



CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES

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Communication, Information and Outreach Plan 2015 - 2017

PROMOTING GLOBAL ACTION FOR MIGRATORY SPECIES

(Prepared by the UNEP/CMS Secretariat)

Summary:

A more strategic, coherent and sustained approach to communication is urgently needed at both national and international level to raise awareness on the need to conserve the world's migratory species.

Effective, strategic and targeted communication, which increases the appreciation of both CMS and its Agreements as a coherent family of inter-governmental treaties actively fostering international collaboration and conservation action for the planet's migratory animals, will lead to greater political support for the very goals and objectives of these treaties.

This Communication, Information and Outreach Plan outlines a possible path for developing such a strategic, coherent and sustained approach to communications within the CMS Family, initially focusing on CMS and AEWA for the period 2015-2017.

The plan includes three top-priority activities designed to enhance the strategic focus and overall coherence of CMS and AEWA communications, as a model for the CMS Family, over the course of the next triennium.

These include:

1. Development of a Communication Strategy and Common Branding;
2. Strengthening the Joint Communications, Information Management and Awareness-raising Team; and
3. Initiating the development of a Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) Programme.

Introduction

1. The lack of public awareness of the importance of migratory species as a major component of global biodiversity is one of the greatest barriers to achieving the objectives of the Convention as well as those of its daughter Agreements.

2. Without broad public understanding and awareness of the multiple environmental, cultural and economic values of migratory species of wild animals, the threats the species face and the actions individuals, organizations and governments can take for conservation, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to achieve the goals of the Convention and those of its Agreements in the long run.

3. Global efforts to conserve migratory species will only be strengthened if national and international efforts to raise awareness on migratory species are increased in ways that they will help generate the “political will” and the support required for governments, organizations and individuals to take action for migratory species nationally and on a global scale.

General Communication Principles

4. The following selection of general communication principles will guide the efforts of CMS in this field over the course of the next triennium. The list should be seen as an initial set of guiding principles, which will be reviewed and further enhanced during the process of developing the communication strategy being carried out over the course of the next triennium:

- All communication should be guided by a Strategy (Strategic Communications);
- Communication is a collective effort involving the entire Secretariat, Parties and all stakeholders;
- Communication should support implementation of the Convention and its Agreements and be in line with the goals and objectives of the treaties;
- The impact of communication is strengthened through partners (work with all CMS Family stakeholders, Parties, IGOs, NGOs, individuals and Ambassadors);
- Targeted communication through campaigns (World Migratory Bird Day and smaller targeted campaigns around common conservation issues, species groups and threats);
- Communication efforts should be coherent and aligned within the CMS Family;
- Use creative, emotional and visual elements in communication;
- Increase use of social media and audio-visual material to convey messages;
- Improve the Information and Knowledge Management of CMS and its Agreements as a backbone to effective communication and implementation; and
- Increase and enhance Communication, Education and Awareness-raising (CEPA) activities on the national level, building on existing CEPA Programmes of other biodiversity-related Multilateral Environment Agreements (MEAs).

Priority Activity 1: Development of a Communication Strategy and Common Branding

5. A communication strategy should be developed which will lead to a more coherent approach to communication by CMS and inside the wider CMS Family. The strategy will be aligned with the overall objectives of CMS and its Agreements and will function as the guiding document defining the communication objectives, target audiences, tools and resources needed to carry out effective communications in the years to come.

6. Work towards such a common communication strategy for the CMS Family has already begun in the framework of the pilot on joint services in the area of communication between the CMS and AEWA Secretariats. Building on the mandates given by Parties to both CMS and AEWA through AEWA Resolution 5.5 and CMS Resolution 10.9, the Executive Secretaries of CMS and AEWA have recommended that “strategically aligned communication strategies” be developed for CMS and AEWA, which build on all previous mandates given to the Secretariats by their Parties for communication and activities related to information management.

7. The objective is to arrive at a global communication strategy for the promotion of action for migratory species conservation (CMS Framework Strategy) complemented by a coherent, strategically aligned and targeted communication strategy for AEWA (focusing on the objectives of AEWA, but aligned with the global objectives of the Convention). The new strategies for CMS and AEWA will be the first examples of aligned communication strategies within the wider CMS Family, also acting as a possible model for other CMS Instruments to follow.

