



CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES

Distr: General

UNEP/CMS/Conf.9.18/Rev.1
22 September 2008

Original: English

NINTH MEETING OF THE
CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
Rome, 1-5 December 2008
Agenda Item 14.0

PROGRESS REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CMS INFORMATION MANAGEMENT PLAN (IMP)

(Prepared by the CMS Secretariat with support of UNEP-WCMC)

Introduction

1. Effective and efficient conservation action requires sound information on which to base planning and decision-making. Recognising this, Resolution 6.5 of the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties set out an Information Management Plan and determined the priority actions to be implemented in the short, medium and long-term.
2. The availability of strategically relevant information continues to be a key challenge, with which CMS has constantly been confronted throughout its existence. This is reflected in the first of the four objectives of the Strategic Plan of the Convention for 2006-2011, “*to ensure that the conservation and management of migratory species is based on the best available information*”.
3. In this context, national reports produced by Parties to the Convention continue to be the best available means to assess implementation of the Convention, and to guide priorities for future action. As such, access to information used to prepare them, and the management and effective use of those reports remain an important focus of the information management activities of the Convention.
4. The objectives of the Information Management Plan continue to be as relevant today, as when they were initially set out, nearly a decade ago. These include:
 - a) reviewing of information needs and initiating of actions to ensure improved future access to information;
 - b) developing of information management tools to support the activities of the Convention and Agreement Secretariats;
 - c) ensuring consistency and best practice in the compilation of information;
 - d) increasing access to information on migratory species already being collected by secretariats and Parties; and
 - e) an increased use of the internet in delivering information services.

5. Much progress has been made to date in the implementation of many of the priority actions identified in Resolution Conf. 6.5. The CMS Information Management System (IMS) emerged in the initial stage of IMP. IMS, available online through the website of the Secretariat, brings together the information provided by the Parties to CMS through their National Reports, the knowledge generated within CMS and other biodiversity agreements, the electronic library, and the data from various expert organizations. This is demonstrated in Annex 1: Schematic illustration of the CMS Information Management System (CMS IMS).

6. Further amendments to Resolution 6.5, as well as a summary of the progress achieved in developing the IMP, were identified in Resolution 7.8. A key addition to the Plan was the connection of the Global Register of Migratory Species (GROMS¹) to the Convention. With regard to information access, a further aim was to populate the electronic library, providing access to documents of relevance to the Convention that could be directly accessible through the internet. In addition, the format of the National Reports changed on a trial basis for COP7; the 26th meeting of the Standing Committee confirmed the adoption of the new format.

7. Resolution 8.10 established additional priority actions to be carried out to improve the implementation of the CMS IMP. A synoptic table of progress made on each priority action is provided in Annex 2.

Reporting process

8. The conversion to an electronic format led to an improved reporting process. It facilitated the provision of information updates as well as the analysis, accessibility and exchange of the data in a clear and standardised manner. A further step towards improved data management would be the launch of SONAR, which would not only provide easy access through an online system but also strive towards harmonisation with other biodiversity-related MEAs. Paper Conf 9.20 deals with the reporting by Parties in more detail, while Conf. 9.33 includes a budget option for SONAR in 2009-2011.

Harmonization of national reporting

9. The UNEP-funded Knowledge Management project analysed the approach to reporting that the human rights treaty system has been using. These treaties require Parties to submit a core report of relevance to all the treaties, supplemented by smaller treaty-specific reports. A framework for a joint core report for CMS, CBD, CITES, the Ramsar Convention, AWEA and IOSEA was produced and presented to the Knowledge Management workshop in March 2008. The document is available at the WCMS website at the following address < <http://www.unep-wcmc.org/conventions/harmonization/projects.htm> >.

10. Another outcome of the Knowledge Management project is a study on joint reporting for CMS, AWEA and IOSEA (see [the](#) same web link as above). The report developed a skeleton framework which would allow for national reporting by member Parties of any or all

¹ GROMS is an information system designed to satisfy the needs of CMS and its related Agreements concerning the scientific information on migratory species and their populations. Originally based on an initiative by the CMS Secretariat, it was launched in 1998 with financial support from the German Ministry of the Environment through the Federal Agency of Nature Conservation. The rationale behind GROMS is mainly based on the fact that although many databases include migratory species, scientific information on details about their migration behaviour, routes and seasonal distribution was scattered. Therefore, summarising knowledge about migratory species within one information system was among the main objectives of the GROMS information system, which should serve as a tool for fact finding and decision making by CMS and its related Agreements.

of the three treaties. It is also structured in a way as to allow for expansion to include other Agreements and MoUs under CMS, thus assisting the implementation of SONAR 2010 for CMS and its Agreements and MoUs. The March 2008 Knowledge Management workshop concluded therefore that joint and harmonized reporting is possible for CMS including of all Agreements and MoUs.

