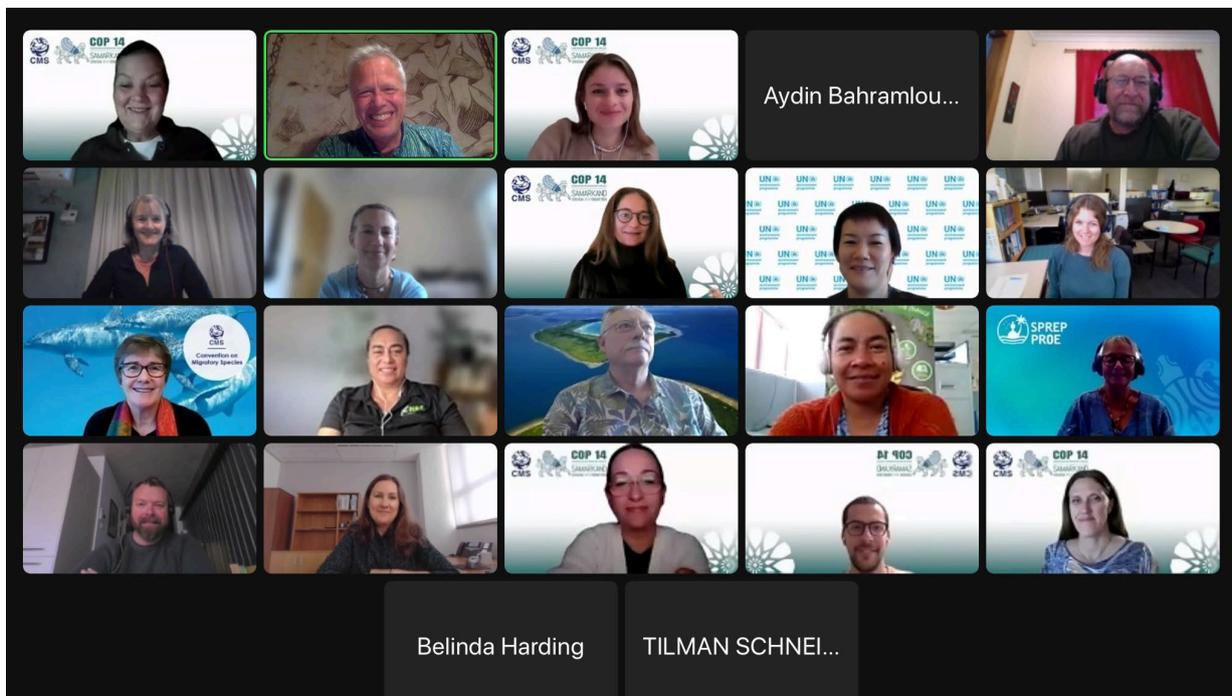




**Regional Workshop in Preparation for the Fourteenth Meeting of the
Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species
(Pre-COP14)**

**Oceania
17 – 18 - 19 October 2023**

Virtual format via Zoom



**WORKSHOP REPORT
Tim Dodman, November 2023**

CMS Pre-COPs were organized thanks to the generous contribution of the European Commission



Workshop introduction, agenda and participation

The 14th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS COP14) was being held in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, 12-17 February 2024. In October 2023, the CMS Secretariat organised a series of regional workshops in preparation for COP14 (Pre-COPs14), which aimed to provide an opportunity for Parties, especially CMS National Focal Points (NFPs), to have an overview of priority COP14 issues for their regions and to discuss them beforehand. The Pre-COPs also aimed to provide a better understanding of the Convention and COP functioning, foster exchange of information among Parties, and strengthen institutional capacity by promoting participation in negotiations.

The online Pre-COP14 workshop for Oceania, 17-19 October 2023, was structured around a series of presentations, and included a closed session on Day 2. There was a high level of participation throughout, with useful and engaging discussions. It was facilitated by Mr Tim Dodman and Ms Alexandra Macdonald (NFP for New Zealand). The meeting received generous financial contributions from the European Union for providing funding through the third phase of the African, Caribbean and Pacific MEAs Programme (ACP).

The workshop was held online through Zoom, lasting for four hours on 17 and 18 October and one hour on 19 October, and was designed to be fully held during the day for participants in Oceania. The workshop agenda is shown in Annex 1. Participants comprised CMS NFPs and/or other government representatives of CMS Parties of the Oceania region, plus representatives of the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP ROAP), Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), and members of the Secretariat. The workshop was guided by two facilitators and supported by the CMS Secretariat. A full participant list is given in Annex 2.

Tuesday 17th October

Opening Session

The facilitator, Mr Tim Dodman, welcomed everyone to the meeting, outlined the online workshop protocol and agenda, took a workshop participant photo and introduced the key note presenters providing opening remarks. Participants also introduced themselves.

