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**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF
THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME**

(Prepared by the United Nations Environment Programme)

Summary:

The present report is submitted by the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) for consideration at the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, to be held in Campo Grande, Brazil, from 23 to 29 March 2026. It provides information on the administrative and financial management support provided by UNEP to and its programmatic cooperation with the Secretariat of the Convention building on the report provided to the fifty-six meeting of the Convention's Standing Committee, held on 25 and 27 March 2025 in Bonn, Germany.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

I. Background

1. The present report is submitted by the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) for consideration at the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS COP-15), to be held in Campo Grande, Brazil, from 23 to 29 March 2026.
2. Building on the previous report provided to the Standing Committee at its fifty-six meeting (UNEP/CMS/StC56/Doc.8) held in Bonn, Germany, 25 to 27 March 2025, section II of the present report provides updates on programmatic collaboration between UNEP and the CMS Secretariat on the implementation of outcomes of the fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, held in Samarkand, Uzbekistan from 12 to 17 February 2024. Section III of the present report provides information on administrative and financial management support.

II. Programmatic collaboration between UNEP and the CMS Secretariat

Seventh Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA)

3. The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) actively participated in the seventh session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-7), including the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) Day held under the theme *“Advancing sustainable solutions for a resilient planet.”* The MEAs Day provided an important platform to reaffirm the central role of MEAs in global environmental governance and to highlight the value of coordinated whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches. In this context, CMS emphasized the inherently transboundary nature of migratory species conservation and the critical importance of international cooperation, policy coherence and integrated action across sectors to address shared challenges such as habitat loss, climate change and unsustainable use.
4. During the high-level dialogues and the concluding discussion, CMS underscored its contribution to advancing biodiversity conservation and the Sustainable Development Goals through strengthened synergies with other biodiversity-related MEAs and relevant global frameworks. The discussions highlighted practical pathways to enhance implementation, including aligning national policies, sharing data and scientific knowledge, and leveraging joint actions at regional and flyway levels. The outcomes of the MEAs Day reinforced the relevance of CMS as a platform for cooperation and collective action, and supported calls to further strengthen UNEA’s standing agenda item on cooperation with MEAs to better support Parties in delivering measurable conservation outcomes for migratory species and their habitats.
5. At UNEA-7. Member States adopted several resolutions relevant to CMS including Resolution UNEP/EA.7/Res.5 on promoting synergies, cooperation or collaboration for national implementation of multilateral environmental agreements and other relevant environmental instruments¹.

¹ <https://docs.un.org/en/UNEP/EA.7/L.8>

Support for strengthening cooperation, coordination and synergies between biodiversity related conventions

6. UNEP serves as Secretariat of the Bern Process, which promotes cooperation and collaboration among biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), in support of the effective and coherent implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KM-GBF), in line with agreed priorities and available capacities. The Bern Process builds on the outcomes of the Bern I, II and III consultations and is formally recognized by the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) through Resolution 11.10 (Rev. COP14) on Synergies and Partnerships², which encourages enhanced cooperation with other MEAs and relevant processes. The Bern III Conference directly addressed areas of relevance to CMS implementation, particularly those related to migratory species conservation, ecological connectivity, transboundary cooperation, and integrated national implementation of MEA commitments.
7. As a follow-up to Bern III, 2025 activities under the Bern Process have focused on operationalizing synergies and supporting the global review of collective progress under the KM-GBF. In August 2025, UNEP convened an expert workshop in Bogis-Bossey, Switzerland, which examined how biodiversity-related MEAs, including CMS, can more coherently contribute to planning, monitoring, reporting, and review processes under the KM-GBF. The workshop discussed practical options for aligning MEA reporting and strategic frameworks, thereby facilitating more visible and coordinated CMS contributions to the global review of KM-GBF implementation.
8. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) continues to host InforMEA, the United Nations Information Portal on Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), as a centralized platform providing searchable access to MEA treaty texts, governing body decisions, national reports and related legal instruments. The portal also includes a multilingual, self-paced e-learning section offering free online courses on MEAs and international environmental law.
9. The CMS Secretariat remains actively engaged with the InforMEA Initiative, supporting UNEP on outreach and visibility efforts, interoperability and data exchange, e-learning contributions, and semantic management. The Secretariat participates in the InforMEA Initiative Steering Committee Meetings, where partners from MEA secretariats and UN organizations coordinate platform development and governance. In 2024 and 2025, these discussions have included topics such as enhancing interoperability, improving system APIs and document indexing, integrating new technologies like generative AI, and planning overall platform enhancements.
10. UNEP provided support to the Secretariat of the CMS in the organization and delivery of the Global Workshop on CMS Legislation, held from 3 to 4 June 2025 in Bonn, Germany. The workshop was implemented as part of the CMS National Legislation Programme, established under CMS Resolution 12.9, and brought together representatives of CMS Parties and non-Parties, legal experts, and observers from other multilateral environmental agreements and relevant organizations. The workshop focused on strengthening national legal frameworks for the effective implementation of CMS, including guidance on operationalizing key Convention provisions such as Article III.5 on the 'take' prohibition, legislative approaches to support ecological connectivity, and measures to address known and emerging threats to migratory species³.

