



Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

Secretariat provided by the United Nations Environment Programme



40th Meeting of the Standing Committee

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UNEP/CMS/StC40/9

REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT ON ACTIVITIES SINCE COP10

Introduction

1. The Secretariat has submitted two written reports to members of the Standing Committee on activities carried out since COP10 (see Annexes 1 and 2). As these reports contain detailed information, this document provides only a snapshot of key activities undertaken by the Secretariat. In addition, various documents, which will be introduced during the Standing Committee meeting, provide more information on the Secretariat's other work.

Implementation of COP10 Resolutions

2. As a follow up to the decisions taken at COP 10, the Secretariat's achievements have included:

- a) Finalizing all financial commitments linked to COP10;
- b) Compiling existing information and case studies on the design of protected area systems covering migratory pathways and critical sites and related opportunities for ecological networks (Resolution 10.3);
- c) Undertaking an assessment of the current Strategic Plan and starting to develop a new Strategic Plan in accordance with Resolution 10.5 by establishing the Working Group and contracting a consultant to support the work of the Group (see Document StC40/12);
- d) Implementing the Capacity Building Strategy 2012-2014 (Resolution 10.6). Funds were secured through the ENRTP¹ Strategic Cooperation Agreement between the Environment Directorate-General of the European Commission and UNEP. Consultants have been contracted to draft a Manual and develop a concept for an e-community platform for National Focal Points for the CMS Family;
- e) Implementing Outreach and Communication (Resolution 10.7). A system of notification regarding important issues has been in place since December 2011. Year of the Bat and World Migratory Bird Day campaigns were carried out in 2012. More use is being made of social media, e.g. Facebook and You-tube, for outreach;
- f) Developing a new CMS Family website as indicated in Resolution 10.9. A consultant has been contracted and is developing a database structure for the new website. This new structure will allow the full participation of the CMS Family, for example in the InforMEA Project. Developing as well a web-based working area for

the Convention's institutional bodies in particular the Scientific Council has also been developed following the example of the AEWA Technical Committee (TC) Workspace;

- g) Starting to develop a Costed Work Plan required by Resolution 10.1;
- h) Focusing on strengthening the Secretariat's existing partnerships, as instructed by CMS Resolution 10.21, and continuing to streamline activities within the CMS Family (see Document StC40/18)
- i) Establishing and securing funds for a Working Group which is tasked with developing an Action Plan for the conservation of landbirds of the African-Eurasian flyway (Resolution 10.27) as well as for a Working Group which addresses the issue of bird poisoning (Resolution 10.26);
- j) Making significant progress on the implementation of Resolution 10.28 on Saker falcon conservation, including establishing the Saker Falcon Task Force;
- k) Finalizing the COP10 Proceedings;
- l) Translating and publishing the UNEP/Grid Arendal – CMS Publication '*Living Planet: Connected Planet – Preventing the End of the World's Wildlife Migrations through Ecological Networks*' into French and Spanish;

Human Resources Issues

3. The main developments have comprised the following:

- a) CMS Executive Secretary (D-1): Responsibility lies with UNEP, and UNEP will announce the name of the new Executive Secretary in due course;
- b) Executive Coordinator of the CMS Project Office Abu Dhabi (P-5): interviews have taken place and the Secretariat awaits UNEP's feedback;
- c) AEWA Executive Secretary (P-4): AEWA MOP5 decided to retain the post at the P-4 level. Accordingly, the job description was amended and reclassified, and the post has now been advertised with a deadline of 15 December 2012;
- d) Administrative and Fund Management Officer (P-4): Following Mr. Sergey Kurdjukov's retirement in June 2012, Mr. Bruce Noronha entered on duty the same month;
- e) Associate Programme Officer (P-2) to assist in the coordination of the Sharks MoU and Gorilla Agreement, as well as to liaise with Friends of CMS: Ms Andrea Pauly was selected and entered on duty in September 2012;
- f) Associate Scientific Officer (P-2): the incumbent, Ms. Aline Kühl, has taken Special Leave without pay for one year starting 15th October 2012. The interviews for this position have taken place and final selection of the recommended candidate is expected to occur shortly;
- g) Associate Programme Officer (P-2) for Abu Dhabi: reclassified from a G-6 post, this P2 position was advertised and the interviews are scheduled to take place in November 2012;
- h) Secretary (G-4) for the Agreement Development and Servicing Unit: Ms. Stella Reschke resigned. Interviews for this post have taken place and a suitable candidate

was found, unfortunately this person could not take up this post for health reasons. The post has been re-advertised.

Conservation Activities

4. Conservation activities have included the following:
 - a) With support from UNEP, the Small Grant Programme has been revitalized. In total, 12 projects were selected to be funded in 2012;
 - b) With support from Norway and in collaboration with the Wildlife Conservation Society, the Secretariat has initiated a community forest conservation project, aimed at reducing the threats faced by the critically endangered Cross River Gorilla, on both sides of the Nigeria-Cameroon border;
 - c) Again funded by Norway, two projects are underway to determine the migration route of the White-eared Cob in Ethiopia and to reducing the threat from (illegal) hunting on threatened waterbirds in Kostanay, Kazakhstan;
 - d) On 6th March 2012, the government of Niger established the Nature Reserve of Termit-Tin Toumma, which includes 97,000 km² of high biodiversity value land. This is one of the key objectives and outcomes of the CMS concerted action on Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna;
 - e) See Document StC40/22 for more conservation activities.

