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REPORT ON SYNERGIES AND PARTNERSHIPS

Summary:

In the 2012-2014 triennium, the Secretariat has focused on developing effective and practical cooperation with the other instruments of the CMS Family and relevant stakeholders as instructed by CMS Resolution 10.21.

The implementation of this resolution contributes to the attainment of the Strategic Plan 2006-2014 (Resolution 10.5) targets 3.3, 3.5, 4.3, 4.4 and the Future Shape (Resolution 10.9) activities 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14 and 15.

This report highlights the current state of activities, as at July 2014, undertaken since the 10th Meeting of the CMS Conference of the Parties (Bergen, November 2011).

REPORT ON SYNERGIES AND PARTNERSHIPS

(Prepared by the UNEP/CMS Secretariat)

Introduction

1. *Cooperation with Parties, standing bodies set up under CMS Agreements and international organizations concerned with the conservation of migratory species* is one of the key functions of the CMS Secretariat as mandated by Article IX of the Convention. Furthermore, the CMS Strategic Plan 2006-2014 recognizes that the objectives of CMS and other biodiversity-related conventions are mutually supportive and that strengthening a network of partners and establishing a dialogue with other key sectoral groups whose activities have impacts on migratory species are crucial to promoting CMS and its mandate.
2. Over the last three years, the Secretariat has made significant efforts to coordinate actions, create synergies and avoid duplication among the various relevant instruments and initiatives as instructed by CMS Resolution 10.21.
3. This report, which is structured following the provision of Res.10.21, highlights the current state of activities, undertaken since the Tenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP10, November 2011).

Streamlining activities within the CMS Family

4. The Secretariat has continued to streamline activities with other CMS instruments following the mandate and guidance of Resolution 10.9 on the Future Structure and Strategies of the CMS Family. Also see Documents UNEP/CMS/COP11/Doc.16.1 and 16.2.
5. Significant progress has been made particularly towards the harmonization and interoperability of information management and reporting systems. These include the online registration tool now being used by a number of CMS instruments including those run by out-posted offices; workspaces for facilitating the communication and work of the various scientific advisory bodies; the new website and the on-line system for national reporting. See Document UNEP/CMS/COP11/Doc.19.1.
6. The Secretariat has made efforts to coordinate, to some degree, fundraising activities within the Family by exploring new opportunities and means, and leading the management and joint implementation of common projects, such as the ones related to capacity building. See Documents UNEP/CMS/COP11/14.4: Resource Mobilization and UNEP/CMS/COP11/20.1: Implementation of Capacity Building Strategy 2012-2014 for more details.
7. Greater synergies have also been sought on several programmatic issues. For instance, CMS, ASCOBANS and ACCOBAMS are working towards joining forces to make progress on the work related to underwater noise, while AEWA and the Raptors MoU have contributed with their expertise to the efforts that the CMS Secretariat and Scientific Council are making on combating bird poisoning. Further details are contained in the specific COP11 documents.
8. The future Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023 will provide the overarching framework for the entire CMS Family. The CMS Secretariat has been actively seeking the engagement and views of the various CMS Family Secretariats and their institutional bodies and expert groups in the development of the future Strategic Plan. See Document UNEP/CMS/COP11/Doc.15.2.

9. Communications and synergies between Bonn-based and out-posted offices have also been enhanced through the establishment of regular meetings (actual or virtual as appropriate) and thanks to a retreat, which took place in June 2013 after the arrival of the new CMS Executive Secretary in March 2013.

Promotion of synergies with other biodiversity-related Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)

Biodiversity Liaison Group (BLG)

10. The Secretariat has taken part in the two meetings of the BLG that took place in 2013. An informal meeting was held in January in Bonn, in the margins of the First IPBES Meeting, while a formal BLG meeting was held on 13 February in Switzerland. Discussions were held on relevant issues such as coordination of requests to IPBES and joint fundraising to promote synergies and collaboration on programmatic issues through the scientific bodies. The CMS and AEWA Secretariats brought to the agenda of BLG the proposal to consider the CMS Family Online Reporting System as a tool that could increase synergies on national reporting under the biodiversity-related conventions. BLG members continue working together to explore the way forward.

Biodiversity-related MEAs

11. Meanwhile, liaison has continued individually with BLG members through implementation of joint work plans, and enhancing synergies when possible. Activities were undertaken with CBD, CITES and Ramsar pursuant to the respective Joint Work Plans (JWPs) for 2012-2014.

