

*Amendments proposed in session*

**DRAFT RESOLUTION**

**ADVANCING ECOLOGICAL NETWORKS  
TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF MIGRATORY SPECIES**

*Deeply concerned* that habitats for migratory species are becoming increasingly fragmented across terrestrial, freshwater and marine biomes;

*Recalling* Resolution 10.3 on the role of ecological networks in the conservation of migratory species highlighting the critical importance of connectivity for conservation and management in the CMS context, inviting the exploration of the applicability of ecological networks to marine migratory species and assigning to Parties, the Scientific Council and the Secretariat a number of tasks for the 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Conference of the Parties and beyond;

*Further recalling* Resolution 10.19 on climate change urging Parties to maximize species and habitat resilience to climate change through appropriate design of ecological networks, ensuring sites are sufficiently large and varied in terms of habitats and topography, strengthening physical and ecological connectivity between sites and considering the option of seasonal protected areas;

*Reaffirming* Target 10 of the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023 (UNEP/CMS/COP11/Doc.15.2), which states that “all key habitats and sites for migratory species are identified and included in area-based conservation measures so as to maintain their quality, integrity, resilience and functioning in accordance with the implementation of Aichi Target 11”, which in turn calls for at least 17% of terrestrial and inland water and 10% of coastal and marine areas being “conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well-connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes”;

*Welcoming* the progress made in producing a strategic review on ecological networks thanks to a voluntary contribution from Norway (UNEP/CMS/COP11/Doc.23.4.1.2) and a compilation of case studies illustrating how ecological networks have been applied as a conservation strategy to different taxonomic groups of CMS-listed species (UNEP/CMS/COP11/Inf.22) as requested by Resolution 10.3;

*Expressing satisfaction* with the formal establishment and launch of a Network of Sites of Importance for Marine Turtles within the framework of the CMS Indian Ocean – South-East Asia Marine Turtle Memorandum of Understanding (IOSEA) with particular emphasis on the development of robust criteria intended to lend credibility to the site selection process;

*Recognizing* that transboundary area-based conservation measures including networks of protected and other management areas can play an important role in improving the conservation status of migratory species by contributing to ecological networks and promoting connectivity particularly when animals migrate for long distances across or outside national jurisdictional boundaries;

*Acknowledging* progress made by some Parties and other Range States with the establishment of transboundary area-based conservation measures as a basis for ecological networks and promoting connectivity, for example through the KAZA Treaty on Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCA), signed by Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe on 18 August 2011, which is a large ecological region of 519,912 km<sup>2</sup> in the five countries encompassing 36 national parks, game reserves, forest reserves and community conservancies, and further *recalling* that the KAZA region is home to at least 50% of all African elephants (Appendix II), 25% of African wild dogs (Appendix II) and substantial numbers of migratory birds and other CMS-listed species;

*Acknowledging* that the Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs), both terrestrial and marine, identified by BirdLife International under criteria A4 (migratory congregations) comprise the most comprehensive ecological networks of internationally important sites for any group of migratory species, which should be effectively conserved and sustainably managed under the corresponding and appropriate legal frameworks, taking note in particular of the list of IBAs in Danger which need imminent decisive action to protect them from damaging impacts;

*Taking note with interest* of several IUCN processes which may contribute to the conservation of migratory species and, when adopted, promote ecological networks and connectivity, including the draft IUCN WCPA Best Practice Guideline on Transboundary Conservation drafted by the IUCN WCPA Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group, the IUCN WCPA / SSC Joint Taskforce on Protected Areas and Biodiversity work on a standard to identify Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) and the IUCN Joint SSC/WCPA Marine Mammal Protected Areas Task Force process to develop criteria for identifying Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs);

*Acknowledging* that the ability to increasingly track animals globally will greatly enhance the knowledge base for informed conservation decision making, for example through global tracking initiatives such as ICARUS (International Cooperation for Animal Research Using Space), planned to be implemented on the International Space Station by the German and Russian Aerospace Centres (DLR and Roscosmos) by the end of 2015;

