



CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES

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SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL
Bergen, 17-18 November 2011

REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON FRESHWATER FISH Bergen, 17 November 2011 14:30-16:30

1. Introduction by the Appointed Councillor for Fish

Welcome to the working group by Dr. Zeb Hogan, CMS Scientific Councillor for Fish.

Councillors present:

Zeb Hogan, Working Group Chair, CMS Scientific Councillor for Fish
Barry Baker, CMS Scientific Councillor (By-catch)
Ana E. Agreda, Scientific Councillor for Ecuador
Marco Antonio Herrera Cabrera, Instituto Nacional de Pesca de Ecuador
Narelle Montgomery, Scientific Councillor for Australia

2. Review of the Conservation Status of Migratory Freshwater Fish (ScC17 Agenda Item 7)

The 15th Meeting of the Scientific Council (Rome, 2008) tasked the COP Appointed Councillor for Fish, Dr. Zeb Hogan, with preparation of a review of the conservation status of migratory freshwater fish to determine which species would benefit from listing on the CMS Appendices. The report, presented as document UNEP/CMS/Inf.10.33 summarizes the results of the review. The report is meant as a starting point to discussions about the value of listing additional freshwater fish species on CMS, as it identifies approximately 35 species that could potentially be listed on the CMS Appendices. An executive summary is provided as document UNEP/CMS/Conf.10.31 and a Resolution as document UNEP/CMS/Resolution 10.12.

The Working Group endorsed the draft resolution on migratory freshwater fish (document UNEP/CMS/Res.10.12) and noted the following important text:

3. Further requests Parties to improve the monitoring of freshwater fish in order to assess the level of vulnerability of populations according to IUCN Red List criteria and work collaboratively to improve knowledge of trans-boundary migratory fish in order to better identify species that would benefit from international cooperation;

4. Urges Parties to consider submitting listing proposals for those species highlighted in the review as threatened, as well as other species that would benefit from international cooperation;

5. Calls upon Parties to engage in international cooperation on migratory freshwater fish at sub-regional or regional levels.

Furthermore, the working group wished to add the word “by-catch” to document UNEP/CMS/Res.10.12 to items 2 and 5.b as follows:

“Requests Parties and invites Non-Parties to strengthen measures to protect migratory freshwater fish species against threats, including habitat destruction, habitat fragmentation, overfishing, by-catch, invasive species, pollution and barriers to migration;”

and

“identify, as appropriate, effective mechanisms to mitigate threats such as habitat degradation, barriers to migration, by-catch and overexploitation; and”.

3. Res.10.23: Concerted and Cooperative Actions (ScC17 Agenda Item 17.1 and 17.2)

The working group expressed concern that no significant concerted action had been taken among freshwater fish for the last 3 years. The working group discussed the nomination of focal points for Cooperative Action species (to provide updates on Appendix I and Appendix II species). The working group suggested that Germany might be willing to serve as the focal point for all sturgeon species. Following the meeting, the Councillor for Germany indicated that, if requested by the secretariat, he could identify an expert from Germany to serve as focal point. The working group noted that there is a recently developed CMS Migratory Sharks MOU. The working group discussed lack of concerted or cooperative action on sturgeon and urges CMS parties to consider concerted or cooperative action in the near future.

Relating to both Res.10.16 and Res.10.23, the working group noted that Ecuador has a non-governmental organization called CPPS (Permanent Commission of the South Pacific) that has a regional action plan (carried out by individual countries) to protect sharks. There are three “black-listed” shark species already defined in the action plan. At the moment CPPS is organizing regional workshops (Chile, Columbia, Ecuador, Peru) and building capacity. All the parties of the treaty have obligations, as they are committed to comply with the mandate.

4. Res.9.9: Arctic Marine Species (ScC17 Agenda Item 17.3.3)

Regarding document ScC17/Inf.17 “Current and Predicted Conservation Status of CMS-listed Arctic Marine Species (in follow-up to Resolution 9.09)”, the working group suggested that one solution to enhance the relevant sections of ScC17/Inf.17 could be to appoint focal points to the listed Arctic Marine Species, namely Basking shark (*Cetorhinus Maximus*), Porbeagle (*Lamna nasus*), Spiny dogfish (*Squalus acanthias*). The working group further noted that e.g. Porbeagle and Spiny dogfish were proposed for listing by the European Commission (and its member states). The working group suggested that it may be appropriate that parties that nominate species also serve as focal point. The Sharks MOU may also be willing to take on the task.

5. Proposals for Amendment of Appendices I and II of the Convention (ScC17 Agenda Item 18)

Ecuador presented a proposal for the inclusion of the giant manta *Manta birostris* on Appendix I and II of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals. This proposal had been amended on 17 November and therefore is different from what is currently posted on the CMS COP10 website.

Ecuador proposes increasing protected offshore and inshore areas as cooperative and concerted action, and also recommends in the proposal that manta ray be included in Sharks MOU. The working group suggested Ecuador add additional documentation to the proposal. The Working Group endorsed this proposal in principle and agreed that this proposal should be presented to COP10.

6. Other Business

Assessment of migratory fish conservation status for the lower La Plata Basin

Dr. Zeb Hogan presented an informally submitted project proposal by SAYDS, Argentina. The objectives of the project are (a) recognition of those fresh-water fish species that exhibit well defined migratory patterns based on scientific literature and fishers perceptions, (b) assessment of temporal and spatial movement patterns based on scientific evidences and traditional ecological knowledge, and (c) to determine if target migratory species have showed changes in their abundance and sizes based on fisher experience and available fishing records. The proposed implementation organization is Wetlands International.

The proposal was presented in the working group to highlight that the information this project would provide, is needed. However, being an informally submitted document, the proposal cannot be handled in COP10. The working group concluded that proposal needs more detail and that CMS should consider support this project if it is re-submitted following the revised guidelines of the CMS Small Grants Programme. The working group suggested priority areas for additional regional development of listing proposals (with possible support for the CMS Small Grants Programme) to be the La Plata Basin, the Amazon Basin, Lake Chad Basin(Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Nigeria), and the Himalayan region.

Hammerhead and Sawfish proposals

The working group was informed that an NGO called Migratory Wildlife Network is developing listings proposal for Scalloped hammerhead, Great hammerhead, Smooth hammerhead, and the family Pristidae (sawfishes). They had asked Dr. Zeb Hogan to present this information to the Working Group, so that the CMS Scientific Council would be aware of these draft proposals.