

3rd Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the CMS Scientific Council (ScC-SC3)

Bonn, Germany, 29 May – 1 June 2018

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REPORT ON THE AQUATIC WILD MEAT WORKING GROUP

(Prepared by the Secretariat)

Summary:

Resolution 12.15 on Aquatic Wild Meat requests the Scientific Council to establish a thematic Working Group dealing with aquatic wild meat.

Decision 12.45 directs the Scientific Council to invite Councillors and external experts, including from across the CMS Family, to participate in the thematic Working Group dealing with aquatic wild meat, to ensure that all affected CMS-listed species are considered.

The Aquatic Wild Meat Working Group is directed in Decision 12.46 to report on its activities to each meeting of the Scientific Council. This is the first such report, updating the Council on the status of establishment of the Working Group.

REPORT ON THE AQUATIC WILD MEAT WORKING GROUP

Background

1. As directed by CMS Resolution 10.15 “Global Programme of Work for Cetaceans”, and in view of emerging evidence of a conservation problem on a scale similar to that documented for terrestrial bushmeat now affecting aquatic wildlife species, the Aquatic Mammals Working Group provided a preliminary briefing to the First Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council (ScC-SC1) in 2016 ([UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC1/Doc.10.2.2](#)). The briefing outlined, for some species and regions, the state of knowledge regarding the harvest of aquatic wild meat (at the time referred to as “aquatic bushmeat”), and made recommendations for elements of a potential resolution for the 12th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP12).
2. ScC-SC1 welcomed the report and requested the Aquatic Mammals Working Group to continue its work on the topic in consultation with experts of other affected species groups.
3. The Aquatic Mammals Working Group further developed the report making use of the CMS Scientific Council Workspace, by members of the Aquatic Mammals Working Group and contributors and reviewers from both inside and outside the CMS Family. ScC-SC2 noted the report, and the draft resolution and decisions associated to COP12/Doc.24.2.3 was recommended for adoption. Resolution 12.15 on Aquatic Wild Meat can be accessed [here](#).
4. Decision 12.45 directs the Scientific Council to invite Councillors and external experts, including from across the CMS Family, to participate in the thematic Working Group dealing with aquatic wild meat, to ensure that all affected CMS-listed species are considered; and report on the activities of the Working Group to each meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
5. Decision 12.46 directs the Aquatic Wild Meat Working Group to undertake the following tasks:
 - a) Establish an online repository of papers and other information (knowledge base) on aquatic wild meat to support CMS Parties to reach Targets 2, 5, 6, 11, 13 and 14 of the CMS Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023;
 - b) Serve as an expert resource that CMS Parties, the Scientific Council and the Secretariat can avail themselves of, if they wish to contribute to the bushmeat/wild meat discussions within the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the International Whaling Commission (IWC) and the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management (CPW), or when international coordination and cooperation are required;
 - c) Collect and present information about seabird harvests, for consideration by Parties at the 13th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CMS;
 - d) Facilitate a discussion about the possibility of adding CMS Appendix I-listed sharks and rays to the scope of the Working Group, and draft a recommendation for consideration by the Scientific Council;
 - e) Share information with IWC and, subject to funding availability, participate in future Small Cetacean Sub-committee meetings with a focus on aquatic wild meat;
 - f) Assist the Secretariat in preparing contributions to the development of the Abidjan Convention Action Plan to Combat Trade, Direct Consumption, Illegal Logging, and Other Uses of Endangered, Threatened or Protected Coastal and Marine Species;

- g) Develop an action plan for supporting Range State Parties, to reduce the impact of aquatic wild meat harvests, for consideration by the Scientific Council; and
- h) Report on its activities to each meeting of the Scientific Council.

Progress of the Aquatic Wild Meat Working Group

- 6. An invitation has been circulated to Councillors and external experts and a cross-taxa membership base is forming.
- 7. A dedicated area within the CMS Scientific Council Workspace has been established, and future work will progress through this channel.
- 8. During COP12 the Government of Brazil invited the newly formed Aquatic Wild Meat Working Group to participate in a workshop of the *IWC Working Committee on Poorly Documented Takes of Small Cetaceans* (19-21 March 2018). A presentation, based on the documentation for COP12, was offered to the workshop. The IWC Working Committee welcomed the establishment of the CMS Aquatic Wild Meat Working Group and looked forward to future collaboration.

Recommended action:

- 9. The Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council is invited to take note of the progress of the Aquatic Wild Meat Working Group.