



Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

Forty-fifth meeting of the Standing Committee, Bonn (Germany)
9 and 10 November 2016

Report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme

Introduction

1. The present report is submitted by the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) for consideration at the forty-fifth meeting of the Standing Committee of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals. It provides information on secretariat services provided by UNEP to and in support of the Convention on Migratory Species since the forty-fourth meeting of the Standing Committee, held in Bonn, Germany, from 14 to 15 October 2015. Building on the report of the forty-fourth meeting of the Standing Committee, section I of the present report provides updates on programmatic collaboration between UNEP and the Convention on the implementation of outcomes of the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, held in Quito in November 2014. Section II of the present report provides information on administrative and financial management support provided to the Convention.

I. Programmatic support provided to the Convention on Migratory Species

A. Implementation of the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species

1. Global level

(a) Outcomes of the second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP

2. UNEP has continued to strengthen its programmatic support to the work of the Convention on Migratory Species and its agreements.

3. At its second session, held in Nairobi in May 2016, the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme, building on the implementation of the outcomes of its first session, the outcomes of the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda and the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, further addressed its mandate as the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, promotes coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system and serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment.

4. Also at that session the Environment Assembly adopted the following resolutions, which when implemented will have an important impact on the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015–2023 as part of a mutually beneficial relationship between the Convention on Migratory Species and UNEP:¹

Resolution 2/5, on delivering on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

Resolution 2/6, on supporting the Paris Agreement;

¹ Resolutions adopted by Environment Assembly at its second session are available from <http://web.unep.org/unea/list-resolutions-adopted-unea-2>.

Resolution 2/7, on sound management of chemicals and waste;

Resolution 2/8, on sustainable consumption and production;

Resolution 2/10, on oceans and seas;

Resolution 2/11, on marine plastic litter and microplastics;

Resolution 2/12, on sustainable coral reefs management;

Resolution 2/13, on sustainable management of natural capital for sustainable development and poverty eradication;

Resolution 2/14, on illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products;

Resolution 2/15, on protection of the environment in areas affected by armed conflict;

Resolution 2/16, on mainstreaming of biodiversity for well-being;

Resolution 2/17, on enhancing the work of UNEP in facilitating cooperation, collaboration and synergies among biodiversity-related conventions;

Resolution 2/18, on the relationship between UNEP and the multilateral environmental agreements for which it provides the secretariats;

Resolution 2/19, on the midterm review of the fourth Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law (Montevideo Programme IV);

Resolution 2/20, on the proposed medium-term strategy for 2018–2021 and programme of work and budget for 2018–2019;

Resolution 2/21, on sand and dust storms;

Resolution 2/25, on application of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development in the Latin America and Caribbean Region.

5. UNEP is well positioned to make a positive contribution to work on the integrated perspective and enhancement of the implementation of the Convention on Migratory Species and the other instruments in the cluster of biodiversity-related conventions through its medium-term strategies and programmes of work. The Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015–2023 is reflected in and integrated into the UNEP medium-term strategy for 2018–2021 and relevant subprogrammes of the programme of work and budget for 2018–2019 (in particular the subprogrammes “Healthy and productive ecosystems”, “Environmental governance” and “Environment under review”) adopted by the Environment Assembly in its resolution 2/20.²

(b) Delivering on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

6. The United Nations Environment Programme, within its mandate, has an important role in the follow-up and review of the progress made in implementing the environmental dimension of sustainable development. Through the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goals Indicators, UNEP is responsible for methodology development and the reporting of data on relevant indicators at the national, regional and global levels as input for the report of the Secretary-General on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.³

7. In its resolution 2/5, on delivering on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Environment Assembly outlined the contribution of UNEP to delivering on the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and encouraged the Executive Director, within the mandate, programme of work and budget of UNEP, to take action to enhance coordinated, coherent and integrated delivery within the United Nations system on the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, by, inter alia, fostering partnerships and other means of cooperation with other relevant United Nations bodies; engaging with regional coordination mechanisms, as appropriate; actively promoting the integration of the environmental dimension into United Nations development assistance frameworks at the country level; and enhancing institutional and human capacity-building at the national, regional and international levels.

8. The Environment Assembly also encouraged the Executive Director to further promote synergies between multilateral environmental agreements at the national, regional and global levels, recognizing the institutional independence of the governing bodies of those agreements, with a view to

² http://www.unep.org/about/sgb/cpr_portal/Portals/50152/UNEA%202/20.pdf.