Fundraising

5. The Secretariat had raised considerable resources that enabled the implementation of most of the activities undertaken so far. Securing the means to implement the Convention and its agreements in a sustainable manner however requires continual fundraising efforts (see Documents StC40/10.4 and 13).

Implementation of CMS Instruments and other Meetings

6. To administer the Convention as well as 13 MOUs and two Agreements, the CMS Secretariat must devote much of its time and resources to organizing meetings, as requested by the Parties or Signatories. The following meetings have been undertaken since COP 10:
 - a) 6th Meeting of the IOSEA Advisory Committee Meeting, 21-22 January 2012 in Bangkok;
 - b) 6th Meeting of the Signatories to IOSEA, 23-27 January 2012 in Bangkok;
 - c) 8th Meeting of the Jastarnia Group under ASCOBANS, 31 January – 2 February in Bonn;
 - d) 2nd Meeting of the ASCOBANS North Sea Group, 19 March in Galway;
 - e) 19th Advisory Committee Meeting of ASCOBANS, 20-22 March, Galway;
 - f) 1st Meeting of the Saker Falcon Task Force, 29 March in Abu Dhabi;
 - g) 3rd Meeting of the Signatories of the MoU on the Conservation of Cetaceans and their Habitats in the Pacific Islands Region, 8 September in Noumea;
 - h) 1st Meeting of the African Eurasian Landbird Working Group, 31 August – 2 September in Accra;

- i) 1st Meeting of Signatories to the Sharks MoU, 24-28 September in Bonn.

7. At the time of writing, the following additional meetings are expected to take place over the remainder of 2012:

- a) 7th Meeting of the Parties of ASCOBANS, 22-24 October in Brighton;
- b) Workshop to refine/ review the CMS Family Manual and discuss the concept on NFP e-community , 1-2 November in Bonn;
- c) 1st meeting of the CMS Strategic Plan Working Group, 5-6 November 2012 in Bonn;
- d) 40th meeting of the CMS Standing Committee, 7-8 November 2012 in Bonn;
- e) Regional Workshop to integrate objectives and obligations of biodiversity related conventions (i.e. CMS, CITES) into new generation of NBSAPs, 26-28 November in Harare, Zimbabwe.
- f) Workshop for the development of an international Action Plan to improve transboundary conservation of the Argali Sheep (*Ovis ammon*), 2-4 December 2012 in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
- g) 1st Meeting of Signatories to the Raptors MoU, 9-11 December in Abu Dhabi;
- h) Meeting on Central Asian Flyway to discuss the legal and institutional framework for Central Asian Flyway, 12-13 December in Abu Dhabi.
- i) 2nd Meeting of Signatories to the Dugong MoU was scheduled to take place from 4-6 December in Manila. However, it has been decided to postpone this meeting and to combine it with a meeting foreseen under the new Dugong GEF project in February 2013;

8. Further details on the outcomes, or expected outcomes of these meetings, can be found in Document StC40/21.

Action requested:

The Standing Committee is requested to:

- a. take note on progress made regarding the implementation of decisions taken by COP10, and
- b. provide further guidance as applicable.

REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE UNEP/CMS SECRETARIAT SINCE COP10 13 March 2012

Introduction

To keep you abreast of the activities undertaken by the Secretariat, our intention is to brief you on a quarterly basis through concise reports. It is our wish that you will share this information with Parties in your region. Furthermore, if you wish to obtain more information on one or more of the activities mentioned in this Report, please do not hesitate to contact the Secretariat.

Follow-up after COP10

On 25 November 2011, the official closing ceremony of the 10th Conference of the Parties to CMS took place in Bergen. For many of the delegates this was the end of a very intensive week of discussions and negotiations. On our return to Bonn, the Secretariat immediately started finalising all the financial commitments linked to COP10, for example paying the last installments to the Hotels, Travel Agents, Interpreters and Report Writers just to mention a few. At the same time we began compiling the COP Proceedings and finalizing the Reports of the 17th meeting of the Scientific Council, the 38th and 39th meetings of the Standing Committee, the 1st Meeting of Signatories to the Bukhara Deer MoU and the 2nd Meeting of the Parties to the Gorilla Agreement. This included formatting, translating and proofreading the different languages versions of these documents. Several of these documents are already online and we aim to complete and print the Proceedings in the months to come. In addition to the COP/Meeting documents, work is also ongoing to translate the UNEP/Grid Arendal – CMS Publication *‘Living Planet: Connected Planet – Preventing the End of the World’s Wildlife Migrations through Ecological Networks’* into French.

Status of the implementation of COP Decisions

Directly after COP, the Secretariat collated a list of activities mentioned in the draft Report of COP10 and/or listed in the Resolutions adopted where the Secretariat is named as Actor. This turned out to be an impressive list of activities that has to be added to the ‘normal duties’ of the Secretariat. Due to our limited resources, we will have to spread the implementation of all these activities over the triennium, and many of the activities will be dependent upon securing additional funds. However a first start has been made and you will find information about these activities in this report.

In addition, the Secretariat has compiled a list of key suggestions made by Parties and others regarding changes in the organization of COP11 in late 2014. Based on feedback from Standing Committee members (due by 6 March 2012), the Secretariat will compile a short paper for consideration at the Committee’s November 2012 meeting.

