

6th Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the CMS Scientific Council (ScC-SC6)

Bonn, Germany, 18 – 21 July 2023

UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Report

REPORT OF THE MEETING

I. OPENING OF THE MEETING AND ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

1. Ms Narelle Montgomery, Chair of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) Scientific Council (ScC) and of its Sessional Committee (ScC-SC), welcomed participants, including Vice-Chair Daniel Fernando, Committee members, other members of the ScC and observers to the Sixth Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council (ScC-SC6) - the first physical meeting since 2019. As this meeting was the last before the Fourteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CMS (COP14), there was a need to review all documents for the COP. She reminded the Committee that its main responsibility was to provide scientific advice to the COP, the Secretariat and others, prioritizing the substantive issues.
2. Ms Amy Fraenkel, Executive Secretary of CMS, warmly welcomed all participants to the meeting. Noting the ambitious mandate from COP13, advances had been made across a wide range of topics, including taxonomy, ecological connectivity, light pollution, the Central Asian Flyway (CAF), Jaguar (*Panthera onca*), terrestrial wild meat, climate change, insects and wildlife disease. There was a strong mandate from COP13 to assess the conservation status of migratory species. She thanked all ScC-SC members for dedicating their time and energy to CMS, especially Ms Narelle Montgomery for steering the Committee over the last few years and the two outgoing COP-appointed Councillors Mr Giuseppe Notarbartolo di Sciara and Mr Colin Galbraith. She also welcomed Ms Dagmar Zikova as the new CMS Scientific Officer and thanked Mr Marco Barbieri for his immense contributions to this Committee, Ms Melanie Virtue for serving as Meeting Secretary, the entire CMS Conference Services team and the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV) for provision of interpreters.

ITEM 2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND MEETING SCHEDULE

Item 2.1 Provisional Agenda and Documents and 2.2 Provisional Annotated Agenda and Meeting Schedule

3. The Chair invited comments on the documents [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Doc.2.1/Rev.1 Provisional Agenda and Documents](#) and [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Doc.2.2/Rev.1 Provisional Annotated Agenda and Meeting Schedule](#). As there were no comments, both were adopted.

II. STRATEGIC AND INSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

ITEM 3. SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL

Item 3.1 Evaluation of the results of the restructuring of the Scientific Council

4. The Chair summarised that COP11 agreed to the restructuring of the ScC, as outlined in document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Doc.3.1 Evaluation of the Results of the Restructuring of the Scientific Council](#), to be composed of nine COP-appointed Councillors and 15 Party-appointed Councillors, three from each of the Standing Committee's (StC's) geographic regions. When COP11 agreed to these changes, it also decided to evaluate the results with a view to review or confirm the structure. Common themes identified in a survey provided to all Scientific Councillors, ScC-SC members and StC members included enhancing engagement of Scientific Councillors who were not members of the ScC-SC, conducting regular reviews of working groups and task forces, increasing the number of virtual intersessional meetings, providing additional Secretariat support to Scientific Councillors, and increasing communication between meetings to highlight ongoing work and opportunities for engagement. The ScC-SC was invited to consider the survey results and recommend any appropriate improvements.
5. Mr James Williams (Party-appointed Councillor, UK) considered that the ScC was working and should continue as is. However, he considered that having three Party-appointed Councillors from each region rendered rotation awkward, and recommended considering increasing the number to four per region. He further suggested that, for improved governance and decision-making, all Decisions should be directed to the ScC, which could then determine which, if any, should be handed to working groups for input.
6. Mr Rob Clay (COP-appointed Councillor for Birds) considered that Scientific Councillors of the Americas not part of the ScC-SC could feel out of the loop, but all were very engaged.
7. The Chair summarised that the ScC-SC supported the survey results, and requested the Secretariat to consider the financial ramifications of increasing the number of Party-appointed Councillors from three to four per region, and to include this as a suggestion to COP14, along with an outline of additional resources needed.
8. The ScC-SC6 supported the results of the survey on the effectiveness of the restructuring of the ScC and provided six recommendations listed in document [ScC-SC6 CRP 3.1 Recommendations to Doc.3.1](#), which included exploring the potential to increase the number of Party-appointed Councillors from each region from three to four, and considering increasing the number of virtual intersessional meetings on priority topics.

Item 3.2 Rev. 1 Appointment of members of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council

9. The Secretariat indicated that the COP-appointed Councillors for Aquatic Mammals, Mr Giuseppe Notarbartolo di Sciara, and for Climate Change, Mr Colin Galbraith, would not be seeking reappointment for the next intersessional period. The Secretariat had received five nominations - four for the Aquatic Mammals position and one encompassing both positions.
10. The ScC-SC6 requested the Aquatic Mammals Working Group (WG) to review nominations for the Aquatic Mammals position. The WG later reported back that two candidates, Ms Ellen Hines and Ms Vanessa Tossenberger were preferred. The ScC-SC6 tasked the Secretariat to seek potential additional candidates for the Climate Change position in order to broaden the field, while noting the strong experience of the sole candidate, and making use of the COP14 postponement.

11. The ScC-SC6 agreed to recommend for consideration by COP14 both Ms Ellen Hines and Ms Vanessa Tossenberger as the preferred candidates for the position of COP-appointed Councillor for Aquatic Mammals, and to request the Secretariat to seek additional candidates for the position of the COP-appointed Councillor for Climate Change and present the list of candidates to COP14 for consideration, as detailed in document [ScC-SC6 CRP 3.2/Rev.1](#) *Recommendations to Doc.3.2/Rev.1*.

ITEM 4. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF WORK (POW) FOR THE SESSIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL

12. The Secretariat indicated that [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Doc.4](#) *Implementation of the Programme of Work for the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council* developed and adopted at its Fifth Meeting (ScC-SC5) had been guiding CMS's work in this intersessional period. The POW had a column indicating the status of each activity as of June 2023. The ScC-SC was requested to note any changes in or updates to the status column. No changes or updates to the POW were noted, apart from one small amendment to delete an outdated sentence.
13. The ScC-SC6 agreed to adopt the document.

ITEM 5. SYNERGIES AND PARTNERSHIPS

Item 5.1 Cooperation with Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)

14. The Secretariat introduced document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Doc.18.2](#) *Cooperation with Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)*, which reported on progress on the implementation of Resolution 10.8 (Rev.COP13) regarding cooperation with IPBES. The document outlined the activities carried out so far including the review by the Secretariat and the ScC WG on Connectivity of the initial scoping report of a fast-track assessment on integrated biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning and ecological connectivity for consideration by IPBES-10 in August 2023. Most inputs provided by CMS (Secretariat and the ScC WG) were taken into account in the final draft of the scoping report. Document 18.2 included draft amendments to the resolution (Annex 1) and the draft Decisions (Annex 2). The ScC-SC noted the importance of continued engagement with IPBES.
15. Mr Rubén Moreno-Opo (Party-appointed member for Europe) highlighted the importance of the successful cooperation between CMS and IPBES and its continuation. The proposed amendments to the Resolution and Decisions were important, but should also include key results of the Tenth Session of the Plenary of IPBES (IPBES-10) of August 2023. He recommended to include text to the Resolution and Decisions regarding IPBES-10 outcomes and requested an improvement to the Spanish translation.
16. The Chair agreed that cooperation with IPBES had been beneficial and invited Mr Moreno-Opo to provide specific wording for inclusion in Document 18.2. The Secretariat indicated that it would work to improve the Spanish translations to ensure they reflected the English version.
17. Reinforcing the value of fruitful CMS cooperation with IPBES, the ScC-SC6 endorsed the Recommendations to COP14 contained in paragraph 25 of the document, subject

to the specific additional text revisions provided in document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.18.2/Add.1](#) *Addendum 1 to Doc.18.2*.

III. SCIENTIFIC ASSESSMENTS AND REPORTS

ITEM 6. ATLAS ON ANIMAL MIGRATION

18. Mr Fernando Spina (COP-Appointed Councillor for Connectivity/Networks), introduced [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.20](#) *Atlas on Animal Migration*, summarising the development of the Atlas on Animal Migration, which aimed to offer the best available picture of and scientific background to animal movements in time and space. He added that the atlas should be a key tool to understand the impacts of climate change on migration. In Annex 1 of Document 20, Parties were encouraged to make use of the atlas, whilst the Secretariat should promote the use of existing modules as much as possible and explore options for the development of new modules. He noted that it was important to identify the means to support the completion of the atlas.
19. The Chair congratulated all involved on the successful launch of the atlas, noting the wealth of accessible information it contained, and directed the meeting to the draft Decisions to consider in Annex 1.
20. Mr James Williams (Party-appointed Councillor, UK) thanked everyone who had worked on the atlas, which was excellent. As the actions directed to the Secretariat outlined under 14.BB to be done in cooperation with the ScC were subject to availability of resources, he recommended to have a separate decision relating to ScC engagement, so that both parts of the process were in train.
21. Mr Rob Clay (COP-appointed Councillor for Birds) seconded Mr Williams' recommendation, adding that a clear mandate for the ScC would make it easier to promote the actions outlined under 14.BB, for example in meetings with others working in migratory species conservation.
22. Mr Simon Nemtsov (Party-appointed Councillor, Israel) considered that an interactive online atlas was very important, and recommended that it should be highlighted and easily accessible on the CMS website.
23. The Secretariat was certain that the atlas was on the CMS website, but agreed that it should be more prominent.
24. BirdLife International echoed congratulations to the Secretariat, alerting the ScC to a potential new module of the Atlas, mapping flyway ecological networks, globally. BirdLife International considered that the outputs could also form the basis of a report in the IUCN World Heritage Programme series; the idea for this arose through CMS, followed by an online discussion with the CMS and AEWA Secretariats, UNESCO and IUCN World Heritage. BirdLife International added that the Ramsar Secretariat was also involved, with text in their Synergies Resolution encouraging "*the Secretariat, in consultation with the Ramsar Scientific and Technical Review Panel...to contribute to ongoing efforts to improve ecological connectivity of the world's flyways for migratory birds and potentially of other taxa.*"
25. The ScC-SC6 agreed to recommend the draft Decisions for adoption, with amendments listed in document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.20/Add.1](#) *Addendum 1 to Doc.20*, which related to promoting information on the CMS website and addition of a new Decision

inviting the SC to provide advice and guidance in relation to modules and usability, promoting knowledge and use of modules and providing recommendations to COP15.

ITEM 7. CONSERVATION STATUS OF MIGRATORY SPECIES

Item 7.1 State of the World's Migratory Species

26. The Secretariat indicated that document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Doc.7.1](#) *State of World's Migratory Species* related to COP Decision 13.24 on the Conservation Status of Migratory Species. The document was linked to CRP 7.2 [Assessment of the Risk posed to CMS Appendix I-listed Species by direct Use and Trade](#) and CRP 7.3 [In-depth Review of the Conservation Status of Individual CMS-listed Species](#). The reports and case studies were now presented to the ScC for review and advice before their final submission to COP14. The Secretariat requested the meeting to provide input on any factual inaccuracies and recommendations, and consider any data gaps as well as the development of online tools, a database and the frequency of updates. The Secretariat thanked the UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) and Mr Marco Barbieri (Secretariat) for their work on this flagship report for CMS.
27. UNEP-WCMC gave an overview of the State of the World's Migratory Species, which would be finalised by and presented at COP14. This first ever global report on migratory species aimed to provide a sound scientific basis for evidence-based decision-making, following a State-Pressure-Response framework approved by the ScC in 2021. UNEP-WCMC noted that the *State* chapter provided an overview of current conservation status and trends. Based on data from the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, one in five CMS-listed species were threatened with extinction and 44% had a decreasing population trend, whilst 82% of CMS Appendix I species and 10% of CMS Appendix II species were globally threatened. Global extinction risk was rising for both CMS-listed and migratory species as a whole, whilst conservation status was deteriorating. There was an average decline of 90% in CMS-listed fish populations. Of non-CMS migratory species that might benefit from increased protection, 309 species were globally threatened or Near Threatened (NT), especially birds and fish.
28. UNEP-WCMC explained that the *Pressure* chapter provided an overview of threats to species, including a summary of the impact of the four major pressures on migratory species and threats to important sites for CMS species. The deteriorating status of migratory species was driven by intense levels on anthropogenic pressure, and three in four CMS-listed species were affected by habitat loss, degradation and fragmentation, whilst seven in ten CMS-listed species were affected by overexploitation. The top threats were primarily driven by agriculture, hunting and fishing. Globally there were almost 10,000 Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) triggered by CMS-listed species; other frameworks for identifying important sites, such as Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs) and Important Shark and Ray Areas (ISRAs), could help fill taxonomic and geographic gaps in the site network. 58% of monitored sites faced unsustainable pressure.
29. UNEP-WCMC added that the *Response* chapter detailed actions to conserve migratory species and their habitats, with illustrative examples including six key topics (legally binding obligations, reducing overexploitation, protecting and conserving key habitats, promoting ecological connectivity, ecosystem restoration and mitigating pollution).
30. UNEP-WCMC concluded that the Report recommendations set out priority actions including efforts to protect, connect and restore habitats, to tackle exploitation, and to ensure the CMS Appendices protected all species in need of further conservation action.