³ <http://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/report/2016/secretary-general-sdg-report-2016--EN.pdf>



increasing efficiency, effectiveness and inclusiveness and avoiding duplication of efforts; invited multilateral environmental agreements to take into account relevant targets and indicators of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in their reporting obligations; and emphasized that UNEP, within its mandate, had an important role in the follow-up to and review of progress in implementing the environmental dimension of sustainable development, including the provision of policy-relevant information, through assessment processes such as the Global Environment Outlook, as a contribution to the *Global Sustainable Development Report* and to the annual Sustainable Development Goals progress report, all of which should support the overall follow-up and review by the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

9. UNEP continues to work closely with the secretariats of the multilateral environmental agreements, including the Convention on Migratory Species, on metadata and reporting, so as to take into account relevant targets and indicators of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The important contribution of the multilateral environmental agreements and in particular the Convention on Migratory Species to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is presented graphically on the UNEP Live Sustainable Development Goals portal.⁴ The Convention on Migratory Species has contributed to the synergies between the goals and targets of its Strategic Plan and the Sustainable Development Goals at the targets level. Once finalized and adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species at its twelfth meeting, to be held in Manila in October 2017, indicators to measure progress towards the achievement of the targets will be added to the portal.

10. Through assessment processes such as the Global Environment Outlook, UNEP provides policy-relevant information as a contribution to the Global Sustainable Development report and the annual Sustainable Development Goals report, both of which support the overall follow-up and review by the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development as the central platform for the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals.

11. UNEP Live covers the internationally agreed environmental goals and provides credible, up-to-date information to support the follow-up to and review of progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals at all levels, ensuring good traceability of data and the information made accessible through it.⁵

12. At the second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, UNEP launched a special publication entitled *Role of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) in Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*.⁶ The publication provides an overview of the linkages between the current strategic plans, targets and indicators of various biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements and the Sustainable Development Goals, along with recommendations for national and global action, and is projected to be a major tool as the multilateral environmental agreements position themselves to play a significant role under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

(c) **Tackling illegal killing, trade and taking of migratory species**

13. Environmental crime, including wildlife and forest crime, is now considered to be the fourth largest crime sector, with dire environmental, economic and social impacts. In its resolution 2/14, on illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products, the Environment Assembly stressed its commitment to implementing fully and without delay the commitments set out in its resolution 1/3 and in General Assembly resolution 69/314.

14. In resolution 69/314, on tackling illicit trafficking in wildlife, the General Assembly reaffirmed the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, “The future we want”, which recognized the economic, social and environmental impacts of illicit trafficking in wildlife and the need for firm and strengthened action on both the supply and demand sides and emphasized the importance in that regard of effective international cooperation among relevant multilateral environmental agreements and international organizations.

⁴ <http://uneplive.unep.org/portal#meas>.

⁵ <http://uneplive.unep.org/>.

⁶ United Nations publication, ISBN No. 978-92-807-3558-1. Available at <http://www.unep.org/environmentalgovernance/Portals/8/publications/role-mea-synergies-sdgs.pdf>.

15. In its decision 11.16, on the prevention of illegal killing, taking and trade of migratory birds, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species invited UNEP, inter alia, to support the work of the Convention in that area.

16. In response to Environment Assembly resolution 1/3, General Assembly resolution 69/314 and resolution 11.16 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species, the Executive Director of UNEP has prepared an analysis of the environmental impacts of illegal trade in wildlife⁷, which was made available to the United Nations Environment Assembly at its second session. Strongly evidence-based, the analysis compiles and synthesizes for the first time the environmental effects of illegal trade in wildlife, enhancing the knowledge base for further development of policy-support tools.

17. UNEP is increasingly engaged in activities aimed at combating environmental crimes, especially those involving illegal exploitation of natural resources. In particular, UNEP has sought to address the issue through strengthening the evidence base for intervention; establishing national policies and capacity-building programmes; and raising awareness on the issue to decrease demand. UNEP work in the area includes strengthening the environmental rule of law at all levels, as mandated by the UNEP Governing Council in its decision 27/9, on advancing justice, governance and law for environmental sustainability, and by the Environment Assembly in subsequent resolutions; strengthening the environmental rule of law; and supporting national legislation processes, public participation, enforcement and judicial action.

18. As part of its promotion of the environmental rule of law to combat the illegal trade in wildlife and the initiation of a comprehensive awareness-raising strategy on the implications of the illegal trade in wildlife, UNEP is currently working on the first UNEP global environmental rule of law report, which will enhance its work in that area.

19. In support of target 15 of the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015–2023, UNEP continued to strengthen international efforts to combat illegal trade in wildlife with the launch of the Wild for Life campaign at the second session of the Environment Assembly. The initiative is aimed at promoting collaboration, policy implementation and grassroots participation to sensitize communities in source and destination countries to the war on poaching.

