

**53<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee**

*Bonn, Germany, 19 – 20 October 2022*

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UNEP/CMS/StC53/Doc.11

**ASSESSMENT OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN  
FOR MIGRATORY SPECIES 2015-2023**

*(Prepared by the Secretariat)*

**Summary:**

This document summarizes progress in the implementation of CMS Decisions 13.1 to 13.3, and certain aspects of Decision 13.4, all concerning assessment of the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023 (SPMS).

The Standing Committee is recommended to take note of the assessment and to take account of the results in considering options for follow up to the SPMS 2015-2023 (addressed separately in Document UNEP/CMS/StC53/Doc.12).

## ASSESSMENT OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR MIGRATORY SPECIES 2015-2023

### Background

1. The Conference of the Parties (COP) at its 11<sup>th</sup> meeting (COP11, Quito, 2014) adopted the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species (SPMS) 2015-2023 (Annex 1 to CMS [Resolution 11.2<sup>1</sup>](#)). Through the same resolution the COP decided to keep the implementation of the SPMS under review at its regular meetings.
2. A progress report on the implementation of the SPMS was submitted to the COP at its 13<sup>th</sup> meeting (COP13, Gandhinagar, 2020) (Annex 2 to document UNEP/CMS/COP13/Doc.14.1). COP13 took note of the report, and gave instructions and guidance towards the further assessment of the implementation of the SPMS through CMS Decisions 13.1 to 13.3 - *Progress in the Implementation of the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023*. The COP also provided for the development of options for possible follow up to the SPMS for the period after 2023, in CMS Decisions 13.4 and 13.5.
3. An update on the implementation of CMS Decisions 13.1-5 was provided to the Standing Committee at its 52<sup>nd</sup> meeting in September 2021 (document UNEP/CMS/StC52/Doc.10). The Standing Committee noted that a lack of resources had prevented the Secretariat from making significant progress with Decision 13.1 concerning further development of indicators and fully assessing the implementation of the Strategic Plan, and agreed that efforts in the time remaining before COP14 should be focused on those elements of Decision 13.1 that were achievable with indicators that were already fully operable. The work could also include the identification of any available case studies.
4. The Standing Committee also noted that the modified schedule for the fifteenth Meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP15) in 2022 concerning the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) would affect the timing of consideration of the Framework's content as part of the context for developing options for a follow-up to the SPMS. The Standing Committee also considered a timeline for developing a follow up to the SPMS, taking into account the expected schedule for the CBD COP (which became altered again after the Standing Committee meeting had concluded), as well as major environmental assessments and developments in other intergovernmental fora.
5. The present document provides a further update on the implementation of CMS Decisions 13.1 to 13.3, and certain aspects of decision 13.4, addressing respectively the availability of the agreed indicators for the SPMS; a summary of progress in achieving the targets in the SPMS, assessed using available information; a discussion of some lessons learned from the process of assessing the impact of the SPMS; and information on approaches to strategic planning adopted by other biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements, including how these have taken account of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the proposals for a Global Biodiversity Framework.

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<sup>1</sup> Superseded by CMS/Resolution 11.2 (Rev.COP12)

Assessment of the implementation of the SPMS – Availability of indicators and other sources

6. In Decision 13.1 the Secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, was requested to:
- (a) further develop indicators identified in the Strategic Plan that are not yet operable, notably the composite indicators recommended for assessing progress towards Targets 6 and 7;**
  - (b) identify data gaps which are hindering assessment of progress in relation to indicators, and support filling of those gaps; and**
  - (c) identify appropriate case studies and single assessment studies relevant to those indicators in the Strategic Plan expected to be based on such studies, and support their undertaking.**
7. As noted above, the Standing Committee agreed at its 52<sup>nd</sup> meeting that given the lack of resources for significant work on these issues, efforts should concentrate on already operable indicators and available sources, and the identification of any available case studies.
8. Annex B of the Strategic Plan as adopted by COP11 contained an initial indicative selection of headline indicators to track progress towards achievement of the 16 targets in the Plan. In Resolution 11.2 the Parties made provision for additional inter-sessional work prior to COP12 to define indicators for each of the targets in the Plan, drawing as far as possible on existing work such as that under the global Biodiversity Indicators Partnership. Following that intersessional work, COP12 adopted a revised version of the Plan with more detailed indicator definitions in its Annex B, supported by a series of indicator “factsheets” that were provided for information in document UNEP/CMS/COP12/Inf.26.
9. A summary of the current status of these indicators and availability of information is given in Annex 1.

Assessment of the implementation of the SPMS and achievement of its targets

10. In Decision 13.1 the Secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, was requested to:
- (d) undertake a full assessment of the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023 in time for the Standing Committee’s consideration of available options for a follow-up to the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023 and for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its 14th meeting.**
11. According to the list of indicators agreed by COP12, a substantial part of the picture of SPMS implementation is expected to be provided via the National Reports from Parties, combined with a periodic global Migratory Species Conservation Status Report. The format for National Reports has been structured to correspond to the structure of goals and targets in the SPMS. At COP13 in 2020, reports were received in time for analysis from 62 per cent of the countries that were Party to the CMS at the time, while reports from a further 10 per cent were received subsequently. An analysis of the national reports was provided to COP13 (document UNEP/CMS/COP13/Doc.20), together with a progress report on the implementation of the SPMS (document UNEP/CMS/COP13/Doc.14.1 Annex 2) and the Migratory Species Conservation Status Report (provided as a series of annexes to document UNEP/CMS/COP13/Doc.24/Rev.1).
12. The equivalent results for the subsequent triennium, to be provided to COP14, are not yet due, and so the current “interim” picture described in this present document could be substantially augmented when those two forms of further input become available. Partly for this reason, and partly because of the resourcing situation alluded to earlier in this document, a “full assessment” of the implementation of the SPMS 2015-2023 is beyond the scope of work that has been feasible to complete in advance of the 53<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee.

13. However, drawing on the analysis prepared for COP13 and other sources, a summary relating to implementation of each of the targets in the SPMS is provided in Annex 2. Overall, positive progress had been made towards the achievement of some SPMS targets, especially those relating to awareness raising, improved governance arrangements and area-based conservation measures (Targets 1, 3 and 10, respectively). Despite notable progress in these areas, however, progress towards the achievement of some other targets was lacking, thereby hindering ultimate progress overall towards the SPMS goals. In particular, the reduction or mitigation of the impacts of various threats and pressures on migratory species, including unsustainable use (Targets 5, 6 and 7), was considered a priority area for intensified efforts. Favourable conservation status represents the ultimate objective of many of the Targets in the SPMS, and the indicators assessing progress towards the achievement of Target 8, which specifically seeks an improvement in this status, revealed a varied picture depending on the taxonomic group assessed and the method of assessment.