12. Dialogue and synergies with other MEAs were particularly enhanced on the subject of streamlining national reporting and promotion of collaboration at the national level for the review of national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs). Further details on the implementation of JWPs for 2012-2014 as well as JWPs for 2015-2017 will be presented and discussed at the 42nd Meeting of the CMS Standing Committee (3 November 2014, Quito).

Environment Management Group (EMG)

13. Collaboration between biodiversity-related MEAs also takes place in the context of the EMG Issue Management Group on Biodiversity which is assisting with a UN system-wide response to support the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. Members of this group, including the CMS Secretariat, mapped the contributions of each agency to the implementation of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets with a view to identifying potential areas of cooperation and existing gaps. In November 2012, the UN Environment Management Group, through its senior officials' segment, agreed to "*provide technical support to facilitate further synergies and cooperation, sharing tasks and coordination and planning of future actions by the UN system to support implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, as well as the strategic planning processes of the biodiversity related MEAs, such as for migratory species...*".

Consolidating existing partnerships

14. The Secretariat has mostly focused on renewing its commitments with intergovernmental organizations and civil society.

15. For instance, in February 2013, a renewed Letter of Cooperation (LoC) was signed with the United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Joint activities identified under the LoC include exchange of information on sharks, work to develop mitigation strategies to reduce cetacean bycatch and training volunteers to respond to marine mammal stranding and entanglement events.

16. New simplified JWPs have been developed to formalize and stimulate activities in areas of overlapping priorities with a number of partners. Joint briefings have been held (in person, in the case of the agencies based in Bonn) and synergies have been developed. Regular contacts, through meetings or phone calls, have taken place to review progress and exchange information on emerging issues.

17. For instance, the Secretariat has revitalized its cooperation with the Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), by contributing to the drafting of the joint IUCN/UNCCD/UNEP publication entitled “Conserving Drylands Biodiversity” which was launched at the IUCN World Conservation Congress (6-15 September 2012, Jeju, Republic of Korea), and developing a joint fact sheet to raise awareness about the overlapping key objectives of the two conventions.

18. Collaboration with the International Whaling Commission (IWC) has in recent years mainly focused on the threat posed to cetaceans by marine debris. A priority topic for both treaties, CMS contributed to two workshops organized by the IWC on the subject. The CMS Focal Point for North America attended both workshops and served on the Steering Committee for the second workshop and chaired its session on the role of intergovernmental bodies in policy and management of marine debris. The Secretariats of CMS and IWC are also in discussion about a possible renewal of the partnership agreement, originally signed in 2000.

19. CMS continues to benefit from the support of numerous NGOs in the implementation of species MOUs, and the operation of various scientific working groups as outlined in the specific COP11 documents.

20. Some examples of current collaboration with NGO partners are given below:

- a) Following from the first Civil Society Dialogue held in the margins of CMS COP10, Wild Migration has sought to further the relationship between the NGO community and the CMS Family. This has been focused through the review *A Natural Affiliation: Developing the Role of NGOs in the Convention on Migratory Species Family*, which was presented to both the Strategic Plan Working Group and the 41st Standing Committee. The review found that most NGOs currently consider CMS a small part of their conservation programmes, yet they would increase their engagement with the CMS Family if the right collaborative ‘dynamic’ were created. A series of recommendations have been developed for CMS Party consideration. (See Inf.15). Wild Migration has also contributed to the work of the Secretariat in furthering CMS Family work by: supporting the delivery of CMS Regional Pre-COP workshops in Chile, Zimbabwe and Fiji in 2014; bridging the retirement of the Appointed Councillor for Aquatic Mammals by developing reports and documentation for the Aquatic Mammals Working Group of the Scientific Council; supporting the coordination of the implementation of the AEWA Plan of Action of the African Initiative; and supporting the coordination of the conservation of African Elephants

through improved implementation of the West African Elephant MOU. Wild Migration has also provided technical and advisory support to a number of NGOs seeking to increase their involvement with the CMS Family, in particular in relation to a number of agreement meetings (Gorillas, Pacific Islands Cetaceans MOU, Sharks, ASCOBANS, ACCOBAMS) as well as the processes of the Scientific Council and in preparation for COP11.