(d) Marine plastic debris and microplastics

20. In its resolution 1/6, on marine plastic debris and microplastics, the Environment Assembly requested the Executive Director to present a study on marine plastic debris and microplastics. The report, *Marine plastic debris and microplastics: Global lessons and research to inspire action and guide policy change*,⁸ which was made available for the second session of the Environment Assembly, provided a comprehensive overview of the current state of knowledge; an evidence base for urgent action, outlining potential ways for taking action; key conclusions; and a set of recommendations, including with regard to future research. UNEP views the report as an input to the implementation of resolution 11.30, on management of marine debris, in which the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species invited UNEP to continue and increase its leading role in acting as a moderator between the various stakeholders in the maritime industry and facilitating coordination to facilitate the implementation of best practice measures. The secretariat of the Convention was one of the peer reviewers of the study.

21. UNEP also developed the first massive open online course (MOOC) on marine litter, which ended in January 2016, and is currently planning a revised course for 2017 within the framework of the Global Partnership on Marine Litter, for which UNEP serves as secretariat.

22. In addition, as part of the Global Partnership on Marine Litter, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and UNEP co-published the study *Abandoned, lost and discarded gillnets and trammel nets. Methods to estimate ghost fishing mortality rates and levels and status of regional monitoring and management*.⁹ The study describes methods for estimating ghost fishing mortality rates and levels and synthesizes estimates of loss rates, density, duration of fishing efficiency and ghost fishing mortality rates. It also assesses related measures of regional bodies and arrangements for monitoring and managing the impacts of abandoned, lost or discarded fishing gear and ghost fishing.

⁷ http://www.unep.org/about/sgb/Portals/50153/UNEA/FINAL_%20UNEA2_Inf%20doc%2028.pdf.

⁸ United Nations publication, ISBN No. 978-92-807-3580-6. Available at http://www.unep.org/gpa/documents/publications/Marine_Plastic_Debris_and_Microplastic.pdf.

⁹ United Nations publication, Sales No. 978-92-5-108917-0. Available at <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5051e.pdf>.



2. Regional level

23. The UNEP ecosystems management regional subprogramme coordinators for Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa and Europe continued to work in support of the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015–2023 by undertaking and facilitating various activities and workshops in their regions.

24. In May 2016, UNEP and the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), in collaboration with the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, launched at the second session of the Environment Assembly and on the International Day for Biodiversity a major series of four regional reports, one each for Africa, Asia and the Pacific, West Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean, entitled *The State of Biodiversity: a mid-term review of progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets*.¹⁰ Each report provides a summary of progress achieved, a detailed target-by-target analysis and a summary of key findings, opportunities and recommendations for policy and decision makers.

25. UNEP provided financial and technical support for the third meeting of signatories of the Memorandum of Understanding Concerning Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of the Saiga Antelope, which was held in Tashkent on 28 and 29 October 2015 and preceded by a technical workshop on 26 and 27 October 2015. Governments and conservationists agreed on a concrete set of measures to restore saiga populations in Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Russia, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. One of the key outcomes of the Tashkent meeting was the review and adoption of a detailed set of measures for the period ending in 2020 for range States and consumer countries, including the alteration of border fencing and infrastructure obstructing saiga migration, anti-poaching action and strengthened wildlife health management.

26. UNEP provided technical support for the International Conference on Illegal Exploitation and Illicit Trade in Wild Flora and Fauna, jointly organized by the African Union and the Government of Congo and held in Brazzaville in April 2015. UNEP support included the preparation of the elements of a declaration affirming Africa's commitment to combating illegal wildlife trade and the preparation of a draft strategy on an African common strategy for combating such trade. UNEP is also currently supporting finalization of the common strategy.

27. On 28 and 29 July 2015, in Nairobi, UNEP and the Conservation Council of Nations, with the cooperation of experts in the prosecution of international crime, hosted an East Africa regional judiciary and law enforcement workshop on wildlife and environmental crime. The workshop strengthened the judicial, prosecutorial and support sectors in the fight against wildlife crime and identified challenges and strategies to address priority issues in the subregion, including the need to strengthen cross-border cooperation through formal and informal avenues; to streamline the procedures and strengthen the capacity of the judiciary, prosecutors and law enforcement to combat wildlife crime and to develop strategic training programmes for that purpose; to strengthen policy and legislation; to make use of the international resources available to support and add value to efforts to combat wildlife and environmental crime; to expand efforts to raise the awareness of judges, prosecutors, agents, policymakers and local communities of the value of wildlife and the implications of wildlife crime; to prosecute corruption, which undermines all efforts at all levels to combat wildlife crime; and to run training programmes for the judiciary, prosecutors and law enforcement officials from supply, transit and demand countries with a view to strengthening collaboration on international trade cases and awareness-raising initiatives.

