

**52<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee**

*Online, 21 – 29 September 2021*

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**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF WORK (2020-2023)**

*(As at July 2021/ Prepared by the Secretariat)*

**Summary:**

The present document provides the status of implementation of the Programme of Work (POW) for 2020-2023, as of July 2021, following its adoption by the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CMS (February 2020, Gandhinagar, India).

The Standing Committee is recommended to take note of the document and to give comments and guidance, as necessary, to the Secretariat.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF WORK (2020-2023)

### Background

1. The [Programme of Work \(POW\) for 2020-2023](#), as it was adopted by the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CMS (February 2020, Gandhinagar, India), contains all mandates falling under the responsibility of the Secretariat as well as those that fall under the Standing Committee and Scientific Council and their Working Groups that require the Secretariat's support.
2. These mandates comprise all CMS Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) including those serviced by dedicated personnel, such as those on Dugongs, Birds of Prey, Sharks and IOSEA, as well as Action Plans; Programmes of Work; Initiatives; Concerted Actions and provisions of Resolutions and Decisions which were adopted by COP13 as well as earlier ones still in force.
3. The POW covers only programmatic activities for which voluntary funding is required, and does not reflect the core operational activities of the Secretariat nor the costs associated with them.

### Report on implementation

4. The current POW has proven to be an important tool guiding the work of the Secretariat and its fundraising efforts.
5. The present document consists of two sections: (i) a narrative report on the status of implementation, including the challenges the Secretariat has been facing and planned steps to carry out each activity, and (ii) the POW in tabular form which provides a brief overview through a traffic-light rating system.
6. For each activity, where funding is required, the funding source is indicated.. This document needs to be read in conjunction with document UNEP/CMS/ StC52/Doc.9.2 on *Resource mobilization*.

### Recommended actions

7. The Standing Committee is recommended to take note of the document and to give comments and guidance, as necessary, to the Secretariat.

## OVERARCHING ISSUES

### MIGRATORY SPECIES IN THE POST-2020 GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK

#### Status and Achievements

Following the adoption of Decisions 13.7 – 13.8, the Secretariat continued engaging in the process related to the development of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

The post-2020 global biodiversity framework is to be adopted by COP15 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the CBD COP15 was postponed to 2022, and all related preparatory meetings were rescheduled accordingly.

Immediately after COP13, the Secretariat attended the 2nd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG2) on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework on 24-29 February 2020, in Rome and promoted the agreed CMS priorities highlighted in the *Gandhinagar Declaration* (Resolution 13.1).

On 17 August 2020, the Co-chairs of the OEWG released an updated version of the zero draft of the framework in which it appeared that the elements suggested by CMS Parties and partners during the OEWG2 in Rome had not been fully reflected. This was brought to the attention of the Co-chairs also during a meeting of the Biodiversity Liaison Group in September 2020.

Since the beginning of 2021, the CMS Secretariat actively participated in various webinars and informal meetings and in the follow-up [Workshop of biodiversity related conventions on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework \(Bern II\)](#) from 18 January to 2 February to identify and raise attention to CMS priorities.

The Twenty-fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA-24) and the Third meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI-3) of CBD were held online during the period from 3 May to 13 June 2021. While SBSTTA-24 provided advice on a scientific and technical review of the updated goals and targets, and related indicators and baselines of the draft post-2020 global biodiversity framework, SBI-3 reviewed and made recommendations on the supporting implementation mechanisms such as resource mobilization and capacity building and national reporting.

The Secretariat reviewed and analyzed relevant documentation of these meetings and made extensive consultations. With regard to monitoring framework, the Secretariat undertook work to address the lack of adequate of proposed indicators in for ecological connectivity and held a workshop on ecological connectivity indicators on 23 March 2021 along with further informal exchanges of ideas among parties, partners and experts including Scientific Council members. On 20 April 2021, the Secretariat also convened the Third Meeting of the Working Group (WG) on CMS Family inputs to the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, which comprises representatives of governments and organizations and CMS Councillors.

These meetings and consultations provided inputs and recommendations which were reflected in submissions to SBSTTA-24 as well as in documents which were disseminated to CMS Parties focal points aiming at supporting them in the consultations with their CBD counterparts and in the deliberations at SBSTTA-24 and SBI-3. The document ["Ecological Connectivity Indicators for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework"](#) which was circulated to CMS Parties and submitted to SBSTTA on 3 May.

Suggestions made to date by CMS regarding indicators to support the goals and targets in the post-2020 framework were discussed at the 5th meeting of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council (ScC-SC5) from 28 June to 9 July 2021. The meeting expressed support for the approach being taken and made some suggestions were made regarding additional indicators worth considering.

Revised drafts of the Framework and its indicators were released on 12 July 2021. The Secretariat is in the process of reviewing them and will engage in consultations with the Working Group on the CMS Family inputs to the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, in advance of the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Working Group meeting (OEWG3) from 23 August to 3 September 2021.

### **Next steps**

The Secretariat will attend the OEWG3 and continue actively participating in the development of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework in view of its adoption at CBD COP12 in 2022.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN**

### **Status and Achievements**

Details on progress in the implementation of activities under this item are provided in document UNEP/CMS/StC52/Doc.10 “*Assessment of the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023 and development of options for a follow up*”.

### **Challenges**

Lack of resources has not allowed progress in activities expected to support the assessment of the implementation of the Strategic Plan, such as the further development of indicators identified in the Strategic Plan that are not yet operable, as well as the identification and filling of data gaps, case studies and single assessment studies.

Delays in the negotiation and adoption of a post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework are in turn delaying the identification of concrete options for a follow-up to the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023, for which the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework is expected to constitute a key reference.

### **Next steps**

Efforts to raise resources for the assessment of the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023 will be continued.

The Secretariat, in consultation with the Working Group on CMS Family inputs to the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, will continue to monitor progress in, and provide input to the development of the framework, with a view inter alia to identify implications and possible role for CMS in its implementation, and options for a follow-up to the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023.

## **NATIONAL REPORTING**

### **Status and Achievements**

Details on progress in the implementation of activities under this item are provided in document UNEP/CMS/StC52/Doc.11 “*Revision of the national report format*”.

### **Challenges**

Identification of a right balance between the exigencies of gathering information in sufficient detail to allow a meaningful assessment of implementation of provisions of the Convention and the decisions of CMS COP while avoiding excessive reporting burden on Parties' relevant authorities is a challenge in the revision of the existing format.

### **Next steps**

Upon approval of a revised template for Parties' reporting to COP14, the Secretariat will convert the template in the Online Reporting System and make it available to Parties.

The Secretariat will fundraise with a view to secure resources to undertake an analysis of National Reports prior to COP14.

## APPLICATION OF ARTICLE III OF THE CONVENTION

### Status and Achievements

Details on progress in the implementation of activities under this item are provided in the Scientific Advisory Services section under “*Conservation Status of Migratory Species*”.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND MIGRATORY SPECIES

### Status and Achievements

The Government of Norway provided a generous contribution of €100,000, which was recognized under the Champion Programme in the margins of COP13. The grant, which aims at supporting CMS work to promote that global efforts to reach the 2030, already, contributed to the analysis on the direct and indirect impacts of wild meat taking, trade and consumption of terrestrial and CMS species and to solidifying the ongoing collaboration with the Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) with the objective to promote integrated approaches for the conservation of land resources and wildlife which are at the basis of land degradation neutrality and sustainable development.

The Secretariat made some preliminary progress with regard to highlighting the interlinkages between migratory species and sustainable development and contributions of the CMS Family to achieving SDGs through the publication of the [Factsheet on sustainable development for wildlife and people](#).

### Next steps

The Secretariat will engage in consultation with the Norwegian Government to discuss further key activities to be supported with the grant.

**IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT - SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY SERVICES****ATLAS ON ANIMAL MIGRATION****Status and Achievements**

The development of an Atlas on Animal Migration is a long-standing initiative of the Convention, which has been included in the Programme of Work since COP11 (Quito, 2014). It is expected to be developed with a modular approach. Progress in the development of the initiative since its inception until COP13 is summarized in document UNEP/CMS/COP13/Doc.25. This section summarizes significant developments since COP13.

Atlas for migratory mammals in the Central Asian region: a first version of this module was completed in 2019 thanks to financial support from the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety of Germany (BMU) and the Swiss Government. It was published as CMS Technical Series Publication No. 41. Funding for an update and expansion and its further development into an interactive online webtool to facilitate greater accessibility and usability has been secured within a joint project proposal with the UNEP Vienna Office submitted to the German International Climate Initiative (IKI).

Atlas of bird migration in the Eurasian-African region: development of this module, funded by the Ministry of the Environment and Protection of Land and Sea of the Government of Italy and undertaken by the European Union for Bird Ringing (EURING) under an agreement with the CMS Secretariat, has continued. Preliminary results were presented to the EURING 2021 Analytical Meeting & Workshop, held from 31 May - 11 June, 2021, at Université Laval, in Québec City, Canada.

Marine Turtle Breeding and Migration Atlas "TurtleNet": this online interactive atlas developed by Queensland's Department of Environment and Science (DES) in collaboration with CMS, brings together decades of Australian and global data on nesting, courtship, feeding and migration routes of marine turtles. It has been launched on 16 June 2021 on the occasion of World Sea Turtle Day 2021. The interactive atlas will help inter alia to advance the turtle conservation efforts of CMS and its Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Marine Turtles and their Habitats of the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia.

Global Initiative on Ungulate Migration (GIUM): the CMS Secretariat is working in partnership with an international team of scientists and conservationists to create the first-ever global atlas of ungulate (hooved mammal) migrations. The detailed maps of the seasonal movements of herds worldwide will help governments, indigenous people and local communities, planners, and wildlife managers to identify current and future threats to migrations, and advance conservation measures to sustain them in the face of an expanding human footprint. The Global Initiative on Ungulate Migration (GIUM) was launched with the publication of a commentary titled "Mapping out a future for ungulate migrations," in the May 7 issue of the journal *Science*.

**Challenges**

Atlas of bird migration in the Eurasian-African region: the development of this module has suffered some delays with respect to the original planning due to the administrative and technical complexities of the project. The duration of the grant and a new timeline has been negotiated and agreed with the donor (the Ministry of the Environment and Protection of Land and Sea of the Government of Italy) and the implementing partner (the European Union for Bird Ringing - EURING). The completion of the module is foreseen in February 2022.

**Next steps**

With a view to providing a consistent framework for the development of further modules of the Atlas, the Secretariat is developing a concept for the Global Atlas of Animal Migration, building on the experience gained and the analytical tools developed within the modules already being realized. To this effect, the Secretariat is planning to convene a workshop in which the participation of members

of the Sessional Committee, interested observers and partners in the development of current modules is foreseen.

## CONSERVATION STATUS OF MIGRATORY SPECIES

### Status and Achievements

Through Decision 13.24 COP13 requested the Secretariat to further develop the preliminary review of the conservation status of migratory species submitted to COP13, and provided guidance towards its further development, including the initiation of an in-depth review of the conservation status of individual CMS-listed species, and undertaking an assessment of the impact of direct use on the conservation status of species listed on Appendix I. The same deliverables are reflected in the Programme of Work. Through Decision 13.26 the Scientific Council was requested to provide support and guidance to the Secretariat in undertaking the activities foreseen in Decision 13.24.

Through Decision 13.17 *Application of Article III of the Convention Regarding International Trade in Appendix I-listed Species*, COP13 also requested the Secretariat to undertake, within the scope of Conservation Status Report, an assessment of the impact of international trade on the conservation status of relevant Appendix I species.

Fundraising activities undertaken after COP13 by the Secretariat in respect to the implementation of decisions 13.24 and 13.17 have succeeded in raising resources that, though not sufficient to fully deliver all the expected outputs, can allow significant progress. In particular, resources have been provided by the Government of Australia (Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment), the Government of Switzerland (Federal Office for the Environment FOEN), and by the Government of the United Kingdom (Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs – DEFRA). Thanks to the above-mentioned contributions, the Secretariat has been able to establish an agreement with the UNEP - World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) to assist with undertaking the activities foreseen in Decision 13.24 (a) - (c) and 13.17. As an initial step, the CMS Secretariat and UNEP-WCMC have been working towards the development of a framework, criteria and methodologies to undertake the activities. Three draft documents have been submitted to the fifth meeting of the Sessional Committee of the CMS Scientific Council (ScC-SC5, 28 June – 9 July 2021) for review:

- a. A proposed framework for a review of the conservation status of migratory species that can serve as a basis for the compilation of the report for COP14;
- b. A template for a set of case studies providing an in-depth assessment of Appendix I species;
- c. A proposed methodology for a rapid assessment of Appendix I taxa to provide further insights on (i) the impact of direct use and trade on the conservation status of Appendix I-listed taxa, and (ii) possible implications on eligibility for inclusion in Appendix I.

The meeting has finalized and endorsed the documents.

### Challenges

Delivery of this activity is dependent on successful fundraising. While significant resources have already been secured, additional funding will be needed to allow the full development of the deliverables foreseen by the relevant COP13 Decisions mentioned above.

### Next steps

Following the endorsement by the Sessional Committee of the proposed framework, criteria and methodologies, various deliverables are expected to be developed under the agreement between the CMS Secretariat and UNEP-WCMC in the coming months.

Discussions are underway with UNEP-WCMC to extend the original agreement to cover also the assessment of the conservation status of individual Appendix II-listed species and advance the development of the conservation status report, using additional resources recently obtained from the

Governments of Australia and Switzerland. Fundraising efforts to secure additional resources are going to be continued.

## CLIMATE CHANGE AND MIGRATORY SPECIES

### Status and Achievements

With respect to climate change-related activities included in the Programme of Work, no significant implementation has been possible due to a lack of funding. In particular, no progress could be made in (i) the development of a baseline curriculum for webinars and e-learning courses to build capacity on climate change and migratory species among natural resource professionals and decision makers; (ii) undertaking a review of evidence for climate change impacts on migratory species and an assessment of migratory species vulnerability to climate change; (iii) the development of guidelines for adaptation measures. Concepts for the review, assessment and guidelines under (ii) and (iii) have been developed and are used for fundraising purposes.

The possibility of convening an online workshop of the Working Group on Climate Change and Migratory Species under the Scientific Council was discussed during the 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council, and is being further explored by the Secretariat in consultation with the COP-appointed Councillor for Climate Change. The workshop should focus on the development of the advice requested by COP13 Decision 13.128 *Climate Change and Migratory Species* and on the development of a follow up instrument to the Programme of Work on Climate Change and Migratory Species annexed to Res. 12.21 *Climate Change and Migratory Species* and due to expire in 2023.

With a view to promoting the establishment of climate-resilient networks of sites for migratory species the Secretariat, jointly with Wetlands International, led the development of a project concept titled 'Climate Resilient Flyways Asia: Developing a climate resilient network of important sites in the East Asian - Australasian Flyway and the Central Asian Flyway for the conservation of migratory waterbirds in the context of climate change and climate change adaptation'. The concept was submitted to the International Climate Initiative (IKI) of the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) of the Government of Germany by Wetlands International as lead implementing organization of a consortium that includes the CMS Secretariat, the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership Secretariat, the Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative and BirdLife International as other implementing partners and the Governments of China, India, Indonesia and the Philippines as political partners.

### Challenges

Lack of funding is the main impediment to progress in this area.

### Next steps

The Secretariat is monitoring progress in the organization of UNFCCC COP26 with a view to identify opportunities for active participation.

In relation to the establishment of climate-resilient networks of sites for migratory species, should the application to IKI mentioned above not be successful, the Secretariat intends to explore opportunities to submit the proposal to other donors/funding schemes. Fundraising efforts to secure resources are going to be continued.



## CONNECTIVITY

### Status and Achievements

The two activities foreseen by the Programme of Work in relation to this item correspond to mandates further specified by Dec. 13.114 directed to the Scientific Council, which is therefore primarily responsible for overseeing their implementation and reporting the outcomes to COP14. These mandates include:

- investigate and report on the linkages between migratory species connectivity and ecosystem resilience;
- assess the needs and develop focused objectives for new research on key connectivity issues, including but not limited to climate change, which affect the conservation status of each of the major taxonomic groups covered by CMS and produce a report on the findings of this assessment for COP14.

Fundraising efforts undertaken by Secretariat has allowed to secure some funding to support these activities from the Government of Switzerland. Implementation of the activities is expected to be overseen and guided by the CMS Scientific Council Working Group on Ecological Connectivity, established by the 5th meeting of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council (ScC-SC5), that also agreed elements for terms of reference for the activities.

In addition, significant progress has been made to promote ecological connectivity in other fora and global processes especially in the context of discussions around the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

The Secretariat collaborated with the UNESCO Man at the publication "[Rethinking Ecological Connectivity – A Pathway towards Living in Harmony with Nature](#)", published by Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework - EU Support to further reinforces the need to integrate the various aspects of ecological connectivity in the framework.

In April 2021, the United Nations General Assembly adopted [Resolution 75/271 "Nature knows no borders: transboundary cooperation a key factor for biodiversity conservation, restoration and sustainable use."](#) which the CMS Secretariat had been consulted on in 2019. The Resolution elevates the importance of ecological connectivity and international cooperation for biodiversity conservation thus underpinning the CMS priorities for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and the ongoing discussions under the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Collaboration is ongoing with the Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) on the development of a working paper on connectivity and restoration which will inform the second edition of the Global Land Outlook to be launched in 2022.

The Secretariats of CMS and UNCCD and the World Heritage Centre continued to promote their proposal for an assessment on connectivity to be considered by Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) at its 9<sup>th</sup> Plenary session in 2022.

Finally, the Secretariat has recently launched a [thematic webpage on Ecological Connectivity](#), as a go-to platform for showcasing information related to ecological connectivity and migratory species. The page describes and provide examples of ecological connectivity and its relevance to CMS and relevant global processes. The page, which is continuously updated, provides various resources such as main relevant policy decisions, technical publications and scientific papers, guidelines and other tools.

### Challenges

The CMS Scientific Council Working Group on Ecological Connectivity that should oversee and guide the activity will take some time to be established and become fully operational. Some additional resources might still be required to undertake the activities to the extent desired.

### **Next steps**

The establishment of the Scientific Council Working Group on Ecological Connectivity is the first step. Once the Working Group will be operational, detailed Terms of Reference for the activities will be defined, on the basis of which the Secretariat will make any necessary arrangements to contract components of the work.

The Working Group will report on the implementation of these activities to the meeting of the Sessional Committee preceding COP14. Fundraising efforts to secure additional resources are going to be continued.

## **SUSTAINABLE TOURISM**

### **Status and Achievements**

No progress could be made on the activity foreseen under this item due to the lack of resources.

### **Challenges**

Lack of resources.

### **Next steps**

While fundraising efforts will be continued, the Secretariat will explore the possibility to develop at least some elements of this activity with the help of interns.

## **SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME**

### **Status and Achievements**

The CMS Small Grant Programme (SGP) is fully dependent on external resources, and is activated when sufficient funding becomes available to justify a call for project proposals.

A pledge to support the programme in the intersessional period between COP13 and COP14 was made by the Government of India. The Secretariat has made the necessary to receive the funds and held internal discussions on the activation of the programme.

### **Challenges**

The SGP was established in 1994 by the Fourth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties as a grassroots tool that has served as a catalyst for further action to conserve migratory species and their habitats, funding projects in more than 30 countries since its inception. The SGP has played an important role in strengthening the implementation of the Convention through supporting CMS conservation initiatives for a number of migratory taxa, with a strong focus on implementation in developing countries.

However, since the funding of the programme has become fully dependent on voluntary contributions, funding has become unpredictable and planning difficult. In addition, the administrative arrangements required to disburse small grants has become increasingly difficult over the years.

### **Next steps**

As funding has been received, the Secretariat will make the necessary and most efficient arrangements to utilize these funds in support of small-scale projects.

## IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT – AQUATIC SPECIES

### MOUS AND STANDALONE ACTION PLANS

#### IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU

##### Status and Achievements

From 21-25 October 2019, the 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Signatories ([MOS8](#)) to the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Marine Turtles and their Habitats of the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia (IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU) was held in Da Nang, Viet Nam. The key outcome of the meeting was the adoption of an ambitious [Work Programme 2020-2024](#) (WP). The 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Advisory Committee (AC8) took place immediately prior to the MOS.

Following MOS8, the Secretariat and Advisory Committee have been systematically addressing the implementation of the WP tasks assigned to them, respectively, and regular updates are provided to Signatory States, along with offers of support to them to stimulate implementation of the measures foreseen for them. This includes work on illegal take and trade and the development of a revised National Reporting Format.

