



**CONVENTION ON
MIGRATORY
SPECIES**

Distribution: General

UNEP/CMS/COP12/Inf.7.1
24 October 2017

Original: English

12th MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
Manila, Philippines, 23 - 28 October 2017

**HUMANE SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL (HSI) AND HSI AUSTRALIA
CMS PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES**



**HUMANE SOCIETY
INTERNATIONAL**

Humane Society International (HSI) and HSI Australia

CMS Partnership Activities

Humane Society International (HSI) is an international non-profit organization with representation in many countries around the world and a focus on both animal welfare and conservation. HSI staff – who include lawyers, scientists and other specialists - have long experience of working productively within international treaty bodies, including those concluded under the United Nations (especially CMS and CITES) and others, particularly the International Whaling Commission. We note that many of these treaty bodies have common goals and we seek to build strong joint initiatives and alliances across them and with other key stakeholders in the pursuit of our shared aims.

Humane Society International Australia (HSI Australia) entered into a partnership agreement with the Convention on the Conservation on Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS Secretariat) in 2011. Humane Society International headquarters (HSI HQ) entered into a similar partnership agreement at CMS CoP11 in 2014.

HSI, both HQ and Australia, have been active participants for more than a decade at CMS CoPs, CMS Scientific Council meetings, and with various of the CMS Agreements and MoUs. Below is a summary of some of these activities since CoP11 in 2014.

CMS Sharks MoU

Both HSI HQ and HSI Australia are cooperating partners to the CMS Sharks MoU and were part of the working group that helped draft its conservation plan. We participated in MOS2 on February 15-19, 2016 in Costa Rica where we successfully helped lobby for stronger actions to be taken under the Conservation Plan of the MoU.

The result was the addition of 22 species (5 species of sawfishes, 3 species of thresher sharks, both species of manta ray, 9 species of mobula rays, the silky shark, great hammerhead shark and scalloped hammerhead) to Annex I, the list of species covered by the conservation action plan of the agreement. We are monitoring the progress of these listings and are keen to help further in the progress of effective conservation measures for these species.

HSI also joined and is currently participating on the intercessional “Communication and Awareness Raising Strategy (IWG-CommA)” Working Group.

ASCOBANS

HSI personnel have had a long and productive association with the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans in the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas (ASCOBANS). HSI participated in the ASCOBANS COP, August 30-September 1, 2016 in Finland. We provided scientific advice to nations,

helped the Secretariat in the drafting of resolutions and lobbied for the conclusion of strong resolutions and other decisions. A series of strong resolutions were concluded which recommitted the agreement to strong actions in the region. We also participated in the latest meeting of the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee in le Conquet in France in September this year,

During the period since the last CoP, we have been an active participant in two key ASCOBANS workstreams – one focused on bycatch and the other on the drafting of a new action plan for common dolphins in the region. For example, we participated in the ASCOBANS Workshop on Bycatch in February, including helping there in the drafting of an urgent letter to European Union authorities who are in the process of revising key fisheries measures, including those relating to monitoring and protecting cetaceans from bycatch. In related work, HSI Europe has joined forces with WDC and EIA, to lobby within the European Commission for strong conservation measures to be concluded within the fisheries regulations. We were also represented at the common dolphin workshop in Galway, Ireland in June.

ACCOBAMS

HSI is a partner organization of the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans in the Black Sea Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area and involved in many consultations, including those conducted through the joint ACCOBAMS-ASCOBANS workstream on marine noise. We participated in the CoP on November 22-25, 2016 in Monaco, where provided advice to participants, assisted the Secretariat and lobbied for strong outcomes. A series of decisions resulted which refocused the work of the Agreement for the next triennium.

ACAP

HSI Australia has been an active participant on the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatross and Petrels (ACAP) since its first negotiation.

HSI has attended all of the ACAP meetings of the Parties, meetings of the ACAP Seabird Bycatch Working Group and the ACAP Population and Conservation Status Working Group, either as an adviser on the Australian delegation or as an observer, including the meetings in 2015 and 2016 and most recently the ACAP meeting of the Parties in September 2017

HSI also assists ACAP at various Regional Fisheries Management Organization (RFMO) meetings in advocating for stronger protections for seabirds by mitigating threats from fisheries bycatch. We attended the annual meetings of the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT) in 2015 and 2016 and the Ecologically Related Species Working Group meeting in March 2017. We are attending the CCSBT Compliance Committee meeting and annual commission meeting in Yogyakarta in October 2017. We advocate for CCSBT to adopt a binding seabird bycatch mitigation measure to conform to ACAP advice on best practice mitigation.