¹⁰ UNEP-WCMC (2016) *The State of Biodiversity in Africa: A mid-term review of progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets*. UNEP-WCMC, Cambridge, United Kingdom. Available at http://www.unep-wcmc.org/system/comfy/cms/files/files/000/000/731/original/Biodiversity_Review_AFRICA.pdf; UNEP-WCMC (2016) *The State of Biodiversity in Asia and the Pacific: A mid-term review of progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets*. UNEP-WCMC, Cambridge, United Kingdom. Available at http://www.unep-wcmc.org/system/comfy/cms/files/files/000/000/733/original/Biodiversity_Review_ASIA_PACIFIC.pdf; UNEP-WCMC (2016) *The State of Biodiversity in Latin America and the Caribbean: A mid-term review of progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets*. UNEP-WCMC, Cambridge, United Kingdom. Available at http://www.unep-wcmc.org/system/comfy/cms/files/files/000/000/734/original/Biodiversity_Review_LAC.pdf; UNEP-WCMC (2016) *The State of Biodiversity in West Asia: A mid-term review of progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets*. UNEP-WCMC, Cambridge, United Kingdom. Available at http://www.unep-wcmc.org/system/comfy/cms/files/files/000/000/732/original/Biodiversity_Review_WEST_ASIA.pdf.

28. In October 2015 UNEP, together with the Office of the Chief Justice of Kenya and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, hosted a special session on illegal wildlife trade during the first Africa Colloquium on Environmental Rule of Law. Participants at the special session discussed the obstacles to the effective investigation, prosecution and adjudication of illegal wildlife trade from their national and regional standpoints. In their discussions, they identified and proposed solutions to the legislative problems faced in investigating, prosecuting and adjudicating illegal wildlife trade and suggested ways of strengthening enforcement to curb such trade.

29. In November 2015, UNEP and the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) organized the 2nd International Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Conference, held in Singapore. Building on the outcomes of the first such conference in 2013, the conference focused on the growing connection between environmental offences and internationally agreed development goals by identifying strategies designed to ensure the better incorporation of law enforcement into the monitoring of the environmental product supply chain; to promote collaboration between law enforcement and the public and private sectors; and to curb demand for illegal products.

30. UNEP provided technical support for the fourth annual training course for the East African Association of Prosecutors, held in Kampala from 5 to 7 November 2015, with a presentation on practical aspects of prosecuting environmental crimes. The objective of the course was to enhance harmonization and international cooperation in the prosecution of environmental offences. The course was attended by participants from Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania.

B. Support for strengthening cooperation, coordination and synergies between the Convention on Migratory Species and other biodiversity-related conventions

31. In its decision SS.XII/3, the Governing Council of UNEP recognized the importance of enhancing synergies, including at the national and regional levels, among the biodiversity-related conventions and invited the Executive Director of UNEP to undertake, as appropriate, further activities to improve the effectiveness of and cooperation among multilateral environmental agreements, to explore the opportunities for further synergies in the administrative functions of the multilateral environmental agreement administered by UNEP and to provide advice on such opportunities to the governing bodies of those agreements.

32. In its resolution 11.10, on synergies and partnerships, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species requested the secretariat to take action to strengthen implementation of the Convention through processes on the revision of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, including through cooperation with the UNEP regional offices, and invited the secretariats of other conventions to continue to liaise with the UNEP regional multilateral environmental agreement focal points for biodiversity and ecosystems and make the best use of their role in assisting the implementation of the biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements.

33. Further, in paragraph 89 of “The future we want”, Heads of State and Government and high-level representatives encouraged parties to multilateral environmental agreements to consider further measures to promote policy coherence at all relevant levels, improve efficiency, reduce unnecessary overlap and duplication and enhance coordination and cooperation among the multilateral environmental agreements, including the three Rio conventions, as well as with the United Nations system in the field.

34. UNEP worked closely with the secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species, including in the implementation of resolution 11.10, on synergies and partnerships, resolution 11.3, on enhancing synergies and common services among the family of Convention on Migratory Species instruments, resolution 11.11, on enhancing the relationship between the Convention family and civil society, resolution 11.16, on the prevention of illegal killing, taking and trade of migratory birds, resolution 11.26, on programme of work on climate change and migratory species, resolution 11.27, on renewable energy and migratory species, and resolution 11.02, on the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015–2023. In addition, UNEP has reviewed guidance, experience and lessons learned at the national level relating to the coherent implementation of biodiversity-related conventions.

35. UNEP has also worked closely with the secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) on implementation of CITES resolution Conf. 13.3, on cooperation and synergy with the Convention on Migratory Species.