Ms Amy Fraenkel, Executive Secretary of CMS, welcomed everyone to the workshop. She highlighted that the Status of the World's Migratory Species Report would be launched at COP14, which would also adopt a new Strategic Plan for Migratory Species and consider the addition of 14 more species to its appendices, new global guidelines and best practices on key issues and new Programmes of Work. A new CMS budget for the next triennium would also be adopted, and she hoped that Parties would support the third scenario included in the budget document to ensure that CMS was fit for purpose. She noted that the overall aim of the Pre-COPs was to provide CMS Parties with an opportunity to prepare for COP14 well ahead of the COP itself. She reminded the workshop that the COP14 slogan "Nature knows no borders" highlighted that the survival of migratory species was dependent on international collaboration. Ms Fraenkel thanked the European Union for providing funding for the Pre-COPs through the third phase of the African, Caribbean and Pacific MEAs Programme (ACP). She also acknowledged the great contribution of members of the Oceania region for their significant support to CMS, and thanked workshop participants, the Secretariat staff and facilitators.

Highlighting the importance of the region's iconic migratory species, Ms Makiko Yashiro, Regional Coordinator for Ecosystem Management Sub-programme at UNEP ROAP, indicated that UNEP was committed to support CMS in key areas, including in implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), as a new blueprint for conservation. She noted the impact of plastic pollution in the region, and was hopeful that capacity to address this threat would soon be strengthened by a binding instrument.

Mr Stuart Chape, SPREP Director of Island and Ocean Ecosystems, indicated that 21 islands and territories were members of SPREP, seven of which were also CMS Parties. He noted the relevance to the region of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Marine Turtles and their Habitats of the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia (IOSEA Marine Turtles MOU) and the MOU on the Conservation and Management of Dugongs (*Dugong dugon*) and their Habitats throughout their Range, as well as the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP). He considered that the listing proposal for gadfly petrels was also of high importance for Oceania.

Session 1: Preparation for COP14

Overview of CMS and useful information for NFPs

Mr Tim Dodman provided an overview of CMS and useful information for NFPs, including a brief summary of NFP roles and responsibilities and the CMS implementation cycle.

1st Extraordinary Meeting of the Conference of The Parties (ExCOP1)

The Secretariat presented information on the ExCOP1, scheduled to take place remotely from 28-30 November 2023. COP13 had adopted Resolution 13.2 on Financial and Administrative matters covering the budget period until 31 December 2023. Only the COP could adopt a CMS budget, and due to the COP14 postponement into 2024, the ExCOP was needed to ensure the continuous operation of CMS by adopting an interim budget for 2024. Participants appreciated the deadline extension for receipt of official letters from Parties requesting the convening of an ExCOP. It was clarified that such letters must be signed by CMS NFPs.

Overview of CMS COP14

The Secretariat next introduced COP14, which would take place in the Silk Road Congress Center, Samarkand, Uzbekistan from 12 to 17 February 2024. [Information for Participants](#) was available on the CMS website. It was important to register early for COP14 using the [registration form](#) on the CMS website. The Secretariat indicated that it might be in a position to fund one representative from each eligible Party. Travel funded delegates should request funding as early as possible. Participants were invited to reserve their accommodation by 20 December 2023 at the latest. Parties were requested to pay particular attention to the credentials of their representatives.

Session 2: Priority topics and key issues of COP14 - Strategic and Institutional matters

Scientific Council

COP14/Doc. 15.1: Evaluation of the results of the restructuring of the Scientific Council

Ms Narelle Montgomery (Australia) introduced the document. The Sessional Committee of the SC (ScC-SC) had confirmed that the restructuring of the Scientific Council was effective and suggested

increasing the number of Party-appointed Councillors from 3 to 4 per region. Oceania supported increasing the number of Party-appointed Councillors from 3 to 4 per region, noting that this would facilitate the turnover of the Councillors, and would alleviate pressure on Working Groups.

COP14/Doc. 15.2: Scientific Council Membership

The Secretariat introduced the document, clarifying that the ScC-SC was composed of nine COP-appointed Councillors with specific expertise and 15 Party-appointed Councillors - three from each Standing Committee (StC) region. Party-appointed members should normally be nominated for a term of two triennia, and at each COP half of the Party-appointed membership was renewed. Oceania had pointed out that the Party-appointed members should serve for a term of at least two triennia, and it was agreed by the region that the members for Oceania would serve for three terms (or triennia), allowing rotation of one member during each COP period, which would provide continuity and build capacity.

COP14/Doc. 16: Election of Parties to the Standing Committee

The Secretariat informed that there were 12 Regional members to the StC, including one member from the Oceania region, currently New Zealand, which had served one term, with alternate Palau. Both members could continue to serve.

COP14/Doc. 23: National Reports

The Secretariat reported that only 41% of CMS Parties had submitted their National Reports in time for inclusion in the analysis of reports. The deadline for submission of National Reports had been extended to 14 November 2023. Participants contributed some reasons for the low response rate of Oceania:

- A large amount of work was required to complete the report, including conducting research, asking others for input and waiting for responses, which presented a challenge for small countries.
- The online process was complex, requiring much cutting and pasting; the template needed revision.
- There was limited capacity of staff to complete the report.
- The template was very detailed, with many targets, some of which were difficult to quantify.

