

4th Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the CMS Scientific Council (ScC-SC4)

Bonn, Germany, 12-15 November 2019

UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC4/Doc.3.2

PROPOSAL FOR ADDITIONAL COP-APPOINTED COUNCILLORS

(Prepared by the COP-appointed Councillor for Aquatic Mammals)

Summary:

This document outlines some issues regarding the workload involved in managing a number of intersessional Working Groups simultaneously. It includes an offer of support to the Scientific Council proposed by three Partner NGOs; OceanCare, WDC and Wild Migration.

PROPOSAL FOR ADDITIONAL COP-APPOINTED COUNCILLORS

1. The intersessional Working Group that reviewed the areas of expertise of COP-appointed Councillors for the period COP13–COP15 (UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC4/Doc.3.1) has assessed the subject areas currently in effect within the Scientific Council, with the intent of decide which COP-appointed roles should be filled in the next two trienniums. This assessment has been based on the focus of Resolutions and species listed on the Appendices, as a metric for where CMS scientific attention is currently focused.
2. The Third Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council (Bonn, 29 May – 1 June 2018) discussed amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the CMS Scientific Council and its Sessional Committee. While these discussions sought to provide clarity and streamline Sessional Committee processes, an unintended consequence was to restrict the chairing of Working Groups to Party- or COP-appointed Councillors.
3. This has resulted in the Appointed Councillor for Aquatic Mammals chairing three very active Working Groups in addition to normal duties:
 - the Aquatic Mammals Working Group itself,
 - two intersessional Working Groups, which are thematic and cross-cutting, each with COP-approved work programmes;
 - Aquatic Wild Meat;
 - Animal Culture and Social Complexity.
4. Each of the three Working Groups draws in considerable time and expertise from expert members beyond the Scientific Council. The Aquatic Mammals Working Group has 74 members, the Aquatic Wildmeat Working Group has 33 members, and the Animal Culture Working Group has 70 external expert members across all CMS taxa.
5. In preparation for this 4th Meeting of the Sessional Committee and for COP13, these groups have developed the following documents:
 - The Aquatic Mammals Working Group has delivered:
 - Important Marine Mammal Areas (COP13./Doc 26.2.1)
 - Update on issues affecting Red Sea Cetaceans (COP13/Doc 26.2.10/Annex 1)
 - Arabian Sea Humpback Whale Concerted Action report (COP13/Doc.28.1.4).
 - The Aquatic Wildmeat Working Group has delivered:
 - Aquatic Wild Meat Working Group progress report (COP13/Doc 26.2.4, ScC-SC4/Doc.10.2.4);
 - Harvest of CMS Appendix I-Listed Sharks and Rays as Aquatic Wild Meat (ScC-SC4/Doc.10.2.4/Annex 1);
 - Determining the Extent of Interplay Between Bycatch and Aquatic Wild Meat Harvests (ScC-SC4/Doc.10.2.4/Annex 2);
 - Aquatic Wildmeat in the Coastal Regions of Benin and Togo: A Study of Consumption and Drivers (COP13/Inf.6).
 - The Animal Culture Working Group has delivered:
 - Animal Culture Working Group progress report (COP13/Doc.26.4.1)
 - Eastern Tropical Pacific Sperm Whale Concerted Action report (COP13/Doc.28.1.2).
6. Given this workload and following an offer from three CMS-Partner NGOs active in these Working Groups (OceanCare, WDC, and Wild Migration), I would like to put forward their proposal, elaborated in Annex 1, to this meeting for its consideration. The proposal is that the Conference of the Parties appoint the Vice-Chairs of the Aquatic Wild Meat Working Group and the Animal Culture Working Group as either Working Group Chairs or as Appointed-Councillors for a trial period between COP13 and COP14.

7. The three Partner NGOs would cover any expenses incurred by these two temporary and additional roles, to ensure this additional capacity does not draw on the existing CMS budget. This would be time-limited trial, open to full Party assessment, with the possibility to extend the arrangement to COP15, if so desired, before the regular review of COP-appointed Councillor subject areas for COP15.

Recommended Actions

8. The Sessional Committee is recommended to:
 - a) consider the offer of support submitted by Partner NGOs – OceanCare, WDC, and Wild Migration, *Proposal for additional capacity to support the Aquatic Wildmeat and Animal Culture work of the Scientific Council between COP13—COP14* (annexed to this document); and
 - b) develop a recommendation for CMS Parties to consider at CMS COP13.



Proposal for additional capacity to support the Aquatic Wildmeat and Animal Culture work of the Scientific Council between CoP13—CoP14

September 18, 2019

Background

The work of the Scientific Council, and more recently its Sessional Committee, has long underpinned the progress of the Convention and CMS has enjoyed great generosity from its CoP-Appointed Councillors, who are often drawn from outside of the public service, bringing a wealth of expertise to the work of the Convention.