36. UNEP organized and conducted South–South experience-sharing workshop on dealing with mainstreaming and synergies among the biodiversity-related conventions in the updated/revised post-



2010 national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs), held in Nairobi from 15 to 17 March 2016, to create an understanding of the role of NBSAPs in promoting synergies among biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements; to promote the sharing of experiences of countries in the African, Caribbean and Pacific regions on revision and implementation issues in respect of revised post-2010 NBSAPs; and to provide an opportunity to discuss policy and legal preparedness in using NBSAPs as a tool for achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and contributing to the synergies of biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements. The meeting was the first of its kind in promoting synergies across NBSAPs and brought together national focal points, government representatives and biodiversity experts from, inter alia, Brazil, the Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Kiribati, Mexico, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Samoa, Sierra Leone, Tonga and Vanuatu.

37. The workshop provided an opportunity and additional guidance for countries to ensure that key emerging and strategic issues relevant to effective realization of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 were integrated into the NBSAPs. The countries engaged in small group discussions on how to deal with different multilateral environmental agreement priorities within the NBSAPs considering the countries' priorities (based on a pre-workshop activity and presentations made during the first day of the workshop); how stakeholders and focal points from other biodiversity conventions could be involved in the finalization of NBSAPs considering issues of mainstreaming and synergies; and issues of legal preparedness in finalizing and implementing the NBSAPs. Conclusions and outputs from those discussions were presented by the rapporteurs for the groups and each country went on to prepare its own matrix on synergistic implementation of the four biodiversity-related conventions on the last day.

38. Insights from the workshop revealed that very few NBSAPs systematically considered policy, legal or implementation options that would enhance national-level cooperation and synergies across the biodiversity conventions. Institutional and technical capacity-building and restructuring of reporting and monitoring mechanisms were important elements in improving levels of synergies and therefore in promoting efficient outcomes. A presentation on the Convention on Migratory Species highlighted that although all parties to the Convention had NBSAPs, only an estimated 42 per cent of the NBSAPs outlined actions for migratory species. Specifically, considering that all parties to the Convention were also parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, their national obligations could play a key role in conserving and sustainably utilizing migratory species and biodiversity in general.

39. UNEP published an options paper entitled "Elaboration of options for enhancing synergies among biodiversity-related conventions",¹¹ which was part of the report of the Executive Director of UNEP to the Environment Assembly at its second session. The options paper is one of several outputs delivered in the framework of the UNEP project on improving the effectiveness of and cooperation among biodiversity-related conventions and exploring opportunities for further synergies. The secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species was actively involved in the process.

40. The options paper sets out 28 recommendations and 88 action points for consideration by, among other bodies, the United Nations Environment Assembly, the governing and advisory bodies of each biodiversity-related convention, including the Convention on Migratory Species, and the liaison group of the biodiversity-related conventions. UNEP also views the options paper as one of several inputs to the processes initiated by the secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species under resolution 11.10, on synergies and partnerships, and by the CITES secretariat under resolution Conf. 16.4, on cooperation of CITES with other biodiversity-related conventions, and the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity under its decision XII/6, on cooperation with other conventions, international organizations and initiatives.

41. The options paper further identifies specific options for action to improve synergies and coherence in the implementation of the biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements, under seven related themes: national biodiversity strategies and action plans, the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets; reporting, monitoring and indicators; the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services and strengthening the science-policy interface; information management and awareness-raising; capacity-building;

¹¹ <http://www.unep.org/about/sgb/Portals/50153/K1600544%20Doc%2012%20Add1%20Eng.pdf>.

funding and resource efficiency; and institutional collaboration. The options paper also identifies the need for implementation links to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

42. The overarching considerations identified by the options paper and of importance to the Convention on Migratory Species are as follows:

(a) Benefits to be gained by implementing the biodiversity-related conventions in a synergistic and coherent manner so as to increase their national implementation, efficiency and effectiveness;

(b) Importance of acknowledging and building on past, existing and planned activities of biodiversity-related conventions and others so as to identify and address opportunities to build synergies and increase coherence in the implementation of the conventions;

(c) Value of engaging with the activities of UNEP (and other relevant entities) to identify and address opportunities to further build synergies and increase coherence in the implementation of the conventions;

(d) Potential opportunities for the further promotion of synergies among the biodiversity-related conventions in the context of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the Global Sustainable Development Goals and their targets;

(e) Need for all actors, including Governments, United Nations bodies, conventions and their secretariats and other stakeholders, to continue to promote and undertake mutually supportive efforts and approaches aimed at enhancing coordinated and coherent implementation of the biodiversity-related conventions at all levels, building on existing activities and experience.