² [cms_cop14_res.11.10_rev.cop14_synergies-and-partnerships_e.pdf](#)

³ <https://www.cms.int/en/meeting/global-workshop-cms-legislation>

11. Through this activity, UNEP supported the CMS Secretariat in enhancing countries' capacity to translate CMS obligations into effective national legislation, while promoting the exchange of good practices and peer learning among participating countries. A total of twenty-one countries participated in the workshop. UNEP also used the opportunity to reinforce linkages between CMS implementation and the Montevideo Environmental Law Programme, offering further support to participating countries to strengthen national biodiversity legislation in a coherent and complementary manner. This collaboration contributed to strengthening partnerships between CMS and UNEP legal initiatives, and to advancing integrated legal approaches for biodiversity conservation at the national level.
12. Following the adoption of the Samarkand Strategic Plan for Migratory Species (SPMS) (2024–2032) at CMS COP14, UNEP has, since 2025, supported the CMS Secretariat in developing a monitoring framework for the SPMS. This included identifying scientifically robust indicators of specific relevance to the SPMS targets and in alignment with other MEA indicators as guided by the Intersessional Working Group on the SPMS.
13. UNEP provided support to Parties and the CMS Secretariat to enhance national reporting for the CMS and three of its agreements – including the agreement on the conservation of small cetaceans of the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas (ASCOBANS), the agreement on the conservation of populations of European bats (EUROBATS) and the agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA). This includes the analysis of the National Reports submitted by Parties to COP15 ([COP Doc. 22](#)), to assess progress, challenges and priorities for future implementation. UNEP is also actively supporting the CMS Secretariat in efforts to align the template for the CMS National Reports with Samarkand Strategic Plan for Migratory Species (SPMS) (2024-2032). The Online Reporting System (ORS) is designed to streamline national reporting and support reporting of synergies across multiple MEA secretariats. A new centralised platform was brought live in 2025, with improved reliability, security and interoperability. The ORS tool is available in five UN languages (English, French, Spanish, Russian, and Chinese).

Synthesizing scientific knowledge on migratory species and ecological connectivity to support implementation of the Convention

14. Building on the successful launch of the *State of the World's Migratory Species* report at COP14, UNEP developed the *State of the World's Migratory Species: Interim Report (2026)* for consideration at COP15 ([Doc. 20.2/Rev.1](#)). Produced in response to CMS Decision 14.24 d), this report provides an update on recent major developments in the conservation status of CMS-listed species. It focuses attention on recently reported population changes and provides updated information on the extent to which the important habitats – and migratory pathways – used and relied upon by CMS-listed species have been identified and protected.
15. UNEP has also supported the CMS with a comprehensive review of the Range States of species listed in the CMS Appendices, to help ensure these data, which are central for the effective implementation of the Convention, are as up-to-date as possible.

The African Elephant Fund

16. Since the AEF's inception, sixty-eight projects had been completed in the African elephant range States as of 30 November 2025, contributing to strengthened national capacities and on-the-ground conservation outcomes. Recent examples include enhanced surveillance and monitoring capacities in key migratory corridors in Cameroon

and strengthened law enforcement and judicial capacities in Liberia to address illegal killing of elephants and the trade in elephant products.

