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MIGRATORY  
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**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS ASSESSMENT**

*(Prepared by the Secretariat)*

Summary:

This information document was submitted by the Secretariat in addition to the meeting document “Communications, Outreach and Information Management” ([UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.19](#)).



# Strategic Communications Assessment

Convention on the Conservation of  
Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)

Prepared by Sean Southey

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Green Turtle (?) © Canva.com

## Introduction

This document was prepared by Sean Southey, Communications Consultant to the CMS, with the intention of providing strategic communications advice to support the continued communications efforts of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS). The opinions, comments, and recommendations in this document are thus solely those of the consultant. The document was informed through discussions with CMS partners, other communications officials in the environmental field, two internal half-day workshops with CMS staff, and small group discussions with CMS staff, particularly in the communications team, as well as over 30 years working within the international environmental community.



Mongolian Gazelles © Thomas Müller

## Communication Priorities for CMS

This evaluation process has resulted in a deep respect for the CMS team and the profound need we have for this Convention. More importantly, it has reinforced the need for this Convention to have a strong, focused, and enhanced voice.

We sit at a crossroads at a critical time in human history. We suffer from overlapping environmental crises of biodiversity loss, climate change, and pollution. We need focused and effective efforts by all actors of society to quickly advance a stronger agenda for positive change. The processes associated with UNFCCC COP27 in Sharm el-Sheikh and CBD COP15 in Montreal have recognized the need for a deeper focus on the intersectionality of their missions. Further, recent reports of IPBES and other strategic assessments call for action to address the underlying causes and key drivers and to look at systemic and transformative change.

CMS is a critical actor in these efforts as its mission places it at the very intersection of these global priorities. And it is exactly here that work needs to be done – on the integration – the nexus. CMS is mandated to protect the many endangered and threatened species that migrate across our planet, but it equally has the mission of ensuring connectivity and the protection of the habitats and places associated with these migrations. Working on the front line of conservation efforts for many of our most iconic and important species – terrestrial, aquatic, and avian – CMS is well positioned to demonstrate the integrated efforts required; to provide thought leadership on emerging issues and critical challenges; to catalyze strategic partnerships to ensure needed food, habitat, and security; and, to deepen public and political support for many threatened species as they move across our increasingly fragile planet.

It is not enough for CMS to quietly undertake its mission. We need to understand the challenges migratory species face. We need to enact solutions. We need Parties to take the necessary actions to implement CMS. We need new Parties, partnerships, and programs. And all of this requires effective communications. And this communication work requires financial resources, staff, in-kind support, and prioritization by the Parties and the whole CMS team and Family.

To succeed in its conservation mandate, CMS and its Parties it is recommended that strategic communication be recognized as a cross-cutting priority that directly supports CMS's priorities, including:

- Supporting the conservation of migratory species and their habitats through increased awareness-raising amongst Parties, partners, and the public.
- Supporting implementation of the Convention through more efficient information and knowledge sharing.
- Reinforcing CMS's reputation amongst the environmental community as the leading, credible, and neutral United Nations authority for the conservation of migratory species.

With the new Global Biodiversity Framework, the opening of the UNFCCC processes to include biodiversity and nature-based solutions more deeply, and increased scientific and policy attention to the issues of key drivers, migration, habitats, and connectivity, CMS has a strategic opportunity to advance its mission by working closely with key players on priority topics to:

1. **Highlight the Achievements and Effectiveness of CMS in the Successful Conservation of Migratory Species** - by raising awareness of the successful examples of international cooperation and conservation actions that are taking place in the framework of CMS as the leading international authority on the migration of species; by consistently communicating CMS's vision, mission, and niche; and by communicating the collective decisions made by countries and their actions to implement them, the adoption of international guidelines, and capacity-building initiatives underway.
2. **Convey Reasons Why Migratory Species and the Phenomenon of Animal Migration Matter** – including the different values attached to migratory avian, terrestrial, and aquatic species and their significance for biological diversity, their role in ecosystem services, and relevance for sustainable development - to generate interest in and attention to the conservation of migratory species, and to increase the level of priority given to conservation of migratory species on the political agenda (both nationally and internationally);
3. **Draw Attention to Threats to Migratory Species** – such as illegal killing, unsustainable harvest or hunting, poisoning, habitat loss and fragmentation, pollution, and climate change – and outline steps that can be taken to ensure that any use is legal and sustainable, and to address other threats.
4. **Demonstrate and Advocate for an Integrated Approach to Conservation** – that acknowledges and builds on the fact that species, habitats, connectivity, climate change and climate solutions, security, and conflict are all interconnected and thus need integrated and cross-agency solutions.

Utilizing data-driven, thoughtful, effective, and results-based communications on the above issues, CMS can advance its mission by:

- Acquiring new Parties, partners, and collaborators.
- Ensuring maximum impact from the commitments, programs, and efforts made by existing Parties and donors.

- Engaging partners and the environmental community at large to mobilize further resources for the conservation of migratory species and their associated habitats.

Together, this can help avoid the extinction and further decline of migratory species and their habitats.



Purple Heron © Canva.com

## Communication Challenges

In undertaking this assessment and making strategic recommendations, it was essential to understand the currently existing "communication tensions" being experienced by CMS. In recognizing tensions, one can design solutions that optimize, to the extent possible, a path for the organization. All systems have tensions. They always exist, and they are real.

Tensions often appear as contradictions - a pull in two different directions. Perhaps even irreconcilable differences. Yet, there are always two separate sides, directions, pulls - in a system. The intention of this report is to articulate these tensions; analyze their impact on the communication effectiveness of CMS; and then map out a way forward that adapts behaviors considering the tensions. Often, there is a natural tendency to say, let us move completely to one side or the other. However, in real life, that is generally not an option, and compromise provides the best route forward. The following outlines the key "communication tensions" identified.



## The Mandate Challenge

The mandate of CMS is unique and extensive – addressing potentially all migratory species and their habitats around the globe. However, it is sometimes perceived as a "small" Convention. The wide diversity of species, landscapes, habitats, and related environmental topics it has to address can detract from a sense of coherence. In addition, the initial Parties to CMS were concentrated in Africa and Europe, while CMS now has Parties from all over the world, including most of Latin America, and is increasing its signatories from Asia and other parts of the world. Rather than "small," CMS should be viewed as focused. It is important to make this distinction clear to the wider environmental community. CMS may have a complex and diverse mandate – yet it is uniquely "strategically focused" – to conserve one of the most important natural assets of our planet, our migratory species and their habitats.



## The Hydra Challenge

CMS is an extremely complex organization, hosting a many-headed "Family" of 7 Agreements and 19 MOUs; connected to UNEP both through UNEP's provision of the administrative platform of CMS as well as being part of the broader set of UN actors in the environmental arena; and regularly managing dozens of issues, partners, publications, and on-going species conservation efforts. This "many-headed" and "many-faced" aspect of CMS makes it hard to surface a single voice, spokesperson, message, or brand. It can make it difficult to prioritize and deliver against multiple mandates. With "**many heads**", CMS needs to carefully manage communications so that the many voices are seen as connected and coherent, that they speak with a consistent message, and that they are co-branded in a fashion that builds and empowers the entire community. Creating that coherent voice is the CMS Hydra Challenge.



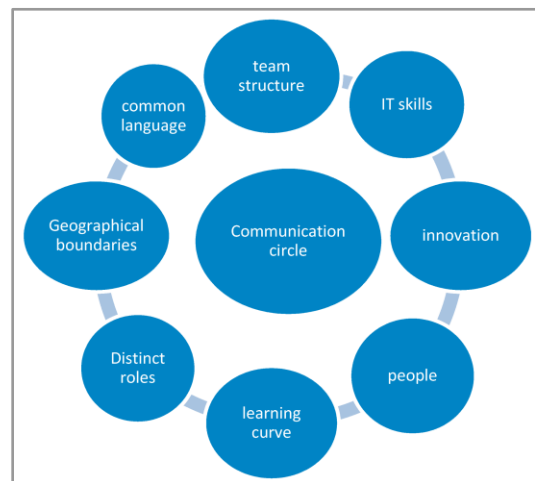
## The Staffing Challenge

CMS has a small communications team named IMCA which stands for the Information Management, Communication, and Awareness-Raising Unit. The **small IMCA team**, with significant resource constraints, is stretched to provide support to the aspects of work and the many "heads" of CMS. The problem is confounded by having a three or four-person team divide its time with a 2/3 allocated to CMS and the last 1/3 allocated to AEWA (Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds). Further, the IMCA team is expected to provide ad-hoc support to other members of the CMS Family which are part of or supported by the CMS Secretariat directly or indirectly. To overcome this staffing challenge, the core team of IMCA will need to be strengthened. However, this is not alone sufficient. A reexamination of the joint CMS/AEWA communications unit approach might be strategic to determine whether it really delivers the anticipated economies of scale and enhanced collaboration upon which it was founded. Regardless, to overcome the shortage of dedicated communications staff, additional efforts will also be required to equip and empower more members of the CMS team and Family to be effective, consistent, and responsible communicators.