UNEP-WCMC invited input from the ScC-SC on identifying any factual inaccuracies, guidance on possible future iterations of the report including frequency, providing recommendations and filling data gaps.

31. The Secretariat emphasised that these data were needed to communicate what was happening and to take action, and welcomed comments on the draft report. Once finalised, a launch would be planned, and a foreword provided by the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The Secretariat welcomed ScC-SC advice on future dissemination of the report.
32. The Chair emphasised that this was a significant report, both for the ScC and for the Convention, containing very useful information.
33. The Secretariat summarised the main points for completing the report. After collecting inputs for corrections or improvements, the final version would be presented to COP14. The report raised key policy messages and points that highlighted the importance of CMS for the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), particularly with respect to connectivity. The report offered new insights, such as the number of Critically Endangered (CR) species in Appendix II and the consequences of declining populations. The report also encouraged Parties to list species that would benefit from listing; highlighted the benefits of migratory species in mitigating climate change; promoted restoration planning at the national level and the integration of migratory species into National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs). The report would provide a good basis for future work, and decisions were needed relating to possible future iterations of the report, frequency and possible use of online tools.
34. The Secretariat reminded the meeting of Decision 13.26, which called on the Scientific Council to consider reports provided and formulate recommendations to COP14 on conservation actions underpinned by reports as appropriate. It would seem appropriate to give the Secretariat the mandate to craft finalisation of the report with UNEP-WCMC.
35. BirdLife International congratulated the authors on an excellent report, which it strongly supported, and which it hoped would become a standard CMS product presented at each COP and included in the new Strategic Plan.
36. The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) considered the report extremely useful and committed to highlight it. WCS recommended using the terms “offtake” and “removal from the wild” in place of “harvest” for all species. WCS also suggested to include population monitoring, adaptive management and species-specific management strategies.
37. The European Federation for Hunting and Conservation (FACE) noted that “hunting” was used as a collective term for a range of biological resource use types, although often it could be minor compared to “collection” of terrestrial animals; labelling the use of wild animals for pets, display and other uses as “hunting” was not an accurate description of the actual threats.
38. The ScC-SC6 requested the Secretariat to finalize the report presented in the Annex of document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Doc.7.1](#) *State of World's Migratory Species* and prepare a document for the consideration of COP14, including recommended actions, a draft Resolution and draft Decisions. The ScC-SC6 further made general comments on the document, as outlined in document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Doc.7.1/CRP 7.1](#) *Recommendations to Doc.7.1*.

Item 7.2 Assessment of the risk posed to CMS Appendix I-listed species by direct use and trade

39. In reference to the Annex of document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Doc.7.2 Assessment of the Risk posed to CMS Appendix I-listed Species by direct Use and Trade](#), Mr Simon Nemptzov (Party-appointed Councillor, Israel) recommended to include species-country combinations, noting the need to try and get a better understanding of noncompliant use that was occurring. He considered that data should be included relating to countries where non-compliance was taking place.
40. BirdLife International welcomed the assessments, and as there were limits in information sources available, recommended providing an overview of the types of biases that tended to occur to provide a better sense of how well the available data might represent the situation on the ground. BirdLife International gave examples that would provide useful context: “Are seizures of larger species more likely because they might be easier to discover? Are smaller species being traded unnoticed? Is trade in more charismatic species more likely to be reported? Is there more expertise to identify individuals being traded in some taxa compared with others?”
41. WCS noted that it was important to know the type of trade, and that it would be useful to monitor and record trade in CMS-listed species to understand its impact. Under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), most countries only recorded trade in CITES-listed species; WCS recommended that CMS Parties should also record trade in CMS-listed species.
42. UNEP-WCMC noted that there was further information on trade in Tables B1 and B2 of the annex to document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Doc.7.2](#), and concurred that there was a data gap in the CITES trade database about national and international level trade of species not listed under CITES.
43. Mr João Loureiro (Party-appointed member for Europe) recommended encouraging Parties to monitor trade and to provide clear statements to help customs and trade regulators.
44. The Chair reminded that Parties were expected to report on trade in CMS-Appendix I - listed species in their reports to CMS.
45. Mr Carlos Orrego Vásquez (Party-appointed member for South & Central America and the Caribbean) gave a case study from Costa Rica, where trade had supported local livelihoods around conservation areas since 1983, with some local traders contributing to research and monitoring of marine turtles. Through effective monitoring it has been possible to demonstrate cases of sustainable trade, where there had been no negative impact on turtle numbers over two generations. He recommended that such case studies could make a useful contribution. The Secretariat noted that the report needed to clarify that not all take and trade was illegal, and inclusion of good case studies was helpful for sharing information, also on the website.
46. The Born Free Foundation considered that gorillas and Chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*) were not well covered. Trade in infant gorillas and Chimpanzee was often in-country, and did not register as illegal and/or international trade. The scale of the problem of trade in great apes was much greater than what a cursory look at this report might indicate. This might be the same for some other species.
47. The ScC-SC6 requested the Secretariat to finalize the report contained in Annex of document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Doc.7.2 Assessment of the Risk posed to CMS](#)

Appendix I-listed Species by direct Use and Trade, taking into account, as appropriate, its comments submitted, and provided further general comments as listed in document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Doc.7.2/CRP 7.2 Recommendations to Doc.7.2](#).

Item 7.3 In-depth review of the conservation status of individual CMS-listed species

48. In reference to document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Doc.7.3 In-depth Review of the Conservation Status of Individual CMS-listed Species](#), Mr Graeme Taylor (Party-appointed member for Oceania) noted that there was some significant new content, and there had not been enough time to contribute to it. He gave the example of the Tope Shark (*Galeorhinus galeus*), observing that New Zealand supported three-quarters of the global Tope Shark population, where the sharks fed inshore and stayed around the coastline, and had been managed for sustainable harvest for four decades. The document proposed that Tope Shark met criteria for Appendix I listing, but Mr Taylor emphasized that the New Zealand population was neither migratory nor threatened, so New Zealand would not wish to remove it from harvest.
49. In light of this example, the Chair suggested that the regional difference of species status had been overlooked by the report. CMS did have certain populations listed in Appendix I, so there was a precedent for that, and this might need further attention.
50. Mr Stephen Garnett (COP-appointed Councillor for Birds) noted that large numbers of Great White Pelican (*Pelecanus onocrotalus*) had died recently in Mauritania and Senegal from avian influenza, and there was concern about the West Africa population.
51. Discussions were held on the timeframe for review of all documents relating to the *State of the World's Migratory Species*, the *Assessment of the risk posed to CMS Appendix I-listed species by direct use and trade* and the *In-depth review of the conservation status of individual CMS-listed species*. The meeting noted the importance of the reports, which need ultimately to be factually correct and as useful as possible, and the Chair granted extensions for review.
52. The ScC-SC6 requested the Secretariat to finalize the report contained in Annex of document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Doc.7.3 In-depth Review of the Conservation Status of Individual CMS-listed Species](#), taking into account, as appropriate, its comments submitted, highlighting in document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Doc.7.3/CRP 7.3 Recommendations to Doc.7.3](#) specific comments made about the Tope Shark and Great White Pelican.

IV. INTERPRETATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

ITEM 8. DEFINITION OF THE TERMS “RANGE STATE” AND “VAGRANT”

53. Mr Colin Galbraith (COP-appointed Councillor for Climate Change) and Mr James Williams (Party appointed Councillor, UK) introduced document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.26 Definition of the Terms “Range State” and “Vagrant”](#), for which an Intersessional WG of the ScC-SC was set up. This WG had agreed that it would be valuable to approach this subject from the perspective of identifying when a species was a vagrant, as that was not defined within the Convention at present. The document provided guidance on use of the term “vagrant”, to facilitate decisions by Parties on whether they have conservation obligations arising from the listing of species on the Convention's Appendices. The WG agreed on factors that, when considered together, might support assessment of a species as a vagrant. The document contained a new draft resolution in Annex 1 and draft Decisions in Annex 2.

54. The Chair noted the high level of engagement and fruitful discussions that had been distilled into the document and the draft resolution on guidance.
55. Mr Rubén Moreno-Opo (Party-appointed member for Europe) thanked the Intersessional WG for their work and for this guidance on an important issue. He expressed concern around definition of the term “vagrant” and the draft resolution and the proposed binary choice as to whether a species was vagrant or not, noting the difficulty in assessing when a species should be considered vagrant. He believed that further explanation was needed for cases where a species had unusual movements not reflecting its usual range. He concluded that the term “vagrant” needed clearer provisions, and in the Spanish version of the document, it was not quite clear when a species may be vagrant or non-vagrant.
56. In support of Mr Moreno-Opo, Germany considered that this issue potentially had wide-ranging implications, and introducing a new term and concept that was not contained in the Convention text could affect policy beyond the scope of the Convention and its related obligations. As such, Germany was not comfortable to agree on a recommendation to the COP to adopt this guidance, noting that WG discussions had shown that it was difficult to give clear guidance. Paragraph 7 of the guidance covered how movement patterns of many species were poorly known and urged care when considering vagrancy, whilst paragraph 8 noted that “as climate induced range-shifts gather pace, species that were previously not found in particular locations may move there of their own accord.” Germany warned of the potential for Parties to draw wrong conclusions from and misinterpret the guidance, and suggested that the ScC reported to the COP that it was difficult to produce clear guidance on this issue. Germany noted that ranges would shift across all types of species, and scientific studies indicated that vagrant individuals were valuable for the survival of a species through expanding its range in order to adapt to changing climatic conditions. Germany thus considered that identifying a species which might be considered a vagrant should not lead to a Party simply forgetting about it, as in a binary model, but rather to closely monitor the species to see whether it might be attempting to change its range.
57. Ms Vanesa Tossenberger (Party-appointed Councillor, Argentina) also expressed concern about how to apply these guidelines. Saudi Arabia also considered that the guidance was not clear, especially for rare species with low populations, giving the example of Rüppell’s Vulture (*Gyps rueppelli*), which had expanded from its historical range of Sahelian Africa to become a regular visitor to the Mediterranean area, and had recently been found in Saudi Arabia. Whilst previously considered vagrant outside of Africa, Saudi Arabia noted that its increasing regularity was now considered as range expansion, potentially as a response to changing conditions in its original breeding areas.
58. Mr Simon Nemptsov (Party-appointed Councillor, Israel) advised that CMS did not need a draft resolution for these definitions; the ScC was directed by the COP to look at this issue, but clarity on the guidance was needed before going forward to a draft resolution.
59. Noting that CMS used the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, for example to determine unfavourable conservation status, and that the Red List also provided species range maps, Ms Gianna Minton (IUCN) recommended that CMS use the IUCN definition of a vagrant: “The species is/was recorded once or sporadically, but it is known not to be native to the area”. Vagrancy was not included in species maps on the Red List.
60. Law of the Wild, intervening also on behalf of Born Free and IFAW noted concern for introduction of the term “vagrant” into CMS, which they considered more of a policy than

a scientific issue and beyond ScC remit. Law of the Wild stressed that strong evidence was needed to confer vagrancy, which could not easily be achieved in data-poor environments, where the precautionary principle must prevail. Law of the Wild cautioned that the pace of climate-induced range changes was increasing, so making determinations about vagrancy versus range expansion might not be done in time, which in some cases could increase the risk of extinction.