11. As mentioned above and further described in Annex 3, various opportunities have been seized by the CMS Secretariat to implement some of the IMP priority actions in conjunction with other multilateral treaties, therefore saving on resources and facilitating the development of a more harmonised inter-organisational approach to information management.

The Harmonisation Process of CMS with Other MEAs

12. The IMS is not yet a comprehensive system. The implementation of linking data related directly or efficiently to knowledge and information generated within CMS with other sources has not been established and should be a priority in the next triennium. The sources comprise other information services (including GROMS), information from technical experts and publications, or from other MEAs and international initiatives such as the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) or the Encyclopaedia of Life (EOL) and even the various CMS-related information resources available at UNEP-WCMC. IMS provides a framework to enable information exchange and harmonisation with related MEAs. However a proper integration of the available information into IMS - a gradual and continuous process - is yet to take place.

13. Agreements within the CMS Family have also taken significant steps in the strategic management of information, and have developed, or supported the development of, related tools to facilitate decision-making and support on-the-ground management throughout the distribution range of species included in the Appendices of the Convention.

Objectives

14. Various other actions identified as priority by the CMS Information Management Plan are yet to be implemented. Lack of implementation of some of those actions means that, while the infrastructure is already in place, much of the information available to the CMS Family remains fragmented and dispersed.

15. Implementation of remaining activities in the CMS Information Management Plan would thus:

- a) provide the basis for a continuous review of the Appendices (including information tools for knowledge management by national focal points and the Scientific Council, as well as information on CMS-relevant projects);
- b) provide the means to monitor the effectiveness of the Convention and its contribution to global processes, such as attainment of the WSSD target to reduce biodiversity loss significantly by 2010;
- c) enable the effective management and interlinking of information systems and reporting within the CMS Family and with other biodiversity MEAs relevant to CMS (in particular CBD, Ramsar and CITES); and
- d) provide the information base for the implementation and assessment of the CMS Strategic Plan 2006-2011, and for the identification of priority areas for the Convention beyond 2011.

Action requested:

The Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals is invited to:

