



Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

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REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN Prepared by Dr. Peter Bridgewater (Australia)

As retiring Chairman of the Standing Committee, I would like to express my regret at not being able to present at this fulcrum Conference of the Parties. My Government has asked, however, that I attend to some specific Australian duties during the time of the Conference.

We have accomplished much since the last Conference of Parties, with slow but steady growth in the number of contracting parties, and developments on a number of fronts, including the completion of a number of Agreements, especially the African-European Waterbird Agreement. Thanks there are due to the diligence and support of the Netherlands Government, and the support of my colleague from the Netherlands on the Standing Committee. Congratulations are due also regarding the completion of the Agreement on cetaceans of the Mediterranean and Black Seas, and the leading role played by the Government of Monaco in bringing it to fruition.

We have also made good progress in dealing with non-European species, especially Turtles, small cetaceans and other migratory birds. But there is still along way to go to achieve the objectives of the Convention. The support of the Scientific Council will be needed to help us advance our aims, and we will need to expand our presence in the Americas and Asia.

The conclusion of Memoranda of Understanding with sister Conventions will help us consolidate our position, and the Standing Committee has been supportive of the efforts of the Secretariat to achieve these aims. During the triennium I am obliged to report that the support promised from UNEP at our last Conference was slow in coming, and less fulsome than expected. While all organisations have problems, our Convention deserves better from its "host", and I look forward to a better performance in the next triennium.

We do though, now have our Secretariat in satisfactory accommodation, capable of taking an expansion in staff. We also have a scheme in place which will co-locate Agreement Secretariats with the Convention secretariat over time. This will provide valuable synergy and support for badly stretched Secretariat. We need to keep the Convention review under scrutiny, to ensure our aims are on track, and on target.

Finally, I should also like to acknowledge the excellent support and contribution from members of the Standing Committee during the last triennium. Especially, I would like to acknowledge the contribution of the German government in providing space, hospitality and interpretation for the Standing committee meetings. All members of the Committee appreciated this generosity, which made our Committee work even more effectively than ever. And, last but not least, the hard-working Secretariat, whose numbers were augmented but slightly during this period. I look forward to hearing of the future development of the Convention into the next century!