underway. The resulting impact on nature and society is therefore a very relevant current topic in Germany – and was a motivation to support ETF financially. Mr. Specht did not see any chance of renewing the financial support after 2020, saying that other funding solutions were needed for the ETF to continue post-2020.

Mr. Schneider (CMS Secretariat) took the opportunity to express thanks to the Government of Germany for its initiative to fund the ETF over the last five years.

Mr. James Pearce-Higgins, Director of Science at the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), and ETF Vice-Chairperson gave a brief update on research undertaken by BTO of relevance to the ETF Workplan:

- 1) Following previous work that focused on wind turbines, the BTO along with colleagues, had now sent for publication an overall assessment that looked at the different forms of renewable energy and the impact on birds and mammal species. The subsequent peer-review process would be coming out in the next few months in the Journal of Nature Climate Change.  
The main message was that more energy-intensive forms of renewable energy, such as wind and solar, as opposed to bioenergy, would minimize the footprint on biodiversity. It also found that avoiding protected areas, Key Biodiversity Areas and biodiversity hotspots helped reduce impacts on species significantly. This work had implications for long-term strategic planning.
- 2) Work done with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and Renewables Grid Initiative (RGI) produced the first report on powerlines and collisions and related databases using data collected from transmission operators. It was available on the RGI website and perhaps it could be linked through the CMS. The next step was to secure funding to further research on species vulnerable to collision and electrocution.
- 3) Work is ongoing in the offshore wind industry to improve understanding of the vulnerability of different species. A paper should be coming out soon relevant to the issue of cumulative impact.

Mr. Berry asked the meeting if there were any objections to the nomination of the French Government's, Ministry for the Ecological and Solidary Transition (Ministère de la Transition écologique et solidaire), to become members of the ETF. It was proposed that Mr. Michel Perret would be the Ministry's representative on the ETF. There were no objections. Mr. Perret thanked the members for their vote and said that he looked forward to working with the ETF.

#### **Agenda Item 4 – CMS COP13 preparation – draft energy-related resolutions and decisions**

Mr. Schneider gave the meeting an update on the recent amendments and decisions.

He discussed the meeting documents [UNEP/CMS/COP13/Doc.26.4.2.1 Renewable energy and Migratory Species](#) and [UNEP/CMS/COP13/Doc.26.4.2.2 Power Lines and Migratory Birds](#), and the included draft amendments to the existing CMS decisions and resolutions 11.27 (Rev.COP12) and 10.11, to be presented and proposed for adoption at CMS COP13 for approval. The proposed amendments were based on the consultations with the ETF members through email exchanges and the virtual ad-hoc meeting in July 2019.

The documents would be subject to scientific review by the Sessional Committee of the CMS Scientific Council on 12 to 15 November 2019. The Sessional Committee would make comments on the scientific components of the documents.

Resolution 11.27 (Rev.COP12) *Renewable Energy and Migratory Species* referred to a number of other resolutions and provisions existing under CMS but also under the daughter agreements of CMS, not only those relating to birds, but also to marine mammals, and to bats such as resolutions under EUROBATS.

Mr. Schneider highlighted that some of the proposed changes were aimed at taking into consideration the rapid growth of renewable energy infrastructure. In particular, to better crystallize some technical aspects, for example on data sharing.

Mr. Adamczyk intervened to say that banks were willing to support data sharing, but they were bound by confidentiality agreements with their clients. He would like to have a one-page, non-technical summary describing the minimum data that had to be disclosed with a map that located monitoring points. Data had to serve a scientific purpose, but to ensure uptake and company cooperation, data should not be too difficult to collect from a time and cost perspective. Mr. Adamczyk agreed that standards were necessary, but that they should be clear and achievable so that companies would be able to comply.

Mr. Schneider agreed and pointed out that the critical role of this task force was to support the implementation of the resolutions and decisions related to renewable energy developments and power lines.

Mr. Schneider then discussed the proposed amendments to CMS Decisions 12.81 and 12.82 relating to the proposal to renew support to the ETF. He mentioned the effort to secure better representation within this task force from the energy-responsible ministries and authorities in the countries. Some technical aspects were highlighted including a proposed amendment to Decision 12.82 regarding standardized methodologies, planning and monitoring renewable energy infrastructure.

Mr. Adamczyk mentioned that governments of countries sometimes took steps to favour sustainable development in renewable infrastructure (for example in the form of tariffs), and when they did, it was useful to act quickly because political goodwill lasted a limited time and the window of opportunity would eventually close. It was necessary to know how much data (including cumulative) data was enough.