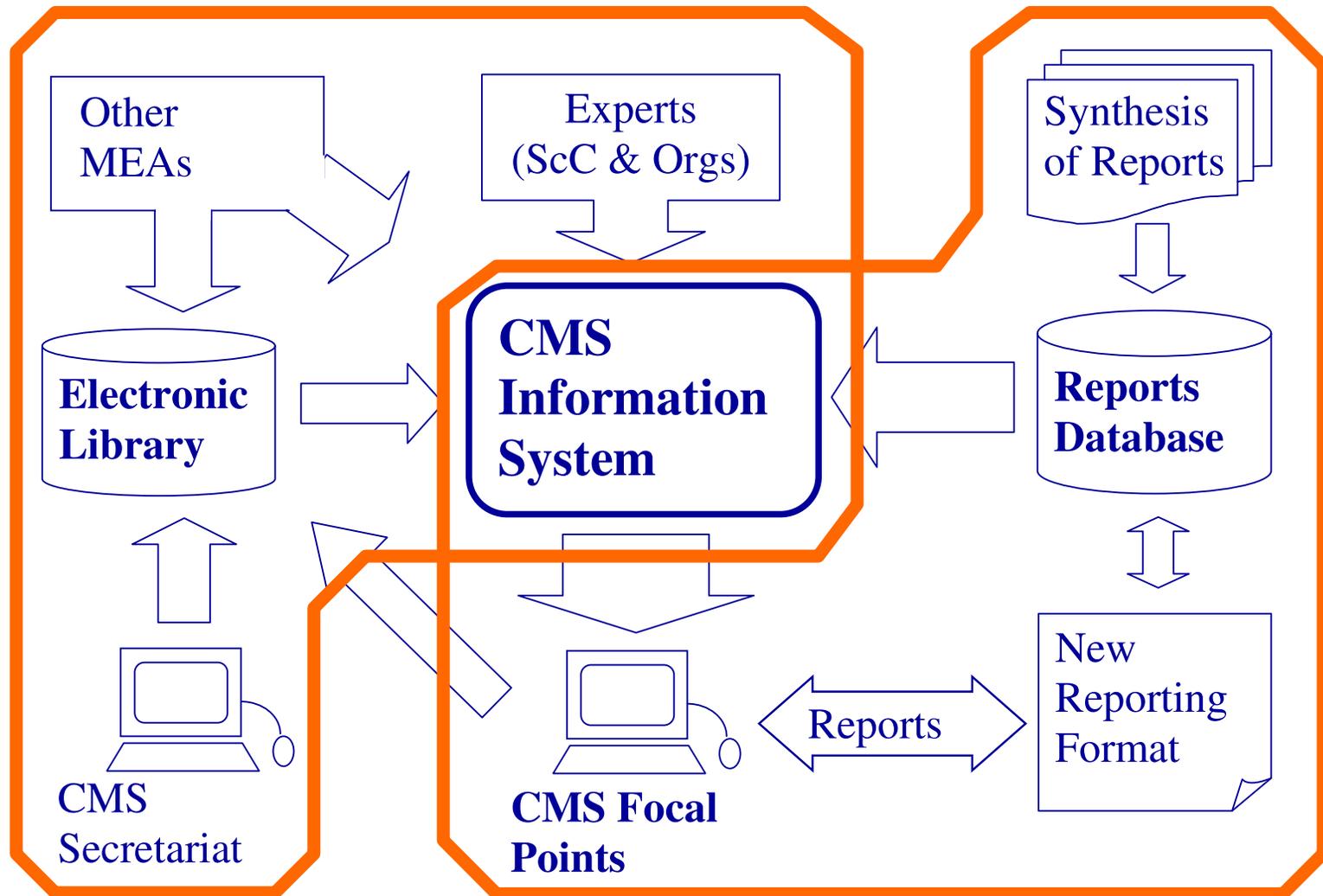
- a) *Note* the progress made in the implementation of the CMS Information Management Plan.
- b) *Acknowledge* the primary role of IMP/IMS in Party report management.
- c) *Recognize* that IMP/IMS work should in future be led by a strengthened Science, Data and Marine Unit, part of a wider remit for scientific and conservation data management and supported by other units, e.g. on website management and liaison with other bodies.
- d) *Review* the implementation of the Information Management Plan, in order to indicate the priorities for further implementation during the forthcoming triennium, part of which are new activities not necessarily included in the original Plan.
- e) *Request* the Secretariat to continue to make progress in the implementation of the Plan and related initiatives to facilitate the implementation of activities identified in Objective 1 of the Convention's Strategic Plan for 2006 - 2011.
- f) *Recommend* Parties to migratory species treaties to encourage Secretariats of multilateral agreements concerned with the protection of migratory species to pursue, together with the CMS Secretariats, a common future report format, and a common future online reporting system.
- g) *Further request* the Secretariat to establish ways to incorporate GROMS into broader databases in order to make use of its full potential for the CMS IMS and other Conventions.
- h) *Recommend* the continued implementation of the Knowledge Management project particularly with regards to the development and interconnection of online reporting facilities for the CMS family.

Annex 1: Schematic illustration of the CMS Information Management System (CMS IMS)

Harmonization Process

Components & Processes

Reporting Process



Annex 2. Implementation of CMS Information Management Plan

Objectives of the Strategic Plan 2006-2011

i. Identify and review major threats to migratory spp. and obstacles to migration referring to affected spp.
ii. Investigate capacity building and education
iii. Establish a national liaison system
iv. Provide information on distribution and population size
v. National and regional policy plans

Action	Comments
1. Continue to identify “partner organizations” for the collection, management and use of information relevant to migratory species	MoUs with Partner orgs since COP8 re. information management: AMMPA, Cartagena, CIC, GNF, IFAW, ITTO, NOAA, SPREP, WAZA, WCS, WDCS, WHMSI
2. Expand the CMS Information Management System to incorporate relevant information from the Strategic Plan, and further information available within Agreement Secretariats and other organizations	Topics such as incorporating indicators mentioned in the Strategic Plan, such as the identification and review of major threats to migratory species and obstacles to migration, questions about capacity building and education, etc. were integrated. Consequently, the standard format of National Reports was adapted to reflect those objectives and activities in the information requested from the Parties and approved by the Standing Committee in November 2007.
3. Work with the Biodiversity Conservation Information System (BCIS) and others to share information and resources (e.g. GROMS) and to address the information needs of the Convention and its Agreements	Under the Knowledge Management project, UNEP worked with the secretariats of conventions and agreements, including CMS and AEW, to develop an online reporting tool. The tool includes not only the option for Parties to produce their national report online but also a generator that allows for easy creation of other online reporting tools or questionnaires for any convention and agreement.
4. Strengthen linkages with the on-going global environmental assessments, particularly UNEP/GEO, and explore opportunities to support the review process of the GEO-4 assessment, in order to facilitate the sharing of the latest, credible data and information on status, trends, emerging issues and challenges on migratory species	Due to financial shortage this could not be implemented as yet
5. Explore synergies between GROMS and the UNEP GEO Data Portal to enhance the mutual use of reliable data sets and information, in the form of maps, charts and graphics, in reporting on migratory species related issues	Rather than connecting to GEO, steps are being put in place to explore synergies between GROMS and GBIF
6. Build on existing efforts to establish an up-to-date, comprehensive and authoritative database of listed species and range states, linked to other relevant	Continuous effort, e.g. through collaboration with the Encyclopedia of Life (The EOL dynamically synthesizes biodiversity knowledge about all known species, including their