## The Systems Challenge

In a complex work environment, one of the hardest things to do is create consistent and clear systems and structures that are adhered to. However, good processes are a critical tool for effective communications as they guide and make efficient "good behaviors." The challenge typically manifests in a few dimensions: 1. people are too busy to design effective systems; 2. other team members see little value in the new systems, and they are not followed; 3. the systems are too onerous and/or complex to increase efficiency; 4. random and unexpected activities disrupt carefully planned actions; and, 5. "management" does not create a culture where the systems are perceived as important. For CMS to further professionalize communication efforts, given its large mandate and limited team, it will need further effective systems that empower and motivate the entire team to engage and support internal and external communications. Regular meetings, clear guidance, annual communication goals and targets, and baseline metrics will all aid in creating an effective CMS-wide culture of effective communication.



## The Funding Challenge

Migratory species are being lost and continue to face increased risks due to overexploitation, human infringement on critical habitats, pollution, and climate change. For CMS to take on these growing challenges, it needs to strengthen its Secretariat and its activities, which will require more resources. Of particular importance, it needs more resources dedicated to communications, public engagement, and outreach. This increased support can come in many forms - new staff, financial contributions from Parties, external resources (either direct or in-kind), and partnership activities that support communications. For this investment to happen, CMS needs to demonstrate the importance of these activities. Visible and meaningful communication wins will help shift the perceived effectiveness of CMS's communication work and allow for a new era of growth and impact.





Dugong © F. Kennedy

## Communication Pathways for Success

For each challenge identified, there is a way forward that minimizes negative impact and maximizes the chances of success. The next section outlines potential routes to success and works to capture concrete recommendations for the consideration of the CMS team.

## Overcoming The Mandate Challenge

In responding to this collection and diverse array of "tensions," it is critical to address the first challenge – The Mandate Challenge – and then build from there. Without clarity on the mandate, especially by outside partners, the other challenges will be much harder to address.

As noted, on the one hand, CMS has an expansive mandate, focusing on all migratory species and their habitats around the world. Yet, this mandate is also very specialized and focused – addressing the loss of biodiversity and related



environmental challenges through the natural phenomenon of migration. Added to this is the complexity of the CMS Family and the wide diversity of species, landscapes, habitats, and related environmental topics it must address, and the fact that the membership of CMS has some gaps, particularly in parts of Asia. It is important to address this challenge directly and make a perceived "weakness" into a clear strength.

CMS can be consistently branded as  
**"Strategically focused."**

This positioning will enhance global appreciation for the importance of CMS's work, deepen the potential for strategic collaborations, and help focus global environmental efforts such that they align in conserving and protecting migratory species.

This brand positioning of CMS can be achieved through a communication plan that calls for consistent, high-level, and clearly articulating messages from CMS. With clarity on the mission and key messages, it will be more feasible to roll out a range of communications activities, from higher-level "branded" annual products and publications to external events to everyday social media posts - that builds an understanding that CMS is an important actor, with a clear focus, in the environment, biodiversity and climate change arenas.

To create this coherent brand both internally and externally, one needs to understand, define, and promote CMS's unique niche. This assessment endorses the following niche for CMS:

*CMS is the leading international authority on the conservation of migratory species, their habitats, and their migratory routes. It leverages its unique role, mandated by UN treaty law, to ensure that CMS Parties, partners, the conservation community, and the public are acting collectively to conserve and protect migratory species and the habitats they require for their intrinsic value within the Earth's ecosystems as well as for the benefits they provide to humanity.*

There are several critical dimensions that add critical texture and depth to understanding this niche. ***It is recommended that a "CMS Message Map" be created that helps internal staff and the CMS Family to position CMS effectively and consistently. The Message Map would include high-level messaging but will also allow for more detailed messaging on issues of importance.*** For example, the top-level information could include the following:

- CMS is a Multilateral Environmental Agreement in accordance with intergovernmental treaty laws and is legally binding.
- CMS is the only intergovernmental treaty organization or MEA established under the United Nations (UN) that addresses migratory species and their habitats.
- CMS works to elevate the policy relevance of migratory species and their habitat conservation both nationally and internationally. It is an innovative and effective tool for protecting migrating species, and it complements other global Agreements and Conventions, especially those working on issues related to biodiversity, species, and/or habitat conservation - including the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), and the Ramsar Convention.
- CMS is "strategically focused," and while animal migration is a widely known, and appreciated phenomenon, only CMS works globally to highlight the value of migration - not just as a natural cyclical

phenomenon of life on Earth, but also why and how it benefits humanity. Moving beyond the stories of migration to stories of humanity and sustainable development is important for strategic communications.

- CMS brings rigor to understanding the processes, challenges, risks, and solutions associated with migratory species and their habitats.
- CMS acts as a global convener, planner, and activator. This special niche of CMS is its ability to get countries and the wider international conservation community to work together effectively to conserve and protect migratory species.
- Cooperation under CMS is based on the recognition by CMS Parties that the investment in one country is often not sufficient to ensure the future survival of these migrating travelers and that international cooperation is essential to address the numerous threats migratory animals face along their migration routes, which often span multiple countries, continents, and oceans. The threats they face during their recurrent migrations are often the same global threats and pressures affecting a wide range of species as well as people. Effective international protection entails conserving the wetland and other habitats and ecosystems migratory species depend on along their regular migration routes.
- CMS has a unique ability to help influence the sustainable use of species that migrate. Parties to CMS recognize that migratory species are valuable - to people and the Earth - for different reasons. For example, many species act as a source of food and income and provide us with many services, including cultural, recreational, or scientific enrichment. They are also a shared resource and indicator of the biological and genetic diversity of our Earth, providing ecological services in the habitats and ecosystems along their migration routes. By respecting these various values, CMS helps to find mutually beneficial solutions for maintaining healthy populations of endangered migratory species while ensuring that any use is sustainable and does not jeopardize their long-term survival.
- Migratory species are truly global in nature. They touch all landscapes, all countries, and all cultures. They literally transverse our planet – across landscapes, under seas and oceans, and through complex flyways. As such, CMS has a critical role in the global processes that help prevent and reverse biodiversity loss. Moving beyond the CMS Conference of the Parties processes, CMS can also play an essential role at the CBD COPs, the UNFCCC COPs, and other critical policy and program settings.

A framework for a CMS Message Map is included in Annex 1. ***It is recommended that this framework is further developed in a participatory manner with the full team to enrich the substance of the CMS Message Map, to create ownership within the team, and to create comfort and familiarity with the new tool.***

To help ensure this message is communicated effectively, it will be important for CMS's communication products to be tailored to each of its critical audiences. ***It is recommended that communications are tailored more specifically to the following key target audiences: 1. governments; 2. key environmental organizations working on environment, biodiversity, climate change, and species; 3. the science community; 4. the public; and 5. policymakers outside of environment and biodiversity-related ministries, such as finance, economy, energy, interior, agriculture, etc.***

Annex 2 provides some further details on each of the key target audiences. It also provides an overview of key communication channels and opportunities that can be utilized to meet these audiences, such as the CMS website, traditional press and media, social media, newsletters, special days, campaigns, conferences, and events.