8. The new Communication Strategies will take into account the CMS Strategic Plan 2015-2023, which is being aligned with the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity for the period 2011-2020 and in particular its Aichi Targets, as adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, the AEWA Strategic Plan 2009-2017 and AEWA Resolution 5.23; as well as the strategic and communication-related documents of other global biodiversity-related MEAs.

9. The future aligned communication strategies will become guiding documents not only for the CMS and AEWA Secretariats, but also for Parties and other stakeholders. The Communication Strategies will highlight the benefits of a more coordinated approach in the area of communications, outreach and information management between CMS and AEWA and within the CMS Family as a whole, while also assessing the human and financial resources needed to implement the new strategies.

10. It is expected that an independent consultant, supervised by the Executive Secretaries of CMS and AEWA and the Coordinator of the Common Communication, Information Management and Awareness-raising Team, will carry out the development of the CMS and AEWA communication strategies. At COP11 the Secretariat will present to Parties a first draft concept for the strategies and a proposal for an inter-sessional process of further developing and adopting them.

11. Following the adoption of the aligned communication strategies by CMS and AEWA Parties, a consultant should be engaged to develop new branding for CMS and its Agreements, which will result in a more coherent depiction of the new CMS Family identity. Such a branding exercise should be conducted by an individual or company experienced and

specialized in developing branding strategies for organizations in order to ensure that the new common branding will result in a more coherent image of the CMS Family to the outside world.

Related Activities and Resources

- Expert Independent Consultant to Develop the Communication Strategy (Funding Secured: €20,000 / Additional Funding Required: €50,000)
- Communication Strategy Development Workshop (s) (Workshop to ensure a participatory process involving all stakeholders, including CMS and AEWA Focal Points, CMS Family Secretariats, Main Partners in Communication and Communications Experts) (Funding Required: €50,000 - €100,000)
- Development of a Common Branding for the CMS Family (Funding Required: €80,000)

Priority Activity 2: Strengthen the Joint Communications, Information Management and Awareness-raising Team

12. In January 2014 a Common Communications, Information Management and Awareness-raising Team consisting of staff from both the CMS and AEWA Secretariats was established as a pilot project to demonstrate the advantages of shared services. It is part of a process which was initiated through the “Future Shape Process” at CMS COP10 through CMS COP Resolution 10.9 and follows requests made by both the 9th Meeting of the AEWA Standing Committee and the 41st Meeting of the CMS Standing Committee.

13. Operating since January 2014, the new joint communication team was set up through an inter-office memorandum by the Executive Secretary of CMS as a pilot to demonstrate the benefits of shared services. The newly established team has to cover a large spectrum of tasks and functions which can be broadly grouped into the areas of communications, information management, public awareness-raising, special events, outreach and campaigns.

14. The Information Officer of AEWA was appointed as Coordinator of the new team, while the overall responsibility for supervision rests with the CMS Executive Secretary, who is working closely with the Executive Secretary of AEWA to provide the overall direction and to ensure that the pilot will be mutually beneficial for the two Secretariats as well as being an example of the success of shared services and synergies between them.

15. Since March 2014, the new CMS and AEWA communications team has been co-located on the same office floor of the UN Bonn Campus building in adjoining offices in order to facilitate communication and collaboration. The new team is currently comprised of one Professional and two General Service staff members and a temporary staffing arrangement for a writer and editor from the UNEP/CMS Secretariat as well as one full time Professional and one part time General Service staff member of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat. It should be noted that both the CMS Professional staff member and editor are not currently covered by the core staff budget.

Composition and Advantages of the New Joint Team

16. Although the full analysis of the pilot being presented to Parties at COP11 will provide a better overview of both the advantages and disadvantages of the joint communications team, the first few months of the pilot have shown that the merger of communication staff from both the CMS and AEWA Secretariats can bring benefits in terms of strengthened coordination of communication activities, gains through specialization, sharing resources, developing common tools and strategies and by bringing greater coherence to the work of CMS and AEWA.

17. For example, some of these common areas include: writing and editing, information and website management, online national reporting, press and media relations, design and development of publications and multi-media content, organization of special events and campaigns (such as World Migratory Bird Day), use of social media and strategic direction and management. While all these tasks were once taken care of by each Secretariat independently with insufficient human resources they are now tackled by the new unit as specialized areas and tasks.

Existing Gaps and Potential Areas Needing Strengthening

18. Although the communication strategy for CMS and AEWA will provide a more comprehensive view of the present capacity vis-à-vis the actual needs of both CMS and AEWA in the area of communications and information management, areas which would benefit from strengthening can already be identified.

