



United Nations Environment Programme

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 PROGRAMME DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT • PROGRAMA DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS PARA EL MEDIO AMBIENTE
 ПРОГРАММА ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ ОБЪЕДИНЕННЫХ НАЦИЙ ПО ОКРУЖАЮЩЕЙ СРЕДЕ

Report to the 37th Standing Committee of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

Introduction

1. The present report, prepared by the Division of Environmental Law and Conventions of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), gives information about substantive UNEP support to environmental conventions, including the Convention on Migratory Species, and administrative support to the Convention provided by the United Nations Office at Nairobi.

I. Substantive support to the Convention

A. CMS as a Tool for Conservation of Biodiversity in Latin America and the Caribbean

2. Convention on Migratory Species (UNEP/CMS) in collaboration with UNEP /ROALC organized a 2nd Capacity Building Workshop in Panama City from 23-25 August 2010 which brought together decision makers and non-governmental organizations from 17 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean to discuss better ways to coordinate and implement activities. The workshop brought together CMS and important partners to help governments throughout the Latin American region to better conserve their biodiversity.

3. With Amazonia and the Pantanal, Latin America hosts some of the world's most important wetlands. The conservation of migratory species and their wetland habitats requires international cooperation among governments, NGOs and biodiversity related conventions.

4. The Coast of the Gulf of Mexico in particular provides critical habitat for hundreds of species of migratory birds, which use this area for breeding, wintering, refueling, and resting on their long journeys. However, in addition to fish, over 6,000 birds, 1,000 sea turtles and 80 marine mammals were collected dead after the devastating oil spill caused by the recent explosion of the BP-owned oil rig, the Deep Water Horizon.

5. The workshop was geared towards identifying training opportunities and enhancing the capacity of decision makers responsible for the implementation of the Convention and other Multilateral Environmental Agreements as well as NGOs in the field of biological diversity and migratory species. The first meeting of this kind was held by CMS and Ramsar in Panama in 2007, where the participants exchanged valuable knowledge on the impact of decisions on wetlands and migratory species and how to sustainably manage and use natural resources.

B. MEA Information and Knowledge Management

6. The UNEP/Division of Environmental Law and Conventions (DEL/C) MEA Information and Knowledge Management (MEA IKM) Initiative develops harmonized MEA information systems to assist Parties and the environment community at large. CMS is part of the Steering Committee of the MEA IKM initiative which met in June 2010 to assess progress on the MEA IKM initiative's pilot project. During the committee's discussions, MEAs confirmed already developed data exchange formats and protocols, agreed on design and functionality of InforMEA, a shared MEA portal, and reached consensus on the information exchange architecture. The meeting also decided to jointly work towards a common MEA terminology and agreed as to how it will facilitate searching the different databases behind the tool. Final recommendations of the meeting included moving InforMEA forward and embarking on collaboration on additional projects, such as on-line national reporting systems and an MEA-wide virtual University.

7. Participating MEAs included CMS, Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), Rotterdam Convention on Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade (PIC), The Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal Basel, and the World Heritage Convention. The participation of CMS was supported and funded by UNEP/DELIC. In addition UNEP-DELIC provided expert advice to CMS on issues related to on-line reporting for the CMS agreement AWEA. Furthermore, CMS as a whole will participate in a working group on on-line national reporting which will be formed as part of the MEA IKM initiative.

C. National implementation of MEAs workshop in Albania

8. In context of the One UN Programme in Albania and upon request of the Albanian Ministry of Environment, Forests and Water Administration, UNEP/ROE/DELIC organized a 3-day training workshop on MEAs. The overall objective was to ensure that the Ministry obtains a greater capacity to raise the profile of the environment in national policies and to improve mainstreaming of environment and MEAs into the national development strategy. This objective contributes towards Outcome 5.1 of the Environment Pillar of the One UN Programme in Albania, which encompasses the goal of compliance by the Government of Albania with the environmental requirements in the EU accession process and with the MEAs.

9. The Workshop represented a pivotal cooperation with MEA Secretariats in the context of the One UN Programme / UNDAF. Upon the invitation of ROE/DELIC, and on a cost-sharing basis, the Secretariats of the CMS, CITES, Ramsar and the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo, 1991) took part in the workshop.