It was considered that the new Strategic Plan to be considered by COP14 was more focused and streamlined and should make reporting easier, once the template was modelled on the new plan.

COP14/Doc. 21: Conservation Status of Migratory Species

The Secretariat presented this document, noting that this report should be presented to each second COP as a basis for species status review. Oceania considered that it made sense for the report to be presented to every second COP, i.e. every six years.

COP14/Doc. 14.1: Implementation of the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species (SPMS) 2015-2023

The Secretariat presented the evaluation of implementation of SPMS 2015-2023, noting that progress had been made on mainstreaming migratory species priorities across government and society, although actions to reduce direct pressures had, so far, not proved sufficient. Further, many

species still had an unfavourable conservation status and a substantial proportion were undergoing population declines. Only moderate progress had been made on reaching the favourable conservation status of migratory species, and enhancing implementation through participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity-building.

COP14/Doc. 14.2: New Strategic Plan for Migratory Species (SPMS)

Ms Alexandra Macdonald presented the SPMS 2024-2032, which had six goals and specific targets, focused on the conservation status, habitats and ranges of and threats affecting migratory species and on implementation and synergies. It was considered that the key challenge for Pacific countries was implementation, which required funding and resources.

COP14/Doc. 17: CMS Contribution to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

The Secretariat presented the document reminding that CMS participated in all consultations leading to the adoption of the post-2020 GBF, including the Bern process on collaboration among biodiversity-related conventions and that some steps to contribute to the implementation of the framework had already been undertaken. The COP was recommended to adopt the draft consolidated Resolution and new Decisions that enabled CMS to effectively contribute to the implementation of the GBF, further input to the Monitoring Framework (AHTEG) on indicators, a new Joint Work Programme with CBD, and further engagement through the Bern Process. The Bern III Conference on Cooperation among the Biodiversity-related Conventions for the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal GBF was scheduled to take place from 23-25 January 2024 in Bern, Switzerland. Funds should be available for the participation of one eligible member per region. It was considered that GBF implementation would be key area of work for Pacific countries in coming years, and it was important to build the needs of migratory species into this.

Session 3: Priority topics and key issues of COP14 – Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

COP14/Doc. 24: Review Mechanism and National Legislation programme

The Secretariat presented the document. It was commented that this looked like a useful mechanism to assist Parties to ensure that their national legislation was on track in terms of migratory species.

COP14/Doc. 26: Definition of the Terms "Range State" and "Vagrant"

The Secretariat reported that the ScC-SC6 (2023) could not agree to recommend the guidance for adoption by the COP, but nevertheless agreed to present the report to the COP for further consideration. Members from Oceania agreed that guidance on this issue would be useful.

Session 4: Amendment of CMS appendices and implementation of the Concerted Action

COP14/Doc. 32.2.8: Report on the implementation of the Concerted Action for the Antipodean Albatross (*Diomedea antipodensis*)

Mr Graeme Taylor introduced the document. Australia, Chile and New Zealand had submitted a progress report, with good progress made towards achieving fisheries management and research objectives, whilst further action was needed to improve the species' status. New Zealand had continued with a range of domestic fisheries bycatch management actions as part of implementation of its national plan of action for seabirds. Australia was implementing a range of management arrangements under its Threat Abatement Plan for seabird bycatch, a National Recovery Plan for

albatrosses and petrels, and a National Plan of Action for minimising the incidental catch of seabirds in Australian capture fisheries.

Support for the Concerted Action was welcomed from countries of the South Pacific, which were required to use correct fishing gear. It was agreed that port-based outreach would be useful. There were issues in meeting success in bycatch mitigation measures, with some resistance in the fishing industry, especially at the southern end of the range when the night-setting period was short in the austral summer.

Aquatic listing proposal

COP14/Doc. 31.4.9: Proposal for the inclusion of the Sand Tiger Shark (*Carcharias taurus*) in Appendix I and II of the Convention

The Secretariat presented the proposal for this Critically Endangered species from the governments of Brazil and Panama. It was noted that Australia was the only Range State for this species in the Oceania region, where there were two populations considered genetically isolated, one on the East coast and one on the West coast (contrary to the distribution map in the document). However, neither population in Australia was considered migratory, and Australia was in discussion with Brazil to consider exclusion of these two populations from the proposal. The issue was noted to be similar to that of Tope Shark (*Galeorhinus galeus*), for which New Zealand had a discrete non-migratory population.

Aquatic concerted actions

COP14/Doc. 32.2.9: Report on the implementation of the Concerted Action for the Common Guitarfish (*Rhinobatos rhinobatos*) and the Bottlenose Wedgefish (*Rhynchobatus australiae*)

The Secretariat presented the report, which recommended that activities in the Concerted Action should focus on ensuring that conservation planning approaches were developed and implemented at various regional scales. Members from the Oceania region agreed that the Concerted Action should be renewed as proposed in Annex 1 to the document.