#### Judging the impact of the SPMS as a whole

14. In addition to considering information that indicates progress in relation to the individual targets in the SPMS, it is important to consider the extent to which the strategic purposes of the Plan as a whole have been achieved.
15. The text of the SPMS itself defines its purpose as “to provide vision, leadership, and a driving force toward the full and effective implementation of goals and targets related to migratory species”. It also refers to the fact that it is organised so as to correspond to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity (2011-2020) and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets, among other things to “provide a logical and effective way for migratory species targets to be integrated into National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), thereby ensuring they are part of national planning and priority-setting processes”.
16. The Working Group that developed the Plan had further expressed the purposes for it as:
- encapsulating an authoritative expression of the niche role of the CMS and its significance, related to the period covered by the Plan, and affirming the credentials of the Convention as the pre-eminently competent body to deliver this role;
  - defining the breadth, boundaries, and strategic priorities of the legitimised CMS agenda, to provide a framework for judging what is within scope, and to guide the organisation of implementation efforts (including expenditure); and
  - defining expected long-term/high-level outcomes, in a way that provides a framework for assessing progress and results.
17. A further stated aim in the SPMS was to broaden the relevance and “ownership” of the Plan among the CMS “Family” of instruments and beyond, responding to an identified need for a coordinated and coherent approach to migratory species conservation among CMS and its daughter agreements, as well as other MEAs. Hence the focus shifted from being a plan for the CMS as an *institution*, to being a plan for *migratory species conservation*.
18. It was expected that stakeholders should be able to make good use of the SPMS in practice as “an authoritative statement of intent, a map and compass for staying on course, a comprehensible picture of what ‘success’ looks like, and a checklist for deciding whether any proposed action would be likely to take the Convention further towards or further away from its destination; it should also stimulate the demotivated and the forgetful, and provide a buttress against challenge to established mandates” (CMS Strategic Plan review 2012, Stage 2 report – Proposals for the CMS Strategic Plan 2015-2023).

19. These various high-level aims offer a frame of reference for considering the added value and impact of the SPMS as a tool or mechanism, which can be taken together with the information on progress towards its individual targets, to provide the basis for the “full assessment” envisaged by COP Decision 13.1(d).
20. The focus towards ensuring that the Strategic Plan had a more distinct and explicit purpose than its predecessors appears to have been beneficial in generating a focus on the niche of the CMS in wider contexts and on striving to articulate clear expected outcomes.
21. It also appears that the strengthened emphasis in the SPMS on taking a “migration systems approach” has provided a beneficial foundation for prioritizing connectivity across the Convention’s agenda, and in positioning the distinctive added value of CMS in other fora.
22. As noted above, the adoption of the SPMS provided an impulse for structural coherence of strategic objectives for the Convention and monitoring progress in their achievement, in particular through alignment of questions in the National Report Format with the goals and targets in the Plan. This is a benefit of having an explicitly adopted plan of targets in principle: whether the individual targets adopted in the SPMS 2015-2023 were optimally framed in this respect however is a different question. The analyses for COP13 highlighted some limitations in the ability to measure progress that are inherent in the construction of the targets themselves. Certain targets for example embody expressions of ultimate outcomes such as habitat resilience or coherent governance, which can be particularly challenging to measure. In other cases, data availability and indicator gaps hinder assessment of progress. It was also noted that there can be considerable time-lags between cause and effect, and these need to be taken into account when considering whether implementation activities are having the desired impact, particularly as some of the outcomes expected by the SPMS assume theories of change involving long timeframes.
23. In a wider sense, the formal adoption by COP of a concise strategic vision of action priorities provides an important vehicle for promoting these priorities in a range of policy fora. Having a unified narrative for this can often be more effective than relying on a suite of individual thematic reports or COP decisions. The fact that the SPMS mirrors the typical approach among Multilateral Environmental Agreements of structuring such plans with a hierarchy of goals and targets allows a common basis for comparing and cross-relating the respective strengths and priorities of each MEA, including CMS.
24. Since the SPMS was constructed in close alignment with the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, judgements about the effectiveness of the latter (assuming that migratory species outcomes broadly mirror those for biodiversity in general) will provide a further reflection on the success or otherwise of these strategies and their implementation in practice, as well as providing some considerations for options for follow-up to the SPMS. This is discussed further in the next section below.

#### Lessons learned from experience in implementing, monitoring and assessing previous strategic plans

25. In Decision 13.4 the Secretariat was requested to:
  - (c) ***compile information on lessons learned from experience in implementing, monitoring and assessing previous strategic plans and, in particular, the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023.***

*Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2006-2014*

26. The consultation and Working Group process that guided the development of the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023 included a compilation of lessons learned from the operation of the previous CMS Strategic Plan (2006-2014). These are listed in Annex 3 of the present document below, and each of them was the basis for a corresponding recommendation for the shaping of the SPMS.

*Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023*

27. Available capacity has not allowed any equivalent consultation process to be undertaken to generate new lessons concerning the implementation and assessment of the SPMS 2015-2023. In the meantime a few preliminary observations can be noted.
28. First, while the Strategic Plan has conveniently brought together an *expression* of “headline” priorities for migratory species conservation in the period it covers, it appears that it has not been a particularly strong *driver* of implementation efforts. Although specific study data on this are lacking, it may nevertheless be speculated that Contracting Parties may have derived more operational direction for CMS implementation from COP Resolutions, while the same might apply to Programmes of Work and COP Decisions in the case of the Secretariat. An effort to link every proposal for a COP Resolution to a relevant provision in the Strategic Plan was found in practice to be of little added value; the lesson here perhaps being that it is unlikely that the motive for a given proposed Resolution *begins* from a provision in the Plan – rather it will tend to originate from some other strand of concern.
29. Second, while the Plan brought together key priority objectives for the period, it did not suggest any order of *relative priority* between them. Resolution 11.2 (Rev.COP12) asked the Secretariat to integrate the goals and targets of the Strategic Plan into work programmes under the Convention. If not the primary driving force, the SPMS might have been a factor in producing more *coherence* or *effectiveness* in internal work programming and progress monitoring than existed previously, but given that it does not provide any prioritisation within the goals and targets, it has not affected decisions about the relative emphasis to give to work on any of them. It is likely that this has also been the case for Parties when planning their own implementation activities. (See also the comment on national reporting below).
30. Third, some lessons concerning *measurability* are apparent in relation to the targets in the SPMS. As will be apparent from earlier sections of the present document, efforts to develop new indicators for the targets that required them have made little progress, beyond the matters that could be covered by questions in the National Report Format or by the Migratory Species Conservation Status Assessment (see earlier discussion above). This is despite the COP (in Resolution 11.2 (Rev.COP12) having identified the most important priorities for indicator development, and despite specifications for the scope and methods having been elaborated (to some extent) in a suite of “indicator factsheets” that were made available as part of the “Companion Volume” to the SPMS.
31. Obstacles here (both for Parties in compiling reports and for the Secretariat in synthesising information from international sources) include lack of resources, technical difficulty and/or availability of relevant data. As noted in the review of the Strategic Plan presented to COP13 however (document UNEP/CMS/COP13/Doc.14.1 Annex 2), the obstacles also include limitations inherent in the construction of the SPMS targets themselves - for example those targets that express ultimate outcomes in terms of “habitat resilience” or “coherent governance”, which are particularly challenging issues to measure. The review also highlighted that with some measures there can be considerable time-lags between cause and observable effect, and these need to be taken into account when considering whether

implementation activities are having the desired impact, particularly as some of the outcomes expected by the SPMS assume theories of change that involve long timeframes.

