



**CONVENTION ON
MIGRATORY
SPECIES**

UNEP/CMS/COP13/Doc.11.2

11 February 2020

Original: English

13th MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
Gandhinagar, India, 17 - 22 February 2020
Agenda Item 11

COP PRESIDENCY REPORT

(Prepared by the Government of the Philippines)

Summary:

This document contains the report on the achievements of the COP
Presidency of the Government of the Philippines

REPORT OF THE COP PRESIDENCY

Background

The CMS 12th Conference of the Parties (CMS COP12) hosted by the Philippines on 23-28 October 2017 in Manila, formalized the role of the Chair of the Conference as President of the COP and during the intersessional period (*UNEP/CMSCOP12 4.2*). The COP Presidency was tasked to help facilitate political action and positive outcomes that further advance the objectives of the Convention, including steering efforts towards implementing the Resolutions and Decisions adopted by the Conference of Parties. As Chair of CMS COP12, the Philippines through its Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) had the privileged to take on the role of the COP Presidency.

The Philippines hereby reports the activities taken in advancing at the national, regional and international levels the objectives of the Convention including contributions to the resolutions adopted at CMS COP12. This report emphasizes on the regional activities undertaken in South East Asia where the Philippines, as member of several regional intergovernmental co-operations and partnerships on biodiversity conservation have better opportunities to promote the work of the Convention.

Activities

- A. As member of Multilateral Environmental Agreements such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, the CITES, and the Ramsar Convention, the Philippines had supported the promotion of coherence and complementarity of measures under the framework of these MEAs with the objectives of the CMS as follows:
1. During the 2nd meeting of the SDI held on 03 July 2018 in Montreal, Canada, the Philippines supported the adoption of the recommendations that promotes the work of the CMS:
 - a) SBI recommendation on *Cooperation with Other Conventions, International Organizations and Initiatives* (CBD/SBI/REC/2/9) which calls upon Parties to provide further support for the implementation of the activities of the proposed work plan of the global “Coastal Forum” focused on coastal wetland conservation as adopted during the CMS COP12 and requests the Executive Secretary to further coordinate the “Caring for Coasts” initiative with the secretariat of the CMS and other relevant partners, in order to advance synergies in their work on the management and restoration of coastal ecosystems worldwide; and
 - b) SBI recommendation on *Mainstreaming of Biodiversity Within and Across Sectors*-(CBD/SBI/REC/2/3) which recognized the work of the CMS and other international organizations to advance biodiversity practices by businesses. The SBI recommendation welcomed the resolution of the CMS COP12 on mainstreaming of biodiversity into the energy sector, in particular, the development of renewable energy that takes into account environmental impact assessments and monitoring and which shall be appropriately integrated in the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.
 2. In advancing COP12 Resolution (*UNEP/CMS 12.25*) on promoting conservation of critical intertidal and other coastal habitats for migratory species (which highlights the importance of intertidal and other coastal habitats for 64 species listed on CMS Appendix I), the Philippines sponsored Ramsar Resolution XIII-20 “*Promoting the conservation and wise use of intertidal wetlands and ecologically-associated habitats*” adopted during the Ramsar COP14. The Resolution calls for, *inter alia*, the setting up of a *Global Coastal Forum* to raise the profile of the wise use of intertidal wetlands and ecologically-associated habitats.

The negotiations for the hosting of the Global Coastal Forum is underway wherein the Philippines shall continue to provide avenue to further explore the mechanisms to operationalize the *Global Coastal Forum*;