61. Mr Daniel Fernando (Party-appointed member for Asia) agreed with the concerns expressed, especially noting the often insufficient or poor data on population status, whilst assumed ranges compounded by continued decline could result in species being erroneously recorded as vagrants and thus not subject to conservation management. He considered that this was especially a concern for marine species, for which there were notable information gaps.
62. WCS advised that the ScC should report to the COP that it was difficult to produce clear guidance on a complex issue, noting that assisted colonisation was even being deployed by some governments. If a country determined that a particular species was a vagrant, it should not ignore this species, but should monitor it to better understand its status, especially in relation to climate change. WCS considered that the factor '*the number of observed individuals is not increasing over time*' seemed odd, as populations could increase or decrease even within their natural range.
63. The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) agreed that the issue had a legal implication, in that vagrant species were not covered by the Convention, which risked conferring an implicit entitlement to a species considered as vagrant. WWF suggested that the document was couched as a report of a work in progress, for which further work was needed before a decision on whether it would be useful or not.
64. Agreeing with the concerns expressed by others, Ms Rima Jabado (COP-appointed Councillor for Fish) was cautious of Parties undertaking self-assessments, noting that the ScC would need to have broad agreement from species experts working on a species to avoid the risk of it being declared as vagrant in order to avoid conservation measures.
65. The Born Free Foundation noted that distribution maps largely reflected the presence of observers available to record species, and rarely-recorded species found in areas with low observer density would not necessarily be vagrants. He also noted that with climate change, today's vagrants might be tomorrow's migratory species.
66. Mr Graeme Taylor (Party-appointed member for Oceania) advised that the need to manage thousands of threatened species with a limited budget required prioritization. He considered that CR species should obviously get priority, and that work on CR species should not be reduced in order to focus on vagrants. He considered that this discussion was largely an academic argument, as vagrant species could be recognized rather quickly, and could be considered for conservation action when they went beyond being vagrants. Mr Barry Baker (COP-appointed Councillor for Bycatch) supported this position and considered the document excellent, including its draft Resolution and Decisions, which had dealt comprehensively with what COP requested of the SC.
67. Zimbabwe considered that it made sense for CMS to have a clear definition of vagrancy, which could lend assurance to evaluate whether, after a periodical assessment, a species might stop being in that position.

68. Mr Timm Rheinhardt (Party-appointed Councillor, Germany) believed that the document, and knowing if a species was vagrant, did not help to prioritize conservation action; there would be no practical implication of not defining the term “vagrant”.
69. Mr Colin Galbraith (COP-appointed Councillor for Climate Change) assessed that the WG had done what it was asked to do, and had only dealt with science, adding that the WG did not look into policy or legal implications to the science. In agreement with Mr Taylor, he added that governments were making these decisions on a regular basis, though often in a data-poor changing environment. The question was whether CMS wanted to help them with this or not. He considered that the WG had addressed this issue in the document, which was scientifically rigorous but did not address conservation implications, which was not the remit of the task. In considering that the document was scientifically as good as it can get, he suggested that the COP should decide on how it wanted to deal with this issue.
70. Mr James Williams (Party-appointed Councillor, UK) was amenable to further discussions, perhaps through a StC WG, but agreed with Mr Galbraith that the SC could not go further scientifically, and the WG had done what it could. He agreed that it might not be practical to monitor vagrant species if resources were limited, especially given the need to focus on other priorities. He suggested that the ScC should decide if it wanted to take this further or not, or could advise the COP that it was a broader issue for the COP itself to take forward.
71. The Chair summarised that this issue was clearly of great interest to many members. She noted first that the WG had completed the job it was tasked to do, which was to provide guidance about when a Party could determine if a species was vagrant. As the next step was to report to the COP, she proposed that the ScC presented the document to the COP after removal of the draft Resolution and Decisions; Parties could then determine if further discussion was needed and give more time to discuss the guidance at national levels and come back with a considered approach to COP. She concluded that the ScC should report to the COP, and let the discussion flow from there.
72. A further discussion was held in the final Plenary on CRP 8 concerning guidance on use of the term “vagrant”. Germany considered that the meeting did not agree that COP should consider the guidance and preferred to simply state that the document reported on results of the discussion. Mr Colin Galbraith (COP-appointed Councillor for Climate Change) encouraged all to adopt a simplistic approach.
73. The Chair led the meeting through the document to produce a third revision. It was agreed to remove the second sentence of the Summary, and the word ‘Scientific’ from paragraph 3. A factual change by the Secretariat was also agreed. Text in paragraph 19 was amended after inputs by Mr Graeme Taylor (Party-appointed member for Oceania), Mr Barry Baker (COP-appointed Councillor for Bycatch) and Mr Colin Galbraith (COP-appointed Councillor for Climate Change) to indicate that ScC-SC6 could not agree to recommend guidance. Mr João Loureiro (Party-appointed member for Europe) opted for the simplest approach, noting that there were invasive species in Portugal listed by CMS. It was proposed that paragraph 20 a) should simply “take note of the report”.
74. The ScC-SC6 revised document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.26/Rev.1](#) *Definition of the Terms “Range State” and “Vagrant”*, which was approved by the meeting, with recommendations that COP take note of the report and consider if any further work was necessary, particularly regarding the potential policy and/or legal implications of this matter. The result of discussions was reported on in document [ScC-SC6 CRP 8/Rev.3](#) *Implementation of Decision 13.140: Guidance on the use of the term “vagrant”*.

ITEM 9. AQUATIC SPECIES CONSERVATION ISSUES

75. Items 9.1 to 9.7 were discussed by the Aquatic Species Working Group.
76. Mr Barry Baker (COP-appointed Councillor for Bycatch) reported back to Plenary that in-session documents or CRPs were in line with proposed edits. There were no proposed edits to document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.27.1.3](#) *Maltreatment and Mutilation of Seabirds in Fisheries*, but the WG recommended it as suitable for adoption.
77. The WG considered that webinars for the Scientific Council in the intersessional period would be helpful, so that Scientific Councillors could be better prepared for discussions, and be able to provide input before final documents are developed.
78. The WG expressed concern about the lack of consultation of Range States on some proposals to list species, especially for the Sand Tiger Shark (*Carcharias taurus*) (document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.31.4.9/Rev.1](#)); this omission was seen as a missed opportunity to gain knowledge from Range States.
79. Mr Baker reiterated the WG's conclusion that it would be important that proponents of Concerted Actions consult with governments and bodies that are foreseen to implement proposed actions. It would be important to seek their agreement prior to submission, as in the case of the Concerted Action proposal for the Blue Shark (*Prionace glauca*) (document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.32.3.7](#)).
80. One challenge noted by the WG related to the applicability of listing criteria for marine species. It was pointed out that determining whether a marine species qualified as 'migratory' under CMS could be challenging, particularly for rare, hard-to-assess, or scientifically under-investigated species as was the case for many marine species. The WG noted that fish species could form 'straddling stocks' of highly mobile populations distributed across multiple jurisdictional areas that would not migrate cyclically or predictably across borders in significant numbers. Members had explained that proving migratory status could be technically and practically demanding, and specifically depleted species could lack sufficient data to assess their seasonal occurrence.
81. Mr Baker concluded by thanking all members of the Aquatic Species WG for their active input.
82. It was agreed in plenary that [ScC-SC6/CRP 9.5.1](#) *Conservation Priorities for Cetaceans* would be subject to a correspondence group.

ITEM 10. AVIAN SPECIES CONSERVATION ISSUES

83. Items 10.1 to 10.7 were discussed by the Avian Species Working Group.
84. Mr Rob Clay (COP-appointed Councillor for Birds) reported back to Plenary that the WG succeeded in reviewing all documents in the agenda and had some productive discussions. Noting that the great quality of the documents meant that they did not need so much discussion, he congratulated all who had worked on them in advance. The WG made a few specific recommendations in the CRPs, such as the need for significant investment in tools that were now available to CMS.
85. The WG recommended that all documents should move forward, including all listing proposals and Concerted Actions, as well as documents reporting back on species actions. He expressed thanks to all members of the Avian Species WG.

ITEM 11. TERRESTRIAL SPECIES CONSERVATION ISSUES

86. Items 11.1 to 11.7 were discussed by the Terrestrial Species Working Group.
87. Mr Alfred Oteng-Yeboah (COP-appointed Councillor for Terrestrial Mammals) reported back to Plenary, and thanked all Terrestrial Species WG participants for their contributions and the Secretariat for support in documentation. The WG reviewed the Implementation of the programme of work of the ScC-SC, region-based agenda items including the Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI), the Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna Initiative and the African Carnivores Initiative.
88. Species-specific matters included the African Wild Ass (*Equus africanus*), the African Elephant Action Plan, the West African Elephant MOU and the Initiative for the Jaguar, via the government of Costa Rica. The WG considered three species listing proposals – Eurasian Lynx (*Lynx lynx*, Appendix II) and Balkan Lynx (*Lynx lynx balcanicus*, Appendix I), Pallas's Cat (*Otocolobus manul*, Appendix II) and Guanaco (*Lama guanicoe*, Appendix II).
89. The WG also reviewed the adequacy of Wilson & Reeder (2005)¹ as a key reference for terrestrial mammal taxonomy.
90. Important discussions were held on the nut-cracking populations of the Chimpanzees of West Africa, addressing behavioural diversity and culture, on proposing an extension to the Concerted Action for the Giraffe (*Giraffa camelopardalis*), on the proposal for a Concerted Action for the Straw-coloured Fruit Bat (*Eidolon helvum*) – a long-neglected species, and on the issue of pastoralism and migratory species.

ITEM 12. CROSSCUTTING CONSERVATION ISSUES

Item 12.1 International Take

12.1.1 Priorities for addressing illegal and unsustainable taking of migratory species

91. In introducing document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.1.1](#) *Priorities for addressing Illegal and Unsustainable Taking of Migratory Species*, the Secretariat indicated that there had not been a cross-cutting look at the drivers and issues in relation to illegal take and what CMS could do in a cohesive way. The Secretariat considered that there were some excellent initiatives addressing Illegal Killing of Birds (IKB), but CMS needed to raise its global engagement in this area. The document built on various mandates and was linked to other reports, whilst also providing an input to the GBF. Annex 1 contained proposed revisions to Resolution 11.31 *Fighting wildlife crime and offences within and beyond borders*, which focused on wildlife crime, but the issue went beyond crime. In reviewing the draft Decisions in Annex 2, the Secretariat advised that CMS should take note of the actions of partners, such as CITES, TRAFFIC and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to strengthen a holistic approach.
92. Mr João Loureiro (Party-appointed member for Europe) noted that most countries did not have the tools or means to effectively control trade, nor to monitor trade legality. He recommended new text to urge Parties and non-Parties to strengthen awareness and cooperation with the relevant national agencies about wildlife trafficking and to monitor the trade of non-CITES listed species. He recommended that the Secretariat continued strengthening collaboration with relevant organisations and stakeholders in order to

¹ Wilson, D. E. & Reeder, D. M., eds. (2005). *Mammal Species of the World: A Taxonomic and Geographic Reference* (3rd ed.). Johns Hopkins University Press.

address illegal trade and to strengthen monitoring of non-CITES listed species. He considered that it was also useful to reflect on seasonal issues relating to take.

