Call for Proposal [Expression of Interest]:
Global Marine Flyways Situation Analysis

Title: Global Marine Flyways Situation Analysis

Department/ Office: United Nations Environmental Programme, CMS Secretariat, BONN

Location: home-based/remote

Application deadline: **26 June 2026, 23:59hrs CEST**

Background and Objective

The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), also known as the Bonn Convention, aims to conserve terrestrial, aquatic and avian migratory species throughout their range. It is an intergovernmental treaty, concluded under the aegis of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), concerned with the conservation of wildlife and habitats on a global scale. As an "umbrella" Convention, CMS maintains close institutional and programmatic linkages with its associated instruments, including legally independent agreements. The "parent" Convention and its "daughter" agreements are collectively referred to as the "CMS Family".

Recognizing that a flyway is a flight path used by large numbers of birds, including landbirds, raptors, waterbirds and seabirds, while migrating between their breeding and non-breeding areas, generally spanning continents and often passing over oceans, the flyways approach is necessary to ensure adequate conservation of migratory birds throughout their ranges and that any use of migratory birds is sustainable. This approach combines species- and ecosystem-based measures and promotes international cooperation and coordination among States, the private sector, multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), United Nations institutions, non-governmental organizations, local communities and other stakeholders.

As recognized under CMS, marine flyways represent large-scale ecological corridors that connect breeding, stopover and non-breeding areas of migratory seabirds across multiple jurisdictions. These flyways underpin the survival of hundreds of migratory seabird species and populations that rely on interconnected terrestrial, coastal and marine habitats during their annual migrations. Recent CMS assessments and decisions adopted at the Fifteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP15) confirm that a substantial proportion of migratory seabirds using marine flyways are experiencing population declines due to cumulative pressures such as habitat loss and degradation, climate change, unsustainable use, pollution and bycatch. While CMS and its Family of Instruments have advanced a range of flyway-based initiatives, COP15 highlighted the absence of a consolidated global analysis assessing flyway-level trends, threats, governance arrangements and conservation responses. Addressing this gap has been identified as essential for strengthening coordinated international action and supporting effective implementation of CMS flyway-related resolutions and decisions.

CMS Resolution 15.9 *Seabirds and Marine Flyways* recognizes at least six global marine flyways identified from seabird tracking data across the four global ocean basins: the Atlantic Ocean Flyway (AOF), East Indian Ocean Flyway (EIOF), North Indian Ocean Flyway (NIOF), Pacific Ocean Flyway (POF), West Pacific Ocean Flyway (WPOF), and Southern Ocean Flyway (SOF). The resolution highlights that seabirds are among the most threatened bird

groups globally, face multiple pressures across their annual cycles, and require coordinated conservation action across ocean basins and throughout the full life cycle.

In this context, **the CMS Family invites applications for conducting the Situation Analysis of the Global Marine Flyways** as adopted by CMS Resolution 15.9 and its related Decisions.

2. Objective of the Assignment

The overall objective is to produce a global situation analysis covering all six marine flyways that:

- Synthesizes the best available scientific and policy information on seabird distributions, connectivity, threats, governance, and existing responses across all marine flyways.
- Identifies knowledge gaps, conservation priorities, and opportunities for coordinated action within and between each flyway.
- Maps the relevant stakeholder and institutional landscape, including Parties, non-Party Range States, CMS family instruments, other multilateral environmental agreements, regional fisheries management organizations, United Nations bodies, non-governmental organizations, research institutions, local communities, and private-sector actors.
- Supports the identification of critical networks of sites and broader marine areas associated with breeding, foraging, stop-over, migration, and wintering stages.
- Provides practical recommendations and a framework to inform future flyway-level implementation plans.

The analysis will focus on species listed in Annex B to Resolution 15.9 *Seabirds and Marine Flyways* , with the possibility of grouping them into ecologically coherent sub-groups, and will assess conservation status, existing and emerging threats, institutional practices, knowledge gaps, legal and non-legal frameworks, and opportunities to improve conservation outcomes. Based on the analysis, the study will identify priority conservation and policy actions, including measures aligned with climate mitigation and adaptation strategies.

