

SEVENTH MEETING OF THE
CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
Bonn, 18-24 September 2002

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CMS INFORMATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

(Prepared by UNEP-WCMC, in consultation with the Secretariat)

1. Effective and efficient conservation action requires information on which to base planning and decision-making. The CMS Information Management Plan (IMP) addresses the requirements of Convention and related Agreements. The CMS IMP aims to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of CMS implementation, and to ensure an effective contribution by CMS to harmonised reporting and information management of biodiversity-related treaties.
2. Resolution 6.5 of the Sixth Meeting of the CMS Conference of the Parties (Cape Town, 1999) outlined the following objectives of the Plan and identified the priority actions to be carried out through the end of 2004:

Objectives:

1. Update information needs and initiate actions to ensure improved future access to information
2. Develop information management tools to support the activities of the Convention and Agreement Secretariats
3. Increase access to information on migratory species already being collected by secretariats and Parties
4. Improve the use of the world wide web (WWW) in delivering information services
5. Improve the Convention's regular review mechanisms
6. Develop mechanisms for sharing experience, in particular between Parties and other Range States

The table at Annex 1 summarizes the progress made to date in implementing the CMS Information Management Plan.

3. Following the recommendations and instructions in Resolution 6.5, the CMS Secretariat commissioned the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) in 2001 to conduct a synthesis of annual reports to the CMS and related agreements. This synthesis has brought together a wealth of information on the activities, knowledge, strengths and needs of the Parties to CMS and related Agreements. Similarly, commissioned by, and in close collaboration with the CMS Secretariat, UNEP-WCMC has also conducted a review of the content and format of national reports of Parties,

and drafted a new reporting format. The draft of the new national Report Format was made available to all CMS Parties for use on a voluntary trial basis for the production of their 2002 reports.

4. These actions set the basis for the harmonisation of reporting within CMS and in relation to other conventions and agreements. The new Report Format, in particular, sets an important precedent in relation to the facilitation of modular reporting, and the exchange of information across Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), therefore facilitating both the process of reporting itself as well as the management of information.

5. Implementation to date of the actions set out in Resolution 6.5 has resulted in the development of the CMS Information System. This system brings together the information provided by the Parties to CMS through their national reports, the knowledge generated within CMS and other biodiversity agreements, and the data from various expert organisations. The Web-based Information System offers the following categories of information:

a) Information about animals listed in the CMS Appendices

This option provides access to the information available in Party Reports for Appendix I species in relation to population size, trends, research and monitoring activities, etc. in conjunction with the information provided on-line by expert organisations (e.g. BirdLife, Fishbase, IUCN Red listing, UNEP-WCMC, etc.).

b) Information about animal groups of special interest to the CMS

This option provides access to the information available in Party Reports to the CMS on animal groups of special interest to the Convention (i.e. Bats, Birds, Marine Turtles, Marine Mammals, and Terrestrial Mammals - other than Bats), on issues such as implementing legislation, obstacles to migration, endangering factors, impediments for action, assistance required, etc.

c) Information about Parties to the CMS

This option enables the user to obtain a *country profile* for each Party to the CMS, with information on national governmental and non-governmental organisations relevant to the implementation of the convention; implementation of resolutions and recommendations at a national level; mobilisation of financial and technical resources; use of technology such as satellite telemetry; and species listed in the CMS Appendices that are present in the country in question.

d) Information provided by Parties to the CMS on specific themes

This option enables the user to attain an *overview* across Parties to the CMS *regionally or world-wide*, on the current state of affairs on a number of themes relevant to the implementation of the Convention, such as implementation of resolutions and recommendations, mobilisation of financial and technical resources, and use of technology such as satellite telemetry.

6. For those who are interested in seeing what the CMS Information System has to offer, a live demonstration will be given by UNEP-WCMC during the forthcoming conference. A prototype of the CMS Information System is also available on the CMS web site at the following URL:

<http://www.unep-wcmc.org/cms/ims>

Action requested:

The Conference of the Parties is invited to review the implementation, to date, of the Information Management Plan, to indicate the priorities for further implementation during the forthcoming triennium (including, as appropriate, new activities not necessarily included in the original Plan), and to provide feedback on the Information System, both in terms of content and presentation, with a view to guiding this important activity over the next three years.