3. In collaboration with the CMS Secretariat, the Philippines co-hosted side events during international conferences that promoted the principle of connectivity conservation and as the contribution of the CMS to the Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework: a) CBD COP14 held on 17 - 29 November 2018 in Egypt where connectivity-related initiatives under the CMS and other MEAS implemented at the national and regional levels were highlighted; and b) Ramsar COP13 with the side event entitled: *Connectivity Conservation, Towards 2020 and Beyond*;
 4. UNEP/CMS/COP12/Doc.25.1.25 on the inclusion of the White-spotted wedgetfish (*Rhynchobatus australiae*) in CMS Appendix II calls for the inclusion of the species in the coverage of the Shark MoU. During the MOS3 in 2018, the proposal of the Philippines to include *Rhynchobatus australiae* and look-alike species in the Shark MoU was approved;
 5. In advocating further the protection of migratory species in areas beyond national jurisdiction, the Philippines has been actively participating in the intergovernmental conferences on international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ). In particular, the Philippines has raised the inclusion of connectivity of ecosystems as part of the design/criteria in establishing area-based management tools, including marine protected areas. The Philippines also strongly supported the promotion of coherence and synergy of measures relevant to conservation and sustainable use and management of marine resources protected under relevant legal instruments and frameworks and relevant global, regional, subregional or sectoral bodies;
 6. On the management of marine debris (*UNEP/CMS/COP12/Doc.24.4.1*), Philippines exercises strong leadership by raising its stance in various regional and global platforms that tackle marine litter. Specifically, we called on a strengthened and effective global governance structure and a stronger comprehensive policy framework that will accelerate and harmonize actions of countries to prevent and significantly reduce marine litter ending up in the ocean. At the national level, our position at the international arena is further substantiated by working our national plan of action that will define our priorities and targets in order to prevent the leakage of litter to the marine environment.
- B. The significant role of the Philippines in promoting the Convention in South East Asia Region is underscored by the fact that the country remains to be the lone CMS member state in the region. Membership of the Philippines to the ASEAN and other regional partnerships provided leverage in facilitating complementation of regional plans and activities with the CMS Program of Work. Below are contributions of the COP Presidency on this respect.
1. Following the conclusion of the CMS COP 12, the Philippines reported to the 20th Governing Board Meeting of the ASEAN Center for Biodiversity (ACB) on the significant results of the Conference held for the first time in the Region. The report highlighted the Conference resolutions which are relevant to the key programs of the ACB such as the *"Promoting Marine Protected Area Networks in the ASEAN Region"* and the designation and support to the management of ASEAN Heritage Parks which can include sites relevant to migratory species. The report also highlighted the need for more dynamic participation of the ASEAN region in the conservation of migratory species, including follow-up with ASEAN Member Countries on their possible accession to the Convention. The Philippines shall continue to take opportunity of the ASEAN platform to promote the broader manifestation of the convention in the region.

2. Implemented regional initiatives on migratory bird conservation through its participation to the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP), as follows:
 - a) Convened the “2nd Research and Development Conference: “*East - Australasian Flyway for Wetlands and Migratory Waterbirds in the course of Climate Change*” held on October 7-11, 2019, Bacolod City, Philippines. The regional congress highlighted, among others, thematic areas for the conservation of waterbirds and wetland habitats: i) effects of climate change to wetlands and migratory waterbirds; ii) appropriate management strategies on wetland habitats of waterbirds; and iii) adaptable innovation and breakthroughs for sustainable urban future for people, wetlands and waterbirds;
 - b) Co-implementer of the ASEAN Flyway Network Project being coordinated by the ASEAN Center for Biodiversity and Singapore to expand the network of managed internationally important sites for migratory waterbirds across the EAAF by designating them as Flyway Network Sites. The project intends to assist seven (7) ASEAN countries (Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia, Myanmar, Thailand) to conduct assessment of identified internationally important bird sites along the EAAF. Capacity building on wetland management for site managers of existing Flyway Network Sites (*Olango Island Wildlife Sanctuary, Naujan Lake, Tubbataha Reef Natural Park, and Negros Occidental Wetland and Conservation Area*) had been carried out. Four new internationally important site are being assessed for designation as Flyway Network Sites (*Agusan Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary, Panabo-Carmen Wetlands, Sibugay Bay and Lake Mainit*);
 - c) In pursuit of *CMS CP12 Resolution 12.29 (Prevention of illegal killing, taking and trade of migratory birds in the Eastasian-Australasian Flyway)*, a regional project being coordinated by *Birdlife International “Regional situation analysis on the hunting and taking of migratory birds in Southeast Asia”* is being implemented in the Philippines (2019-2020) together with other South East Asian countries. A report on the national situational analysis on illegal hunting and taking of birds in the Philippines shall be submitted to the *Birdlife* for regional consolidation and reporting to the CMS Secretariat;
3. Pursued the objectives of the CMS as a member state and Chair (2016-2018) of the Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reef, Fisheries and Food Security (CTI-CFF). The CTI-CFF is a regional cooperation of six-member countries (*Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Timor-Leste*) with shared jurisdiction over the Coral Triangle, the most diverse marine eco-region in the world. The Sulu-Sulawesi Seascape spanning three countries-Indonesia, Malaysia and Philippines, serves as a geographic focus for investments of the CTI-CFF in the conservation of migratory species such as marine turtles, marine mammals, sharks and rays, and seabirds under the CTI-CFF Regional Plan of Action.

