



**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
ON THE CONSERVATION AND  
MANAGEMENT OF MARINE TURTLES  
AND THEIR HABITATS OF THE INDIAN  
OCEAN AND SOUTH-EAST ASIA**

CMS/IOSEA/MOS8/Doc.10.4  
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8<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE SIGNATORY STATES

Da Nang, Viet Nam, 21-25 October 2019

Agenda Item 10.4

**OUTCOMES OF CMS COP12  
AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATION**

*(Prepared by the Secretariat)*

Action Requested:

- Take note of the report.
- Consider options for collaboration.
- Provide guidance to the Secretariat and Advisory Committee.

## OUTCOMES OF CMS COP12 AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATION

1. The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) brings together the States through which migratory animals pass, the Range States, and lays the legal foundation for internationally coordinated conservation measures throughout a migratory range. CMS currently has 129 Parties.
2. The IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU was negotiated in the framework of CMS, and since its establishment the Secretariat has been provided by the CMS Secretariat. With the move of the offices of the IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU to the CMS headquarters in Bonn, Germany, in 2017, options for synergies between the MOU and the mother Convention have increased further.
3. The 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS COP12) was held in Manila, at the kind invitation of the Government of the Philippines, from 23 to 28 October 2017. The most directly relevant outcomes of COP12 cover the following topics:
  - a) [Resolution 12.07 The Role of Ecological Networks in the Conservation of Migratory Species & Resolution 12.26 Improving Ways of Addressing Connectivity in the Conservation of Migratory Species](#)  
In the preamble of Resolution 12.07, CMS Parties expressed satisfaction with the formal establishment and launch of the Network of Sites of Importance for Marine Turtles within the framework of the CMS IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU, and its particular emphasis on the development of robust criteria intended to lend credibility to the site selection process. Both Resolutions contain many recommendations for countries on making use of ecological network concepts and ensuring connectivity in their efforts to conserve migratory species.
  - b) [Resolution 12.14 Adverse Impacts of Anthropogenic Noise on Cetaceans and Other Migratory Species & Decisions 12.42-12.43](#)  
The Resolution endorses the Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessments for Marine Noise-generating Activities, intended for use by the entire CMS Family. The Guidelines are designed to provide regulators with tailored advice presenting Best Available Techniques (BAT) and Best Environmental Practice (BEP) to apply in domestic jurisdictions. They are provided in modular format to enable regulators to apply specific information of relevance to their jurisdiction. Their overall aim is to ensure that decision-makers are presented with sufficient information to make an informed decision about impacts.  
The following industries/noise sources are addressed in the Guidelines: Military and civil high-powered sonar; Shipping and vessel traffic; Seismic surveys (air gun and alternative technologies); Construction works; Offshore platforms; Playback and sound exposure experiments; Pingers (acoustic deterrent/harassment devices, navigation); Other noise-generating activities (acoustic data transmission; and wind, tidal and wave turbines, future technologies). More details are provided in CMS/IOSEA/MOS8/Doc.11.2.
  - c) [Resolution 12.15 Aquatic Wild Meat & Decisions 12.44-12.46](#)  
The Resolution seeks to give recognition to this topic, which unlike its terrestrial counterpart, “bushmeat”, has not yet been the focus of international policy efforts. It establishes a thematic working group dealing with aquatic wild meat, the tasks of which

are detailed in the related Decisions. The working group was established in June 2018.

- d) [Resolution 12.16 Recreational In-Water Interaction with Aquatic Mammals & Decisions 12.50-12.52](#)  
While the Resolution in giving recognition to this threat is focused on aquatic mammals, the related Decisions direct the CMS Scientific Council to develop guidelines and a recommended code of conduct for operators are wider in scope.
- e) [Resolution 12.20 Management of Marine Debris](#)  
The Resolution acknowledges the wide range of challenges and covers knowledge gaps in management of marine debris, best practice for commercial marine vessels, actions by the industry, public awareness and education campaigns, as well as collaboration and policy intervention.
- f) [Resolution 12.21 Climate Change and Migratory Species & Decisions 12.72-12.74](#)  
The Resolution adopts a Programme of Work including short-, medium- and longer-term actions, and requests CMS Parties and Parties and Signatories to Agreements and MOUs concluded under CMS to work together to assess what steps are necessary to help migratory species cope with climate change and changes in human activities as a result of climate change and of mitigating its effects. This includes a call to those exercising jurisdiction over areas that a migratory species inhabits or is expected to inhabit in the near future due to climate change, to participate in activities of CMS and relevant CMS instruments, in order to promote timely conservation measures where migration patterns have changed due to climate change.
- g) [Resolution 12.22 Bycatch](#)  
The Resolution outlines actions to be taken in order to achieve effective mitigation and monitoring, covering participation in Regional Fisheries Management Organizations, bycatch mitigation methods and data collection, collaboration and cooperation, and technological and financial assistance. On addition to recommending measures to reduce bycatch of protected species including turtles, it also encourages stakeholders to consult experts on all taxa concerned, including the particular expertise available within relevant CMS agreements, to consider the potential effects on aquatic mammals, seabirds, marine turtles and sharks when choosing mitigation measures.
- h) [Resolution 11.29 \(Rev.COP12\) Sustainable Boat-based Marine Wildlife Watching & Decisions 12.78-12.80](#)  
The Resolution endorses guidelines on boat-based marine wildlife watching, found in the [Annex](#) to the resolution, for different taxonomic groups. These Guidelines cover general considerations concerning boat-based wildlife watching, including the need for Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs), considerations about vessels, licensing/permits and other matters, as well as species-specific considerations for developing national guidelines for boat-based wildlife watching focusing on sirenians, pinnipeds, elasmobranchs, seabirds and marine turtles.

