

# Bridging Climate Action and Conservation: Opportunities for Migratory Species under the UNFCCC Frameworks



*Julia Weatherhogg , Programme Officer*  
UNFCCC Secretariat, CRFS Alliance

# Interlinkages between Climate Change and Migratory Species



## Climate Change Impacts on Migratory Species

- Habitat loss
- Migration and breeding changes
- Food scarcity
- Disrupted Migratory Movement
- Breeding disruptions
- Increased mortality



## Climate Action Impacts on Migratory Species

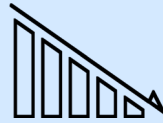
- Habitat restoration
- Pollution Reduction
- Grassland Conservation
- Renewable energy risks
- Carbon offset risk



## Ecological Importance of these Species

- Pollination
- Nutrient cycling
- Carbon Sequestration
- Pest control
- Indicators of Ecosystem Health

# Interlinkages between Climate Change and Migratory Species

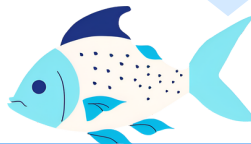


“The Living Planet Index shows an average 73% decline in monitored vertebrate wildlife populations (mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles and fish) in just 50 years (1970-2020).”

“22% of the 1,189 CMS-listed species are threatened with extinction, and 44% are showing population declines.”



“Nearly all (97 per cent) of CMS-listed fish are threatened with extinction.”



# Interlinkages between Climate Change and Migratory Species



**Hawksbill Turtle**



**Arctic Caribou**



**Monarch Butterfly**



**Dugong**

**Current Status**

The hawksbill turtle nesting females on Milman Island, Great Barrier Reef, declined by **57% from 1990 to 2018**.

Arctic caribou populations have declined by **65%** in the last 2-3 decades.

The western population faces near-extinction, dropping **99.9% from 10 million to 1,914 (1980s–2021)**, while the eastern population declined **84% (1996–2014)**.

Dugongs are listed as vulnerable to extinction by the IUCN, with their population **declining by at least 20%** (regional variations) over the past 90 years (as of 2005).

**Climate Change Impact**

Habitat loss from rising sea levels, coral bleaching, and skewed sex ratios.

Habitat loss from permafrost thaw, vegetation changes, and extreme weather.

Habitat loss from shrinking alpine meadows; disrupted migration cues.

Seagrass loss from warming seas, storms, and coastal pollution.

**Role in Climate**

Maintains coral reefs; species diversity.