- b) BirdLife International (BLI) has recruited a coordinator (funded by BLI partners in the United Kingdom (RSPB), Switzerland (SVS) and Sweden (SOF)) to work on the African-Eurasian Migratory Landbird Action Plan. BLI, mainly through RSPB, continued taking part and providing invaluable support to the implementation of the Convention bird-related mandate ranging from the development of guidelines to prevent bird poisoning to the programme of work on flyways; from the work on bird taxonomy and nomenclature to the one on illegal killing, taking and trade. Close cooperation has also been achieved on renewable energy and fundraising.
- c) The International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) and the Secretariat developed a simple JWP to formalize and stimulate activities in our areas of overlapping priorities. Such priorities include marine mammals, sharks, raptors, elephants, and habitat protection and connectivity for migratory species. In cooperation with the IFAW Middle East training workshops on the implementation of international regulations for the conservation of sharks under CMS, CITES, FAO and relevant RFMOs were organized and held in Yemen and Egypt.
- d) The Saiga Conservation Alliance and the Association for the Conservation of Biodiversity of Kazakhstan have provided continuing technical coordination support for the implementation of the Saiga MOU and the associated Medium-Term International Work Programme (2011-2015).
- e) Whale and Dolphin Conservation (WDC) has continued to provide scientific and technical advice about marine mammals to the CMS Family, and coordinate the Technical Advisory Group of the Pacific Islands Cetaceans MOU. They also provided technical, financial and logistical support to the CMS Scientific Council Workshop on the Conservation Implications of Cetacean Culture, held in London, United Kingdom, on 15 and 16 April 2014.
- f) The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) implemented a CMS Cross River Gorilla project in Cameroon and Nigeria, funded by a voluntary contribution made by Norway at CMS COP10. WCS has implemented a Small Grants project on cetaceans in Congo, and was also one of the partners in the ecological networks in Africa project on the White-eared Kob migration.
- g) Many organizations contributed to the success of the 2012 Year of the Bat campaign, of which the founding partners include the IUCN Bat Specialist Group, Bat Conservation International and the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA).

Continuing informal collaborations

21. The Secretariat is also pursuing synergies with other organizations with which there is no formal partnership agreement. For instance, CMS continues working closely with the UN

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) on a number of issues including shark conservation and wildlife diseases. The First Meeting of the CMS/FAO Task Force on Wildlife and Ecosystem Health took place on 29 January 2013.

22. The Pew Environment Group, which is very active in shark conservation, participated actively in the 1st Meeting of the Signatories to the CMS Sharks MOU, where they organized a side event on the identification of shark fins in the context of an evening reception. The Pew Environment Group is also supporting CMS Regional Pre-COP workshops in Chile, Zimbabwe and Fiji in 2014 by providing expert input to shark related topics and promoted CMS objectives related to shark conservation in statements submitted to meetings of fisheries organizations and in press releases.

23. In March 2014, the CMS Secretariat participated in the meeting of the Sargasso Sea Alliance in Bermuda where the Hamilton Declaration on Collaboration for the Conservation of the Sargasso Sea was adopted. During the meeting, CMS was declared a key partner of the Alliance because of the importance of this ocean ecosystem for migratory animals.

Engagement in strategic collaborations

International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)

24. In 2012, the CMS and AEWA Secretariats, on behalf of the Family, initiated a joint project with IRENA and BirdLife International which aims to evaluate the conflict between migratory species and renewable energy developments and produce consolidated guidelines on the possible mitigation and/or avoidance measures. Both outputs (review and guidelines) have been reviewed at each stage by the Secretariats and the Scientific and Technical Subsidiary bodies of the CMS Family instruments as well as by the project partners. The final products are submitted to the decision-making bodies of the CMS Family instruments for adoption. See Document UNEP/CMS/COP11/Doc.23.4.3.

Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF)

25. As instructed by a number of Resolutions e.g., 10.10 and 9.9, the Secretariat formalized its cooperation with the Arctic Council's International Secretariat of CAFF in 2012. In addition, a (trilateral) JWP including AEWA was developed to guide and include activities of interest. A strengthened dialogue with CAFF is crucial to improving the understanding of the on-going and predicted changes to the Arctic environment, particularly related to climate fluctuations, and impacts on many migratory species including birds and marine animals. One of the activities identified as part of the JWP is the development of an Arctic Species Trend Index for migratory birds, with a view to contributing to filling the gaps of existing data and better reflect the global picture of Arctic bird migrants.

World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) - Germany

26. Friends of CMS (Freunde der Bonner Konvention), the NGO established to explore fundraising opportunities for conservation projects with the private sector in Germany ceased operations in 2013. The German office of the WWF expressed its interest to explore the possibility of cooperating with the Secretariat for the conservation of selected migratory species and related issues and involve members of the former "Friends" in this new collaboration. A Memorandum of Cooperation was developed and signed with a view to

provide the framework for joint collaborative activities. The priorities identified include the conservation of the Blue Whale¹, an Appendix I and II species, and conservation activities in the KAZA² region in Southern Africa, from which many CMS-listed species such as the Cheetah and the African Elephant benefit.