32. Challenges of measurement need not mean that the targets concerned are poorly conceived. Indeed, SPMS Goal 3, which seeks an improvement in ecological connectivity for migratory species, is mirrored by one of the objectives in the draft Global Biodiversity Framework which has been particularly championed by CMS Parties, supporters and the Secretariat. The best available lessons on potential ways of measuring this have been distilled through several indicator workshops and other processes that are contributing to the development of the Monitoring Framework that will accompany the GBF, and this continues to be a key priority.
33. A fourth issue concerns the relationship between the SPMS and the process for submission of National Reports by Parties to each Meeting of the COP. The format for National Reports was revised to align with the structure of goals and targets in the Strategic Plan, and this has proved successful in generating national reports (and a globally synthesised overview) that speak directly to assessing progress towards the achievement of the SPMS. Lessons emerging from operation of the process have been noted in the synthesis report for COP13, and in a summary of feedback that was solicited from Parties during the pre-COP preparatory meetings in 2019 (both reported in document UNEP/CMS/COP13/Doc.20). Some key examples are highlighted in the paragraphs that follow.
34. These national reporting lessons mainly relate to on-line submission technicalities, ways of making the questionnaire questions clearer (with supplementary guidance) and providing scope for more explanatory narrative, rather than reflecting on the SPMS itself or the principle of using an aligned national report process for assessing progress with the Plan. That said, the issue of providing guidance to clarify certain questions may in some cases trace back to questions of interpreting the SPMS target wordings themselves (an example given was Target 4 on incentives), and a lesson here (other than being as clear as possible in the formulation of targets) could be to follow the example of some other MEAs by including a *glossary of terms* as an integral part of the Strategic Plan.
35. Finally, the aspiration for greater uptake and ownership in the CMS Family and the generation of a system of “sub-targets” has not been very strongly achieved, probably due at least in part to the individual instruments, in their own strategic planning or equivalent processes, having more issue-specific priorities than would fit the idealised “cascade” model that the SPMS perhaps envisaged. The lesson here is that the original neatly framed ideal for this kind of alignment across the CMS Family, while conceptually attractive, was in practice not a very feasible vision; and the underlying structural reasons for this are not something that can be influenced merely by the arrangement of content in a planning document. Another factor is that (often for good reasons) there is no particular synchronisation between the adoption and review timeframes for strategic planning processes of the CMS and the individual instruments. An Agreement’s strategic review falling due towards the end of the SPMS period for example might have little reason to align itself with the SPMS, given moreover that the SPMS itself is aligned with the Aichi Targets which have already reached the end of their timeframe.

#### *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020*

36. As mentioned above, the SPMS is closely aligned with the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 (SPB), hence the specific reference in CMS COP Decision 13.4 to compiling lessons learned also from experience in implementing, monitoring and assessing the SPB. This linkage also means that the extent to which the SPB’s objectives were achieved (or not) to a large extent expresses the status of the linked results in the SPMS (assuming that the results for migratory species broadly mirror those for biodiversity in general).

37. The alignment of the targets in the SPMS with the Aichi Biodiversity Targets in the SPB was intended to strengthen the way in which CMS contributes to broader global biodiversity conservation agendas. The extent to which there have been tangible gains from doing this, and what lessons might be drawn from the experience, would need further study to illuminate. One clear consequence however has been the yoking together of this expression of CMS priorities (and the structure of national reports, as described above) with a global framework that was always due to be at least revisited in 2020. This has had the result of rendering the CMS SPMS obsolete, at least in part. The success of the SPMS also was inevitably tied to the success of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, which as mentioned below has had mixed results. One lesson here might be to avoid such a close “locking-in” in future.
38. In 2019 the IPBES Global Assessment on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (<https://ipbes.net/global-assessment> ) included an assessment of progress globally towards the SPB’s Aichi Biodiversity Targets. This produced worrying conclusions that overall, biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services were deteriorating worldwide; direct and indirect drivers of change had accelerated; and that, based on the trajectories at the time, the Aichi Biodiversity Targets would not be achieved. The IPBES Assessment then highlighted its own lessons learned that were considered relevant to the setting of future targets (see Annex 4).
39. In 2020 the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO-5, <https://www.cbd.int/gbo/gbo5/publication/gbo-5-en.pdf> ) also reviewed progress against the targets of the SPB, and offered narratives on the some lessons learned that are relevant to the development of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and in the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity more generally (see Annex 5).
40. Finally, analysis carried out by the CBD Secretariat indicates that there was a relatively low level of uptake in revised NBSAPs of the goals and targets of other MEAs to which CBD Parties were also a Party. This may be a reflection on the process for revising the NBSAPs, and/or the continued challenges of improving coordination of implementation at the national level.

#### Approaches adopted by other biodiversity-related Multilateral Environmental Agreements

41. In Decision 13.4 the Secretariat was requested to:
  - (b) ***compile information on approaches adopted by other biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements in defining strategic objectives and strategic planning and in considering the implications for them of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.***
42. COP Decision 13.4(b) embraces two questions, namely (i) how other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) have approached the issue of strategic objectives and strategic planning for their own purposes; and (ii) how such MEAs are considering the implications for them of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework in this regard. Some preliminary observations on both questions are offered below, but dialogue with key MEAs on this is continuing, and further information may be provided at a later date. This section of the document excludes any treatment of the Convention on Biological Diversity, since that is covered by the treatment of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and the Global Biodiversity Framework throughout other sections of this document.
43. The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands currently operates under a Strategic Plan (the Convention’s 4th) for the period 2016-2024. The Plan is a 34-page document with 4 goals, 19 targets, 56 indicators and, at the time of its adoption, 14 “possible further indicators that may be developed”. The goals and targets are not constructed to mirror the Strategic Plan



for Biodiversity, but an annex provides a tabulation of the correspondences between the Ramsar goals & targets and the Aichi biodiversity targets.