In response to *UNEP/CMS resolution 24.4.9* on promoting marine protected area networks in the ASEAN Region and the conservation and management plan for marine turtles under the IOSEA, the following initiatives to advance the management of Marine Turtle Protected Area Networks within the Sulu-Sulawesi Seascape were undertaken:

- a) Convened the Sulu-Sulawesi Seascape Convergence Meeting in August 2018 which tackled the vision for the establishment of a Marine Turtle Protected Area Network (MTPAN) across Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines representing critical sites in the life cycle of marine turtle population of the region e.g nesting, foraging, developmental habitat or migratory route. The meeting successfully agreed on: a) transboundary seascape coordination mechanisms for MPA Networks for marine turtles (and whale sharks) base on scientific data on the critical range of the species within the Sulu-Sulawesi with the vision that the network may expand outside the Sulu-Sulawesi region; b) updated draft “Sub-Regional Plan for Managing Transboundary Fisheries in

the Sulu-Sulawesi Seas”; and c) road map for the establishment of Marine turtle and Whale shark Marine Protected Area network.

The tri-country MTPAN within the Sulu-Sulawesi Seascape had been identified composed of the following based on marine turtle satellite tracking studies in the Sulu-Sulawesi Sea: the local MTPAN of the Philippines - *Turtle Islands Wildlife Sanctuary, Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park and El Nido-Taytay Marine Resource Reserve, and Balabac Strait*; Indonesia - *Bunaken National Park and Berau Marine Reserve*; and Malaysia - *Tun Sakaran Marine Park, Turtle Islands Parks, Sugud Islands Marine Conservation Reserve, and Tun Mustapha Park*. A coordinating mechanism for transboundary management of these sites is a significant future work of the CTI framework.

b) Under the Philippine Chairmanship of the CTI-CAFF, the Regional Conservation Action Plan for Marine turtles, Sharks, Rays and Marine Mammals was initiated. The regional action plan for marine turtles conforms with the priority actions articulated in the Marine Turtle Conservation and Management under the IOSEA-CMS.

4. Contributing to the achievement of *UNEP/CMS/COP12/Doc.24.4.12 on transfrontier conservation areas* for migratory species, the Philippines convened on July 11-12, 2018, the 13th Joint Management Committee Meeting of the Philippines – Malaysia Bilateral Cooperation for the management of the Turtle Island Heritage Protected Area (TIPHA), a transboundary protected area recognized to be the largest rookery of green turtles in Southeast-Asia and the first transboundary marine protected in the world for green turtles. The Turtle Islands within the Philippine territory (nationally known as Turtle Islands Wildlife Sanctuary) is designated as a *Marine Turtle Network Site* under the IOSEA MOU. The meeting agreed on resolutions to address the illegal trade in marine turtle eggs which include *inter alia*, enhancing border controls to monitor illegal trade, implementing biodiversity-friendly livelihoods, and promotion of eco-tourism (Philippine side). Malaysia reported developments in their efforts on the reduction of marine turtle by-catch in fisheries through the adoption of marine turtle excluder device and adjustments in line fishing using circular hooks instead of “J” hooks. The meeting also agreed to conduct further investigation on impact of light pollution to marine turtles (adult and hatchlings) from stationary gill net using light.
5. Hosted for the second time, with the Partnership in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA), the East Asia Seas Congress in 26-30 November 2019, Iloilo City. The congress on its sixth series of triennial ocean conferences aims to promote regional actions that respond to the global ocean agenda as contained under Goal 14 of the Sustainable Development Goals. The congress tackled a broad range of marine issues and corresponding marine management strategies that also address conservation of migratory species and their habitats such as establishment of marine protected area and networks, management of litter, opportunities for synergies, **establishing blue carbon network, enhancing ways to reducing impact of marine debris, catalyzing improved source-to-sea (s2s) governance, among others, in pursuit of the Sustainable Development Strategy for Seas of East Asia (SDS-SEA)**. A key highlight of the congress was the signing of the Ministerial Declaration “*East Asian Region Moving as One to Secure Healthy Oceans, People and Economies*” which seals the commitment of the Country Partners to adopt and implement ICM national laws and policies and achieve 25% coverage of the regions coastline under ICM, develop blue economy investments, reduce or prevent marine pollution, and Implement policies and programs on sustainable coastal tourism.