German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ)

27. The Secretariat has strengthened its cooperation with the GIZ Regional Programme for Sustainable Use of Natural Resources in Central Asia in support of the implementation of CMS activities in the region and the development of the Central Asian Mammals Initiative. See Document UNEP/CMS/COP11/Doc.23.3.1.

Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Initiative

28. The Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Initiative continues to provide a mechanism to advance migratory species initiatives in the Americas, including through financial support of several CMS sharks and cetacean activities in South America, and the formulation of a Framework for Migratory Bird Flyways in the Americas.

Engagement with expert committees and processes initiated by partners

Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management (CPW)

29. In March 2013, the Secretariat became a founding member of the CPW. The CPW is a voluntary partnership of international organizations including the CBD, CMS, CITES and OIE secretariats, as well as FAO, UNEP, IUCN, IIFB, TRAFFIC, IUFRO, CIFOR, ITC and CIC. The mission of the CPW is to promote conservation through the sustainable management of terrestrial vertebrate wildlife in all biomes and geographic areas and to increase cooperation and coordination on sustainable wildlife management issues among its members and partners. In the biennium 2013-2014, the work of CPW focused on the thematic focal areas of wildlife, food security and livelihoods; human wildlife conflict; and illegal and unsustainable hunting.

Global Partnership for Oceans (GPO)

30. In May 2013, the Secretariat joined the World Bank lead GPO which is a growing alliance of governments, international organizations, civil society groups, and private companies committed to preserving the health of the world's oceans. Launched at Rio+20, the Partnership aims to address issues of global concerns such as overfishing, pollution and habitat loss. By participating in the Partnership, CMS, together with its specialized instruments and scientific advisory mechanisms, intends to contribute advice and knowledge about the unique needs of migratory species that depend on ocean habitats.

Friends of Target 12

31. With support from CBD, IUCN has established the partnership "*Friends of Target 12*", comprising organizations and institutions (including CMS) which join forces to support

¹ WWF studies specific routes and areas used by blue whales in Chilean waters aiming to support informed decisions about protected areas for this species.

² The Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA) encompasses 109 million acres and crosses five southern Africa countries making it the largest transboundary conservation area in the world. Funded by the German Government, WWF provides expertise in Community-Based Natural Resource Management, to ensure that local communities benefit economically from wildlife on their land, through the creation of a world-class tourism experience.

countries to achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 12. It aims to provide practical guidance and raise awareness of initiatives and programmes that contribute to the implementation of the activities needed to stem the tide of species extinctions.

UNEP 2015 Strategic Group

32. The CMS Executive Secretary is a member of this Group, a key task of which is to provide environmental inputs to the various Post-2015 Development Agenda and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) processes.

Promotion of collaboration at the national level

National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs)

33. Also as per Resolution 10.18, the Secretariat has promoted collaboration between CMS and other MEAs' National Focal Points with regard to the integration of measures to conserve migratory species into NBSAPs.

34. Two regional workshops for Africa were held with a view to assisting NFPs integrate CMS and CITES objectives into their NBSAPs: the first one for Anglophone countries took place in Zimbabwe, November 2012, and the second in Cameroon in June 2013, for Francophone countries. Both events were organized by the UNEP Division of Environment Law and Conventions (DELIC) and the Regional Office for Africa (ROA) with the support of the governments of Germany, Sweden and Japan. The CMS Secretariat contributed to their preparation and took part in both workshops to support participants to develop common best practice with tangible targets to improve policy and administrative coordination of biodiversity-related MEAs in the NBSAP process. CMS also participated in NBSAP-related workshops in the Middle East and in the Pacific Regional Workshop, August 2012, to encourage the uptake of migratory species into 14 Pacific Island country NBSAPs.

35. The CMS Secretariat also takes part in the NBSAP Forum, which is a new global partnership, hosted by the CBD Secretariat, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and UNEP, aiming to support countries in finding the information they need to develop and implement effective NBSAPs. A dedicated web portal has been established to develop a "community of practice" across a wide range of stakeholders who need access to timely information regarding best practices, guidance and resources or wish to share their information and knowledge. The CMS Secretariat's participation, on behalf of the entire Family, envisages the provision of relevant documentation and offering ad hoc guidance on specific issues whenever the need arises.