The 9th Meeting of the Advisory Committee ([AC9](#)), the first ever held independently of a MOS, convened online from 15 to 19 March 2021. The ten AC Members made substantive progress on several tasks given to them by Signatory States. They were supported by the four Sub-Regional Focal Points, representing the Western, North-western and Northern Indian Ocean and South East Asia sub-regions, as well as representatives of the two Marine Turtle Task Forces established under the MOU (more information [here](#)).

On 23 March 2021, the Western Indian Ocean Marine Turtle Task Force ([WIO-MTTF](#)) held its ninth – but first virtual – meeting. In a three-hour video call, some institutional matters were addressed, a new Chair and Vice-Chair were elected, and the sub-region invited to take part in the celebration of the 20th Anniversary of the IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU.

With programmes from 20 countries, on 16 and 19 June 2021 the IOSEA region celebrated World Sea Turtle Day and the 20th Anniversary of the IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU. The programme included a two-hour webinar hosted in Malaysia, which gives the audience the chance to delve into the history of sea turtle conservation in the IOSEA region and hear about the panellists' hopes and visions for the next twenty years. All videos can be accessed on YouTube: [http://bit.ly/seaturtle\\_livestream](http://bit.ly/seaturtle_livestream).

##### Challenges

Despite the introduction of a scale of assessed contributions, which are voluntary, the support of Signatories in implementing the MOU through the Secretariat has always been very insecure. Besides issues related to staffing security, this also means that activities foreseen in the work programme, such as organization of meetings and capacity-building workshops or development of guidance material, cannot be implemented in a timely fashion.

##### Next steps

Systematic implementation of the priorities identified in the Work Programme 2020-2024 will continue. A key priority is mobilizing resources for technical support and capacity-building, as well as providing support to Signatory States to implement conservation actions.

For the remainder of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year, the plans include holding virtual sub-regional meeting/s in the South-East Asia and/or Northwestern Indian Ocean sub-regions; and holding virtual meetings of the Marine Turtle Task Forces in the Northern Indian Ocean and Western Indian Ocean sub-regions. The Advisory Committee is also working on a capacity-building strategy, which will be the basis for renewed efforts in this regard, with several virtual capacity-building workshops in priority countries foreseen. There are also plans to conduct an online survey for the IOSEA constituency

(both past and present) to review the performance of the MOU in its 20 years, identify what went well and where we could have tried a different approach, and identify lessons-learned for the coming years.

## Sharks MOU

### Status and Achievements

The 3rd Meeting of the Signatories to the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Sharks (Sharks MOS3), was held from 12 - 14 December 2018 at the Oceanographic Museum in Monaco. The meeting adopted i.a. a comprehensive Programme of Work 2019-2021, a Capacity-building Strategy and included eight additional species in Annex 1. The meeting also agreed to support the implementation of numerous CMS mandates related to sharks and rays, such as Concerted Action and relevant Resolutions, in particular Res.12.22 on Bycatch. Further details can be accessed on the Meeting page: <https://www.cms.int/sharks/en/MOS3>

The 4th Meeting of the Advisory Committee to the Sharks MOU which was foreseen to take place in 2020 could unfortunately not take place as a physical meeting due to Covid-19. Instead regular monthly online sessions are taking place to work on the various tasks of the Committee, which includes amongst other things to develop regional priorities for shark and ray conservation as a priority. The Sharks MOU Advisory Committee has contributed to a number of CMS processes, such as preparing a comprehensive scientific review of listing proposals for the inclusion of shark and ray species in CMS Appendices at COP13, and supporting the implementation of Concerted Action for Angelsharks and Rhino Rays.

Since the last report in 2018, the MOU France has signed the MOU as 49th Signatory. In addition, two Cooperating Partners have signed (Safe Our Seas Foundation and Divers for Sharks) bringing the overall number of Cooperating Partners up to 14.

### Challenges

The financial situation of the MOU remains difficult, with only a few donors providing regular voluntary contributions, some of which are earmarked for extra-budgetary activities with tight deadlines for implementation. The Secretariat remains understaffed when viewed against the volume of work that could be achieved. The organization of the 4th Meeting of the Signatories is currently delayed due to Covid-19 and related travel restrictions. Bearing in mind that the MOU is trilingual and has a global membership spanning many time zones, it is seen as a challenge to hold the meeting online. In addition, the quality of the internet connection, that is required to be able to use common conference platforms (min. 10Mbit) might limit access for a significant number of delegates.

### Next steps

The Secretariat will seek guidance from Signatories on options for MOS4, which could include holding the meeting fully or partially online or postponing the meeting until 2022.

## Pacific Islands Cetaceans MOU

### Status and Achievements

The 4th Meeting of the Signatories ([MOS4](#)) will be held online on 5-6 August 2021, in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) in the framework of the ACP third phase of the Capacity Building Project for the implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) in the African, Caribbean and Pacific regions (ACP MEAs III), and back-to-back with the SPREP Regional Marine Species Action Plan meetings. The previous MOS was held in 2012 in New Caledonia.

MOS4 will discuss regional cetacean conservation issues (such as disentanglement, marine tourism, Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs), strandings, climate change, deep sea mining), will seek endorsement of the draft Whale and Dolphin Action Plan 2022-2026, deal with some institutional issues, and give guidance on the way forward.

The MOU has 15 Signatories and 7 Collaborating Organisations. The most recent Signatory is the United States of America which joined the MOU in 2012, covering American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands.

### **Challenges**

There are no regular voluntary contributions to support this instrument. Accordingly, the Secretariat coordinates this MOU without dedicated staff time, which severely limits the assistance it can give to Signatories.

### **Next steps**

The Government of Australia has pledged AUD 30,000 to implement some priority activities arising from MOS4. Securing such funding for the MOU and implementation of activities remains a priority. Pledges for voluntary contributions are encouraged and most welcome. MOS4 will also provide Signatories with information on funding opportunities.

## **Dugong MOU**

### **Status and Achievements**

The Dugong MOU Secretariat is hosted by Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD), on behalf of the Government of the United Arab Emirates, and is part of CMS Office – Abu Dhabi. The hosting arrangement with EAD provides the core budget of the Dugong MOU Secretariat, as well as its premises and other practical support. EAD has hosted the Dugong MOU Secretariat since 2009, and the partnership was extended in February 2020 until the end of 2023.

The Dugong MOU Secretariat is liaising with the Government of Thailand with regards to hosting the Fourth Meeting of Signatory States (MOS4) and an associated international conference on dugong and seagrass conservation tentatively scheduled for 2023. MOS4 will provide a Programme of Work for the period 2023-2025 to support the MOU's implementation.

In 2020-2021, the Secretariat undertook the following activities:

- Commenced implementation of the IKI Seagrass Ecosystem Project in January 2020, following approval and recruitment of project staff in 2019.
- Initiated a review of the Dugong MOU's Conservation and Management Plan and associated documents (2020).
- Secured EUR 300K funding from Fondation Segré and commenced collaboration with the NGO Dugongos to support dugong and seagrass conservation activities in the Bazaruto Archipelago, Mozambique (2020).
- Promoted Dugong MOU resources - including the Dugong and Seagrass Research Toolkit, Dugong Catch and Bycatch Questionnaire - in the media and on the [Dugong & Seagrass Hub](#) (launched in March 2021).
- Four community-based dugong and seagrass conservation projects in Bahrain, Indonesia, New Caledonia and Tanzania were selected to receive small grants from the Dugong MOU in 2021.

### **Challenges**

Mobilizing resources for technical support and capacity-building to implement conservation actions remains a challenge and a major priority for the Dugong MOU Secretariat. The Secretariat continues to work actively with the support of the Dugong MOU Dugong Technical Group and a range of partners including NGOs, IGOs and Government agencies to pursue resources for implementation.

### **Next steps**

The Secretariat will continue to identify tools and resources for projects, capacity building including resource mobilization through seeking US\$ 120,000 per annum in voluntary contributions as agreed at MOS3. The Secretariat will plan the 4th Meeting of Signatory States (MOS4) and an associated international conference on dugong and seagrass conservation, tentatively scheduled for 2023.

## **South Pacific Loggerhead Turtle Action Plan**

### **Status and Achievements**

The Project Loggerhead bycatch reduction training and tag deployment in Peru Small-scale longline fleet was completed. Additional funding from Australia is available for additional projects.

### **Challenges**

The limited capacity within the Secretariat remains a challenge for the implementation of the plan.

### **Next steps**

The Secretariat will solicit project proposals from Range states.

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF CONCERTED ACTIONS**

### **Angelshark**

#### **Status and Achievements**

The implementation of the Concerted Action foresees the organization of a regional workshop for Ranges States i. a. in the Mediterranean region. The Parties to CMS and Signatories to the Sharks MOU agreed that there should be support for improved regional management across the Mediterranean Sea, with Angelsharks also listed under the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention).

The Secretariat in cooperation with the Principality of Monaco, the Sharks Trust, the Angelshark Project and Sharks MOU Advisory Committee members for the European region have conducted a series of initial online Workshops for Range States in April 2021 to inform about the current state of knowledge of Angelsharks and recent work regarding their conservation and to lay the foundation for the implementation of the [Concerted Action for the Angelshark](#) in the Mediterranean region and specifically for the development of a Single Species Action Plan. For further information on the Workshop and relevant background documents, please visit our workshop page: [Angelsharks in the Mediterranean - Online Workshop for Range States](#)

#### **Challenges**

The ongoing Covid-19 situation, in particular restrictions related to travel and holding physical meetings led to delays in implementation.

#### **Next steps**

A draft Single Species Action Plan for the Angelshark in the Mediterranean Sea (SSAP Angelshark Med) will be finalized by Sharks MOU AC members for Europe with support from the Secretariat. The draft will be sent out for consultations to CMS Parties and non-Party Range States. Furthermore, Range States will be requested to agree a procedure and modus operandi for developing the final version and adopting the SSAP Angelshark Med intersessionally. Currently it is foreseen to hold a physical meeting of Range States to facilitate final negotiations in 2022, provided that travel can resume.

## Atlantic Humpback Dolphin

### Status and Achievements

This Concerted Action aims to develop an action plan for this Critically Endangered species, which should be agreed at a meeting of Range States.

As a first step, the Concerted Action foresees the formation of a Steering Committee among stakeholders (governmental, NGO, Secretariat) of the Range States of the Atlantic Humpback Dolphin. The Steering Committee will advise the Secretariat on the development of the draft action plan and support it actively in the practical preparation of the meeting, including seeking funding, venue and date selection, definition of agenda, invitation of participants, as well as all other practical and logistical aspects.

In February 2021, a letter was sent to all Parties in the species' range, which resulted in approval of the composition of the Steering Committee.

The Principality of Monaco has granted the use of part of their contribution under the Migratory Species Champion programme for the development of the draft action plan.

### Challenges

The implementation of this Concerted Action requires significant time commitment from the Secretariat, which is difficult to realize given the limited staff time available, and no dedicated funds available to increase capacity.

### Next steps

The Steering Committee will shortly be formally established, and will take up its tasks as described above. The Secretariat is preparing draft terms of reference for the development of the draft action plan for the Steering Committee's feedback.

## Arabian Sea Humpback Whales

### Status and Achievements

The Arabian Sea Humpback Whale (ASHW) Concerted Action was adopted by COP12 (2017) for an initial three-year period. It was extended for an additional three years by COP13 (2020). The concerted action outlines a number of priority activities to be implemented by ASHW range states in partnership with the ASHW research and conservation community. These include: (a) addressing gaps in knowledge; (b) information sharing and awareness raising; (c) capacity building; and (d) development of implementation strategies. A number of activities undertaken will benefit both the ASHW and other large whale species in the Arabian Sea.

There are eight primary range states for the ASHW in the Northwest Indian Ocean. India, Iran, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen are CMS Parties. Oman while not a party to CMS is, along with India, a member of the International Whaling Commission (IWC).

Formed in 2015, the Arabian Sea Whale Network (ASWN) – an informal collaboration of researchers and conservation organizations pursuing the conservation of whale populations throughout the Northern Indian Ocean - focuses on the ASHW as a flagship species. It has provided the primary mechanism to coordinate activities that contribute to implementing the Concerted Action across the ASHW's range.

The Concerted Action recognizes the importance of engaging governments in conservation activities for the ASHW. Owing to mandates in both fora, the CMS and IWC Secretariats have been collaborating closely to reach out to key range states on the development of an IWC ASHW Conservation Management Plan (CMP). The ASHW has been identified within IWC as a candidate

for a CMP, and the development of a range state endorsed regional ASHW CMP is identified as an activity in the Concerted Action.

The following activities were undertaken in 2020-2021:

- ASWN communication and collaboration including (a) regular updating of the ASWN website and support from the IWC Secretariat to create a searchable literature list; and (b) the creation of two working groups focusing on (i) entanglement and stranding response and (ii) acoustic research.
- Testing and refinement of the ASWN regional online database using the Flukebook platform with financial support in part from the IWC Scientific Committee.
- A number of research publications and conservation project proposals for the ASHW and other large whales in the Arabian Sea were presented by ASWN members to the 2020 and 2021 meetings of the IWC Scientific Committee.
- Following a joint letter sent by the IWC and CMS Executive Secretaries in April 2020, the Inspector General of Forests indicated that India is pursuing developing a CMP for ASHWs, and that the matter had been raised with Oman authorities in the margins of the 2018 IWC Florianopolis meeting. The population is considered critically endangered by the Government of India which will enable dedicated projects and financing for conservation in the country; consultations were underway with state governments in India in order to develop a national conservation plan.
- The 2021 meeting of the IWC Scientific Committee: (a) reiterated that the ASHWs are priority candidates for a CMP and welcomed efforts to encourage range states to develop one; (b) commended efforts of scientists within the region, especially the ASWN, to develop a strong scientific basis to guide the development of a CMP and recommended continuation of these studies; and (c) recommended that ASWN members and relevant ASHW range states undertake and support the work proposed in the CMS Concerted Action.

### **Challenges**

Over a three-year period, close to US\$1 million is estimated to be required to implement the Concerted Action's work plan in full. The ASWN coordinator role (previously funded with a small grant from Emirates Nature) has not been funded since April 2019, although a dedicated group has been working to maintain momentum on several initiatives advancing the Concerted Action's implementation. The effectiveness of the Concerted Action would be significantly enhanced with urgent government engagement and support, particularly to scope a range-wide process to develop a CMP. Progress has been slowed by the COVID pandemic, and new relationships are being developed as a result of personnel changes in government posts in the two key range states.

### **Next steps**

The Secretariat will continue to explore options to support implementation of the Concerted Action, while pursuing the engagement of range states jointly with the IWC Secretariat to consider and initiate development of an ASHW CMP.

## **Rhino Rays**

### **Status and Achievements**

The Secretariat is closely liaising with the IUCN Sharks Specialist Group, the Sharks MOU Advisory Committee, and donor countries to support the implementation of the Concerted action for Rhino Rays.

Significant funding for the development of a regional Conservation Strategy and Action Plan for the Indo-West Pacific has been secured from the government of Australia as voluntary contribution to the CMS Sharks MOU. The activities will also contribute to developing and implementing regional priorities for conservation of species included in the Appendices of CMS and Annex 1 of the Sharks MOU, specifically critically endangered sawfish in the Indo-West Pacific.



The Secretariat is also in the process of reaching out to other donors to support similar activities in two other regions of relevance for Rhino Rays (Americas, Mediterranean Sea and Atlantic Coast of Africa). Furthermore, a scientific review of rhino ray bycatch is being prepared by a CMS intern with an academic background in Rhino Rays, in cooperation with the Chair of the IUCN Shark Specialist Group, and experts from the Sharks AC.

### **Challenges**

Difficulties might occur regarding the organization of Conservation Planning Workshops in the Covid-19 context. Support from UNDP might be needed to undertake procurement in the region(s). Additional funding is required to support activities in the Americas, Mediterranean and Atlantic coast of Africa regions. Current staffing capacity to coordinate activities and project administration is low.

### **Next steps**

A network of researchers and policy makers for the four regions will be established with expertise relevant to conservation of Rhino Rays. The Secretariat will reach out to important non-Sharks MOU Signatory and non-Party Range States, to identify and establish areas of cooperation on joint objectives related to the conservation of CMS-listed chondrichthyans, and Rhino Rays in particular, and thereby creating an incentive to join CMS and the Sharks MOU to further cooperation. Conservation planning workshops in key Range States will be held. A side event will be organized at the 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Signatories to present the project.

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, DECISIONS AND others**

### **European Eel**

#### **Status and Achievements**

The Secretariat, together with the Sargasso Sea Commission have held online discussions with Range States regarding the development of a single species Action Plan.

#### **Challenges**

The limited Secretariat capacity is currently the main challenge for making progress on this work.

#### **Next steps**

The Secretariat plans to develop a draft Action Plan, hold consultations among the Range States and relevant IGOs and NGOs on the draft Action Plan, and convene another meeting of the Range States thanks to funding from the Governments of Monaco and Sweden.

### **Polar Bear**

#### **Status and Achievements**

The Secretariat attended the March 2020 Biennial Meeting of the Parties to the Polar Bear Agreement, and is participating in the Climate Change Communications Working Group.

## **Global Programme of Work on Cetaceans**

#### **Status and Achievements**

Resolution 10.15 (Rev.COP12) contains a comprehensive work programme for the Secretariat, Scientific Council and its Aquatic Mammals Working Group. This work programme has resulted in the establishment of numerous now independent work streams under CMS, such as those on marine wildlife tourism, aquatic wild meat, and animal culture. It has also contributed to closer collaboration with other relevant organizations, such as the International Whaling Commission.

Pursuant to Decision 13.83d, the Secretariat co-hosted a joint workshop with IWC in April 2021, which focused on providing an overview of current knowledge on the role of cetaceans in ecosystems. A report is available [here](#). A follow-up workshop is planned, which will focus on more technical aspects.

### **Challenges**

Commissioning a review of regional threats to aquatic mammals other than cetaceans is also foreseen. This will require funding and prioritization of species to be addressed first.

### **Next steps**

The period covered by the cetacean work programme extends to 2024; accordingly, a review of its implementation to date, preparation of a gap analysis and identification of the priorities going forward have been requested in Decision 13.81. The Government of Monaco has pledged financial support for these activities.

Also foreseen in the Decisions is the potential development of an Action Plan for cetaceans in the Red Sea region. The first step will be consultation with the Range States. The Secretariat is coordinating internally between the Bonn and Abu Dhabi offices.

## **Marine Turtles**

### **Status and Achievements**

On the occasion of World Sea Turtle Day 2021, "[TurtleNet](#)", an interactive atlas that shows nesting, courtship, feeding and migration routes of marine turtles has been launched. The new online Marine Turtle Breeding and Migration Atlas, developed by Queensland's Department of Environment and Science (DES) in collaboration with the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), brings together decades of Australian and global data. The Secretariat is very grateful to former COP-appointed Councillor for Marine Turtles Colin Limpus for this valuable tool.

Decision 13.70 requests the development of a draft Single Species Action Plan for the conservation of Hawksbill Turtles to address their trade and use in South-East Asia and the adjacent Western Pacific. This work is to be based on a report by CITES, which is now available (CITES/COP18/Inf.18, available [here](#)), as well as the findings presented in the Hawksbill Assessment under preparation by the Advisory Committee of the IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU, which is now close to publication. In parallel, the Secretariat is working on an overview of turtle- and turtle trade-related commitments of countries in the region to show how the SSAP would help them to implement these mandates. In a collaboration between WWF and SPREP, an assessment of status of and threats to hawksbill turtles is underway for the Western Pacific region, which is not covered by the IOSEA review.

### **Challenges**

Decision 13.70 foresees a review of relevant scientific information on conservation and threats to marine turtles, such as climate change, and the development of new recommendations for the conservation of all CS-listed species of marine turtle, including the preservation of the current nesting beaches and the identification of new nesting beaches. Funds required for the first step, the review of conservation status and threats, has been proposed to a donor and is awaiting confirmation.

### **Next steps**

Development of terms of reference for the global review of relevant scientific information on conservation and threats to marine turtles will commence if and when funding is confirmed.

Regarding the development of the Single Species Action Plan for Hawksbill Turtles, the Secretariat is aiming for a meeting of range states in the second quarter of 2022.

## Marine Wildlife Watching

### Status and Achievements

A CMS Notification was circulated in July 2021 to request Parties to provide the Secretariat with copies of the relevant documents for any measures as described in paragraph 1 of [Resolution 12.16](#) Recreational In-Water Interaction with Aquatic Mammals that they have adopted regarding recreational in-water interactions with aquatic mammals or other CMS-listed species. The Notification also requests Parties to provide the Secretariat with copies of the relevant documents for any measures that they have adopted as described in paragraph 1 of [Resolution 11.29 \(Rev.COP12\)](#) Sustainable Boat-based Marine Wildlife Watching.