44. The Ramsar Convention's COP14 in November 2022 is due to consider the results of a review of its Strategic Plan (details presented to the Convention's Standing Committee in 2021 - see [https://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/library/sc59\\_10\\_spwg\\_report\\_e.pdf](https://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/library/sc59_10_spwg_report_e.pdf) ), and a Draft Resolution ([https://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/library/cop14\\_18\\_4\\_dr\\_strategic\\_plan\\_e.pdf](https://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/library/cop14_18_4_dr_strategic_plan_e.pdf) ) which *inter alia* notes that the review has identified a number of targets and indicators where some Parties are experiencing challenges with implementation. Three new annexes are proposed to be added, covering wetland conservation actions to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals; an updated approach to communication, capacity-building, education, participation and awareness (CEPA); and gender-responsive policies and practices.
45. The Ramsar Draft Resolution also proposes extending the period of the 4th Strategic Plan from 2024 until the time of the Convention's COP15, and that in the meantime a working group will prepare a 5th Plan to be ready for adoption at COP15. It is further proposed that this 5th Plan will include an annex that maps the Plan's goals and targets against those in the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, but that the goals of the 4th Plan will remain unchanged, "to maintain consistency and continuity in reporting".
46. Parties to the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA) in 2018 adopted the Agreement's second Strategic Plan, covering the period 2019-2027. This is a 39-page document with 5 objectives, 27 targets and 62 indicators, plus a further 6 high-level "purpose" indicators. For each target, where applicable, links are identified with individual targets in the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.
47. A review of progress in implementing the AEWA Plan over the period 2019-2022 has been provided as a document for the 8<sup>th</sup> Session of the Meeting of the Parties in September 2022 (available at [https://www.unep-aewa.org/sites/default/files/document/aewa\\_mop8\\_11\\_strategic\\_plan\\_progress\\_report.pdf](https://www.unep-aewa.org/sites/default/files/document/aewa_mop8_11_strategic_plan_progress_report.pdf) ). The analysis is based on national reports from Parties, a waterbird conservation status report and various other sources, and all the available indicator results (for those indicators where assessment has been possible thus far) are condensed in a numerical scoring system that expresses the degree of overall progress made towards each target.
48. A separate document for AEWA MOP8 provides a target-by-target assessment of AEWA's contribution to the Aichi biodiversity targets in the period 2011-2020 ([https://www.unep-aewa.org/sites/default/files/document/aewa\\_mop8\\_35\\_contribution\\_to\\_aichi\\_targets.pdf](https://www.unep-aewa.org/sites/default/files/document/aewa_mop8_35_contribution_to_aichi_targets.pdf) ), noting however that this is made difficult by the fact that "the targets themselves mix multiple elements and have limited precision"; while another document provides an assessment of the potential for the Agreement to contribute to the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals ([https://www.unep-aewa.org/sites/default/files/document/aewa\\_mop8\\_37\\_relevance\\_sdg\\_delivery.pdf](https://www.unep-aewa.org/sites/default/files/document/aewa_mop8_37_relevance_sdg_delivery.pdf) ) .
49. A further paper explores AEWA's scope to contribute to the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework ([https://www.unep-aewa.org/sites/default/files/document/aewa\\_mop8\\_36\\_support\\_for\\_post-2020\\_framework.pdf](https://www.unep-aewa.org/sites/default/files/document/aewa_mop8_36_support_for_post-2020_framework.pdf)), and this cross-refers to selected Strategic Plan targets, MOP Resolutions and guidance documents. A draft Resolution for MOP8 anticipates this document being updated once the GBF has been adopted, and anticipates a mid-term assessment of AEWA's contribution to GBF implementation being undertaken and brought to a future MOP.

50. The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), instead of a Strategic Plan has a “Strategic Vision”, first adopted in 2000 and revised several times since. The most recent version, adopted in 2019 and for the period 2021-2030 (available here [https://cites.org/sites/default/files/document/E-Res-18-03\\_0.pdf](https://cites.org/sites/default/files/document/E-Res-18-03_0.pdf) ), is a 4-page document with 5 goals and 25 objectives. Earlier versions had been accompanied by an Action Plan, but this is no longer the case, the COP having agreed that it is unnecessary since actions are undertaken through the direction given in Resolutions and Decisions. To confirm the latter however, COP18 asked the Secretariat to review the Vision against existing Resolutions and Decisions and to identify any objectives in the Vision that are not adequately reflected (review completed in 2021). The previous version of the Vision (for 2008-2020) also included 39 indicators, and a proposed list of 59 new or revised indicators for the current version are due to be considered by the Convention’s COP19 in November 2022.
51. The 2008-2020 version of the CITES Vision had already been updated during that period to include elements describing the contribution of CITES to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 (a separate document showed how the Vision’s objectives map against the Aichi targets), and its contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals. The new version adopted in 2019 took account of the incipient post-2020 agenda as it was understood at the time, and the COP has asked the Convention’s Secretariat to undertake an analysis of the linkages between the Vision and the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework once the latter is adopted. A further Decision on this, now proposed for CITES COP19 in November 2022, emphasises the highlighting of areas of particular alignment between the Vision and the GBF, as a basis for assessing how the Convention can contribute to the implementation of the Global Framework and its Monitoring Framework.
52. The State Parties to the World Heritage Convention (WHC) in 2011 adopted a Vision and Strategic Action Plan for 2012-2022, comprising a 9-page document containing 6 goals and 17 priorities (available here <https://whc.unesco.org/archive/2011/whc11-18ga-11-en.pdf> ). This was followed in 2012 by an Implementation Plan to operationalise the listed priorities (<https://whc.unesco.org/archive/2012/whc12-36com-12A-en.pdf> ), which defines 80 activities, each accompanied by a Key Performance Indicator (KPI), forming the basis for regular monitoring reports to the General Assembly. No decision has yet been made about what should follow this Plan after 2022.
53. Synergies between the World Heritage Convention and other instruments, including the biodiversity-related Conventions, is addressed in the WHC Plan’s goals and priorities, although there are no specifics on links to other targets such as those in the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity. The World Heritage Committee at its 44th session in 2021 requested the World Heritage Centre and IUCN to report back at its 46th session (in 2023) on the adopted post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, with recommendations on how its implementation can be supported by the WHC and taken into account in its processes.
54. The Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention) adopted a Resolution on “the medium-term strategic development of the Convention” in 2000, but the Convention is only now in the process of developing its first Strategic Plan. As an initial stage, a three page text containing statements of vision, mission and 4 goals for the period to 2030 was agreed by the Parties in 2021. A working group has now developed the draft of a fuller Strategic Plan, augmenting the 4 agreed goals with (currently) 11 targets and 18 proposed indicators. It is expected that this Plan may be finalised and adopted in December 2022, although some aspects, such as elaboration of the indicators, may continue to be developed during 2023.
55. The “medium term strategic development” Resolution in 2000 had already committed the Bern Convention to “adapting its programme of activities to better follow relevant issues in the agenda of the Convention on Biological Diversity”, and a document was produced in 2019 to map out the Bern Convention’s contribution to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020

and the Aichi targets. The brief for developing the new Strategic Plan explicitly provided that it should be done in such a way that the Convention's contribution to the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework "can be easily and objectively assessed". The development process was then deliberately delayed because of the delays in finalising the GBF, and indeed the revised timing of CBD COP15 means that even if the Bern Convention Plan is agreed in the first few days of December 2022, some final rationalisation of it to align with the eventual text of the GBF may yet be necessary thereafter. In the meantime, its draft targets have been designed where applicable to relate to the draft targets in the GBF, and its proposed indicators take account of the development (thus far) of indicators for the GBF.