93. Mr James Williams (Party-appointed Councillor, UK) noted that draft Decision 14.CC asked the ScC to: a) review the analysis by the Secretariat, b) establish a WG on taking of terrestrial species, and c) consider the need to modify WG terms of reference (TOR), but he considered that it also need to: d) report to COP. He noted that it would help to have draft text on what the TOR should be, including how long the WGs would last, so that the ScC-SC could see how it all fitted together.
94. Noting that overexploitation had emerged as a key threat to migratory species that needed to be addressed, UNEP-WCMC suggested to mention IPBES assessments in the preamble. UNEP-WCMC also agreed with Mr Loureiro that the gap in monitoring of non-CITES CMS species was significant, and filling this gap could be a way to expand draft Decision 14.AA d) to include monitoring of take and trade, as well as data collection.
95. FACE considered that the immense loss of revenue noted in paragraph two of Annex 1 suited illegal taking, but was less well suited to unsustainable use, especially by local communities who depended on wildlife use for their livelihoods, as land use pressure and degradation were often the primary cause of population decline. Thus, the steps needed to address unsustainable take were often very different to issues of wildlife crime. FACE also suggested that the new operative paragraph 7 should aim to prevent, not minimize, unsustainable use, and noted repetition in new operational paragraphs 14 and 15 and a factual amendment in relation to an IPBES reference.
96. WCS noted that unsustainable take in relation to domestic trade was sometimes a greater threat than international trade. WCS added that it was not enough to know if a population was declining; it was also necessary to promote adaptive science-based management. Whilst unsustainable take and domestic trade and markets were very relevant, WCS encouraged Parties to develop species management plans, and build these issues into them, and to focus on Target 5 of the GBF to prevent unsustainable and illegal trade, and associated pathogen spillover.
97. The Born Free Foundation echoed the comments of WCS, and recommended that, in those sections where illegal or unsustainable take was causing decline of species, to add in the consequences of species decline on ecosystems.
98. Noting that the document only mentioned local communities, IUCN suggested to include indigenous peoples and use the term Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs), which would be in synergy with other MEAs. The Secretariat welcomed the constructive comments that would go into an addendum and be used to adjust the text, including in relation to indigenous peoples.
99. The ScC-SC6 provided comments, and proposed a number of amendments to the draft Resolution and the Decisions of document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.1.1](#) *Priorities for addressing Illegal and Unsustainable Taking of Migratory Species*, as outlined in document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.1.1/Add.1](#) *Addendum 1 to Doc.30.1.1*. The ScC-SC6 approved the amended document.

12.1.2 Aquatic wild meat

100. The Secretariat introduced document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.1.2](#) *Aquatic Wild Meat*, for which the CRP had already been issued, reflecting some minor comments of the Aquatic WG. At COP12 Parties adopted a resolution on aquatic wild meat, which

also established a WG on this issue, and COP13 gave precise mandates to this group, chaired by Ms Margi Prideaux. Steps had been taken towards development of an action plan to address aquatic wild meat harvests in West Africa, for which online Range State consultations were ongoing and an in-person meeting planned.

101. Mr Barry Baker (COP-appointed Councillor for Bycatch) noted that Ms Prideaux would step down from her role as Chair of the WG following COP14, a role she had held since 2019. He commended her work over two decades, which had brought important subjects to the attention of the Parties, and provided an important link between CMS and the NGO and scientific communities, facilitating input to CMS processes and ensuring that outcomes of CMS work were seen and used. She had also worked hard in the background supporting the previous two COP-appointed Councillors for Aquatic Mammals and was instrumental in developing and moving along the Pacific Cetaceans MOU. He noted that CMS was deeply indebted to Ms Prideaux, and thanked her for her incredible work for migratory species.
102. The ScC-SC6 revised document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.1.2 Aquatic Wild Meat](#), and agreed to recommend it to the COP, noting further revisions that contained draft Decision text moved from Doc.27.5.1 *Conservation Priorities for Cetaceans*. Updates to the draft Action Plan presented in Annex 3 were expected, which would reflect discussions of the Range States to be held in Saly, Senegal, on 7 September 2023, as part of the CMS Marine Megafauna Week: Atlantic Coast of Africa. The ScC-SC6 approved the revised document [ScC-SC6 CRP 12.1.2 Aquatic Wild Meat](#), pending the further revisions.

12.1.3 Terrestrial and avian wild meat

103. The Secretariat introduced document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.1.3 Terrestrial and Avian Wild Meat](#). Due to budgetary reasons, only an analysis on terrestrial wild meat was undertaken and published in 2021; the report was summarised in the document Annex, whilst the full version was available on the CMS website. More funds had recently become available, which would enable an analysis of avian wild meat.
104. Noting that the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and WCS (through the Sustainable Wildlife Management Programme) were also looking at unsustainable wild meat use and trade, WCS suggested to include the use of wildlife, especially wildlife markets, not just for consumption, but for other uses, and to highlight the importance of domestic trade.
105. The ScC-SC6 recommended that the COP adopt the draft Resolution and Decisions including the text changes proposed in document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.1.3/Add.1 Addendum 1 to Doc.30.1.3](#). The ScC-SC6 highlighted the importance of the issue of live wildlife taking and trade, especially birds and mammals for the domestic meat trade.

Item 12.2 Conservation planning and management

12.2.1 Ecological connectivity

12.2.1.1 Ecological connectivity - Policy aspects

106. Mr Fernando Spina (COP-appointed Councillor for Connectivity) introduced document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Doc.12.2.1.1/Add.1 Ecological Connectivity – Policy Aspects](#). Connectivity had been a key topic for CMS for many years, and CMS had taken steps to enhance its understanding and delivery in recent years. The document reported on

progress on the implementation of Decision 13.115 and on policy-related provisions of Resolution 12.26 (Rev.COP13) *Improving Ways of Addressing Connectivity in the Conservation of Migratory Species*, and of Resolution 12.07 (Rev.COP13) *The Role of Ecological Networks in the Conservation of Migratory Species*. The document proposed consolidation of two Resolutions on ecological connectivity into a single Resolution and amendments to the proposed new Decisions contained in Annex 3.

107. Mr James Williams (Party-appointed Councillor, UK) considered this to be a cornerstone work for conserving migratory species. WCS also commended this excellent document, which increased the visibility of CMS with respect to connectivity, and WCS encouraged the active engagement of CMS at the next IUCN World Conservation Congress. WCS provided further specific written comments, including using the term KBAs to replace IBAs, when used.
108. BirdLife International also provided written textual change suggestions relating to deep concern for habitats, adding a concern that infrastructure projects that constituted barriers to migration with negative impacts on migratory species and knock-on effects at population scale continued to be built. BirdLife International also recommended to acknowledge the nearly 10,000 sites of international importance for migratory species highlighted in the State of Migratory Species Report which were KBAs, then clarify that it was not just these areas but the routes connecting them that needed focus.
109. Mr Héctor Vera Alcaraz (Party-appointed member for South & Central America and the Caribbean) considered that there was not enough treatment relating to the deep concern for habitat fragmentation, and proposed text to invite Parties to implement the restoration and mitigation of negative effects related to the loss of connectivity.
110. The Secretariat noted that this issue had been a shining example of how CMS worked with experts, Parties and NGOs, and the work of CMS had been very relevant to other frameworks, including IPBES and IUCN.
111. The ScC-SC6 provided comments on document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Doc.12.2.1.1/Add.1](#) *Ecological Connectivity - Policy Aspects*, an addendum consolidating two Resolutions on the topics of ecological connectivity and ecological networks into a single Resolution, with amendments to the draft Decisions in Annex 3 of the document. The amended document was approved by the meeting.

12.2.1.2 Ecological connectivity - Technical aspects

112. Mr Fernando Spina (COP-appointed Councillor for Connectivity) introduced document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Doc.12.2.1.2/Rev.1](#) *Ecological Connectivity - Technical Aspects*, which reported on progress of implementation of relevant Resolutions' provisions and Decisions directed to the ScC, and summarised the ScC's work since COP13 to promote connectivity and to implement connectivity-related goals and targets of the Post-2020 GBF and further development of its monitoring framework. The Chair noted that the document demonstrated the comprehensive asset of work done since COP13, which had borne fruit, with incorporation of connectivity into the GBF.
113. The ScC-SC6 approved the document and recommended its endorsement and the lines of future work outlined, subject to the minor amendments detailed in document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Doc.12.2.1.2/Rev.1/CRP](#) *Recommendations to Doc.12.2.1.2*. The ScC-SC6 emphasised the centrality of ecological connectivity to the goals of CMS and its importance to other strands of work being brought to the COP, and highlighted

opportunities for synergies with various scientific data holding initiatives, including the KBA Partnership and BirdLife International's Data Zone redevelopment.

12.2.2 Transfrontier Conservation Areas

114. The Secretariat introduced document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.2.2](#), *Transfrontier Conservation Areas*, which included the multiyear project funded by the European Union "Cross Regional Wildlife Conservation in Eastern and Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean", which had supported regional economic communities in advancing transfrontier cooperation.
115. The ScC-SC6 approved the document and supported adoption of the recommended actions, as indicated in document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.18.2/Add.1 Addendum 1 to Doc.30.2.2](#).

12.2.3 Community participation and livelihoods

116. The Secretariat introduced document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.2.3](#) *Community Participation and Livelihoods*, for which the Secretariat had circulated a template to all Parties and other stakeholders, inviting the submission of case studies on conservation measures involving local communities. In cooperation with the Government of the UK, the case studies were compiled and analysed, and a set of ten key principles for involving local communities in conservation actions produced. The document contained a new draft resolution in Annex 1 and draft Decisions in Annex 2.
117. With reference to land and user rights, IFAW recommended that communal conservancies and locally managed areas could form valuable dispersal areas for migratory species outside of protected area networks, as well as corridors.
118. FACE advised that the draft Resolution could draw upon some important aspects of the CITES Resolution Conf. 16.6 (Rev. COP18) on CITES and livelihoods, and the GBF Targets. FACE provided written recommendations to: encourage Parties to work closely with key stakeholder groups to design, implement and monitor effective strategies for the conservation of CMS-listed species; maximize the benefits for rural communities in particular to support poverty eradication; recognize wildlife as an important component of local livelihoods; and adopt mitigation strategies as appropriate, as the implementation of some listings might have negative impacts on rural communities.
119. Germany was not comfortable with the SC debating this, which it considered a policy issue.
120. The ScC-SC6 approved the document and supported the recommended actions it contained, and made one minor comment to the Annex to the Resolution, highlighted in document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.2.3/Add.1 Addendum 1 to Doc.30.2.3](#).

Item 12.3 Infrastructure

12.3.1 Infrastructure and impact assessment

121. The Secretariat informed that document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.3.1](#) *Infrastructure and Impact Assessment* was prepared for the Intersessional WG on Linear Infrastructure, which developed recommendations as amendments to Resolution 7.2 (Rev.COP12) *Impact Assessment and Migratory Species* and a set of draft Decisions. The ScC-SC was requested to identify types of infrastructure not yet addressed under

CMS and provide advice on actions that could be taken and report the findings to COP14. The Secretariat clarified that the proposed types of infrastructure for consideration included dams and urban sprawl and development.

122. Mr James Williams (Party-appointed Councillor, UK) was concerned by the amount of work suggested, especially for the Secretariat and how realistic this was considering other priorities. He also questioned how well it fitted in with the scope of CMS compared to the work of other MEAs, whilst some information sought could be regarded as being under commercial confidentiality. He recommended some streamlining of the text relating to connectivity.
123. Mr Simon Nemptov (Party-appointed Councillor, Israel) indicated that it was not only linear infrastructure that affected migratory species. He questioned if there would be scope for implementing follow-up actions should the ScC-SC identify types of infrastructure not yet addressed by CMS; just mentioning their existence would not seem to be enough. The document was focused on linear infrastructure, but there were other issues relating to infrastructure development that needed consideration, such as pollution by offshore rigs. He advised that the ScC-SC should highlight this point to the ScC, and if new issues were identified, to consider how to follow on from them.
124. Mr Héctor Vera Alcaraz (Party-appointed member for South & Central America and the Caribbean) noted that the context of this document was related to the migration of large mammals in Central Asia, which were strongly impacted by linear infrastructure. He considered that the timing was right to start thinking how initial concerns about linear infrastructure could lead to other concerns, such as wind power infrastructure. The Chair concurred that it was useful to note the genesis of this issue.
125. The Secretariat noted that although the document title was “*Infrastructure development and migratory species*”, the work carried out focused on linear infrastructure following the mandate of the WG established by the ScC. The Chair recommended to capture in the draft Decisions about investigating the impacts of additional types of infrastructure on migratory species in the next intersessional period.
126. Mr Zeb Hogan (COP-appointed Councillor for Fish) indicated that the impact of dams was a huge issue for freshwater fish, and noted his availability to help with highlighting this in relevant documentation.
127. The ScC-SC6 revised the document, notably with new text concerning dams and urban sprawl, and a recommendation to establish a WG on infrastructure, as outlined in document [ScC-SC6 CRP 12.3.1 Infrastructure and Impact Assessment](#). The ScC-SC6 approved the revised document.