These documents will feed into the development of the guidelines, including a recommended code of conduct for operators, on recreational in-water interactions with CMS-listed species. With thanks to funding from the Government of Monaco, the Secretariat is planning a consultancy to develop these guidelines. A draft document is expected to be available by end of 2021.

### Next steps

Once the draft guidelines are available, the Secretariat will hold consultations as per Dec.13.68 b) and c).

## Conservation Implications of Animal Culture and Social Complexity

### Status and Achievements

Decision 13.104 requests the Secretariat to convene a workshop on Animal Culture and Social Complexity, which is to assist the Expert Group on this subject to make progress on a number of the tasks it was given in Decision 13.103. This workshop was originally planned for mid-2020, and a number of preparatory steps had already been taken, including the identification of a host and venue. Due to the pandemic, the workshop had to be postponed. The Expert Working Group is nevertheless moving forward on the activities foreseen. Further developments are included in the Terrestrial Species section under "*Chimpanzees*".

### Challenges

Given that the participants foreseen are spread around the globe, and extensive discussion will be required, this workshop does not lend itself easily to a virtual format. Hence, with the pandemic ongoing, no new dates have been identified yet.

### Next steps

The Secretariat, relevant COP-appointed Councillors and the Chair of the Expert Group continue considering options and possibilities, and will resume concrete preparations for the workshop as soon as possible.

## Aquatic Wild Meat

### Status and Achievements

A report on progress was submitted to the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council and can be accessed as ScC-SC5/Inf.4.

## Marine Noise

### Status and Achievements

The Secretariat is working with the CMS/ACCOBAMS/ASCOBANS Joint Noise Working Group (JNWG) in order to provide the advice requested in Decision 13.60 to the Scientific Council. Three things are mandated: a) preparing the report on Best Available Technology (BAT) and Best

Environmental Practice (BEP) for publication as an issue of the CMS Technical Series, b) advice on any additional noise mitigation guidance required; and c) an assessment of the need to update the EIA Guidelines (Annex to Res.12.14) and/or their Technical Support Information.

The JNWG has concluded its initial review of the BAT/BEP report and is currently awaiting input from the affiliated Industry Advisory Group, before finalizing its submission to the Scientific Council.

### **Next steps**

The Secretariat is working on expanding the membership of the Industry Advisory Group supporting the JNWG in order to have as many relevant sectors represented as possible.

A notification will be sent to Parties in line with Decision 13.58 to solicit input with respect to experiences and lessons-learned in the application of the EIA Guidelines.

The Secretariat will also contact the authors of the chapters of the Technical Support Information to the EIA Guidelines. Where new science is available the technical experts who authored each chapter will be invited to review and consider revising their contributions. New chapters may also be considered, if required. The updated Technical Support Information will then be published as an issue of the CMS Technical Series.

## **Marine Debris**

### **Status and Achievements**

CMS COP13 established a new COP Appointed Councillor position for Marine Pollution, and selected Mark Simmonds OBE for the role. His work programme was developed at the recent meeting of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council, and was included in the Aquatic Species POW. The following priority areas were identified:

- Marine debris including Fishing Aggregating Devices (FADs), noting links to the work of the Councillors for Bycatch and Marine Fish
- Evidence of the effect of persistent organic pollutants (POPs) on marine migratory species, and
- Nutrient Pollution.

Contributing to the implementation of Decision 13.123 in the Asia and Pacific region, the CMS Secretariat leads the Migratory Species Focal Area of the project, “Promotion of Action against Marine Plastic Litter in Asia and the Pacific ([CounterMEASURE II](https://www.cms.int/en/project/countermeasure-ii-project))”. For more details, please refer to the Terrestrial Species section of the current report on Plastic Pollution. <https://www.cms.int/en/project/countermeasure-ii-project>

### **Next steps**

The Secretariat, together with the COP-appointed Councillor for Marine Pollution, will prepare a document for COP14 including draft decisions on marine pollution.

## **Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs)**

### **Status and Achievements**

IMMAs are a global aquatic mammal place-based conservation tool developed by the IUCN Marine Mammal Protected Areas Task Force. The relevance of IMMAs to aquatic mammal conservation was recognised by CMS with Resolution 12.13. The current work on IMMAs related to CMS is led by the COP-appointed Councillor for Aquatic Mammals, Giuseppe Notarbartolo de Sciara, who is also the Co-chair of the IUCN Task Force.

To date, 159 IMMAs – which can be found in [www.marinemammalhabitat.org](http://www.marinemammalhabitat.org) – have been identified encompassing habitat of 30 marine mammal species listed in at least one of the CMS Appendices.

Identification of IMMAs based on ad hoc criteria on a regional basis is planned to continue for the coming years, pending availability of funds, while 35 per cent of the world's oceans have been covered by the effort already.

### **Next steps**

The Secretariat will continue to engage in the negotiation process for and implementation of the treaty on marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (Decision 13.57 c), and will aim to implement Decision 13.57 a-b with the financial support of the Government of Monaco.

## **Live Capture**

### **Status and Achievements**

Decisions 13.74 and 13.75 on the subject relate to Parties submitting information on the implementation of the Best Practice Guidelines relating to the Live Capture of Cetaceans from the Wild for Commercial Purposes. A CMS Notification was circulated to request Parties to submit this information through the National Report process

Recent updates on the live capture of cetaceans from the wild for commercial purposes was brought to the attention of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council in [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC5/Inf.5](#).

### **Next steps**

Upon request and subject to the availability of resources, the Secretariat would provide assistance to Parties to amend their national legislation, in line with the recommendations contained in the Best Practice Guidelines mentioned above.

## **Seagrass Ecosystem Project**

### **Status and Achievements**

The project started in January 2019 and is funded for four years as part of the International Climate Initiative (IKI) supported by the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU). The project is managed by the Secretariat of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Dugongs and their Habitats throughout their Range. The overall project goal is to improve conservation of seagrass meadows and the biodiversity they support in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Timor-Leste. In support of this goal, the project outcome is focused on integrating seagrass ecosystem services into policy frameworks and business models in selected sites within these five target countries.

The project is making progress towards its full implementation, despite challenges caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. Major achievements include:

- The project kick-off meeting in Manado, Indonesia (January 2020) and the Indonesia National Planning Meeting in Bahoi, Indonesia (February 2020).
- Updated translation of the CMS Dugong Catch and Bycatch Questionnaire into Bahasa Indonesia, Tagalog, Thai and Tetun (March 2021).
- Five National Partner organizations trained in the CMS Dugong Catch and Bycatch Questionnaire (2020-2021).
- Delivery of the CMS Dugong Catch and Bycatch Questionnaire in Indonesia, Philippines and Thailand, and the resulting data shared with the project's Technical Partners to inform the development of methodologies for seagrass and dugong assessments (2021).
- Establishment of a homestay association in Timor-Leste; members participated in a learning exchange with the Atauro Homestay Association (October 2020).
- Signing of a provincial level MOU on waste management and dugong conservation by relevant authorities in Trang, Thailand (November 2020).
- Analysis of seagrass conservation policies in the five countries (ongoing).

- Facilitation of two online knowledge exchanges, on community outreach, ecotourism, and community saving groups, among the project's National Partners (2021).
- The Dugong and Seagrass Hub was completed and went live on World Seagrass Day (1 March 2021).

### **Challenges**

The Covid-19 pandemic and resulting travel restrictions required a reassessment of the implementation strategy of the project. The project management team has learnt that providing technical support remotely to National Partner organizations established on the ground can be an effective model with several benefits, including fostering local leadership and innovation, reducing our carbon footprint and saving the travel budget. As the pandemic continues, the project team will continue to remotely support the National Partners implementing the project on the ground.

### **Next steps**

The project's Technical Partners will deliver a full assessment of seagrass and dugongs, and the ecosystems services provided by seagrass. The policy analysis will be completed, and recommendations will be produced. New business models (e.g. spirulina farming and a blue carbon credit scheme) will be developed and implemented. A participatory media training programme will be delivered, resulting in the production of a short film on seagrass conservation.

## **Bycatch**

### **Status and Achievements**

#### a) implementation of Decisions 13.62 and 13.62:

Funding has been secured from the Principality of Monaco for the implementation of Decision 13.63 on Bycatch, requesting the Secretariat to support the Scientific Council with the implementation of Decision 13.62 to commission a review of current data and knowledge about levels of bycatch of CMS-listed chondrichthyan species and existing measures to mitigate bycatch, to identify priorities for bycatch mitigation and make recommendations to Parties and the CMS Sharks MOU on the most effective and appropriate measures to mitigate and reduce bycatch. A review of existing measures to mitigate such bycatch is currently being prepared the COP Appointed Councillor for Bycatch.

#### b) Project: "Minimizing Bycatch of Seabirds and Sea Turtles in West African Industrial Fisheries"

Since 2018, the Secretariat has managed the CMS component of a MAVA-funded multi partner project to minimize bycatch of seabirds and sea turtles in West African industrial fisheries, in which BirdLife International is the lead implementing organization. Phase II of the project started in 2020 and will end in October 2022.

During Phase II CMS will focus on "Advocacy for legislation and mitigation measures". The aim of the project is to pave the way for improved fisheries governance in West Africa to ensure that use of marine resources is sustainable. Although the project largely focusses on seabirds and marine turtles, it will also generate positive outcomes for other species that are fished either directly or indirectly in regional fisheries.

CMS in collaboration with other project partners will contribute to initiating gear trials in collaboration with key research institutes/ partners; assessing the effectiveness of mitigation measures based on such trials; supporting and advising West African governments to assess their scientific and control needs, as well as include bycatch considerations into their fisheries management plans and communicate to foreign fleets operating in the region; developing guidelines on how to reduce bycatch; providing information to national governments/parliaments to promote bycatch mitigation measures; supporting the update and alignment of national policies to include key bycatch considerations and species conservation obligations under relevant international treaties in at least four countries; and supporting national governmental partners to ensure that ICCAT recommendations and species conservation obligations under relevant international treaties are considered.

**Challenges****a) implementation of Decisions 13.62 and 13.62:**

Species specific data on bycatch of sharks and rays is limited for some regions and fisheries.

**b) Project: “Minimizing Bycatch of Seabirds and Sea Turtles in West African Industrial Fisheries”**

Covid-19 has delayed numerous activities related to training workshops at which physical presence is required and meetings with government officials.

Additional funding is required to initiating gear trials in collaboration with key research institutes/ partners.

**Next steps****a) Implementation of Decisions 13.62 and 13.62:**

A study will be commissioned to review current levels of bycatch of CMS-listed and Sharks MOU Annex 1-listed chondrichthyan species, available knowledge of at-vessel and post-release mortality in those fisheries interacting with these listed chondrichthyan species. The COP Appointed Councillors for Bycatch and for Marine Fish and the Sharks MOU Advisory Committee will provide expert advice to support the process and will develop recommendation Parties and CMS Signatories on the on the most effective and appropriate measures to mitigate and reduce bycatch based on the outcome of the reviews.

**b) Project: “Minimizing Bycatch of Seabirds and Sea Turtles in West African Industrial Fisheries”**

Training workshops for new observers are currently planned to take place in several West African countries. It is intended to add extra sessions on shark and ray identification, safe handling and release, data collection and legal requirements under CMS and CITES. Furthermore, the partnership is engaged in fundraising to undertake technical bycatch mitigation trials onboard of vessels in the region.

## IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT – AVIAN SPECIES

### MOUS AND STANDALONE ACTION PLANS

#### Aquatic Warbler MOU

##### Status and Achievements

The 4th Meeting of Signatories (MOS4), originally envisaged to be held in 2020, was postponed to a date to be determined. Potential new Signatories will be invited to sign the MOU.

##### Challenges

Funds for MOS4 need to be identified. Sustainable funding for the continuation of the coordination arrangement with NABU (BirdLife partner in Germany) needs to be ensured.

##### Next steps

The timeline and host country for MOS4 need to be identified. The Secretariat will continue to try to raise funds for continuation of the coordination. In addition, Signatory States will be approached regarding the possibility of voluntary contributions for small projects related to the MOU. In particular, project descriptions are awaited for two small projects in Africa to ensure African involvement in the implementation of the MOU: 1) Identification of key stopover sites in Morocco including a threat assessment for such sites; 2) Hydrological measures in the vicinity of Djoudj National Park, Senegal to ensure sufficient water reaches the key Aquatic Warbler wintering sites at this location.

#### Raptors MOU

##### Status and Achievements

The Coordinating Unit (CU) of the Raptors MOU is hosted by Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD), on behalf of the Government of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and is part of CMS Office – Abu Dhabi. The hosting arrangement with EAD provides the core budget of the Raptors MOU CU, as well as its premises and other practical support. EAD has hosted the Raptors MOU CU since 2009, and the partnership was extended in February 2020 until the end of 2023.

The recruitment process for the Head of the CU was completed in March 2021 after the post was vacated in the beginning of March 2020. During this one-year period CMS Office – Abu Dhabi advanced the work of the MOU in six key priority areas.

In 2020-2021 the CU undertook the following activities:

- Initiated the process to prepare the Third Meeting of Signatories (MOS3) including a review of the Action Plan and MOU, updates to the list of species and their classification, updates to the list of important sites, developing species and site proposal forms and development of reporting forms for signatories and cooperating partners. Signatories were invited to consider hosting MOS3 with the aim of holding the meeting in October 2022.
- Advanced the work plan of the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) with the aim of holding TAG's fourth meeting in December 2021, which will make technical and scientific recommendations to MOS3; an agreement was reached with BirdLife International to provide technical support to TAG.
- Supported the work of the Saker Falcon Task Force and the implementation of the Saker Falcon Global Action Plan (SakerGAP) (see below).
- Supported the implementation of African-Eurasian Vultures Multi-species Action Plan (Vultures MsAP) (see below).
- Took initial steps to advance the development of national and regional raptor conservation strategies by participating in the Pakistan National Raptor Conservation Strategy workshop (January 2020).



- Engaged in cross-cutting initiatives on poisoning, illegal killing and bird safe power infrastructure and provided expert advice to Raptors MOU signatories.
- Undertook outreach activities resulting in the number of Signatories increasing to 61 with Ethiopia's signing of the MOU (19 February 2020).
- Developed a cooperative framework with the newly appointed CMS Ambassador for avian species for collaboration on her future expeditions including the Round Britain Climate Challenge and Flight of the Osprey.
- Sought voluntary contributions from Signatories and received generous financial contributions from Hungary, Slovak Republic and Sweden that complement EAD's core support.

### Challenges

Short-term staffing issues dominated the challenges faced by the CU, while long-standing financial resource gaps remain to deliver the full scope of the Raptors MOU work programme, particularly for the implementation of the SakerGAP and Vulture MsAP. At MOS2, Signatories endorsed a minimum target of USD 150,000 per annum in voluntary contributions to complement the generous, long-standing core support from EAD. This target has not yet been achieved.

### Next steps

The Coordinating Unit will:

- Organize and convene the Fourth TAG meeting (December 2021).
- Organize the Third Meeting of Signatories (October 2022).
- Support national strategic planning work by Signatories.
- Remain alert for opportunities to secure additional resources to advance the MOU's work programme.

## High Andean Flamingos MOU

### Status and Achievements

Bolivia was in the role of coordinating the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of High Andean Flamingos and Their Habitats until 2020. However, it was not possible to organize the 2nd Meeting of Signatories (MOS2) in 2020 due to lack of funds, staffing capacities and the circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic. Upon becoming a signatory, Argentina is foreseen to fill the role of coordination between 2020 and 2022, as per the agreed coordination mechanism.

### Challenges

The main challenge for this MOU is to identify financial resources to support its coordination, and to implement the Action Plan by carrying out coordinated surveys and other conservation measures.

### Next steps

For the planning of MOS2, the Secretariat will assist Signatories in raising funds and identifying time and venue.

## Middle-European Population of the Great Bustard MOU

### Status and Achievements

Implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of the Middle-European Population of the Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*) and its action plan is in progress, with several national and cross-border projects contributing to the implementation in the Range States. The Secretariat remains in contact with the Signatories and partner organizations.

### **Challenges**

The lack of financial resources to hire a Coordinator. For the 5th Meeting of Signatories (MOS5), funds need to be identified.

### **Next steps**

The Secretariat will stay in contact with potential host countries for MOS5.

## **Siberian Crane MOU**

### **Status and Achievements**

Plans for the 8th Meeting of Signatories (MOS8) to the Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for the Siberian Crane (*Grus leucogeranus*) had to be postponed due to lack of financial resources, staffing capacities and the Covid-19 pandemic. As the main partner, the International Crane Foundation (ICF) provides in-kind support to the coordination of this MOU through various activities.

### **Challenges**

The main challenge is to ensure sustainable funding to support the coordination through relevant partners, particularly the ICF, which amounts to €10,000 per year; and to ensure funding for MOS8.

### **Next steps**

The Secretariat will continue its efforts to fundraise for the continuation of the coordination through ICF, and to fundraise for MOS8.

## **Southern South American Migratory Grassland Birds MOU**

### **Status and Achievements**

Two years after the revision of the MOU Action Plan at the 2nd meeting of Signatories (MOS2) held in Florianópolis, Brazil from 24 to 25 July 2018, and its implementation in each Signatory country since then, a virtual Monitoring Meeting of the Action Plan of the MOU on the Conservation of Southern South American Migratory Grassland Bird Species and their Habitats was held from 1 to 4 September 2020. The meeting was organized by the Brazilian Ministry of the Environment - MMA, in conjunction with the National Center for Bird Conservation and Research – CEMAVE of the Chico Mendes Institute for Biodiversity Conservation - ICMBio, as coordinators of the MOU until 2023. Prior to the meeting, MOU Signatory countries' National Focal Points had been asked to complete a monitoring spreadsheet. The meeting assessed the degree to which each planned action had been implemented and to discuss the next steps to achieve the Action Plan's targets.

### **Challenges**

The main challenge is the raising of funds to support the implementation of the MOU.

### **Next steps**

The Secretariat will assist the Range States and the MOU coordination in the implementation of the actions agreed at MOS2 and outlined in the MOU Action Plan.

## **African-Eurasian Migratory Landbirds Action Plan**

### **Status and Achievements**

In 2020, a virtual meeting of members of the AEML Steering Group and members of the Board of the Swiss Ornithological Institute (SOI) was facilitated by the CMS Secretariat, during which options for the way forward of the AEMLAP and the implementation of the POW were discussed, including the option for a Coordination Unit based at the SOI. Since the call, the Terms of Reference (TORs) for the Coordination Unit were prepared and became effective on 01 June 2021.

Voluntary funding for the AEMLAP is available from Switzerland for coordination and meeting, and it is currently being considered how these funds will be allocated most effectively.

A survey was conducted among AEML WG members to understand successes and limitations of the AEML WG POW 2016-2020, and as a basis to draft a new AEML WG POW for the period 2021-2025.

The Secretariat also contributed to a Project Concept of a Birdlife International Consortium for the IKI Country Specific Selection Procedure for South Africa, August 2020, on the topic "Restoring ecosystems in South Africa to capture carbon, enhance people's resilience to climate change and safeguard biodiversity" and included budget proposals for coordination of AEMLAP work. However, we have recently learnt that the concept was rejected by IKI.

### **Challenges**

Some key challenges for the implementation of the AEML WG POW included budgetary constraints, lack of political will or stability in some key regions, lack of expertise and workforce, lack of collaboration between key institutions, and the lack of a coordinator for the AEML WG. The latter is currently being addressed (see "Next Steps").

Moreover, to enable long-term coordination of the AEML WG and successfully implement the AEML WG POW and the AEMLAP, sustainable, longer-term funding is needed.

### **Next steps**

The SOI is currently working on preparing a timeline and budget for the TORs, on the basis of which the Secretariat shall prepare a legal instrument. Arrangements for the coordination with the SOI and the development of a new POW will be made. The new POW will likely be drafted in collaboration with the Coordination Unit at the SOI, once established. It will be based on the previous POW and take into consideration the survey results. Fundraising activities will be continued.

## **Birds International Single Species Action Plans**

### ***Baer's Pochard Action Plan***

#### **Status and Achievements**

The Action Plan for the Baer's Pochard (*Aythya baeri*), which lives only in Asia and is considered Critically Endangered by IUCN, is under implementation. Activities are coordinated with the help of the Baer's Pochard Task Force under the lead of the Beijing Forestry University and the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust. Due to the lack of staffing capacities and financial resources, the Secretariat has not been involved in particular activities supporting the implementation of this action plan in the current intersessional period until now.