19. The post of CMS Associate Information Officer is a critical post within the new team covering the growing information management needs of both Secretariats and represents a large part of the CMS contribution to the new joint communication unit and has therefore been included in all three of the COP11 budget scenarios.

20. Furthermore, the new joint communication team has significantly benefitted from temporary CMS staffing arrangements which have been critical in supporting both communication activities and tasks which could not be done by existing core staff.

Improved Information and Knowledge Management

21. The CMS Associate Information Officer fulfils a key function within the new joint communication team. The Officer is in charge of the overall management of the CMS Family websites and other shared online tools and platforms, including the online workspaces, the meeting registration tool, the contacts database, newsletter mailing tool, the technical maintenance of the online reporting system and the NFP e-community. Including the Associate Information Officer post in the next CMS budget will help to significantly strengthen the overall information and knowledge management capacity within the new joint communications team and will ensure in-house capacity for information management.

Writing and Editing Services

22. A key function within the new joint communications team currently being covered through temporary staffing arrangements is that of a dedicated writer and editor. Main tasks comprise writing and editing reports, articles including op-eds and documents as well as

writing news and editing articles for the website. A dedicated writer and editor within the communication team is an essential asset when it comes to new content production and has led to improving the overall quality of all written communication products and other documents produced by the Secretariats. In addition, the temporary staff member has supported both the CMS and Agreement Secretariats as report writer for numerous meetings and is an integral part of the small web team in charge of the regular maintenance of the different websites.

Management of International Campaigns and Social Media

23. CMS and its Agreements have over the past ten years been the main drivers behind a number of successful global outreach campaigns dedicated to raising awareness on migratory species and the need for their conservation. Both the series of “Year of” campaigns dedicated to dolphins, bats and gorillas and particularly the annual World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) campaign initiated in 2006 have been very successful examples of global awareness-raising efforts being jointly run by the CMS and Agreement Secretariats.

24. Yet the steady growth in popularity and expansion of campaigns such as WMBD are increasingly proving to be a challenge in terms of staff capacity for both Secretariats despite the formation of a new joint communication team. In fact, it is only through the support of a temporary consultant that the two Secretariats were able to continue to run the WMBD campaign over the past three years. The demands of running these growing global campaigns such as WMBD have simply outrun the available in-house capacity and experience available at the Secretariats.

25. At the same time, campaigns such as WMBD and Year of the Bat have been great testing grounds for the Secretariats to explore and gain valuable experience in the use of social media tools to conduct international outreach. However, the use of social media channels such as Facebook and Twitter has recently also expanded beyond the campaigns. It has become increasingly challenging for both the CMS and AEWA Secretariat to keep up with the increasing demands of running the various social media channels effectively.

26. It is against this background, along with the recognition that both the demand for writing and editing services and the demands associated with the onset of new media and international species campaigns such as WMBD will likely continue to grow, that the Secretariat would like to encourage Parties to strongly consider providing voluntary contributions and/or gratis personnel to support the new joint communication team in these areas. In the long run Parties may also consider working towards establishing a more sustainable solution which would help cover these shortfalls.

Analysis of the Pilot and Initial Lessons Learned

27. In carrying out the first step of the pilot, the CMS Standing Committee has requested the Executive Secretary of CMS, in cooperation with the Executive Secretary of AEWA, to prepare an analysis and a proposal that identifies the best opportunities for the pilot. It is in this regard that the Executive Secretary of CMS has prepared the *Proposal to Improve Efficiency and Effectiveness of the CMS Family* [UNEP/CMS/COP11/Doc.16.2] which argues that the shared services of Communication, Information Management and Awareness-raising are the most suitable for a pilot at this stage and offer the best prospects of gaining more experience of synergies and of “learning by doing”.

28. The Secretariat will report back on the replicable and measurable results of the pilot to COP11, which would also be communicated as part of a package to the Parties for a further decision on synergies for other common services. The report will outline the progress so far in conducting the pilot and offer insights into lessons learned which will help guide and reassure Parties of future sharing of common services between CMS, AEWA and other potential synergies inside the CMS Family.