12.3.2 Renewable energy and migratory species

12.3.2.1 Renewable Energy and powerlines and 12.3.2.2 Ecological Risk Assessment for the Impact of Offshore Wind Farms on Birds in Australia

128. The Secretariat introduced document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.3.2 Renewable Energy and Migratory Species](#), which reported on progress implementing Resolution 10.11 (Rev.COP13) *Power Lines and Migratory Birds*, on Resolution 11.27 (Rev.COP13) *Renewable Energy and Migratory Species* and on related Decisions. The document outlined activities carried out by the Energy Task Force (ETF) in reference to its 2021-2024 Workplan and referred to the transition of the ETF from its initial focus on migratory birds to a multi-taxa agenda. The Secretariat noted that the ETF, through its

implementing partner, members and stakeholders, had been able to disseminate and promote several tools focused on managing and monitoring the impacts of renewable energy infrastructure, such as the Migratory Soaring Bird Tool. Annex 1 outlined the ETF activities, whilst Annex 2 contained the draft Decisions.

129. Mr Barry Baker (COP-appointed Councillor for Bycatch) introduced document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Doc.12.3.2.2](#) *Ecological Risk Assessment for the Impact of Offshore Wind Farms on Birds in Australia*, which reported on an ecological risk assessment to identify birds assessed to be at high risk from negative interactions with offshore wind farms in Australia. He noted that the study employed a semi-quantitative risk assessment process to highlight the suite of birds that might interact with offshore wind farms in Australia, and that the 273 taxa included in the analysis included CMS-listed albatross and petrel species, as well as shorebirds and passerines. He added that the logistical challenges to quantify the potential and realised impacts of offshore wind farms required specific approaches to data collection and analyses. He considered that the extensive development of offshore wind farms in the Northern Hemisphere provided examples of best and emerging approaches to quantify and mitigate negative impacts of offshore wind farms on seabirds that could be applied throughout the range of CMS listed albatrosses, petrels and other seabirds. He advised that results of the risk assessment enabled establishing baseline data and developing mitigation measures, and could be applied elsewhere.
130. Mr Graeme Taylor (Party-appointed member for Oceania) commented that the Government of New Zealand was keen to promote offshore developments, and there was much concern about this new risk, especially for marine mammals, most of which were Data Deficient (DD), as well as more than 80 breeding seabird species, over half of which were endemic. He considered this to be a major new risk that had not been considered adequately. Noting that New Zealand had a large number of seabirds breeding in the austral winter, including nocturnally active species, to which turbines would be of low visibility, he considered that these new documents were very welcome, and both had already been very useful.
131. Mr Rubén Moreno-Opo (Party-appointed member for Europe) thanked all involved for their work in preparing these documents, which contained useful information about the ETF activities, which were central to these efforts, and useful for all Parties. He recommended that the ScC-SC move these Decisions forward and that renewables were planned carefully to minimise risks. He informed that vultures often collided with turbines in Spain, where the many renewable energy projects in agricultural areas presented a risk for various species listed in CMS Appendix I such as Lesser Kestrel. He considered that it would be useful to have an information note to emphasise the need for conservation efforts for migratory species to reduce these impacts. He also noted that maps were very useful in recognising these issues and in planning for these developments.
132. Mr Djibril Diouck (Party-appointed member for Africa) thanked Australia for that important study, noting that as many countries were developing renewables, including Senegal, where some studies on impacts had been carried out, there was much that still needed to be done. Agreeing that the pace of development was certainly of concern, the Chair considered it was very useful for countries to share their experiences, and encouraged engagement with the ETF, which needed a broad representation from across the globe.
133. Germany noted that the ETF showed that it was not necessary to reinvent the wheel to mitigate these challenges, and it was useful to have that exchange on offshore windfarms. The Chair added that the ETF webpage had many helpful resources.

134. The ScC-SC6 recommended that the COP adopt the draft decisions including the text changes outlined in document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.3.2/Add.1 Addendum 1 to Doc.30.3.2](#).
135. The ScC-SC6 agreed with the document's recommended actions to the SC to take note of the document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Doc.12.3.2.2 Ecological Risk Assessment for the Impact of Offshore Wind Farms on Birds in Australia](#) and share the ecological risk assessment with the ETF.

Item 12.4 Threats

12.4.1 Climate Change and Migratory Species

136. Noting that climate change was a key issue for CMS, Mr Colin Galbraith (COP-appointed Councillor for Climate Change) introduced document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.4.1/Rev.1 Climate Change and Migratory Species](#), which proposed a revision of the Resolution 12.21 and new draft Decisions for the triennium following COP14. He recalled that no migratory route was fixed, and animals would change their movements in relation to various drivers, including climate. As the dramatically increasing pace of climate change compromised the capacity of migratory species to shift their ranges, which was already limited especially by human activity, he considered it necessary to evaluate the combined level of the risk of climate change impacts alongside other risks.
137. As there was a spectrum of sensitivity to climate change, with some species being more resilient and better able to adapt than others, Mr Galbraith considered it challenging for governments to make decisions around climate change, which was having often catastrophic impacts on many species. He urged that CMS should further engage in work on climate change, especially by forging stronger relationships with other instruments concerned with climate change such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and should make the case for how migratory species were affected by climate change, were important indicators of change, and were potentially part of the solution for mitigation and adaptation.
138. Mr James Williams (Party-appointed Councillor, UK) outlined the document structure: Annex 1 contained a proposed revision of Resolution 12.21, including an annexed Decision Framework to guide engagement between Range States and for the prioritization of actions. Annex 2 contained draft Decisions, including those directed to the ScC and the COP-appointed Councillor for Climate Change. Five Information Documents had also been produced, including a draft summary for policy makers available as document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Inf.30.4.1 Climate Change and Migratory Species – A Review of Impacts, Conservation Actions, Ecosystem Services, and Indicators](#), which presented a review of impacts, conservation actions, ecosystem services and indicators. The Information Documents would be edited prior to their launch.
139. BirdLife International suggested the addition of a new paragraph in the preambular part of the Resolution to recognise the urgency of climate change happening now: *“Recognising with equal concern that hard and soft limits to adaptation have been reached to some ecosystems and regions, thus impacting on migratory species and their habitats”*.

140. Responding to Mr Mark Simmonds (COP-appointed Councillor for Marine Pollution), who questioned how the ScC-SC would address its extensive directives, Mr Galbraith answered that these would probably be put to the re-established Climate Change WG.
141. IFAW welcomed the updated Resolution, draft Decisions and Annexes, which formed an excellent resource. Recalling evidence that protecting and restoring wild animals and their habitats could enhance natural adaptation and mitigation potential was strongly welcomed, as there was strong evidence that many animals enhanced ecosystem function including in helping to mitigate climate change. However, IFAW considered that the document failed to tackle this adequately, and urged CMS to highlight how migratory species could be allies in mitigating climate change, not just victims; this might also open the door to related funding options. The Chair endorsed that highlighting migratory species as allies in climate change mitigation was a useful concept to embrace.
142. The Born Free Foundation recognised the importance and currency of the document, and shared a context from Africa Climate Week 2022, where the importance of African ecosystems in contributing to solve climate change impacts was underlined. The Born Free Foundation considered that the CMS document would be a good place to convey the message that it was not just that species were being adversely affected by climate change, but that species and ecosystems were part of the solution, and added that CMS was well-placed to play a leading role in promoting this.
143. Mr Mark Simmonds (COP-appointed Councillor for Marine Pollution) brought up a process issue, reminding that text had been drafted and submitted relating to the suggestion that a specific Steering Group be established to guide this work, but this text was missing in CRP 12.4.1. The Secretariat recalled that this would fall to the Climate Change WG. Mr Colin Galbraith (COP-appointed Councillor for Climate Change) confirmed that it was up to the WG to form whatever committee they needed, but agreed that having a clear group working on this would be useful, which should be taken forward through a Steering Group.
144. The ScC-SC6 proposed amendments to the document [ScC-SC6 CRP 12.4.1 Climate Change and Migratory Species](#). The ScC-SC6 approved the revised document to be recommended to the COP.

12.4.2 Insect decline and its threats to migratory insectivorous animal populations

145. The Secretariat introduced document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Doc.12.4.2 Insect decline and its threats to migratory insectivorous animal populations](#), which provided an overview of available information on global insect decline and its drivers and impacts, with specific focus on insectivorous birds and bats. The Secretariat informed that CMS first addressed this issue at COP13, since when it had established cooperation with the Leibniz Institute for the Analysis of Biodiversity Change (LIB) for production of the report, with support of the Governments of Germany and Australia. COP13 adopted Resolution 13.6 on Insect Decline and its Threat to Migratory Insectivorous Animal Populations, calling upon Parties to engage in scientific research on this issue. Furthermore, the COP13 Decision 13.129 invited the ScC to identify and prioritize the main factors causing the established loss of insect biomass, collect relevant information and assess its cascading effects on migratory insectivorous animal species, as well as developing and publishing guidelines. The Secretariat concluded that the draft report included comments aimed at triggering feedback from the ScC-SC on specific elements of the report, presented in Annex 1.

146. Mr Héctor Vera Alcaraz (Party-appointed member for South & Central America and the Caribbean) noted that the dependence of freshwater fishes on insects had not been addressed by the report. He informed that freshwater migratory fishes with unfavourable conservation status were mostly large and dependent on insects in the early stages of their life, as juveniles, which might explain in part the lack of data. The Chair advised that this could be something to explore in the next intersessional period.
147. Mr Timm Rheinhardt (Party-appointed Councillor, Germany) noted that insects were at the basis of almost all terrestrial and avian food chains, and without insects most of these food chains would collapse. He recommended highlighting the role of insects in connectivity: as insects had higher biomass than any other taxa, biomass transfer was mostly insect-based, so much connectivity related back to insects in the first place.
148. Saudi Arabia welcomed the very useful report, but considered that it would also be useful to cover how a decline of migratory birds could potentially lead to an increase of insects in some areas, whence more insects might impact habitats and agricultural crops.
149. Mr Djibril Diouck (Party-appointed member for Africa) found the report to be very distinctive and to cover important topics, noting that insect decline was a major issue for migratory species, and was related to many other issues, such as air pollution. As this was a complex topic, requiring more time to collect data, he suggested that the ScC considered it during the next intersessional period.
150. Mr Simon Nemtsov (Party-appointed Councillor, Israel) questioned the process for the draft document, and whether it would come back to the ScC before COP14. The Secretariat believed that the ScC would like it to finalise the report and prepare a document for the COP that would propose revisions comprising further action. The Chair clarified that given the length of the report, more time was granted to provide written comments to the Secretariat, which would then have a mandate to liaise with the authors to complete the report based on the written comments provided.
151. The ScC-SC6 requested the Secretariat to finalize the report on insect decline, and to prepare a new document for consideration by COP14 including a proposal directed to the SC to continue aspects of Decision 13.129 on insect decline, as outlined in document [ScC-SC6 CRP 12.4.2 Recommendations to Doc.12.4.2](#). The ScC-SC6 agreed that further time was required to finalise the document and provide comments.

12.4.3 Wildlife disease

152. Ms Ruth Cromie (COP-appointed Councillor for Wildlife Health) introduced document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Doc.12.4.3 Migratory Species and Health](#), as well as [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Inf.12.4.3 Migratory Species and Health: A review of migration and wildlife disease dynamics, and the health of migratory species, within the context of One Health and ecosystem approaches to health](#), which was presented as an Information Document. She indicated that the documents aimed to contribute to the work of the WG on Migratory Species and Health under the ScC. She noted that drivers of wildlife disease emergence could pose additional threats to migratory species, and Covid-19 had renewed interest in One Health and sources of wildlife for zoonotic conditions. She added that CMS had a history of working on health, including poisoning and Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), which was a threat facilitated by people and now impacting wildlife. A team of wildlife professionals led by Ms Katie Beckmann and Ms Marja Kipperman had developed the review, which was in three sections: reflecting the interdependence of health across sectors and the need for One Health and ecosystem approaches; migration and disease dynamics including vectors of

disease; and key health issues for migratory species and the drivers of disease. She invited the ScC-SC to review and provide feedback, and to consider how to further address the issue of wildlife health, which was a highly relevant topic today; pushing the issue back to COP15 or beyond might risk missing the next pandemic.