Action	IMP Objective /Priority	Time frame	Current status	Notes	Remaining activities
1. Review Party reports together with information from other sources to develop an overview of the national and global implementation of the convention. Based on this review, develop revised guidelines and/or pro-formas.	5 Very High	2000	Completed	<p>Synthesis of reports to CMS and associated agreements submitted by CMS Parties between 1988-2001 completed and distributed at end of 2001, and used as the basis for the development of the new National Report Format.</p> <p>Synthesis of 2002 National Reports to CMS submitted up to 31 July 2002 is available as document UNEP/CMS/Conf. 7.6.1.</p> <p>The product of both exercises is also available for consultation and feedback in electronic form through the CMS Information System:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">http://www.unep-wcmc.org/cms/ims</p>	
2. Finalise the CMS Information Management Plan incorporating relevant information from the Strategic Plan, following the Standing Committee and further consultation with the Convention and Agreement Secretariats.	1 High	2002	Completed	Draft document submitted at the 6 th CMS Conference of the Parties. Final version available from the CMS Secretariat.	
3. Work with the Biodiversity Conservation Information System (BCIS) and others such as GROMS to develop a project on migratory species bringing together the information resources of these networks to address information needs of the Convention and its Agreements.	1 High	2002 – 2004	Ongoing	<p>The CMS Information System already interconnects the databases of several expert organisations so that users of the system are able to gain immediate access to the knowledge managed by these organisations on any given species. Systems currently interconnected through the CMS Information System include:</p> <p>BirdLife species database;</p> <p>Fishbase;</p> <p>Species 2000;</p> <p>IUCN Red List;</p> <p>International Taxonomic Information System;</p> <p>and a www image library.</p>	<p>As emerging initiatives develop their information systems and Internet interfaces, further interconnections can be enabled. Developments expected to be possible in the short to medium term include interconnections with: GROMS; IUCN Species Information System; AEWAs Species Database; Wetlands International International Waterfowl Census Database; and BirdLife International Important Bird Areas data.</p> <p>A project proposal to integrate data from Wetlands International, BirdLife and UNEP-WCMC is currently in development in the context of AEWAs.</p>

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4. Build on existing efforts to establish an up-to-date, comprehensive and authoritative database of listed species and range states, linked to other relevant species information and make it available on the web.	2 High	2002	First stage completed	With the transition of WCMC (now UNEP-WCMC) to the UNEP family, the CMS has gained access to the Centre's databases, which are now an integral part of the CMS Information System. The System therefore contains up-to-date information on issues such as: species distribution ranges, species listing under various multilateral environmental agreements; literature references on the distribution and conservation status of species protected by the CMS; species nomenclature; synonymy; common names in over 30 languages, etc.	There is a need to examine the CMS Range State list more thoroughly to determine inconsistencies between the list and information contained in the WCMC database; this examination should be carried out in relation to the broader question of the long-term maintenance of the CMS Range State list.
5. Develop a CMS and Agreements projects database to help in monitoring the contribution being made by the Convention to ongoing work on migratory species, and as an aid to project management.	2 High	2002 – 2003	Not yet initiated	The CMS Information System is designed to enable management of information on CMS and Agreements projects.	It is still necessary to design a format for, and undertake the collection of, information on project implementation (see Action 6).
6. Request the submission of Party reports and other official documents, including project reports, proposed amendments to the Appendices and reports on 'concerted action species' in electronic format to facilitate making them more widely available using the Internet.	3 High	2002	Ongoing	The CMS Secretariat continues to encourage Parties to submit their National Reports in electronic form. The new Report Format has been made available to all Parties on a voluntary trial basis. Nevertheless, submission of reports and additional information remains low. The CMS Information System includes an Electronic Library through which the convention's 'electronic knowledge' can be accessed.	Additional reports received during or after COP6 will be compiled and added to the synthesis. Further materials already available in electronic form will be added to the Electronic Library as resources allow.
7. Develop a method for sharing information between the Convention, Agreement secretariats, and the Parties	3 High	2002 – 2003	Ongoing	The modular design of the CMS Report Format and the CMS Information System enables the exchange of information among Agreements and Parties. The modalities for integrating information from CMS Agreements remain to be worked out.	Consideration may be given to the usefulness of developing a CMS Intranet, through which Secretariats and Parties could exchange ideas and documents.
8. Implement a method for delivering information on migratory species and actions over the Internet, which includes the following: Party reports, a synthesis of past Party reports and project reports linked as appropriate to species and party lists	4 High	2002	Prototype methodology completed	The CMS Information System brings together the information provided by the Parties to CMS through their National Reports, the knowledge generated within CMS and other biodiversity-related agreements, and the data from various expert organisations.	Information from additional reports, once received, will be added to the database and made available for viewing.

