

SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL COMMENTS

(arising from ScC-SC8)

**PRIORITIES FOR AREA-BASED CONSERVATION OF MARINE MIGRATORY SPECIES
UNEP/CMS/COP15/Doc.25.3.1**

(ScC-SC8 Agenda item 8.3.1)

GENERAL COMMENTS ON THE DOCUMENT

The Sessional Committee made the following comments on the Draft Resolution on Priorities for Area-based Conservation of Marine Migratory Species:

- It was appreciated that the Secretariat streamlined its mandates related to this subject in one Resolution combining several area-based conservation work streams.
- It was agreed to make reference to EBSAs and KBAs throughout the operative paragraphs draft Resolution and the draft Decisions.
- It was agreed to mention the KBA partnership where reference is made to partners.
- It was questioned whether CMS may urge Parties to sign another treaty in operative paragraph 6.
- Clarification was sought whether the term “perplexities” in preambular paragraph 3 was the right word.
- It was noted that operative paragraph 9 was similar to Draft Decision 15.AA and the question was raised whether both were required.
- The question was raised whether it was appropriate to ask Parties to support another body financially in draft Decision 15.BB).
- It was agreed that draft Decision 15.BB should not focus on the IUCN Species Survival Commission only and that it should be broader to include other groups working on e.g. KBAs.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COP15

The Scientific Council recommends adopting the draft Resolution and Decisions with amendments as specified below.

COMMENTS ON SPECIFIC SECTIONS/ INCLUDING POSSIBLE PROPOSALS FOR TEXT REVISION

The following amendments are proposed in the operative paragraphs of the draft Resolution *Priorities for Area-based Conservation of Marine Migratory Species* (Annex 2, page 12 of the document)

2. *Recognizes* IMMAs, ISRAs, IMTAs as well as EBSAs and KBAs and other similar scientific frameworks as key advisory tools for guiding measures to mitigate threats, spatial conservation and management, including for marine spatial planning and the design of marine protected areas;

3. *Urges* Parties to integrate CMS-relevant area-based tools and identified sites, such as IMMAs, ISRAs, ~~and~~IMTAs, and KBAs, into national conservation planning, spatial planning and reporting processes, including their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans

(NBSAPs), in support of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Targets 1 and 3;

4. *Encourages* Parties to make use of the growing e-atlases of IMMAs and ISRAs, including in the designation of EBSAs and KBAs and engage in ongoing regional expert consultation processes to identify additional areas critical for migratory species;

8. *Encourages* Parties to support ~~the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC)~~ the identification of IMMAs, ISRAs, IMTAs and related tools as well as other relevant processes in the identification of EBSAs and KBAs;

9. Further encourages Parties to make use of the identified Important Areas when designating marine protected areas, or generally for marine spatial planning processes and the mitigation of threats, to support the conservation of CMS-listed species; and

The following amendments are proposed in the draft Decisions on *Priorities for Area-based Conservation of Marine Migratory Species* (Annex 3, page 13 of the document)

Directed to Parties

15.AA Parties are requested to make use, as appropriate, of the identified Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs), Important Shark and Ray Areas (ISRAs), ~~and~~ Important Marine Turtle Areas (IMTAs), Ecologically or Biologically Significant Areas (EBSAs) and Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) when identifying habitat at risk or designing threat mitigation measures, and when designating marine protected areas, or generally for marine spatial planning purposes, including through National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs).

15.AA (bis) Parties that are also members of RFBs are requested to encourage those bodies:

a) make existing fisheries and observer data available and/or support with analysis of these data for the purpose of ISRA, IMMA, IMTA, and KBA delineation, and to increase efforts to undertake additional research on the habitats of relevant species, including reproductive areas (e.g., nursery or mating grounds); and

b) to urge RFBs to collaborate closely with CMS and relevant CMS daughter agreements to ensure that ISRA, IMMA, IMTA, and KBA identification and conservation measures are appropriately reflected into fisheries research and management frameworks.

Directed to Parties, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations

15.BB Parties, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations are encouraged to actively engage with and provide financial and technical support to the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) and the KBA Partnership for the process of identifying IMMAs, ISRAs, ~~and~~ IMTAs and KBAs globally

Directed to the Scientific Council

15.CC The Scientific Council is requested to, subject to the availability of resources:

a) develop a report about improving the long-term effectiveness of protected areas dedicated to marine migratory species in the face of climate change, and make recommendations to Parties; and

b) collaborate with the IUCN SCC and the KBA Partnership to include data on CMS-listed species in the identification of IMMAs, ISRAs, ~~and~~ IMTAs, and KBAs.

Directed to the Secretariat

15.DD The Secretariat shall:

- a) inform Parties of newly identified IMMAs, ISRAs and IMTAs, and the relevant CMS-listed species;
- b) reach out to other relevant regional and international organizations to bring to their attention the value of identifying IMMAs, ISRAs, ~~and~~ IMTAs and KBAs for conservation planning;
- c) continue to liaise with the IUCN SSC and the KBA Partnership to promote the value of IMMAs, ISRAs, ~~and~~ IMTAs, and KBAs for the conservation of CMS-listed species, and continue to engage in the Blue Corridors for Turtles partnership; and
- d) continue to engage in the process around the BBNJ Agreement, including attending upcoming meetings.