Costed Work Plan (Res. 10.1)

As requested during the budget discussion at COP10, the Secretariat is making an effort to develop a costed Work Plan and to share it at a later stage with the Standing Committee. The format is ready and all Professional staff are currently inserting the activities foreseen to be implemented by their Unit in 2012. It is expected that the 2012 Work Plan will be finalized by the end of March and can then be used as the basis for the individual Work Plan that each Staff member has to draft under the UN Rules and Regulations and to be inserted in their E-Performance Plan for the period 1 April 2012 - 31 March 2013.

The role of Ecological Networks in the Conservation of Migratory Species (Res. 10.3)

Due to the generous support pledged by the government of Norway at the Donors meeting during COP10, a project has been developed to unravel the migratory routes used by the White-eared Kob in Ethiopia. The migration of up to one million White-eared Kobs yearly between western Ethiopia and southern Sudan rivals that of the great herds of the Serengeti. However little is known about their migration route. The project, developed by the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation authority (EWCA), in close cooperation with the CMS Secretariat, foresees identifying the areas used by this species during their migration as well as promoting transboundary cooperation between Ethiopia and Southern Sudan for this unique migration corridor. It is expected that first results will be published in 2013. Meanwhile a contract has been signed and the implementation of the project has started.

Setting up the Strategic Plan Working Group (Res. 10.5)

In accordance with Resolution 10.5, the assessment of the Strategic Plan 2006-2011 and the elaboration of a new one for 2015-2023 will be undertaken by an inter-sessional Working Group. The Group has been established and is electing its Chair and Vice Chair. As soon as this election has taken place, the Secretariat will consult the Chair and Vice Chair on how to proceed. It is proposed to hire Consultants who can support the Working Group in undertaking both exercises. The first physical meeting of the Working Group is scheduled to take place in Bonn, in the first week of November 2012 back-to-back with the 40th Meeting of the Standing Committee.

Capacity Building Strategy 2012-2014 (Res. 10.6)

CMS, together with AEWA, will receive a grant from the ENRTP's¹ Strategic Cooperation Agreement (SCA) between the European Commission - Directorate-General Environment and UNEP to implement part of the joint capacity building activities for the next 3 years in line with the adopted CMS capacity building plan for 2012-2014. The focus of the activities will be mainly on the African region, and more specifically, on strengthening the capacities to implement CMS and its instruments, such as AEWA. Steps have already been taken to develop a handbook and an interactive e-learning tool for both the national focal points and focal points for the CMS instruments which clearly explain their roles and responsibilities in order to strengthen the national institutions responsible for migratory species conservation management. Similarly the complementary training workshops will be delivered for the selected target groups during the next triennium.

Outreach and Communication issues (Res. 10.7)

At COP10 the Outreach and Communication Plan (OCP) was adopted through Resolution 10.7. Over the years the Secretariat has felt that not all Parties and Partner Organisations are familiar with the activities carried out by the Secretariat. Directly after COP10 we started to improve our communication e.g. through notifications. More thought is being given to targeted communication with the Parties, respective subsidiary bodies and Organisations to brief them on activities, achievements, challenges and lessons learned. This will be one of our priorities for 2012.

1) Notifications

As of December 2011 we began sending '*notifications*' to all Parties, Range States and Partner Organisations to bring matters of importance to your attention. These notifications provide information on new Signatories/Parties to MoUs/Agreements/CMS, the launch of vacancy announcements within the Secretariat and other issues of major interest. All notifications are placed on our website under <http://www.cms.int/notifications/2012>

¹ ENRTP = Thematic Programme for Environment and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources including Energy

2) *Year of the Bat*

The Year of the Bat initiative is spearheaded by the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and EUROBATS, with support from the United Nations Environment Programme. Similar to past CMS species-focused campaigns, the Year of the Bat aims to raise global awareness about bats, bat conservation and bats' unique role in our environment.

At the beginning of 2012, the species campaign '*Year of the Bat*', which was coordinated by the EUROBATS Secretariat in 2011 was handed over, as agreed, to the CMS Secretariat. The original idea was to focus on Bats in Europe in 2011 and to broaden the campaign to a worldwide focus in 2012. The reality is that, right from the start, there was worldwide interest in the campaign with positive responses from bat conservationists, organizations, government offices and passionate individuals from all corners of the globe. This provides an impetus for shaping a dynamic global outreach this year.

For the day-to-day coordination of the campaign, a part-time Consultant has been recruited to support the CMS Information and Capacity Building Unit thanks to the financial support of the German Government. Since taking over the campaign from EUROBATS, considerable amounts of information material have been reprinted to meet the demands of an interested public. In addition to existing publications, an electronic newsletter and a poster for the campaign has been designed and is currently in print. The campaign website has also been reviewed and is continuously being updated. New features to enhance YoB events on the website are currently being developed.

More information at: <http://www.yearofthebat.org/>; Year of the Bat has been active on Facebook since November 2010 under the link: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Year-of-the-Bat>

3) *World Migratory Bird Day 2012*

Since 2006 the World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) is celebrated annually during the second weekend of May. This campaign is an AEW/CMS initiative and since its beginnings mainly coordinated by the AEW Secretariat. However taking into account that from 14-18 May 2012 the 5th Meeting of the Parties to AEW will take place, the AEW Secretariat will not have the capacity to coordinate this year's campaign. It has therefore been mutually agreed that the CMS Secretariat will coordinate WMBD 2012 and has taken up this challenge as of the beginning of 2012. A short term Consultant has been recruited to support the CMS Information and Capacity Building Unit with the financial assistance of Germany. The Theme of WMBD 2012 is '*Migratory birds and people – together through time*', celebrating the historic relationship between migratory birds and humans. The relationship between birds and people has always been a special one, and the closer one looks at this valuable relationship, the greater these connections seem to become. Postcards and posters have been printed and information explaining this year's theme will be made available through the website: www.worldmigratorybirdday.org.