IOSEA

HSI supported a workshop for the Northern Indian Ocean region of the Indian Ocean South-East Asian (IOSEA) Marine Turtle MoU in October 2014 at request of the government of the Maldives.

HSI also works on marine turtle protection through support of a field project in India, collaborating with the *Too Rare to Wear* campaign to reduce sale and trafficking of marine turtle shell, as well as on policy efforts at RFMOs and the Inter-American Convention on the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (IAC).

Conservation of Gorillas and their Habitats (Gorilla Agreement)

HSI Australia played an active role in the development of the Gorilla Agreement. In late March 2011, HSI attended the “First Meeting of the Technical Committee of the UNEP/CMS Agreement on the Conservation of Gorillas and their Habitats” which took place in the Rwandan capital Kigali. There HSI assisted in and formulated new strategies for the protection of all gorilla species in Africa.

HSI had also attended the first meeting of the Parties to the CMS Gorilla Agreement in late 2008.

HSI has made significant investments in the Gorilla Agreement and we are committed to continuing to push for the ongoing implementation for this agreement within the CMS framework.

Conservation of Cetaceans and their Habitats in the Pacific Islands Region (Pacific Cetaceans MoU)

HSI Australia has been a vocal and uncompromising advocate for cetacean protection in CMS and Australian Federal Parliament and other international fora, ensuring successive Australian Governments advance and defend cetacean protection measures.

In 2005, HSI Australia supported Australia, New Zealand and Samoa in recommending the CMS Parties affirm their commitment to the finalization of a Memorandum of Understanding for whales and their habitats in the Pacific. HSI has since played an active role in the continued implementation of the Pacific Cetaceans MoU and protection of cetaceans through other international commitments such as the IWC.

HSI attended and supported the *Whales in a Changing Ocean* Conference in Tonga in March 2017 which provided advice on the next iteration of the South Pacific Whale and Dolphin Action Plan.

Dugong

HSI Australia has worked for 20 years on efforts to secure the conservation and management of dugong both under Australian legislation, and through international means.

In 2001, HSI secured an election commitment from the Australian Government gaining a commitment from other dugong range states to develop an agreement to better conserve the species through CMS. In 2002, HSI attended CMS CoP7 as a member of the Australian Government Delegation where we helped ensure a Resolution was passed, committing Parties to this initiative. This also spurred the development of regional protection for the species such as the Dugong Action Plan 2003-2007, under the Pacific Regional Environment Programs (SPREP), Marine Species Framework.

As part of HSI’s Wildlife and Habitat Protection Program, nominations to Commonwealth and State environment and threatened species legislation have been prepared and submitted since 2014, along with Key Threatening Process (KTP) nominations for recognition of issues such as gill netting and boat strike as a key threat to the conservation of the dugong and other marine species. HSI also nominated the Dugong for listing under Australian Federal Legislation, and was invited by the Minister to sit on the national Dugong Review Group. Working with the Commonwealth, these efforts helped lead to the establishment of Dugong Protected Areas in the Great Barrier Reef and to a ban on gill netting in two of them.

Workshop on Climate Change

HSI participated in the CMS climate change workshop in Bonn in 2016 looking at the CMS workstream on this topic ahead of the next CMS CoP. We were pleased to be able to offer advice on public engagement issues and it was agreed *inter alia* to work up some case studies based on individual animals and habitats. We have since been assisting in the drafting of some of these. The development of a new 'consolidated' resolution was also discussed and text reviewed.

CMS CoP12

HSI has been actively involved in preparations for the upcoming CMS CoP12 including assisting countries with proposals with scientific and legal advice, encouraging support for proposals, and we also took part in the Scientific Committee's review of the proposals at its last meeting. We will attend the CoP where we will continue these efforts and one of us is also serving on the delegation of Australia.

We look forward to a continued partnership and collaboration with the CMS Secretariat and Parties to the CMS and its MoUs and Agreements.