Ms. Lori Anna Conzo (International Finance Corporation) suggested that the bullet point: “analysis of methods for establishing cumulative impact”, be modified by adding a comma, then adding, “noting there are different spatial scales”; in order to add some flexibility. All cumulative impact analysis starts by establishing the spatial scale and that would allow countries or even regions of countries to start producing cumulative studies, which is better than nothing.

Mr. Schneider highlighted that a new draft decision also encourages the Parties to integrate biodiversity and migratory species considerations in their national energy and climate action plans.

Mr. Schneider proceeded to discuss the proposed amendments to CMS Resolution 10.11 *Powerlines and Migratory Birds*. Some members had sent comments on the proposed amendments. It was suggested that the document mentioned sensitivity mapping as a best practice tool for example. The document integrated the concept of referring to new scientific literature.

Mr. Adamczyk made comments on the point of scientific literature: it was often theoretical. He reminded the meeting that no business wanted to base its projects on methods that had not been properly demonstrated as effective. He recommended integrating this concept into the text.

Mr. Schneider stated that the document with all the proposed amendments would be posted on the CMS COP13 website soon and it would be submitted to the Sessional Committee of the CMS Scientific Council for review. Any further suggestions for modifications from the Sessional Committee would be posted.

### **Agenda Item 5 – Update on the Information Resources Document**

Ms. Steiner provided an update on the Information Resources Document. This document, first published in 2018, collected all guidance that currently existed on strategic spatial planning, environmental impact assessment, mitigation measures, and monitoring. It was divided into three sections: 1) Guidance, 2) Decision support tools and 3) Information documents.

Ms. Steiner asked the participants to support the enhancement and updating of the document by sending any relevant material to the ETF coordination committee. Documents in different languages were also relevant and would be added to the new information document as a link to the original version providing that they were sent with a short abstract in English and contact details.

Andrew Carryer (Renewable Grid Initiative) asked if case studies would also be added to the information document.

Ms. Steiner asked the ETF members if they approved of adding case studies to the document and this suggestion was accepted with no objections. Ms. Steiner added that the ETF coordination team had already constructed a template for case studies that would be available for interested ETF members to fill out.

For the benefit of the new members, Ms. Steiner briefly stated the mandate, the goal and the role of the ETF. She mentioned some of the resolutions that the ETF was implementing were on electrocution, powerlines and renewable energy and some of the guidelines that already existed that had been produced through this task force and others from the CMS Family, which included the EUROBATS guidelines for wind farms.

A survey had also been sent out to the ETF members and there were 12 responses. The most important aims of the ETF according to survey, in order were: 1) implement and drive policy 2) research and development of new tools and 3) knowledge exchange. When the ETF member respondents were asked to explain their answers and what their expectations were from ETF, the two most common responses were 1) incorporating standards and 2) knowledge exchange and sharing experiences. Another message coming from the survey: ETF could be a high-level platform to catalyze policy and change, and to unlock resources for research, innovation and decision support tools.

Ms. Steiner then presented the results of a survey from 2017 of the CMS Parties on how they were implementing guidelines. Of the 90 reports submitted in 2017, 47% (42 Parties) explicitly indicated that electrocution was an obstacle to CMS Appendix 1 migratory species in their country, while 38% (34 Parties) reported that wind turbines were an obstacle. The new CMS country reports had just been submitted at the end of August 2019. Therefore, a similar analysis has not been possible before the ETF4 meeting.



## **Agenda Item 6 – ETF Working Groups**

### ***(i) ETF working groups – breakout sessions***

Ms. Steiner presented the four working group themes that stemmed from the survey of the ETF members mentioned in the previous agenda item and asked the meeting participants to choose one of the following groups:

ETF Working Groups:

- 1) Biodiversity, standardizations of monitoring protocols and data sharing, permits and licensing (7 participants).
- 2) Long-term strategic environmental planning and assessments (6 participants).
- 3) Research and cumulative impacts, development of tools and solutions (3 participants).
- 4) Sharing knowledge and experience and communication strategies – both internal and external (4 participants).

The aim of each group was to define:

- what the vision of the working group should be.
- what the ETF working group wanted to achieve on this topic.
- what could be the challenges.
- enabling conditions.