56. The International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling and its International Whaling Commission (IWC) does not have a Strategic Plan, relying instead on the Recommendations adopted by the Commission and its Scientific and Conservation Committees. The Conservation Committee itself however has a ten-year Strategic Plan (2016-2026), which is a two-page document with four objectives, five "priority actions" and 12 "measures of success". The Committee also has a five-year Work Plan, setting out a more detailed framework of actions. In addition, the IWC's Working Group on Operational Effectiveness has prepared a discussion document for consideration at the 68<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Commission in October 2022, which raises the possibility of the development of a Strategic Plan in future (see <https://archive.iwc.int/pages/view.php?ref=19656> ).

### Conclusions

57. Based on the discussion above, a number of conclusions may be drawn.
58. First, there are clearly a number of benefits, both measurable and anecdotal, in having a Strategic Plan for CMS implementation. However, it is important to consider which aspects provide the most value, in considering any future follow up. For instance, reporting on SPMS implementation in National Reports provided additional, useful data, and may have helped focus national implementation efforts. Having articulated objectives in the SPMS was helpful to focus new Resolutions and Decisions and the work of CMS Parties, stakeholders and the Secretariat, while linking every Resolution explicitly to the SPMS may not be as important.
59. Second, the extent and complexity of strategic plans varies considerably among the biodiversity MEAs, ranging from short vision statements to more comprehensive plans, and anything between eleven and twenty-seven targets/objectives and twelve to sixty-two indicators. Additional consultations would be helpful to understand how the various strategic plans have functioned in delivering expected outcomes.
60. Third, the benefits of mirroring the SPMS to a single, external instrument (i.e., the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020) seems to have had questionable value. CMS objectives were not well reflected in revised NBSAPs. Some of the SPMS targets were less relevant to CMS priorities than others. And the ongoing negotiations for an entirely new global biodiversity framework (GBF) will render many aspects of the SPMS obsolete. As implementation of CMS is relevant not only to achievement of the CBD and anticipated GBF, but also to other MEAs including CITES, Ramsar, UNCCD, UNFCCC, WHC and the IWC, it may be more effective to articulate CMS priorities in any follow up to the SPMS, and demonstrate how they help to *deliver* other global priorities.

### Recommended Actions

61. The Standing Committee is recommended to:

- a) take note of the assessment;
- b) take account of the results in considering options for follow up to the SPMS 2015-2023 (addressed separately in Document UNEP/CMS/StC53/Doc.12).

## ANNEX 1

## CURRENT AVAILABILITY OF INDICATORS FOR THE SPMS TARGETS

SPMS target	Indicator(s)	Availability
1. People are aware of the multiple values of migratory species and their habitats and migration systems, and the steps they can take to conserve them and ensure the sustainability of any use.	1.1 Levels of engagement in World Migratory Bird Day and similar events.	WMBD events are documented on a global map ( <a href="https://www.worldmigratorybirdday.org/events-map">https://www.worldmigratorybirdday.org/events-map</a> ) and can be displayed for individual years. In addition to numbers of events, data could potentially be compiled on website and social media activity.
	1.2 Simple qualitative assessment by CMS Parties in triennial national reports.	Covered in a three-part question in National Report Format.
	1.3 Ad hoc case studies.	Not currently apparent.
2. Multiple values of migratory species and their habitats have been integrated into international, national and local development and poverty reduction strategies and planning processes, including on livelihoods, and are being incorporated into national accounting, as appropriate, and reporting systems.	2.1 Single assessment study.	No study undertaken.
	2.2 CMS National Report Format question.	Covered in a six-part question in National Report Format.
3. National, regional and international governance arrangements and agreements affecting migratory species and their migration systems have improved significantly, making relevant policy, legislative and implementation processes more coherent, accountable, transparent, participatory, equitable and inclusive.	3.1 CMS National Report Format question.	Covered in a four-part question in National Report Format.
	3.2 Single assessment study of the CMS Family of instruments.	No study undertaken.
4. Incentives, including subsidies, harmful to migratory species, and/or their habitats are eliminated, phased out or reformed in order to minimize or avoid negative impacts, and positive incentives for the conservation of migratory species and their habitats are developed and applied, consistent with engagements under the CMS and other relevant international and regional obligations and commitments.	4.1 CMS National Report Format question.	Two-part question in National Report Format
5. Governments, key sectors and stakeholders at all levels have taken steps to achieve or have implemented plans for sustainable production and consumption, keeping the impacts of use of natural resources, including habitats, on migratory species well within safe ecological limits to promote the favourable conservation status of migratory species and maintain the quality, integrity, resilience, and ecological connectivity of their habitats and migration routes.	5.1 Red List Index (impacts of utilization on migratory species).	Red List Index trends driven by utilization are shown for CMS-listed migratory species, and for all migratory birds, in the Migratory Species Conservation Status Review presented to COP13.
	5.2 CMS National Report Format question.	Question in National Report Format.