17. In a context of prioritization and streamlined implementation modalities, the 11th round of calls for proposals under the AEF was implemented in a highly targeted manner from 24 January to 15 March 2025, with a focus on priority actions under the revised AEAP. The call was published on the UNEP and AEF websites in English and French, and disseminated through the CMS and CITES Secretariats, CITES Management Authority focal points, and the AEF Steering Committee. Despite these constraints, over 110 project proposals were received from governments and NGOs across more than 25 range States, of which nine were selected for funding by the AEF Steering Committee, reflecting a strategic and focused allocation of available resources.

Strategic matters

18. At the request of the African elephant range States, the AEF Secretariat participated as an observer and technical expert at the CITES African Elephant Dialogue meeting held on 23 – 26 September 2024 in Maun, Botswana. The AEF Secretariat presented on the status of the implementation of the AEAP through the AEF.
19. A mapping study was completed in October 2024, which analysed key organizations and initiatives working on African elephant conservation and management. The study consolidated information on the major actors in this field and identified potential areas for collaboration and synergy. It also informed the development of a draft strategic approach for the AEF, which highlighted its central positioning as a Fund governed by the African elephant range States.
20. The AEF project proposal evaluation and selection criteria, and the project proposal template were revised by the AEF Steering Committee to align with the updated AEAP. The revised guidelines now require project proponents to incorporate gender, environmental and social considerations when designing and submitting their projects.

Visibility and Outreach

21. The AEF Secretariat, in collaboration with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), organized a joint side event at CMS COP14 on 12 February 2024. The event featured a panel discussion bringing together stakeholders from the government, international non-governmental organizations, and non-profit sectors to exchange knowledge and experiences on opportunities and strategies for increasing financing for sustainable wildlife conservation.
22. An exhibition booth was organized at the sixth session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-6) in Nairobi, Kenya, that took place on 26 February to 1 March 2024. The booth attracted over 200 visitors interested in learning more about the Fund, accessing funding, and exploring partnership opportunities.
23. A side event was organized at CITES COP20 on 2 December 2025. The event brought together range States and donors to review the progress and achievements in the implementation of the AEAP through the support provided by the AEF and the CITES Monitoring Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) Programme.

AEF Steering Committee

24. A new AEF Steering Committee was elected by the African elephant range States in July 2024 to serve for three years (August 2024 – July 2027). Zimbabwe and Zambia, representing the southern Africa sub-region, also serve as chair and vice-chair of the

Committee. Cameroon and the Central Africa Republic, Tanzania and Rwanda, and Nigeria and Burkina Faso, represent the central, east and west Africa sub-regions respectively. The Netherlands, Belgium and Germany compose the donor representatives, with the European Commission and France as observers. UNEP, and the CMS and CITES Secretariats also continue to serve as ex-officio members.

25. The 13th AEF Steering Committee meeting was held in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe on 6 – 7 May 2025. The main agenda of the meeting was to evaluate the proposals received during the 11th call for proposals, and to select projects for funding.

Jaguar Conservation

26. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) participated in the second meeting of the jaguar range States, held from 22 to 24 September 2025 in Mexico City, Mexico, jointly with the Secretariats of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), recognizing the complementarity of their respective mandates in the conservation of the jaguar (*Panthera onca*). The meeting, which was organized by the Government of Mexico and co-chaired by Mexico and Brazil, enabled an integrated discussion of both habitat and population conservation and the challenges related to illegal killing and illicit trade, thereby strengthening a coherent regional approach.
27. In this context, the Regional Action Plan for Jaguar Conservation was agreed by consensus by the jaguar range States, with the support of UNEP, CMS and CITES. The Plan is designed to serve as a common strategic framework to facilitate the development of national action plans and intergovernmental coordination, while linking conservation actions with CITES implementation and compliance mechanisms and with the objectives for the conservation of migratory species promoted under CMS.
28. Furthermore, the Parties agreed to strengthen this collaboration through the establishment of an Intergovernmental Platform for Jaguar Conservation and a modular system for monitoring illegal killing and illicit trade, the implementation of which is envisaged to take place in close cooperation between CITES and CMS, with the support of UNEP. In particular, the potential contribution of the UNEP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNEP-ROLAC) was recognized as a key coordinating element, in light of its convening power and access to funding mechanisms, thereby contributing to the effective implementation of the Regional Action Plan and to maintaining the political momentum generated among jaguar range States.