COP14/Doc. 32.3.7: Proposal for a Concerted Action for the Blue Shark (*Prionace glauca*) already listed in Appendix II of the Convention

The Secretariat presented the proposal for Blue Shark, which had a wide global range, including in Oceania. The Concerted Action proposed would provide an important avenue for addressing the threats to and lack of cooperative management for this species and for promoting further research and conservation. SPREP considered that Blue Shark conservation depended largely on Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs), and encouraged CMS Parties to liaise with them. Members commented that Parties had not been consulted in the preparation of the document, and considered that greater liaison with Parties was needed for its improvement. However, the deadline for further comments on the proposal had already passed.

Wednesday 18th October

Session 5: Priority topics and key issues of COP14 – Administrative and Budgetary Matters

COP14/Doc. 13.2: Budget 2024-2026 for the intersessional period between COP14 and COP15

The Secretariat presented the draft proposed budget 2024-2026, outlining three future budget scenarios:

- Scenario 1: Zero nominal growth (status quo compared to 2021-2023 budget); no funds would be allocated for meetings of governing bodies nor the travel of Secretariat staff to COP15.
- Scenario 2: Zero real growth; this scenario would include Umoja costs and an increase in the cost of meetings plus 2% inflation.
- Scenario 3: Strengthening Secretariat staff capacity and addressing needs related to information management and communications.

Discussion points included seeking clarifications on the scale of contributions, also in relation to ExCOP1. Further discussions were anticipated in the closed session.

Session 6: Priority topics and key issues of COP14 – Interpretation and implementation of the Convention – Crosscutting Conservation Issues

COP14/Doc. 30.1.1: Intentional Take: Priorities for addressing illegal and unsustainable intentional taking of migratory species

The Secretariat highlighted that domestic use and trade were not covered by CITES. There was intentional take in Oceania of turtles for their shells and their eggs, of sharks, for which cooperation with RFMOs was important, and of shorebirds, with significant take along the flyway, including in non-Party Range States.

COP14/Doc. 30.4.5: Threats: Plastic Pollution

The Secretariat presented the document, which included a request to support negotiations for a legally binding treaty on plastic pollution under UNEP. Members considered that this was a significant issue for the Pacific sector, with many migratory species consuming ocean plastic, noting also some crossover with marine pollution issues (COP14/Doc. 27.2.1). Plastic pollution, however, presented a major information gap for the Pacific, where it would be important to conduct an assessment of its status and impact.

COP14/Doc. 30.3.1: Infrastructure: Infrastructure and impact assessment

The Secretariat presented the document, questioning if the proposed draft amendments to Resolution 7.2 (Rev. COP12) and Decisions were appropriate to address the issue. It was noted that the impact of infrastructure, including from offshore energy developments, would be cumulative. Windfarms were considered relevant in New Zealand, although there were no offshore windfarms as yet.

Conservation Planning and Management

COP14/Doc. 30.2.1.1: Ecological Connectivity – Policy aspects and COP14/Doc. 30.2.1.2: Ecological Connectivity – Technical aspects

The Secretariat presented an overview of both documents on ecological connectivity, noting the strong links to the GBF, that a survey for Parties on connectivity data would soon be launched, and highlighting the links between connectivity, resilience and climate change.

Threats

COP14/Doc. 30.4.1: Climate Change and Migratory Species

The Secretariat highlighted the role of migratory species in ecosystem functions and services, the impact of climate change on migratory species, and the importance of nature-based solutions to climate change. The importance of this item to the Oceania region was clear, including more storms damaging shorelines and impacting low-lying islands. More case studies from Oceania could be included in future reviews. It was anticipated that the report would be launched at a side event at UNFCCC COP26 and presented at a side event during CMS COP14.

COP14/Doc. 30.4.3: Wildlife Disease

The Secretariat introduced the document, which included a new draft Resolution on Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) and draft amended Resolution 12.6 on Wildlife Disease and Migratory Species. Oceania considered that HPAI was of global concern, including for Oceania. Wildlife Health Australia was recognised as a key programme in the region, with an important resource centre.

COP14/Doc. 30.4.4: Light Pollution guidelines for wildlife

The Secretariat introduced the document, which included guidelines on how to effectively avoid and mitigate the indirect and direct negative effects of light pollution on migratory species. It was noted that the original guidelines were very useful, and light pollution was having an impact on a number of migratory birds in Oceania, including Tahiti Petrel (*Pseudobulweria rostrata*).

Session 7: Priority topics and key issues of COP14 - Interpretation and implementation of the Convention – Avian species and crosscutting issue

Crosscutting Conservation Issues

COP14/Doc. 30.3.2: Infrastructure: Renewable energy and powerlines

The Secretariat informed about the mandate and activities of the CMS Energy Task Force (ETF), and highlighted the guidelines for sustainable deployment and the need to produce guidance for assessing and mitigating the impact on migratory, including aquatic, species. The ETF carried out important work of relevance to Oceania, especially in relation to ETF's work expansion to aquatic species. It was suggested that representatives from Oceania could join the ETF, to bring regional expertise. Infrastructure was becoming a big topic in New Zealand, with windfarms set to expand offshore, with potential impacts on seabirds and marine mammals. It was important to progress the use of mitigation tools. Interest in the AVISTEP guidance was expressed.