D. Multilateral Environmental Agreement (MEA) Focal Points

10. The UNEP multilateral environmental agreement focal points promote the effective implementation of biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements in various regions and identify synergies between them. These Focal Points are based at the various UNEP's Regional Offices, namely, Regional Offices for Africa (ROA), Regional Office for Asia and Pacific, (ROAP), Regional Office for Europe (ROE), Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC) and Regional Office for West Asia (ROWA).

11. With the establishment of the Biodiversity MEA Focal Point positions, UNEP has stepped up its commitment to supporting the implementation of CMS through its regional offices. The MEA Focal Point officers met with the members of the CMS Secretariat in Nairobi in May 2010 and in Nagoya in October 2010 on the margins of Convention on Biological Diversity's 14th Meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA-14) and CBD COP-10, respectively, for an informal briefing and a discussion of ongoing and potential activities in each of the regions.

12. Furthermore, a number of the MEA Focal Point officers participated at the CBD COP-10 as part of the CMS delegation to support the Secretariat in covering negotiations and side events relevant to, or of interest to, the work of CMS. This included the launch of the State of the World's Waterbirds 2010 and the CMS Side event "Steppes and deserts of Eurasia: a refuge for migratory species".

13. The CMS Secretariat and the MEA Focal Points are currently in the process of establishing a joint action plan, based on the original Terms of Reference (TOR) and the overall work plan. While all the MEA Focal Point officers will have some common basic support roles, the detailed activities are expected to vary from region to region. For example, for the Asia and the Pacific, discussions have taken place with the CMS Senior Advisor located at ROAP in considering support to non-Parties in the region while significant contribution was provided to the Proponents of the GEF-sponsored Siberian Crane Wetland Project in meeting with the delegates from the beneficiary countries to discuss the prospects of the project.

14. A formal visit of the MEA Focal Points to the CMS Secretariat in Bonn is being planned, in order to be better briefed on the Convention and be introduced to the members of the Secretariat. During the course of 2011, increased regional efforts are also envisaged for the MEA Focal Points to assist the countries in preparing themselves in the run-up to CMS COP-10 in November 2011. These include regional/sub-regional preparatory consultations on the general issues of discussion and regional workshops on selected MOU of importance to the region.

E. Conservation and management of dugongs and their habitats throughout their range

15. The UNEP Regional Office for West Asia in collaboration with CMS secretariat supported the first official signatory State meeting of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Dugongs (*Dugong dugon*) and Their Habitats throughout Their Range, which took place from 4 to 6 October 2010 in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

16. To this end, the focal point in West Asia region, provided support to the above-mentioned meeting to develop the Memorandum of Understanding and promote the conservation of dugongs, an endangered species, throughout the range States to which they migrate. The Regional Office worked with the secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species by sharing contact lists and details of networks of regional experts, focal points and organizations in the Arabian Peninsula and the Mashreq. That information, together with details of joint programmes, enriched the meeting, which saw the participation of key countries such as Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait and Qatar.

F. Great Apes Survival Partnership

17. The Great Apes Survival Partnership worked with the Convention on Migratory Species in selecting priority biodiversity conservation projects for the “Play for Life 2010” campaign, which was run by the German company Puma and UNEP. The campaign used sports messaging and public service announcements to raise awareness and funds for biodiversity conservation in Africa during the 2010 International Year of Biodiversity. Following consumer voting in July 2010 the project on cross-river gorilla conservation in Cameroon proposed by the Convention on Migratory Species was one of three selected to receive campaign support.

G. Intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services

18. The Executive Director of UNEP convened three ad hoc open-ended intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder meetings on an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services. The first meeting was held in Putrajaya, Malaysia, from 10 to 12 November 2008, while the second took place in Nairobi from 5 to 9 October 2009.

19. The third and final meeting was held in Busan, Republic of Korea, from 7 to 11 June 2010. The main outcome of the meeting was governmental agreement to establish a new platform as an independent intergovernmental body administered by one or more existing United Nations organizations, agencies, funds or programmes. It was also agreed that the platform should respond to requests by Governments, identify and prioritize key scientific information needed for policymakers, perform regular and timely assessments of knowledge on biodiversity and ecosystem services and their interlinkages, support policy formulation and implementation and prioritize key capacity-building needs. It should also catalyse financing to meet such needs by providing a forum with conventional and potential sources of funding. Governments also agreed on some key guiding principles.