The Central Asian Mammals and Climate Adaptation (CAMCA) project

29. The Central Asian Mammals and Climate Adaptation (CAMCA) project, funded by the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany and led by UNEP, in collaboration with CMS's Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI) and a range of local and international partners, is working with communities and governments in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan to increase the resilience of flagship mountain species – Snow Leopard, Argali, Bukhara deer, Asiatic Ibex, Tian Shan Maral, Tian Shan Brown Bear – and associated ecosystems to climate change and related threats.
30. The goal of the CAMCA project is to contribute to the increased climate change resilience of wildlife and people and to achieve greater conservation of biodiversity by improving the understanding of vulnerability of flagship species and their habitats to climate change, developing and testing participatory tools for nature-positive ecosystem-based

adaptation (EbA) and climate change-informed wildlife management, and integrate the findings in local, national and regional policy.

31. Specific contributions to CMS include support to:
 - a. the development updated virtual interactive version of the Central Asian Mammals Migration and Linear Infrastructure Atlas, and associated species fact sheets on climate change and landscape connectivity for Bukhara deer, snow leopard, and argali sheep;
 - b. the revision of the species action plans for the Argali and Bukhara Deer during the Third Meeting of the Signatories to the Bukhara Deer MOU (MOS3) on 10-11 Sep 2024 in Almaty, Kazakhstan and the Range State Meeting on the Implementation and Revision of the International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Argali (*Ovis ammon*) on 12-13 Sep 2024, Almaty, Kazakhstan;
 - c. the revision of the Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI) Programme of Work to be adopted at the upcoming CMS COP15, through a technical workshop (06 May 2025 in Vilm, Germany) and the Third CAMI Range States meeting (24-26 Jun 2025, Tashkent, Uzbekistan);
 - d. Regional conference: 'Building Resilience for Wildlife and Communities in the Mountains of Central Asia – results and upscaling of the Central Asian Mammals and Climate Adaptation (CAMCA) project' to highlight transboundary ecological connectivity (22-23 Oct 2025, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan).
32. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan are Parties to CMS and a number of its regional instruments (e.g. Bukhara Deer MOU, Argali Action Plan, etc.) and participate in CAMI which facilitates regional cooperation for the conservation of migratory species.

Kunming Biodiversity Fund

33. The Kunming Biodiversity Fund, co-chaired by China and UNEP with UNEP as a founding member of the Fund as well as host of the Secretariat, approved a 1 million USD for CMS to support Yemen to assess and protect marine turtles in Khore Omiera Protected Area, in alignment with Yemen's National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan priorities. In addition, conditional approval was awarded for 1.8 million USD to protect and restore ecological integrity and connectivity and to advance migratory species issues in transboundary conservation areas in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Implementation will commence in 2026.

Global Environment Facility

34. In line with CMS's emphasis on the transboundary nature of migratory species conservation and the critical importance of international cooperation and policy coherence, UNEP supports a range of GEF-funded initiatives that promote cross-border collaboration and ecosystem connectivity.
35. In the Congo Basin, UNEP is implementing a GEF-funded project that strengthens transboundary cooperation between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Republic of the Congo in the Cuvette Centrale peatlands. The project maintains connected habitats and coordinates cross-border conservation actions for wide-ranging species, particularly forest elephants, while safeguarding peat-swamp forest biodiversity, including chimpanzees, bonobos, and gorillas.

36. Similar objectives are pursued under the UNEP-GEF project Ecosystem Conservation and Community Livelihood Enhancement in Northwestern Zambia, which applies community forest management approaches to improve ecological connectivity between West Lunga National Park and Kafue National Park. This corridor links West Lunga to the broader Kavango–Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA), a critical habitat for the savanna elephant.
37. Complementary transboundary conservation efforts are also being advanced through UNEP-supported discussions and projects in southern and eastern Africa, including cooperation between South Africa, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe on elephant and rhino conservation in the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park, as well as cross border collaboration and coordination framework between Uganda, Kenya and South Sudan for wildlife protection in the greater Kidepo conservation landscape around Uganda's Kidepo National Park.
38. In addition, the UNEP-GEF Coastal Wetlands project in Chile supported the improvement of ecologically valuable wetlands in South-Central Chile and associated watersheds, which provide critical habitats for migratory birds. UNEP worked with communities in five wetlands to develop studies and management plans to enhance conservation outcomes, including for migratory species. UNEP collaborated with partners such as the AUDUBON to improve flood control that benefits migratory birds and increases the resilience of the habitat. UNEP provided technical support to leverage additional resources, from a fund of the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (NMBCA) of the Fish and Wildlife Service of the United States Government - Project: "Scaling up Coastal Bird Conservation in Chile: building constituencies and sustainable stewardship." Finally, extensive communications efforts raised local awareness on biodiversity and migratory species.

