

**Meeting of the Intersessional Working Group on
Linear Infrastructure and Migratory Species**

Isle of Vilm, 27 June – 1 July 2022

UNEP/CMS/LI-IWG/Inf.1

**IDENTIFYING APPROACHES FOR MITIGATING THE EFFECTS OF
INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT ON MIGRATORY WILDLIFE**

Background

Infrastructure development fragments and destroys habitat and creates barriers to the movements of species, thereby isolating populations and preventing access to essential resources such as food and water, causing die-offs and reduced fitness. Infrastructure also causes direct injuries and mortality through collisions, entanglement as well as disturbance and pollution. The loss of ecological connectivity leads to genetic isolation of small populations, leaving them more vulnerable and prone to local extinction. Infrastructure development may cause other indirect impacts, for example by providing access to formerly inaccessible areas, leading to poaching, land conversion and human settlement.

Article III 4 a) and b) of the CMS Convention stipulates that Parties that are Range States of a migratory species listed in Appendix I shall endeavour: a) to conserve and, where feasible and appropriate, restore those habitats of the species which are of importance in removing the species from danger of extinction; b) to prevent, remove, compensate for or minimize, as appropriate, the adverse effects of activities or obstacles that seriously impede or prevent the migration of the species.

The 12th Meeting of the CMS Conference of the Parties (COP12) adopted [Resolution 7.2 \(Rev.COP12\) on Impact Assessment and Migratory Species](#). The Resolution urges Parties to conduct environmental impact assessment (EIA) for projects and strategic environmental assessment (SEA) for policies and plans, as tools for the implementation of the convention, against the obligations set out in Article III. 4 a).

CMS [Resolution 11.24 \(Rev. COP13\) on the Central Asian Mammals Initiative](#) includes the Programme of Work for the Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI) 2021-2026. CAMI Programme of Work measures 3.4 and 3.6 promote the use of technical publications such as the CAMI Atlas and Guidelines and encourages decision-makers to integrate migratory species considerations when planning and maintaining infrastructure.

CMS COP13 adopted [Decisions 13.130-13.134](#) to address the impact of infrastructure on migratory species and their habitats. In accordance with Decision 13.131, the CMS Scientific Council Sessional Committee established a multi-stakeholder Intersessional Working Group (IWG) on linear infrastructure composed of stakeholders with experience and knowledge on the impact of linear infrastructure development on migratory species and options for mitigation. Decision 13.133 requests the CMS Secretariat to organize at least one meeting of the Working Group to implement the IWGs mandate as given by the Scientific Council in [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC5/Outcome 13](#).

The report “*Linear Infrastructure and Migratory Species: the role of impact assessment and landscape approaches*” ([UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC5/Inf.3](#)), prepared in response to Decision 13.131, found that a range of guidance material and standards already exist, which require the international and national finance sectors as well as national authorities to consider biodiversity and species in the planning processes. What was found missing, are screening, scoping and mitigation measures addressing characteristics of (groups of) migratory species, as well as data on the habitats, feeding, breeding and migration areas. Also, the international and national governance structures that require relevant institutions and authorities to actually apply the existing guidance and standards were found to be weak.

Based on the above mandates, infrastructure is a priority issue addressed as part of the 2020 – 2023 Joint Work Programme between the CMS Secretariat and the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation of Germany (BfN). The meeting of the IWG will be convened within the framework of the BfN-CMS Joint Work Programme 2020-2023 under the activity “Identifying Approaches for Mitigating the Effects of Infrastructure Development on Migratory Wildlife.”

Objectives

The Working Group will:

- Review the report “Linear Infrastructure and Migratory Species: the role of impact assessment and landscape approaches”, prepared in response to Decisions 13.130-13.
- Agree on a workplan and priority tasks for the Working Group during the meeting, based on the above report as well as selected recommendations of the “Guidelines for Addressing the Impact of Linear Infrastructure on Large Migratory Mammals (CAMI guidelines) in Central Asia”;
- Develop recommendations on the future direction of work under the Convention to support Parties in addressing the impact of linear infrastructure on migratory species.

Expected outcomes

The Working Group will produce:

- Recommendations to improve the collection, storage, accessibility and use of available and required data related to habitat, feeding, breeding and migration areas of migratory species.
- Screening and scoping guidance for migratory species to be recommended for usage by international and national finance, infrastructure development and environmental authorities.
- Recommendations, where within the international and national governance structures for application of standards and guidelines considerations for migratory species should be taken and which institutions should have a role within these structures.
- Recommendations specific to the CAMI region.

Modus operandi

The Working Group will build on existing work done under CMS that is related to linear infrastructure, such as outputs of the Energy Task Force, the Guidelines for Reducing the Impact of Linear Infrastructure on Migratory Mammals in Central Asia, and the CMS Family Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessments for Marine Noise-generating Activities. The group will also consider examples of use of datasets on movements of individually identified migratory animals as tools to improve knowledge on possible impact of linear infrastructures across taxonomic groups of interest to CMS.

The Working Group will conduct the bulk of its work during the planned meeting. Only review and finalization of the work will be done after the meeting. At the meeting, the Working Group will be split into three breakout groups focusing on:

- a) How well the needs of migratory species are integrated in international and national standards and what mechanisms exist both at the international and national level that require those responsible for infrastructure development, including financiers to take into account the standards. On the basis of best-practice examples, such as GRASP's role in the IFC governance structure for the application of standards and guidelines in great ape habitat, explore the role that CMS and other scientific and conservation institutions can play in governance structures for the application of standards and guidelines.
- b) The availability of data for migratory species' habitats, feeding, breeding areas and migration routes, as a precondition for considering their requirements in the planning and construction of linear infrastructure. The establishment of centralized data repositories on the movement of migratory species with the goal of making information on migratory species movement more accessible to and provide examples of best practices in the applied use of such data to linear infrastructure stakeholders and beyond. General requirements, including screening and scoping guidance, as well as mitigating measures for terrestrial, avian and aquatic species in relation to linear infrastructure. In order to avoid overlaps and duplication, existing guidelines for the different species groups will be presented.
- c) Recommendations of the CAMI Infrastructure Guidelines, CAMI Atlas as well as recommendations of the Transboundary hotspots study, which will be assessed and compared to the recommendations of the report "Linear Infrastructure and Migratory Species: the role of impact assessment and landscape approaches", contributing to the implementation of CAMI Programme of Work Activities 3.4 b), 3.6 a, b), e) and g). 3.4 b), 3.6 a, b), e) and g).