29. Although the period since the formation of the new communication team is relatively short, a number of lessons and important points for consideration by the Parties have already emerged:

- A joint communication team needs an effective and practical communication strategy to guide its work. A strategy is needed which will ensure that all communication efforts conducted by the joint team follow clear strategic communication goals, has clearly defined target audiences and activities as well as the adequate communication tools and resources needed to do the work;
- The joint approach only makes sense, if it results in a well-managed, coordinated and strengthened communication team where tasks are clearly defined, specialized and spread evenly across the team;
- The joint communication team needs a clear mandate from both CMS and AEWA Parties, the required resources in place to conduct its activities and the full support of the senior management and staff of both Secretariats; and
- Even with the present composition of the joint team, it has become clear that the capacity to cover all the areas of work is currently not sufficient. Although there are advantages of specialization through the establishment of a larger joint team, the vast spectrum of activities and the present work load of members of the team indicate that activities will either need to be reduced and/or streamlined or the capacity of the team increased in the medium to long term.

How to Strengthen the Joint Communication Team

30. Provided Parties to CMS and AEWA are in favour of establishing a Common Communications, Information Management and Awareness-raising Unit for CMS and AEWA and to expand the service to the CMS Family (i.e. to go beyond the pilot stage), it would be important for Parties to consider the following steps and resources required to ensure the effective and sustained operation of the new common communications unit in the long run:

- The current composition and staffing of the new joint team needs to be secured. The primary goal should be to ensure that all members of the team are accounted for, i.e. secured in future budgetary considerations;
- The post of CMS Associate Information Officer is a critical position within the new team and represents a large part of the CMS contribution to the joint communication unit. Parties should recognize this and consider to establish this post as already reflected in CMS Resolution 10.1 Annex 2 “*Activities to be funded by voluntary contributions as per future shape*”; and

- Parties could consider providing voluntary contributions and/or gratis personnel to further strengthen the team in terms of human capacity to address the growing demands on the Secretariats, especially with regards to running the annual international outreach campaigns for migratory species (i.e. World Migratory Bird Day) as well as to expand effective use of social media.

Priority Activity 3: Development of a Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) Programme

31. Both the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands have well established Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) Programmes, which are designed to build capacity in these areas for Parties to the two Conventions. CEPA Programmes have become core instruments to support the implementation of both Conventions and are based on the recognition that a CEPA programme can play an important role in implementation and in achieving the objectives of the Conventions.

32. In the context of the CBD, it is Article 13 which directs Parties to promote and encourage understanding and develop education and public awareness programmes to raise awareness on biodiversity, which has ultimately led to the development of the CEPA Programme for CBD. The recognition by CBD Parties of the importance of CEPA has produced a number of subsequent CBD decisions and was most recently reinforced by the adoption of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, where Target 1 directs all CBD Parties to work towards making “people aware of the values of biodiversity and the steps they can take to conserve and use it sustainably by 2020 at the latest”.

33. Although both the Convention and its Agreements have similar wording with regard to “making the general public aware” of the contents and objectives of the Convention and its Agreements and a number of decisions relating to communication, capacity-building and awareness-raising have been adopted, there is currently no CEPA Programme within the CMS Family.

34. Initial steps towards a CEPA Programme within the CMS Family have nevertheless been taken by AEWA Parties at the 5th Session of the Meeting of the Parties, through AEWA MOP Resolution 5.5 on the “Implementation and Revision of the Communication Strategy”. While not going as far as calling for the development of a full CEPA Programme, AEWA Resolution 5.5 contains a number of actions related to CEPA for both Parties and the Secretariat, including an invitation to AEWA Contracting Parties to nominate a suitable National Focal Point for CEPA issues from either the governmental or non-governmental sector to help coordinate national and regional implementation of AEWA’s Communication Strategy.

35. Building on both previous priority activities for the CMS Communication, Information and Outreach Plan for the period 2015 – 2017, the Secretariat is proposing to explore the possibility of developing a joint CEPA Programme for CMS and AEWA as a cross-cutting programme between the two Secretariats. Initially shared between the new Common Communications Unit and the Capacity-Building related staff at CMS and AEWA, the programme could eventually be further developed into a CEPA Programme that encompasses and caters for the entire CMS Family.

36. The proposed development of a CMS Family CEPA Programme would reinforce the communication strategy under development and become a primary vehicle to support its implementation, particularly on the national and regional level. Hence, the Secretariat proposes to start the development of such a CEPA Programme only after the adoption of the new CMS and AEWA communication strategies to ensure a coherent and strategic approach and to allow the Secretariats to invest the maximum human capacity towards the development of such a joint CEPA Programme.

37. The development of a CEPA Programme for the CMS Family should also be guided by the premises, that it would need to be sufficiently funded and that it should build on existing experience and tools made in the context of other MEAs, and try to build synergies between the various existing MEA CEPA Programmes and activities wherever appropriate and possible.