- C. The heightened national awareness and momentum generated from the hosting of CMS COP12 in Manila had broadened stakeholder participation and enhanced the country’s efforts on migratory species conservation in the aspect of policy and programs, area-based

interventions, awareness and capability building activities. The following provides a summary of major achievements at the national level during the intersessional period:

1. Cascading of the Philippine Biodiversity strategy and Action Plan (PBSAP) which include targets for the conservation of migratory species was undertaken to mainstream biodiversity strategies in the plans and programs of local government units, Civil Society Organizations, and the private. Localizing the PBSAP is a strategy to broaden community engagement and financing mechanism for biodiversity conservation.

Non-government and civil society organizations through their voluntary action or formal partnership with the government contributing in the mobilization of technical and financial resources needed to implement CEPA activities, e.g World Migratory Bird Days, coastal clean-up and festivals (i.e Pawikan or marine turtle festival, National Bird Festival, Whale shark festival), capacity building of local stakeholders, scientific studies, species monitoring, and field interventions to address threats to migratory species (e.g promoting code of conduct and best practices in wildlife tourism), community organization and livelihood assistance. The private sector is also a key support group in the mobilization of resources for biodiversity conservation programs mainly as part of their corporate social responsibility. Resort companies in particular are key players in the protection of marine nesting beaches adjacent to their properties and providing incentives to communities for conservation action. The Biodiversity Financing Project of the DENR aims to establish the mechanism to increase and sustain the engagement of the private sector in financing biodiversity conservation;

2. The intersessional period has been a productive season for improving governance, policy and legislative coherence in the country towards enhanced conservation of migratory species. Convergence initiatives and arrangements with relevant government agencies were undertaken as follows:
 - a) Convergence initiatives between BMB and BFAR adopting the "Operational Plan for Sustainable Fisheries and Aquatic Biodiversity Conservation" addressing management concerns on marine wildlife and habitat such by-catch of marine turtles, dugongs, marine mammals and seabirds, management of invasive alien species, marine debris/pollution, and enforcement of wildlife laws;
 - b) Cooperation with the newly created Bangsamoro Administrative Region of Muslim Mindanao on cascading national biodiversity laws and programs to assist the region in aligning their development frameworks with national biodiversity targets. The Muslim Mindanao Region is an important investment area for biodiversity conservation considering the infancy of conservation work in the area. Initial consultation raised the need for biodiversity investment in the largest marshland in the country, the Liguasan Marsh which covers an area of around 2,200 km² of which 300 km² area was previously reserved for a game refuge and bird sanctuary but is in dire need of area-based interventions;
 - c) Mainstreaming biodiversity in the energy sector, infrastructure sector, and mining sector kicked off with series of sectoral roundtable table discussions which identified areas of innovations to mitigate impacts of the industry to migratory species and biodiversity;
 - d) The Philippines finally acceded to the Ballast Water Convention in 2018. The Marine Industry Authority, in consultation with the DENR and other concerned government bodies in the maritime industry is in the process of finalizing the rules and regulations on ballast water management of the Convention;