### ***(ii) ETF working groups – reporting back***

Before initiating the session, the Chair gave the floor to Sylvie Apollin, Director of Development at the Musée National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris, to welcome the participants on behalf of the Museum's president, who was travelling.

The Chair asked for the report from the working groups. One person from each group described the points raised in their conversation.

#### Working Group on long-term strategic environmental planning and assessments

Group vision:

That the ETF plays a key role in facilitating the development of appropriate legislation, policies and plans that incorporate measures to mitigate the impact of renewable energy infrastructure on migratory species.

Legal framework:

- Convince planners and politicians to develop the appropriate legislation.
- Clarify who is responsible within government agencies and how national policy and planning translates to the local level.
- The European Union has a role to play in the provision of appropriate guidance to National governments on the design of adequate legislation and standards in the renewable energy sector.
- Scientific data is required to inform the decision-making process.
- Key point: Review and map current country legislation to identify gaps.

Technical tools and pre-planning:

- Sensitivity mapping should be available to all stakeholders. It could be viewed as an enabling factor by showing countries that they have sufficient space available to locate renewables where they will have minimal impact.
- Importance of long-term planning so that renewables could be sustainable.

- Early intervention following signals of decreasing species populations - take a holistic proactive approach differentiating the impact of renewables against other threats.
- Consider species movement in a landscape, as species may change their migratory routes or the habitats they use, due to, for example, climate change and/or the development of poorly placed renewables infrastructure.
- The earlier the planning is integrated, the better the outcomes.
- Common understanding across all the different stakeholder groups of the issues.
- Champion successes to the wider community based on proven interventions.

Adopt a proactive and positive approach:

- Governments need to be pro-active rather than leaving it all up to consultants or individuals. Try to reward and encourage governments to become involved with ETF, by giving them the opportunity to promote their achievements.
- The ETF could target those countries where there was potential for concern.
- Build the capacity of countries to protect their biodiversity, to not only build resilience to impacts, such as those resulting from climate change, but to also help them achieve their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement.

#### Working Group on biodiversity, standardizations of monitoring protocols and data sharing, permits and licensing

Group vision:

The ETF has a key role in facilitating the development of global standards for monitoring, data sharing, financing and licensing.

- Simplicity would facilitate uptake.
- Risk-based approach.
- Minimum standard – a basic document that would be tailored in different places. What would the standard be that was good enough and practical?
- Standards and protocols should be developed for both established and emerging markets.
- The focus should also be on other taxa in addition to birds.
- Migratory flyways, wintering, and breeding areas should also be considered.
- Transmission lines and wind turbines were connected and a oneness of infrastructure.
- Renewable energy infrastructure needs to be developed in a tailored, site-specific way, and scaled up based on scientific impacts monitoring and assessments.
- Some locations are of greater risk to some bird species than other species. There are also many unknowns regarding the susceptibility of birds to renewables.
- Fatality monitoring in a way that integrated international practices to informing collision susceptibility.
- Thresholds – how many dead birds are too many? – Thresholds should incorporate the precautionary principle to ensure sustainability is achieved.
- Data sharing, disclosure of data: non-technical summary of environmental and social impact assessments.
- Terms and conditions for the life of the project need to be in place.
- A database is required for post-construction monitoring that ensures data is collected in a robust and standardized way. The database would be updated as new data becomes available through further monitoring.

Ms. Steiner raised the issue of raw data – how we could access data in order for it to be used for assessing cumulative impacts.

Mr. Perret spoke to highlight the legal framework of transparency, which in France was built into the constitution.

Mr. Allinson pointed out a dilemma: was an X percent reduction in the population of a species, for example a vulture species, acceptable if it was in exchange for saving ice caps and Polar Bears from extinction? It would have to be demonstrated that there was no other way of satisfying both objectives.

Ms. Steiner and Mr. Allinson pointed out that there was a difference between cumulative impacts - aggregating data from multiple wind farms and aggregating data from renewable infrastructure(s) together with other environmental threats – the vocabulary used to depict these two concepts could vary and would need to be standardized.

Samantha Ralston-Paton (BirdLife South Africa) joined the meeting online and commented that guidance on operational phase monitoring should not just include data collection, but also on how to analyze it. In South Africa, a great deal of data is collected, but the robust statistical analysis is not always conducted.

#### Working Group on Research cumulative impact and development tools

Group vision:

Emphasize the role the ETF could have in bringing access to scientific knowledge and disseminating it.