*Recognizing* that to meet their needs throughout their life history stages marine migratory species depend on a range of habitats across their migratory range whether in marine areas within and/or beyond the limits of national jurisdiction;

*Further recognizing* CMS's approach to coordinated conservation and management measures across a migratory range can contribute to the development of ecological networks and promote connectivity that are fully consistent with the law of the sea by providing the basis for like-minded Range States to take individual actions at national level and regarding their flag vessels in marine areas within and beyond the limits of national jurisdiction and to coordinate these actions across the migration range of the species concerned;

*Aware* of the United Nations General Assembly Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group to Study Issues Relating to the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity Beyond Areas of National Jurisdiction, including its deliberations with respect to area-based conservation measures and environmental impact assessment in marine areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction;

*Recalling* Resolution 10.3 acknowledging the processes, workshops and tools underway within the Convention on Biological Diversity can assist in identifying habitats important for the lifecycles of marine migratory species listed on the CMS Appendices;

*Welcoming* the progress made in the process being undertaken by the Convention on Biological Diversity, which has convened regional workshops covering approximately 68% of world ocean areas, to scientifically describe Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs);

*Considering* that some of the scientific criteria applied to describe EBSAs are particularly relevant to marine migratory species, namely ‘special importance of life history stages of species’, ‘importance for threatened, endangered or declining species and/or habitats’, ‘vulnerability, fragility, sensitivity or slow recovery’ and ‘biological productivity’;

*Recognizing* that the description of areas meeting the scientific criteria for EBSAs has been undertaken on an individual site basis and that scientific guidance for selecting areas to establish a representative network of marine protected areas is provided in Annex II to CBD COP decision IX/20;

*Also recognizing* the importance of promoting the development of ecologically coherent networks of EBSAs;

*Aware* that marine migratory species provide a useful basis to further review the potential contribution of the scientific data and information used to describe EBSAs to the development of ecological networks and the promotion of connectivity by exploring whether this data and information could contribute to identifying areas meeting the needs of marine migratory species which use multiple habitats throughout the stages of their life history and across their migration range; and

*Welcoming* as a contribution to the strategic review on ecological networks, the Global Ocean Biodiversity Initiative (GOBI) review of EBSAs and marine migratory species undertaken to determine how marine migratory species have factored in the description of EBSAs and, through the use of preliminary case studies on cetaceans, seabirds and marine turtles, to explore the potential for the scientific data and information describing EBSAs to contribute to the conservation of migratory species in marine areas within and beyond the limits of national jurisdiction, particularly with respect to ecological networks and connectivity.

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

1. *Expresses its gratitude* to the Government of Norway for funding the work on the strategic review and case studies on ecological networks intersessionally;

