



Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

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REVIEW OF PARTY REPORTS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

1. Article VI, paragraph 3, of the Convention requires Parties to report on the implementation of the Convention. Resolution 4.1 (Nairobi, 1994) outlines formats for reporting by Parties after accession and as updates to the meetings of the Conference of the Parties. It also directs the Secretariat to compile in a database the information received from Parties and to update it with any new information that may be made available by Parties. Furthermore, it refers to the need for Parties to submit their reports at least six months before any given meeting of the Conference of the Parties to allow the Secretariat to prepare a meaningful synthesis.
2. Reports received by the Secretariat are a major means of collecting information on implementation of the Convention, and provide a useful record of action and achievement. While the reports generally follow the agreed format, certain characteristics are noteworthy:
 - a) The reports vary considerably in the level of detail provided. Reports submitted in 1997 range from 3-30 pages in length.
 - b) As the reports update previous reports, it is necessary to review not only current reports but also past reports to ensure a complete picture of implementation of the Convention.
 - c) Some information needed for effective implementation of the Convention is either absent or could be presented in a more useful format in reports.
 - d) The lack of synthesis means that useful information contained in reports may be overlooked by other Parties to whom it could be useful.
3. As a consequence, it may be stated that party reports do not provide an overall view of implementation of the Convention. Such a review requires more input than can be achieved from a series of national reports - in particular, international sources and experts could place national contributions in a broader context.
4. The timeliness of submission of reports is however a constraint to their usefulness. Document UNEP/CMS/Conf. 6.6 identifies over 200 potential reports due since 1988. A significant percentage of these, including a particularly high number of those due in 1999, had not been received at the time of writing.
5. It is recognised that the lack of reports from Parties does not necessarily mean that the Convention has not been implemented in a particular country. However, such low levels of reporting and lack of timeliness place considerable constraints on the uses that can be made of the reports. It

has not been possible, for instance, to produce a synthesis of reports for consideration prior to the meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

6. The absence of synthesis prevents feedback to Parties and other agencies on the implementation of the Convention. Yet this should provide an important connection in the reporting process, encouraging good implementation practice and allowing the possibility of improved priority setting for future work. Furthermore, the absence of a regular synthesis denies CMS the opportunity to link its implementation to the wider interpretation of the status and uses of biodiversity.

7. Reporting requires work and implies the need for information management capacity and expertise throughout the Parties. For many Parties, the resources necessary to generate reports may need strengthening. In addition, for most Parties, CMS is but one of a range of biodiversity-related conventions (CBD, CITES, Ramsar Convention on Wetlands and World Heritage) to which they have reporting obligations - almost all CMS Parties are members of at least three of these other biodiversity-related conventions. Fulfilling all reporting obligations to these conventions places a considerable burden on already scarce resources. It makes sense, therefore, to streamline reporting and to ensure that maximum benefit is derived from the reporting process.

8. This objective was highlighted by the *Feasibility study for a harmonised information management infrastructure for biodiversity-related treaties* undertaken by the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) on behalf of the five convention secretariats and UNEP (summarised in document UNEP/CMS/Conf.6.7 *Draft Information Management Plan...*, Section 7, pp.27-30). The study called for the review and clarification of reporting requirements of each of the conventions as the key first step to identify common information needs.

9. Attached to this cover paper is a project proposal, drafted by WCMC at the request of the Secretariat, for consideration by the Conference of the Parties. The proposal addresses the following issues:

- The need for an overall synthesis of CMS and Agreements reports;
- The need to examine reporting formats and process in the light of the synthesis; and
- The opportunity to design a synthesis that could address the wider requirements of other conventions.

10. The Conference of the Parties is invited to review the proposal and, if it decides that the project should be undertaken, to allocate sufficient funding in the core budget. (If the project is to begin already in 2000, some adjustment will need to be made to the budget already agreed for that year.)

Synthesis of CMS national reports: a project proposal submitted by the World Conservation Monitoring Centre

1. Objectives

The objective of this proposal is to undertake a synthesis of CMS national reports in order to provide a basis for:

- i) Evaluating the benefits of a regular synthesis of reports;
- ii) Developing recommendations for improvements to reporting that would improve future syntheses; and
- iii) Identifying linkages and synergies that could be established with other biodiversity-related conventions based on the synthesis.

2. Justification (refer to cover paper)

3. Activities and Outputs

Stage 1: Assessment of current position:

- a) Synthesis of existing reports to CMS and related Agreements covering all reports submitted prior to the date of project initiation. Output will be an overall synthesis establishing achievements by parties and presented in terms of actions and their outcomes relating to species and sites. Input will also be sought from international experts and relevant organisations. The report format will be developed in conjunction with the Secretariat.
- b) In executing a), national report content and format will be reviewed in relation to reporting guidelines for CMS and related agreements. Output will be a review on how closely reports comply with the guidelines, with an analysis of the implication of areas where they do not.
- c) Report and consultation with Secretariat/nominate body

Stage 2: Development of proposed changes:

- d) In the light of conclusions from b), and in relation to the CMS Strategic Plan and Information Management Plan, review the reporting guidelines to develop recommendations for changes and improvements, incorporating possible linkages with the reporting requirements for other conventions.
- e) Assess the synergies between CMS and other species/site-related conventions in terms of species and areas covered and review existing programmatic linkages between CMS and other conventions.
- f) Report and consultation with Secretariat to obtain agreement on materials to be used in the briefing meetings with Parties.

Stage 3: Evaluation of proposed methodology for reporting with selected Parties

- g) Ground-truth findings and proposed directions by holding briefing meetings with up to five national CMS implementation agencies (selected in consultation with the Secretariat) to obtain feedback on the conclusions from Stage 1 and the proposed changes from Stage 2. Input from the Parties will shape the final methodology.

Stage 4: Development of final methodology

- h) Revise and consolidate methodology for reports and process in light of feedback from

selected Parties.

- i) Present consolidated methodology to Secretariat.
- j) Prepare final report incorporating comments. This report will comprise:
 - A synthesis of national reports for CMS and related agreements covering the lifetime of the convention
 - A review of compliance with existing guidelines for reporting
 - Recommended changes to reporting guidelines
 - Assessment of potential uses of CMS reports and their synthesis for other conventions
 - Analysis of Party responses to proposed changes

4. Indicative budget

Budget covers only staff costs and travel for consultants. Staff costs are based on an average rate allowing for likely allocation of staff at different grades. All operating overheads are included. The budget does not cover any Secretariat or Party costs for time or travel, nor does it cover venue costs for briefing and consultation with Parties or costs associated with publication and distribution of outputs.

Activity	Days	Total \$
a) Synthesis of reports	50	21,200
b) Assessment against guidelines	5	2,600
c) Report and consultation	4	1,840
d) Proposed changes to reporting guidelines	6	2,760
e) Assess synergies	5	2,600
f) Report and consultation	4	1,840
g) Ground truth with Parties	10	4,600
h) Revise proposed changes to reporting	6	2,640
i) Presentation to Secretariat	4	1,840
j) Final report preparation	5	2,600
Estimated total staff costs	99	44,520
Travel costs		5,000
Total		49520

Estimated costs are based on prices at October 1999 and remain valid until 30 June 2000.