#### **Challenges**

The main challenges are obtaining funds for the implementation of the action plan, and raise the awareness of its importance, particularly in the Range States that are not Parties to the Convention.

#### **Next steps**

In line with [Decision 13.47](#), the Secretariat will continue to invite those Range States that are not yet Parties to ratify or accede to the Convention (or at least support the action plan), and will coordinate with the Secretariat of the EAAFP to support and monitor the implementation of the action plan to the extent possible during the intersessional period.

### ***Dalmatian Pelican Action Plan***

#### **Status and Achievements**

In line with Decision 13.47 b), the CMS Secretariat coordinates with the Secretariat of the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA) regarding the implementation and monitoring of this Action Plan for the Dalmatian Pelican. In the intersessional period, due to the lack of resources and capacities, the CMS Secretariat itself was not able to undertake any specific activities in support of its implementation though.

#### **Challenges**

The main challenge will be to raise sufficient funds for supporting the implementation of this plan. The population in East Asia, which breeds in Mongolia and migrates into China is in a critical situation.

#### **Next steps**

The Secretariat will remain in contact with the AEWA Secretariat and other partners to support and raise funds for the implementation of this Action Plan to the extent possible.

### ***White-headed Duck Action Plan***

#### **Status and Achievements**

In line with Decision 13.47 b), the CMS Secretariat coordinates with the Secretariat of AEWA regarding the implementation and monitoring of this Action Plan for the White-headed Duck. An International Species Working Group on the White-headed Duck exists under AEWA. In the intersessional period, due to the lack of resources and capacities, the CMS Secretariat itself was not able to undertake any specific activities in support of its implementation though.

#### **Challenges**

The main challenge for supporting the implementation will be raising funds. The critical threat of over-hunting/illegal killing of this species can be considered as the most sensitive issue when it comes to implementation.

#### **Next steps**

The Secretariat will remain in contact with the AEWA Secretariat, the AEWA International Species Working Group and other partners to support and raise funds for the implementation of this Action Plan to the extent possible.

### ***Far-Eastern Curlew Action Plan***

#### **Status and Achievements**

Thanks to voluntary contributions from the Government of Australia, two studies could be commissioned under small-scale funding agreements to the organization Birds Russia to undertake surveys and analyze the impacts of shorebird hunting in the Russian Far-East. The first study was conducted in Kamchatka in 2019, the second one using the similar methodology in Sakhalin. The reports are available from the Secretariat. In May 2021, shortly before the time of writing, the Government of Australia has pledged AUD95,000 for the establishment of the ITTEA.

#### **Challenges**

The main challenge is to raise the awareness of the importance of this action plan, and increasing resources and capacities for its implementation, particularly in the Range States that are not Parties to the Convention.

#### **Next steps**

In line with [Decision 13.47](#), the Secretariat will continue to invite those Range States that are not yet Parties to ratify or accede to the Convention (or at least support the action plan), and will coordinate

with the Secretariat of the EAAFP to support and monitor the implementation of the action plan to the extent possible during the intersessional period.

### **European Roller Action Plan**

#### **Status and Achievements**

As requested by [Resolution 11.17 \(Rev.COP13\)/Rev.1](#), the Secretariat supports the activities of the Landbirds Working Group and the CMS Scientific Council, in liaison with the Migrant Landbirds Study Group and the Friends of the Landbirds Action Plan in supporting the implementation of this Action Plan. To support the work on landbird species including the European Roller, the Secretariat contributed to a project concept of a Birdlife International consortium for the International Climate Initiative (IKI) Country Specific Selection Procedure for South Africa in August 2020, on the topic “*Restoring ecosystems in South Africa to capture carbon, enhance people’s resilience to climate change and safeguard biodiversity*” and included budget proposals for coordination of AEMLAP work. However, the concept was rejected by IKI recently.

#### **Challenges**

The main challenge is to secure funding for the international coordination and implementation of this action plan.

#### **Next steps**

The Secretariat will continue its support to the implementation of this action plan and its monitoring in liaison with the relevant groups and partners.

### **European Turtle Dove Action Plan**

#### **Status and Achievements**

The development and adoption of the Turtle Dove SSAP constitutes so far the main fulfillment of the provisions of CMS concerning the species.

One of the most important elements of the Turtle Dove SSAP is a temporary moratorium on the harvest of the species until a robust adaptive harvest management mechanism (AHMM) is adopted for the hunting of this species. A zero-quota approach to harvesting for a specific period is indicated to be necessary to allow for the collection of solid data on population trajectories and harvesting being gathered in all regions of the Turtle Dove’s flyway. The European Commission hosted a series of workshops during 2020 and 2021 regarding the development of an AHMM for both, the central-eastern flyway and the western flyway of the Turtle Dove. The workshops were organised by the contract team for the AHMM development, led by the Institute for Game and Wildlife Research (*Instituto de Investigación en Recursos Cinegéticos*, IREC), and chaired by the Nature Unit of the European Commission’s Directorate-General for the Environment (DG-ENV).

Representatives of the CMS Secretariat participated in all workshops and gave inputs in line with provisions of the SSAP. The CMS Secretariat highlighted actions under SSAP Objective 3, including the development of a robust AHMM framework for the hunting of Turtle Doves for each flyway, based on demographic and hunting data, and the proposition of national and local hunting quotas and seasons with the aim of informing hunting legal regulations.

Another action under this objective is the collection of robust and accurate hunting bag data, and reporting these hunting bag statistics annually to the Turtle-dove Harvest Working Group, to calculate a yearly hunting bag statistic for each Range State. The CMS Secretariat pointed out that this action is applicable to all Range States in which hunting of Turtle Doves takes place.

The CMS Secretariat also encouraged, via several e-mail announcements, non-EU CMS member states that are Turtle Dove Range States to share relevant data about the Turtle Dove in their countries, and to participate in a survey to collect information on habitat management.

Furthermore, the CMS Secretariat raised awareness on the plight of the Turtle Dove and on the SSAP and the SSAP process via a statement from May 2021 by the Executive Secretary to the Range States. The Executive Secretary reminded them that the Action Plan is to apply to all regions of CMS Party Range States, and welcomed the efforts initiated by the European Commission to support the development of an AHMM for the Turtle Dove for EU Member States, which would ensure that any hunting of the species is sustainable and fully in line with the AP. She further highlighted the potential such a management framework could have in setting an impressive example of successful international cooperation for other parts of the Turtle Dove's range.

### **Challenges**

The main challenge for appropriate conservation of the Turtle Dove is that information about them is very scarce, especially in the non-EU countries along the central-eastern flyway. Information is needed to develop/refine the AHMM, and for appropriate and well-informed habitat management. Data provision by Range States, notably engagement of non-EU range states, has been a challenge during the development of the AHMM.

### **Next steps**

The Secretariat will continue raising awareness about the plight of the Turtle Dove and the need to share data on the state of its populations, particularly in non-EU Range State Parties. Regarding actions of the European Commission related to a possible hunting moratorium, no conclusions have been reached yet.

## **Saker Falcon Global Action Plan**

### **Status and Achievements**

The Coordinating Unit (CU) of the Raptors MOU has been tasked by CMS Parties to support the Saker Falcon Task Force (STF) and to promote and oversee the implementation of the Saker Falcon Global Action Plan (SakerGAP).

In 2020-2021 the CU undertook the following activities:

- Convened a side event at CMS COP13 in February 2020 on the SakerGAP's implementation.
- Convened three virtual meetings of the STF (June, October, and December 2020) and identified priorities.
- Convened four meetings of Discussion Groups on conceptualizing an Adaptive Management Framework for the sustainable use of Saker Falcons and on Electrocutation where terms of reference were developed and later endorsed by the STF.
- Sought voluntary contributions from Signatories to advance the work of SakerGAP.

### **Challenges**

The main challenge identified is fulfilling the call from the CMS Conference of the Parties (Res 11.18 (Rev. COP 12)) to mobilize resources from CMS Parties and Saker Falcon Range States to support and coordinate activities envisaged in the SakerGAP such as addressing electrocution and further conceptualizing an adaptive management framework. The application of UN rules to short-term contracting of experts had delayed advancing the process.

### **Next steps**

The Coordinating Unit will:

- Convene the Discussion Groups established by the STF.
- Organize and host the 8th STF Telecom before the end of 2021.
- Continue to seek opportunities to secure additional resources to support coordination and implementation of the SakerGAP.

## African Eurasian Vultures Multi-species Action Plan (Vulture MsAP)

### Status and Achievements

CMS Parties have requested the Coordinating Unit (CU) of the Raptors MOU to facilitate continuation of the Vulture Working Group and associated coordination structures (Vulture Steering Group, proposed Regional Implementation Committees and a small team of coordinators) to promote effective implementation of the Vultures MsAP.

In 2020-2021 the CU undertook the following activities:

- Convened two side events at CMS COP13 (February 2020) on Vulture MsAP implementation and on Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs).
- Launched the Vulture MsAP Strategic Implementation Plan (February 2020) identifying 11 flagship priority projects, while highlighting several implementation gaps and organizational needs.
- Convened regular Vulture MsAP Coordination Team (VCT) teleconferences to monitor implementation and identified two priority areas of work: the persecution of vultures in West Africa largely driven by Belief-Based Use (BBU) and the threat of NSAIDs.
- Offered support to the government of Guinea Bissau to build capacity of local agencies to respond to and investigate mass poisoning incidents following a large poisoning event apparently linked to BBU.
- Coordinated a Working Group on NSAIDs under the auspices of the Raptors MOU TAG and the VCT, to raise awareness of the threat that these drugs pose to vultures and other raptor species including developing information materials targeting national authorities responsible for licensing veterinary drugs and other stakeholders at the national and international level.
- Thanks to contribution by UNEP, co-commissioned, with the CITES Secretariat, a Review on Vulture Trade and Sentinel Poisoning in West Africa for the CITES Animals Committee Working Group on West African Vultures and actively participated in the 31st Animals Committee Meeting (June 2021), which produced draft decisions on West African Vultures for CITES in line with the Vultures MsAP.
- Sought voluntary contributions from Signatories for capacity building to address vulture poisoning and to tackle the threat posed by the veterinary use of NSAIDs to vultures.

### Challenges

The Vultures MsAP was adopted by CMS COP12 in 2017 with a specific request to Parties and Range States to source funding to support implementation. No targeted funding has yet been contributed to deliver the priority flagship projects or to meet the costs needed to establish and maintain the structures and activities envisaged in the Vulture MsAP. The coordinators, who were engaged to develop the Vultures MsAP, continue to voluntarily act in their positions as a temporary solution, but with significantly reduced capacity. Funding is urgently needed to allow continuation of these functions, if implementation is to be effectively coordinated across the 128 Range States.

### Next steps

The Coordinating Unit will:

- Continue to convene online teleconferences of the Vulture MsAP Coordination Team.
- Coordinate the NSAID WG to produce outreach materials targeting international and national agencies responsible for the licensing of veterinary drugs and organizations representing livestock breeders and veterinarians in order to ban the use of known lethal NSAIDs, reduce exposure of vultures and raptors, and promote alternatives.
- Continue to support the training mission to Guinea Bissau and identify opportunities to support other initiatives in West Africa.
- Support strategic international activities in the framework of the Egyptian Vulture 'New Life' project.
- Continue to pursue opportunities to secure additional resources to implement flagship projects.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF CONCERTED ACTIONS

### Asian Population of the Great Bustard Concerted Action

#### Status and Achievements

The mandate was extended by COP13 through adoption of [Concerted Action 12.8 \(Rev.COP13\)](#). The Secretariat has been in regular contact with and provided advice on the timeline and process to the compilers for the revision of the Action Plan on the Great Bustard in Asia, a key activity under the Concerted Action. However, due to lack of capacities and resources, it was not possible to support further activities outlined under the Concerted Action.

#### Challenges

The main challenge is to identify sufficient resources for supporting Range States in the implementation of this Concerted Action, including the revision of the Action Plan, which is largely depending on work under the lead of Mongolia and the Eurasian Great Bustard Alliance.

#### Next steps

The Secretariat will continue to endeavour to raise funds for the implementation of the Concerted Action including for the finalization of the Action Plan and for a conference to review progress on implementation of the Concerted Action and the Action Plan.

### Concerted Action for the Great Indian Bustard

#### Status and Achievements

[Concerted Action 13.10](#) for the Great Indian Bustard (*Ardeotis nigriceps*) is implemented under the lead of the Government of India and the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS). The Secretariat works generally in close cooperation with the Government of India in the frame of the COP presidency. There are potential linkages to the work of the Energy Task Force under the thematic aspect of promoting the reconciliation of migratory species conservation with the development of renewable energy and power line infrastructure, and regarding mandates to address illegal killing of birds.

### Concerted Action for the Bengal Florican

#### Status and Achievements

[Concerted Action 13.11](#) for the Bengal Florican (*Houbaropsis bengalensis bengalensis*) is implemented under the lead of the Government of India and the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS). The Secretariat works generally in close cooperation with the Government of India in the frame of the COP presidency. There are potential linkages to the work of the Energy Task Force under the thematic aspect of promoting the reconciliation of migratory species conservation with the development of renewable energy and power line infrastructure, and regarding mandates to address illegal killing of birds.

### Concerted Action for the Antipodean Albatross

#### Status and Achievements

[Concerted Action 13.12](#) for the Antipodean Albatross (*Diomedea antipodensis*) is under implementation under the lead of the Proponent Governments. A progress report for the period May 2020 to April 2021 was submitted as [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC5/Inf.2](#) to the Fifth Session of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council, scheduled to be held from 28 June to 9 July 2021.



## IMPLEMENTATION OF RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, DECISIONS AND OTHERS

### *Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds (IKB)*

#### *Intergovernmental Task Force in the Mediterranean (MIKT)*

##### **Status and Achievements**

Based on the provisions of [Resolution 11.16 \(Rev.COP13\)](#) *Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds*, the Intergovernmental Task Force to address illegal killing, taking and trade of migratory birds in the Mediterranean (MIKT) has continued its activities. The new Coordinator of the MIKT, Ms Foteini (Clairie) Papazoglou, entered on duty on 14 December 2020 and is home-based in Cyprus.

A report on the MIKT work was presented at CMS COP13 in Document [UNEP/CMS/COP13/Doc.26.1.1](#), and a [side event](#) was held on Wednesday, 19 February 2020.

COP13 adopted [the Decisions](#) 13.27-13.31 *Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean (MIKT)*, addressed to Parties, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), NGOs, other stakeholders and the Secretariat in aspects related to the implementation of the MIKT Programme of Work 2016-2020, [the Scoreboard to assess the progress in combating illegal killing, taking and trade of wild birds \(IKB\)](#) and the [Rome Strategic Plan](#).

As of May 2021, the **Membership of the Task Force** consists of 22 CMS Contracting Parties as members, three Interested Parties and one Non-Party are Observers. Twelve multilateral environmental agreements (represented by their Secretariats), organizations and networks, and nine international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are Observers to MIKT. A list of all Members and Observers is available on the [CMS MIKT website](#).

The final version of the [Rome Strategic Plan 2020-2030](#), which had been developed and discussed by the Second Joint Meeting of the Bern Convention Network of Special Focal Points (SFPs) on Eradication of Illegal Killing, Trapping and Trade in Wild Birds (IKB) and CMS MIKT, was adopted as the common strategic framework for CMS Members and Bern Convention Countries by the 39<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention, Strasbourg, 3-6 December 2019, and by the CMS MIKT in June 2020 via electronic consultations.

In line with [Decision 13.27](#), which encourages parties to “periodically use **the Scoreboard** in Annex 1 of Resolution 11.16 (Rev.COP13) as a national tool to self-assess progress in addressing the illegal killing of wild birds the Scoreboard on IKB”, the Secretariat supported the completion of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Scoreboard which ran from July to November 2020. The Scoreboard is addressed to 54 countries (i.e. Mediterranean and Bern Convention countries beyond the Mediterranean). The first Scoreboard completion had run in 2018, and was completed by 30 countries, while the second was completed by a total of 24 countries. In 2020, the Scoreboard completion was supported by CMS and used the CMS Online Reporting Tool, and was available for the first time in English, French and Spanish. Out of 24 countries three chose to complete it in French or Spanish. The information received was analysed by a contractor of the Bern Convention Secretariat, presented at the Bern Convention 40<sup>th</sup> Standing Committee in December 2020, and was updated by the MIKT Coordinator, and presented [as an updated analysis](#) to the Third Joint Meeting of the Bern Convention Network of Special Focal Points (SFPs) on Eradication IKB and CMS MIKT (cf. below). The updated analysis included the results from countries which submitted their answers to the second Scoreboard after the deadline in November 2020 as well as the amended overall results. The countries added in the updated analysis were Greece, Malta, Serbia, Spain and the UK, as well as Belarus for the first time. The Scoreboard is planned to be completed next time in 2023.

Additionally, the CMS Secretariat together with the Bern Convention Secretariat, undertook to publish the Scoreboard results as submitted from 2018 and 2020 on a public website. This was a long-standing request by stakeholders, and an action that has been supporting transparency and best practice transfer. Following an extensive consultation with countries to obtain permissions, the

CMS and the Bern Convention Secretariats received the agreement from 22 countries to publish their data on a public website. The website was hosted by the Bern Convention and linked from [the MIKT website too](#).

### *Meetings of MIKT*

The MIKT Coordinator organized a meeting of the MIKT Consultative Group, an advisory group set up under the [Modus operandi](#) of the MIKT, on 2 March 2021. The Group had the opportunity to review and provide comments and suggestions on some of the documents and papers that were presented at the Joint Bern Convention-MIKT meeting in June 2021 afterwards.

The CMS and the Bern Convention Secretariats organized the **Third Joint Meeting** of the Bern Convention Network of Special Focal Points (SFPs) on Eradication of Illegal Killing, Trapping and Trade in Wild Birds and the CMS MIKT [between 9-11 June 2021, online](#). It was also the fourth MIKT meeting and it was attended by 125 participants from 26 Member and Observer Countries. In total the Members and Observers represented 36 different countries. The main objective of the meeting was to support the implementation of the Rome Strategic Plan. Firstly, the Secretariats, and then Members and Observers reported on the work done since the last meeting, to combat IKB. Secondly, the participants discussed the adoption of an ambitious workplan for the period 2021-2025 for the MIKT, in line with the Rome Strategic Plan 2020-2030; the endorsement of a paper on 'Baseline and Methodology for Assessing Progress in Achieving the Rome Strategic Plan'; a decision on the way forward for the reporting format and frequency of meetings; a decision on the way forward for assessing the national legislation for combating IKB in countries; and a decision on the way forward for developing National IKB Action Plans. The meeting went successfully and final decisions on the adoption of the MIKT workplan, the paper on 'Baseline and Methodology' and a format for reporting and frequency of meetings were expected in July 2021.

### *Funding*

The European Union confirmed the approval of a Phase II funding agreement through the Global Public Goods and Challenges (GPGC) Cooperation Agreements with UNEP for supporting the work of MIKT in the period 2021-2023. The funding would mainly support the post of the MIKT Coordinator and the travel support to and the organization of face-to-face meetings.

### *Training and meetings*

Following the organization of [a successful training workshop](#) on illegal killing, taking and trade of migratory birds (IKB) for prosecutors and investigators from Member countries in Segovia, Spain, in May 2018, a training package was compiled in English by the European Network of Prosecutors for the Environment and the CMS Secretariat, and was translated into French, Spanish, Italian, Greek and Arabic, thanks to the funding from the European Union provided under the Phase I GPGC project. The package was disseminated to prosecutors and investigators who participated in the workshop in 2018 and others that expressed interest in 2021. The aim of the package was to transfer the messages and findings of the workshop to the national level to the participants and other countries which could not participate in 2018.

The package included presentations on the research into the size and extent of the IKB problem, the various motives of offenders, the techniques and equipment used in illegal killing of birds (IKB), the expertise and international assistance available, the EU Wildlife Trade (CITES) Regulations and, most importantly, case studies of significant prosecutions and investigations into IKB from different countries, mainly from the Mediterranean Region.

### **Challenges**

There are two main challenges related to the work of MIKT: the strengthening of the involvement and engagement of the Governments of some of the MIKT Mediterranean countries, as well as in-country capacities, resources and knowledge in the enforcement against IKB toward the overall goal of eradicating IKB.

The second main challenge relates to funding. The post of MIKT Coordinator is funded until 2023, but except for support to the organization of in-person MIKT meetings, no significant funding for other activities to support the implementation of the Rome Strategic Plan or Workplan is available.