In practice, the CoP-Appointed Councillors volunteer their time and energy to CMS work, only financially compensated for their travel to CMS CoP and Scientific Council meetings. They routinely undertake considerable work between meetings, often facilitating processes and the implementation of action plans, as well as drafting or overseeing the development of documents for both the Scientific Council and Conference of the Parties.

The intersessional process to analyse, review and recommend CoP-Appointed Councillor subject areas for the period CoP13—CoP15 [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC4/Doc.3.1] has recently considered the subject areas currently in effect within the Scientific Council, with the intent of deciding which CoP-Appointed roles should be filled in the next two trienniums. This assessment has been based on the focus of Resolutions and species listed on the Appendices, as a metric for where CMS scientific attention is currently focused.

Understandably, the review process has not been able to analyse the volume of Scientific Council Working Group or Task Force output, nor the implementation of work directed through Resolution-endorsed action plans and work programmes, the development and reporting on Concerted Actions, or the drafting of advisory documents. As such, it has not assessed how active each CoP-Appointed Councillor is, nor the levels of activity within the Scientific Council itself.

The 3rd Scientific Council Sessional Committee (ScC SC3) discussed *Amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the CMS Scientific Council and its Sessional Committee*. While these discussions sought to streamline Sessional Committee processes, an unintended consequence was to restrict the Chairmanship of Working Groups to a small pool of Party- or CoP-Appointed Councillors. This resulted in two active intersessional, thematic Working Groups—each with CoP-approved work programmes—being left to the Chairmanship of the *Appointed Councillor for Aquatic Mammals*, over and above the work already required to Chair the *Aquatic Mammals Working Group* and fulfil the function of a CoP-Appointed Councillor.

Current situation for the COP-Appointed Councillor for Aquatic Mammals

The *Appointed Councillor for Aquatic Mammals* now chairs three very active intersessional working groups. These are *Aquatic Mammals*, and the two newer thematic Working Groups—*Aquatic Wildmeat* and *Animal Culture*.

Each Working Group draws in considerable time and knowledge from expert members beyond the Scientific Council.

- The *Aquatic Mammals Working Group* has 74 members. More than three-quarters are external experts.
- The *Aquatic Wildmeat Working Group* is a thematic Working Group with 33 members. 29 are external expert, across aquatic mammals, marine fish, aquatic reptiles, seabirds, and terrestrial wildmeat.
- The *Animal Culture Working Group* is a thematic Working Group with 70 external expert members across all CMS taxa.

Each Working Group operates in direct response to a work programme articulated and adopted by a CoP.

- The *Aquatic Mammals Working Group* responds to the programme of work articulated in Resolution 10.15 (Rev. CoP12): [Global Programme of Work for Cetaceans](#).
- The *Aquatic Wildmeat Working Group* responds to the programme of work articulated in Resolution 12.15: [Aquatic Wild Meat](#).
- The *Animal Culture Working Group* responds to the programme of work articulated in Resolution 11.23 (Rev. CoP12): [Conservation Implications of Animal Culture and Social Complexity](#).

Proposal

While Resolution 12.4: *Scientific Council* limits membership and attendance at Sessional Committee meetings to nine CoP-Appointed Councillors, it does not rule out the appointment of more than nine CoP-Appointed Councillors.

The *Aquatic Wildmeat* and *Animal Culture Working Groups* currently benefit from the Scientific Council Chair endorsement of two active Vice-Chairs that support the *Appointed Councillor for Aquatic Mammals* to deliver the work as directed by the CoP. These are Philippa Brakes for *Animal Culture* and Margi Prideaux for *Aquatic Wildmeat*.

As an interim measure, we propose that the existing Vice-Chairs are either appointed as Working Group Chairs or Appointed Councillors for a trial period between CoP13 and CoP14. Each of the Vice-Chairs already has a clear programme of work to follow, are familiar with their Working Groups members, and with CMS processes. Their addition would complement the proposed CoP-Appointed Councillor subject areas proposed at paragraph 35 for the period CoP13–CoP15, providing additional capacity to one particularly active area of the Scientific Council, but without altering the process and recommendations of the Intersessional Working Group that reviewed of the areas of expertise of COP-Appointed Councillors for the period CoP13–CoP15.

This proposal is for a time-limited period to allow Party assessment of the arrangement, with the possibility for the Parties to extend the arrangement to CoP15, if so desired, before the regular review of CoP-Appointed Councillor subject areas is conducted for CoP15.

To facilitate this trial, OceanCare, WDC, and Wild Migration propose to cover expenses for the participation of the two new Working Group Chairs or Appointed Councillors for the period of this trial.