WMBD is also on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/worldmigratorybirdday>.

WMBD 2012 will be celebrated worldwide during the weekend of 12-13 May and will precede the opening of the AEW MOP in France.

4) Additional Outreach

Since November 2011, CMS has a Facebook page (www.facebook.com/bonnconvention) and has also revived its YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/bonnconventionvideos). Through Facebook, CMS reaches out to those partners and other interested individuals that are active on this platform with a steadily growing number of “followers”. A number of video interviews were produced at COP10 to highlight a number of topics that were of particular interest during the Conference, and additional video material was collected for future use in campaigns and other outreach activities. The COP10 videos are available on the CMS website and on the CMS YouTube channel.

5) Development of a new Family website (Future shape Res. 10.9)

Due to the generous financial support of the Government of Germany, a first start could be made with the development of a new CMS Family Website. Since November 2011, the CMS Family Website Working Group (with representatives from AEWA, ASCOBANS, CMS, EUROBATS and the Gorilla Agreement) has refined the project description, issued a call for tenders and identified a contractor for the first steps towards a new website. A new database structure will be set up, and the Working Group has been meeting regularly to prepare detailed specifications for the contractor. Without going into detail, the database structure will make CMS and other Agreements’ data more easily accessible for any enquiries through the future website, and will also enable CMS and the above-mentioned Agreements to participate in InforMEA. The development of a new Family CMS Website is one of the activities foreseen in the Future Shape process and therefore some funds have also been allocated in our Core Budget. As soon as the database structure is in place, a layout for the CMS Family website will have to be developed, the site will have to be programmed, and afterwards populated with content. Funds permitting, a start could then be made with making the new information available in the official languages of the Convention or its Agreements.

Central-Asian Flyway (Res. 10.16)

In close cooperation with the AEWA Secretariat and the CMS Project Office-Abu Dhabi, we have begun to organize a Central-Asian Flyway (CAF) Range States meeting to discuss a legal and institutional framework for CAF. This meeting will take place from 12-13 December 2012 in Abu Dhabi and will be organized back-to-back with the 1st Meeting of Signatories of the Raptors MoU (9-11 December) thanks to the support of Switzerland and Germany.

Saker Falcon (Res. 28)

The Interim Coordinating Unit (ICU) of the Raptors MoU has taken forward preparations to establish a specific Saker Falcon Task Force (STF) to bring together Range States, Partners and interested parties, to develop a coordinated Global Action Plan, including a management and monitoring system, to conserve the Saker Falcon. Terms of Reference have been drafted for adoption at the 1st meeting of the STF which will take place on 29 March 2012 in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. These Terms of Reference have been circulated to all key Saker Falcon Range States, Partners and other interested parties, along with a request for Expressions of Interest from representatives who wish to be considered to serve on the STF.

HRMS Issues (Res. 10.29)

As of 7 January 2012, the Executive Secretary, Elizabeth Mrema, left Bonn to take up her new assignment as Deputy Director of the Division on Environmental Policy Implementation at UNEP Headquarters in Nairobi. To ensure continuity it has been agreed that she will stay involved in the work of CMS as Acting Executive Secretary and that for the day-to-day management, the Deputy Executive Secretary Bert Lenten would take up the role of Officer in Charge besides his normal duties. Meanwhile,

in accordance with Resolution 10.29, UNEP has launched the recruitment process for the post of Executive Secretary of CMS (D-1) in Inspira. The deadline for applications is 23 April 2012.

Sergey Kurdjukov, the Administrative and Fund Management Officer (P-4), will retire at the end of June 2012. The recruitment process for this post is in its final stages and it is expected that the new AFMO will probably enter on duty on 1 May 2012, in time for a proper handover between the two Officers.

The post of Associate Programme Officer (P-2), dealing with the coordination of the Sharks MoU and the Gorilla Agreement and the post of Coordinator for the CMS Project Office in Abu Dhabi (P-5) are currently still being processed by UNON/UNEP in Nairobi and are expected to be advertised in due course. The post of Executive Secretary of AEWA will be advertised soon and it is expected that the interviews will take place after AEWA MOP5 (14-18 May) as the Parties have to first agree on the classification of the post.

MoU Activities:

1st Meeting of the Sharks MoU

The Secretariat will convene the First Meeting of Signatories to the Sharks MOU in the week beginning 24 September 2012. We have liaised with several potential Host Countries, but none were able to take on the responsibility in the required time frame. The meeting will therefore take place in Bonn, Germany from 24 - 28 September 2012. A notification announcing date and venue of the meeting was sent to the Parties and stakeholders on 8 March 2012; official invitations will follow in due course. The Secretariat has received a grant from the ENTRP's Strategic Cooperation Agreement (SCA) between the European Commission - Directorate-General Environment and UNEP for the implementation of the Sharks MOU, under the same window as has been provided for the implementation of the Capacity Building Strategy. Together with the generous support received from the USA during the Donors meeting at COP10, funds are in place to move on with the preparations for the meeting. Meanwhile a "Friends of the Chair" Drafting Committee has been established to advance the draft Conservation and Management Plan for Migratory Sharks prior to the meeting.