IMCA is already working to enhance the understanding of the complex mandate of CMS. But taking the time to produce simple explanatory media pieces could greatly add to the overall understanding of the CMS Family. ***It is recommended that CMS create a series of informational pieces in different formats (written, animation, video, infographics, etc.) that clearly outline the overall mission of CMS.*** A good example of an asset like this is the

informational piece created by the UN System Staff College on CMS [here](#). These foundational communication pieces are essential for scaffolding people's understanding of CMS and could be used consistently in presentations by staff, social media, and for discussions with strategic partners. Work on CMS's identity will need to be ongoing and iterative, responding to new opportunities and challenges as they arise. However, continued focus is essential to ensure that CMS communication activities build, rather than detract, towards coherence and a more comprehensive understanding of the overall work and impact.

## Overcoming The Hydra Challenge

As a framework Convention, CMS encompasses several instruments: 7 agreements, 19 MOUs, and 4 or more Special Species Initiatives. Each of these "instruments" has its own name, mission, mandate, identity, and overall brand. In addition, some of the independent agreements are not even co-located with the CMS Secretariat, nor supported directly by the CMS Secretariat, but rather by independent Secretariats (for example, ACAP, Wadden Sea Seals and ACCOBAMS). Two of the Agreements, AEWA and EUROBATS, have their Secretariats collocated with CMS in Bonn and are more closely associated with UNEP.



Annex 4 provides a more comprehensive listing of these entities. This "many-headed" and "many-faced" aspect of the CMS makes it hard to surface a single voice, spokesperson, message, or brand.

This assessment is working from the strong belief that "brand" matters - that the way you communicate, build and curate your "look and feel", share your content and engage with your constituencies, all impact your ability to deliver against your mission. A coherent and thoughtful "brand" across the CMS Family would:

- Enhance the likelihood that migratory species are protected.
- Improve the recognition of CMS, the CMS Family and the Parties.
- Create a more consistent, positive, and trusted response to CMS and the CMS Family among decision-makers, partners, and the public.
- Support efforts to increase CMS funding, partnerships, and strategic collaborations.
- Inspire employees - as most staff need more than just work, they need something to work towards.
- Add clarity and focus to the work of employees, partners and Parties.
- Enhance long-term sustainability of efforts as the additive impacts across the CMS Family can be better recognized.

In short, more consistency and coherence can help ensure that the CMS 'speaks' to a partner, a Party, a collaborator, or an individual in such a way that encourages the protection of migratory species and the connectivity and habitats they require.

The current institutional make-up of the CMS Family leaves many people confused. The risk is that this may make activities, campaigns, projects, research, advice, and conservation efforts appear disjointed and "messy," which can damage reputation and, therefore, longer-term impact.

With careful messaging, the CMS can work to make a potential challenge - the breadth, diversity, and complexity of the CMS Family - into a strength. Many organizations have different dimensions of their work, sub or parallel brands, language differentiation for varying regions, spin-off companies, and/or sub-branded projects and initiatives. The most successful of these groups use specific tactics to pull together the different strands of work.

Several parallel activities are suggested to pursue the goal of deeper brand alignment.

- Work on the CMS identity and brand more clearly articulating what CMS is, what it does, its niche, how it works, and its visual identity.
- Rework the "brand architecture" of the CMS Family into a more coherent win-win brand identity.
- Utilize the CMS Message Map outlined above to create a more clear and consistent narrative to be utilized by the CMS Family.
- Create "Signature" CMS communication initiatives that are catalytic, regular, and impactful and pull together the different interests, needs and voices of the CMS Family.

The **CMS identity** is currently strong. Consultations affirm that CMS is a respected organization with a recognized and understood mandate. However, understanding of the mission seems too often to be limited to the more unidimensional aspect of "migrating species" themselves and often falls short of a deeper understanding of the important role that CMS plays with issues of habitat and connectivity and its advisory and advocate role across other UN environmental processes, such as CITES, CBD, UNFCCC, and IPBES.

Further, the work associated with the many agreements and MOUs clustered around the CMS seems rarely to be understood as being a result of the CMS. Thus, the full impact of the CMS is rarely comprehended.

**Brand Architecture** is one of the biggest challenges that CMS and the CMS Family currently face. CMS itself is sometimes branded alongside UNEP and other times referred to as the "Bonn Convention" to honor the city where it was created. Further, the associated 7 agreements, 19 MOUs, and 4 or more Special Species Initiatives utilize their own identity and use a different approach to co-branding with CMS. The result is a confusing array of brands, all loosely tied together as the "CMS Family." While there is no inherent reason this approach could not continue, there is probably significant value in having a more thoughtful and consistent approach to branding. In addition, there is no consistency in terms of whether and how the UNEP or UN logos are also used and whether those are even the most current logos in use by those entities. In addition, the CMS Secretariat provides the secretariat for only some, not all, of these entities.

Annex 4 includes a summary of the many logos associated with the CMS Family. The figure below presents some of the key logos and logo usage of the CMS Family.





Clearly, this is somewhat overwhelming.

There is a significant potential benefit in a bolder, more integrated brand alignment within the CMS Family. The impact and effectiveness of all the Family members might increase, with the increased brand recognition, by encouraging all Family members to systematically incorporate the CMS logo. In assessing the situation, three paths forward are recognized:

1. Maintain the status quo and let the many "flowers" of CMS "bloom," each in their own way.
2. Create a voluntary co-branding strategy.
3. Create and roll out a new official and mandatory branding strategy for the CMS family.

Looking at how other environmental organizations with multiple separate but connected entities resolve this challenge is informative. The most relevant would seem to be IUCN, which has its core entity, IUCN itself, with its central legal office in Gland, Switzerland, but six branded Commissions, each with their own logos, missions, and communities, as well as over 50 national and regional committees. Historically, each of the IUCN Commissions could use its logo as a stand-alone piece. As each entity grew and efforts were made to deeper align and leverage the efforts under a more unified IUCN umbrella. Joint use first began as a voluntary norm, and then in 2011, the IUCN Council, the governing body of IUCN, required that "Commission logos must always appear with the IUCN logo on all external communications. This applies to all printed, digital and web materials". Thus, the current usage is as shown below:





Evolving since this time, now the over 50 national and regional committees of IUCN use the same approach:



The result has been a more aligned visual identity and mutual benefits in brand positioning, fundraising, and community building.

***It is recommended that a co-branded approach be introduced for the CMS Family. This could be implemented in either a voluntary or required format based on discussions with the CMS Parties and the respective Family members.***

Below are some options for co-branding:

Option 1: Always Accompany Family Logos with CMS logo.



Option 2: Modify Family Logos to include small CMS logo.



Option 3: Always Accompany Family Logos with CMS and UN logo.



Whether these modifications are introduced voluntarily or as a required element of being part of the CMS Family, a style guide would need to be created that clarifies the logo use in specific circumstances. This would include the ideal positioning of the CMS logo in relation to the other Family instruments' logos but would also include support in using the logos against different backgrounds and in different contexts, such as in print or visual media. For several

of these options, it is likely that consultation with the relevant Parties would be required, and approval of the Parties may be necessary.

In closing the branding topic, *it is recommended that CMS consider a redesign of their core logo. While a full rebrand is not needed, as the logo is well known and respected, updating the CMS logo to add more color and a terrestrial species might be strategic.* The rework could also allow for more endangered species and other charismatics to be added. This would reinforce the overall brand identity and mandate of CMS.

The new **CMS Message Map** articulated in the section above would also assist in creating aligned communications. It will act to help create the layered messaging the CMS needs to employ to share its meta-level communication messages while allowing for Family member products, assets, reports, and events to share specific lessons and recommendations.