Research:

- It was most useful to use a tiered approach.
- Foundational knowledge about the distribution of species and their movements, and interconnectivity between populations was needed.
- Lack of data was an issue. Filling in knowledge gaps was required. Many “strategic-type” assessments had to be done due to lack of data. The challenge was to assemble the resources and people needed to produce the data - check with the CMS Parties.
- Sometimes monitoring was occurring, and data was collected and analyzed, but nothing was done with this information. There should be mechanisms to access and use this data.
- Even with non-standardized data, there were ways to use them to pull out some information.

Specific knowledge gaps related to different types of renewable energy and related infrastructure:

- 1) Solar: there were currently large-scale developments in desert regions but there was a considerable lack of data on impacts. This was a priority.
- 2) Wind: some lack in emerging markets but overall, we had a good idea of the sorts of species that were more likely to be affected. What was needed was evidence of the effectiveness of solutions.
- 3) Powerlines: Pull together evidence on vulnerability to electrocution and collision-related to species distribution. Identify areas where interventions might be made.

Additional aspects:

- Cumulative impact: what was the appropriate scale for analysis?
- Migratory populations are often exposed to different impacts in different countries.
- For sea birds, there were some tracking studies, but there was a general lack of data.

Mr. Andrew Carryer (Renewable Grid Initiative) added that it would be interesting to know if the approach of the French Government on transparency was based on an attempt to implement the Aarhus Convention on transparency. If so, that could be referenced by other countries, which currently do not make study results available, to do so as a means of complying with the Convention to which they are signatory.

#### Working Group on sharing knowledge and experience; communications strategy

Group vision:

Increase awareness, knowledge, and action on the negative impacts that energy structures have on migratory species.

Communication strategies and challenges:

- Traditional webinars and workshops are fine, but we need to consider other more innovative ways to achieve the group vision.
- Organizing best practice field trips: inviting people to visit best practice examples was one of the most effective ways to tailor the information to the needs of the members, but it would require the allocation of resources.
- Do not assume that all government officials were aware of the negative impacts of energy structure: organize “awareness meetings”.
- Communicate and capacity-build developers/government on cost-benefit analysis methods, but also to point out to them the benefits of investing in a clear communication strategy.
- Highlighting success stories always worked better than being negative.
- Communication should be tailored to address particular target groups.
- Identified target groups: ETF Members; CMS Parties that were not part of the ETF; development banks; energy industry; governments/local government departments; the public.

#### **Agenda Item 7 – Next Steps and Prioritization of ETF Activities**

Ms. Steiner asked all members and observers to identify what they believed were the most important priorities for the ETF going forward.

Mr. Shobrak requested that the working groups should be able to reconvene to discuss this matter. The participants of the meeting agreed.

After a short discussion, the groups reconvened and shared their priorities and commitments that were written on post-it notes that were collected. This was followed by a ‘tour’ across the table where participants were able to add individual priorities and commitments.

All members and observers were also asked what were the actions that they could commit to achieving over the next year to contribute to the successful functioning of the ETF, in general, or through the working groups.

A summary of the resulting priorities for the ETF will be made available on the ETF webpage, along with a list of commitments from each member.

#### **Agenda Item 8 – Election of Officers: Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair of the ETF**

Following the ETF modus operandi, Mr. Berry asked the members for nominations for the position of ETF Chairperson, to succeed the outgoing Chairperson, Mr. El-Gebaly.

There were no self-nominations. Mr. Shobrak nominated Mr. Michel Perret, as a representative of the Government of France, to the position of Chairperson of the ETF. Mr. Perret was happy with the nomination but needed to confirm his availability for the position with his Ministry and would inform the ETF Coordinator within a few weeks on the outcome. Mr. El-Gebaly agreed to remain in the

position of Chair temporarily until a new Chairperson was found. There were no objections from the meeting regarding this procedure.

Mr. Pearce-Higgins confirmed his availability to remain in the position of Vice-Chair until the next ETF meeting. The meeting confirmed Mr. Pearce-Higgins unanimously as ETF Vice-Chair.

The meeting also agreed that if Mr. Pearce-Higgins was unable to attend the next meeting or for any other matter, Ms. Latifa Sikli (High Commission for Water and Forest and the Fight Against Desertification, Morocco) could be the alternate Vice-Chair.

The Chair, Mr. El-Gebaly, thanked all participants and declared the closure of the official part of the first day of the ETF4 meeting.