6th Meeting of IOSEA Marine Turtles MoU

The Sixth Meeting of the Signatory States to the IOSEA Marine Turtles MoU was held in Bangkok, Thailand, from 23-27 January 2012, preceded by a two-day session of the IOSEA Advisory Committee. The organisation of the meeting was supported by generous contributions from the Governments of France and the United States.

Twenty-three Signatory States were officially represented at MOS6, along with a nearly full contingent of Advisory Committee members, as well as invited experts and observers from various intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations. The meeting was to have been held in early December 2011, but the severe flooding in and around Bangkok in the latter part of 2011 forced its postponement.

The four days of wide-ranging discussions generated the most interesting ideas about the future direction of marine turtle conservation of any IOSEA Signatory State Meeting to date. After taking advantage of an opportunity to discuss issues in sub-regional groups, the meeting agreed that the following issues were the highest priorities for IOSEA to address in the immediate future: (1) illegal direct take of marine turtles; (2) identification of index beaches associated with genetic stocks; (3) capacity-building in support of Signatory State efforts; (4) investigation of indirect take in legal fisheries; and (5) socio-economic considerations of relevance to marine turtle conservation. Furthermore, the Signatories agreed an indicative scale of contributions to ensure sustainable funding.

Dugong and Raptors MoUs

The Environment Agency Abu Dhabi, on behalf of the Government of the United Arab Emirates, signed a three-year extension to the donor agreement for the UNEP/CMS Office - Abu Dhabi in December 2011. This secures funding for the period 2012-2014 towards maintaining and staffing the office, as well as providing secretariat and some project support for implementation of the Raptors and Dugongs MoUs.

The Raptors MoU has welcomed 2 new signatories since COP10: one Cooperating Partner signed at the International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey during the International Festival of Falconry, held in Al Ain, UAE on 11 December 2011 and Sri Lanka was welcomed as a new signatory to the Dugong MoU in January 2012.

The Interim Coordinating Unit has identified a number of existing projects and initiatives that may offer real synergies with the goals of the Raptors MoU. For example, the GEF-funded Migratory Soaring Birds Project led by BirdLife International, the EURAPMON initiative (Research and Monitoring for and within Raptors in Europe), the recently established Vulture Specialist Group under the auspices of the IUCN Species Survival Commission and the CMS Working Group to Minimize the Risk of Poisoning to Migratory Birds, established following Resolution 10.26. Plans are being developed for collaborative activities with all these projects.

On 26 February, the Dugong MoU held an event called *SOS: Save our Sirenians – Dugongs and West African Manatees* to launch the new *Dugongs, Seagrass and Coastal Communities Initiative* attended by local business, academic and conservation community as well as visiting guests who were in Abu Dhabi to attend the IUCN-SSC Chair's Meeting. The event featured presentations from experts including Professor Helene Marsh, and a screening of two short films.

The Dugong MoU Secretariat was also involved in the revision of the Dugong Action Plan (2013-2017) of the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) in Nadi, Fiji in March 2012. Pilot projects to trial incentive tools for dugong and seagrass conservation in Mozambique and Papua New Guinea also continue to be developed. A regional GEF Dugong and Seagrass Conservation proposal involving 7 countries (Indonesia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mozambique, Sri Lanka, Timor Leste and Vanuatu) is currently being progressed.

The 1st Meeting of Signatories (MoS1) to the Raptors MoU has been announced to take place on 9-11 December 2012 in Abu Dhabi. The 2nd Signatory State Meeting of the Dugong MoU will be held in Manila, Philippines on 4 - 6 December 2012.

Other Activities:

Fundraising activities

At COP10 and especially since then, the Secretariat has reaped the benefits of its considerable and in some case long-standing fundraising efforts. For instance, ENTRP's Strategic Cooperation Agreement (SCA) between the European Commission - Directorate-General Environment and UNEP recently confirmed support to 2 out of the 3 projects that were submitted.

The Secretariat has also started implementing the projects funded by pledges received at the donors meeting which took place in the margins of COP10. Beside contributions to the Small Grants Programme and the Sharks MoU, significant funding from Norway is being used for projects that aim at improving the conservation status of species at critical sites - the Lesser White-fronted goose in Azerbaijan, Cross River gorillas in central Africa and the White-eared Kobs in Ethiopia and South Sudan.

In the wake of these achievements and encouraging response from CMS stakeholders, the Secretariat is now stepping up its efforts to mobilize resources by developing a more coherent and harmonized strategy across the Family aiming at developing a portfolio of projects on the basis of the most pressing needs taking into account the recommendations of the Future shape process. Some examples of activities supported with funds raised so far are mentioned above including the development of a new website. In addition, for instance, resources have been secured for the development of a web-based communication space and working area for the CMS Family's institutional bodies.

The Secretariat is also trying to diversify its contributors by exploring financial sources beyond the traditional donors. These include non-member states e.g. USA and relevant Foundations. For instance, we are awaiting a response about a proposal on the development of the analytical tool linked to the on-line reporting system of the CMS Family submitted to a US-based Foundation.

Small Grants Programme (SGP)

The Secretariat will shortly announce the launch of the newly revitalized Small Grants Programme 2012-2014 for which Finland provided funds and UNEP pledged a significant amount at the COP10 Donors meeting in Bergen. The first call for applications for 2012 will go out shortly. The maximum contribution per project through the SGP will be Euro 15,000; this means that a minimum of 5 projects could receive support. You are encouraged to be on the lookout for the Notification on this in due course.