As well as the messages shared above on CMS itself in the Message Map, to be of value to the CMS family, it would need to include thematic priorities that frame and position the overall mission and mandate of the many entities tied together by the CMS. These would need to include the following:

- **Animal Migration:** The phenomenon of animal migration (species, their habitats, their migration routes, and their movements) needs to be preserved as an invaluable component of nature, contributing to the health and survival of many ecosystems of our planet and to human well-being through economic, health, food, and cultural benefits. As the only global authority, CMS works to preserve one of the natural wonders of the world, animal migration, whether it happens in the immensity of the oceans, steppes, and savannah or through densely inhabited cities and regions.
- **Habitat:** The critical role that habitats play in ensuring safe migrations, including threats and challenges they are facing. It would also need to outline key messages on how to protect habitat and outline strategies that have been successful.
- **Connectivity:** Connectivity is a leading critical issue for CMS. Without habitat connectivity and the ability to safely access migratory routes, migratory species are at risk of numerous threats, including increased conflict for food, shelter, and breeding grounds; genetic weakness; and disruption in traditional paths of migration. Connectivity is at the very core of the unique value proposition of CMS as it speaks to the need for healthy migratory species AND safe and fecund migration routes. In the absence of effective and meaningful connectivity, the migration of animals cannot succeed. CMS recognizes that while safe habitats are essential for migratory species, it is connectivity that brings them together and allows migration to happen.
- **Over-exploitation:** While CITES deals with the illegal trade in wildlife, CMS is mandated to help manage global over-exploitation of migratory wild species that takes place within countries, whether from illegal or unsustainable killing for sport, food, sale, or other reasons. Over-exploitation of a species at any place along its migratory path can impact the overall health and diversity of the species. Thus, CMS provides guidance on the "taking" of wild animals through a holistic lens that cuts across borders, habitat types, and marketplaces.
- **Climate change:** The climate change crisis is a core cross-cutting priority for CMS and the CMS Family. We know that climate change is already harming migratory species and the phenomenon of animal migration. Due to climate change, ranges of migratory species are changing, and CMS instruments may need to adapt to these variations. Human activities because of climate change, including adaptation and mitigation measures, can have an immediate negative impact on migratory species. Thus, the CMS Family is emphasizing the need to: (1) coordinate action to help migratory species adapt to climate

change; (2) ensure that current protected areas and protected area networks for migratory species conservation do not diminish on account of climate change; (3) enhance protected areas and networks to maximize representativeness and thereby increasing their contribution to migratory species conservation; and (4) raise awareness of how the conservation of migratory species can contribute to climate change mitigation, with migratory species providing maintenance services in many of the plant's vital habitats.

- **Pollution:** Increasingly, pollution, including noise, light, and plastic, is impacting oceanic and terrestrial ecosystems. Many migratory species are very sensitive to changes in the health of their migration routes, and increases in noise or light can profoundly impact the health of a species. For example, noise and light can stop breeding, discourage habitat use, create food and water access challenges, and disrupt habitat connectivity and the very ability of species to find and follow their migration routes.

The intention of the CMS Message Map is to help the CMS Family consistently embed these high-level messages in appropriate communications. As new communication assets are created, they can be validated against and grounded in these key messages. Linking these priority key messages to broader global discourse will help position CMS and the CMS Family as crucial partners in realizing sustainable development. Linking these messages to the key findings of other institutions, such as IPBES, CITES, CBD, UNEP, and UNFCCC, will boost exposure and build validation. Additionally, the Message Map should be further fine-tuned to include tailored versions of the high-level messages to the various key target audiences identified in Annex 2 of this document.

## Overcoming The Staffing Challenge

Given the above-mentioned complexity of communicating the work and mission of the CMS, the resources assigned to the communications team are far from optimal. The budget assigned to the IMCA communication team (IMCA stands for the Information Management, Communication, and Awareness-Raising Unit) is less than 25,000 Euros a year, less than 1% of the overall estimated CMS budget of 2.8 million euros. The team is made up of only four people, who divide their time between two significant agendas - the work of CMS and AEWA. A busy agenda and complex reporting lines are further confounded by an overall lack of financial resources for creating communications materials, like high-quality images, animations, and videos.



***To address the challenge of staffing and resource shortage at CMS, it is recommended that the IMCA unit be expanded through new staff, promotions and collaboration with other partners and the CMS Family; that CMS staff-at-large are empowered and equipped to better support communication efforts; and that focused fundraising be undertaken to support the IMCA team and their communication efforts.***

An expanded and equipped team within CMS and the CMS Family would allow for more capacity to vision, create, and distribute excellent communication guidance, products, and expertise that maximize global efforts to conserve and protect migratory species of wild animals and position CMS as a leader in realizing this global priority.

While building the CMS IMCA team will largely depend upon additional resources, strong and strategic management, and the strength of the systems put in place, fostering a CMS "Culture of Communication" will require greater focus as it implies the empowering of key staff with guidance and tools to communicate their work and the CMS mission more effectively. This will have to be a multi-pronged and ongoing initiative. It starts with the recognition that all of CMS's technical teams can support communications and requires a shift in perspective for technical staff to see the communications' value of their work and the value of communications to their impact.

When employees understand the mission of a business and its reason for being, they are more likely to feel that same pride and work in the same direction to achieve the goals the business owner has set. Having a strong brand for CMS will act as a "flag" that all staff can rally around. While the technical teams occasionally engage with IMCA, it is often too late in the communication cycles to ensure proper, impactful communication. Planning and preparatory work are what allow for strategic agreement on the right format and the right message articulation, as well as adjusting the communication to the target audiences.

To empower the greater CMS team and Family, priority will need to be given to excellent systems and structures that aid in planning, retrieval of templates, and sharing of information. In the next section on systems and structures, suggested templates are elaborated in more detail.

Unleashing the full communication potential of the CMS team will make the most of the expertise and diversity of the CMS staff. With a clear Message Map, easy and accessible tools, guidance and training on effective

communication, and a communications plan co-created between IMCA and the 3 technical teams, there is great potential to get deeper communications impact from the many passionate and informed staff.

To allow more voices and a greater number of communication products while not losing clarity and coherence will require a phased approach with a very clear review and approval system, such as:

- Staff members identify speaking or communication opportunities, date, theme, and budget, utilizing the regular meetings with IMCA and the Thematic/IMCA communication plan.
- Staff member presents a proposal for engagement: a document, social media asset, speech, presentation, video, etc.
- The speaking and/or communication product opportunity and proposed engagement are reviewed and, if necessary, revised according to pre-established criteria, including alignment with the CMS Message Map.
- Final product, interview, and/or presentation approved by IMCA and/or the Executive Secretary - based on the scale of the communication effort.
- After the staff members' engagement, feedback and capacity-building can be offered based on review and the impact metrics (if available).

Participating more consistently at CMS and external events, such as the UNFCCC and CBD COPs, Davos, World Parks Congresses, etc., will both engage staff who attend, while strategically increasing the brand with a critical target audience - the conservation community at large. Increased visibility and exposure of CMS in external events offer unique opportunities to position the CMS niche. Utilizing these Thematic/IMCA communication plans, efforts can be made to map the most relevant opportunities, allow time for strategic participation, and equip more staff to be effective communication champions.

Once an event is identified and an opportunity created, it will be necessary to define a unifying approach to attract attention to the event ("a hook") and a strategy:

- What are our key high-level messages?
- What is the focus of this event? What is "newsworthy"?
- What partners do we need with us to provide credibility?
- Is any training needed for our team?
- Is the investment in our travel and preparation worth the expected impact?
- How do we share with our larger community what happened at the event?

Lastly, when reviewing the work of IMCA, it was noted that there was often confusion and complication created by the merger of the CMS and AEWA teams around two linked but often distinct agendas. ***It is recommended that an assessment be undertaken as to the true value of having an integrated CMS/AEWA IMCA team. It may be clearer and more cost-effective to have two separate units as this might reduce confusion of roles, mandates, and conflicting priorities.***

## Overcoming The Systems Challenge

As noted, moving to a higher level of efficiency, and empowering more staff to be communicators, will require investment in better systems and structures. While much of this investment may not take direct financial investment, it will require an extensive commitment of the IMCA team to set up and time to be invested by the key CMS staff to learn, engage, improve, and utilize the tools created.