Promotion of collaboration at the regional level also through strengthened CMS regional presence

Collaboration with UNEP Regional Offices and Regional Biodiversity MEA Focal Points

36. Synergies with UNEP Regional Offices also through Biodiversity MEA Focal Points were improved during the triennium 2012-2014.

37. Examples of their assistance, in addition to those reported in other sections of the present document, include the financial support provided by the UNEP Regional Office for

Europe to convene a meeting on the way forward for the Central Asian Flyway legal framework (UAE, December 2012) and to assist with the development of the Arctic Species Trend Index with CAFF.

38. The UNEP Regional Office for West Asia (ROWA), through its MEA focal point, has been very actively involved in the work of the Raptors; Dugongs and Sharks MOUs. ROWA took part in the Saker Falcon Task Force, to implement Resolution 10.28. It was also involved in the project; '*Addressing Bycatch of Marine Mammals, Sharks and Turtles in the Gulf*' and '*Gulf Collaboration for Dugongs and Seagrasses*'. ROWA was also involved in the presentation of UNEP and CMS work on sharks in the Middle East in the context of a training workshop on the prevention of wildlife trafficking on sharks in Middle East and North Africa regions.

39. The UNEP Regional Office for North America (RONA) and CMS have enhanced their collaborations on shared migratory species conservation interests through the presence of the North American Focal Point for CMS, a post shared between CMS and RONA. Joint activities included information exchange on marine mammal activities, including on projects such as the Spain-UNEP LifeWeb Marine Mammal Initiative, as well as the CAFF/UNEP Arctic Migratory Birds Initiative, and synergies identified on topics such as illegal wildlife trade and marine debris.

40. The secondment of the JPO for Central Asia to the UNEP Office in Moscow for six months in 2012 resulted in closer collaboration and communication with that office as well as the UNEP ROE Office in Geneva.

CMS presence in the regions

41. The arrangement with the SPREP Secretariat to promote CMS work in the Pacific Islands Region has had a positive impact in the region. The main objectives and outcomes of such a cooperation were (i) promoting the accession of new CMS Parties (Fiji) and MOU signatories (e.g. Vanuatu to the Sharks MOU); (ii) providing technical support for countries' NBSAP reviews (Fiji, Nauru, Samoa and Tonga), (iii) strengthening CMS's relationship with the International Whaling Commission and its regional conservation planning for Pacific whale species; (iv) supporting the implementation of the Sharks, Dugongs and Pacific Cetaceans MoUs and their action plans; (v) and supporting capacity building activities including assisting with the organization of the CMS Regional Pre-COP Workshop in Fiji (August, 2014) as well as the associated meeting with CBD and Ramsar and at which CITES will also be represented.

42. In North America, the CMS Focal Point has been has promoted CMS and supported its global programme of work by (i) raising the profile of CMS in North America through education and outreach efforts including stakeholder roundtables, dissemination of information materials, attending wildlife related events, and network building; (ii) building political support for CMS and its instruments (e.g. ACAP, Sharks MoU, Pacific Cetaceans MoU, IOSEA etc.); (iii) identifying opportunities for resource mobilization (e.g. USFWS multilateral grants programme, U.S. Government Agencies and private foundations), and (iv) strengthening partnerships with the U.S. Government and NGO community (e.g. NOAA, USFWS, WHMSI, Pew Environment Group, ICCF, World Bank, the GEF). See Document UNEP/CMS/COP11/Doc.12.2.

Strengthened partnerships with the private sector

43. Consistent with the CMS Code of Conduct for Partnerships with the Private Sector, the Secretariat has strengthened contacts with HeidelbergCement (global manufacturers of building materials), which became partner of the Year of the Bat campaign and has been promoting it also through the regular bat nights they organize in their quarries. The Secretariat has contributed to expanding HeidelbergCement's mobile exhibition which promotes the importance of conserving biodiversity in quarries.

44. The Migratory Species Champion Programme intends (amongst other things) to provide the basis for engaging the private sector in the conservation of CMS species.

Conclusions and way forward

45. There has been considerable progress in maintaining or enhancing existing partnerships and co-operative relationships but also in entering new collaborations with key organizations. It is however recognized that great potential still remains to be explored. In the triennium 2015-2017, the Secretariat will continue endeavouring its synergistic work with all relevant stakeholders in accordance with the provisions of Resolution 10.21.

Action requested:

The Conference of the Parties is requested to:

- (a) Note the progress made, as reported in this document.
- (b) Provide any comments to guide the Secretariat further, in its implementation and promotion of synergies and partnerships in accordance with Resolution 10.21.