Avian Species Conservation issues

COP14/Doc. 28.1: Prevention of illegal killing, taking and trade of migratory birds

The Secretariat highlighted the work of the Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean (MIKT) and the establishment of the Asia Pacific Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds Intergovernmental Task Force (ITTEA). Thanks was expressed to the Secretariat for the coordination of webinars under ITTEA, which had been very useful. It was noted that North America was not shown on the ITTEA map, although many migratory birds present in Oceania bred there. Migratory shorebirds were hunted along the flyway, and indigenous take of Bar-tailed Godwits

(*Limosa lapponica*) had been recorded in Alaska. The status of bird killing across the Pacific islands was not well known, although Wedge-tailed Shearwater (*Ardenna pacifica*) and Collared Petrel (*Pterodroma brevipes*) were known to be hunted in Vanuatu.

COP14/Doc. 28.4.1: Flyways

The Secretariat noted advancement in establishing an initiative for the Central Asian Flyway (CAF) and enhanced cooperation with the East-Asian Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP). The Oceania region welcomed the focus on CAF, which presented an important knowledge gap in global flyways. It was clarified that participation in the Flyways Working Group was not restricted to Parties. There was no framework in place for the Pacific Flyway, which presented a large data gap. It was useful for Oceania to keep track of actions in other flyways, which were often of relevance also to Oceania.

COP14/Doc. 28.5.2: Action plans for birds: Action Plan for the Christmas Island Frigatebird

Mr Mark Carey introduced the Action Plan for Christmas Island Frigatebird (*Fregata andrewsi*), a species which only bred at Christmas Island, Australia. The plan had been adopted by the EAAFP. Australia and the Philippines were the only Parties to CMS that were Range States. Direct targeting by fishermen and bycatch were principal threats; Jakarta Bay in Indonesia was a key non-breeding hotspot. It was noted that frigatebirds were of cultural significance in the Pacific, and the region supported the adoption of this action plan and its implementation, as well as the action plan for the Far Eastern Curlew (*Numenius madagascariensis*).

Closed Session

A closed session was held at the end of the day, without participation of the Secretariat.

Thursday 19th October

Session 8: Priority topics and key issues of COP14 - Interpretation and implementation of the Convention - Aquatic species

Aquatic Species Conservation Issues

Fisheries-induced threats

COP14/Doc. 27.1.1: Bycatch

The Secretariat introduced the document, including the report "*Technical mitigation techniques to reduce bycatch of sharks: there is no silver bullet*". The Oceania region acknowledged the important work carried out by the Secretariat and the COP-appointed Councillor for Bycatch. The resources developed, including the reviews and mitigation measures, would be very useful to Parties. It was important to progress in mitigation of marine turtle bycatch in the Oceania region. The region noted that CMS had an important role to support Parties with technical guidance; building synergies was also essential.

The shift to the broader term "fisheries-induced mortality" for sharks and rays, which covered all forms of mortality, and which could give a better estimate of impacts, was discussed. Clarity was needed on what was included within this term, especially relating to targeted take. It was noted that the term did not include mortality related to non-active fishing gear. Seabird bycatch was noted to be very important in New Zealand, although seabird bycatch did not seem to fit within this document.

ACAP addressed bycatch of seabirds, but did not cover all regions or all seabird species affected by bycatch.

For Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) member countries, reporting on bycatch was mandatory through Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC). New Zealand reported on bycatch in all RFMOs and in the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), as well as in annual reporting to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). It was noted that one of the greatest threats to cetaceans in the Pacific was from non-active fishing gear. Some netting gear used to deter sharks in New Caledonia was being tested.

COP14/Doc. 27.1.2: Fish aggregating devices (FADs)

The Secretariat introduced the document, which included an annex "*An Introduction to FADs as a Source of Marine Debris*". The role of CMS was to enhance and support actions by other international bodies dealing with FADs (defined as objects, structures or devices of any material, man-made or natural, which were deployed, and/or tracked, and used to aggregate fish for subsequent capture). The Oceania region welcomed this document and its guidance, noting that the WCPFC was trying to address FADs. It was estimated that 20,000-30,000 FADs were released into the Pacific every year, with only about 9% retrieved. The Cook Islands had experienced impacts of FADs. Greater controls and the use of biodegradable FADs were needed.

Marine pollution and other threats

COP14/Doc. 27.2.1: Effects of marine pollution on migratory species

The Secretariat introduced the document, which included the annex "*Migratory species and marine pollution: a brief overview of issues*". The primary role of CMS was to complement actions by other bodies that dealt directly with source reduction, or control of pollutant release. It was noted that the proposed Decision directed at the ScC to undertake a review of cumulative impacts was a significant task and could be difficult to achieve in many countries. Access to data and filling information gaps were essential to progress in understanding the effects of marine pollution on migratory species. Some information was available on species at high risk from plastic pollution.

