

**6th Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the
CMS Scientific Council (ScC-SC6)**

Bonn, Germany, 18 – 21 July 2023

UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Doc.12.4.4.2

LIGHT POLLUTION GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS FROM AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

(Prepared by the Governments of Australia and New Zealand)

Summary:

Australia and New Zealand have drafted additional light pollution guidance to be applied within their national jurisdictions.

Australia has finalized three additional appendices to their *National Light Pollution Guidelines for Wildlife*: bats, terrestrial mammals and ecological communities.

New Zealand has finalized its *Mitigation Standards to Reduce Light-induced Vessel Strikes of Seabirds with New Zealand Commercial Fishing Vessels*.

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Background

1. At its 13th meeting, the Conference of the Parties (COP13, 2020), considered the issue of light pollution. Through [Resolution 13.5](#) *Light Pollution Guidelines for Wildlife*, COP13 noted that artificial light is significantly increasing globally and that it is "known to adversely affect many species and ecological communities by disrupting critical behaviours in wildlife and functional processes, stalling the recovery of threatened species, and interfering with migratory species' ability to undertake long-distance migrations integral to their life cycles", or by negatively influencing main food sources of migratory species.
2. Resolution 13.5 also endorsed National Light Pollution Guidelines for some groups of migratory wildlife including marine turtles, seabirds and migratory shorebirds, and recommended that Parties, non-Parties and other stakeholders use the Guidelines to limit and mitigate the harmful effects of artificial light on migratory species. The Guidelines provide a risk assessment and adaptive management framework to address the negative impacts of light pollution on all susceptible wildlife, but especially migratory species.
3. With a view to complementing those Guidelines, COP13, through Decision 13.138, requested that the Secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, prepare guidelines for adoption by COP14 on how to effectively avoid and mitigate the indirect and direct negative impacts of light pollution on those taxa that are not yet the focus of the guidelines endorsed by Resolution 13.5 – taking into account other existing guidance, as relevant.

Continued development of light pollution guidance at the national level

4. New Zealand and Australia have recently finalized documents that provide additional information and guidance on light pollution.
5. The Australian Government has continued to develop additional evidence-based guidance on the impacts of light pollution on wildlife and has updated its *National Light Pollution Guidelines for Wildlife* to include appendices for non-migratory taxa/ecosystems: bats, terrestrial mammals and ecological communities.
6. New Zealand has developed an evidence-based guidance document relevant to light pollution and migratory species: *Mitigation Standards to Reduce Light-induced Vessel Strikes of Seabirds with New Zealand Commercial Fishing Vessels*.¹

Discussion and analysis

7. New Zealand's standards are highly relevant to migratory species, particularly marine taxa, and are presented to Parties for information and potential adaption to their national circumstances, as part of CMS's body of light pollution guidance and information-sharing with relevant stakeholders.
8. Australia's updated Guidelines provide new information on primarily non-migratory taxa. However, these are presented to Parties to share with relevant stakeholders and to consider potentially adapting as part of CMS's body of light pollution guidance, particularly new sections that may be relevant to migratory species (for example, indirect impacts on migratory species' food sources, such as insects).

¹ <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/56320-Mitigation-Standards-to-Reduce-Light-induced-Vessel-Strikes-of-Seabirds-with-New-Zealand-Commercial-Fishing-Vessels>

Recommended actions

9. The Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council is recommended to:
 - a) Take note of the additional appendices to Australia's *National Light Pollution Guidelines for Wildlife* contained in UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Inf.12.4.4.2a;
 - b) Take note of the New Zealand's *Mitigation Standards to Reduce Light-induced Vessel Strikes of Seabirds with New Zealand Commercial Fishing Vessels* contained in UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Inf.12.4.4.2b.