SPMS target	Indicator(s)	Availability
<p>6. Fisheries and hunting have no significant direct or indirect adverse impacts on migratory species, their habitats or their migration routes, and impacts of fisheries and hunting are within safe ecological limits.</p>	<p>6.1 Trends in implementation of measures designed to minimize impacts of fisheries and hunting on migratory species, their habitats and their migratory routes.</p>	<p>Not available.</p>
	<p>6.2 Red List Index (impacts of fisheries on migratory species).</p>	<p>Fisheries impacts form part of the data for indicator 5.1, but analysis not presented separately in the Migratory Species Conservation Status Review because based on too few species to be reliable.</p>
<p>7. Multiple anthropogenic pressures have been reduced to levels that are not detrimental to the conservation of migratory species or to the functioning, integrity, ecological connectivity and resilience of their habitats.</p>	<p>7.1 Trends in selected threats to migratory species, their habitats and migratory routes.</p>	<p>Some assessments undertaken in the context of the Convention could be relevant here, in relation to threats such as plastic pollution, noise pollution, light pollution, consumptive use, Invasive Alien Species and energy and linear infrastructure.</p>
<p>8. The conservation status of all migratory species, especially threatened species, has considerably improved throughout their range.</p>	<p>8.1 Red List Index for migratory species.</p>	<p>Addressed in Migratory Species Conservation Status Review presented to COP13.</p>
	<p>8.2 Living Planet Index for migratory species.</p>	<p>Addressed for CMS-listed migratory species in Migratory Species Conservation Status Review presented to COP13.</p>
	<p>8.3 Wild Bird Index for migratory birds.</p>	<p>Not available.</p>
	<p>8.4 Trends in distribution of migratory species.</p>	<p>Not available.</p>
<p>9. International and regional action and cooperation between States for the conservation and effective management of migratory species fully reflects a migration systems approach, in which all States sharing responsibility for the species concerned engage in such actions in a concerted way.</p>	<p>9.1 Single assessment study of concerted engagements reflecting a migration systems approach.</p>	<p>No study undertaken.</p>
	<p>9.2 CMS National Report Format question.</p>	<p>Five-part question in National Report Format.</p>
<p>10. All critical habitats and sites for migratory species are identified and included in area-based conservation measures so as to maintain their quality, integrity, resilience and functioning in accordance with the implementation of Aichi Target 11, supported where necessary by environmentally sensitive land-use planning and landscape management on a wider scale.</p>	<p>10.1 Proportion of threatened and/or congregatory migratory species for which Key Biodiversity Areas have been identified throughout their range.</p>	<p>Not available.</p>
	<p>10.2 Proportion of Key Biodiversity Areas for selected groups of migratory species that are included in protected areas.</p>	<p>Addressed in Migratory Species Conservation Status Review presented to COP13 (and presented as trend data).</p>
	<p>10.3 Management effectiveness of areas protected specifically for migratory species.</p>	<p>Not available.</p>
<p>11. Migratory species and their habitats which provide important ecosystem services are maintained at or restored to favourable conservation status, taking</p>	<p>11.1 "Case study" approach.</p>	<p>Relevant case studies may exist, but work to identify them (or stimulate new ones) has not been done.</p>

SPMS target	Indicator(s)	Availability
into account the needs of women, indigenous and local communities, and the poor and vulnerable.		
12. The genetic diversity of wild populations of migratory species is safeguarded, and strategies have been developed and implemented for minimizing genetic erosion.	12.1 CMS National Report Format question, in two parts.	Two-part question in National Report Format.
13. Priorities for effective conservation and management of migratory species, their habitats and migration systems have been included in the development and implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, with reference where relevant to CMS agreements and action plans and their implementation bodies.	13.1 Extent of reflection of migratory species concerns in National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans.	Partly addressed by a question in the National Report Format.
	13.2 Extent of reflection of migratory species concerns in the implementation of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans.	Not available.
14. The traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of migratory species, their habitats and migration systems, and their customary sustainable use of biological resources, are respected, subject to national legislation and relevant international obligations, with the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities, thereby contributing to the favourable conservation status of migratory species and the ecological connectivity and resilience of their habitats.	14.1 CMS National Report Format question.	Three-part question in National Report Format.
15. The science base, information, training, awareness, understanding and technologies relating to migratory species, their habitats and migration systems, their value, functioning, status and trends, and the consequences of their loss, are improved, widely shared and transferred, and effectively applied.	15.1 Trends in publication of papers on migratory species conservation in peer-reviewed or other similarly authoritative sources.	Not available.
16. The mobilization of adequate resources from all sources to implement the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species effectively has increased substantially.	16.1 Success in implementing national actions for mobilizing resources to meet Target 16.	Not available.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SMPS TARGETS - SUMMARY OF CURRENT INFORMATION

**Target 1: People are aware of the multiple values of migratory species and their habitats and migration systems, and the steps they can take to conserve them and ensure the sustainability of any use.**

(From COP13 National Reports): Fifty Parties reported positive results of awareness-raising activities, indicating that notable progress was being made. Data on actual levels of awareness in the terms of this target, however, are not available.

**Target 2: Multiple values of migratory species and their habitats have been integrated into international, national and local development and poverty reduction strategies and planning processes, including on livelihoods, and are being incorporated into national accounting, as appropriate, and reporting systems.**

(From COP13 National Reports): Thirty-two Parties reported having strategies, plans and/or processes relating to other sectors that reference migratory species. Parties did not, however, provide many specifics in relation to how the conservation of migratory species features in processes relating to poverty reduction, livelihoods or national accounting. A few Parties indicated that migratory species were mentioned in other national reporting processes, including reports to other Conventions; but an understanding more generally of the extent to which the values of migratory species and their habitats are integrated into strategies, planning processes and reporting systems is lacking.

**Target 3: National, regional and international governance arrangements and agreements affecting migratory species and their migration systems have improved significantly, making relevant policy, legislative and implementation processes more coherent, accountable, transparent, participatory, equitable and inclusive.**

(From COP13 National Reports): Twenty-six Parties reported that existing governance arrangements already satisfied all the points in Target 3. Twenty-one others indicated that relevant improvements making either a major contribution or a good contribution towards achieving the target had been made in the reporting period. In relation to coherence, collaboration between CMS and other Convention focal points was reported by 62 Parties, and national-level mechanisms for liaison between different sectors or groups to address CMS implementation issues were reported by 38 Parties.

**Target 4: Incentives, including subsidies, harmful to migratory species, and/or their habitats are eliminated, phased out or reformed in order to minimize or avoid negative impacts, and positive incentives for the conservation of migratory species and their habitats are developed and applied, consistent with engagements under the CMS and other relevant international and regional obligations and commitments.**

(From COP13 National Reports): Over half of the reporting Parties have made some progress with developing or applying positive incentives. Fewer than a third, however, reported being able to tackle harmful incentives, though a further 24 Parties indicated that harmful incentives had never existed in their country. The concept of harmful incentives has, however, been subject to some mixed interpretations.



**Target 5: Governments, key sectors and stakeholders at all levels have taken steps to achieve or have implemented plans for sustainable production and consumption, keeping the impacts of use of natural resources, including habitats, on migratory species well within safe ecological limits to promote the favourable conservation status of migratory species and maintain the quality, integrity, resilience, and ecological connectivity of their habitats and migration routes.**

(From COP13 National Reports): Forty-six Parties reported having taken positive steps towards achieving this target. Some individual instances (e.g. “circular economy” initiatives, rights-based initiatives) offer interesting examples for others to consider. Ways of defining and keeping within “safe ecological limits” were not specifically addressed through the national reports, and this is an issue that would need more concentrated attention to ensure that Target 5 is met.

(From Conservation Status Report): Disaggregated sub-sets of the Red List Index (covering CMS listed mammals and birds, and all migratory birds) showing trends driven only by utilization, is declining, indicating that, overall, use of these species remains unsustainable.