To achieve this end, *it is recommended that CMS create an Online Communications Portal and a CMS Communications Capacity Building plan.*

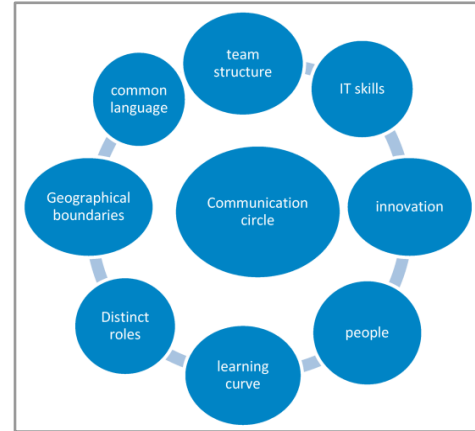
A **CMS Online Communication Portal** would allow for easy access to critical communications products and guidance. These could include:

- The CMS Key Message Map.
- Guidance and protocols, for example, on:
  - Social Media use by staff
  - Style and Visual Identity
  - Effective storytelling and guidelines on web articles
  - Media Engagement Policy
  - Working with Partners and Ambassadors
  - Target Audience identification
- Generic CMS Assets, such as PowerPoints, letterhead, and other key collateral.
- Foundational CMS communication products (video, animation, infographics, etc) that explain CMS's work.
- CMS Communication Planning tools.

To be effective, the portal would be best complemented by a **Communications Capacity Building** plan for the appropriate CMS team to strengthen and enhance communications efforts. This could be an integrated element to the onboarding process of key CMS staff so that new team members understand the communication objectives, systems, and structures of the CMS. While additional sessions can be added based on emerging needs and staff requests, these could include:

- CMS Messaging.
- Effective use of social media.
- Public speaking.
- Media engagement.
- Introduction to campaigning.
- Planning a powerful event.
- Effective storytelling.
- Social and behavior change communications.
- Measuring communication impact.

The cost for this program could be minimal as CMS IMCA staff have many of these skills and many external partners would probably be willing to provide these services virtually at low to no cost. The only significant costs would be the time required to organize these training sessions and the staff time spent utilizing the learning opportunities.



While the portal and capacity-building plan are strategic, nothing can replace the importance of regular meetings between the thematic teams and IMCA. Meetings with the Aquatic, Terrestrial, and Avian units can identify and map key communication moments and build a communications pipeline for upcoming collaborations. The most common communication challenge in any big organization is the lack of upfront planning ahead of events and communication moments. This tends to lead to missed opportunities, last-minute stress, and weak products.

## Overcoming The Funding Challenge

Effective communication takes investment. It requires a commitment to staff, training, tools, systems and structures, products, travel, and impact measurement. While senior management appears to wisely invest in communications from their current budget, there is no question that further resources are required.

CMS will need to evaluate how best to raise these additional resources. As it is unlikely significant new funds can come from Parties, *it is recommended that a communications fundraising plan be created that outlines CMS communications needs, costs, value-added, partnership opportunities and impact measurement criteria.*



To create this plan, the IMCA team would work directly with CMS's resource mobilization officer to identify funding opportunities beyond the funding provided by the Parties. The plan would include, but not be limited to:

- Create a more systemic approach to CMS communication fundraising that ensures that CMS programmatic fundraising embeds and allocates a specific share to effective communications - for example, 5% to 10%.
- Prepare specific funding requests for communication needs and target appropriate donors. A target of 3-5 funding proposals to be sent out per year.
- Seek direct and in-kind funding toward specific communication products and projects - for example, for specific events, videos, animations, or campaigns.
- Seek additional funds for World Migratory Bird Day and for a potential UN Migratory Species Day
- Seek Party and partner in-kind contributions and collaborations for specific communication needs - for example, a specific campaign, social media asset, or video project.

A stronger and bigger team, with additional funds, will allow for strategic investment in critical communications tools and systems, such as:

- An **Annual CMS Communication Plan** to provide clarity and strategic direction to the IMCA team. While still allowing for flexibility as communication opportunities arise, the Annual Plan will map key events, publications (both CMS and partner), and other communication moments.
- **Enhance Metrics for Communications.** Because of the resource shortage and limited budget, no resources are available to be allocated toward baseline metrics for communications. This means CMS has limited metrics to assess its communications work. Metrics are essential to evaluate and measure



whether goals and targets are being met. They also help optimize human and financial resources. IMCA will thus initiate a new monitoring and measurement program, including traditional, online, and "share of voice" metrics. It is estimated that, working with their partners in the UN family, these metrics can be incorporated for under 10,000 euros annually. Reviewing and evaluating metrics with the whole CMS team will help guide decisions, enable collective learning, and support adjustment and modification of communication approaches based on concrete metrics.

- The Annual Communication Plan, combined with the investment in monitoring tools, will allow the team to create a **Theory of Change and Annual Goals** for their communication efforts. Sharing the materials and SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timebound) with the full CMS team will help technical staff better understand the strategic value of thoughtful communication pieces. In turn, these communication goals and targets will allow the IMCA unit to deliver more effectively.

It is also noted that CMS has a shortage of the financial resources needed to create the ideal collection of powerful short visual communication assets - video, animation, and social media materials. However, there are many approaches that could help generate content. While CMS can pursue partnerships with the most established media houses, such as Discovery or National Geographic, it should not underestimate the potential of creating content with smaller media-producing institutions that might have more to gain from such an alignment. And while CMS might directly encourage community-created content, through contests, awards, or the WMBD campaign engagement, for example, this community engagement is often better managed by organizations that have already curated a focused and attentive community. Whether you ask the audience to share their favorite shark video or ask them to share what they're doing to protect the monarch butterfly, these community content creation approaches can both be a source of useful visuals and a way to increase audience engagement.

***Since visual products can be expensive and their production time-consuming, it is recommended that additional funding be identified specifically for production and/or new tactical partnerships will need to be developed. CMS has a "clean" and exciting brand, and many content creators would be honored and excited to work with CMS in a community-generated or more formal partnership model.***

In closing this section on fundraising, an overall assessment is that the communications efforts of the CMS are not sufficiently funded. **To succeed at the scale needed, at the highest level, it is recommended that further resources be allocated to build the CMS communications team, capacities, and the associated systems and structures.**



African Elephants © Canva.com

## Strengthening Communication Foundations

### Increased Visual Communication with Species

CMS's primary communication channels are designed to inform Parties and partners, communicate challenges and successes to the larger environmental community, and help inform, engage, and activate the public at large through regular communications, education, and public outreach. This is essential for influencing both partner and public perceptions of CMS and the plight of migratory species. In assessing the current content mix, it is noted that a lot of CMS content focuses on the processes, events, and meetings that CMS is involved in or manages. While this may interest Parties and some stakeholders, communicating the deeper strategic purpose of CMS (protecting our migratory species) would be aided by using a more visual and storytelling format that captures the hearts, dreams, and ambitions of the audience, including Parties. As a global community, we tend to love migrating species whose visits are marked, noted and special. Capturing this "magic" cannot happen through meetings and updates on processes alone. It needs to be visual and utilize drama, storytelling, and compelling visuals. Videos, pictures, and animations are particularly effective at attracting attention - especially given the many charismatic species covered under the CMS. In pursuing this route, CMS would be more aligned with global norms where more and more visual and animated content is being utilized, usually with subtitles.

***It is recommended that in creating content for each channel and event it utilizes, CMS increases the use of visual and storytelling materials and formats that capture the majesty and challenges of migratory species and shares stories of human activities that are helping support these important migrations.***

## Expanded Global Awareness-raising Campaigns

For many years, CMS has been successfully managing two World Migratory Bird Days annually. While this has taken significant internal staff time, it has been a very successful tool for communicating CMS and its mission and creating professional alliances and strategic partnerships. However, there is a real opportunity now that these events are well known and respected to use them to raise dedicated funds, acquire more visual assets, secure new partnerships, and further increase the profile of CMS. This will require a process of "professionalization" of the team, fundraising strategy, and partnering process. With thoughtful planning, there is no reason that these annual days can continue to run with significant gains for the organization at limited or no cost.

***It is recommended that the two World Migratory Bird Days be continued, but with a more professionalized approach that looks more strategically at the impact, revenue, partnership, and branding of CMS. Part of this process should be seeking official UN recognition of the days.***

In undertaking this "upgrade" of the Migratory Bird Days, it would be strategic to evaluate the cost-effectiveness and impact of adding an additional campaign day for CMS - UN World Migratory Species Day or UN World Animal Migration Day. While Migratory Bird Days have been effective, they have not captured the full breadth of CMS's work, which includes aquatic and terrestrial migrations. ***It is recommended that CMS seriously consider pursuing UN official acknowledgment of a UN World Migratory Species Day but undertakes this work in the framework of a fundraising and resource mobilization plan that ensures that sufficient resources and new staff time are available.*** Given the powerful visuals, stories, partners, projects, and collective goodwill associated with migrations, this day could be a powerful coming together of the avian, aquatic, and terrestrial species-loving communities that would benefit conservation and protection and enhance the focused strategic mission of CMS.

