



19th November 2011

Migratory Wildlife Network: **Statement to CMS CoP10**

The Migratory Wildlife Network is honoured to be attending this 10th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS CoP10).

The Network is a focused group of conservation professionals dedicated to supporting wildlife Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), wildlife scientists and wildlife policy experts who seek to coordinate and progress migratory wildlife conservation, in particular through the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS). The Network's Membership now spans over 400 individual wildlife experts working in more than 50 countries.

We look forward to contributing to the dialogue and decisions of this CMS CoP10, and through this statement, we offer our preliminary positions on a number of the important conservation priorities before the meeting as well as the budget implications inherent in the decisions that will be taken. On behalf of our Membership, we urge you to ensure that strengthening of the CMS conservation agenda is a priority.

Civil Society Participation

Civil society has historically contributed substantially to CMS through voluntary and monetary contributions and strong programmes of work supporting, promoting and implementing on-ground CMS conservation activities. We also speak to and educate our supporter constituencies about the progress of this conservation work.

We wish for this to continue long into the future, but as the convention changes so too does the nature of our relationship with it. We urge CMS Parties to explore ways of integrating our contributions further into the formal work of the convention, including support of specific agreements.

The Future Shape of CMS

We commend the Intersessional Working Group on the Future Shape (IWGoFS) on bringing forward such a depth of information on the way forward for CMS. We are fully supportive of taking strategic decisions that will support the growth of CMS's conservation agenda. The Migratory Wildlife Network urges CMS Parties to:

1. ensure that civil society has full and transparent access to all Future Shape discussions during CMS CoP10, and any ongoing processes agreed in the coming triennium – specifically the intersessional work on the elaboration of the next Strategic Plan 2015-2020 described in Resolution 10.5
2. reject proposals for 'taxonomic or geographic clustering' of any agreements while they are in their infancy unless a solid species conservation benefit can be demonstrated;
3. reject proposals to shelve or retire any CMS existing or proposed agreements as 'non-performing' until adequate budgets have been allocated to each, and an appropriate period of performance gauged;
4. actively champion a substantial increase in the CMS budget to enable appropriate agreement growth, provide for regular funding to ensure agreement progress; increase capacity within the Scientific Council to the convention and sufficient resources to ensure the tangible reporting of conservation successes to CMS CoP11; and to
5. commence a dialogue with CMS Partner NGOs about potential Partner support of specific agreements.

CMS must have sufficient budget to progress the conservation priorities determined by CMS CoP10. It is also critical that all CMS agreements have sufficient budget allocation



to enable them to progress with their conservation work. We strongly urge CMS Parties agree to a significant increase in CMS budget to enable appropriate agreement growth, provide for regular funding to ensure agreement progress, sufficient resources to ensure the triennium progress on conservation work and to enable tangible reporting of conservation activities to CMS CoP11 and beyond.

None of the work of the convention can be progressed without a strong programme of scientific support. The CMS Scientific Council underpins the work of the entire organisation and we feel that we should at this time be building its competency. We also believe that the small grants programme has been a life-blood for the organisation, providing vital support and encouragement across the whole range of CMS activities. These projects have underpinned and contributed significantly to the development of most of the agreements and action plans that are now part of the CMS suite of tools.

CMS Strategic Plan

We commend the Secretariat for achieving solid progress in the three year period of the Strategic Plan 2006-2011. We note that there was a heavy reliance on voluntary contributions, which we believe is not a sustainable way forward for the next Strategic Plan. We urge Parties to recognise that certain areas such as agreement meetings were not achieved simply because no funding was available, and not because there was limited conservation merit of these activities.

We welcome the draft Strategic Plan for 2012-2014 and look forward to engaging with the proposed activities in the coming triennium. The Migratory Wildlife Network wishes to register our interest to be included in the intersessional work on the elaboration of the next Strategic Plan 2015-2020 described in Resolution 10.5.

The conservation agenda of the convention

The Migratory Wildlife Network wishes to commend Norway's leadership in bringing forward a draft "Message to Durban" from CMS CoP10. As one of the Arctic ring Countries it is particularly pertinent that we are in Norway at this time considering the impact of climate change on migratory species, and especially those of the Arctic.

Res 10.19 on **climate change** is a solid forward step, calling for adaptive management; a standardized methodology for evaluating the susceptibility of species to climate change; and the identification of CMS Appendix listed species vulnerable to climate change. We welcome the appropriate cross over to Res 10.3 on ecological networks seeking to ensure that individual sites are sufficiently large and heterogeneous in terms of species composition, habitat and topography and to strengthen the physical and ecological connectivity between sites, as well as seasonal protection measures to protection critical aspects of species lifecycles. The Migratory Wildlife Network urges CMS Parties to accept and agree to fund the recommendations from the Scientific Council aimed at strengthening this important resolution, and providing the critical scientific capacity that the convention will need to take this programme of work forward.

In addition to the **narwhal** identified by the CMS Scientific Council, we urge CMS Parties to commit to progressing at CMS CoP11 a proposal to list **polar bear** on the CMS Appendices in recognition of their extreme vulnerability to habitat loss as a result of climate change. Through this listing, CMS could complement the important work already being carried out by Range States, in particular through the Polar Bear Agreement and the Arctic Council Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Programme, by facilitating an international discussion about the shared-responsibility of CMS Parties beyond the Arctic to mitigate the impact of climate change on these important Arctic species.