Action	Comments
species information and available on the web	taxonomy, geographic distribution, collections, genetics, evolutionary history, morphology, behaviour, ecological relationships, and importance for human well being, and distributes this information through the Internet), see www.eol.org for more details
7. Develop a CMS and Agreements projects database to help monitor the contribution being made by the Convention to ongoing work on migratory species, and as an aid to project management	The TEMATEA web-based tools provide a logical, issue-based framework of commitments and obligations from regional and global biodiversity-related agreements. They are based on existing articles, decisions, recommendations and resolutions from different agreements on issues that are a priority for biodiversity. The following six issues are currently covered: Access and benefit-sharing; biodiversity and climate change; inland waters; invasive alien species; protected areas; and sustainable use. The modules are available at www.tematea.org .
8. Request the submission of National reports and other official documents, including project reports, proposed amendments to the Appendices and reports on 'concerted action species' in electronic format in order to make them available through the internet	The standard format of National Reports was adapted to reflect the objectives and activities in the information requested from the Parties. Topics such as incorporating indicators mentioned in the Strategic Plan, such as the identification and review of major threats to migratory species and obstacles to migration, questions about capacity building and education, etc. were integrated.
9. Develop a mechanism for the sharing of experience on priority topics and establish list servers or web forums for discussion and exchange of information on key areas of interest to the implementation of the Convention and/or Agreements	IMS mostly covers this, since its purpose is to be the central source of CMS concerning information.
10. Finances permitting, develop a method for sharing information between the Convention, Agreement Secretariats and the Parties	IMS is a unique and powerful instrument that enables the collection, management, analysis and use of the information necessary for effective implementation of CMS and its agreements at local, regional and global levels. It also avoids duplication of effort, and minimises the costs involved in the production, collection, management and analysis of relevant information.
11. Finances permitting, develop an information system on a group of high-profile species in collaboration with partner organizations, to demonstrate the potential for a coordinated, web-based information system to support the Convention and Agreements	Various CMS projects have been implemented to focus on high-profile species. Among those are the "Year of the..." campaigns: YoT, YoD, YoG (Turtle 2006, Dolphin 2007 and 2008, Gorilla 2009), as well as the Avian Influenza Task Force, which all offer extensive and unique-of-its-kind information.
12. Continue the dialogue with information managers of other global biodiversity-related treaties on streamlining information management and reporting	March 2008, Cambridge, UK: Knowledge Management (KM) workshop; recent approval by UNEP/ Project Approval Group (PAG) of commencing to draft Phase II of the KM project among biodiversity conventions

Annex 3: Information synergies with biodiversity-related agreements

I. Background

1. Resolution 8.11 on 'Cooperation with Other Conventions' reiterated the importance and the need for enhanced collaboration among biodiversity-related conventions to coordinate action towards the achievement of the goal of significantly reducing biodiversity loss by 2010; and recalled target 4.3 of the CMS Strategic Plan 2006-2011 calling for cooperative activities in pursuit of shared targets with relevant multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and increased partners, and its operational principle (2) on close cooperation with relevant MEAs and key partners and capturing synergies in pursuit of shared targets.

2. Resolution 8.11 also encouraged the Executive Secretary to continue to take an active part and role in the activities of the Biodiversity Liaison Group (BLG) established under the aegis of the CBD; invited the Executive Secretary, in collaboration with the BLG and UNEP, to advance work on the development and implementation of issue-based modules for the coherent implementation of the biodiversity conventions; invited the Executive Secretary, in collaboration with the BLG and UNEP, to advance the harmonization of reporting both within the UNEP-CMS 'family' of Agreements and between relevant conventions; and invited the Executive Secretary to assist with the establishment of the Global Partnership for Biodiversity, where CMS will be a core member, to promote the objectives of the Convention and contribute to the achievement of the 2010 target.