Sahelo-Saharan Antelopes

On the 6 March 2012, the Government of Niger established the Nature Reserve of Termit-Tin Toumma which includes 97,000 square km of high biodiversity value. This was one of the key objectives of the CMS Concerted Action on Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna.

CMS Family meetings scheduled for 2012

- IOSEA Advisory Committee Meeting (21-22 January, Bangkok, Thailand)
- 6th Meeting of Signatory States to IOSEA (23-27 January, Bangkok, Thailand)
- ASCOBANS 8th Meeting of the Jastarnia Group (31 January – 2 February, Bonn, Germany)
- “Save our Sirenians” – Dugongs and Western African Manatees Event (26 February, Abu Dhabi, UAE)
- 2nd Meeting of the ASCOBANS North Sea Group (19 March, Galway, Ireland)
- ASCOBANS 19th Advisory Committee Meeting (20-22 March, Galway, Ireland)
- ECS/ ASCOBANS/ ACCOBAMS Workshop on the EU Habitats Directive (24 March , Galway, Ireland)
- EUROBATS 7th Standing Committee Meeting (28 March, Paris, France)
- 1st Saker Falcon Task Force Meeting (29 March, Abu Dhabi, UAE)
- ACAP 4th Meeting of Parties (23-27 April, Lima, Peru)
- African Regional Preparatory Workshop for AEWa MOP5 (12-13 May, La Rochelle, France)
- AEWa 5th Meeting of Parties (15-17 May, La Rochelle, France)
- EUROBATS 17th Advisory Committee Meeting (15-17 May, Dublin, Ireland)
- 1st Meeting of Signatory States to CMS Sharks MoU (24-28 September, Bonn, Germany)
- ASCOBANS 7th Meeting of Parties (22-24 October, Brighton, UK)
- CMS Strategic Plan Working Group Meeting (5 November, Bonn, Germany)
- CMS 40th Standing Committee Meeting (6-7 November, Bonn, Germany)
- 2nd Meeting of Signatory States to the Dugong MoU (4-6 December, Manila, Philippines)
- 1st Meeting of Signatory States to the CMS Raptors MoU (9-11 December, Abu Dhabi, UAE)
- Central Asian Flyway (CAF) Workshop (12-13 December, Abu Dhabi, UAE)

REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CMS SECRETARIAT
1 MARCH - 31 AUGUST 2012
(Report No. 2)

Introduction

To keep the Standing Committee abreast of the activities undertaken by the Secretariat, our intention is to provide regular brief reports. This is the second such report since COP10. The Committee is invited to share this information with the Parties in their region. The Secretariat can provide more information on any of the activities mentioned in this Report, if required.

News from the Secretariat

HRMS Issues:

After 10 years as dispatch clerk at CMS, Nalanda Wijeratne retired from UN Service on 1st April 2012. For the time being, the CMS Management has decided not to fill this vacancy, as e-mail has reduced the need for a staff member to deal with outgoing post. As an experiment, Nalin's tasks have been divided among his colleagues. To make this feasible, it has been decided to use the funds available to temporarily extend three part-time GS posts from 50 to 80 per cent. It is planned to evaluate this experiment in early 2013.

On 1st July our Administration and Fund Management Officer, Sergey Kurdjukov retired. Meanwhile, Bruce Noronha, a Kenyan national, was recruited and entered on duty at the beginning of June. Bruce has worked at UNEP HQ in Nairobi for the past sixteen years performing a wide range of functions mostly relating to programme coordination and administration. He also advised UNEP management on the services provided by the United Nations Office in Nairobi, particularly relating to Information and Communication Technology. More recently, Bruce worked with UNEP's Division of Environmental Law and Conventions, where he was responsible for supporting the development, implementation and reporting on the Division's programme and budget. As a result, he is familiar with the major activities of the MEAs and their administrative relationship to UNEP.

Besides retirement, other Staff also look for new challenges for career development. Being a small Secretariat, CMS unfortunately cannot offer much career advancement to its highly qualified young personnel in administrative positions. Ms. Stella Reschke, who has worked as a secretary with the agreements unit for nearly three years wanted to utilize her Master's degree in international relations. Stella recently decided to take up a new assignment with the German International Cooperation agency, Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), in Burundi and so will leave the Secretariat in mid-September.

In mid-October 2012 Ms. Aline Kühl (Associate Scientific Officer) will also leave the Secretariat. Aline decided to make use of the UN's Special Leave Without Pay scheme, which allows Staff members to stop work for up to one year, for instance, to follow a course of study to increase their knowledge. Aline will move to Tunisia to study wildlife in the Mediterranean region and to improve her knowledge of French and Arabic.

Both vacancies are at an advanced stage of recruitment.

Other vacancies and new positions are also being filled.

- In mid-July the interviews took place for the recruitment of the Associate Programme Officer (P-2) to assist in the coordination of the Sharks MoU and the Gorilla Agreement, funded by Germany.
- The interviews for the post of Executive Coordinator (P-5) for the UNEP/CMS Project Office in Abu Dhabi took place in August.
- The recruitment process for the new Associate Programme Officer (P-2) for the UNEP/CMS Project Office Abu Dhabi started in August;
- The vacancy announcement for the post of Executive Secretary AEWA (P-4) is expected to be advertised soon by UNON.
- The recruitment of the CMS Executive Secretary is in its final stages. In mid-August the first round of interviews took place and the face-to-face interviews were held end of August for six short-listed candidates. In accordance with Resolution 10.29, the Standing Committee is involved in the recruitment process.