43. Based on the report of the Executive Director of UNEP on the results of the project and other developments under biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements, the United Nations Environment Assembly at its second session adopted resolution 2/17, on enhancing the work of UNEP in facilitating cooperation, collaboration and synergies among biodiversity-related conventions,¹² which creates further opportunities for collaboration and cooperation in the context of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular the Sustainable Development Goals and targets related to biodiversity, including those under the Convention on Migratory Species.

44. In consideration of the need referred to in paragraph 41 (e) above, at the second session of the Environment Assembly UNEP launched a number of publications promoting and encouraging synergies between the biodiversity-related conventions.¹³

45. In February 2016, UNEP supported a workshop on enhancing synergies among the biodiversity conventions organized by the Convention on Biological Diversity in Geneva. Participants at the workshop included the heads of seven biodiversity-related convention secretariats, including the Convention on Migratory Species, and national focal points of the key biodiversity conventions from select countries. It was decided that the outcomes of the workshop would be provided as a report for the first session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity for discussion and recommendations for consideration by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity at its thirteenth meeting.¹⁴

C. Multilateral Environmental Agreement Information and Knowledge Management Initiative

46. The Multilateral Environmental Agreement Information and Knowledge Management Initiative is facilitated and supported by UNEP. The aim of the initiative¹⁵ is to assist parties in implementing their obligations under the various conventions through interoperable information

¹² http://www.unep.org/about/sgb/cpr_portal/Portals/50152/UNEA2%20RES/2-17.pdf.

¹³ “Role of Multilateral Environmental agreements (MEAs) in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)” (available at <http://goo.gl/dPN87P>); “Enhancing cooperation among the seven biodiversity related agreements and conventions at national level using the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans” (available at <http://goo.gl/1BGSHB>); Contributions of United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) towards achieving the Strategic Plan of Biodiversity (2011-2020) and the Aichi biodiversity targets (available at <http://goo.gl/kvMvl4>); Elaboration of options for enhancing synergies among the biodiversity related conventions (available in the six official languages of the United Nations at <http://goo.gl/eyAveO>); Understanding synergies and mainstreaming among the biodiversity related conventions (available at <http://goo.gl/EkNP2k>).

¹⁴ The report of the workshop is available at <https://www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/sbi/sbi-01/information/sbi-01-inf-21-en.pdf>.

¹⁵ <https://www.informea.org/en/about>.



systems that adhere to global standards, interoperability and open-source technology. The initiative is arguably one of the broadest knowledge-sharing platforms in the United Nations system, as it unites more than 20 multilateral environmental agreement secretariats hosted by FAO, the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), UNEP, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), as well as the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Observers include IUCN and FAO as partners of the Environmental Law Information Service (ECOLEX),¹⁶ along with the Eurasian Economic Union, the Environment Management Group, UNEP, UNEP-WCMC, the International Institute for Sustainable Development and soon the United Nations Institute for Training and Research.

47. The secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species is a member of the initiative and actively participates in its steering committee and working group meetings.

InforMEA: The United Nations Information Portal on Multilateral Environmental Agreements

48. The United Nations Information Portal on Multilateral Environmental Agreements (InforMEA) project,¹⁷ steered under the auspices of the Multilateral Environmental Agreement Information and Knowledge Management Initiative, seeks to enhance global access to information on multilateral environmental agreements and to contribute to the capacity of countries to develop and enforce laws and strengthen institutions to achieve internationally agreed environmental objectives and goals, including those enshrined in multilateral environmental agreements.

49. The joint InforMEA web portal provides access to decisions and resolutions of the conferences of the parties to multilateral environmental agreements, as well as news about events, multilateral environmental agreement membership, national focal points, national reports and implementation plans.¹⁸ An evaluation survey showed that 73 per cent of national focal points and government officials surveyed indicated that the InforMEA portal facilitated their work or considerably improved their understanding of multilateral environmental agreements.¹⁹

50. The response rate to those same questions was 93 per cent among surveyed users of the e-learning tool,²⁰ which seeks to enhance knowledge and understanding of international environmental law. The platform caters for more than 2000 registered learners from 160 countries and includes the Course for the National Focal Points for the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals and its Instruments, available in English, French and Chinese and soon to be made available in Spanish.²¹

51. Through the InforMEA project, the Thesaurus of Environmental Law and Conventions was developed, with active contribution by the secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species. The Law and Environment Ontology (LEO) is accessible through the glossary section of the InforMEA Portal and currently comprises 530 terms with definitions, term relationships including narrower and broader terms, and synonyms.²² The terms have been aligned with individual multilateral environmental agreement taxonomies and vocabularies to capitalize on legacy indexing efforts carried out under some agreements. LEO goes beyond InforMEA content to include national legislation, case law and literature, as provided through the ECOLEX portal operated jointly by FAO, IUCN and UNEP. Furthermore, LEO will over time provide an overview of established linkages to internationally agreed goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals.²³

52. The secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species is one of the most advanced secretariats within the initiative with regard to participation in the technical harvesting mechanism. As

¹⁶ www.ecolex.org.