### Preparations for CMS ScC-SC4 and COP13

4. The [4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the CMS Scientific Council](#) (ScC-SC4) will take place from 12 to 15 November 2019 in Bonn, Germany. At this meeting, progress in the implementation of the Resolutions and Decisions adopted at COP12 will be discussed, and proposals for future work agreed for presentation to the [13<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Conference of the](#)

[Parties to CMS](#) (COP13), which will take place in Gandhinagar, India, from 17 to 22 February 2020.

5. Signatories to the IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU might be particularly interested to note the proposed activities relating to the following COP13 agenda items (documents are being uploaded in the coming weeks):

26.2.2	Marine Noise	COP13/Doc.26.2.2
26.2.3	Bycatch	COP13/Doc.26.2.3
26.2.4	Aquatic Wild Meat	COP13/Doc.26.2.4
26.2.5	Marine Wildlife Watching	COP13/Doc.26.2.5
26.2.6	Marine Turtles	COP13/Doc.26.2.6
26.4.4	Improving Ways of Addressing Connectivity in the Conservation of Migratory Species	COP13/Doc.26.4.4
26.4.6	Community Participation and Livelihoods	COP12/Doc.26.4.6
26.4.7	Infrastructure Development	COP12/Doc.26.4.7
26.4.8	Climate Change and Migratory Species	COP12/Doc.26.4.8
26.4.9	Light Pollution	COP12/Doc.26.4.9.1, COP12/Doc.26.4.9.2

#### Proposed Activities Related to Marine Turtles

6. Drafts are currently available for the following proposed activities, which might be profitable as areas for cooperation between CMS and the IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU:
- a) Marine Noise: Implementation of the *CMS Family Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessment for Marine Noise-generating Activities* (see CMS/IOSEA/MOS8/Doc.11.2 for further details), including the *Technical Support Information*, to which an additional module *Advisory Note: Further guidance on independent, scientific modelling of noise propagation* is proposed to be added.
  - b) Bycatch: CMS Parties can, subject to the availability of funds and, as appropriate, in collaboration with relevant intergovernmental organizations, request the Secretariat to commission national or regional reviews to determine relative levels of bycatch of CMS-listed marine species in commercial and artisanal fisheries, identify and prioritize fisheries and areas, in which adverse impacts of bycatch are highest for CMS-listed marine species, and organize, if warranted, regional workshops to identify appropriate bycatch mitigation measures for fisheries of highest priority.
  - c) Aquatic Wild Meat: Note the report *Determining the Extent of Interplay between Bycatch and Aquatic Wild Meat Harvests* (Annex 2 to UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC4/Doc.10.2.4), submitted by the Aquatic Wild Meat Working Group and provide input to the Working Group's further work, as required.
  - d) Marine Wildlife Watching: Utilizing the review of existing guidelines on recreational in-water interactions with marine mammals, elasmobranchs and marine turtles presented in UNEP/CMS/COP13/Doc.26.2.5 Annex 2, the CMS Scientific Council may be

requested develop guidelines, including a recommended code of conduct for operators on recreational in-water interactions with CMS-listed species. The Secretariats and Advisory Committees of the CMS MOUs dealing with aquatic species are to be consulted in the development of these guidelines.

- e) Light Pollution: Under this agenda item, the Government of Australia submitted the *National Light Pollution Guidelines for Wildlife, including Marine Turtles, Seabirds and Migratory Shorebirds* also submitted to this meeting as CMS/IOSEA/MOS8/Doc.11.1.
7. Of particular interest is Agenda Item 26.2.6 Marine Turtles, which foresees intense collaboration with the IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU. In the proposed Decisions, the Scientific Council is requested, subject to the availability of resources, to review relevant scientific information on conservation and threats to marine turtles, such as climate change and sky glow. This would take place, as far as feasible in collaboration with the IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU and the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles.
8. Based on this review, the Council should develop new recommendations for the conservation of all species of marine turtles included in Appendix I or II of the Convention. In addition, and in collaboration with the IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU and relevant non-governmental organizations, the development of a draft Single Species Action Plan (SSAP) for the conservation of the Hawksbill Turtle is foreseen, which is to be presented at the 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP14) in 2023. This SSAP would address the trade, use and other threats to the conservation of hawksbill turtles in South-east Asia, and the adjacent western Pacific.
9. The SSAP should be developed in collaboration with the Indian Ocean South-east Asia Marine Turtle Memorandum of Understanding and with relevant non-governmental organizations, and taking into account the CITES 2019 *Report on Status, Scope and Trends of the Legal and Illegal International Trade in Marine Turtles, its Conservation Impacts, Management Options and Mitigation Priorities* (presented to this meeting as CMS/IOSEA/MOS8/Inf.10.1.a), as well as the Hawksbill Assessment under preparation by the Advisory Committee of the IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU.

### **Recommended Actions**

10. The Meeting of the Signatories is recommended to:
  - a) consider options for collaboration.
  - b) provide guidance to the Secretariat and Advisory Committee.