**Target 6: Fisheries and hunting have no significant direct or indirect adverse impacts on migratory species, their habitats or their migration routes, and impacts of fisheries and hunting are within safe ecological limits.**

**Target 7: Multiple anthropogenic pressures have been reduced to levels that are not detrimental to the conservation of migratory species or to the functioning, integrity, ecological connectivity and resilience of their habitats.**

(From COP13 National Reports): Parties identified various threats and pressures that are of continuing concern, with habitat loss and degradation being dominant among these. All of the 32 pressures that Parties were invited to report on (including those related to fisheries and hunting) were considered to be having a severe adverse impact on migratory species in at least one country. Illegal hunting, which includes illegal fishing, was identified as one of the overall top three pressures with severe adverse impacts on migratory species, and each of the pressures relating to fisheries and hunting that Parties were invited to report on was reported to be having an adverse impact in at least 40 countries. In terms of trends, direct killing/taking and bycatch were cited as two of the pressures with the most significant negative trends in the reporting period. Parties reported a variety of actions that are aimed at combating threats and pressures; however, there was not enough information to assess progress in terms of the outcome described by Target 7.

(From Conservation Status Report): In relation to Target 7, although fisheries impacts form part of the data for the analysis of the Red List Index for species in use, no separate analysis for these impacts is presented in the Migratory Species Conservation Status Review, because the data on this are based on too few species to be reliable.

**Target 8: The conservation status of all migratory species, especially threatened species, has considerably improved throughout their range.**

(From COP13 National Reports): The reports provide a snapshot of the conservation status of those species for which reporting Parties either have systematic data or some other informed basis for making an assessment. Parties reported improvements in some areas for some terrestrial and aquatic mammals, notable declines for bats, birds and fish, a more mixed picture for reptiles, and no information for insects. Major changes of this kind (both positive and negative) were reported by a minority of Parties.

(From Conservation Status Report): The Red List Index shows that CMS-listed birds and mammals have, on average, deteriorated in status (extinction risk) over the period from 1988 to 2016. This is also the case for migratory birds as a whole (the only group that has been comprehensively assessed and could be analysed). CMS-listed birds are more threatened overall than CMS-listed mammals (i.e. lower RLI values). The Living Planet Index, which monitors abundance changes of vertebrate species over time, shows an overall average increase in CMS-listed species abundance of 8% between 1970 and 2015. Reptiles, aquatic mammals and birds increased in abundance, while fish and terrestrial mammals declined. For populations of Appendix I species, the average trend is overall negative, with species declining in abundance by 23% between 1970 and 2015.

**Target 9: International and regional action and cooperation between States for the conservation and effective management of migratory species fully reflects a migration systems approach, in which all States sharing responsibility for the species concerned engage in such actions in a concerted way.**

(From COP13 National Reports): It is difficult for national reports to shed light on progress towards the ultimate outcome expressed by this target; but 24 Parties reported participating in the implementation of “concerted actions” as defined by the CMS COP, and just 10% of the taxa currently identified for such actions are known to be receiving attention in that context. A range of other positive cooperation activities were reported by 23 Parties. These figures are low overall compared to what might be expected, given the centrality of Target 9 to the purposes of CMS.

**Target 10: All critical habitats and sites for migratory species are identified and included in area-based conservation measures so as to maintain their quality, integrity, resilience and functioning in accordance with the implementation of Aichi Target 11, supported where necessary by environmentally sensitive land-use planning and landscape management on a wider scale.**

(From COP13 National Reports): Most reporting Parties (70 Parties) have done some inventorying of critical habitats and sites for migratory species, but only one-fifth of those who submitted reports indicated that this was complete. The reports do not illuminate the extent of coverage of migratory species interests by area-based conservation measures, although about half of the Parties mentioned new legislation or other provisions. Assessments of management effectiveness in respect of similarly relevant protected areas were reported to have been undertaken by 23 Parties, while a further 23 Parties reported that such assessments were either in development or had been undertaken for some areas.

(From Conservation Status Report): The proportion of Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) of importance for migratory species that are covered by formal protected areas has grown substantially over recent decades. Protected area coverage of KBAs identified for CMS-listed species averages 49% globally.

**Target 11: Migratory species and their habitats which provide important ecosystem services are maintained at or restored to favourable conservation status, taking into account the needs of women, indigenous and local communities, and the poor and vulnerable.**

(From COP13 National Reports): It is difficult for national reports to shed light on progress towards the ultimate outcome expressed by this target. Parties were asked to report instead on whether they had done any assessment of ecosystem services associated with migratory species, and 30 Parties indicated that they had taken this initial step.

**Target 12: The genetic diversity of wild populations of migratory species is safeguarded, and strategies have been developed and implemented for minimizing genetic erosion.**

(From COP13 National Reports): Just under half of the reporting Parties indicated that relevant strategies or other measures had been implemented or were being developed to minimise genetic erosion of biodiversity. While this indicates that some progress is being made, the extent to which genetic diversity is being safeguarded is challenging to assess from the national report information.

**Target 13: Priorities for effective conservation and management of migratory species, their habitats and migration systems have been included in the development and implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, with reference where relevant to CMS agreements and action plans and their implementation bodies.**

(From COP13 National Reports): Migratory species are highly likely to be benefiting from at least some of the general biodiversity provisions in countries that have strong NBSAPs – but fewer than one-fifth of reporting Parties indicated that migratory species are explicitly referred to. Examples where this does occur included references to action plans for relevant species, and steps to address obstacles to migration.

(It should be possible to study this further, by direct access to published NBSAPs and national monitoring processes).

**Target 14: The traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of migratory species, their habitats and migration systems, and their customary sustainable use of biological resources, are respected, subject to national legislation and relevant international obligations, with the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities, thereby contributing to the favourable conservation status of migratory species and the ecological connectivity and resilience of their habitats.**

(From COP13 National Reports): Only five Parties felt that this target had been substantially achieved, but a majority reported that they were taking action to foster consideration of these perspectives and/or to promote the requisite participation. A number of Parties considered that this issue was not applicable to them, which suggests a need to clarify definitions. (Although the extent to which the target is relevant will vary between countries, all countries can in principle contribute towards the achievement of the target, including in the context of international cooperation).

**Target 15: The science base, information, training, awareness, understanding and technologies relating to migratory species, their habitats and migration systems, their value, functioning, status and trends, and the consequences of their loss, are improved, widely shared and transferred, and effectively applied.**

(From COP13 National Reports): Seventy-seven Parties reported taking action in relation to this target, particularly on promotion of awareness, education and information exchange. Most of the reporting Parties also identified an on-going need to improve capacity further in order to implement fully their obligations under CMS.

**Target 16: The mobilization of adequate resources from all sources to implement the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species effectively has increased substantially.**

(From COP13 National Reports): Fewer than one-third of reporting Parties, whether mobilizing resources internally or as donor countries or recipients, reported an overall increase in resources mobilized in the way this target describes; indicating that insufficient progress is being made in relation to this target. Comments throughout the national reports have emphasised the extent to which an insufficiency of resources is hampering implementation efforts.

## LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE OPERATION OF THE CMS STRATEGIC PLAN 2006-2014

### *Purposes*

1. Vision, mission and purpose material is somewhat diffused within the text.
2. Some potential users of the Plan have not been clear that it was relevant to them. (See also lessons 3 and 15 below).
3. The Plan is ambiguous (and users have been unclear) as to whether it is a plan just for the “parent Convention” or for the whole “CMS Family” (i.e. including CMS Agreements/MoUs).