Action	IMP Objective /Priority	Time frame	Current status	Notes	Remaining activities
9. Develop an information system on a group of high profile species in collaboration with partner organisations, to demonstrate the potential for co-ordinated web-based information services to support the Convention and Agreements.	4 High	2002 – 2004	Initiated	Consideration is being given to using a select number of Appendix I ‘concerted action species’ as the group of species on which to base this Action.	
10. Develop a mechanism for the sharing of experience on a priority area and establish list servers or web forums for discussion and exchange of information on key areas of interest to implementation of the Convention and/or Agreements.	6 High	2002 – 2004	Not yet initiated	Consideration is being given to using ‘concerted action species’ as the group of species on which to base this Action. Other possibilities under considerations include following a thematic, rather than a taxonomic approach (e.g. satellite telemetry, by-catch, etc.)	
11. In the course of normal Secretariat business, continue the dialogue with information managers of other global biodiversity-related treaties on streamlining information management and reporting, convening as necessary a meeting of information managers from the organisations concerned.	1 Medium	2003 – 2004	Ongoing	The CMS Secretariat continues to work with UNEP and other Multilateral Agreements on the activities for harmonisation under UNEP. (Information document UNEP/CMS/Inf. 20 refers. See also: http://www.unep-wcmc.org/conventions/harmonization/index.htm). The new CMS Report Format and the CMS Information System are cutting-edge initiatives that provide important building blocks to this process.	CMS will participate in future developments of this UNEP-led initiative, with its Information System at the core of the CMS contribution.
12. Develop a database of Parties, including Focal points, for the Convention and all agreements, incorporating all of the information necessary on means and dates of accession, reservations, adoption of amendments, etc.	2 Medium	2002 – 2004	Completed for collaborating Parties (Constant updating required)	The CMS Information System includes information provided by Parties through the new Report Format on issues listed in this point. The system also includes information on implementing legislation, relevant governmental and non-governmental organisations, national/regional plans and policies, as well as issues such as implementation of resolutions and recommendations at a Party level, mobilisation of financial and technical resources, awareness raising, etc.	The CMS Information System nevertheless still lacks information from those Parties that have not submitted their national reports. Parties should therefore be further encouraged to submit their reports – even after the official deadline in this instance – and to submit their reports for CoP8 in a timely manner.
13. Develop a metadatabase of information sources on migratory species, linked to the database on listed species and on Parties and other Range Species.	2 Medium	2002 – 2004	Not yet initiated	Technology in the CMS Information System enables direct access to the information maintained by expert organisations when this is delivered through the Internet. Consideration is being given to the convenience of developing a metadatabase for information sources not available electronically.	

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14. Use the CBD clearing house mechanism as an existing tool to promote CMS and facilitate the sharing of information on migratory species	3 Medium	2002 – 2004	On schedule for 2003	With the CMS Information System now in place, it is possible to take steps to establish mechanisms to share information with the CBD CHM over the Internet.	
15. Establish a regular process for, and undertake a review of appendices based on available information on migratory species and the threats to them.	5 Medium	2002 – 2004	On schedule for COP8	Consideration is being given to the protocol for this review. Meanwhile, a proposal is also being submitted to the consideration of the Scientific Council of a 'rolling paper' format for the review of Appendix I 'concerted action species'.	
16. Work with Agreement secretariats, and the secretariats of other biodiversity-related treaties, to enhance information flow between the organisations.	6 Medium	2002 – 2004	On schedule	See note on Action 7.	
17. Encourage Parties to post details of meetings on relevant lists (e.g. BioNet).	6 Medium	2002 – 2004	Not yet initiated		
18. Consider the necessity for a bibliographic database on migratory species, working in collaboration with Parties, partners, and possibly with commercial abstracting services and bibliographies	2 Low	2002 – 2005	Ongoing	The CMS Information Management System already provides access to literature references available at UNEP-WCMC databases and in the databases of expert organisations already interconnected through the System.	Interconnections with further bibliographic resources can now be established as these are identified.
19. Make appropriate links to other Internet information sources, and where possible make integrated meaningful links rather than just provide a list of 'interesting' links	4 Low	2002 – 2005	Ongoing	The CMS Information System already provides immediate access ('deep-drilling') to the information on any given species in the databases managed by a number of relevant partners.	The System is designed to enable the establishment of further 'deep-drilling' links, including to GROMS, as expert organisations make their information available over the Internet.