II. Collaboration with other multilateral environmental agreements

3. The Biodiversity Liaison Group (BLG) consists of the heads of the secretariats of the six biodiversity-related conventions (Convention on Biological Diversity, Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, Convention on Migratory Species, International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, and World Heritage Convention). Since the 8th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, the BLG met twice. The fifth meeting of the BLG was held in September 2006 in Gland, Switzerland, and the sixth meeting in May 2008 in Bonn, Germany. The reports are available at <http://www.cbd.int/cooperation/BLG-5-rep-final-en.doc> and <http://www.cbd.int/cooperation/BLG-6-rep-final-en.doc>, respectively. The CMS Secretariat participated in both meetings and hosted the sixth meeting. Both meetings addressed a range of issues of relevance to the CMS, including the 2010 biodiversity target and indicators for measuring its achievement, sustainable use of biodiversity, protected areas, cooperation among scientific bodies and development of scientific advice, knowledge management for MEAs, capacity development and technical support for achieving the 2010 target, harmonization of nomenclature and taxonomy, review of the effectiveness of the BLG, preparation of the third edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook, the 2010 Biodiversity Indicators Partnership, and celebration of the International Year of Biodiversity 2010.

4. Since the last Conference of the Parties, the Secretariat actively participated in the following meetings of the other biodiversity-related conventions: eighth and ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD, fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES, [30th, 31st and 32nd session of the World Heritage Committee]. It also participated in the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and the 12th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

III. Knowledge management for biodiversity-related agreements

5. The Secretariat participated in a UNEP-funded project on knowledge management, implemented by UNEP Division of Environmental Law and Conventions (UNEP DELC) and UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), in collaboration with the secretariats of CMS, CBD, CITES, Ramsar Convention, AWEA and IOSEA. This project created an internet portal allowing access to key information from those agreements, including the articles of the agreements; resolutions and decisions of their governing bodies; strategic planning documents; lists of Parties; and national focal point information. The portal is available at www.inforMEA.org. A workshop with the participating secretariats, including CMS, AWEA and IOSEA, was held in March 2008 in Cambridge, UK, and concluded that the portal should be further developed as a tool for interoperable information management for the biodiversity-related conventions and agreements.

6. Under the same Knowledge Management project, UNEP worked with the secretariats of conventions and agreements to develop an online reporting tool, including for CMS and AWEA. The tool includes not only the option

for Parties to produce their national report online but also a generator that allows for easy creation of other online reporting tools or questionnaires for any convention and agreement. It was made available to the CMS and AEWA Secretariats and presented at the above-mentioned knowledge management workshop, which concluded that in a follow-up project it should be further developed to allow for easy analysis and synthesis of the reported information. The workshop included a training session for technical officers of secretariats in the use of the online reporting generator.

7. As a member of the Steering Committee of the UNEP/IUCN [makes it sound like IUCN is part of UNEP] *Tematea - Issue-based Modules for Coherent Implementation of Biodiversity-related Conventions*, the Secretariat has been actively involved with the development of the modules. These are web-based tools that provide a logical, issue-based framework of commitments and obligations from regional and global biodiversity-related agreements. They are based on existing articles, decisions, recommendations and resolutions from different agreements on issues that are a priority for biodiversity. The following six issues are currently covered: Access and benefit-sharing, biodiversity and climate change, inland waters, invasive alien species, protected areas, and sustainable use. The modules are available at www.tematea.org.

8. The use of the Issue-based Modules is further supported at the country level to promote national cooperation and communication across sectors and conventions. This builds capacity among national governmental and non-governmental experts to evaluate and improve their existing national implementation of biodiversity-related commitments in a coherent way.

IV. Harmonization of national reporting

9. The Knowledge Management project suggested two joint reporting frameworks on thematic issues: inland waters for CBD and Ramsar Convention, and drylands for CBD and UNCCD (see <http://www.unep-wcmc.org/conventions/harmonization/projects.htm>). Although not directly relevant for CMS, these studies demonstrate another possible way forward for harmonizing reporting between biodiversity-related conventions, through choosing themes within the remit of two or more agreements on which Parties would report once, covering the information needs of all agreements involved. The Knowledge Management workshop in March 2008 asked for the exploration of further opportunities for recommending clustering of reporting questions along the lines of such modular frameworks.