20. As requested by the UNEP Governing Council in its decision SS.XI/4, the meeting outcome document, known as the “Busan outcome”, was transmitted to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session for consideration during the high-level segment on biological diversity in September 2010 and thereafter.

21. The new platform, when established, will provide a common framework for biodiversity-related conventions to ensure that scientifically sound, uniform and consistent approaches are taken in tackling common issues being dealt with under multiple conventions.

22. CMS participated in all the meetings, consulted and made direct input to the process.

H. International Year of Biodiversity

23. The 2010 International Year of Biodiversity (IYB) is a special year declared by the UN General Assembly in recognition of the 2010 target to significantly reduce the rate of biodiversity loss worldwide. Migratory species and their habitats are increasingly threatened by habitat loss, over-exploitation, pollution and climate change. Biodiversity and ecosystem services are vital for the well being of human society and long term prosperity but consequences of its loss are yet not fully understood.

24. Being an official partner of the International Year of Biodiversity, the Convention on Migratory Species joined the Convention on Biological Diversity to help raise awareness of the importance of biodiversity on a global scale through:

- stressing the importance of biodiversity for human well-being;
- redoubling efforts to reduce the rate of biodiversity loss.
- celebrating conservation success stories.

25. The following paragraphs report on UNEP activities in support of the international year of biodiversity in partnership with biodiversity related MEAs including CMS.

26. The UNEP activities included; a ministerial round-table to discuss biodiversity during the eleventh special session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, held in Bali, Indonesia in 2010; development with IUCN of a special page on the UNEP website¹ that carries exclusive and comprehensive information on biodiversity issues through features such as “Species of the Day”, “Inspired by Nature” and “Community Story of the Week”; a series of technical presentations on biodiversity in collaboration with multilateral environmental agreements, United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and communities; a bibliography on biodiversity; quote of the day and others.²

27. UNEP also partnered with the Indian Premier League in identifying an ambassador for biodiversity from the world of cricket (Mr. Sachin Tendulkar) and in showcasing what it has called a “biodiversity quote of the match” and a “biodiversity pledge” to spotlight and increase awareness of biodiversity issues. The UNEP Division of Communications and Public Information focused on biodiversity as the key theme for all activities during the Year. These included a special biodiversity issue of the UNEP magazine for young people, a children’s painting competition on biodiversity and others.

28. UNEP also decided to make biodiversity the theme for World Environment Day, which was celebrated globally with a launch in Rwanda on 5 June 2010.

29. UNEP, in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, prepared, launched and supported an international travelling exhibition on biodiversity. Since its launch in January 2010 at UNESCO headquarters, this exhibition has travelled the world, providing information on the role and relevance of biodiversity for human well-being. UNEP also provided financial and technical support to develop a public service announcement to help the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity to promote the International Year of Biodiversity.

30. UNEP also launched the global celebration of the International Day on Biodiversity with events in Nairobi, including tree planting and a public debate on biodiversity and agriculture with Biodiversity International and others. Through its regional offices, UNEP developed action plans for celebrating the International Year of Biodiversity. The action plan includes activities throughout 2010 to raise awareness of and celebrate biodiversity in Africa, Asia and the Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean.

31. UNEP also supported the simultaneous launch of the third edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook* report with activities in Nairobi and through its regional offices. To supplement the global report, the UNEP Division of Environmental Law and Conventions and the UNEP regional offices in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, West Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean produced regional biodiversity status reports. These were launched simultaneously along with the global report in the official United Nations languages of the regions.

II. Administrative support to the Convention

A. Administrative issues

32. UNEP and the United Nations Office at Nairobi have continued to work closely with the secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species in the provision of administrative services. They are,

1 www.unep.org/iyb.

2 www.unep.org/delc.

however, aware of the difficult financial situation facing the Convention, which will require expenditure to be brought into line with income.

33. A report on UNEP's views on the Future Shape of CMS document as prepared by ERIC will be provided as a stand alone document.

34. UNEP will also give a briefing to the Standing Committee on the 13% Programme Support Cost (PSC) as well as on the issue of Delegation of Authority (DoA) to the Executive Secretary of CMS.

B. Personnel issues: accounting and financial management services

35. There continues to be good cooperation and consultation between the secretariat's administrative staff and their counterparts in the United Nations Office at Nairobi in this area. The secretariat and/or the Office prepare all financial reports in consultation with each other.