COP14/Doc. 27.2.2: Marine noise

The Secretariat presented the document on marine noise; existing mandates included dissemination of CMS Family Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for Marine Noise-generating Activities, and publishing a report on "*Best Available Technology (BAT) and Best Environmental Practice (BEP) for Three Noise Sources: Shipping, Seismic Airgun Surveys, and Pile Driving*". Marine noise was considered a major issue for the Oceania region, with current and emergent threats, such as noise from windfarms, likely having a high cumulative impact on marine species, especially cetaceans. The Oceania region supported updating the Technical Support Information to the Noise EIA Guidelines. The Australian government was in the process of developing its own marine noise guidelines to manage and mitigate impacts on marine species. It was noted that deep-sea mining was an emerging issue that could produce significant marine noise.

COP14/Doc. 27.2.3: Vessel strikes

The Secretariat introduced the document on vessel or ship strikes, which impacted marine megafauna, including Whale Sharks (*Rhincodon typus*), which were at high risk of collisions in major shipping routes during their migrations, and in specific aggregation sites. The document emphasized

the need for proactive measures, research, monitoring programmes and international cooperation. Specific guidance was provided on measures to reduce the collision risk of Whale Sharks from ship traffic.

New Zealand noted that Bryde's Whale (*Balaenoptera edeni*) was being hit by ships coming into ports, and safe speed limits and other measures had been set to reduce vessel strike impacts. However, vessel strikes were very hard to measure or control in the open sea. Probably only a small percentage of struck animals with obvious injuries were washed up, as struck animals usually disappeared, thus cetacean mortality due to vessel strikes was under-recorded. Australia had a vessel strike strategy in place. Vessel strikes were not known to be an issue in Fiji or the Cook Islands. It was suggested that an increase in marine noise could potentially lead to an increase in vessel strikes.

COP14/Doc. 27.2.4: Deep-sea mining (DSM)

The Secretariat introduced the document on DSM, which was the process of retrieving mineral deposits from the deep seabed (ocean floor below 200m). The draft Resolution urged Parties not to engage in DSM until sufficient and robust scientific information had been obtained to make informed decisions as to whether mining and related activities caused harmful effects to the marine environment and its fauna. Sand mining had been an issue in New Zealand, where a moratorium on seabed mining had since been introduced. There was also pressure in New Zealand for a moratorium on deep-sea mining under the High Seas or Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Treaty. Guidelines and the Resolution would be very helpful for the region. As DSM operations would likely occur around the clock, it was also deemed relevant for light pollution.

COP14/Doc. 27.3.1: Marine Wildlife Watching: Recreational in-water interactions (RIWI)

The Secretariat introduced the document, which included an annex on the proposed "*Guidelines for Recreational In-water Interactions with Marine Wildlife*". It was noted that the guidelines were already useful, and had been used in New Zealand, where there were RIWI with Common Bottlenose Dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*). It was noted that the guidelines and codes of conduct should be adapted to each country and location, and cover safety concerns for both wildlife and people. It was recommended to distribute the guidelines to Signatories to the Pacific Islands Cetaceans MOU. RIWI was an important issue in the Pacific, and guidelines would be useful, for instance in evaluating new (eco)tourism proposals being promoted in Fiji. The guidelines linked to the 2022-2026 Pacific Islands Regional Marine Species Action Plans, which included a Whale and Dolphin Action Plan and a Turtle Action Plan.

Area Based Conservation Management

COP14/Doc. 27.4.1: Important marine mammal areas (IMMAs)

The Secretariat introduced the document, noting that 81 new IMMAs had been identified and 22 additional CMS-listed species included in newly identified IMMAs since COP13. Fiji noted that IMMAs had been very useful, including in relation to RIWI and the (Pacific region) Whale and Dolphin Action Plan. The Australian government used IMMAs as an information source for conservation planning and decision making.

COP14/Doc. 27.4.2: Important shark and ray areas (ISRAs)

The Secretariat introduced the document, including a new initiative endorsed by the Signatories of the Sharks MOU, which aimed to identify and conserve critical habitats for shark and ray populations.

The Oceania region expressed support for the initiative. It was noted that there were significant information gaps in the region. There was hope that an ISRA workshop for the Pacific would be held in 2024.

COP14/Doc. 27.4.3: Seagrass Ecosystems

The Secretariat noted that the CMS MOU on the Conservation and Management of Dugongs and their Habitats throughout their Range acknowledged seagrass ecosystems as the most important habitat for Dugong populations, as well as several other marine migratory species. Seagrass was declining at 7% per year due to pollution, coastal development, climate change, unregulated fishing activities and dredging. The region noted that seagrass was vulnerable to threats including different natural events, including flooding in Australia. Seagrass was considered to play a vital role in nearshore marine ecosystems and the food chain in Fiji.

