



# CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES

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Agenda Item 10.9

## REVIEW AND GUIDELINES TO PREVENT THE RISK OF POISONING OF MIGRATORY BIRDS

### Summary

Resolution 10.26 on Minimizing the Risk of Poisoning to Migratory Birds established an Inter-sessional Working Group under the Scientific Council to assess the severity of poisoning and to recommend suitable responses to address the problem. On this basis, the working group in close cooperation with the CMS Secretariat has prepared the following documents for consideration of the Scientific Council:

- A “Review of the ecological effects of poisoning on migratory birds”;
- “Guidelines to Prevent Poisoning of Migratory Birds” (full and short versions); and
- A draft Resolution on “Preventing Poisoning of Migratory Birds”.

The evaluation and mitigation of the effects of poisoning on migratory birds are also part of the Scientific Council Work Programme and the CMS Strategic Plan 2006-2014.

## **REVIEW AND GUIDELINES TO PREVENT THE RISK OF POISONING OF MIGRATORY BIRDS**

*(Prepared by the UNEP/CMS Secretariat)*

1. Following Resolution 10.26 on Minimizing the Risk of Poisoning to Migratory Birds, several documents have been prepared including: a “Review of the ecological effects of poisoning on migratory birds”; “Guidelines to Prevent Poisoning of Migratory Birds” and a draft Resolution on “Preventing Poisoning of Migratory Birds”. To undertake this task, a Working Group was established under the Scientific Council and a Coordinator of the Working Group was appointed in January 2013, thanks to the financial support of the United Kingdom and the Coordinating Unit of the UNEP/CMS Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia (Raptors MoU).

2. On the 27-31 May 2013 a Meeting of the Working Group took place in Tunis at the kind invitation of the Government of Tunisia. The discussions held during this Workshop largely form the basis of the documents that are presented now. The organization of this Meeting was made possible thanks to the financial support of Switzerland, Tunisia and the European Science Foundation.

### **Action requested:**

The Scientific Council is invited to:

- (a) Endorse the “Review of the ecological effects of poisoning on migratory birds” (UNEP/CMS/ScC18/Doc.10.9.1) and submit this document to COP11 for information.
- (b) Review the “Guidelines to Prevent Poisoning of Migratory Birds” (both the short: UNEP/CMS/ScC18/Doc.10.9.2 and full: UNEP/CMS/ScC18/Inf.10.9.2 versions) and agree on which of these two versions should be submitted to COP11 for adoption.
- (c) Review the draft Resolution on “Preventing Poisoning of Migratory Birds” (UNEP/CMS/ScC18/Doc.10.9), annexed to this cover note and submit the draft Resolution to COP11 for adoption.
- (d) Provide guidance on scientific and technical issues related to the impact of poisoning on migratory birds.
- (e) Seek avenues for research and dialogue on prevention of poisoning of migratory birds with other MEAs and relevant organizations, including their scientific bodies.

## ANNEX

## DRAFT RESOLUTION

## PREVENTING POISONING OF MIGRATORY BIRDS

*Concerned* that very large numbers of migratory birds are killed annually as a result of poisoning and that this unnecessary mortality can severely affect the conservation status of vulnerable species, including many listed under CMS and its associated instruments, and/or protected nationally, and that for some species poisoning is the primary cause of their unfavourable conservation status;

*Highlighting* the need to provide practical guidance on preventing, minimizing and where feasible eliminating poisoning from, inter alia, agriculture pesticides, poison bait, veterinary pharmaceutical treatments and use of lead for hunting and fishing;

*Aware* that internationally agreed measures and concerted actions to address bird poisoning are urgently needed and should involve CMS Parties, Range States, international and national organizations, the private sector and relevant stakeholders;

*Recalling* Resolution 10.26 on minimizing the risk of poisoning to migratory birds, which called on the Scientific Council and the Secretariat to establish an intersessional working group, the Minimizing Poisoning Working Group, to review poisoning risks and to propose suitable responses to minimize and prevent poisoning impacts;

*Acknowledging* the positive actions undertaken by some Parties to the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA) to phase out the use of lead shot for hunting in wetlands;

*Further recalling* that the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia, highlights the many African-Eurasian migratory raptors with an unfavourable conservation status at a regional and/or global level as a result of poisoning;

*Noting* the objectives of the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, which promotes the environmentally sound use of hazardous chemicals and shared responsibility to protect the environment from harm, but which does not adequately address issues related to serious pesticide impacts on wild birds;

*Noting with satisfaction* Recommendation 164 (2013), adopted by the Standing Committee to the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention), which raises concern regarding the still widespread use of poisons to kill protected species, and calls for a strengthened cooperation to enhance national and international actions to eliminate this damaging practice;

*Recalling* the Ramsar Convention's Resolution XI.12 on ecosystem approaches to wetlands and health which recognizes the interactions between disease - including poisoning - in the wildlife, human and domestic animals, and stressed the urgent need to ensure that policy responses are better integrated in a 'One Health' approach across these sectors for most effective outcomes;

*Recognizing* that whilst activities associated with some substances toxic to birds can have social and/or economic significance, such as the protection of agricultural crops from pests, experience shows that strategies to minimize and prevent the risk of poisoning of birds can be, nonetheless, sustainably implemented with benefits from to the provision of wider ecosystem services;