III. Administrative and financial management support provided to CMS Secretariat

39. Programme Support Cost (PSC): In accordance with UN General Assembly resolution 35/217 and relevant UN procedures, PSC is charged on all extrabudgetary resources at a standard rate of 13 per cent. This is to recover the incremental costs incurred while supporting activities financed through such resources. UNEP is committed to the continuous review of its existing PSC policy. A draft revised 'Guidelines on Management of Programme Support Costs (PSC)' from the UN Secretariat was circulated for comment and UNEP also requested inputs from UNEP-administered MEA Secretariats. The new UN Secretariat Guidelines, which was issued by the Controller on 7 April 2025, contains several updates which will be integrated into a review of the existing UNEP PSC policy:
 - a) Additional guidance on the definition of 'Direct Costs'.
 - b) Updated definition of "indirect costs".
 - c) Confirmation that implementing entities shall not use PSC resources for expenditures that should be charged as direct costs.
40. PSC Income and Use: The level of PSC income available in a given year is directly contingent upon the revenue generated in the preceding year. In accordance with the agreed cost-sharing arrangement, 67 per cent of PSC income derived from the CMS Trust Funds is allocated to the CMS Secretariat to support its administrative functions, while the remaining 33 per cent is retained by UNEP. The portion retained by UNEP finances the provision of advisory services, policy development, and core administrative support in areas such as human resources, finance, procurement, legal affairs, and other services delivered by UNEP and its primary service provider, the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON). The final allocation of PSC income to the CMS Secretariat for

2025 amounted to USD 892,799 inclusive of the 2023–2024 biennium overrun. This allocation is used to finance the administrative staff of the Secretariat. The financial resources available under the Overhead Trust Fund were not adequate to fully cover the approved expenditure requirements for the period. A comprehensive analysis of the funding gap has been transmitted to the CMS Secretariat. Due to the unpredictable nature of the PSC income, UNEP continues to advise the CMS Secretariat to fund fixed long-term costs, such as administrative staff salaries, from the core budget and other sources of income.

41. Settlement of contributions: The UN Secretariat adopted the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) in 2014. Umoja⁴ implements strict IPSAS-based liquidity management, which requires that cash be available for the settlement of payments. Parties are therefore encouraged to settle assessed contributions in full early in each year to guarantee continuity of operation. Those Parties that are in arrears are requested to engage with the CITES Secretariat on settlement modalities.
42. Payment of Contributions through the UN Development Programme (UNDP): In June 2024, UNON issued a circular on Guidelines for Depositing Small Value Contributions (not exceeding USD 50,000) through UNDP Country Offices. The Guidelines have been prepared primarily to accommodate low value contributions from MEAs administered by UNEP. Where a contribution cannot be remitted to the recipient via regular avenues such as electronic funds transfer (EFT) or check, the Guidelines provide for an alternative option for payment of low value contributions.
43. Partnership Policy: On 29 June 2024, the UNEP Executive Director issued a new Partnership Policy, effective from 29 September 2024, applicable to all Partner Categories and Partnership Modalities across UNEP and UNEP-administered MEA Secretariats. The Policy establishes the overarching principles and governance framework for partnership management, while the accompanying procedures set out the operational steps. Half-way into the transition period, following constructive and comprehensive feedback from UNEP and UNEP-administered MEA Secretariats, a first package of simplified, risk-contextualized measures for implementation partnerships was endorsed by the Executive Director on 8 September 2025 and became effective on 15 October 2025. These interim measures streamline due diligence and risk assessment requirements, introduce a USD 200,000 threshold for mandatory contextualized risk assessment, reinforce reliance on UN mutual recognition tools such as HACT, and simplify validation processes through the UNEP Partners Portal, as well as reactivating the partnership focus group consisting of dedicated MEA representatives. This process is harmonized with the overall efforts at UN and UNEP to simplify and streamline partnership procedures. Under the simplified measures, UNEP-administered MEA Secretariats may also maintain or develop tailored procedures where justified by their mandates and operational models, provided they remain consistent with the UNEP Partnership Policy and its simplification framework.
44. Human Resources: UNEP provides guidance and support in implementing best practices in human resources management, fostering a culture of accountability and transparency. In the year 2025, UNEP assisted CMS in processing numerous position management requests (including creation, reclassification, and extension of position validity), requests related to recruitment (including approval of job openings, job advertisements and selections for different staff and non-staff categories); and requests related to personnel administration (including processing of lateral assignments, transfers, resignations, separations, special post allowance and exceptional extensions