- e) Issuance of a joint policy among the DENR, Department of Agriculture and Department of Tourism on marine wildlife interaction, taking into consideration the technical guidance from the CMS on wildlife tourism (*UNEP/CMS Resolution No.12.23 and UNEP/CMS 24.4.5*).
3. Establishment of Protected Areas under the National Protected Areas System and other effective area-based conservation measures has been unprecedented in the history of protected area management in the country that benefits the conservation of migratory species.
- a) Republic Act 11038 or the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System of 2018 legislated 94 Protected Areas covering terrestrial, inland wetland and coastal and marine ecosystems. This includes designation as marine reserve of the newly discovered, *Philippine (Benham) Rise*, an ecologically and biologically significant marine area (EBSA) supporting whales, dolphins, sharks, rays and sea turtles, and also a spawning area for the highly migratory Pacific blue fin tuna. As such, about 35% of Key Biodiversity Areas, which are important for migratory species are now covered under the National Integrated Protected Areas System. Important Marine Mammal Areas are likewise partly covered by declared marine Protected Areas as follows: a) Babuyan IMMA-Palau Island Protected Landscape and Seascape, and Penablanca Protected landscape and Seascape; Philippine Rise Marine Reserve; b) Bohol Sea-Panglao Island Protected seascape c) Tanon Strait-Tanon Strait Protected Seascape, Sagay Marine Reserve d) Malampaya Sound- Malapaya Sound Protected landscape and Seascape; e) Mayo Bay to Pujada Bay-Pujada Bay Protected Landscape/Seascape;
- b) The Coastal and Marine Ecosystem Management Program and the Wetland Conservation Program are programs designed for greater engagement of local governments and communities on wetland and marine ecosystems. Both programs primarily aims to facilitate the management of networks of locally managed coastal marine and inland wetland habitats to augment the efforts on the management of protected areas by the national government. To date, 1,620 locally managed marine protected areas had been established.

Guidelines on the establishment of Marine Protected Areas Network was developed which take into account the management of sites critical for life stages of aquatic animals, including migratory species. With this, initiatives has been undertaken to upscale local Marine Protected Areas (MPA) into MPA networks involving local government for collaborative management of ecologically connected sites. e.g Verde Island Passage Marine Protected Area network. Marine Turtle Protected Area Network was also established involving four Protected Areas and a local conservation area i.e Tubbataha Reef Natural Park, Turtle Island Wildlife Sanctuary, Balabac Strait, El Nido Marine Resource Reserve as a promising solution to address illegal turtle egg collection, by-catch and hunting.

Biodiversity Friendly Enterprise is also being implemented as a component of both programs;

- c) To augment protection of migratory habitats beyond protected areas, management of Critical Habitats which are habitat of threatened species and congregation of migratory birds has been designated pursuant to the Wildlife Resources and Conservation Act (R.A 9147). Of the 7 Critical Habitats, 5 (70%) were intended to protect migratory waterbirds and marine turtle nesting sites (i.e. LPPCHEA, Malasi Lake, Cabusao wetlands, Magsaysay Critical Habitat, and Carmen Critical Habitat). Lo Conservation Areas pursuant to the Local Government Code;

4. Developed the National Conservation Action Plans (2020-2030) for Dugongs and Marine turtles guided by the conservation and management plans for both species under the IOSEA and the Dugong MOU. The action plans shall serve as reference for site specific investments for the most vulnerable habitats of dugongs and marine turtles in the country;
5. In furtherance of the Whale shark concerted action plan adopted during the CMS COP12, the DENR executed a collaborative program with Marine Wildlife Watch of the Philippines and the Large Marine Vertebrates (LAMAVE) for advocacy, research and population monitoring of whale sharks. 5 major Whale shark aggregations in the Philippines are being monitored. A new global hotspot for whale shark in Palawan was discovered, where connectivity was established with Malaysia and Indonesia using satellite telemetry and photographic identification. From this site, collaborations for global genetics, genomics and kinship mark-recapture are currently being pursued.

In 2019, the Philippines became the second world's largest known population of whale sharks as investigated through photo-ID, with 1,750 individuals identified to date, second only to Mexico (Pacific + Caribbean);

6. New legislation and domestic measures were promulgated to mobilize resources of relevant government agencies in restoring habitats which are of importance to migratory species, as follows:

Implementation of Executive Order No. 53 on the rehabilitation of Boracay Island that enabled the enforcement of easement regulations in the Island protecting marine turtle nesting beach and the rehabilitation of the inland wetlands critical for migratory waterbirds. This unprecedented government action also triggered the review of implementation of existing national policies pertaining to the protection of coastal and marine ecosystems and inland wetlands that ushered political interventions (e.g enforcement of easement regulations for inland wetlands and coastal marine areas, management of marine debris) elsewhere in the country especially in islands being promoted for tourism.