### *Quality standards and success criteria*

4. Expectations and assumptions about what constitutes “success” of the Plan vary considerably, so consensus about its impact, even if the evidence base was there, would still be hard to achieve.

### *Providing a sense of direction*

5. The Plan makes poor distinctions between end objectives, activities, targets, indicators, milestones and verifications, and contains very few expressions of intended ecological outcomes.
6. Constructing the objectives as responses to challenges has made the Plan reactive, rather than a positive agenda for change and securing expanded opportunities. This is probably also why it mixes ends and means, misses one or two key issues and struggles to foreground conservation end-objectives.
7. The “Operational Principles” are of mixed conception and their relationship to other parts of the Plan has not been optimal.
8. Many of the objectives and targets do not express the intended level or standard of results, and are not measurable: this has not only hampered performance assessment but has also weakened the attention given to implementation.
9. The Plan has not given strategic direction on how to decide priorities for the development of future instruments.
10. COP decision-making has been poorly linked to the Plan, and the Plan seems to have had little influence on the business of the COP.

### *CMS family coherence*

11. With one exception (AEWA), daughter instruments have not considered it useful to act on the Plan’s encouragement for them all to develop linked plans; yet “family cohesion” is reported by some to need improvement.

### *External synergies and partnerships*

12. The Plan has potential to be better used as a tool for outreach and for developing and supporting partnerships.

### *Relationship to budgeting and work programming*

13. With one exception (a Scientific Council plan, now expired), and despite an expressed expectation in the Plan, relevant work plans etc. have not been structured so as to follow it.

### *Approaches to prioritisation*

14. The Plan refers to the role of the COP and Standing Committee in setting priorities, but says nothing itself about prioritisation. (See also lesson 9 above).

*Indicating implementation responsibilities*

15. The responsibility for implementing each item is not explained, so this has not always been clear to those concerned, and it is difficult/impossible to document an accountability audit-trail.

*Monitoring and evaluation*

16. The monitoring & evaluation regime associated with the Plan is seen by some as its weakest aspect, and a range of specific deficiencies have been noted which make assessment of progress very difficult, as well as having wider effects on Plan utility.
17. Party national reports to COP (and other potentially relevant report material, with just one or two exceptions), are not organised in a way that relates the information reported to the content of the Strategic Plan.
18. None of the information streams and reporting processes available give any systematic or consistent intelligence about the demonstrable conservation impact of the Plan, and it is also difficult to draw meaningful conclusions about performance against the targets.
19. The COP is not able to take stock of progress with implementation of the Strategic Plan because no suitable opportunity has been built in to the agenda.

*Structure*

20. Users prefer short plans.
21. The Plan's small number of objectives allows the Convention's priorities to be conceptually grasped "in one glance", and has allowed the Plan to be truly strategic at this level. (See also lessons 5 and 6 above).

*Awareness*

22. The low visibility of the Plan has resulted in its having low political profile and reduced impact, as well as unclear expectations about its role.
23. The Plan has good potential to act as a vehicle for raising awareness about the CMS and for communicating its mission and priorities, but has been under-utilised for this.

*The drafting process*

24. Low levels of use of the Plan are partly a consequence of a weak sense among stakeholders (internally and externally) of investment in it and ownership of it, dating back to the way in which it was developed and adopted.

**LESSONS LEARNED CONCERNING THE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR BIODIVERSITY 2011-2020  
(FROM THE 2019 IPBES GLOBAL ASSESSMENT)**

- Future targets with clear, unambiguous, simple language, and quantitative elements are likely to be more effective.
- Future targets that more explicitly account for aspects of nature or nature's contributions to people (NCP) relevant to good quality of life will be more effective at tracking the consequences of declines in nature and NCP for well-being, as well as better able to support future assessments of implications for Sustainable Development Goals achievement.
- Future targets may be more effective if they take greater account of socioeconomic and cultural contexts.
- Future target setting will be more inclusive if it integrates insights from the conservation science community, social scientists, Indigenous Peoples & Local Communities (IPLCs), Indigenous and local knowledge, and other stakeholders.
- Future protected area targets that focus on enhancing coverage of important locations for biodiversity and strengthening management effectiveness may be more effective than simply setting a specific percentage of the terrestrial and marine environments to be conserved.
- Future targets for marine protected areas may deliver better biodiversity benefits if they focus on management effectiveness in particular.
- Future protected area targets may be more effective if they also explicitly address freshwater ecosystems and their processes, integrating nature and people.
- A greater focus on protected area governance is important.
- The implementation of future targets on conservation of species and sites could be more efficient through effective prioritization.
- A new framework for biodiversity will be less effective if it does not explicitly address the implications of climate change for nature conservation.
- Future targets may be more effective if they consider the availability of existing indicators and the feasibility of developing new ones.
- Sustained and augmented investment is needed to maintain, expand and improve knowledge products that underpin multiple indicators.
- A new version of the strategic plan [for biodiversity] is likely to be more effective if it gives greater emphasis to the trade-offs and synergies between targets.

**ANNEX 5****LESSONS LEARNED CONCERNING THE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR BIODIVERSITY 2011-2020  
(FROM THE GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY OUTLOOK, 5TH EDITION, 2020)**

- The need for still greater efforts to address the direct and indirect drivers of biodiversity loss, including through integrated and holistic approaches to planning and implementation, and greater interaction among government ministries, economic sectors and society generally.
- The need to strengthen further the integration of gender, the role of indigenous peoples and local communities and the level of stakeholder engagement.
- The need to strengthen national biodiversity strategies and action plans, and associated planning processes, including their adoption as whole-of-government policy instruments.
- The need for well-designed goals and targets formulated with clear, and, simple language, and with quantitative elements (i.e. according to “SMART” criteria).
- The need to reduce time lags in planning and implementation of biodiversity strategies and action plans, and to account for unavoidable time lags in implementation.
- The need for increased ambition of national commitments, and for the regular and effective review of national activities.
- The need for learning and adaptive management, including through greater efforts to facilitate technical and scientific cooperation, and to understand the reasons for the effectiveness or otherwise of policy measures.
- The need for greater attention to implementation, and sustained and targeted support to countries.
- Increasing efforts to address the direct and indirect drivers of biodiversity loss.
- Strengthening the integration of gender, the role of indigenous peoples and local communities and stakeholder engagement.
- Strengthening national biodiversity strategies and action plans and associated planning processes.
- Well-designed, “SMART” goals and targets.
- Increasing the ambition of national commitments.
- The need to reduce time lags in planning and account for time lags in implementation.
- The need for effective review and sustained and targeted support to countries.
- The need for learning and adaptive management.
- The need for attention to implementation.