COP14/Doc. 27.5.1: Marine Mammals: Conservation priorities for cetaceans

The Secretariat noted that the draft Resolution of this document integrated cetacean conservation across government sectors and included priority actions relating to bycatch, aquatic wild meat, marine debris, chemical pollution, marine noise, vessel strikes, live capture, RIWI, disease, DSM, involvement of indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs), habitat protection and restoration, connectivity, animal culture and collaboration. The Oceania region commended the Secretariat for capturing all cetacean threats into one document. Cetacean strandings were noted to be of high importance in Oceania. SPREP maintained the Strandings of Oceania Database. It was recommended to streamline marine mammal Resolutions at COP14.

Marine Turtles

COP14/Doc. 27.6.1: Marine Turtles and COP14/Doc. 27.6.2: Single Species Action Plan for the Hawksbill Turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) in South-East Asia and the Western Pacific Ocean Region

The Secretariat introduced both documents focused on marine turtles, which included mandates to review relevant scientific information on conservation and threats to marine turtles (in collaboration with the IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU and the Inter-American Convention), to develop recommendations including the preservation of the current nesting beaches and the identification of new nesting beaches, and to develop a Single Species Action Plan for the conservation of Hawksbill Turtles (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) to address their trade and use in South-East Asia, and the adjacent Western Pacific. Bycatch was considered an important issue across the region, noting capture of Leatherbacks (*Dermochelys coriacea*) in long-line fisheries in northern waters of New Zealand. There had been a workshop in Fiji to review bycatch mitigation methods.

Session 9: Closing session

Ms Alex Macdonald concluded that the workshop had been very useful and informative and thanked all presenters for their impressive presentations and Mr Tim Dodman for facilitating the meeting. She noted the appreciation of Oceania participants that the workshop had been held during their daytime, which was during the night for participants from the Secretariat. She urged NFPs to submit letters in relation to ExCOP1, and noted that the region should decide on its representation at the Bern III Conference. She also encouraged members in the region to reach out for guidance, as there were some complex issues to consider, which could be addressed through a side meeting. Participants expressed thanks to all contributors and there was a final word of advice to wrap up warmly for COP14, as it could be very cold in Uzbekistan in February.

CMS COP14 Regional Preparatory Workshop (Pre-COP14)
Oceania
 17 – 18 - 19 October 2023
 Online

PROVISIONAL ANNOTATED AGENDA

1st Day 1.00 – 5.00 CEST			
TIME	MIN	AGENDA ITEM	DOCUMENT
Opening Session			
01.00 - 01.15	15 min	Welcoming Participants; Opening Remarks	No document
01.15 - 01.20	5 min	Organization of work: Presentation of the workshop Agenda and Schedule	Pre-COP14 Provisional Agenda / Schedule
Session 1: Preparation for COP14			
01.20 - 01.35	15 min	Overview of CMS and useful information for NFPs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Brief Introduction on CMS; – Brief summary of the role and responsibilities of CMS NFPs; 	CMS Family Manual
01.35 - 01.50	15 min	Overview of CMS COP14: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – COP14: dates and location – Theme and logo; – COP Schedule; – Registration; – Travel for eligible delegates – Accommodation – Credentials; – Visa; 	COP14/Doc.3.1

		– Presentation of the COP Agenda	
		Session 2: Priority topics and key issues of COP14 - Strategic and Institutional matters (Presentations and Discussion)	
01.50 - 02.10	20 min	Scientific Council: Evaluation of the results of the restructuring of the Scientific Council Scientific Council Membership	COP14/Doc.15.1 COP14/Doc.15.2
02.10 - 02.25	15 min	Election of Parties to the Standing Committee	COP14/Doc.16
02.25 - 02.37	12 min	National Reports;	COP14/Doc.23
02.37 - 02.50	13 min	Conservation Status of Migratory Species;	COP14/Doc.21
02.50 - 03.00	10 min	Break	
03.00 - 03.25	25 min	To frame the discussion on the new Strategic Plan for Migratory Species, key findings of the following will be presented: - Implementation of the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023 New Strategic Plan for Migratory Species	COP14/Doc.14.1 COP14/Doc.14.2
03.25 - 03.40	15 min	CMS Contribution to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework	COP14/Doc.17
		Session 3: Priority topics and key issues of COP14 – Interpretation and implementation of the Convention (Presentations and Discussion)	
03.40 - 03.55	15 min	Review Mechanism and National Legislation programme	COP14/Doc.24
03.55 - 04.10	15 min	Definition of the Terms "Range State" and "Vagrant"	COP14/Doc.26
		Session 4: Amendment of CMS appendices and implementation of the Concerted Action process (Presentations and Discussion)	

04.10 - 04.25	15 min	Avian concerted actions Report on the implementation of the Concerted Action for the Antipodean Albatross (<i>Diomedea antipodensis</i>)	COP14/Doc.32.2.8
04.25 - 04.34	15 min	Aquatic listing proposals Proposal for the inclusion of the Sand Tiger Shark (<i>Carcharias taurus</i>) in Appendix I and II of the Convention	COP14/Doc.31.4.9
04.40 - 05.00	20 min	Aquatic concerted actions Report on the implementation of the Concerted Action for the Common Guitarfish (<i>Rhinobatos rhinobatos</i>) and the Bottlenose Wedgefish (<i>Rhynchobatus australiae</i>) Proposal for a Concerted Action for the Blue Shark (<i>Prionace glauca</i>) already listed in Appendix II of the Convention	COP14/Doc.32.2.9 COP14/Doc.32.3.7

