

Cape Town Declaration on reconciling renewable energy and power line development with migratory species conservation

Cape Town, South Africa, 1-2 December 2016

We, the members of the *Multistakeholder Task Force on Reconciling Selected Energy Sector Developments with Migratory Species Conservation* ('Energy Task Force'), established by Resolution 11.27 of the Convention on Migratory Species,ⁱ which met for the first time in Cape Town, South Africa from 1-2 December 2016:

Welcome the entry into force of the Paris Agreement on 4 November 2016, and *note* the importance of rapid deployment of renewable energy technologies as a key response to the urgent threat of climate change;

Recognise that the deployment of renewable energy and associated infrastructure such as power lines may result in negative environmental impacts, including impacts on migratory species and their habitats;

Conscious that the risk to migratory species can be particularly significant if renewable energy installations and power lines are placed in inappropriate locations and without integrating environmental considerations in planning and assessment procedures;

Note that effective integration of wildlife conservation into energy policy and decision making can contribute to public acceptance of renewable energy development and reduce the potential for conflict, delay and associated financial costs;

Recognise the importance of constructive engagement between government, private sector and civil society organisations, and note the value of international cooperation and exchange in ensuring the conservation of migratory species across borders;

Mindful of existing decisions^{ii,iii} and guidance^{iv} in relation to the reconciliation of renewable energy and power line development with migratory species conservation;

Call on policy makers and regulators to develop, implement and evaluate strategic environmental assessment and strategic planning processes to minimise environmental impacts, reduce social conflict and facilitate responsible energy development;

Encourage the energy sector, regulators and financial institutions to utilise decision support tools and demonstrated best practices^v to avoid, mitigate and monitor impacts on migratory species and their habitats, including cumulative impacts;

Commit to a collaborative program of work to promote responsible renewable energy and power line development, including:

- preparing and disseminating tailored information resources for the energy sector, policy makers, regulators, financial institutions and conservation organisations;
- promoting research into the current and predicted impacts of renewable energy and power line

development on migratory species, the effectiveness of avoidance and mitigation measures, and related economic costs and benefits;

- facilitating collaborative engagement between key stakeholders, focused on identifying and implementing practical, evidence-based strategies for reducing the impacts of energy development on migratory species;

Extend our warm thanks to the Government of South Africa for its hospitality and to the Government of Germany for generously sponsoring the establishment of the task force.

ⁱ Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) Resolution 11.17 *Renewable Energy and Migratory Species*.

ⁱⁱ Relevant decisions in relation to reconciling renewable energy development with migratory species conservation include: CMS Resolution 7.5 *Wind Turbines and Migratory Species*; CMS Resolution 10.19 *Migratory Species Conservation in the Light of Climate Change*; CMS Resolution 10.24 *Further Steps to Abate Underwater Noise Pollution for the Protection of Cetaceans and Other Migratory Species*; CMS Resolution 11.27 *Renewable Energy and Migratory Species*; AEWA Resolution 5.16 *Renewable Energy and Migratory Waterbirds*; EUROBATS Resolution 7.5 *Wind Turbines and Bat Populations*; Ramsar Resolution XI.10 *Guidance for Addressing the Implications for Wetlands of Policies, Plans and Activities in the Energy Sector*; ASCOBANS Resolution 6.2 *Adverse Effects of Underwater Noise on Marine Mammals during Offshore Construction Activities for Renewable Energy Production*; ACCOBAMS Resolution 4.17 *Guidelines to Address the Impact of Anthropogenic Noise on Cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS Area*; Bern Convention Rec. 109 on minimizing adverse effects of wind power generation on wildlife.

ⁱⁱⁱ Relevant decisions in relation to mitigating the impacts of power line development on birds include: CMS Resolution 10.11 *Power Lines and Migratory Birds*; AEWA Resolution 5.11 *Power Lines and Migratory Waterbirds*; Bern Convention Recommendation No. 110 on minimizing adverse effects of power lines on birds.

^{iv} This guidance includes, *inter alia*: "Guidelines on How to Avoid or Mitigate the Impact of Electricity Power Grids on Migratory Birds in the African-Eurasian Region", adopted by CMS COP10, AEWA MOP5 and CMS Raptors MOU MOS1; 'Renewable Energy Technologies and Migratory Species: Guidelines for Sustainable Deployment', adopted by CMS COP11 and AEWA MOP6; and "Guidelines for consideration of bats in wind farm projects", EUROBATS Publication Series No. 6.

^v For example, the Renewable Grid Initiative database of best practices: <http://renewables-grid.eu/activities/best-practices.html>