## Multilingual Outreach

To position itself as the global lead on migratory species, it will be important to look more deeply at the languages used to share CMS's work. While the assessment suggests that CMS is trying to use all three languages of the Convention (English, French, and Spanish), English clearly dominates and translation is somewhat erratic, especially on the less formal communication pieces. ***It is recommended that CMS commits to communicating equally in all 3 official CMS languages but further, where possible, translates critical pieces into other languages, especially the other three UN languages (Chinese, Arabic and Russian), as appropriate for the publication.*** As CMS often produces works on a specific species and its migratory route, this might also suggest certain pieces be shared in other appropriate local languages. Language translation could be another area to explore through a partnership model with organizations that align with CMS's mission but have a more regional focus and additional language expertise.

## Regular Signature Communication Products

***It is recommended that CMS consider creating a few select CMS Signature Communication Products to both create brand alignment across the CMS Family and help enhance the overall brand of CMS.*** Launching catalytic, regular, and impactful reports would allow for more consistent messaging from CMS to the environmental community while enhancing the global discourse on migratory species conservation. Since these comprehensive reports can be expensive and do not necessarily generate newsworthy content on an annual basis, a structured approach could be considered whereby themes change on an annual basis. For example:

- Year One – Global Status of Aquatic Migratory Species.
- Year Two – Global Status of Terrestrial Migratory Species.
- Year Three – Global Status of Marine Migratory Species.
- The flagship Conservation Status Reports to be produced for each CMS COP would draw on and highlight the insights from these three sector reports.

An alternative approach would be the creation of an "Annual Report on the Status of Migratory Species".

Rather than producing these materials in isolation, CMS could utilize a partnership approach to (1) identify the best data, (2) leverage partners' research and production capacities; (3) reduce cost; and (4) amplify distribution. Working with the CMS Family, UNEP, IPBES, IUCN Species Survival Commission, and other thematic partners (such as Birdlife), CMS could launch such an endeavor once the required additional resources are identified to ensure that these products are well designed and add value to the global discourse on sustainable development. In discussions with external partners, the IUCN Species Survival Commission, for example, expressed a strong interest in deeper collaboration around signature products.



Monarch Butterfly © Canva.com

## Summary of Strategic Communication Recommendations

Overall, it is recommended that strategic communication be recognized as a cross-cutting priority for CMS and its Parties, directly supporting the Convention's priorities to succeed in its conservation mandate. To support this new priority, and to enable CMS to loudly undertake its mission, it is further recommended that Parties allocate adequate financial resources, staff and in-kind support. Strategic communication for CMS includes:

- Supporting the conservation of migratory species and their habitats through increased global awareness-raising of the importance of migratory species and their role in providing benefits to people.
- Supporting the growth of CMS with new Parties and implementation of the Convention through more efficient information and knowledge sharing.
- Reinforcing CMS's reputation amongst the environmental community as the leading, credible, and neutral United Nations authority for the conservation of migratory species through showcasing of the role, purpose and achievements of the Convention.

The following is a summary of the specific key recommendations of this assessment process:

### **Overcoming The Mandate Challenge**

Recommendation #1: *It is recommended that a "CMS Message Map" be created that helps Secretariat staff and the CMS Family to position CMS effectively and consistently. The Message Map would include high level messaging but will also allow for more detailed messaging on issues of importance.*

Recommendation #2: *It is recommended that the Message Map be produced in a participatory manner with the full Secretariat team to enrich the substance of the CMS Message Map, create ownership within the team, and create comfort and familiarity with the new tool.*

Recommendation #3: *It is recommended that communications are tailored more specifically to the following key target audiences: 1, governmental Parties, especially to the CMS; 2. Key environmental organizations working on environment, biodiversity, climate change and species; 3. The science community; 4. The general public; and, 5. Policymakers outside of environment and biodiversity-related ministries, such as finance, economy, energy, interior, agriculture, etc.*

Recommendation #4: *It is recommended that CMS create a series of informational pieces in different formats (written, animation, video, infographics, etc) that clearly outline the overall mission of CMS.*

### **Overcoming The Hydra Challenge**

Recommendation #5: *It is recommended that a co-branded approach be introduced for the CMS Family. This could be implemented in either a voluntary or required format, based on discussions with the CMS Parties and the respective Family members.*

Recommendation #6: *It is recommended that CMS consider a redesign of their core logo. While a full rebrand is not needed, as the logo is well known and respected, updating the CMS logo to add more color and a terrestrial species might be strategic.*

### **Overcoming The Staffing Challenge**

Recommendation #7: *To address the challenge of staffing and resource shortage at CMS, it is recommended that the IMCA unit be expanded through new staff, promotions and collaboration with other partners and the CMS Family; that CMS staff-at-large are empowered and equipped to better support communication efforts; and that focused fundraising be undertaken to support the IMCA team and their communication efforts.*

Recommendation #8: *It is recommended that an assessment be undertaken as to the true value of having an integrated CMS/AEWA IMCA team. It may be clearer and more cost-effective to have two separate units as this might reduce confusion of roles, mandates, and conflicting priorities.*

### **Overcoming The Systems Challenge**

Recommendation #9: *It is recommended that CMS create an Online Communications Portal and a CMS Communications Capacity Building plan.*

### **Overcoming The Funding Challenge**

Recommendation #10: *It is recommended that a communications fundraising plan be created that outlines CMS communications needs, costs, value-added, partnership opportunities and impact measurement criteria.*

Recommendation #11: *Since visual products can be expensive and their production time-consuming, it is recommended that additional funding be identified specifically for production and/or new tactical partnerships will need to be developed. CMS has a "clean" and exciting brand, and many content creators would be honored and excited to work with CMS in a community generated or more formal partnership model.*

Recommendation #12: *To succeed at the scale needed, at the highest level, it is recommended that further resources be allocated to build the CMS communications team, capacities, and the associated systems and structures.*

### **Strengthening Communication Foundations**

Recommendation #13: *It is recommended that in creating content for each channel and event it utilizes, that CMS increase the use of visual and storytelling content that captures the majesty and challenges of migratory species and shares stories of human activities that are helping migrations.*

Recommendation #14: *It is recommended that the two World Migratory Bird Days be continued, but with a more professionalized approach that looks more strategically at impact, revenue, partnership, and branding of CMS. Part of this process should be seeking official UN recognition of the days.*

Recommendation #15: *It is recommended that CMS seriously consider pursuing UN official acknowledgment of a UN World Migratory Species Day but undertakes this work in the framework of a fundraising and resource mobilization plan that ensures that sufficient resources and new staff time are available.*

Recommendation #16: *It is recommended that CMS commits to communicating equally in all 3 official CMS languages, but further, where possible, translates critical pieces into other languages, especially the other three UN languages (Chinese, Arabic and Russian), as appropriate for the publication.*

Recommendation #17: *It is recommended that CMS consider creating a few select CMS Signature Communication Products to both create brand alignment across the CMS Family and help enhance the overall brand of CMS.*



Tiger Shark © Canva.com

## Conclusion

It is encouraging that CMS continues to prioritize communications as a critical dimension of their work. Given its important role in the complex environmental arena, it is essential to share and reach the broad and important objectives set out by the Parties, partners, and the CMS Family. Strategic communication is a cross-cutting priority that directly supports CMS's all priorities and thus requires continued, if not enhanced, financial and institutional support.

We need migratory species for our economies, tourism, and subsistence survival. We need them for the many ecological services they provide, the health of the ecosystems they inhabit, and the other species they support through pollination and seed distribution. They can be iconic and magnificent like migratory birds, whales, and elephants - feeding the human soul with inspiration, aesthetic, religious, and social value – or wrongly despised like vultures and bats due to their strange look.