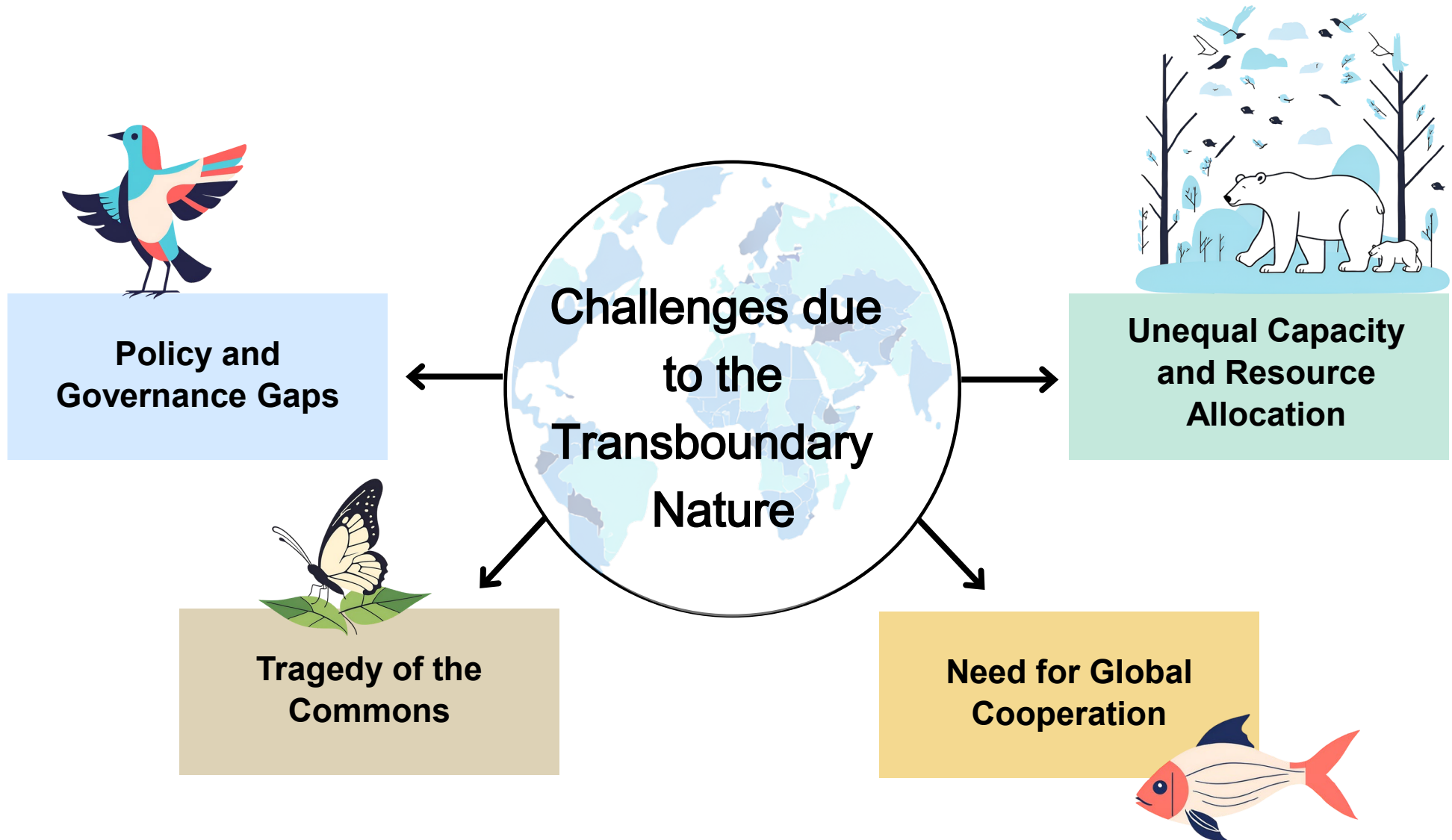
Caribou enrich tundra soil with nitrogen and serve as key prey for Arctic carnivores.

Aid pollination, indicate environmental health, and their decline disrupts ecosystems and food chains.

Dugongs support seagrass health, aiding carbon storage, while serving as prey for sharks and orcas.



# Climate Change and Migratory Species Conservation are Transboundary Phenomena



# Synergies with UNFCCC

---

## Relevance of the GBF to CMS

The Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) aligns closely with CMS priorities, reinforcing habitat protection, ecological connectivity, species conservation, and pollution reduction for migratory species. CMS plays a crucial role in translating GBF goals into actionable conservation strategies at the global, regional, and national levels. Effective cooperation between CMS, CBD, and other MEAs will be essential to ensuring that migratory species benefit from the GBF's ambitious 2030 targets.



## COP (UNFCCC) as a Forum for Dialogue and Decision

Initiatives like the Ocean for Climate Declaration, Eastern Tropical Pacific Marine Corridor, Global Fund for Coral Reefs, & Great Blue Wall Initiative



# Synergies with UNFCCC

## COP 30 Ambitions

Brazil will showcase its efforts to protect the Amazon rainforest, which is vital for regulating the climate globally. The Amazon provides critical habitat for migratory species, such as the osprey and fork-tailed flycatcher. Brazil aims to showcase its bioeconomy model (G20), which promotes carbon-neutral, Indigenous-inclusive, and economically viable conservation strategies.



## NDCs and Biodiversity

NDCs explicitly referring to Indigenous peoples and other local communities grew by 88%. More NDCs now include wetlands (51 vs. 32), mangroves (43 vs. 29), and marine ecosystems (60 vs. 47), with some setting conservation targets.



## Climate Resilient Food Systems Alliance

At COP29, the CRFS Alliance highlights food systems' role in tackling climate change, biodiversity loss, and land degradation under Rio Conventions.



# Synergies with UNFCCC

---

## Nairobi Work Program

The Nairobi Work Programme promotes nature-based solutions, coastal adaptation, and strategic partnerships for climate resilience and biodiversity protection.



## Role of Indigenous Peoples

CMS COP14 (2024) and the Paris Agreement (mentioned five times) affirm Indigenous knowledge in conservation, protection of migratory species and climate action. The LCIPP empowers Indigenous communities, who steward 80% of forest biodiversity, to shape climate action within the UNFCCC process (**Inuit Arctic Policy- special protection for threatened and endangered species**).



---

**Thank  
you!**