*Concerned* that there is a serious geographical bias in relevant research and knowledge, and *emphasizing* that further research on and monitoring of birds and sources of poisoning are urgently required for some poisoning sources, and that studies should be designed so as to better assist in formulating and monitoring policy;

*Acknowledging* that a number of Parties are already applying relevant policies, for example, removal of certain toxic agricultural insecticides from the market, implementing programmes of Integrated Pest Management, and promoting the use of non-toxic ammunition for hunting, and *commending* those Parties for such actions;

*Noting* the UNDP/GEF 'Migratory Soaring Birds Project' implemented by BirdLife International, which aims to ensure that the conservation needs of migratory soaring birds are addressed by industry, including the agriculture sector, along the Red Sea/Rift Valley Flyway, and *recognizing* the potential this project has to promote the implementation of this Resolution and associated Guidelines nationally and locally;

*Stressing* that capacity building at national and regional level is of fundamental importance for the effective implementation of this Resolution;

*Acknowledging* with thanks the Government of Tunisia for hosting the workshop held in Tunis the 27-31 May 2013 to assess the severity of poisoning and to discuss guidelines, and the generous financial support provided by the Government of Switzerland and the European Science Foundation towards the organization of this workshop; and

*Taking note* of the “Review of the ecological effects of poisoning on migratory birds” and *thanking* the Working Group members, the Coordinator and the CMS Secretariat for their contributions to the production of this document;

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

1. *Adopts* the “Guidelines to Prevent the Risk of Poisoning of Migratory Birds” (the Guidelines) contained in document UNEP/CMS/COP11/XX;
2. *Urges* Parties and *encourages* non-Parties to disseminate and implement these Guidelines across all flyways as applicable, where necessary translating the Guidelines into different languages for their wider dissemination and use;
3. *Requests* CMS Parties and *invites* Parties and Signatories of CMS Family instruments to identify within flyways, those geographical areas where poisoning is causing significant bird mortality or morbidity, and address these as a matter of priority applying the Guidelines as appropriate;
4. *Urges* the Secretariat to consult regularly with relevant stakeholders, including government agencies, scientific bodies, non-governmental organizations and the agricultural, pharmaceutical, hunting and fishing sectors, in order to monitor the impacts of poisoning on

birds and to support the elaboration of national strategies and sector implementation plans as necessary;

5. *Requests* CMS Parties to monitor and evaluate the impact of poisoning on bird populations regularly at national level, as well as the effectiveness of measures put in place to minimize poisoning impacts;

6. *Calls on* Parties and non-Parties, including inter-governmental organizations and other relevant institutions as appropriate, to elaborate national strategies to address poisoning or to include the measures contained in this Resolution and in the Guidelines in their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAP) and relevant legislation to ensure that the impact of poisoning on bird populations, and other wildlife, is prevented, minimized or - desirably - eliminated;

7. *Instructs* the Secretariat, in close cooperation with relevant CMS instruments, to liaise with the Bern Convention Secretariat and other relevant international organizations in order to update the Guidelines as necessary, and *requests* Parties to contribute to the dissemination and updating of the Guidelines;

8. *Invites* the Rotterdam Convention to cooperate actively with CMS on matters related to poisoning of migratory birds, and in particular on the development of decision-making criteria that include risk to migratory birds when assessing proposals to import chemicals;

9. *Invites* the International Cooperation on Harmonisation of Technical Requirements for Registration of Veterinary Medicinal Products (VICH) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to evaluate the risk that veterinary medicinal products pose to scavenging bird species through either lethal or sub-lethal impacts, and use the results to provide guidance to the veterinary sector;

10. *Instructs* the Secretariat, in collaboration with Parties and relevant international organizations, subject to the availability of funds, to organize regional workshops in high risk areas/flyways to promote the implementation of the Guidelines and to share best practice and lessons learnt;

11. *Calls on* Parties and *invites* non-Parties and stakeholders, with the support of the Secretariat, to strengthen national and local capacity for the implementation of this Resolution including, *inter alia*, by developing training courses, translating and disseminating examples of best practice, sharing protocols and regulations, transferring technology, and promoting the use of online tools to address specific issues that are relevant to prevent poisoning;

12. *Urges* Parties, UNEP and other relevant international organizations, as well as the industry, bilateral and multilateral donors and others, to support financially the implementation of this Resolution and the Guidelines, including through the coordination provided by the Minimizing Poisoning Working Group, support of regional workshops, and the provision of financial assistance to developing countries for relevant capacity building;

13. *Proposes* the continuation of the open-ended Minimizing Poisoning Working Group until COP12, renewing its membership to incorporate expertise from geographical regions currently absent as well as representatives of industry and governments, to address the impact of other sources of poisoning and geographic gaps and to monitor the implementation of the Guidelines;

14. *Further proposes* the Working Group and the Coordinator to engage actively with relevant agrochemical, veterinary pharmaceutical and companies manufacturing lead ammunition/fishing weight, so as to encourage the translation and dissemination of the Guidelines widely within their networks and to end-users and others; and

15. *Calls on* Parties to report progress in implementing this Resolution, including monitoring, risk reduction and efficacy of measures taken, to COP12 in 2017 through their National Reports.