### **Next steps**

At the time of writing, next steps are the adoption of the MIKT workplan for the period 2021-2025, the endorsement of a paper on Baseline and Methodology and an agreement on a format for reporting and frequency of joint meetings. Additionally, it was expected that the CMS Secretariat would implement some actions to support some of the MIKT countries with assessing their national legislation in relation to combating IKB and could carry out a number of capacity building actions. Further activities will also include the identification of potential additional funding sources and support to fundraising activities to strengthen the financial basis for the implementation of the Rome Strategic Plan and MIKT Workplan.

### *Intergovernmental Task Force to Address Illegal Hunting, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway (ITTEA)*

#### **Status and Achievements**

Since the activities undertaken in conjunction with the promoting the establishment of the Intergovernmental Task Force to Address Illegal Hunting, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway (ITTEA) at the 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Partners of the EAAFP (MOP10, Changjiang City, China, 2018), as reported in [UNEP/CMS/COP13/Doc.26.1.1](#), no major progress has been made due to the lack of capacities and resources. In May 2021, shortly before the time of writing of this report, the Government of Australia has pledged AUD150,000 for the establishment of the ITTEA.

#### **Challenges**

Many countries of the region are not Parties to CMS. The main challenge is therefore to catalyze action and political will by engaging the governments of these countries for the CMS initiative, and for the eradication of IKB in the region. The funding pledged by Australia is an important step towards the establishment of the ITTEA. More funding needs to be raised for the sustainability of the initiative.

#### **Next steps**

Towards implementing [Decision 13.33](#), The Secretariat will work, in close consultations with CMS Parties in the region, the EAAFP Secretariat, the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna - Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative (CAFF-AMBI), BirdLife International and other relevant partners, as well as with participating authorities and partners in Non-Parties towards the establishment of the ITTEA. As agreed at the EAAFP MOP10, the ITTEA is foreseen to cooperate with and have a supportive role to the existing EAAFP Task Force on Illegal Hunting, Taking and Trade of Migratory Waterbirds.

### *Other IKB-related activities*

#### **Status and Achievements**

Preliminary discussions were held with BirdLife International and in conjunction with activities of other Secretariat Units (particularly the Terrestrial Species Team in the context of [Decision 13.109](#) - Addressing Unsustainable Use of Terrestrial and Avian Wild Meat of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, with regard to potential options and conceptualization for supporting the Scientific Council in the implementation of [Decision 13.29](#) on the scope and scale of illegal killing and taking of birds, as well as illegal trade of birds across Sub-Saharan Africa and Central Asia, as well as towards the implementation of [Decision 13.30](#) on a global situation analysis on production, sale, use and regulation of use of mist nets, and other sorts of nets used for bird trapping.

#### **Challenges**

The main challenge remains to secure sufficient funding for these comprehensive exercises.

### **Next steps**

The Secretariat will continue seek funding for these activities, in close consultation with Parties and partners.

## **Flyways**

### *Flyways Working Group*

#### **Status and Achievements**

In line with [Decision 13.41](#), despite the lack of dedicated financial and personnel resources, the Secretariat has continued to support and promote the activities of the Flyways Working Group in consultation with the Chair of the Working Group according to the Programme of Work, regarding the extension of its membership and facilitating the coordination with other CMS Working Groups and Task Forces such as MIKT, the Preventing Poisoning Working Group, the African Eurasian Migratory Landbirds Working Group and the Energy Task Force in the context of specific thematic areas and regional approaches. An online meeting with the Working Group's Chair (who is not in the position to continue to fill this role due to the expiry of his term as COP-appointed Councillor) and the COP-appointed Councillor for Birds to discuss the way forward and potential lead for the future.

#### **Challenges**

The main challenge is to secure funding for the coordination of the working group, for meetings of the working group, and for the implementation of the Flyways Programme of Work.

#### **Next steps**

A virtual meeting of the Flyways Working Group is envisaged to be held in the intersessional period. The planning will be discussed with the COP-appointed Councillors for Birds.

### *Americas Flyways Framework Task Force*

#### **Status and Achievements**

In line with [Decision 13.41 c\)](#), the Secretariat has been in contact with the Chair of the Task Force, Brazil. Since the finalization of the Task Forces workplan by a voluntary consultative group under the lead of Audubon, staff and financial resources were insufficient to coordinate this Task Force on permanent basis side to drive forward the implementation of the workplan, and in-person meetings could not be organized due to the lack of resources and the global Covid-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, based on exchange with the Secretariat since COP13, in line with action 1.1.4 of the workplan, Brazil joined the Energy Task Force to support the development of good practice guidelines on reconciling renewable energy developments with the conservation of migratory species. The secretariat further facilitated and tried to improve the information exchange in the context of renewable energy technologies and migratory species between countries and with multilateral entities. In general, the Secretariat promoted the Task Force and its work at ad-hoc occasions.

#### **Challenges**

The main challenge is to secure funding for the coordination and meetings of the Task Force, and for the implementation of its workplan.

#### **Next steps**

The Secretariat will continue to support the Task Force in raising resources for its coordination on a permanent basis, to support the implementation of the workplan, and to organize in-person meetings in the future, in close consultations with the Members and other interested partners.

## Central Asian Flyway (CAF)

To support the implementation of [Decision 13.46](#), the Secretariat has been working closely together with the Government of India and the AEWA Secretariat to further advance the process initiated in 2018 between the Government of India and both Secretariats. Based on this process, in March 2021, the Secretariat sent a call for nominations of representatives for the CAF initiative was sent to the Range States, relevant organizations including MEA Secretariats, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations as well as of experts. By the time of writing, 10 CAF Range States, 14 organizations, and the representatives of technical advisory bodies of CMS and its relevant daughter agreements had confirmed their representation.

### **Challenges**

The main challenge will be to raise the political support of all Range States and required resources to establish an institutional framework for the CAF, and an inter-governmental meeting with the aim to agree on the modalities of the framework by COP14, as well as to raise the resources and capacities for updating the CMS Central Asian Flyway Action Plan for the Conservation of Migratory Waterbirds and their Habitats.

### **Next steps**

With a view to identify elements of the work required for addressing species conservation issues, existing action plans and their status, and scientific and capacity-building activities, the Secretariat, will further liaise with the Range States. In close cooperation with the Government of India, a stocktaking meeting is envisaged to be held online, if possible in 2021.

## **Preventing Bird Poisoning**

### **Status and Achievements**

Through [Resolution 11.15 \(Rev.COP13\)](#), COP13 reaffirmed the adoption of the *Guidelines to Prevent the Risk of Poisoning to Migratory Birds* and proposed the continuation of the open-ended Preventing Poisoning Working Group (PPWG) until COP13. As adopted through the same Resolution, the Secretariat has supported the development of the Terms of Reference Intergovernmental Task Force on Phasing Out the Use of Lead Ammunition and Lead Fishing Weights (in preparation at the time of writing), which are submitted to the CMS Standing Committee at its 52nd meeting in document UNEP/CMS/StC52/Doc.16 "*Phasing Out the Use of Lead Ammunition and Lead Fishing Weights*".

Furthermore, the Secretariat and the Coordinating Unit of the Raptors MOU have supported activities in cooperation with partners, particularly the Vulture Conservation Foundation, to address the catastrophic poisoning of Hooded Vultures (*Necrosyrtes monachus*) which took place in Guinea-Bissau in March 2020, including contributing to a concept of a consortium of partner organizations for a capacity-building mission by veterinaries and vulture experts to Guinea-Bissau. In this context, the Secretariat has also included a proposed budget for the coordination of the Multi-Species Action Plan on African-Eurasian Vultures in a concept note on *Protecting vulnerable communities and migratory species in West Africa against zoonotic diseases through building connected landscapes and habitats*, submitted to the International Climate Initiative (IKI), responding to the IKI thematic call on *Pandemic preparedness: natural protective barriers between humans and animals by expanding, linking and improving protected areas*. At the time of writing, a response from IKI has been still awaited.

Finally, the Secretariat has been supporting an ad-hoc CMS Expert Group for the Evaluation of Exposure of European Union Birds to Lead Fishing Weights and Lead Ammunition in Terrestrial Environments, established thanks to the voluntary work of several members of the PPWG. The Group recently responded to a call of the European Chemicals Agency, providing an evaluation of likelihood and frequency of ingestion of lead ammunition in terrestrial environments and lead fishing weights by European Union bird species, and numbers of birds at risk.

## Challenges

The main challenge of this Resolution and related [Decisions 13.39 to 13.40](#) is the lack of financial resources to hire a Coordinator for the PPWG and the foreseen Intergovernmental Task Force on Phasing Out the Use of Lead Ammunition and Lead Fishing Weights, to organize regional workshops to implement the actions identified in the POW of the PPWG, and to organize working group and task force meetings.

## Next steps

The Secretariat is supporting the StC52 in preparing the Terms of Reference (ToRs) for the Intergovernmental Task Force on Phasing Out the Use of Lead Ammunition and Lead Fishing Weights. Once the ToRs are approved by the Standing Committee, to implement Decision 13.40 c), subject to the availability of resources, the Secretariat will launch the process for convening the Task Force.

## Energy Task Force

### Status and Achievements

[Resolution 11.27 \(Rev. COP13\)](#) reaffirms the instruction by COP to the Secretariat to convene a multi-stakeholder Task Force on Reconciling Selected Energy Sector Developments with Migratory Species Conservation (the Energy Task Force, ETF). The Government of Germany provided funding for the coordination and basic functioning of the ETF from 2018 to the end of 2020 under the Migratory Species Champion Programme. A contractual arrangement with Birdlife International for the coordination of the ETF has been in place until April 2021.

### Membership

As of the time of writing, the ETF, 15 CMS Contracting Parties are Members of the ETF, with representatives from environment-, energy- and development-related ministries and authorities. In addition, the membership comprises one international development government agency, the secretariats of six multilateral environmental agreements, and a further 10 international organizations and institutions, including intergovernmental organizations and networks, development banks and non-governmental organizations. A further 15 national and international organizations and associations are Observers to the ETF.

### Activities

In the intersessional period, the Secretariat has closely collaborated with the ETF and its Coordinator, supported various activities, including:

- the organization of the [5<sup>th</sup> ETF meeting](#) (ETF5), 30 November to 1 December 2021, online; a major achievement of this meeting was the adoption of the new ETF Workplan for the period 2021-2024
- two interim virtual ETF meetings on [3 August 2020](#) and [28 April 2021](#);
- fundraising activities and outreach, and the preparation and dissemination of a [fundraising brief](#); fundraising letters to addressed to development banks and other financial institutions;
- the development of the draft new ETF Workplan presented to and adopted at the ETF5.
- maintenance of the ETF website and creation of meeting webpages, supported by the Joint CMS-AEWA Communications Team
- communication with Governments and partners to promote the ETF and strengthen its membership.

Further major activities and events are highlighted in the [report to the ETF5 meeting](#).

### *Funding situation*

At COP13, the Government of India pledged EUR 60,000 for the ETF work under the Champion Programme. In 2021, the Government of France pledged EUR 25,000 pledged by France for ETF-coordination related activities.

The Secretariat also contributed to a Project Concept of a Birdlife International Consortium for the IKI Country Specific Selection Procedure for South Africa, August 2020, on the topic "*Restoring ecosystems in South Africa to capture carbon, enhance people's resilience to climate change and safeguard biodiversity*" and included budget proposals for coordination of ETF work. However, we have recently learnt that the concept was rejected by IKI.

### **Challenges**

The main challenge is to raise funds for a sustainable and more strengthened basis for the ETF coordination for the coming years to more effectively mobilize the ETF membership. Other challenges are the engagement, commitment and action by ETF members and observers towards the workplan completion and wider ETF delivery and promotion, and strengthening the involvement of financial institutions.

### **Next steps**

Based on the available resources and subject to additional funds in the future, the Secretariat will endeavour to ensure the continuation of the ETF coordination in the long term, including through relevant contractual arrangements with Birdlife International; and aims to further promote and strengthen the engagement of governments and organizations, particularly international financial institutions in the ETF work, and support the implementation of the ETF Workplan 2021-2024 and to ETF meetings to the extent possible.

## IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT- TERRESTRIAL SPECIES

### MOUS, STANDALONE ACTION PLANS AND INITIATIVES

#### Gorilla Agreement

##### Status and Achievements

In January 2021, the accession of the Republic of Angola to the Gorilla Agreement took effect.

With funding received from the Government of Germany through the Secretariat of the Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP), a consultant is being hired to conduct an analysis of the implementation of CMS obligations related to Chimpanzees and Gorillas through national legislation and regulations in Nigeria and Cameroon.

The CMS Secretariat has been liaising with the GRASP as well as with potential donors to implement the work under the agreement. In addition, a letter was sent out to the Parties of the Gorilla Agreement and State members of GRASP to nominate joint focal points in order to streamline the collaboration.

##### Challenges

Parties are slow in paying their agreed contributions, thereby limiting the funding that is available for implementation of conservation activities.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the preparations of the 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Parties to the Agreement had to be postponed to 2021.

##### Next steps

The Secretariat seeks to organize the 4th Meeting of the Parties in 2021 or early 2022 and will continue working with the GRASP Secretariat to bring coherence to both entities' work, including through a Memorandum of Understanding between the GRASP and CMS Secretariat.

A Technical Meeting is planned to be held with experts from the IUCN and the GRASP Secretariat, in order to identify a project that could drive forward the conservation of the Gorilla in its Range States, using funding that is still available for the Gorilla Agreement.

#### Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI)

##### Status and Achievements

The Secretariat has renewed its Joint Work Programme 2020-2023 with the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation of Germany (BfN), funded by the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety of Germany (BMU), which allowed in 2020 the convening of an online workshop on Bukhara Deer. Through the Joint Work Programme, BfN also agreed to provide resources in 2021 for the preparation of a Conservation Roadmap for the Persian Leopard, followed by a workshop in 2022, as well as a workshop on linear infrastructure also in 2022. In 2023, BfN agreed to provide resources for two further workshops, one on the Asiatic Wild Ass and one on either capacity development for transboundary cooperation or addressing poaching through community-based approaches.

With funding received from the Government of Switzerland, the Secretariat commissioned an expert in May 2021 to extend the report *Mapping Transboundary Hotspots for the Central Asian Mammals Initiative* to those species included by COP13 in the CAMI Programme of Work as well as extend it to relevant areas in South and East Asia.



The Secretariat was informed by the UNEP Vienna Office that the joint project proposal submitted four years ago to the German International Climate Initiative (IKI) was successful. This will allow the Secretariat to implement a number of CAMI Programme of Work activities related to ecosystem adaptation over the coming 3.5 years.

Given the increasing plight of the Asiatic Cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus* subspecies *venaticus*) and the precarious status of the North-Eastern African Cheetah (*A. j. soemmeringii*), the IUCN SSC Cat Specialist Group proposed to the 5th Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the CMS Scientific Council (ScC-SC5) the development of a coordinated conservation and recovery strategy for Cheetah across North-Eastern Africa and its former Asian distribution. An intersessional Working Group was established to elaborate such a strategy.

### **Challenges**

Covid-19 implications required a change in priorities for the implementation of the Joint Work Programme with BfN and resulted in focusing on desk work as well as convening workshops online rather than in person.

Departure of the CAMI Coordinator in late 2020, resulted in CAMI work being delayed. A new Coordinator has been recruited and is expected to start her work soon.

### **Next steps**

The Secretariat will recruit two staff at professional and general service levels to support the implementation of the IKI project.

## **Saiga MOU**

### **Status and Achievements**

A study was commissioned in 2020 by the Secretariat, funded by the BfN to provide an overview of the conservation status of Saiga for consideration by the 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Signatories to the Saiga MOU that will be hosted online by the Russian Federation from 28-29 September 2021.

Also in 2020, the Secretariat commissioned the study *The Sustainable Use of Saiga Antelopes: Perspectives and Prospects* with funding from the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety / Federal Agency for Nature Conservation of Germany.

### **Challenges**

With the passing of Mr Anton Mezhnev, focal point for Saiga in the Russian Federation, a highly respected expert was lost who had provided invaluable support to the MOU in the past.

### **Next steps**

The Secretariat is in discussion with the Russian Federation regarding the organization of the Saiga MOS4.

## **African Elephant Action Plan and Western African Elephant MOU**

### **Status and Achievements**

Funding was provided by the Government of Germany to convene a meeting of the Western African Elephant MOU back-to-back with the CITES MIKE programme in 2020 to discuss the implementation of COP Decisions 13.99 - 13.100 related to the future of the MOU.

### **Challenges**

Due to COVID-19 travel restrictions the meeting could not be convened.

## **Next steps**

The Secretariat currently explores possibilities to convene the meeting online in the fourth quarter of 2021.

## **Joint CMS-CITES African Carnivore Initiative (ACI)**

### **Status and Achievements**

A draft Programme of Work (POW) for the Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative (ACI) was developed in a collaboration between the CMS Secretariat, the CITES Secretariat and experts from the IUCN SSC Cat and Canid Specialist Groups. The draft POW was electronically consulted with the ACI Range States. A revised draft of the document was submitted to the 73rd Meeting of the Standing Committee of CITES for review. Following approval by the CITES Standing Committee through postal procedure, the revised POW is submitted to the CMS Standing Committee at its 52nd meeting in document UNEP/CMS/StC52/Doc.18 "*Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative*".

The *Guidelines for the Conservation of the Lion in Africa* (GCLA) and the *Roadmap for the Conservation of the Leopard in Africa* (RCLA) were submitted for review to the 31st Meeting of the CITES Animals Committee (AC31) and the 5th Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the CMS Scientific Council (ScC-SC5). At both meetings, the future review of the Lion Guidelines was delegated to the Range States at their meetings within the framework of the ACI under the condition that the Animals Committee and the Scientific Council be updated and consulted about any development relevant to them. As regards the Leopard Roadmap, only the CMS Scientific Council delegated its review to the ACI Range State meetings.

At ScC-SC5, an intersessional Working Group was formed with the mandate to review the conservation status of Cheetah populations of Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe and their potential inclusion in Appendix I of CMS and to report to the Sessional Committee at its 6th meeting on its findings and to inform a decision at COP14.

### **Challenges**

Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, no ACI Range State Meeting has yet been possible but it is aimed to be held in 2022, pending the receipt of external resources.

### **Next steps**

The Secretariat will continue to cooperate with the CITES Secretariat on the ACI and items related to the ACI species. This will include the preparations of the Range State meeting, which is vital for shaping the future implementation and governance of the initiative, and for the prioritization of work under the POW by the Range States.

A collaboration is being planned with IUCN regarding the establishment of a sustainable funding mechanism for the ACI.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF CONCERTED ACTIONS

### Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna

#### Status and Achievements

In 2020, COP13 adopted the renewal and continuation of the Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna Concerted Action<sup>1</sup> in accordance with the process elaborated in Resolution 12.28 *Concerted Actions*<sup>2</sup>. COP13 further adopted the inclusion of two additional species in the Concerted Action: the Red-fronted Gazelle (*Eudorcas rufifrons*), and the Barbary Sheep (*Ammotragus lervia*). Together with the Scientific Council, the CMS Secretariat supports the Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna Concerted Action<sup>3</sup>.

In response to a proposal prepared by the Secretariat in close cooperation with the IUCN Specialist Group for Antelopes (ASG), in 2021, the Government of Germany pledged funding of EUR 1.46 million for a project addressing the illegal killing and disturbance of Sahelo-Saharan megafauna. The project is foreseen to start in the course of 2021 and run until 2024. It aims to support the Range States in enhancing the regional conservation of the Sahelo-Saharan megafauna by further developing Range State's capacity to foster the sustainability of their actions through regional and multi-stakeholder cooperation. In particular, the project will support activities to stop the extinction of the last Addax remaining in the wild in the area adjacent to the Termit Tin Toumma National Nature Reserve in Eastern Niger. The activities include the GPS-collaring of a few Addax individuals to collect and analyze data on their roaming and migration patterns to enable better monitoring, and the establishment of a regular patrol programme.

#### Challenges

Halting the extinction of the remaining less than 100 wild-ranging Addax in Niger is the greatest challenge of the project described above. It will require the engagement of additional partners and substantive additional resources to be raised to establish a breeding center to conserve the gene pool of the remaining wild population. Security issues in various countries of the Sahelo-Saharan region, and the complex logistics necessary for on-the-ground interventions pose significant challenges as well.

#### Next steps

The Secretariat will start the implementation of the project, and is liaising with various governments and organizations to leverage further support and resources for the emergency actions for the rescue of the last wild Addax, as well as for the sustainability of the activities addressed through the above-mentioned project in the long term. At the time of writing, the Third Regional Seminar of the Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna Concerted Action Range States is planned to be held in Morocco in 2022.