153. WCS commended the document, and made a few suggestions for improvement, including the recommendation to refer to pathogen spillover instead of disease spillover. WCS advocated that the document and Parties should recognize that wildlife might not show morbidity, mortality or any signs of disease, such as is the case with many bats, but might still carry pathogens with potential to spill over, often mutate, and infect other wildlife, livestock, or people, which could lead to epidemics or pandemics, or have serious disease implications in other wildlife. WCS considered that the greater risk of spillover was from and to mammals and birds, and that there was a significant need for pathogen surveillance, as well as disease surveillance. WCS recommended more attention to livestock/wildlife interactions and disease, such as for Saiga Antelope (*Saiga tatarica*) and Vicuña (*Vicugna vicugna*). In addressing the issue of wildlife health in the context of CMS, WCS recommended further elaboration on the issues of pathogen spillover and of livestock/wildlife interactions, and encouraged engagement with the ongoing World Health Organization (WHO) negotiations of a new instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response. WCS particularly encouraged wildlife ministries to engage with their governments' health ministries on those negotiations, and invited the authors to connect with the WCS Wildlife Health Programme.
154. Noting that monitoring of wildlife and disease was insufficient, Mr Djibril Diouck (Party-appointed member for Africa) advised that it was important to introduce programmes to monitor epidemics and pathogens. He considered that the risks of disease spread increased when animals did not show symptoms of disease, and the issue of interconnections between migratory species and diseases should also be included in CITES. He noted that the One Health approach was important, and had been taken on board in Senegal, but more progress was needed in order to stay ahead of the next pandemic. He informed that there was an outbreak of avian influenza in pelicans in 2022 in West Africa, and in other wild birds in 2023. He considered that the report and documents were important and current, and it was necessary to continue working on them.
155. Noting that there had been avian influenza in wild birds in Israel, Mr Simon Nemptov (Party-appointed Councillor, Israel) considered that much emphasis had been put on disease since Covid-19, and the issue of spillover was very important. He advised that the document should access updated information, as some references cited were old, and that wildlife trade and CITES were not mentioned in the report; the CITES Standing Committee had a group on diseases and health. He considered that there were global efforts to address wildlife disease, but over 70% of diseases originated in animals, so UNEP and the WHO needed to address this issue together. He encouraged CMS Parties to find out who in their health ministry took part in the WHO, and enlighten them why wildlife issues needed proper consideration.
156. Mr Edson Gandiwa (Party-appointed member for Africa) considered the document to be of critical importance, especially after Covid-19, and wildlife coverage was key, notably in considering transboundary issues. He advised that regional representation needed to be enhanced, highlighting a programme in Southern Africa relating to animal health and spillover. He concluded that wildlife conservation efforts should not be compromised.
157. India informed that India had robust infrastructure to deal with wildlife disease, had been able to successfully manage outbreaks, and that the Government of India took One

Health seriously, and had envisaged a centre for wildlife health, diagnostics and research.

158. Noting the focus on spillover, Mr Timm Rheinhardt (Party-appointed Councillor, Germany) raised that there was also a spillback issue. He believed that it would be useful to include an overview of migratory species and the diseases that they might have been affected by in the past in the report, not just avian influenza and Covid-19, but others as well, such as rabies.
159. The Born Free Foundation considered the document to be very timely, as Intergovernmental Negotiating Body was negotiating and drafting a global agreement on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response on behalf of the WHO, with contributions from NGOs. Considering that the WHO took a largely anthropocentric point of view, the Born Free Foundation recalled that One Health was not just a concept on a piece of paper, and prevention was better than cure, especially for pandemics. It noted that the potential of zoonoses coming back to humans was an issue, e.g., pathogens from people to great apes and back again. The lack of equipment for disease surveillance was a widespread issue, as noted recently by Ms Sacha Dench (CMS Ambassador for Avian Migratory Species), who found and observed teams of people tasked with collecting samples from dead seabirds in West Africa without Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for their work. The Born Free Foundation urged CMS to use its influence to contribute to the new One Health High-Level Expert Panel (OHHLEP), noting that NGOs had less of a voice at this panel than Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs).
160. IFAW agreed with WCS that encouraging environmental focal points to liaise with health focal points engaged in pandemic instruments was vital. He advised that the document listed a number of efforts to address the drivers of population decline, but omitted direct exploitation, which was also a potential driver of disease emergence, and should be included.
161. The Secretariat noted that more time was needed to collect feedback on the document, which it would then finalise for consideration by COP14.
162. The ScC-SC6 provided comments as outlined in document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Doc.12.4.3/CRP Recommendations to Doc.12.4.3](#), and requested the Secretariat to finalize the report and prepare a document for consideration by COP14 containing draft Decisions and a draft amended Resolution 12.6 *Wildlife Disease and Migratory Species*. The ScC-SC6 agreed that further time was required to finalise the document and provide comments.

Item 12.4.4 Light pollution

12.4.4.1 Light Pollution Guidelines for Wildlife

163. Introducing document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.4.4 Light Pollution Guidelines for Wildlife](#), Mr Mark Simmonds (COP-appointed Councillor for Marine Pollution) indicated that artificial light was increasing globally, and was known to negatively affect migratory species, as well as insects, upon which many preyed. He noted that it was a broad and technical multidisciplinary subject of relevance to city planners, physicists and others, and the guidelines had seen collaboration with CitiesWithNature in curbing light pollution in cities. He reminded that World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) 2022 had focused on light pollution under the theme “*Dim the lights for birds at night*”. He noted that the guidelines, which built on a framework developed by the Australian government, included

appendices on practical lighting design, “what is light?”, measuring light and artificial light auditing, whilst also containing species-specific information for marine turtles, seabirds, shorebirds, landbirds and bats. He thanked all who had contributed to the document, especially the Governments of Australia and Germany which supported it, and to the lead consultant Ms Laetitia Nunny.

164. Mr Carlos Orrego Vásquez (Party-appointed member for South & Central America and the Caribbean) commended the great work done on light pollution, and recommended to involve further stakeholders, such as local communities and municipalities, who make local planning decisions, especially to minimize disturbance by infrared light turtles laying their eggs.
165. Mr Djibril Diouck (Party-appointed member for Africa) considered that guidelines were much needed for light pollution. He informed that authorities in Senegal had learned where marine turtles laid their eggs, but some beaches no longer supported them, and monitoring teams had found that light pollution was to blame. He added that awareness raising efforts had been conducted, inviting mayors for example, as it was often these officials who allowed lights to be installed at turtle-nesting beaches. Whilst finding solutions was not always easy as there were often economic considerations, he noted that it was essential to find solutions and offer options for tourism and safe beaches for turtles, including nocturnal turtle-watching visits. Ms Amy Fraenkel, Executive Secretary of CMS, agreed that the Secretariat should disseminate the guidelines to the tourism and private sectors, once adopted.
166. Ms Narelle Montgomery (in her capacity as Party-appointed member for Oceania) suggested that CMS should emphasise that the guidance, which was a fantastic product, comprised international guidelines for all migratory species, including for migratory bats and migratory landbirds – two new appendices that had been developed during the intersessional period.
167. The ScC-SC6 supported the recommended actions contained in the document, and also recommended that the titles of the Resolution and Decisions be amended to read “*CMS Light Pollution Guidelines*”, to ensure consistency with the text of the guidelines, as outlined in document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.4.4/Add.1 Addendum 1 to Doc.30.4.4](#).

12.4.4.2 Light Pollution Guidance Documents from Australia and New Zealand

168. Mr Graeme Taylor (Party-appointed member for Oceania) informed that Australia and New Zealand had drafted document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Doc.12.4.4.2 Light Pollution Guidance Documents from Australia and New Zealand](#). He informed that Australia’s guidance included appendices on bats, terrestrial mammals and ecological communities, whilst New Zealand had developed “*Mitigation Standards to Reduce Light-induced Vessel Strikes of Seabirds with New Zealand Commercial Fishing Vessels*”, which was very relevant as the commercial fishing fleet was significant, and thousands of birds came into contact with or landed on boats. He illustrated this by sharing an example of a CR seabird species with a world population of about 200 birds that only bred at one site, where many boats anchored nearby out of the wind; multiple collisions had been recorded due to the light used by the boats at night. Adding that a fisheries officer promoted awareness among skippers at this site, he stressed that engagement with the fishing industry was vital. He concluded that bird strike was a major issue around the world, as millions of birds crashed into lit infrastructure, and lighting such buildings at night was not necessary.

169. Mr Mark Simmonds (COP-appointed Councillor for Marine Pollution) noted that the ScC-SC did not have an expert in this field, which would be good to address. The Chair advised that this gap could be considered in the review of COP-appointed Councillors.
170. The Born Free Foundation enquired about the scope of the paper, especially in relation to defining light, noting that wavelengths beyond the human eye, such as those linked to 5G transmitters and electromagnetic radiation, might impact birds and insects. Noting the necessity to be precautionary, Mr Simmonds answered that the full range of light spectra had been taken into account.
171. Mr Djibril Diouck (Party-appointed member for Africa) emphasised the need for clear guidelines and experience. He highlighted some research in Senegal which showed that light could be used to reduce bycatch of marine turtles, with a success rate of 70%, as turtles, as well as rays, swam away from lights around nets. He recommended that the potential use of lights to mitigate bycatch of migratory species should be further investigated and publicised.
172. The ScC-SC6 took note of the additional references and mitigation standards provided in two information documents.

12.4.5 Plastic pollution

173. The Secretariat introduced document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.4.5](#) *Plastic Pollution*, highlighting a regional CMS project, for which the report *Impacts of Plastic Pollution on Freshwater Aquatic, Terrestrial and Avian Migratory Species in the Asia and Pacific Region* had been concluded, and invited comments on the draft Decisions.
174. Whale and Dolphin Conservation (WDC) recommended that, under draft Decision 14.AA, Parties should monitor persistent organic pollutants and per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAs), especially as some migratory species were used for human consumption.
175. Mr Graeme Taylor (Party-appointed member for Oceania) informed the meeting about a paper in *Nature Communications* looking at the global distribution of plastics linked to seabirds, which identified overlapping risks with ocean gyres. He added that the paper included a new listing of species at highest risk with reference to their distribution, which would help target research, e.g., to measure contaminants in their tissues.
176. Mr Djibril Diouck (Party-appointed member for Africa) noted that plastic pollution was a phenomenon affecting all ecosystems and all species, significantly affecting marine species, and it was vital that the ScC-SC made clear recommendations in this regard.
177. Mr James Williams (Party-appointed Councillor, UK) noted that a key challenge was preventing plastic pollution in the first place, and CMS needed to identify where to best focus its efforts with respect to the new treaty on plastic pollution. In relation to draft Decision 14.AA a), he questioned if asking Parties to fully support negotiations for the treaty was appropriate, and in relation to draft Decision 14.CC wondered if developing a report for other regions was achievable.
178. Mr Mark Simmonds (COP-appointed Councillor for Marine Pollution) noted that document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.27.2.1](#) *Effects of marine pollution on migratory species* highlighted the need for CMS to complement what was being done under the new plastics treaty, as well as under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic

Pollutants, and that this was something already posed to the COP. He further noted that the ScC-SC needed to consider marine debris.

179. The ScC-SC6 supported the recommendations set out in the document, and provided comments as detailed in document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.4.5/Add.1 Addendum 1 to Doc.30.4.5](#).