¹⁷ www.informea.org.

¹⁸ For example: <https://www.informea.org/en/search/%22alien%20species%22>.

¹⁹ <https://www.surveymonkey.net/results/SM-BFMC8Y5R/>.

²⁰ www.informea.org/e-learning.

²¹ <http://e-learning.informea.org/course/view.php?id=11>.

²² www.informea.org/leo.

²³ Under development: <https://www.informea.org/goals>.

a result, the decisions of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and national plans and reports under the Convention can be searched on the InforMEA portal along with similar such documents from other multilateral environmental agreements.²⁴ Most recently, the secretariat of the Convention pioneered the implementation of a jointly developed document-sharing mechanism that will soon allow for publications by members of the Convention family to be searchable and retrievable alongside other multilateral environmental agreement publications.²⁵

53. In the context of the work of the Multilateral Environmental Agreement Information and Knowledge Management Initiative, the Convention secretariat, together with the CITES secretariat, drafted a joint project that would provide for the automated linkage of annexes of species-related conventions (CITES and the Convention on Migratory Species), the European Nature Information System and the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, harmonizing their respective nomenclatures, which, donor support permitting, would be implemented over the next three years.

54. In June 2016 InforMEA partners convened in Montreux, Switzerland, for the annual review of the Multilateral Environmental Agreement Information and Knowledge Management Initiative. The meeting, supported by the European Union and co-chaired by UNEP and CITES, brought together representatives of 20 multilateral environmental agreements, including the Convention on Migratory Species, as well as four United Nations organizations: FAO, UNESCO, ECE and UNEP. In the coming years, InforMEA will be greatly expanded in scope. A comprehensive database of multilateral environmental agreement publications will be introduced, in addition to a feature that will make treaty texts available in a machine-readable format. The feature will allow third parties to more easily retrieve and utilize treaty text. The Multilateral Environmental Agreement Information and Knowledge Management Initiative will also work to enhance InforMEA's search function, as well as to revise the navigation menu to improve the user experience and to increase InforMEA visibility on search engines.

D. Great Apes Survival Partnership

55. The Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP) works to balance field projects undertaken through the collaboration of partnership members – which include member States, research institutions, conservation organizations, United Nations agencies and private supporters – with a policy agenda that uses legislative, educational and communication resources to effect change. The present section provides a summary of the achievements of recent partnerships between GRASP and the Convention on Migratory Species.

56. GRASP and the Convention have agreed to collaborate on the implementation of the Convention's Agreement on the Conservation of Gorillas and Their Habitats, which was established in 2008 and covers 10 of the 21 GRASP range States in Africa. The Convention is a charter partner of GRASP. GRASP and the Convention will work to merge the GRASP and Convention focal points and technical advisory groups and will host regular meetings of the parties to the Gorilla Agreement at relevant GRASP events. GRASP and the Convention will also seek to undertake joint projects on behalf of gorilla conservation and will utilize the legal foundation of the Gorilla Agreement wherever necessary in the 10 gorilla range States. This enhanced collaboration will begin in November 2016, with the third meeting of the GRASP Council, to be held in Jakarta, which will also include the third meeting of the parties to the Gorilla Agreement.

57. In September 2016, GRASP will launch the Apes Seizure Database in response to the Secretary-General's call to ensure a coherent response by the United Nations system to the illegal trade in wildlife. The database, which will track illicit traffic in gorillas and other great apes, will support the Gorilla Agreement mandate to conserve gorillas and their habitat and will be used to support law enforcement efforts.

58. GRASP and the Convention worked closely to stage the GRASP photo exhibition "Their Fate is Ours: The Humanity of Great Apes" at the Alexander Koenig Research Museum in Bonn, Germany, in April 2016.

²⁴ <https://www.informea.org/en/treaties/cms>.

²⁵ <https://www.informea.org/documents>.



II. Administrative and financial management support provided to the secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species

A. United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 2/18

59. The final report of the Executive Director of UNEP on the work of the task team on the effectiveness of administrative arrangements and programmatic cooperation between UNEP and UNEP-administered convention secretariats was submitted to the United Nations Environment Assembly at its second session.²⁶ The recommendations in that report formed the basis for Environment Assembly resolution 2/18, on the relationship between UNEP and the multilateral environmental agreements for which it provides the secretariats.²⁷

60. The resolution calls for the Executive Director, inter alia, to develop a flexible draft template of options for the provision of secretariat services in an appropriate form, such as a memorandum of understanding between the Executive Director and the conferences of the parties or other relevant governing bodies of the UNEP-administered multilateral environmental agreements, for their consideration. UNEP will prepare a draft template of options for consultation with the secretariats of the conventions, including the Convention on Migratory Species, in early 2017.