2nd Day 1.00 – 4.00 CEST			
TIME	MIN	AGENDA ITEM	DOCUMENT
01.00 - 01.05	5 min	Welcoming Participants	
		Session 5: Priority topics and key issues of COP14 - Administrative and Budgetary Matters (Presentations and Discussion)	
01.05 - 01.30	25 min	Budget 2024-2026 for the intersessional period between COP14 and COP15	COP14/Doc.13.2
		Session 6: Priority topics and key issues of COP14 - Interpretation and implementation of the Convention - Crosscutting Conservation Issues (Presentations and Discussion)	
01.30 - 01.43	13 min	Intentional Take Priorities for addressing illegal and unsustainable intentional taking of migratory species	COP14/Doc.30.1.1

01.43 - 01.56	13 min	Threats Plastic Pollution	COP14/Doc.30.4.5
01.56 - 02.09	13 min	Infrastructure Infrastructure and impact assessment	COP14/Doc.30.3.1
02.09 - 02.22	13 min	Conservation Planning and Management Ecological Connectivity – Policy aspects Ecological Connectivity – Technical aspects	COP14/Doc.30.2.1.1 COP14/Doc.30.2.1.2
02.22 - 02.32	10 min	Break	
02.32 - 02.52	20 min	Threats Climate Change	COP14/Doc.30.4.1
02.52 - 03.05	13 min	Wildlife Disease	COP14/Doc.30.4.3
03.05 - 03.18	13 min	Light Pollution guidelines for wildlife	COP14/Doc.30.4.4
		Session 7: Priority topics and key issues of COP14 - Interpretation and implementation of the Convention – Avian species and crosscutting issues (Presentations and Discussion)	
		Crosscutting Conservation issues	
03.18 - 03.31	13 min	Infrastructure Renewable energy and powerlines	COP14/Doc.30.3.2
		Avian Species Conservation issues	
03.31 - 03.44	13 min	Prevention of illegal killing, taking and trade of migratory birds	COP14/Doc.28.1
03.44 - 03.54	10 min	Flyways Flyways	COP14/Doc.28.4.1
03.54 - 04.04	10 min	Action plans for birds Action Plan for the Christmas Island Frigatebird	COP14/Doc.28.5.2
04.05 - 05.05	1 hour	Group discussion: time available to the region for a possible closed discussion.	

		<p>The group may discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - agreed priority issues for the region; - appointment of members for StC and ScC; - selection of representatives in groups and committees at COP (e.g. Credential Committee) - the listing proposal for gadfly petrels for COP15 and share thoughts on a side event for COP14
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3rd Day 1.00 – 4.00 CEST			
TIME	MIN	AGENDA ITEM	DOCUMENT
01.00 - 01.05	5 min	Welcoming Participants	
		Session 8: Priority topics and key issues of COP14 - Interpretation and implementation of the Convention - Aquatic species (Presentations and Discussion)	
		Aquatic Species Conservation Issues	
01.05 - 01.18	13 min	Fisheries-Induced Threats Bycatch	COP14/Doc.27.1.1
01.18 - 01.31	13 min	Fish aggregating devices	COP14/Doc.27.1.2
01.31 - 01.44	13 min	Marine pollution and other threats Effects of marine pollution on migratory species	COP14/Doc.27.2.1
01.44 - 01.57	13 min	Marine noise	COP14/Doc.27.2.2
01.57 - 01.10	13 min	Vessel strikes	COP14/Doc.27.2.3
02.10 - 02.23	13 min	Deep-sea mining	COP14/Doc.27.2.4
02.23 - 02.33	10 min	Break	

02.33 - 02.46	13 min	Marine Wildlife Watching Recreational in-water interactions	COP14/Doc.27.3.1
02.46 - 02.59	13 min	Area Based Conservation Management Important marine mammal areas	COP14/Doc.27.4.1
02.59 - 03.12	13 min	Important shark and ray areas	COP14/Doc.27.4.2
03.12 - 03.25	13 min	Seagrass Ecosystems	COP14/Doc.27.4.3
03.25 - 03.38	13 min	Marine Mammals Conservation priorities for cetaceans	COP14/Doc.27.5.1
03.38 - 03.51	13 min	Marine Turtles Marine Turtles Single Species Action Plan for the Hawksbill Turtle (<i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i>) in South-East Asia and the Western Pacific Ocean Region	COP14/Doc.27.6.1 COP14/Doc.27.6.2
Session 9: Closing session			
03.51 - 04.00	9 min	Workshop conclusions: - Looking ahead to COP14 and beyond - Closing remarks	

**OCEANIA Pre-COP14
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