Status of the implementation of COP decisions

The Secretariat is doing its utmost to implement activities arising from COP10, but this list is long and the Secretariat has only limited resources available, necessitating a process of prioritization. While discussing the Programme of Work, the Secretariat felt that the criteria for determining the appropriate priority to attach to tasks were not clear. Therefore a two-day retreat was organized in May 2012 with an external facilitator to discuss in depth how to make best use of the limited resources available to achieve the greatest impact. This retreat was attended by all CMS Professionals including the Acting Executive Secretary.

Costed Work Plan (Res. 10.1)

The process of developing the costed programme of work started earlier this year, and now all Units have filled out their sections. One of the most difficult aspects of this is assessing accurately the number of days needed to implement any given activity. Meanwhile the tables of the draft costed Work Plan have been populated and the next step is to use the criteria that have been developed during the retreat and to set priorities.

The Role of Ecological Networks in the Conservation of Migratory Species (Res. 10.3)

Due to the generous support pledged by the government of Norway at the Donors meeting during COP10 it has been possible to develop a project to discover the migration routes used by the White-eared Kob (*Kobus kob leucotis*) in Ethiopia. The migration of up to one million White-eared Kobs yearly between western Ethiopia and southern Sudan rivals that of the great herds of the Serengeti. However little is known about their migration route. The project developed by Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority in close cooperation with the CMS Secretariat foresees the identification of the areas used by this species during its migration. It is expected that the first results could be published in 2013. Meanwhile a contract has been signed and the implementation of the project has started.

Development of the new Strategic Plan (Res. 10.5)

To steer the development of the new CMS Strategic Plan 2015-2023 the inter-sessional Working Group has been established with Ms. Ines Verleye (Belgium) and Ms. Wendy Jackson (New Zealand) as Chair and Vice-Chair respectively. The members of the Group are as follows:

Africa	Ms Nopasika Malta Qwathekana, South Africa Dr. Samuel Kasiki, Kenya
Asia	Mr. Mohammad Sulayem, Saudi Arabia Mr. Sadegh Sadeghi Zadegan, Iran.
Europe	Ms. Ines Verleye (CHAIR), Belgium Mr. Martiros Nalbandyan, Armenia
South & Ctrl Am. & Caribbean	Mr. Roman Baigún, Argentina Mr. Eduardo Espinoza, Ecuador
Oceania	Dr Wendy Jackson (VICE CHAIR), New Zealand [Alternate] Ms Fiona Bartlett, Australia
North America	Vacant (no Parties in the region)
Standing Committee Chair	Mr. Alfred Oteng Yeboah
Scientific Council Chair	Dr. Fernando Spina

The Group developed the Terms of Reference for an external consultant to support the Working Group, and after seeking tenders, and reviewing the offers, awarded the contract to Dave Pritchard.

Dave Pritchard has commenced consultation with stakeholders, and will report back to the Working Group at its first meeting in November immediately before the CMS Standing Committee's 40th meeting where progress of the Group is to be reported.

Capacity Building Strategy 2012-2014 (Res. 10.6)

CMS together with AEWA received substantial financial support to implement a project on joint capacity building activities for the next three years. The funds come through the ENRTP Strategic Cooperation Agreement (SCA) between European Commission - DG Environment and UNEP

In line with our Capacity Building Plans, the focus of the new Project will be to strengthen the capacity of the focal points of CMS AEWA, and other CMS instruments particularly in Africa. Steps have already been taken to develop the CMS Family Manual and an interactive e-learning tool. The manual will clearly explain the roles and responsibilities of the CMS Family focal points in order to strengthen the national institutions responsible for managing migratory species conservation. Supplementary training workshops will be organized in Africa in 2013 and 2014 and, similar events might be held in the other regions, such as Asia and Latin America if resources permit.

Outreach and Communication issues (Res. 10.7)

Improving outreach and communication is one of the Secretariats priorities for 2012. More and more use is made of social media. Please have a look at YouTube or our Facebook page. "Quick links" to these can be found at the front page of the CMS website (www.cms.int)

1) Year of the Bat

The Year of the Bat campaign is attracting worldwide interest. In 2012, more than 90,000 items of outreach material were distributed and more than 100 events were registered on the campaign's website www.yearofthebat.org. In addition to existing information a new poster "save bats to save the planet" has been published to highlight the link between bats and ecosystem services. An additional change this year is the campaign newsletter. Every edition has highlighted a different region of the world – first the Americas, then Asia/Pacific, followed by Africa and finally Europe. Funds for 2012 were kindly contributed by Germany but have been exhausted meaning that fundraising is of highest importance now. All this work would not be possible without having a dedicated consultant to take care of the day-to-day coordination.

2) World Migratory Bird Day 2012

WMBD 2012 celebrated the connections between migratory birds and people and took place on 12-13 May 2012. Since the campaign's inception in 2006, the total number of registered WMBD events has almost reached 1,000 and activities have taken place in 118 different countries and territories. This year's celebration saw more than 250 events in 81 countries on six continents, making it the most successful campaign in WMBD's history.

The events of WMBD 2012 included various indoor activities, such as photo exhibitions, education seminars and conservation talks on birds and discussions on migratory birds in addition to outdoor activities such as bird watching, tree planting, field excursions, and even a football tournament. For more information please visit the website (<http://www.worldmigratorybirdday.org/2012/>).