Recognizing these critical challenges, this assessment has intended to enhance the communication, public awareness, outreach, and behavior change initiatives of the Convention on Migratory Species. It looks to galvanize more collective action to ensure the biodiversity and climate agendas truly reflect the need to protect migratory species. It is designed to help increase the number of initiatives in support of these important species. But not just increase the number but equally increase their efficacy, efficiency, and impact. Protecting migratory species is about cooperation and collaboration - and thus about communication. It challenges and needs us to work together. CMS



was created to help build these bridges between states, NGOs, multilateral agreements, and local communities and indigenous peoples.

To fulfill its mission, CMS will need to continue to enhance its internal and external communication efforts. It must raise the profile of migratory species and galvanize global attention to ensure effective protection. A good communication strategy is pragmatic. It must be revisited regularly and adapted considering changing circumstances. We need CMS as a critical player in raising the global discourse on migratory species.

Communication is critical to the CMS mission. It enhances the accession of new parties to the Convention. It helps to shift policy and create new effective programs. It raises public awareness about migratory species and issues that affect them. It generates increased public awareness about CMS, its mission, and its relevance - providing them the platform, resources, and partnerships needed to succeed.

## Annex 1: Framework for the CMS Message Map

<b>DRAFT CMS MESSAGE MAP</b>	
<b>Overarching CMS Communications Goal</b>	To work within CMS, the CMS Family, and CMS Parties and partners to vision, create, and distribute excellent communication guidance, products, and expertise that maximize global efforts to conserve and protect migratory species of wild animals and position CMS as a leader in realizing this global priority.
<b>Key Target Audiences for CMS</b>	<p>As a UN Convention, a key primary target audience is the governmental Parties and in particular the decision-makers of both Parties and non-member Range States. This communication involves both the process communication required of the Secretariat, but also materials targeting thought leadership, capacity building, and conservation management practices for all issues related to migratory species.</p> <p>As the only global Convention that specializes in the conservation and sustainable use of migratory animals, their habitats, and migration routes, the second primary target audience is the global community of organizations working on biodiversity conservation, climate change, and sustainable development. CMS uses communications to leverage the strength of this vast network of MEA, UN agencies, and NGOs to ensure that migratory species are given the global importance and support required.</p> <p>CMS is a strongly science-based Convention, where policymaking is grounded on scientific knowledge. Continuously strengthening the Convention's scientific inputs through its Scientific Council and including more and more scientists in its network requires a focused outreach activity towards Academia, to make sure that CMS and its objectives are known to this group.</p> <p>To ensure sustained political and programmatic focus on migratory species, CMS's communication also uses the press and social media as important tools for reaching a wider global audience and the "general public." However, in approaching the broader public, efforts are tailored to ensure that audiences are matched with the topic, context, and specific communication campaign being planned. For example, depending on context and goals, the communication efforts might be aimed at children and youth, people living in or around wetlands, consumers such as the hunting community, the tourism or energy sector, or developers.</p> <p>Policymakers outside environmental/biodiversity-related ministries (finance, economy, interior, agriculture etc.)</p>
<b>CMS Institutional Framing</b>	CMS is a Multilateral Environmental Agreement in accordance with intergovernmental treaty laws and is legally binding. It is the only intergovernmental

	<p>treaty organization or MEA established under the United Nations (UN) that focuses on the conservation of migratory species and their habitats.</p>
	<p>CMS works to elevate the policy relevance of migratory species and their habitat conservation both nationally and internationally. It is an innovative and effective tool for protecting migrating species and it complements other global Agreements and Conventions, especially those working on issues related to biodiversity and habitat conservation - including the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), and the Ramsar Convention.</p>
	<p>CMS is "strategically focused" and while animal migration is a widely known, and appreciated phenomenon, only CMS works globally to highlight the value of migration - not just as a natural cyclical phenomenon of life on Earth, but also why and how it benefits humanity, moving beyond the stories of migration to stories of humanity and sustainable development.</p>
	<p>CMS brings rigor to understanding the processes, challenges, risks, and solutions associated with migratory species and their habitats.</p>
	<p>CMS acts as a global convener, planner, and activator. This special niche of CMS is its ability to get countries and the wider international conservation community to work together effectively to conserve and protect migratory species and their habitats.</p>
	<p>Cooperation under CMS is based on the recognition by CMS Parties that the investment in one country is often not sufficient to ensure the future survival of these migrating travelers and that international cooperation is essential to address the numerous threats migratory animals face along their migration routes, which often span multiple countries, continents, and oceans. The threats they face during their recurrent migrations are often the same global threats and pressures affecting a wide range of species as well as people. Effective international protection entails conserving the wetland and other habitats and ecosystems migratory species depend on along their regular migration routes.</p>
	<p>CMS has a unique ability to help influence the sustainable use of species that migrate. Parties to CMS recognize that migratory species are valuable - to people and the Earth - for different reasons. For example, many species act as a source of food and income and provide us with many services including cultural, recreational, or scientific enrichment. They are also a shared resource and indicator of the biological and genetic diversity of our Earth, providing ecological services in the habitats and ecosystems along their migration routes. By respecting these various values, CMS helps to find mutually beneficial solutions for maintaining healthy populations of endangered migratory species, while ensuring that any use is sustainable and does not jeopardize their long-term survival.</p>

	<p>Migratory species are truly global in nature. They touch all landscapes, all countries, and all cultures. They are literally transverse our planet – across landscapes, under seas and oceans and flying through complex flyways. As such, CMS has a critical role in the global processes that help prevent and reverse biodiversity loss. Moving beyond the CMS Conference of the Parties Processes, CMS also plays an essential role at the CBD COPs, the UNFCCC COPs, and other critical policy and program setting for a for biodiversity and realizing the sustainable development goals.</p>
<p><b>CMS Key Thematic Priorities</b></p>	<p><b>Animal Migration:</b> The phenomenon of animal migration (species, their habitats, their migration routes, and their movements) needs to be preserved as an invaluable component of nature, contributing to the health and survival of many ecosystems of our planet and to human well-being through economic, health, food, and cultural benefits. As the only global authority, CMS works to preserve one of the natural wonders of the world, animal migration, whether it happens in the immensity of the oceans, steppes, and the savannah or through densely inhabited cities and regions.</p> <p><b>Habitat:</b> The critical role that habitats play in ensuring safe migrations, including threats and challenges they are facing. It would also need to outline key messages on how to protect habitat and outline strategies that have been successful.</p> <p><b>Connectivity:</b> Connectivity is a leading critical issue for CMS. Without habitat connectivity and the ability to safely access migratory routes, migratory species are at risk of numerous threats including increased conflict for food, shelter, and breeding grounds; genetic weakness; and disruption in traditional paths of migration. Connectivity is at the very core of the unique value proposition of CMS as it speaks to the need for healthy migratory species AND safe and fecund migration routes. In the absence of effective and meaningful connectivity, the migration of animals cannot succeed. CMS recognizes that while safe habitats are essential for migratory species, it is connectivity that brings them together and allows migration to happen.</p> <p><b>Over-exploitation:</b> While CITES deals with the illegal trade in wildlife, CMS is mandated to help manage the domestic and international over-exploitation of migratory wild species. Over-exploration of a species at any place along its migratory path can impact the overall health and diversity of the species. Thus, CMS provides guidance on the "taking" of wild animals through a holistic lens that cuts across borders, habitat types, and marketplaces.</p> <p><b>Climate change:</b> The climate change crisis is a core cross-cutting priority for CMS and the CMS Family. We know that climate change is already harming migratory species and the phenomenon of animal migration. Due to climate change, ranges of migratory species are changing, and CMS instruments may need to adapt to these variations. Human activities because of climate change, including adaptation and mitigation measures, can have an immediate negative impact on migratory species.</p>

	<p>Thus, the CMS Family is emphasizing the need to: (1) coordinate action to help migratory species adapt to climate change; (2) ensure that current protected areas and protected area networks for migratory species conservation do not diminish on account of climate change; and (3) enhance protected areas and networks to maximize representativeness and thereby increasing their contribution to migratory species conservation.</p>
	<p><b>Pollution:</b> Increasingly, pollution, including noise, light, and plastic pollution, is impacting ocean and terrestrial ecosystems. Many migratory species are very sensitive to changes in the health of their migration routes and increases in noise or light can profoundly impact the health of a species. For example, noise and light can stop breeding, discourage habitat use, create food, and water access challenges, and disrupt the very ability of species to find and follow their migration routes.</p>

## Annex 2: CMS Key Target Audiences and Channels of Communication

As a UN Convention, a key primary target audience is the **governmental Parties** and in particular the decision-makers of both Parties and non-member Range States. This communication involves both the process communication required of the Secretariat, but also materials targeting thought leadership, capacity building, and conservation management practices for all issues related to migratory species.