Item 12.5 Conservation implications of animal culture

180. The Secretariat presented document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.5 Conservation Implications of Animal Culture and Social Complexity](#) on behalf of Ms Philippa Brakes (Chair of the Expert WG on Animal Culture and Social Complexity), to whom sincere thanks were extended for her work and leadership on this document. The Secretariat informed that tasks assigned by COP13 were largely implemented through workshops in 2022 and 2023, with the set-up of nine taxonomic sub-groups, three sub-groups on cross-cutting issues and two sub-groups on culture-related Concerted Actions. Annex 1 presented the recommendations from the second CMS workshop on animal culture and social complexity; Annex 2 listed the draft Decisions. The Secretariat requested the ScC-SC to provide feedback on responsibility and on the draft Decisions in Annex 2.
181. The Secretariat highlighted an additional issue, notably determining where the Expert Group should sit in terms of ScC-SC responsibility, given that it now covered all taxonomic groups. The Secretariat informed that to date, this group had been under the responsibility of the COP-appointed Councillor for Aquatic Mammals, due to its original focus on cetaceans. The Secretariat suggested responsibility be handed over to the COP-appointed Councillor for Connectivity, noting the strong links between animal culture and connectivity, as well as his long-standing, close involvement in this work stream.
182. Mr Mark Simmonds (COP-appointed Councillor for Marine Pollution) had been closely involved in this work area for a long time and also acknowledged Ms Brakes' great input. He agreed that this issue should be put under the leadership of Mr Fernando Spina (COP-appointed Councillor for Connectivity), who would give it tremendous energy and enthusiasm.
183. Mr James Williams (Party-appointed Councillor, UK) agreed with Mr Simmonds, and also queried why this group was named an "expert group", as all WGs comprised experts. He further advised caution in the use of language relating to indigenous people, e.g., under draft Decision 14.BB b)ii., and in directing items to the Expert Group rather than to the ScC directly; this might require some rearrangement.
184. Zimbabwe recommended that specific attention should be given to good practice as well as to threats.
185. The Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area (ACCOBAMS) indicated that, in relation to Annex 2 draft Decision 14.BB a) viii., IMMAs and ISRAs were not management tools by definition, although once established they could be used for management purposes.
186. Mr Simon Nemptzov (Party-appointed Councillor, Israel) considered that hunting was not covered enough in the document, adding that a hunter did not always know how a hunted animal fitted within its social group. He noted that human-wildlife interactions usually focused on conflict, but there should also be considerations concerning animal social groups in the case of direct take. He suggested building synergies with MIKT,

whilst other kinds of take, such as fishing, should also be considered as part of human-wildlife interactions in a broad sense.

187. The Born Free Foundation indicated that the characteristics that made an animal attractive to trophy hunting were often associated with older animals that had important social and cultural roles, and this should be taken into consideration when allocating trophy hunting licenses.
188. Mr Djibril Diouck (Party-appointed member for Africa) commended the broadening of the scope of animal culture beyond marine species within CMS. He agreed that hunting could have a high impact on species, and targeting specifically older animals impacted social hierarchy, which could influence the entire social structure of a group. He advised that CMS should focus not just on conflicts but on the impact of hunting on animal groups.
189. Mr Mark Simmonds (COP-appointed Councillor for Marine Pollution) indicated that the issues of both deliberate and incidental removals were taken into account in the development of the culture documents. In relation to the recommendation of Mr Williams, he was concerned that addressing issues to the ScC first, rather than the Expert Group, might hold up progress.
190. The ScC-SC6 revised document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.5](#) *Conservation Implications of Animal Culture and Social Complexity* for submission to the COP, as summarised in document [ScC-SC6 CRP 12.5](#) *Animal Culture*, and recommended that responsibility for this work area be handed over to the COP-appointed Councillor for Connectivity. The revisions and recommendation were agreed by the meeting.

Item 12.6 Ecotourism and migratory species

191. Mr James Williams (Party-appointed Councillor, UK) indicated that document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.6](#) *Ecotourism and Migratory Species* reported on implementation of Decision 13.136 *Sustainable Tourism and Migratory Species*, presenting a review of ecotourism undertaken by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) of the UK. He noted that the document focused on non-lethal tourism, and highlighted the value of observing migratory species to ecotourism, whilst the impacts of ecotourism also needed to be considered. Four ecotourism scenarios had been explored, each with different implications for migratory species: direct species interaction, dedicated observation without interaction, habitat-based ecotourism and incidental wildlife encounters. Annex 1 contained proposed amendments to Resolution 12.23, whilst Annex 2 provided new guidance for Parties and stakeholders.
192. Ms Vanesa Tossenberger (Party-appointed Councillor, Argentina) thanked the UK for preparing this vital document. She recommended adding a reference to the International Whaling Commission (IWC) Conservation Committee within the penultimate preambular paragraph of Annex 1.
193. IWC informed that it has been working on whale watching for numerous years and had a plan for whale watching and its impacts, which would be relevant to include in this document.
194. IFAW suggested adding a phrase under the preambular paragraph of Annex 1 relating to national regulations to indicate that the effectiveness of such measures could be compromised if similar protections were not considered for species throughout their

range. IFAW also recommended that the third paragraph under Governance of Annex 2 regarding cooperation to regulate ecotourism should acknowledge the guidelines.

195. Mr Rob Clay (COP-appointed Councillor for Birds) recommended to add a request for Parties to share information and experiences to avoid others reinventing the wheel.
196. Mr Edson Gandiwa (Party-appointed member for Africa) considered that the Annex 1 paragraph relating to frameworks should cover issues from an African context concerning cross-border tourism to protect connectivity and animal movements.
197. Mr Djibril Diouck (Party-appointed member for Africa) advised that the terms “sustainable tourism” and “ecotourism” should be harmonised.
198. The Chair appreciated the valuable input and work of the UK and JNCC in shaping this document, and thanked the meeting for highlighting inconsistencies, which she requested JNCC to consider in full.
199. The ScC-SC6 agreed with the proposed amendments to Resolution 12.23 contained in document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.6](#) *Ecotourism and Migratory Species*, and provided amendments, adding text to three paragraphs of the preamble and paragraph 6 of the Resolution, as detailed in document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.6/Add.1](#) *Addendum 1 to Doc.30.6*.

ITEM 13. AMENDMENT OF CMS APPENDICES

Item 13.1 Taxonomy and nomenclature

200. The Secretariat presented document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.31.1](#) *Taxonomy and Nomenclature* for review, noting that online versions of the standard references for birds and fishes were available. The Secretariat indicated that the document made suggestions on the alignment of CMS Appendices with the standard references for the respective taxa, whilst a new taxonomic reference for marine mammals was suggested. The Secretariat added that the comparisons were undertaken by the COP-appointed Councillors for Birds and Fish with its assistance. Proposed amendments to Resolution 12.27 were shown in Annex 2, which could be revised as it was co-authored by the ScC-SC. The WGs on Avian and Aquatic Species would review the document before compilation of revisions and issuing a CRP.
201. Mr James Williams (Party-appointed Councillor, UK) noted that document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.29.4.1](#) *Endorsement of the African Elephant Action Plan* referred to taxonomy of the African Elephant, which could be discussed by the Terrestrial WG. Mr Djibril Diouck (Party-appointed member for Africa) informed that there was new nomenclature for elephants in Africa, with two species recognized – (African) Forest Elephant (*Loxodonta cyclotis*) and African (Savanna) Elephant (*Loxodonta africana*), and noted evidence of hybridization in some countries - an issue not well covered by nomenclature. WCS did not consider hybridization of elephants in Africa as an issue for CMS, as very few countries had hybrids, and both elephant species in Africa were on CMS Appendix II.
202. Mr Héctor Vera Alcaraz (Party-appointed member for South & Central America and the Caribbean) reminded that Wilson & Reeder (2005) nomenclature was recommended as the standard nomenclatural reference for terrestrial mammals in 2005, and recommended that CMS also use the Mammal Diversity Database.

203. Concerning a decision on a taxonomic source for aquatic species, Mr Stephen Garnett (COP-appointed Councillor for Birds) recommended Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) as suitable for linking global taxa. He noted that it could take some time to match sources, but would be feasible before COP14.
204. In preparing the supporting information for CMS, Mr Mark Simmonds (COP-appointed Councillor for Marine Pollution) and Mr Giuseppe Notarbartolo di Sciara (former COP-appointed Councillor for Aquatic Mammals) had concluded that there was a problem within CMS concerning accuracy in the taxonomy of cetaceans, which continued to bud off new species. The "*List of Marine Mammal Species and Subspecies*" of the Society for Marine Mammalogy was recommended as the standard reference, and it was important to address any taxonomic discrepancies swiftly. ACCOBAMS supported this source. Mr Barry Baker (COP-appointed Councillor for Bycatch) did not see an immediate need to change taxonomy for aquatic mammals, and suggested to await the appointment of the new Councillor for Aquatic Mammals.
205. The Secretariat informed that relevant taxa were reviewed by the Aquatic and Avian Species WGs, whose proposed amendments and related draft recommendations were subject to approval by plenary.
206. Noting that harmonization between MEAs had been an issue in the past and that CITES was also looking at taxonomy and nomenclature, Mr Stephen Garnett (COP-appointed Councillor for Birds) recommended to align the taxonomy and nomenclature used by CMS and CITES and produce a standardized global reference of species.
207. The ScC-SC6 made revisions to document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.31.1](#) *Taxonomy and Nomenclature*, which included a proposal for broader consideration of the Catalogue of Life and provided draft Decisions directed to the ScC, requesting it to review this catalogue as a potential source for information and to liaise with relevant advisors to other MEAs, as detailed in document [ScC-SC6 CRP 13.1/Rev.2](#) *Taxonomy and Nomenclature*.

Item 13.2 Disaggregation of avian families and genera listed on Appendix II

208. Mr Stephen Garnett (COP-appointed Councillor for Birds) introduced document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.31.2](#) *Guidance on the Disaggregation of Families and Genera listed in Appendix II*, which reported on results of discussions of the Intersessional WG on the disaggregation of higher taxa listed in Appendix II and on alternative treatments to address this issue. He added that the document covered many species and included a list of species for Parties for review and update by each COP. Annex 1 contained a draft Resolution and the species table, whilst Annex 2 contained draft Decisions, including a request for the SC to update the list and report to the COP.
209. Noting the great work done on this issue, Mr James Williams (Party-appointed Councillor, UK) suggested a slight rewording to ensure that the document came across as advisory and did not prejudge the decisions of the Parties. The Chair considered that it was clear that the document was an advisory list, and that this was a living document with an advisory note.
210. BirdLife International congratulated Mr Garnett on his painstaking work, which was a fantastic advance, and agreed with the approach taken as a pragmatic way forward. BirdLife International requested that an Excel version was made available on the main CMS website under the species tab rather than only in SC or COP documents; this would greatly facilitate accessibility both for CMS stakeholders and the wider scientific

community, thereby encouraging useful collaborations. BirdLife International also informed about the redevelopment of the BirdLife data zone, which was going to have a species-specific list, with potential for collaboration to implement CMS-relevant functionality, allowing users to combine searches on threats, habitats etc., with information on whether species were listed on CMS. BirdLife International concluded that before the disaggregation process this would not have been possible.

211. Mr Graeme Taylor (Party-appointed member for Oceania) also congratulated Mr Garnett on this mammoth effort, noting the large number of birds listed. As CMS concerned migratory species, he noted the need to be able to separate out those that really were migratory. He concluded that, as many birds were at risk, resources could not be assigned to all species, so this process would improve focus and prioritization.
212. The ScC-SC6 made revisions to document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.31.2](#) *Guidance on the Disaggregation of Families and Genera listed in Appendix II*, ScC-SC6 CRP 13.2, as detailed in document [ScC-SC6 CRP 13.2](#). The revised document was agreed by the meeting.