### Asian Elephant

#### Status and Achievements

The Government of India has informed the Secretariat of its signing a Protocol on Trans-boundary Elephant Conservation with the Government of Bangladesh, as a first step towards implementing Concerted Action 13.2.

#### Next steps

The Secretariat will continue liaise with the Governments of India and Bangladesh.

<sup>1</sup> [Concerted Action for the Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna \(Concerted Action 13.4\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> Superseded by [Resolution 12.28 \(Rev.COP13\) Concerted Actions](#)

<sup>3</sup> Resolution 12.28 (Rev.COP13) *Concerted Actions* operative paragraph 6.

## Chimpanzee

### Status and Achievements

In the context of the Concerted Action 13.1 *for the Nut-cracking Populations of the Chimpanzees (Pan troglodytes verus) of West Africa*, the Secretariat liaised with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Primate Specialist Group Section for Great Apes Working Group on Chimpanzee Cultures (hereafter WGCC), and organized an online meeting with its members in July 2020 to explore opportunities for collaboration between the WGCC and the CMS Concerted Action on Western Chimpanzees. A timeline for the preparation of a draft project proposal was agreed. To support the implementation of the Concerted Action, the Secretariat initiated, developed and submitted a concept for a project proposal to the International Climate Initiative (IKI) under the title “*Protecting vulnerable communities and migratory species in West Africa against zoonotic diseases through building connected landscapes and habitats*”, together in a consortium with the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), the Elephant Protection Initiative Foundation (EPIF), IUCN, Fauna and Flora International (FFI), Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary (TCS), and the Wild Chimpanzee Foundation (WCF), responding to the IKI thematic call on *Pandemic preparedness: natural protective barriers between humans and animals by expanding, linking and improving protected areas*, in March 2021.

### Challenges

The main challenge of this initiative is to raise sufficient funds for the organization of planning meetings of the Range States and the relevant experts and stakeholders, for data collection, conservation priorities and implementation on the ground, and for strategic outreach work to increase public engagement.

### Next steps

The Secretariat will maintain the contact with the WGCC, and, subject to the approval of the above-mentioned IKI concept, work and coordinate with the IKI consortium on the full IKI proposal and urge the Culture Working Group to prepare an implementation report for submission to sessional committees and COP14.

## Giraffe

### Status and Achievements

The Secretariat circulated the manual ‘*A Journey of Giraffe – A practical guide to wild giraffe translocations*’ prepared by the Giraffe Conservation Foundation in early 2021 for comment to Range States. The manual was one of the outputs envisaged from the Concerted Action. The Secretariat was not able to raise funds so far for the implementation of Concerted Action 13.3.

### Next steps

The Secretariat will try to raise funds to implement the Concerted Action.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, DECISIONS AND OTHERS

### Plastic pollution

#### Status and Achievements

The Secretariat worked with the UNEP Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) to develop a collaborative effort to implement a project funded by the Government of Japan, which contributes to the implementation of Decision 13.123 in the Asia and Pacific region. The project, "Promotion of Action against Marine Plastic Litter in Asia and the Pacific (CounterMEASURE II)" is a U.S.\$5.7-million project aiming at generating, sharing and disseminating scientific knowledge on plastic pollution in the Mekong, Ganges and selected rivers in Sri Lanka and Myanmar to inform policy and decision-making processes at the local, national, regional and global level.

The CMS Secretariat leads the Migratory Species Focal Area of CounterMEASURE II, which contributes towards the achievement of all three key results and manages a budget of U.S.\$ 271,000 to be implemented by March 2022. The Secretariat works with a number of implementing partners to:

- a. Produce a report summarizing the current knowledge on the impact of plastic pollution on migratory species in freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems, with a focus on Asia and the Pacific region (National Oceanography Centre (United Kingdom)).
- b. Assess the level of risk posed by exposure to plastic in the migratory species that occur in the Mekong and Ganges River Basin (Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (Australia)).
- c. Conduct research on the scope and impact of plastic pollution in Mekong and Ganges River fauna with a focus on migratory species of freshwater fish (Mekong River Commission Secretariat).
- d. Prepare a monitoring protocol on the impact of plastics on fauna living in the Mekong River Basin (Mekong River Commission Secretariat).
- e. Conduct outreach activities to raise awareness on plastic pollution and its impact on migratory species in the Mekong and Ganges River Basins.

#### Next steps

Reports received from the implementing partners are currently being and will be evaluated by a Scientific Advisory Group, established to review all outputs from the project.

### Linear Infrastructure

#### Status and Achievements

With funding received from the Government of Germany, the Secretariat commissioned an EIA/SEA expert to assist with the implementation of Decisions 13.130 to 13.134 Infrastructure Development and Migratory Species. A report was prepared which was submitted to the Scientific Council Sessional Committee at its 5<sup>th</sup> meeting. The Sessional Committee established a multi-stakeholder Working Group on linear infrastructure composed of stakeholders with experience and knowledge on the impact of linear infrastructure development on migratory species and options for mitigation. As part of the implementation of the Joint Work Programme between the Secretariat and the BfN, set up under CAMI, the Government of Germany has provided funding to convene a meeting of the multi-stakeholder Working Group in the second quarter of 2022.

#### Next steps

The Secretariat will support the convening of the multi-stakeholder Working Group on linear infrastructure and of its meeting.

## Unsustainable Consumption and Trade in Terrestrial and Avian Species

### Status and Achievements

In 2020, the Secretariat discussed with Birdlife International opportunities for joint fundraising approaches to implement [Decision 13.109](#) *Addressing Unsustainable Use of Terrestrial and Avian Wild Meat of Migratory Species of Wild Animals*. The Secretariat developed Terms of Reference and, thanks to voluntary contributions from the Government of Germany and Norway, could commission the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) to prepare an analysis on the direct and indirect impacts of wild meat taking, trade and consumption of terrestrial species listed on CMS Appendices I and II. At the time of writing, the analysis and the related report have been in finalization.

### Challenges

In terms of financial resourcing, the main challenge is raising of sufficient funds to implement the avian species component of Decision 13.109. Regarding the substance matter, significant information and data gaps on the impacts of wild meat taking, trade and consumption, also due to inaccessibility of some relevant databases impede the formulation of policy recommendations. Insufficient enforcement against illegal and/or unsustainable wild meat taking of CMS-listed species is indicated to be a key issue in many countries.

### Next steps

The Secretariat will continue, in cooperation with Parties and partners, to endeavour to raise additional resources for tackling the issue through addressing information gaps, the formulation of policy recommendations and their coordination on the international level, and concepts for strengthening awareness raising on the issue on different levels, as well as to support implementing projects and measures against illegal and unsustainable taking, trade and consumption of CMS-listed species. The Secretariat will also cooperate with Parties regarding the access to national data on the issue contained in currently inaccessible databases, in line with Decision 13.110.

## Transfrontier Conservation Areas

### Status and Achievements

The CMS Secretariate has significantly advanced agreements for support to specific Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCAs) including support to complete the Mana Pools-Lower Zambezi Memorandum of Understanding and initiatives to extend this to include the wider Zimbabwe-Mozambique-Zambia (ZIMOZA) TFCA. Further, the Secretariate has finalized agreements with WWF-Tanzania and the Elephant Protection Initiative to collaborate on the strengthening of agreements and management plans for the Niassa-Selous (Mozambique and Tanzania) and the Kafta-Sheraro-Gash Setit (Ethiopia and Eritrea) TFCAs respectively. This work has progressed significantly and research into the baseline parameters for the development of agreements and plans is now being completed for both sites. The Secretariate has also completed a partnership agreement with the Cheetah Conservation Foundation and Legal Atlas, to support the review of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Member State's wildlife and protected areas legislation as it relates to the establishment of TFCAs. The compilation of legal texts and support documents, best practices, and relevant documents related to wildlife conservation, management and crime was completed in the third quarter of 2020, and the analysis on potential areas for legal harmonisation has also been completed. Consultation with IGAD countries on which areas of harmonisation to move forward on is now ongoing.

A further key achievement has been the establishment of the East African Community Transfrontier Conservation Area (EAC TFCA) working group through the approval of the East African Community (EAC) Secretariat's Sectoral Council on Tourism and Wildlife Management. The EAC member states have assigned TFCA focal points to the working group. The first formal meeting of the working group, held on 15th May 2020, established the formal structures of the working group, formally approved the group's TOR and established a preliminary work plan. The group now provides a structure

through which CMS and other partners, such as the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), can support the EAC Secretariat to build its capacity for the creation of high-level political instruments and policies related to TFCAs.

### **Challenges**

Due to Covid-19 travel restrictions, implementation of some activities, such as the final signing of the Mana Pools-Lower Zambezi MOU, were hampered. These activities will be done at the soonest opportunity once travel restrictions are lifted.

### **Next steps**

The Secretariat will now work with IGAD member states on legal harmonisation that will strengthen TFCAs in the region. The Secretariat will also begin work on practical management plans for the Niassa-Selous and the Kafta-Sheraro-Gash Setit potential TFCAs. Finally, the Secretariat will work with the EAC TFCA working to further support capacity development and to build tools that will inform the selection and creation of future TFCAs across the region.

## **African Wild Ass**

### **Status and Achievements**

The *Roadmap for the Conservation of the African Wild Ass* provides key conservation guidelines for the African Wild Ass. During 2020, the Secretariat held calls with the National Focal Points of Eritrea and Ethiopia to understand their conservation priorities and needs. Based on these calls, a priority list of tasks was prepared.

The implementation of several activities is currently ongoing: e.g., the CMS Secretariat, together with the Chair of the IUCN SSC Equid Specialist Group, developed a concept for the production of an awareness-raising video about the plight of the African Wild Ass and the importance of conserving the species in Ethiopia and Eritrea (in collaboration with NFPs, IUCN expert(s), researchers, rangers on site, and possibly others), to be broadcasted at schools, universities and museums in the Range States.

For some tasks on the priority list (DNA & diet assessments; distribution assessment), funding has been provided by the Government of Germany.

### **Challenges**

Due to Covid-19, several implementation projects had to be put on hold or could not be started. For example, it was not possible to recruit a volunteer for the video production until mid-2021, and other projects were hampered due to travel restrictions (e.g., between Range States) and due to laboratories being used for COVID19 measures. These activities can now slowly be commenced or continued, in accordance with the restrictions in the various locations being lifted.

### **Next steps**

In the coming future, several pending activities shall be conducted, such as an assessment of African Wild Ass presence in Elba National Park in Egypt; assessments of DNA & diet samples to understand ecological needs and distribution of Wild Ass in their range; and a distribution assessment. In addition, the CMS Secretariat is planning to recruit a volunteer for the production of an awareness-raising video on African Wild Ass.

## **Community Participation and Livelihoods**

### **Status and Achievements**

Although some initial work has been done to gather information on initiatives related to community involvement in the conservation and management of CMS-listed species, due to limited resources the Secretariat was not able to advance the implementation of Decision 13.119.

### **Next steps**

The Secretariat will seek external support to collect the case studies and prepare the compilation as requested.



## INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH

### INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

#### Status and Achievements

The CMS website has been continually improved based on inputs from regular users such as the national focal points and the Secretariat staff. The user experience has been improved with new dynamic list pages compiling the decisions and resolutions in effect from the latest COP in addition to new information hub pages based on specific topics such as infrastructure, ecological connectivity and sharks have been created. In addition to the CMS website, dozens of MOU websites and workspaces have also been maintained and improved.

The websites of the CMS Family powered by the content management system Drupal are undergoing a major technological upgrade imposed by the established industry norms. Drupal's 7th version will soon become obsolete in terms of functionalities and security. The move from Drupal 7 to 8/9 requires a migration from an old website to a new one. Therefore, considerable work has been undertaken to proceed with the migration, including assessment of functionalities and the development of a new template prototype to implement the latest usability norms and trends. A large website survey about the future improvements of the website was conducted amongst several hundred national focal points of all CMS Family instruments in autumn 2020. Core funding through CMS Family cost-sharing has been successfully allocated to this important website upgrade project, which is foreseen to be concluded by the end of 2021.

During CMS COP 13, a newsroom portal was deployed as the homepage of the website to guide visitors directly to the conference news, documents and live streams.

The CMS website uninterruptedly feeds data through its API (application programming interface) to the InforMEA portal. The Secretariat also has made extensive use of the Online Reporting System (ORS) developed by UNEP-WCMC at multiple CMS and MOU reporting cycles.

The Joint CMS/AEWA Information Management, Communication and Awareness-raising Unit (IMCA) continues to provide operational services such as meeting registration, online reporting system and newsletter dissemination services.

#### Challenges

The preparative work of upgrading a dozen websites and workspaces of CMS and the wider CMS Family has proven to be a very complex operation due to the amount of data, layers of interoperability and functionalities in use in the current websites. Also, from a technical viewpoint, some existing modules have become obsolete and their replacement and mapping to new modules has been a challenge due to technological changes.

#### Next steps

The IMCA Unit will focus primarily on ensuring that the upgrade project is fulfilled successfully towards the end of 2021. Important upcoming tasks of the Unit will include:

- The migration of documents from a shared folder system to a professional document management system (Teams/SharePoint) for a better internal workflow for the Secretariat
- Improvement and expansion of the newsletter dissemination system
- Acquisition of a digital assets management system to improve the Unit's workflow with visual assets
- Full integration of the CMS websites with the auto tagging software PoolParty as being provided by the MEA IKM Initiative for improved categorization of data and content.

## COMMUNICATIONS

### Status and Achievements

The IMCA Unit has continually focused on raising awareness around the key messages of the Convention - the conservation issues of migratory species and their habitats. These have been linked to important meetings such as the CMS COP 13, as well as key issues, including zoonotic diseases. International days such as World Migratory Bird Day, World Wildlife Day, International Biodiversity Day and World Environment Day are used as platforms for the dissemination of statements by the Executive Secretary, social media campaigns and traditional media coverage.

The Secretariat achieved unprecedented media coverage in six UN languages and more linked to CMS COP 13 in India, with lasting increased social media attention to the issues around migratory species. Coverage was also recorded in numerous non-Parties including China, Mexico, Russia and the United States of America. International news agencies, the UN News Centre and some of the world's top news outlets such as the BBC covered the meeting.

Relationships with targeted media, also through social media channels are continuously being nurtured and developed. Op-eds by the CMS and AEWA Executive Secretaries were successfully placed. Interviews for CMS and AEWA Executive Secretaries were arranged with Indian news agencies, Deutsche Welle, French Broadcasting Company and UN Radio also featuring international species days. A quote by the CMS Executive Secretary on the listing update of the African Elephant on the IUCN Red List was featured on the BBC.

In May 2021, the joint press release with the University of Wyoming on the Global Initiative on Ungulate Migration garnered mentions by 48 news outlets including the World Economic Forum and Phys.org proving that strong partnerships provide additional opportunities when using media distribution services to publicize scientific findings.

The social media workflow of the Secretariat has become more systematic with the advanced preparation and planning of topic-based posts and the introduction of in-house production of short videos to significantly increase the interaction of users and other institutions with the CMS Secretariat content. On International Biodiversity Day 2021, a tweet of a video produced in-house was seen by 75,000 users within a day.

The IMCA Unit has been managing the CMS Facebook and Twitter accounts as the main social media channels of the Convention. The number of followers on the Twitter account have grown to over 24,700, and the Facebook page has registered a 15% growth since January 2020. The Secretariat has also recently launched the CMS official LinkedIn account to connect with a more professional audience and provide a wider coverage to vacancies and internship opportunities.

### Challenges

Raising the profile of CMS and the issues facing migratory species is challenging in a highly competitive news environment, and additional resources and partnerships are needed to amplify the work of the Secretariat.

### Next steps

The Secretariat is developing a communication strategy to increase the effectiveness of its outreach and communications, in addition to adopting steps for better internal efficiency, workflow and results.

## OUTREACH

### **Status and Achievements**

As one of the primary awareness-raising global campaigns being jointly organised by CMS and the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA), World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) has continued to grow over the years. It generates hundreds of registered events around the world at each peak day of the year (second Saturday in May and October) and high-level supporting statements from the UN Secretary General and Ministers to the heads of different global institutions and civil society actors. In terms of social media reach, the analytical data shows that the hashtags of #WorldMigratoryBirdDay have reached more than 340 million people in May 2021 alone. 2020's combined May/October social media activities have exposed the campaign to more than half a billion people. For the first time, UN.org featured World Migratory Bird Day on its homepage as the top news for the duration of the WMBD weekend, and the UN official twitter account posted five messages during the May 2021 peak day celebrations.

The campaign has become a great asset for CMS and AEWA to engage with the general public and organizations whom there might have been no interaction with. For example, the accounts of Airbus, the International Space Station, the UN Atomic Agency also took part in the celebration of migratory birds on World Migratory Bird Day.

### **Challenges**

Sustainable funding for World Migratory Bird Day would allow CMS and AEWA to further strengthen their ability to successfully run the global campaign twice each year.

### **Next steps**

Efforts by the Secretariats of CMS and AEWA, and Environment for the Americas (EFTA) are underway to widen the core partnership further to integrate and strengthen World Migratory Bird Day along all the key flyways of the world including the East Asian-Australasian Flyway. As per decision 13.138, the Secretariat will take necessary steps to work with its partners so that Light Pollution is considered as the theme for one of the upcoming World Migratory Bird Day campaigns.

## RESOURCE MOBILIZATION AND INTERAGENCY AFFAIRS

### RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

#### Status and Achievements

Significant progress has been made by the Secretariat to raise funds for the implementation of priority activities of the Programme of Work for 2020-2023. Details are included in table of the present document as well as in document UNEP/CMS/StC52/Doc.9.2 "*Resource Mobilization*".

#### Challenges

The Programme of Work for 2020-2023 is very ambitious as it includes all the mandates under the responsibility of the Secretariat as well as those directed to the Standing Committee and Scientific Council which require the support of the Secretariat. Despite the very positive and generous contributions described above, a significant number of areas of work under the POW are currently unfunded.

#### Next Steps

The Secretariat will continue identifying funding opportunities and approaching potential donors.

### SYNERGIES AND PARTNERSHIPS

#### Status and Achievements

The Secretariat strived to engage in events and processes of the UN system including in the preparations of the Food Summit, thematic dialogues convened in the context of the Environment Management Group and consultations around the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.

Collaboration with the other Secretariats of the biodiversity-related conventions (Liaison Group of Biodiversity-related Conventions - BLG) increased significantly over the last two years particularly in relation to the post-2020 process and resulted in various consultations and joint statements in different fora. Among these, the intervention made by the CMS Executive Secretary to address the UN Biodiversity Summit in September 2020 which highlighted the role of the BLG conventions in helping achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and for an effective implementation of an ambitious post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. Th the CMS Executive Secretary also delivered a message on behalf of CMS calling for action to stop and reverse the decline of wildlife, end the overexploitation of nature, which would in turn minimize the risk of future outbreaks of infectious zoonotic diseases.

Meanwhile, bilateral cooperation with BLG members and other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) has continued through the implementation of joint work plans and enhancing synergies when possible. Further details are provided in the Scientific Advisory Services section under "*Connectivity*" and other sections of the POW. The Secretariats of CMS and of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) developed a new Joint Work Programme for 2021-2025 which is submitted to the StC52 for its consideration in document UNEP/CMS/StC52/Doc.17 "*Joint Work Programme between CMS and CITES*".

The CMS Secretariat continued to engage in IPBES processes; participated in its meetings to promote CMS considerations in the development of ongoing assessments.

#### Next Steps

Following some initial steps, the Secretariat will continue engage with UNDP, World Bank, and other key organizations.

The Secretariat will also explore ways to establishing a dialogue with other key sectoral groups including indigenous peoples, local communities and youth groups as well as to increasing the engagement and recognition of those NGO partners whose activities make a significant contribution to CMS.

## STRENGTHENING REGIONAL PRESENCE

### Status and Achievements

The Secretariat has been striving to renew cooperative efforts with the UNEP Regional Offices. In March 2021, a letter was sent to all Offices with a view to promote discussion on areas of possible joint work including:

1. Support for national-level implementation of CMS commitments for example through promoting GEF funding to CMS national priorities that are integrated into the biodiversity and other programmes of the GEF.

2. Collaboration with the Secretariat in implementing its mandates in the region for instance through opportunities for joint implementation such as in the case of CMS participation in the second phase of the CounterMeasure project on plastic pollution and its impacts on freshwater and terrestrial species in the Mekong River basin led by the Office for Asia and the Pacific.