3) Online Workspaces

Triggered by the request of the CMS Scientific Council, the development of a new communication tool has been started. Following the example of the AEWA Technical Committee (TC) online workspace, CMS, EUROBATS and ASCOBANS have decided to provide their Scientific Council (ScC)/Advisory Committees (AC) with the same tool. The online workspace serves as a communication platform for exchange of information, drafting documents, collecting helpful resources and archiving the work of the committee between meetings. It has proven to be an extremely valuable tool to the AEWA TC in the past four years. With the support of an external consultant, the updated AEWA TC workspace and the new CMS ScC, EUROBATS AC and ASCOBANS AC workspaces are expected to be operational in September this year. This project has been made possible due to a generous contribution from the Swiss Government.

Development of a new Family website (Res. 10.9)

By contracting a software company the next step has been set in the development of the new CMS Family website. This consists of developing a structure that will allow us to store e.g. all Resolutions in a single database. By doing so, queries can be made to find all Resolutions that deal with e.g. climate change. It will also allow CMS and those agreements that are part of the new website to fully participate in InforMEA. This all has become possible due to generous financial support of the government of Germany. Additional funding will be required for the next steps including the design of a completely new CMS Family website which was foreseen under the Future Shape process.

Central-Asian Flyway (Res. 10.16)

The organization of the Central Asian Flyway (CAF) Range States meeting is well under way. In close cooperation with the CMS Project Office in Abu Dhabi the dates for this meeting have been set for 12-13 December 2012. This meeting will be held back to back with the 1st Meeting of the Signatories States to the Raptors MoU and will take place in Abu Dhabi. Invitations for both meetings have been sent out to all Parties and Partner Organizations involved in CAF

Other Activities

1st Meeting of the Sharks MoU

Under the same funding scheme used for the implementation of the Capacity Building Strategy, the EU, along with the USA is supporting the 1st Meeting of the Signatories of the Sharks MoU. The meeting will take place from 24 to 27 September 2012 in Bonn, Germany and will adopt a Conservation Plan for Sharks, establish an Advisory Committee and discuss Secretariat arrangements. All logistical and substantive preparations are progressing well.

3rd Meeting of the Pacific Cetaceans MoU

Taking advantage of the presence of many PIC Signatories at the SPREP annual meeting in Noumea, New Caledonia, in September, the Secretariat will convene the 3rd Meeting of Signatories on 8 September. We agreed with SPREP that it would provide a very cost effective opportunity to adopt the new Whale and Dolphin Action Plan, advance the work of the Technical Advisory Group and to discuss the implementation of CMS COP 10 resolutions in the region.

Fundraising activities

Since COP10 we have stepped up our fundraising activities and succeeded in obtaining funds for most of the activities mentioned in the report. Besides the usual donor countries, new possible donors have also been identified and approached. In particular, efforts are under way within the USA. Hopefully these efforts will lead to additional support for the implementation of CMS.

Small Grants Programme

At the Donors' meeting, which took place during COP10, UNEP pledged a total of US\$300,000 in support of the Small Grants Programme (SGP) 2012-2014. With this grant the SGF could be revitalized and in the days to come the results of the first call for applications for 2012 will be issued. In total 75 project proposals were received and reviewed by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Scientific Council and Staff members of the CMS Family. In total 13 projects have been selected and the Secretariat will contact all those that submitted a project proposal about the final outcome. Many good projects were received but funds are insufficient to provide financial support to all of them.

Visit of the MEA Focal Points

In June the Regional UNEP Biodiversity MEA Focal Points visited the Secretariats of CMS, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. Intensive briefing sessions over 1½ days at CMS left the focal points with a deeper understanding of the work of the CMS Secretariat - as well as of those of its daughter

Agreements - its priority areas and activities, and its niche in the biodiversity MEA world working to address the unique challenges faced by migratory species.

UNEP hosts a biodiversity MEA Focal Point in five UNEP regional offices - Africa, Latin America & the Caribbean, West Asia, Asia & the Pacific, and Europe. The Focal Points' role is to provide technical and advisory support directly to MEA secretariats, as well as to enhance countries' capacities to implement biodiversity-related agreements, such as CMS, CITES and CBD. They work at the regional and national level with countries by providing technical and advisory services, information exchange and capacity building for synergistic implementation of MEAs.

CMS Family meetings scheduled for the remainder of 2012

- 11th Meeting of the AEWA Technical Committee (27 -30 August, Accra, Ghana);
- 1st Meeting of the Landbird Working Group (31 August- 2 September, Accra, Ghana);
- 2nd Meeting of Signatories to the MoU on the Conservation of Cetaceans and their Habitats in the Pacific Islands Region (8th September, Noumea, New Caledonia);
- 1st Meeting of Signatories to the MoU on the Conservation of Migratory Sharks (24-27 September, Bonn, Germany)
- 7th Meeting of Parties to ASCOBANS (22-24 October, Brighton, UK);
- CMS Family Manual Workshop (1-2 November, Bonn, Germany);
- CMS Strategic Plan Working Group meeting (5-6 November, Bonn, Germany)
- 40th Meeting of the CMS Standing Committee (7-8 November, Bonn, Germany)
- 2nd Meeting of Signatories to the Dugong MoU (4-5 December, Manila, Philippines)
- 1st Meeting of Signatories to the Raptors MoU (9-11 December, Abu Dhabi, UAE)
- Central Asian Flyway (CAF) Range State Meeting (12-13 December, Abu Dhabi, UAE)