Conf 10.39 and Res 10.3 on **critical sites and ecological networks** is also welcomed, although there is a notable absence of oceanic habitats and in particular high seas. The Migratory Wildlife Network urges CMS Parties to accept the recommendations from the Scientific Council that strengthen this Resolution.

During CMS CoP9 Parties effectively froze the development of **new agreements** until the Future Shape process had been concluded, while allowing the Secretariat to maintain the momentum of agreements already being developed. In this context, the work of the Secretariat in fundraising for and progressing work on the **High Andean flamingos**, the **Southern huemul**, **migratory sharks**, **Sahelo-Saharan antelopes** and **Eurasian aridland mammals** is to be commended, however, the effectiveness of the new agreements, as well as some of the other under-resourced agreements should not be assessed, as there was not a sufficient growth to allow these process to fully form. Significant priorities have still not been progressed, and the Migratory Wildlife Network urges CMS Parties to commit to:



1. finalising and funding the agreement for the Asian **houbara bustard**;
2. providing long-term funding for **Central Eurasian aridland mammals**;
3. moving forward on an agreement for **Sahelo-Saharan megafauna**
4. providing long-term funding for the **migratory sharks** Memorandum of Understanding

In addition, we urge the Range States for **Central African elephants**, the **Central Asian Flyway**, **Pacific marine turtles**, **Subsaharan African bats**, **cetaceans in the Indian Ocean** and **cetaceans in South-East Asia** to meet as appropriate Range State groups in the margins of CMS CoP10, to identify lead Parties to take each process forward and to communicate these decisions clearly to CMS CoP10.

The assessment of **bycatch in gillnet fisheries** (Inf 10.30) is an important and welcomed document for this CMS CoP10 identifying the forty CMS Appendix listed species most exposed to risk from gillnet fishing, including:

seabirds – african penguin, Peruvian diving-petrel, Japanese murrelet, dark-rumped petrel, waved albatross, socotra cormorant, humboldt penguin, balearic shearwater, pink-footed shearwater, Audouin's gull, short-tailed albatross.

cetaceans & sirenians – finless porpoise, Irrawaddy dolphin, dugong, North Pacific right whale, Atlantic hump-backed dolphin, northern right whale, bottlenose dolphin, Heaviside's dolphin, fin whale, sei whale, Indo-Pacific hump-backed dolphin, blue whale, Burmeister porpoise, Baird's beaked whale, Omura whale.

seals and sea otters – Mediterranean monk seal, marine otter, southern river otter.

sea turtles – hawksbill turtle, Kemp's ridley turtle, leatherback turtle, loggerhead turtle, green turtle, olive ridley turtle.

sharks – basking shark, longfin mako shark, porbeagle shark, whale shark, great white shark.

Both Conf 10.33 and Res 10.14 speak to the need for bycatch data to be made more readily available. In addition, CMS's engagement with Regional Fisheries Management Organisations needs to increase dramatically, and reducing this significant impact to the CMS Appendix listed species should be considered a high priority for all CMS Parties.

In 2005, Res 8.22: Adverse Human Induced Impacts on Cetaceans called for CMS to review of the progress and intent of CMS and its agreements to date and how the CMS Family could be more effective through strong collaboration with the International Maritime Organization, the International Whaling Commission and its Scientific Committee and Conservation Committee, the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic, the United Nations Informal Consultation on Protection of the Oceans and the Law of the Sea, the Cartagena Convention, European Union Habitats and Species Directive, the Bern Convention and the United Nations Environment Programme Regional Seas Programme. The review also required the consideration of entanglement and bycatch; climate change; ship strikes; pollution; habitat and feeding ground degradation and marine noise as threats, and to develop a **Global CMS Programme of Work for Cetaceans**. The programme of work proposed draws upon CMS's own priorities as determined through past resolutions and recommendations. To support this programme of work, an expanded strategic role for the Scientific Council's Aquatic Mammals Working Group is proposed to provide specific advice and reporting to support the Global Programme of Work for Cetaceans. The Migratory Wildlife Network urges CMS Parties to accept the recommendations that have come forward from the Aquatic Mammals Working Group of the Scientific Council.

Res 10.24 on **underwater noise** is another important forward step, and the Network urges CMS Parties to ensure that strong regulation of noise pollution is part of the final resolution text.

There are a great many other important conservation issues to be discussed during CMS CoP10, including Res 10.4 on **marine debris**, Res.10.11 on **power lines and migratory species**, Res.10.12 on **freshwater fish**, Res.10.22 on **wildlife disease**, Res.10.26 on **poisoning to migratory birds** and Res.10.27 on **landbirds in the African Eurasian region** for which the Network urges CMS Parties to accept the recommendations of the Scientific Council.

Finally, we strongly urge CMS Parties to adopt the Appendix I listing proposals for **Saker Falcon**, **Red-footed Falcon**, **Far Eastern Curlew** and **Bristle-thighed Curlew**; the Appendix I and II listing proposal for **Giant manta ray**; and the Appendix II listing proposals for **Argali** and the **Bobolink**.