Item 13.3 Potential future listing for selected avian taxa

213. Mr Stephen Garnett (COP-appointed Councillor for Birds) presented document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Doc.13.3](#) *Potential Avian Taxa for Listing*, which identified bird species not currently listed in Appendix II but which might qualify for listing. He noted that the “xxxx” in draft Decision 14.DD b), which left it open as to which taxonomic group to commence with, was filled by UNEP-WCMC, whose gaps for other taxonomic groups might be the same.
214. Mr Graeme Taylor (Party-appointed member for Oceania) considered that this list was already bearing fruit, notably for the gadfly petrels, and it would significantly help to target threatened species and to get them listed on CMS.
215. Noting that this list provided the kind of advice that the ScC-SC should be giving for all taxonomic groups, Mr James Williams (Party-appointed Councillor, UK) cautioned that there was a potential prejudgement issue, and advised that the document should indicate that this was strategic advice, and not an expectation that all potential species should be listed at the next COP.
216. BirdLife International noted that this was another great move that it fully supported, and suggested that instead of referring just to Concerted Actions the text should also invite Parties to consider wider habitat or multi-species interventions.
217. Mr Fernando Spina (COP-appointed Councillor for Connectivity) found the status of taxa presented in paragraph 7 very worrying, noting that it was important to know as soon as possible how many species deserved attention.
218. UNEP-WCMC noted that work highlighted in 14.DD had essentially been done for birds, and recommended that the draft Decision could be adapted slightly to look more broadly at the full list of taxa.
219. Noting that under draft Decision 14.DD b) the SC is asked to develop equivalent lists for other taxonomic groups, the Chair invited contributions towards this and for the work to flow into the other taxa where practical and possible.

220. There was a discussion in the final Plenary on the title of the document. Mr Héctor Vera Alcaraz (Party-appointed member for South & Central America and the Caribbean) considered that it might make sense to revise the title, as mammals and aquatic species had potential for listing during the intersessional period.
221. Noting that the draft Decision 14.DD b) requested the SC to develop equivalent lists for other taxonomic groups for adoption at COP15, the Chair advised that there was potential to revert to the Rev. 1 name, including a reference to equivalent lists for other taxa in the future. The Secretariat explained that the document only dealt with avian taxa, so suggested to retain the original document name, but to amend the title of Decisions to “potential taxa for listing”, as the Decisions would have a life of their own past COP, whereas the CRP would remain static. This was agreed.
222. The ScC-SC6 made revisions to the document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Doc.13.3 Potential Avian Taxa for Listing](#), including the addition of new text to the draft Resolution and three new draft Decisions directed to the ScC, as detailed in document [ScC-SC6 CRP 13.3/Rev.2 Potential avian taxa for listing](#).

Item 13.4 Proposals for amendment of Appendices I and II of the Convention

223. Proposals for inclusion of species were discussed in the Aquatic, Avian and Terrestrial Species Working Groups. Recommendations on all proposals 13.4.1 to 13.4.14 were subsequently agreed in Plenary.

ITEM 14. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONCERTED ACTIONS PROCESS

Item 14.1 Concerted Actions

224. The Secretariat introduced document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.32.1 Concerted Actions](#), which provided a proposal for the revision of CMS Resolution 12.28, prepared by the ScC-SC at its 5th meeting and further elaborated by the StC at its 52nd meeting; since then, Concerted Actions had developed rapidly and new ones proposed. The document had one Annex with a draft revised Resolution in tabular format. The Resolution itself has 2 Annexes: 1. *Guidelines to the implementation of the Concerted Actions process*; and 2. *Template for proposing Concerted Actions*. The meeting was asked to consider changes proposed in the Resolution and whether further changes were needed.
225. Mr James Williams (Party-appointed Councillor, UK) suggested minor changes to the Annexes to the Resolution; as Concerted Actions were brought to a close, it was necessary to be able to review them and learn from them.
226. Ms Narelle Montgomery (in her capacity as Party-appointed member for Oceania) considered that it would be useful to specify that proposals for Concerted Actions should be developed in consultation with other relevant Range States where required.
227. The Secretariat added that consultations should include itself as well, and if proponents were going to assign tasks to other entities, they must consult with the Secretariat. Further, if no report was submitted at the end of a triennium, the Secretariat clarified that the Concerted Action should be considered completed. However, noting that NGOs could propose Concerted Actions, Mr Mark Simmonds (COP-appointed Councillor for Marine Pollution) considered that there needed to be a process on this leading to closure. The Chair agreed that NGOs needed to consult with relevant Parties. Concerning Concerted Action reporting and closure, Mr Simmonds added that a report

should be provided every triennium, for potential closure after two triennia in order to avoid Concerted Actions not being closed.

228. Germany questioned Concerted Actions and the required governance. The Chair replied that good governance needed to be in place to encourage reporting.
229. Mr Graeme Taylor (Party-appointed member for Oceania) suggested that, in giving Parties an opportunity to review documents, the Secretariat should send out an email to gauge interest, then let proponents know, as it might be hard otherwise to know who to consult.
230. The ScC-SC6 made revisions to the document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.32.1 Concerted Actions](#), which included changes to Annex 2 to Resolution 12.28 (Rev.COP13) and proposed repeal to its Annex 3, as detailed in document [ScC-SC6 CRP 14.1 Concerted Actions](#).

Item 14.2 Assessment of progress in the implementation of Concerted Actions and possible proposals for their extension

231. The Chair noted that document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.32.2 Assessment of Progress in the Implementation of Concerted Actions and possible Proposals for their Extension](#) summarized the status of reporting on the implementation of ongoing Concerted Actions. The COP was expected to review progress in the implementation of Concerted Actions as reported in documents [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.32.2.1](#) through to [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.32.2.9](#); and take decisions concerning the continuation of Concerted Actions still to be completed, including any modifications to the original Concerted Action proposals.
232. Assessments of progress in the implementation of Concerted Actions and possible proposals for their extension were discussed in the Aquatic, Avian and Terrestrial Species Working Groups. Proposals [ScC-SC6/CRP 14.2.1](#) to [ScC-SC6/CRP 14.2.9](#) were all agreed in Plenary without discussion.

Item 14.3 New proposals for Concerted Actions for the triennium 2023-2026

233. New proposals for Concerted Actions for the triennium 2023-2026 were discussed in the Aquatic, Avian and Terrestrial Species Working Groups. Recommendations on Proposals, contained in CRPs [ScC-SC6/CRP 14.3.2](#) to [ScC-SC6/CRP 14.3.5](#) and [ScC-SC6/CRP 14.3.7](#) were all agreed in Plenary without further discussion. Discussions in the final Plenary were held for [ScC-SC6/CRP 14.3.1/Rev.1](#) and [ScC-SC6/CRP 14.3.6/Rev.2](#), as reported on below.

14.3.1 Proposal for a Concerted Action for Chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*) behavioural diversity and cultures already listed on Appendix I and II of the Convention

234. In relation to [ScC-SC6/CRP 14.3.1/Rev.1 Proposal for a Concerted Action for Chimpanzee \(*Pan troglodytes*\) behavioural diversity and cultures already listed on Appendix I and II of the Convention](#), Mr Mark Simmonds (COP-appointed Councillor for Marine Pollution) considered this a brilliant proposal and hoped it would be supported with enthusiasm.
235. Considering the Concerted Action to be an excellent work for improving conservation and congratulating those involved in its development, Mr Djibril Diouck (Party-appointed member for Africa) informed that this was an important consideration in relation to animal

culture, notably for the northernmost population of Chimpanzee in Senegal, which had adapted to use tools, including for fishing.

236. Mr Simmonds and Mr Alfred Oteng-Yeboah (COP-appointed Councillor for Terrestrial Mammals) had produced text for the general comments section of Addendum 1 to document 32.3.1: [ScC-SC6/CRP 14.3.1/Rev.1](#). However, they noted that a second paragraph had appeared via another interface, which intended to explain why culture lent survival advantages to Chimpanzees. They believed this second paragraph did not belong in the CRP, but should be noted in the meeting report.
237. The Born Free Foundation considered it important to show why other cultural diversity – besides the nut-cracking culture that the previous Concerted Action had focused on – was equally important.
238. After discussion and review, it was concluded that these thoughts should be captured in the meeting report, as follows: *“While nut-cracking behaviour constitutes a survival advantage, particularly in periods of drought, cultural behaviour has shown to increase cohesion among groups of Chimpanzees and therefore might also enhance their survival chances”*.
239. The ScC-SC6 recommended COP14 to approve the Concerted Action and provided general comments as indicated in the previous paragraph and in document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.32.3.1/Add.1](#) *Addendum 1 to Doc.32.3.1*.

14.3.6 Proposal for a Concerted Action for the Oceanic Whitetip Shark (*Carcharhinus longimanus*) already listed in Appendix I of the Convention

240. WCS proposed minor amendments to the recommendations contained in [ScC-SC6/CRP 14.3.6/Rev.2](#) *Proposal for a Concerted Action for the Oceanic Whitetip Shark (*Carcharhinus longimanus*) already listed in Appendix I of the Convention*. It should be noted that ScC-SC6 did not recommend this proposal for adoption, but suggested including the activities in draft Decisions.

V. FORMAL AND CONCLUDING BUSINESS

ITEM 15. DATE AND VENUE OF THE 7TH MEETING OF THE SESSIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL (ScC-SC7)

241. The Secretariat confirmed the core dates of the CMS COP as 12-17 February 2024; thus the next ScC-SC meeting might be expected to take place in July or September 2024, after the process of elections and subject to the rules of procedure.
242. The Chair noted that the next meeting would be very important for focused discussions on progress of work. The Secretariat was considering financial ramifications of having a five-day pre-COP15 meeting. The Chair added that the COP14 delay had ramifications for document deadlines, but it was good to stick to the original deadlines as much as possible.

ITEM 16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

243. Mr João Loureiro (Party-appointed member for Europe) expressed thanks to all session and WG Chairs, especially to the Chair, Ms Narelle Montgomery. The Chair continued to be impressed by the amount of knowledge members brought to these meetings, which was of real value to the ScC-SC and its observers. Mr Marco Barbieri (recently retired

CMS Scientific Officer) thanked and bid farewell to the Council on his departure from the CMS Secretariat.

ITEM 17. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

244. In closing the meeting, Ms Amy Fraenkel, Executive Secretary of CMS, expressed how impressed she was with the meeting's efficiency and high level of engagement. She advised that there would be a process for election of members to the SC, which the Secretariat would follow up by email, adding that the process would be a bit unusual as half the members were meant to rotate, but it would be resolved. She expressed sincere thanks to the Secretariat for thinking issues through and raising funds for this work, as well as dealing with the administrative challenges, and getting through them with flying colours. She gave special thanks to Ms Melanie Virtue (Secretariat) for her great skill and sensibility in helping to guide the meeting so flawlessly, also to Ms Dagmar Zikova and Mr Nikola Besek (Secretariat), Mr Tim Dodman (report writer) and the many people off-scene, including the interpreters. She reserved final words of thanks for the ScC-SC members and the broader ScC, who represented the hard-core team – the heart of the CMS community, who were passionate about it and brought invaluable expertise. She warmly thanked all ScC-SC members, COP-appointed Councillors and all others for taking part. She also acknowledged the great input of the Meeting Chair and Vice-Chair, remarking how the Chair, Ms Narelle Montgomery, could flawlessly shift from one topic to another and make jokes; she had done a brilliant job. Her leadership and sense of humour had been a great gift to the Secretariat.
245. The Chair in return thanked Ms Fraenkel, and expressed deep appreciation for her guidance and leadership of a very collaborative team, who had a hard job in the CMS COP cycle at events like this. She also thanked the meeting hosts and wished all participants safe journeys back to their home ranges, and looked forward to meeting again at COP14 in Uzbekistan.

SURPRISE ITEM! MARCO BARBIERI

246. Ms Amy Fraenkel, Executive Secretary of CMS, launched a new technical report titled '*Marcus Barbierii diligentii*', which provided an overview of the status and perspectives of this interesting species and its habitat. She stated that Marco was a long-standing member of CMS, who was officer in charge when she joined the Convention. He had been a great source of institutional information and had shown incredible dedication to the Convention. Ms Fraenkel added that all the Secretariat staff wished him well and conveyed their sincere thanks, and it was clear that his legacy would live on.
247. Mr Marco Barbieri (recently retired CMS Scientific Officer) noted that he started with CMS in September 2000. He said it was impossible to summarise the memories of all these years, but if he had been there for so long it was because he loved the Convention deeply. He was honoured to have seen the Convention grow; he found one file recently from COP7 when CMS had 80 parties, whilst now it had 133. The COP had also grown from having less than 300 delegates to 1,500. His work had been greatly enriched by members of the ScC, including some long-standing members such as Mr Colin Galbraith, Mr Barry Baker, Mr Fernando Spina and Mr Hany Tatwany. He also wished to say that Germany, and Bonn in particular, had been a very welcoming place for him to reside in.