Justification

This project directly aligns with and is justified by the flyway-related mandates adopted at the Fifteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS COP15). COP15 reaffirmed and expanded the global flyways approach through decisions addressing terrestrial, coastal, and marine flyways, as set out in CMS Resolution 12.11 (Rev.COP15) *Flyways* and Resolution 15.9 *Seabirds and Marine Flyways* and related Decisions which call for strengthened coordination, information exchange, and global-level analyses to identify implementation gaps, overlaps, and synergies across flyway-related initiatives and regions.

This mandate further emphasizes the role of the Flyways Working Group [FWG] in consolidating information provided by Parties and stakeholders, reviewing existing datasets on migratory bird movements and the status of key sites and habitats, and supporting evidence-based updates to the Programme of Work [POW] on Migratory Birds and Flyways. The proposed project responds directly to these COP15 outcomes by delivering a structured global situation analysis to support coherent implementation of CMS flyway-related resolutions and decisions.

The proposed project is also aligned with other CMS Decisions and Resolutions, not limited to, but including:

a. Resolution 10.8 (Rev.COP14) *Cooperation between the Intergovernmental Science Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and CMS*
b. Resoluion 14.1 (Rev.COP15) *Samarkand Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2024-2032*
c. Resolution 14.4 *State of the World's Migratory Species Report*
d. Resolution 14.13 *Initiative for Central Asian Flyway*
e. Resolution 14.16 *Ecological Connectivity*
f. Resolution 11.16 (Rev.COP15) *The Prevention of Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds*
g. Resolution 12.25 *Promoting Conservation of Critical Intertidal and Other Coastal Habitats for Migratory Species*
h. Resolution 12.21 (Rev.COP15) *Climate Change and Migratory Species*
i. Resolution 11.27 (Rev.COP15) *Renewable Energy and Migratory Species*
j. Resolution 12.12 (Rev.COP15) *Action Plans for Birds*
k. Resolution 12.20 *Management of Marine Debris*
l. Resolution 7.2 (Rev.COP15) *Impact Assessment and Migratory Species*
m. Resolution 11.15 (Rev.COP15) *Preventing Poisoning of Migratory Birds*
n. Resolution 15.2 *Marine Pollution*

Scope of Work

Responsibilities

a) Inception and methodological design

- Review all relevant CMS Resolution and related annexes, including the description of marine flyways and the broad mandate to assess scientific, technical, and governance issues.
- Prepare an inception methodology describing the analytical framework, workplan, stakeholder engagement plan, quality assurance approach, and deliverable structure.
- Define a consistent approach for comparing the six flyways while allowing for flyway-specific characteristics and differences in data availability.

b) Literature Review

- Carry out a systematic and targeted literature review covering seabird ecology, migration, and connectivity patterns across the six marine flyways.
- Review existing tracking data, biodiversity area approaches, important site inventories, and other relevant datasets and tools, such as seabird tracking databases, Key Biodiversity Areas, Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas, and relevant conservation toolkits.
- Review threat assessments across the marine flyways, including (as relevant by flyway) invasive species at breeding sites, bycatch, climate change, habitat loss and degradation, offshore energy and related infrastructure, direct take, pollution, overfishing, light pollution, disease including avian influenza, and mining-related pressures.
- Review existing conservation responses, management measures, policy frameworks, and institutional arrangements relevant to marine flyways and seabirds, including CMS family instruments and other regional and global mechanisms.

- Review progress on Communication, Education, and Public Awareness (CEPA) that supports conservation practices across global marine flyways;
- Create a list of bibliography of the relevant sources used.

c) Data compilation and analytical assessment

- Compile and analyze available information to generate a flyway-by-flyway profile for each of the six marine flyways.
- Prepare an overview of species and/or taxonomic groups strongly associated with each flyway, with attention to migratory status, conservation status, population trend, and relevance under CMS and related agreements where possible.
- Produce a geographically explicit description of key ecological features, critical sites, pelagic use areas, bottlenecks, and important zones such as upwellings and frontal systems wherever sufficient evidence exists.
- Undertake a comparative analysis of principal threats, current responses, geographic gaps, and governance gaps for each flyway.
- Develop a prioritization framework or typology for conservation action, distinguishing urgent, medium-term, and enabling actions.