3. Strengthening engagement in regional fora and with regional entities. The Regional Offices can play a key role in highlighting the work of CMS and its related agreements in relevant fora and initiatives, and in strengthening the engagement of key entities in the work of CMS. For example, best practices developed under the CMS Energy Task Force could be disseminated in the regions for uptake by entities including Regional Development Banks.

4. Accession and political outreach. The number of Parties has grown rapidly over the last few years, and several Regional Offices have played a key role in building political support and promoting country accession. Further efforts are needed to address gaps in membership of CMS and its instruments in order to ensure cooperation and implementation of measures for migratory species across all Range States.

5. Communications and special events. Building on successful past collaborations, the close involvement of the Regional Offices in the preparations of future key meetings as well as outreach and communication initiatives and awareness campaigns (e.g. World Migratory Bird Day) is particularly welcome. The role of the Regional Offices is particularly sought after in the run up to COP14 and associated regional preparatory workshops in helping liaise with the host country, assist Parties and partners in navigating through the agendas of these meetings and rally political support if necessary.

The Secretariat also takes part in the implementation of the third phase of the Capacity Building Project for the implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) in the African, Caribbean and Pacific regions (ACP MEAs III). The project is funded by the European Union and led by UNEP. This phase of the project aims to support ACP countries to enforce and comply with MEAs including CMS. Programme partners include the regional Hubs being the African Union, the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), through which most of the activities are implemented.

The CMS Secretariat collaborates with UNEP and the regional hubs in the implementation of activities that cut across the three regions and aim at promoting country accession or building national and institutional capacity and influencing policies and legislative frameworks for effective implementation of CMS obligations. Additional activities of specific relevance to the regions are also envisaged such as to support to the implementation of the CMS Pacific Islands Cetacean MOU in collaboration with SPREP.

### **Next Steps**

The Secretariat will engage in the implementation of the ACP project, as appropriate, and continue reaching out to the UNEP Regional Offices and exploring opportunities to collaborate.

## **AMBASSADORS FOR MIGRATORY SPECIES**

### **Status and Achievements**

Following the launch of the revamped Programme and the official designations which took place in the margins of COP13, the Secretariat supported Ambassadors for Migratory Species and provided guidance on their role as well as the priority issues, species and dates of interest for 2021 of most relevance to their work.

### **Challenges**

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Ambassadors' engagement was limited to social media messaging and other outreach activities.

### **Next Steps**

The Secretariat will continue foster the relationship with the Ambassadors for Migratory Species and jointly explore ways to elevate the profile of CMS and mobilize attention for specific issues or species.

## CAPACITY-BUILDING

### RECRUITMENT OF PARTIES

#### Status and Achievements

CMS's membership is continuously growing and has reached 132 Parties. Since COP13, the Secretariat has welcomed Turkmenistan and Central African Republic<sup>4</sup>. Several other countries have expressed interest to join the Convention in the near future. However, the membership to the CMS is geographically unbalanced: while regions such as Europe, Africa and South America are well represented, large gaps can still be found in North and Central America, the Caribbean, Asia, and the Pacific.

To promote accession to the CMS, the Secretariat has prepared information materials and bilateral meetings. A number of governments, including the Indian Government, as well as key partner organizations such as UNEP have supported CMS efforts through their bilateral relationships with a number of countries.

With the financial support of European Union, through the Global Public Goods and Challenges (GPGC Programme) Cooperation Agreements with UNEP, the Secretariat is preparing a strategy to promote accession to the CMS.

#### Next Steps

The Secretariat will continue promoting country accession, including through the organization of dedicated events and dialogues at regional level and through bilateral approaches.

### STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONAL AND NATIONAL CAPACITY

Details on progress in the implementation of activities under this item are provided in the Resource Mobilization and Inter-Agency Affairs section under "*Strengthening Regional Presence*".

### REVIEW MECHANISM AND NATIONAL LEGISLATION PROGRAMME

#### Status and Achievements

In relation to the Review Mechanism, the Secretariat received a communication of a possible implementation matter in April 2021 and informed the Party concerned giving the opportunity to provide comments. At the moment of preparing this document, the Secretariat is screening the information provided according to the criteria and procedure established in Resolution 12.19.

Concerning the National Legislation Program, thanks to funding from the European Union, through the Global Public Goods and Challenges (GPGC Programme) Cooperation Agreements with UNEP, the Secretariat has continued with the implementation of Resolution 12.19 and associated relevant decisions.

In 2020, the Secretariat analysed the information submitted and prepared national legislation profiles, including findings and recommended actions, for each of the thirty-nine CMS Parties that completed the National Legislation Programme questionnaire on implementation of CMS Article III paragraph 5. In addition, as requested by Decision 13.20 d), the Secretariat shared the national legislation profiles with the Parties concerned and carefully reviewed the comments received.

<sup>4</sup> Central Africa Republic's accession process was concluded in 2021. However, the Depositary considered that the Instrument of Accession had entered into force in 2018.

In 2021, the Secretariat made a second call, and ten additional CMS Parties submitted the questionnaire on the implementation of CMS Article III, paragraph 5 to the Secretariat. The Secretariat is analysing the information submitted through the questionnaires and preparing national legislation profiles for each of such Parties.

As requested by Decision 13.20 a), the Secretariat revised and extended the National Legislation Program questionnaire to request legislation implementing Article III, paragraphs 4 a) and b). In addition, following Decision 13.20 b), the Secretariat shared the revised questionnaire with all Parties, inviting them to complete and submit it.

The Secretariat is re-designing the National Legislation Program dedicated web page and has also carried out preparatory work to develop knowledge management tools to organize Parties' legislation relating to the implementation of Article III, paragraphs 4 a) and b) and 5, and is preparing capacity-building materials.

### **Challenges**

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, activities planned to be carried out in person had to be redesigned or postponed.

### **Next Steps**

The Secretariat will continue to:

- prepare the above-mentioned national legislation profiles and inform all Parties concerned about the findings and recommended actions.
- implement Decision 13.20, providing technical assistance to Parties in addressing the recommendations in the national legislation profiles and drafting adequate national legislation to implement CMS Article III, paragraph 5.
- prepare guidance materials, model laws, technical guidance, and training related to Article III, paragraphs 4 a) and b) and 5.
- promote the Review Mechanism and handling any communication.

## **STRENGTHENING NATIONAL LEGAL FRAMEWORKS AND CAPACITY FOR THE CONSERVATION OF MIGRATORY SHARKS AND RAYS**

### **Achievements**

With financial support from the Government of Germany in 2020, the Secretariat undertook a compilation and analysis of national legislation regarding the implementation of CMS Article III (5) for shark and rays species in CMS Appendix I, including how bycatch is taken into account, of ten Sharks MOU Signatories that are also CMS Parties. Furthermore, legislative guidance materials were and recommendations for amendment of existing laws regarding the implementation of the CMS Sharks MOU in general, and CMS Art III (5) in particular were prepared. This also included identified best practices to operationalize CMS Article III (4 a and b) for sharks and rays in national legislation. In addition, a compilation of existing and preparation of new training materials was prepared to support 2-day training workshops for other areas of capacity-building as foreseen in the Sharks MOU Capacity-building Programme.

### **Challenges**

The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic prevents holding training workshops with physical presence of participants. However, options are being investigated to take advantage of planned training workshops that will be undertaken in the context of a Mava-funded bycatch mitigation project in West African countries, in which the Secretariat is involved as an implementing partner.

### **Next Steps**

Depending on Covid-19 travel restrictions, the Secretariat will either hold physical training workshops (e.g. back to back with related other workshops) or virtual sessions. It is especially intended to add training sessions on shark and ray identification, data collection, safe handling and release and legal requirements under CMS and other legal framework relevant to the respective country to these planned workshops.



## SERVICING OF GOVERNING BODIES

### ***Organize Standing Committee Meetings***

#### **Status and Achievements**

Since COP13, the Executive Secretary has had regular contact with the Chair of the StC to keep him abreast of important developments. It was agreed that the 52<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee (StC52) will be held online on 21 to 29 September 2021 for the first time due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The meeting will consist of a combination of plenary sessions by videoconference and online platforms for written submissions. Simultaneous interpretation in English, French, Spanish and German will be provided for all plenary sessions thanks to support from the German Government. The meeting will be open to all members of the Standing Committee as well as observers.

StC52 being the first meeting of the Committee after CMS COP13, its main objective was to review progress on number of activities and consider a few items for adoption including the revised format for National reports.

As usual all staff are involved to varying degrees in drafting of the substantive documents for StC52 while the Conference Service Team are taking care of the logistical arrangements and document production.

#### **Next steps**

At the time of writing, the Secretariat is finalizing all documents for the meeting which will be made available on the website in the three official languages by mid-August.

### ***Organize Meetings of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council***

#### **Status and Achievements**

Due to the persistent restrictions in international travel and organization of in-person meetings related to the Covid-19 pandemic, the 5th meeting of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council (ScC-SC5) was convened as an online virtual meeting from 28 June to 9 July 2021. The meeting consisted of a combination of plenary sessions by videoconference; meetings of working groups by videoconference; and online platforms for written submissions. Simultaneous interpretation in English, French, Spanish and German was provided for all plenary sessions thanks to support from the German Government.

The meeting was open to all members of the Sessional Committee, other members of the CMS Scientific Council not members of the Sessional Committee, as well as representatives of CMS Parties, CMS Agreements and CMS partner organizations and institutions. It was attended by more than 150 participants.

ScC-SC5 being the first meeting of the Sessional Committee after CMS COP13, its main objective was to make progress on activities for the intersessional period between COP13 and COP14 in line with relevant COP13 mandates. Prominent items on the agenda of the meeting included:

- The adoption of a Programme of Work for the Sessional Committee for the intersessional period between COP13 and COP14;
- The development of a flagship report on the conservation status of migratory species;
- Conservation action for various migratory species, including Chondrichthyan Species, African carnivores, Sahelo-Saharan megafauna, and African elephants;
- Addressing threats to migratory species such as climate change, infrastructure development, plastic pollution, light pollution, wildlife disease, loss of ecological connectivity;
- Engagement in other processes such as IPBES and the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

The meeting considered a total of 22 working documents and 10 information documents, and produced 18 in-session documents.

### **Challenges**

With participants connecting from a wide range of time zones, a main challenge was to organize the schedule of the meeting in such a way to allow participation at times not too inconvenient for some participants. This was addressed by limiting the time of daily online sessions while extending the duration of the meeting over two weeks. Even with these arrangements, a number of participants had to join sessions outside of normal working hours. However, the challenge was well understood by participants and no significant complains have been recorded in relation to the schedule and organization of work.

Use of online platforms has been somehow challenging for some participants, in terms of connectivity and/or practice in the use of the tools. It also required a significant organizational effort by the Secretariat. While a number of lessons have been learned that should allow to improve services for future meetings, difficulties have not been such to significantly affect the work and productivity of the meeting.

### **Next steps**

At the time of writing, the Secretariat is finalizing and making available online the outcome documents for the meeting. These include the Terms of Reference of several intersessional working groups that the meeting agreed to establish. Operationalization of these working groups is one of the immediate next steps.

In terms of future meetings, the convening of at least one more full meeting of the Sessional Committee is foreseen in the runup to COP14. The possibility of convening additional meetings in the intersessional period in an online format was discussed and will be further considered.

OVERARCHING ISSUES

SDGs	SPMS Targets	Activities	Priority ranking	2020					2021					Status
				Total Budget (€)	Funding Secured			Budget Gap	Total Budget (€)	Funding Secured			Budget Gap	
					MSL	MVL	Donor			MSL	MVL	Donor		
<b>MIGRATORY SPECIES IN THE POST-2020 GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK</b>														
All	All	Continue engage in the development of the post-2020 framework and support the Working Group	High	15,000	0	30,000	Norway Switzerland	0	0	0	0		0	
<b>STRATEGIC PLAN FOR MIGRATORY SPECIES 2015-2023 AND FOLLOW-UP</b>														
All	All	Further develop indicators, identify related data gaps and case studies and undertake a full assessment of the implementation of the Strategic Plan	High	0	0	0		0	50,000	0	0		50,000	
		Develop options for a follow-up to the Strategic Plan 2015-2023	High	30,000	0	0		30,000	0	0	0		0	
<b>NATIONAL REPORTING</b>														
All	All	Revise Format for the national reports in three languages	High	0	0	0		0	10,000	0	10,000	Switzerland	0	
		Undertake Analysis of National Reports	Core	0	0	0		0	0	0	0		0	
<b>APPLICATION OF ARTICLE III OF THE CONVENTION</b>														
All	All	Develop criteria and assess the impact of international trade on the conservation status of Appendix I-listed species	High	0	0	0		0	30,000	0	30,000	Switzerland (2020)	0	
<b>SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND MIGRATORY SPECIES</b>														
All	All	Compile information and data on the interlinkages between migratory species and sustainable development and contributions of the CMS Family to achieving SDGs	Medium	0	0	0		0	20,000	0	100,000	Norway (2020)	0	
<b>Total (including Programme Support Costs -13%)</b>					<b>45,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>30,000</b>		<b>30,000</b>	<b>110,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>140,000</b>		<b>50,000</b>

MSL: Trust Fund, MVL: Voluntary Contributions

completed / on track  
 initiated / partly in progress due to limited funding and/or capacity

not yet started/not progressed- lack of funding and/or capacity  
 only foreseen in 2022/2023

IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT - SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY SERVICES

SDGs	SPMS Targets	Activities	Priority ranking	2020					2021					Status
				Total Budget (€)	Funding Secured			Budget Gap	Total Budget (€)	Funding Secured			Budget Gap	
					MSL	MVL	Donor			MSL	MVL	Donor		
<b>ATLAS ON ANIMAL MIGRATION</b>														
4, 7, 9, 12, 14, 17	15	Develop Global Atlas on Animal Migration (concept and portal)	High	30,000	0	30,000	Italy (2018)	0	200,000	0	0		200,000	
		Develop African-Eurasian Bird Migration Atlas	High	300,000	0	300,000	Italy (2018)	0	300,000	0	300,000	Italy (2018)	0	
<b>CONSERVATION STATUS OF MIGRATORY SPECIES</b>														
4, 7, 9, 12, 14, 17	15	Prepare in-depth review of the conservation status of individual Appendix I-listed species	High	0	0	0		0	30,000	0	128,000	Australia (2020 & 2021)	0	
		Prepare State of World's Migratory Species Report	High	0	0	0			50,000	0	70,000	UK Switzerland	0	
12, 14, 15	6, 7	Undertake assessment of the impact of direct use on the conservation status of species listed on Appendix I	Medium	0	0	0		0	50,000	0	10,000	UK	40,000	
<b>CLIMATE CHANGE AND MIGRATORY SPECIES</b>														
All	1, 2, 4, 5, 7-10, 12, 13, 15	Convene workshop to discuss adaptation and ongoing implementation of the PoW on climate change and migratory species in more details	High	25,000	0	0		25,000	0	0	0		0	
		Participate in UNFCCC COP in 2020 to showcase the issue of the impact of Climate Change on migratory species	High	10,000	0	0		10,000	0	0	0		0	
		Develop a baseline curriculum for webinars and e-learning courses to build capacity on climate change and migratory species among natural resource professionals and decision makers	Medium	0	0	0		0	40,000	0	0		40,000	
		Review evidence for climate change impacts on migratory species; vulnerability assessment and develop guidelines for adaptation measures	Medium	0	0	0		0	200,000	0	0		200,000	
		Build climate-resilient site networks for migratory species (development of project proposal and matching funds)	Medium	50,000	0	0		50,000	100,000	0	0		100,000	
<b>CONNECTIVITY</b>														
6, 7, 11-15	9, 10	Conduct analysis on the linkages between migratory species connectivity and ecosystem resilience	Medium	0	0	0		0	15,000	0	20,000	Switzerland	0	
		Assess needs and develop focused objectives for new research on key connectivity issues	Medium	15,000	0	0		0	0	0	0		0	
<b>SUSTAINABLE TOURISM</b>														
1-3, 5-16	2, 5, 6, 11, 13, 14	Collate existing information on best practices and impacts of tourism on wildlife as basis to develop guidelines for sustainable tourism on wildlife interactions.	Medium	0	0	0		0	20,000	0	0		20,000	
<b>SMALL GRANT PROGRAMME</b>														
All	All	Coordinate implementation of the Programme	Medium	100,000	0	0		100,000	100,000	0	60,000	India	40,000	
<b>LIGHT POLLUTION*</b>														
11, 14, 15	2-8, 10, 11, 13-16	Development of additional guidelines		17,000	0	17,000	Germany	0	0	0	0			
<b>INSECTS*</b>														
2, 15	2-6, 8-14, 16	Development of assessment and guidelines		0	0	0			30,000	0	29,000	Germany Australia	0	
<b>Total (including Programme Support Costs -13%)</b>					<b>547,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>347,000</b>		<b>185,000</b>	<b>1,135,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>617,000</b>		<b>640,000</b>

MSL: Trust Fund, MVL: Voluntary Contributions

\* added after COP13

completed / on track  
 initiated / partly in progress due to limited funding and/or capacity

not yet started/not progressed- lack of funding and/or capacity  
 only foreseen in 2022/2023

IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT - AQUATIC SPECIES

SDGs	SPMS Targets	Activities	Priority ranking	2020					2021					Status
				Total Budget (€)	Funding Secured			Budget Gap	Total Budget (€)	Funding Secured			Budget Gap	
					MSL	MVL	Donor			MSL	MVL	Donor		
<b>MOUS AND STANDALONE ACTION PLANS - COORDINATION, ORGANIZATION OF MEETINGS OF DECISION-MAKING BODIES AND IMPLEMENTATION OF KEY PRIORITIES</b>														
All	1, 3, 4, 6, 8-11, 13, 15	Marine Turtles of the Atlantic Coast of Africa MOU	Core	0	0	0		0	35,000	0	0		35,000	
All	1, 3, 4, 6-11, 13-16	IOSEA Marine Turtles MOU	Core	375,000	0	99,568	Signatories	275,432	375,000	0	138,635	Signatories	236,365	
1-15, 17	1, 3, 4, 6-11, 14, 15, 16	Sharks MOU	Core	496,000	0	234,035	Signatories Monaco	261,965	496,000	0	220,727	Signatories Monaco	275,273	
All	1-3, 6-10, 13-15	Pacific Islands Cetaceans MOU	Core	15,000	0	0		15,000	35,000	0	19,100	Australia	0	
All	1, 3, 4, 6-10, 13-15	Western African Aquatic Mammal MOU	Core	0	0	0		0	35,000	0	0		35,000	
1, 2, 5, 12-14, 17	All	Dugong MOU	Core	450,000	0	342,000	UAE	108,000	450,000	0	342,000	UAE	108,000	
1-15, 17	1-11, 14, 15	South Pacific Loggerhead Turtle Action Plan	Medium	50,000	0	40,000	Australia (2018)	10,000	50,000	0	0		50,000	
<b>IMPLEMENTATION OF CONCERTED ACTIONS</b>														
2, 12, 14, 15	3, 8, 9	Whale Shark	High	60,000	0	60,000	Philippines (2018)	0	0	0	0		0	
2, 12, 14, 15	3, 8, 9	Angelshark	High	25,000	0	10,000	Monaco	0	0	0	0		0	
2, 12, 14, 15	3, 8, 9	Atlantic Humpback Dolphin	High	0	0	0		0	50,000	0	50,000	Monaco (2020)	0	
2, 12, 14, 15	3, 8, 9	Arabian Sea Humpback Whales	Medium	0	0	0		0	0	0	0		0	
2, 12, 14, 15	3, 8, 9	Guitarfish, Smalltooth and LargeTooth Sawfish	High	200,000	0	0		200,000	0	0	0		0	
<b>IMPLEMENTATION OF RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, DECISIONS AND OTHERS</b>														
2, 4, 7, 9, 12, 14, 15, 17	3, 8, 9, 15	European Eel	High	50,000	0	50,000	Monaco SSC* Sweden	0	0	0	0		0	
2, 12, 14, 15	3, 8, 9	Polar Bear	Medium	0	0	0		0	33,000	0	33,000	Norway (2018)	0	
1-4, 6, 8-15, 17	1-3, 6-10, 15	Whales in the South Atlantic Region	Medium	0	0	0		0	60,000	0	0		60,000	
2, 3, 6, 9-15	3, 7, 8, 9	Cetaceans Programme of Work	Medium	45,000	0	45,000	Monaco (2021)	0	0	0	0		0	
14, 15	8	Marine Turtles	Medium	0	0	0		0	30,000	0	0		30,000	
1-3, 6-15	5, 7, 10	Marine Wildlife Watching	High	15,000	0	15,000	Monaco	0	0	0	0		0	
14, 15	8	Freshwater Migratory Fish	Medium	0	0	0		0	60,000	0	0		60,000	
4, 7, 9, 12, 14, 17	15	Conservation Implications of Animal Culture and Social Complexity	High	40,000	0	0		40,000	0	0	0		0	
1-4, 5-17	1, 2, 4-7, 10, 11, 13-16	Aquatic Wild Meat, Marine Noise, Marine Debris, Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs) and Live capture of cetaceans from the wild for commercial purposes	Medium								55,000	Monaco		Support to IMMAs and Noise
1, 2, 5, 12-14, 17	All	Seagrass Ecosystem Project	High	1,205,992	0	1,205,992	Germany (IKI)**	0	821,914	0	821,914	Germany (IKI)	0	
1-3, 6-15	5-7	Bycatch	Medium	0	0	0		0	100,000	0	50,000	Monaco	50,000	
		Review levels of bycatch of CMS-listed chondrichthyan species and existing measures to mitigate it	Medium	200,000	0	205,228	Mava Foundation	0	220,000	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total (including Programme Support Costs -13%)</b>			<b>0</b>	<b>3,226,992</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,306,823</b>		<b>920,169</b>	<b>2,850,914</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,730,376</b>		<b>939,638</b>	