⁴ Umoja is the United Nations' Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) platform used to manage the organization's financial, human resources, and administrative processes efficiently.

- of Consultants and Individual Contractors (CICs) and temporary appointments). UNEP also provides oversight support for UN Secretariat hired CICs' contracts issued for the CMS Secretariat within the same period, ensuring such recruitments are conducted in accordance with UN and UNEP regulations and rules.
45. In 2024-October 2025, UNEP assisted the CMS Secretariat in processing 165 requests, 23 of these were related to position management (including creation, reclassification and extension of position validity), 117 requests related to recruitment (including job advertisements and selections for different staff and non-staff categories) and 25 requests related to personnel administration (including processing of lateral assignments, transfers, resignations, separations, special post allowance and exceptional extensions of Consultants and Individual Contractors (CICs) and temporary appointments). UNEP has oversight for over 55 UN Secretariat hired CIC contracts issued for the CMS Secretariat within the same period.
 46. UNEP also provides the CMS Secretariat with an HR dashboard and monthly staffing report. These new data management tools, launched in December 2022, enhance management information and facilitate decision making, enable monitoring of new trends/challenges/opportunities, tracking challenges in a transparent way, and strengthening corporate oversight and accountability systems.
 47. Furthermore, UNEP has a Service Level Agreement with the UN Office at Nairobi (UNON) for the provision of administrative support functions, including direct assistance to CMS Secretariat personnel. Such assistance includes some HR, payroll and other centralized related issues.
 48. The UNEP MEAs Unit under the Corporate Services Division provided back up to Fund Management Officers (FMOs) during leaves of absence in 2025. This included day-to-day certification and approval of all administrative matters and specific, tailored support to the CMS Secretariat.
 49. At the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, Parties were invited "to consider the feasibility of financing Junior Professional Officers and/or providing gratis personnel or technical experts to the Secretariat to increase its capacity".⁵ The Junior Professional Officers (JPO) Programme would enable young professionals, funded by their Governments, to support CMS Secretariat activities and can also serve as a tool to enhance geographical diversity, with some donors.
 50. UNEP, which coordinates the JPO programme for all UNEP-affiliated entities, issued calls for JPO proposals to all UNEP Directors as well as Heads of UNEP-administered MEA Secretariats including the CMS Secretariat. All proposals were uploaded on the UNEP JPO Portal for the Member States to review.
 51. Oversight: The UNEP Operations and Risk Management Unit (ORMU) in the Corporate Services Division provides coordination services between UNEP and various audit, evaluation, and oversight bodies such as the Board of Auditors, the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), and the Joint Inspection Unit for streamlined and efficient ongoing audit reviews and to ensure timely implementation of audit recommendations. OIOS audited the CMS secretariat in 2024 which resulted in 5 recommendations, none of which were critical.

⁵ Budget for 2024-2026 and Work Programme for the Intersessional Period between COP14 and COP 15 (unep/cms/cop14/doc.13.2/rev.1), resolution on financial and administrative matters