Related Activities and Resources

- Expert Independent Consultant to Develop a CEPA Programme for the CMS Family (Funding Required: €80,000 / to be initiated in 2017).
- CEPA Programme Development Workshop(s) (Kick-off workshop(s) to ensure a participatory process involving multiple stakeholders, including CMS and AEWA Focal Points, CMS Family Secretariats, Main Partners in Communication and CEPA Experts) (Funding Required: €50,000 -100,000 / to be initiated in 2017).
- Development of a CEPA Toolkit & Training Manual to complement the CMS Family NFP Training Manual (Funding Required: €200,000).

Action requested:

The Conference of the Parties is requested to:

- (a) Take note of the document and provide comments as appropriate.
- (b) Adopt the draft Resolution contained in the Annex.

DRAFT RESOLUTION

COMMUNICATION, INFORMATION AND OUTREACH PLAN

Aware of the importance of communication as a central and cross-cutting element for implementing the Convention and its Agreements;

Underlining the urgent need to raise greater public awareness of migratory species, the multiple threats they face, the obstacles to their migration and the important role communication can play in encouraging actions to mitigate these threats both nationally and internationally;

Recalling Article IX, paragraph (j) of the Convention which states that it is a function of the Secretariat “to provide the general public with information concerning this Convention and its objectives”;

Considering the important contribution that the Convention and its Agreements will make towards achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets adopted by the tenth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, in particular with regards to Target 1 on making people aware of the values of biodiversity and the steps they can take to conserve and use it sustainably;

[*Recognizing* the essential role communication will play in implementing the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023 adopted at the 11th Meeting of the CMS Conference of the Parties, in particular with regard to Target 1 of the updated Plan, which calls for actions that will make people aware of the multiple values of migratory species and their habitats and migration systems, and the steps that can be taken to conserve them and ensure the sustainability of any use;]

Acknowledging the importance of the Future Shape Process initiated through CMS Resolution 10.9, aiming to increase efficiency and enhance synergies in the whole CMS Family within the wider context of international environmental governance arising from Rio+20 and other processes stressing the need to develop further synergies among MEAs;

Recalling the decision of the 9th Meeting of the AEWA Standing Committee that requests the interim Executive Officer of AEWA and the Executive Secretary of CMS to develop further synergies between AEWA and CMS and take actions to merge common services and common areas; and

Further recalling that the 41st Meeting of the CMS Standing Committee supported the AEWA Standing Committee’s request that a pilot phase be conducted on common services between the Secretariats;

*The Conference of the Parties to the
Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals*

1. *Endorses* the CMS Communication, Information and Outreach Plan for 2015-2017 and *urges* Parties, CMS Family Instruments, UNEP and all partners and stakeholders working for the conservation of migratory species, actively to assist in the implementation of the Plan and to provide both voluntary contributions and in-kind support, particularly for the priority activities identified in the Plan;
2. *Welcomes* the initiative of the CMS Executive Secretary and the Acting Executive Secretary of AEWA to establish a new joint Communication, Information Management and Awareness-raising Unit serving the CMS and AEWA Secretariats as a pilot demonstrating enhanced synergies within the CMS Family through joint services in the area of communications;
3. *Agrees* to provide adequate resources in the CMS Budget for 2015-2017 to support the implementation of activities described in the Communication, Information and Outreach Plan for 2015-2017 and the effective operation of the new Joint Communication, Information Management and Awareness-raising Unit;
4. *Requests* the CMS Executive Secretary to continue to work closely with the AEWA Executive Secretary to guide the work of the new joint CMS and AEWA Communication, Information Management and Awareness-raising Unit and to ensure the development and implementation of strategically aligned communication strategies for CMS and AEWA as models for enhanced synergies within the CMS Family;
5. *Requests* the CMS Executive Secretary to present the new CMS communication strategy to the 44th Meeting of the CMS Standing Committee for adoption and *invites* AEWA Parties to adopt a new strategically aligned AEWA communication strategy at their 6th Meeting of the Parties;
6. *Requests* Parties to provide voluntary contributions towards the development and implementation of the communication strategy and towards ongoing communication activities being carried out by the Secretariat, giving priority to the activities proposed in the CMS Communication, Information and Outreach Plan for 2015-2017; and
7. *Repeals* Resolution 8.8 and Resolution 10.7.