d) Stakeholder Engagement

- Develop and implement a stakeholder engagement process covering the range of actors recognized in the resolution, including governments, CMS and related instruments, regional fisheries management organizations, intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, research institutions, and where relevant local communities and private-sector actors.
- Prepare a stakeholder mapping matrix by flyway and stakeholder category.
- Identify priority consultees for interviews and consultations.
- Conduct a structured consultation process through interviews, questionnaires, virtual workshops, or other suitable modalities.
- Document conservation priorities, perceived threats, governance gaps, opportunities for cooperation, and recommendations emerging from stakeholders.
- Validate preliminary findings with key stakeholders before finalization.

e) Analysis: gaps, priorities and actions needed

- Identify knowledge gaps requiring further research, monitoring, or data sharing.
- Identify institutional and policy gaps relevant to marine flyway conservation.
- Integrate CMS-reported threats, international, and national ecosystem assessments (e.g. IBAT datasets, UNEP-WCMC National Ecosystem Assessment Initiative) that are considered substantial for supporting the Situation Analysis;
- Identify opportunities for synergy with relevant agreements, initiatives, and processes, including marine protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, BBNJ-related processes where relevant, and flyway coordination mechanisms.
- Recommend priorities for future conservation action and possible building blocks for flyway implementation plans.

f) Production of communication and support materials

- Translate technical findings into clear, accessible, visually engaging products suitable for policy and stakeholder audiences (i.e. factsheets, flyers and social media tiles).
- Ensure that outputs support coordinated action and awareness-raising on marine flyways and migratory seabirds.

Reporting Lines

The contracted entity/Consultant(s) will report directly to the Avian Species Team of the CMS Secretariat and work closely with the head of the Avian Species Team: **Iván Ramírez**.

The contractor will coordinate closely with designated project focal points. Draft outputs will be reviewed by the commissioning entity and selected technical stakeholders.

Periodic progress updates should be provided at least at inception, mid-way through literature review, mid-way through consultations, upon submission of the draft report, and before final delivery.

Work Location

home-based/remote

Expected Duration

The contract is expected to last approximately twelve (12) to eighteen (18) months, beginning from the date of contract signing. The exact duration will be agreed based on the applicant's proposed work plan and discussion with the CMS Secretariat.

Result of Service

Result 1 – Agreed Analytical Framework and Workplan: An inception package is delivered and approved, showing clear understanding of the CMS marine flyways mandate. It sets out the methodology, a realistic timeline, and a clear division of responsibilities.

Result 2 – Consolidated Evidence Base: A comprehensive, well-organized evidence base is assembled from scientific literature and policy documents. It covers seabird habitats, migration patterns, key ecological areas, threats, and existing conservation responses, along with an inventory of key datasets and references used.

Result 3 – Stakeholder Engagement Record: A structured stakeholder engagement process is completed, producing a stakeholder map and contact matrix. Records of all consultations are maintained, and a summary of key findings including areas of agreement, divergence, and opportunities for collaboration is prepared.

Result 4 – Flyway-by-Flyway Situation Analyses: For each of the six marine flyways, a concise profile is produced covering ecological and conservation significance, key seabird species and assemblages, major threats and trends, governance context, critical sites, and targeted recommendations.

Result 5 – Global Synthesis and Strategic Recommendations: A cross-flyway synthesis identifies shared and flyway-specific threats and recurring policy gaps. Practical recommendations are developed for Parties, the Scientific Council, the Flyways Working Group, the Secretariat, and external partners, including options for future implementation planning.

Result 6 – Communication Products: Clear, visually engaging materials are produced for policy and stakeholder audiences, including a full designed report with infographics, a PowerPoint presentation, and a short executive summary suitable for briefings and outreach.

Deliverables

Deliverable 1 – Inception Report

- Content: methodology, workplan, consultation plan, proposed outline of report and presentation, and quality control process.
- Suggested length: 10–20 pages excluding annexes.

Deliverable 2 – Annotated Bibliography and Data / Source Inventory

- Content: organized list of reviewed literature, datasets, policy sources, initiatives, and stakeholder resources.
- Format: Mendeley database or compatible Excel and/or Word annex plus reference library.