2. *Takes note* of the compilation of case studies on ecological networks (UNEP/CMS/COP11/Inf.22);
3. *Endorses* the recommendations made in the strategic review on ecological networks (UNEP/CMS/COP11/Doc.23.4.1.2), included in Annex I to this Resolution;
4. *Requests* Parties and *invites* all other Range States, partner organizations and the private sector to provide financial resources and in-kind support to assist in implementing the recommendations within this Resolution, including Annex I;
5. *Encourages* Parties to provide financial resources and in-kind support to underpin and strengthen existing ecological network initiatives within the CMS Family of instruments, including the Western/Central Asian Site Network for the Siberian Crane and other Migratory Waterbirds, the Critical Site Network of African Eurasian Waterbird Agreement, and the newly launched CMS/IOSEA Network of Sites of Importance for Marine Turtles and East Asian – Australasian Flyway Site Network;
6. *Calls upon* Parties to develop transboundary area-based conservation measures including protected and other area systems, when implementing the CMS ecological network mandate and to strengthen and build upon existing initiatives, including the KAZA TFCA;
7. *Urges* Parties to promote ecological networks and connectivity through, for example, the development of further site networks within the CMS Family or other fora and processes, that use scientifically robust criteria to describe and identify important sites for migratory species and promote their internationally coordinated conservation and management, with support from the CMS Scientific Council, as appropriate;
8. *Invites* Non-Parties to collaborate closely with Parties in the management of transboundary populations of CMS-listed species, including by joining CMS and its associated instruments, to support the development and implementation of ecological networks globally;
- 8 bis. *Urges* Parties to address immediate threats to national sites important for migratory species within ecological networks, making use, where appropriate, of international lists of threatened sites, such as the ‘World Heritage in Danger’ list of UNESCO, the ‘Montreux Record’ of Ramsar and the ‘IBAs in Danger’ list of BirdLife International;
- 8 ter. *Urges further* Parties to monitor adequately ecological networks to allow early detection of any deterioration in quality of sites, rapid identification of threats and timely action to maintain network integrity, making use where appropriate of existing monitoring methods, such as the IBA Monitoring Framework developed by BirdLife International and the International Waterbird Census coordinated by Wetlands International;
9. *Further invites* the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the World Heritage Convention, the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) and others to use existing ecological networks, such as the Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas of BirdLife International, to assess and identify gaps in protected area coverage, and secure conservation and sustainable management of these networks, as appropriate;

10. *Requests* Parties to adopt and implement those guidelines developed within CMS and other relevant processes, which aim to promote connectivity and halt its loss, for example through the provision of practical guidance to avoid infrastructure development projects disrupting the movement of migratory species;

11. *Encourages* Parties, other Range States and relevant organizations to apply the IUCN WCPA Best Practice Guideline on Transboundary Conservation, the IUCN WCPA / SSC Joint Taskforce on Protected Areas and Biodiversity's Key Biodiversity Areas standard and the criteria for identifying Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs) developed by the IUCN Joint SSC/WCPA Marine Mammal Protected Areas Task Force once adopted by IUCN;

12. *Calls upon* Parties and *invites* other Range States and relevant organizations to use tools such as Movebank, ICARUS and other tools to better understand the movements of CMS-listed species, including the selection of those endangered species whose conservation status would most benefit from a better understanding of their movement ecology, while avoiding actions which may enable the unauthorised tracking of individual animals and facilitate poaching;

13. *Encourages* CMS Parties to engage in the ongoing work taking place within the Convention on Biological Diversity to develop EBSA descriptions, noting that CBD COP decision XI/17 states that the description of areas meeting the EBSA scientific criteria is an evolving process to allow for updates;

14. *Calls on* Parties, other Range States, relevant organizations and individual experts in the research and conservation community to collaborate with and participate actively in the EBSA process and mobilize all available data and information related to migratory marine species, to ensure that the EBSA process has access to the best available science in relation to marine migratory species;

15. *Invites* Parties, other Range States and competent international organizations to consider the results of the initial GOBI review (UNEP/CMS/COP11/Inf.23) with respect to EBSAs and marine migratory species as they further engage in the EBSA process and *further invites* a more in-depth review by GOBI to explore the potential for the scientific data and information describing EBSAs to contribute to the conservation of migratory species in marine areas within and beyond the limits of national jurisdiction, particularly with respect to ecological networks and connectivity;

16. *Requests* the Secretariat to share the results of the initial GOBI review with relevant fora including the Convention on Biological Diversity;

17. *Encourages* Parties and the Secretariat to bring this resolution and the experience of CMS relevant to identifying pathways for marine migratory species, critical habitats and key threats, and promoting coordinated conservation and management measures across a migratory range in marine areas to the attention of the United Nations General Assembly Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group to Study Issues Relating to the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity Beyond Areas of National Jurisdiction; and

18. *Reaffirms* Resolution 10.3 on Ecological Networks and *urges* Parties, the Scientific Council and the Secretariat to address outstanding or recurring actions.