52. The recommendations requested the CMS Secretariat to (1) ensure enhanced completeness and accuracy of documentation for meetings and conferences; (2) develop an action plan to increase the number of Parties to the Convention; (3) develop an action plan to implement the Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) and Internal Control Policy; (4) explore payment options for unpaid contributions; and (5) assess the necessity and scope of a potential evaluation policy. As of 30 November 2025, the status of the recommendations is that auditors have confirmed that all recommendations have been closed-as-implemented.
53. Enterprise Risk Management (ERM): UNEP has started work on implementation of the United Nations Secretariat ERM policy and framework, its monitoring and development. Initial consultations between CMS Secretariat and ORMU were conducted.
54. ORMU conducted an Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) workshop from 23 to 25 June 2025 in Bonn, Germany, which resulted in the preparation of the CMS Secretariat Risk Register and associated treatment and response plans. Risk Focal Points at the CMS Secretariat were trained, and all CMS staff participated in risk training and assessments during the three-day workshop. The resulting Risk Register contains one high, one medium and one low risk, for which treatment and response plans were drafted. The CMS Secretariat is responsible for monitoring implementation, reporting, and updating the Risk Register.
55. Legal: The UNEP Legal Unit in the Corporate Services Division provides corporate legal advice and solutions, reviews standard and non- standard legal instruments, drafts legal instruments as appropriate; represents the Organization/Administration before the Management Advice and Evaluation Section (MAES) and the United Nations Dispute Tribunal (UNDT) and provides advice on issues pertaining to liability/indemnity, privileges and immunities, interpretation and application of constitutive, legislative and other instruments governing UNEP's programmes of work with various Implementing Partners, amongst other things. The Unit continues to deliver reliable and consistent advice on the use of legal instruments, non-standard contribution agreements with donors, and contractual modalities for engaging with Implementing Partners as requested by the CMS Secretariat. In particular, the Legal Unit assisted the CMS Secretariat in (a) reviewed matters which concerned the interpretation and application of UNEP's internal policies (i.e. Delegation of Authority Policy and Framework); and (b) provided relevant legal advice on global frameworks.
56. Supply Chain Management: The UNEP Procurement and Partnerships Unit in the Corporate Services Division facilitates the effective provision of goods and services to meet the organization's needs. All low value acquisitions are managed by CMS Secretariat directly. All other acquisitions raised by CMS Secretariat requisitioners come to the Unit for review and internal execution or routing to service providers in line with the Delegation of Authorities for procurement.
57. In the year 2024 and until November 2025, UN Secretariat procurement teams processed 76 purchase orders (POs) for the CMS Secretariat. Of these, approximately 50 % were processed by the UNEP Procurement and Partnerships Unit. The main supply chain services support for CMS Secretariat is provided by UNEP Procurement and Partnerships Unit that can further engage with two designated service providers, UNON and the United Nations Office in Geneva.

58. Support to Multilateral Environmental Agreements: During the reporting period, the UNEP MEAs Unit in the Corporate Services Division provided support in areas such as human resources, finance, legal services, supply chain management, ICT, audit coordination, risk management, and treasury functions for multilateral funds. Key achievements include:
- a) Developing Standard Operating Procedures to streamline administrative processes.
 - b) Coordinating with UNON and UNEP to issue guidelines for depositing low-value contributions via UNDP Country Offices.
 - c) Initiating a UNEP-wide process to ensure MEA Secretariats are consulted in the development of relevant corporate policies.
 - d) Organizing quarterly meetings and sharing weekly administrative tips with Administrative/Fund Management Officers of MEA Secretariats.
 - e) Hosting a four-day training in May 2025 on HR, finance, and legal topics, delivered by UNEP Corporate Services experts. Staff from the CITES Secretariat actively participated. As a result, MEA Secretariat staff are now better equipped to manage administrative functions, enhancing collaboration and knowledge sharing.
59. The UN Secretary-General reforms on management have been an effective instrument for improving efficiency and effectiveness of administration and engagement across the United Nations. The UNEP Executive Director reaffirms the commitment and engagement in the UN reform processes and wishes to assure parties that through the engagement and oversight of the Division of Corporate Services, the CMS Secretariat has an appropriate and effective avenue for having their perspectives and needs included in policy decisions as well as benefitting from efficiency gains introduced in a manner which allows the secretariat to maintain its focus on the Programme of Work including deliverables outlined by the meeting of parties. In pursuit of this goal, the UNEP Deputy Executive Director issued a memorandum in August 2024 requesting that all UNEP Divisions and Offices consistently consult with, and where applicable, include/refer to UNEP- administered MEA Secretariats in the context of proposals for new or revised policies, guidelines, or manuals, the establishment of working groups, focal point networks, and trainings of programmatic and administrative relevance. This was reissued in April 2025.