Deliverable 3 – Stakeholder Mapping and Consultation Package

- Content: stakeholder matrix, interview guide / questionnaire, consultation summary note(s), and stakeholder validation record.
- Format: Word plus spreadsheet annex.

Deliverable 4 – Draft Situation Analysis Report

- Content: full draft covering all six marine flyways, global synthesis, maps/figures, infographics, options, and recommendations.
- Format: Word and PDF.

Deliverable 5 – Final Situation Analysis Report (designed)

- Required characteristics: written in a style that is clear, accessible, and policy-friendly while remaining scientifically robust.
- Required characteristics: includes high-quality infographics, maps, summary boxes, charts, icons, and other visual elements to make findings easy to understand.
- Required characteristics: includes an executive summary, main report, and annexes.
- Recommended length of the detailed report: minimum 70 pages excluding annexes; maximum 120 pages excluding annexes.
- Suggested structure: Executive Summary (5–8 pages); Introduction and policy context; Methodology; Global overview of marine flyways; Situation analysis for each of the six flyways (six chapters); Comparative analysis across flyways; Priority actions and recommendations; Options / building blocks for future implementation plans; References; Annexes.

Deliverable 6 – Presentation in PowerPoint

- A PowerPoint presentation summarizing key messages, intended for the Scientific Council, Flyways Working Group, and partners.
- Recommended number of slides: minimum 18 slides; maximum 25 slides.
- Indicative slide structure: Title and purpose; CMS mandate / background; Objectives and methodology; The six marine flyways; Cross-cutting findings; one slide per flyway (six slides); Threats, governance gaps, critical sites, stakeholder landscape; Priority recommendations and next steps; optional annex / backup slides.

Deliverable 7 – Executive Summary / Policy Brief

- Length: 6–10 pages.
- A concise and attractive summary for senior decision-makers and external partners.

Deliverable 8 – Editable Source Files

- All editable files shall be provided, including Word, PowerPoint, graphics files, spreadsheets, and any non-proprietary datasets prepared under the assignment.

Qualifications/Special Skills

Experience:

The CMS Secretariat welcomes applications from individual consultants and not-for profit entities with substantive proven experience and capacity to provide the required output as described above. In particular, the applicant should:

- Have proven expertise in producing scientific reviews and/or assessment reports;
- Advanced degree in marine ecology, ornithology, conservation biology, environmental policy, international environmental governance, or a related field;
- At least 10 years of relevant professional experience in seabird conservation, migratory species conservation, marine biodiversity, or flyway-scale ecological analysis;
- Have excellent writing skills in English;
- Familiarity with CMS and related instruments;
- Experience with tracking data interpretation, marine protected area processes, and international policy frameworks relevant to areas beyond national jurisdiction or fisheries governance;
- Demonstrated expertise in synthesizing complex scientific and policy information into user-friendly outputs;
- Strong experience with multi-stakeholder consultation processes across regions.

For organizations / consortia

- Proven institutional track record in marine biodiversity and/or seabird conservation.
- Demonstrated capacity to undertake global or multi-regional analytical assignments.
- Multidisciplinary team including expertise in seabird ecology and migration; marine spatial / flyway analysis; conservation policy and governance; stakeholder engagement / facilitation; and report writing and visual communication / infographics.

Proposal Requirements

Interested applicants should submit:

- Technical proposal (maximum 10 pages) including understanding of the assignment, proposed methodology, workplan and timeline, team composition and roles, and examples of similar work. **For the Implementation Plan, use the template in Annex A of the Application form**;
- Financial proposal including professional fees, travel / workshop costs (if applicable), design / production costs, and any taxes or administrative costs**, based on the template of activity-based budget in Annex B of the Application form**;
- CVs of key personnel;
- Two to three relevant writing samples and/or examples of visual products;
- Contact details for references from recent comparable assignments.

Please send your application, incl. the completed application form and its Annexes as well as the Partner Declaration, as relevant, to the CMS Secretariat,
email: cms-secretariat@un.org

Application deadline is the 26 June 2026, 23:59 hrs CEST.