Administrative Order No. 16 expedited the rehabilitation and restoration of the coastal and marine ecosystems of the Manila Bay which is known to be the most important migratory bird site in the country supporting over 100,000 population of staging waterbirds annually. It is also a nesting ground for marine turtles, as well as feeding habitat for cetaceans. Core waterbird congregation in intertidal mudflats around the Bay were established as a national protected area (Las Pinas-Paranaque Critical Habitat), and local conservation areas (i.e Balanga City Wetland Park and Sasmuan wetland Critical Habitat). Rehabilitation programs for other selected coastal areas is also ongoing: El NidoTaytay Managed Resource Protected Area, Siargao Island Protected Landscape and Seascapes, Panglao Island Protected Seascape;

Local ordinances banning single use plastic had been issued and being enforced by several local governments.

7. Formation of strong values among stakeholders on migratory species conservation through social marketing is an integral strategy of the PBSAP and its support programs. These include observance of international celebrations e.g. Month of the Ocean, World Wetlands Day, World Migratory Bird Day, World Wildlife Day, International Biodiversity Day; roll out of social awareness campaigns e.g. "AGOS Awareness Campaign", "Clean and Bountiful Seas"; organizing coastal clean-up events, and outreach to link science to community and creating champions for marine environment protection and conservation; and local festivals featuring migratory species as emblem of conservation e.g Pawikan or marine turtle festival, Whale shark festival, and National bird festivals;

8. Illegal Wildlife collection and trade involving migratory species is being addressed with the strengthening of wildlife law enforcement. DENR continued to mobilized the Philippine Operations Group on Ivory and other Wildlife Species with membership from the law enforcement agencies. At least 1,300 Wildlife Enforcement Officers were deputized by the DENR. Wildlife Monitoring Units had been intensified in illegal wildlife trade hotspots i.e entry points, poaching sites, wildlife destination, and major transshipment points.

A Task Force on Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing is being mobilized by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) conducting seaborne operations in 24 major fishing grounds across the country in collaboration with local enforcement agencies. The BFAR has also initiated the implementation of real-time Vessel Monitoring Mechanism (VMM) to track commercial fishing vessels numbering about 5,000.

The Philippines pursued regional cooperation on wildlife enforcement under the ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network to address transboundary wildlife crime, especially marine turtles which subject of collection in high seas.

Conclusions

Carrying out the tasks of the COP Presidency reiterated the unique but non-exclusive mandate of the Convention which has its underpinnings on ecological connectivity and cooperation at all levels. Our experience under the Coral Triangle Initiative and the EAAFP that promoted the management of ecological networks through establishment of Marine Protected Area Networks based on the ecology of marine turtles, the designation of Flyway Network Sites, including establishment of national Marine Protected Area Networks, presents plausible approaches for connectivity conservation at the global, regional, and national scale.

The integration of ecological connectivity and international cooperation in the Post – 2020 Biodiversity framework is a worthy undertaking that calls all Parties of CMS to support. A post-2020 biodiversity framework with ecological connectivity and international cooperation embedded provides greater assurance of coherence and complementarity of measures on migratory species with other global conventions, regional, subregional, sectoral bodies, as well as to National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans. The infusion of ecological connectivity in the Post-2020 Biodiversity framework is also important in achieving a broader geographic area of implementation of the objectives of the CMS in non-CMS member states in South East Asia (and elsewhere) but are members of the legally-binding CBD.

Looking forward to turning over the COP Presidency at COP13 in Gandhinagar, the Philippines conveys once again its deep appreciation to the Parties, Partners and the CMS Secretariat for the liberal support that resulted to the overwhelming success of the CMS COP12 in Manila, and through the intersessional period that likewise helped achieved the tasks of the COP Presidency. The Philippines as Party to the CMS remains steadfast to its commitments as we continue to champion migratory species conservation, especially within our reach in South East Asia Region towards realizing the fundamental requirements for migratory species conservation: connectivity of landscapes, ecosystems, habitats, evolutionary processes, and connecting humanity to cooperate for the cause of migratory species.

The Philippines conveys its support to the Government of India who shall carry on the tasks of the COP Presidency in the next triennium.