



**CONVENTION ON  
MIGRATORY  
SPECIES**

UNEP/CMS/Resolution 10.12 (Rev.COP15)  
Original: English

**MIGRATORY FRESHWATER FISH**

Adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting (Campo Grande, March 2026)

*Considering* that the CMS Samarkand Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2024-2032 foresees under Goal 1 that the conservation status of migratory species is improved, including that by 2029 all species with an unfavourable status are listed and regularly reviewed (Targets 1.1 and 1.2), and by 2032 their conservation status has improved (Target 1.3),

*Further considering* that the CMS Samarkand Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2024-2032 foresees under Goal 2 that the habitats and ranges of migratory species are maintained and restored, supporting their connectivity, including that by 2029 all-important habitats are identified, assessed and monitored (Target 2.1), and by 2032 these habitats are protected, effectively conserved and restored while habitat loss, degradation and fragmentation are reduced (Targets 2.2 and 2.3), and additionally under Goal 3 illegal and unsustainable take and overexploitation (Target 3.1), direct mortality caused from human-made infrastructure (Target 3.2), pollution and poisoning affecting migratory species and their habitats (Target 3.3), impacts of climate change on migratory species and their habitats (Target 3.4), and the negative impacts of invasive alien species (Target 3.5),

*Recognizing* that bycatch and hydropower dam construction constitutes a significant threat to many migratory freshwater fish species, and that targeted action is required to address this issue,

*Further recognizing* the obligations of the international community to conserve, protect and manage migratory freshwater fish as underpinned by, inter alia:

- a) CBD Decision 15/4 on the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, in particular Target 2 to ensure that at least 30 per cent of areas of degraded terrestrial, inland water, and marine and coastal ecosystems are under effective restoration and Target 3 to conserve at least 30 per cent of terrestrial and inland water areas, and of marine and coastal areas, as well as CBD Decision VII/4 on the revised programme of work of biological diversity of inland water ecosystems, and in particular goal 1.3 to enhance the conservation status of inland water biological diversity through rehabilitation and restoration of degraded ecosystems and the recovery of threatened species,
- b) CITES Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. COP17) sets out a number of conservation management measures for sturgeon and paddlefish, including fishery management programmes, improving legislation, promoting regional agreements, development of marking systems, aquaculture, a universal caviar labelling system, and the control of illicit trade, as well as all species listed on CITES Appendix I-III, including the COP19 listing of seven new freshwater stingray species on Appendix II, and

- c) the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, dealing mainly with good practice and policy development for freshwater and marine fisheries as outlined in its General Principles in Article 6, also giving recommendations for transboundary cooperation, inter alia, in Article 6.12 and Article 7.1.3,

*Recalling* the previous work undertaken under CMS on plastic pollution in Asian river systems, including the assessment of risks to migratory species in the Mekong and Ganga Rivers (UNEP/CMS/Inf.13.11/Rev.1), and recognizing its relevance for migratory freshwater fish,

*Acknowledging* the work of IUCN in assessing the status of freshwater fish, including the identification of Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs),

*Recognizing* that migratory strategies of inland fishes are diverse, with some species migrating wholly within freshwater, others moving between freshwater and marine ecosystems, and many species exhibiting multiple strategies whereby sub-populations in different river-reaches undertake distinct longitudinal or lateral movements,

*Further recognizing* the importance of small-scale and artisanal fisheries and the need for integration with participatory management instruments,

*Appreciating* that while current efforts focus primarily on longitudinal migration, in many rivers long-distance downstream larval 'drift' and shorter-distance lateral movements are also essential to survival,

*Recalling* that in line with Article II of the Convention, Range States should take action to conserve, protect and manage migratory species, and should endeavour to conclude Agreements to promote the conservation and management of migratory species,

*Aware* of the significant and continuing decline of freshwater fish populations through a wide range of threats, including overfishing, habitat destruction, invasive alien species, pollution and barriers to migration resulting in the loss of connectivity between critical habitats,

*Taking note* of the deficient information on the conservation status, migratory behaviour and ecology of freshwater fish and the need for further research, and

*Noting further* the importance of cooperation between Range States in furthering research, awareness raising and transboundary management of migratory freshwater fish, and that these activities could greatly strengthen conservation outcomes for this group of species,

*The Conference of the Parties to the  
Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals*

1. *Takes note* of the *Global Assessment of Migratory Freshwater Fishes* which can be found as Annex 1 to UNEP/CMS/COP15/Doc.25.6.1 and under [www.cms.int/document/freshwater-fish](http://www.cms.int/document/freshwater-fish) and the *Assessment of Potential Candidate Freshwater Fish Species of the Amazon Basin for Listing on the Convention of Migratory Species Appendix II* which can be found under the same website above;

2. *Requests* Parties and invites non-Parties to strengthen measures to protect migratory freshwater fish species against threats, including habitat destruction, habitat fragmentation, overfishing, bycatch, invasive alien species, pollution and barriers to migration, such as the creation of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures in the upper reaches and lower floodplains that are important for the feeding and spawning cycles of wild migratory fish populations;
3. *Further requests* Parties to improve the monitoring of freshwater fish in order to assess the level of vulnerability of each population according to IUCN Red List criteria and to work collaboratively to improve knowledge of transboundary migratory fish in order better to identify species that would benefit from international cooperation;
4. *Urges* Parties to consider proposing for listing those species highlighted in the review as threatened, as well as other species that would benefit from international cooperation;
5. *Calls on* Parties to engage in international cooperation on migratory freshwater fish, which would focus on CMS-listed fish species, at subregional or regional levels, noting that this cooperation should, inter alia:
  - a) involve governments where appropriate, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and local communities;
  - b) identify and implement effective measures, as appropriate, to mitigate threats such as habitat degradation, barriers to migration, bycatch and overexploitation; and
  - c) identify viable and practical alternatives to uses of endangered migratory freshwater fish while recognizing the cultural and economic importance of these species for some communities, and ensuring that use is sustainable;
6. *Requests* Parties to promote the sharing of data with other Range States and/or international bodies on transboundary freshwater migratory fish species, including current abundance, fish ecology and habitat degradation, especially for those species identified on national, regional or global red lists;
7. *Further requests* Parties to take actions with respect to hydroelectric and other dams to compensate the effects of barriers in rivers, such as the creation of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures (key habitats such as free flowing rivers) in the upper and lower floodplains that are important for the feeding and spawning cycles of wild migratory fish populations; and
8. *Instructs* the Secretariat to cooperate with FAO, Ramsar and CITES as well as with Range States of migratory freshwater fish with a view to enhancing protection, conservation and management of these species.