61. UNEP is also preparing to respond to other requests in resolution 2/18, and it wishes to draw the attention of the Standing Committee to the following operative paragraphs, which are relevant to the governing bodies of the multilateral environmental agreements for which UNEP provides the secretariat or carries out secretariat functions:

3. *Invites* the governing bodies of the UNEP-administered multilateral environmental agreements to bring to the attention of the Executive Director any administrative or financial challenges they face as a result of the practical implementation of their memorandums of understanding;

4. *Also invites* the governing bodies of UNEP-administered multilateral environmental agreements to share among themselves good practices in respect of their budget and human resource management;

7. *Requests* the Executive Director, when invited to do so by the governing bodies of the UNEP-administered multilateral environmental agreements, to foster mutually supportive programmes of work between the United Nations Environment Programme and the multilateral environmental agreements in the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and make available relevant scientific information important to their work.

62. UNEP will implement the resolution and report on the progress made to the Environment Assembly.

B. Delegation of authority

63. The UNEP Delegation of Authority Policy and Framework, adopted on 13 May 2016, embodies a uniform and streamlined approach to the delegation of authority. A tailored delegation of authority policy and framework is being developed for the multilateral environment agreements, including the Convention on Migratory Species, and other entities for which UNEP provides the secretariat or performs secretariat functions. The framework considers the dual accountability of the heads of those secretariats, which have been consulted and given the opportunity to provide comments on the draft policy and framework.

64. The delegation of authority document signed in September 2013 between the Executive Director of UNEP and the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Migratory Species, together with the executive secretaries of the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement and the Agreement on the Conservation of Populations of European Bats, will remain in force until the new tailored Delegation of Authority Policy and Framework is adopted.

²⁶ <http://web.unep.org/unea/documents>.

²⁷ http://www.unep.org/about/sgb/cpr_portal/Portals/50152/UNEA2%20RES/18.pdf.

C. United Nations system-wide enterprise resource planning system

65. Since 2 June 2015 and in accordance with General Assembly resolution 60/283, the United Nations, including UNEP and the UNEP-administered convention secretariats, has been employing the new enterprise resource planning system known as Umoja.

66. The implementation of Umoja across UNEP and the UNEP-administered convention secretariats has moved from the deployment phase to the stabilization phase. The remaining challenges continue to be tackled according to established priorities, with particular emphasis on ongoing issues related to the business intelligence and travel modules. UNEP has been proactive in drawing systemic and process issues to the attention of the United Nations Secretariat in New York, which will ensure that they are resolved.

D. Support provided to the Convention on Migratory Species from programme support costs

67. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 35/217 and the United Nations procedures for the approval and management of programme support accounts (ST/AI/286), all trust funds are charged programme support costs. The rate charged is approved by the General Assembly; for UNEP the rate is 13 per cent. The charge is intended to ensure that the cost of supporting activities financed from extrabudgetary contributions is not borne by the regular budget or other core resources that are central to the budget review and approval process of United Nations organizations. For UNEP, the term “extrabudgetary resources” refers to trust funds, as distinct from budgetary resources held in the Environment Fund.

68. Following United Nations standard procedures, the amount of resources available to the secretariats of UNEP and the Convention on Migratory Species for programme support in any given year is based on the income received for that purpose in the previous year. Under the current arrangement, the secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species receives 67 per cent of the programme support costs generated by the previous year’s delivery of the programme of work against the Convention’s respective trust funds.

69. The posts of seven administrative staff directly assigned to the secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species continue to be funded from programme support costs. They include one Administrative and Finance Officer (P-4), two Finance Assistants (both G-6) and two Administrative Assistants (both G-5), all based in Bonn, Germany, a Finance Assistant (G-6) based in Bangkok and an Administrative Assistant (G-6) based in Abu Dhabi.

70. Programme support costs were also used to finance staff development training, including induction training and further training on Umoja, as well as assistance in preparing the second set of International Public Sector Accounting Standard financial statements.

71. All Convention on Migratory Species trust funds continue to be administered by the Executive Director of UNEP and have been extended to 31 December 2019 by resolution 2/23, on the management of trust funds and earmarked contributions,²⁸ adopted by the United Nations Environment Assembly at its second session, in May 2016, thus giving effect to decision 11.1 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species.

²⁸ http://www.unep.org/about/sgb/cpr_portal/Portals/50152/UNEA%202/23.pdf.