MSL: Trust Fund, MVL: Voluntary Contributions

NB: the Monk Seal in the Atlantic MOU is entirely managed by the Range States

\* SSC = Sargasso Sea Commission

\*\* IKI = International Climate Initiative

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 only foreseen in 2022/2023

IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT - AVIAN SPECIES

SDGs	SPMS Targets	Activities	Priority ranking	2020					2021					Status
				Total Budget (€)	Funding Secured			Budget Gap	Total Budget (€)	Funding Secured			Budget Gap	
					MSL	MVL	Donor			MSL	MVL	Donor		
<b>MOUS AND STANDALONE ACTION PLANS - COORDINATION, ORGANIZATION OF MEETINGS OF DECISION-MAKING BODIES AND IMPLEMENTATION OF KEY PRIORITIES</b>														
1-4, 6-13, 15, 17	1-4, 7-10, 15, 16	Aquatic Warbler MOU	Core	40,000	0	0	0	40,000	10,000	0	0		10,000	
1-4, 6-13, 15, 17	1-3, 5, 7-10, 15, 16	High Andean Flamingos MOU	Core	20,000	0	0		20,000	0	0	0		0	
1-13, 15, 17	1-4, 6, 8-10, 14	Middle-European Great Bustard MOU	Core	0	0	0		0	0	0	0		0	
1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 9-13, 15, 17	1, 3, 8-10, 15, 16	Siberian Crane MOU	Core	40,000	0	0		40,000	10,000	0	0		10,000	
1-3, 4, 6-13, 15, 17	1-4, 7-9, 15, 16	Southern South American Grassland Birds MOU	Core	0	0	0		0	0	0	0		0	
1, 2, 8, 9, 12, 13, 15, 17	All	Raptors MOU	Core	450,000	0	347,832	UAE, Sweden, Hungary, Slovakia	102,168	450,000	0	342,000	UAE	108,000	
1-13, 15-17	1-3, 5, 7-11, 14-16	African-Eurasian Migratory Landbirds Action Plan	High	180,000	0	55,000	Switzerland Sponsored Delegate Fund	125,000	0	0	0		0	
2, 6, 7, 11-13, 15	3, 8-10	Birds International Single Species Action Plans	Low	15,000	0	25,400	Australia	0	15,000	0	92,000	Australia	0	including FrigateBird
1, 2, 8, 9, 12, 13, 15, 17	1, 4, 5, 7-11, 15	Saker Falcon Global Action Plan	High	117,000	0	27,000	UAE	90,000	117,000	0	27,000	UAE	90,000	
1, 2, 8, 9, 12, 13, 15, 17	1-11, 13, 15, 16	African-Eurasian Vultures Multi-species Action Plan	High	157,500	0	53,000	UAE UNEP	104,500	157,500	0	36,000	UAE	121,500	
1, 2, 8, 9, 12, 13, 15, 17	1, 4, 5, 7-11, 15	Sooty Falcon International Species Action Plan	Medium	0	0	0		0	54,000	0	18,000	UAE	36,000	
<b>IMPLEMENTATION OF CONCERTED ACTIONS</b>														
1-13, 15, 17	1-10, 14, 15	Asian Great Bustard	Medium	0	0	0		0	0	0	0		0	
<b>IMPLEMENTATION OF RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS AND DECISIONS</b>														
1, 2, 7-12, 15	3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 16	<b>Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds (IKB)</b>												
		Support to the Intergovernmental Task Force in the Mediterranean (MIKT)	High	230,000	0	139,775	EU	90,226	230,000	0	50,000	EU	180,000	
		Assess IKB for South and Central America and the Caribbean	High	50,000	0	0		50,000	100,000	0	0		100,000	
		Assess IKB for Sub-Saharan Africa and Central Asia	Medium	60,000	0	0		60,000	0	0	0		0	
		Address IKB in other regions	Medium	0	0	0		0	100,000	0	0		100,000	
		Undertake analysis of production, sale, use and regulation of use of mist and other nets	Medium	0	0	0		0	80,000	0	0		80,000	
		Establish and support Task Force on Illegal Hunting, Taking and Trade in East Asia (ITTEA)	High	100,000	0	0		100,000	100,000	0	95,000	Australia	5,000	
1, 2, 5-8, 10-13, 15-17	3, 4, 6, 8-10, 13, 16	<b>Flyways</b>												
		Support the Flyways Working Group	Medium	0	0	0		0	0	0	0		0	
		Coordinate and organize meetings and activities for the Central Asian Flyway	High	0	0	0		0	100,000				100,000	
		Prepare guidance for reporting on Flyways Programme of Work	Low											
		Support implementation of the Americas Flyway Action Plan	High	60,000	0	0		60,000	90,000	0	0		90,000	
1-13, 15, 17	1-11, 13, 15, 16	<b>Preventing Bird Poisoning</b>												
		Coordinate Working Group and organize its meetings and regional workshops	High	140,000	0	0		140,000	140,000	0	0		140,000	
		Establish and support Intergovernmental Task Force on Phasing Out the Use of Lead Ammunition and Lead Fishing Weights	High	120,000	0	0		120,000	120,000	0	0		120,000	
2, 4, 7, 9, 10, 12, 15, 17	1, 3, 8, 9, 15, 16	<b>Wildlife Diseases and Migratory Species</b>	Low							15,000	Germany			
All	1, 3-5, 7-11, 15, 16	<b>Energy Task Force</b>	High	200,000	0	60,000	Germany	140,000	200,000	0	85,000	India France	115,000	
<b>Total (including Programme Support Costs -13%)</b>					<b>1,979,500</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>708,007</b>		<b>1,281,894</b>	<b>2,073,500</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>760,000</b>		<b>1,405,500</b>

MSL: Trust Fund, MVL: Voluntary Contributions

NB: Ruddy-headed Goose MOU is entirely managed by the Range States. Central Asian Flyway and Slender-billed Curlew MOU are currently inactive

\* All CMS approved Action Plans

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IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT - TERRESTRIAL SPECIES

SDGs	SPMS Targets	Activities	Priority ranking	2020					2021					Status
				Total Budget (€)	Funding Secured			Budget Gap	Total Budget (€)	Funding Secured			Budget Gap	
					MSL	MVL	Donor			MSL	MVL	Donor		
<b>MOUS, STANDALONE ACTION PLANS AND INITIATIVES - COORDINATION, ORGANIZATION OF MEETINGS OF DECISION-MAKING BODIES AND IMPLEMENTATION OF KEY PRIORITIES</b>														
1-13, 15-17	All	Gorilla Agreement	Core	53,250	28,250	4,200	Germany (through GRASP)	20,800	75,700	40,700	0		35,000	
1-4, 6-13, 15, 17	1, 3, 4, 6-9, 15, 16	Central Asian Mammal Initiative (CAMI)	Core	160,000	0	0		0	285,000	0	222,302	Germany (BfN)* (IKI)**	0	2021-2024 Project total budget: 950,000. It covers also activities for Argali and Bukhara Deer
1-4, 8-13, 15	1, 3, 6-9	Saiga MOU	Core	50,000	0	15,000	Germany (BfN)*	35,000	10,000	0	0		10,000	
1, 2, 4, 7-10, 12, 15, 17	1, 3, 6, 8, 9, 15, 16	Bukhara Deer MOU	Core	10,000	0	40,000	Germany (BfN)*	0	50,000	0	0	Germany (IKI)**	0	see CAMI
1-4, 8-13, 15	1, 3, 6-9	South Andean Huemul MOU	Core	10,000	0	0		10,000	10,000	0	0		10,000	
1-13, 15-17	1, 3, 6-10, 13, 14, 16	Argali International Single Species Action Plan	High	20,000	0	0		20,000	50,000	0	0	Germany (IKI)**	0	see CAMI
1-13, 15-17	1, 3, 6-16	African Elephant Action Plan and Western African Elephant MOU	High	20,000	0	12,000	Germany	0	20,000	0	0		20,000	
2, 4, 12, 15	1, 3, 8, 9	Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivore Initiative	Core	80,000	0	0		80,000	250,000	0	0		250,000	
<b>IMPLEMENTATION OF CONCERTED ACTIONS</b>														
1-13, 15, 17	1, 3, 6-10, 14-16	Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna	High	20,000	0	0		0	100,000	0	652,259	Germany	0	2021-2024 Project total budget: €1,466,273
2, 4, 12, 15	1, 3, 8, 9	Asian Elephant	Medium	0	0	0		0	40,000	0	0		40,000	
2, 4, 12, 15	1, 3, 8, 9	Chimpanzee	Medium	20,000	0	0		20,000	0	0	0		0	
2, 4, 12, 15	1, 3, 8, 9	Giraffe	Medium	54,000	0	0		54,000	157,500	0	0		157,500	
2, 4, 12, 15	1, 3, 8, 9	Support to Range States in implementing the Convention in relation to newly-listed species	Medium	20,000	0	0		20,000	10,000	20,000	0		0	for Jaguar
<b>IMPLEMENTATION OF RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS AND DECISIONS</b>														
6, 9, 11-15	7	Plastic Pollution on Aquatic, Terrestrial and Avian Species	Medium	0	0	76,000	Japan	0	0	0	154,000	Japan	0	2020-2021 CounterMeasure II project
9, 11, 13-15	13	Linear Infrastructure	High	30,000	0	22,000	Germany	0	15,000	0	0		15,000	
6, 7, 11-15	9, 10	Transfrontier Conservation Areas for Migratory Species	Medium	5,000	0	0		5,000	20,000	0	0		20,000	
1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 11-13, 15, 17	1-3, 6	Unsustainable Consumption and Trade in Terrestrial and Avian Species	Medium	60,000	0	35,000	Germany Norway	25,000	0	0	0		0	
2, 4, 12, 15	1, 3, 8, 9	African Wild Ass	High	30,000	0	0		30,000	30,000	0	20,500	Germany	0	
All	1-8, 11, 14	Community Participation and Livelihoods	Medium	0	0	0		0	10,000	0	0		10,000	
2, 15	3, 8	Wildlife Crime and Offences	Medium	2,500	0	0		2,500	2,500	0	0		2,500	
2, 15	3, 8	Tigers and Other Asian Big Cats	Medium	2,500	0	0		2,500	2,500	0	0		2,500	
<b>Total (including Programme Support Costs -13%)</b>				<b>647,250</b>	<b>28,250</b>	<b>204,200</b>		<b>324,800</b>	<b>1,138,200</b>	<b>60,700</b>	<b>1,049,061</b>		<b>572,500</b>	

MSL: Trust Fund, MVL: Voluntary Contributions



NB: In the case of the Gorilla Agreement, the Trust Fund refers to the one of the agreement.

\* BfN: Bundesamt für Naturschutz - German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation

NB: the budget required for the Joint CMS-CITES African Carnivore Initiative has been added for 2021-2023 after COP13

\*\* IKI: International Climate Initiative.



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INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH

SDGs	SPMS Targets	Activities	Priority ranking	2020					2021					Status
				Total Budget (€)	Funding Secured			Budget Gap	Total Budget (€)	Funding Secured			Budget Gap	
					MSL	MVL	Donor			MSL	MVL	Donor		
<b>INFORMATION MANAGEMENT</b>														
4, 12	1	<b>CMS Website &amp; Workspaces</b>												
		Website Upgrade to Drupal 8	High	30,000	13,420	32,400	MOUs' Signatories, Agreements' Parties UNEP	0	30,000	11,300	3,328	MOUs' Signatories, Agreements' Parties	0	
		Develop and Maintain Content (Web pages, News, Articles)	Core					0					0	
		Implement IT Developments and Improvements	High	20,000	0	0		20,000	20,000	0	0		20,000	
		Manage Hosting & Technical Maintenance (Domain names, hosting, system administration and maintenance)	Core	10,000	2,700	3,200	MOUs' Signatories, Agreements Parties	0	10,000	2,700	3,200	MOUs' Signatories, Agreements Parties	0	
All	All	<b>Online National Reporting System (ORS)</b>												
		Manage Hosting and Administration (UNEP-WCMC)	Core	5,000	0	0		5,000	5,000	0	0		5,000	
		Implement System Improvements (Benefitting all MEAs using the ORS, such as Offline Version, Analysis Tool, Website integration via API etc.)	Medium	50,000	0	0		50,000	50,000	0	0		50,000	
		<b>Contact Database</b>	High	20,000	0	0		20,000	20,000	0	0		20,000	
		<b>Meeting Registration Tool</b>	Core	2,000	0	0		2,000	2,000	0	0		2,000	
		<b>ICT Equipment, Licenses &amp; Services</b>	Core	2,000	0	0		2,000	2,000	0	0		2,000	
<b>COMMUNICATIONS</b>														
4, 12	1	<b>CMS Branding</b>	Medium	0	0	0		0	0	0	0		0	
4, 12	1	<b>Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) Programme</b>	Medium	50,000	0	0		50,000	50,000	0	0		50,000	
4, 12		<b>Press and Media</b>	Medium	25,000	0	0		25,000	25,000	0	0		25,000	
4, 12	1	<b>Publications &amp; Other Info Materials</b>	Core	20,000	13,265	0		6,735	20,000	13,530	0		6,470	
4, 12	1	<b>Social Media</b>	High	15,000	0	0		15,000	15,000	0	0		15,000	
<b>OUTREACH</b>														
4, 12	1	<b>Outreach activities and events</b>												
		Organise annual global World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) (website, poster and other print materials and events)	Core	30,000	0	10,000	UNEP	0	30,000	0	10,000	Norway	20,000	
		Outreach activities and events in context of Int. Days, UNEA, SDGs, etc.	Core	20,000	0	0		20,000	20,000	0	0		20,000	
		Targeted PR Campaign (External Agency)	Medium	80,000	0	0		80,000	80,000	0	0		80,000	
4,12	1	<b>COP14 Promotion</b>	Hgih	0	0	0		0	0	0	0		0	
<b>Total (including Programme Support Costs -13%)</b>					<b>379,000</b>	<b>29,385</b>	<b>45,600</b>		<b>295,735</b>	<b>379,000</b>	<b>27,530</b>	<b>16,528</b>		<b>315,470</b>

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RESOURCE MOBILIZATION AND INTERAGENCY AFFAIRS

SDGs	SPMS Targets	Activities	Priority ranking	2020				2021				Status		
				Total Budget (€)	Funding Secured			Budget Gap	Total Budget (€)	Funding Secured			Budget Gap	
					MSL	MVL	Donor			MSL	MVL			Donor
<b>RESOURCE MOBILIZATION</b>														
1, 8-15, 17	2, 9, 16	Promote the Migratory Species Champion Programme	Core											
		Develop project proposals and pursue partnerships with the Private Sector	Core											
<b>SYNERGIES AND PARTNERSHIPS</b>														
12	9	<b>Promote CMS Issues in UN system</b>												
		Environment Management Group (EMG)	Medium											
		2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development	Medium											
		UN Environment Processes including UNEA Meetings related Programmes of Work	High											
12	9	<b>Strengthen Existing Collaboration with MEAs</b>												
		Biodiversity Liaison Group (BLG)	High											
		Coordinate and oversee the implementation of the Joint Work Plans with CBD, Ramsar and CITES	High											
12	9	<b>Strengthen the relationship with Civil Society</b>	High											
1, 2, 8, 12, 14, 15	6, 9	<b>Engage in and pursue strategic cooperations</b>												
		Explore possible engagement of FAO, UNDP, World Bank, regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) and others	Medium											
4, 7, 9, 12, 14, 17	9, 15	Continue to engage in IPBES processes; participate in its meetings to ensure that migratory species needs for research and policy guidance are addressed	High	5,000	0	0		5,000	5,000	0	0	5,000		
<b>STRENGTHENING REGIONAL PRESENCE</b>														
12	9	Continue to foster relationships with various UN Environment Regional Offices and other institutions	Medium											
<b>CMS AMBASSADORS</b>														
4, 10, 12, 15, 17	1, 16	Revamp and maintain the CMS Ambassadorship programme	Medium	10,000	0	0		10,000	10,000	0	0	10,000		
<b>Total (including Programme Support Costs -13%)</b>					15,000	0	0		15,000	15,000	0	0	15,000	

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CAPACITY BUILDING

SDGs	SPMS Targets	Activities	Priority ranking	2020					2021					Status
				Total Budget (€)	Funding Secured			Budget Gap	Total Budget (€)	Funding Secured			Budget Gap	
					MSL	MVL	Donor			MSL	MVL	Donor		
<b>RECRUITMENT OF PARTIES</b>														
2, 12, 14, 15, 17	1, 2, 3, 9	Organize activities and workshops and prepare outreach tools for promoting country accession	High	20,000	0	20,000	EU	0	10,000	0	0		10,000	
<b>STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONAL AND NATIONAL CAPACITY</b>														
1, 2, 5, 7-17	2, 3, 5, 13	Promote implementation of CMS commitments at national level in all regions	Medium	50,000	0	0		50,000	50,000	0	0		50,000	
		Revise and update the CMS Family Manual in all official languages	Low	0	0	0		0	15,000	0	0		15,000	
<b>COP PREPARATION</b>														
1, 10-17	3, 9	Organize regional workshops in preparation of COP14	High	0	0	0		0	0	0	0			
<b>REVIEW MECHANISM AND NATIONAL LEGISLATION PROGRAMME</b>														
All	All	Continue the implementation of National Legislation Programme (prepare profiles, legislative guidance materials, best practices and model laws; support Parties and conduct workshops)	High	100,000	0	100,000	EU	0	100,000	0	100,000	EU	0	
		Prepare legislative guidance materials and model laws regarding the taking of Appendix I-listed chondrichthyan species (Sharks, Rays, Skates and Chimaera)	Medium	12,000	0	115,000	Germany (to Sharks MOU for 2020- 2021)	0	0	0	0		0	
		Promote and implement the Review Mechanism	High	15,000	0	5,000	Finland	10,000	15,000	0	0		15,000	
<b>Total (including Programme Support Costs -13%)</b>				<b>197,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>240,000</b>		<b>60,000</b>	<b>190,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100,000</b>		<b>90,000</b>	

MSL: Trust Fund, MVL: Voluntary Contributions

\*ACP project - Project on Capacity building related to Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA) in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Countries - Phase III - (ACP-MEAs project)

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SERVICING OF GOVERNING BODIES

SDGs	SPMS Targets	Activities	Priority ranking	2020				2021				Status		
				Total Budget (€)	Funding Secured			Budget Gap	Total Budget (€)	Funding Secured			Budget Gap	
					MSL	MVL	Donor			MSL	MVL			Donor
2, 14	3	Organize COP14 and associated events including arranging interpretation, reporting writing, staff travel and support to funded delegates	Core	910,549	410,549	205,000	India Germany Monaco Netherlands Norway Finland Luxembourg Switzerland*	0	0	0	0	0		
		Organize Standing Committee Meetings and maintain regular contact with its members	Core	0	0	0		0	25,950	25,950	0	0		
		Organize Meetings of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council	Core	0	0	0		0	59,239	59,239	0	0		
<b>Total (including Programme Support Costs -13%)</b>					<b>910,549</b>	<b>410,549</b>	<b>205,000</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>85,190</b>	<b>85,190</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	

MSL: Trust Fund, MVL: Voluntary Contributions

\* Details about 2020 funding refer to COP13

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 not yet started/not progressed- lack of funding and/or capacity  
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