1. As the only global Convention that specializes in the conservation and sustainable use of migratory animals, their habitats, and migration routes, the second primary target audience is the **global community of organizations working on biodiversity conservation, climate change, and sustainable development**. CMS uses communications to leverage the strength of this vast network of MEA, UN agencies, and NGOs to ensure that migratory species are given the global importance and support required.
2. CMS is a strongly science-based Convention, where policymaking is grounded on scientific knowledge. Continuously strengthening the Convention's scientific inputs through its Scientific Council and including more and more scientists in its network requires a focused outreach activity toward Academia, to make sure that CMS and its objectives are known to this group.
3. To ensure sustained political and programmatic focus on migratory species, CMS's communication also uses the **press and social media** as important tools for reaching a wider global audience and the "**general public**." However, in approaching the broader public, efforts are tailored to ensure that audiences are matched with the topic, context, and specific communication campaign being planned. For example, depending on context and goals, the communication efforts might be aimed at children and youth, people living in or around wetlands, consumers such as the hunting community, the tourism or energy sector, or developers.
4. Policymakers outside of environment and biodiversity-related ministries, such as finance, economy, energy, interior, agriculture, etc.

CMS's primary communication channels are designed to inform Parties and partners, communicate challenges and successes to the larger environmental community, and help inform, engage, and activate the public at large through regular communications, education, and public outreach. This is all essential for influencing both partner and public perceptions of CMS and the plight of migratory species. Key channels include:

- The Website is the central repository of information for Parties, partners, and the public.
- Press and Media represent effective mechanisms to scale important CMS messages.
- Social Media, in particular Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn, are used to reach partners, professional audiences and the public with CMS stories, reports, and recommendations. With an increasing focus on visual communications, Instagram could be an upcoming addition to the Convention's social media accounts.
- Regular newsletters provide opportunities to communicate more focused insights and updates – particularly to Parties and partners.

Further, CMS utilizes numerous other communication opportunities to communicate with critical target audiences. Environmental events, such as COPs, MOPs, and other global events, both inside and outside the UN family, represent both formal and informal opportunities to influence critical partners in the conservation of migratory species. Special Events and Campaigns, such as CMS's World Migratory Bird Day, Earth Day, Earth Hour, World Environment Day, or other UN Observances and related campaigns, are also important opportunities to share focused CMS insights and recommendations.



## Annex 3: The CMS Family

The 7 agreements within the CMS Family are:

- ACAP - Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels.
- ACCOBAMS - Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea, and Contiguous Atlantic Area.
- AEWA - Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds.
- ASCOBANS - Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas.
- EUROBATS - Agreement on the Conservation of Populations of European Bats.
- Gorilla Agreement - Agreement on the Conservation of Gorillas and their Habitats.
- Wadden Sea Seals Agreement on the Conservation of Seals in the Wadden Sea.

The Memoranda of Understanding within CMS are:

1. Aquatic Warbler Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for the Aquatic Warbler (*Acrocephalus paludicola*)
2. Atlantic Turtles Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for Marine Turtles of the Atlantic Coast of Africa
3. Birds of Prey (Raptors) Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia
4. Bukhara Deer Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation and Restoration of the Bukhara Deer (*Cervus elaphus bactrianus*)
5. Dugong Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Dugongs (*Dugong dugon*) and their Habitats throughout their Range
6. High Andean Flamingos Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of High Andean Flamingos and their Habitats
7. IOSEA Marine Turtles Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Marine Turtles and their Habitats of the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia
8. Middle-European Great Bustard Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of the Middle-European Population of the Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*)
9. Monk Seal in the Atlantic Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for the Eastern Atlantic Populations of the Mediterranean Monk Seal (*Monachus monachus*)
10. Pacific Islands Cetaceans Memorandum of Understanding for the Conservation of Cetaceans and their Habitats in the Pacific Islands Region
11. Ruddy-headed Goose Memorandum of Understanding between the Republic of Argentina and the Republic of Chile on the Conservation of the Ruddy-headed Goose
12. Saiga Antelope Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of the Saiga Antelope
13. Sharks Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Sharks
14. Siberian Crane Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for the Siberian Crane (*Grus leucogeranus*)
15. Slender-billed Curlew Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for the Slender-billed Curlew, *Numenius tenuirostris*





















16. South Andean Huemul Memorandum of Understanding between the Argentine Republic and the Republic of Chile on the Conservation of the Southern Huemul
17. Southern South American Grassland Birds Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Southern South American Migratory Grassland Bird Species and their Habitats
18. West African Elephants Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for the West African Populations of the African Elephant (*Loxodonta africana*)
19. Western African Aquatic Mammals Memorandum of Understanding concerning the Conservation of the Manatee and Small Cetaceans of Western Africa and Macaronesia




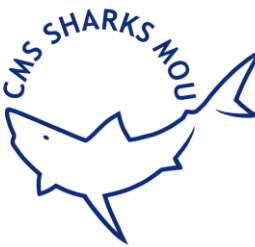



Lastly, there are four Special Species Initiatives:

1. African Carnivores Initiative
2. Central Asian Flyway
3. Central Asian Mammals Initiative
4. Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna

### Annex 4: Current logo and branding of CMS Family

NAME	Main Logo	Other Logo	With CMS
CMS			
ACAP - Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels			
ACCOBAMS - Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea, and Contiguous Atlantic Area			
AEWA - Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds			
ASCOBANS - Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic, Northeast Atlantic, Irish and North Seas			

<p>EUROBATS - Agreement on the Conservation of Populations of European Bats</p>			
<p>Gorilla Agreement - Agreement on the Conservation of Gorillas and their Habitats</p>			
<p>Wadden Sea Seals - Agreement on the Conservation of Seals in the Wadden Sea</p>			
<p>Birds of Prey (Raptors) Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia</p>			
<p>Dugong Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Dugongs (Dugong dugon) and their Habitats throughout their Range</p>			

<p>IOSEA Marine Turtles Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Marine Turtles and their Habitats of the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia</p>			
<p>Pacific Islands Cetaceans Memorandum of Understanding for the Conservation of Cetaceans and their Habitats in the Pacific Islands Region</p>	<p>No logo</p>		
<p>Saiga Antelope Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of the Saiga Antelope</p>			
<p>Sharks Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Sharks</p>			
<p>African Carnivores Initiative</p>	<p>No logo</p>		

The following members of the CMS Family appear to not use a logo:

- Aquatic Warbler Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for the Aquatic Warbler (*Acrocephalus paludicola*)
- Atlantic Turtles Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for Marine Turtles of the Atlantic Coast of Africa
- Bukhara Deer Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation and Restoration of the Bukhara Deer (*Cervus elaphus bactrianus*)
- High Andean Flamingos Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of High Andean Flamingos and their Habitats

- Middle-European Great Bustard Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of the Middle-European Population of the Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*)
- Monk Seal in the Atlantic Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for the Eastern Atlantic Populations of the Mediterranean Monk Seal (*Monachus monachus*)
- Ruddy-headed Goose Memorandum of Understanding between the Republic of Argentina and the Republic of Chile on the Conservation of the Ruddy-headed Goose
- Siberian Crane Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for the Siberian Crane (*Grus leucogeranus*)
- Slender-billed Curlew Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for the Slender-billed Curlew, *Numenius tenuirostris*
- South Andean Huemul Memorandum of Understanding between the Argentine Republic and the Republic of Chile on the Conservation of the Southern Huemul
- Southern South American Grassland Birds Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Southern South American Migratory Grassland Bird Species and their Habitats
- West African Elephants Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for the West African Populations of the African Elephant (*Loxodonta africana*)
- Western African Aquatic Mammals Memorandum of Understanding concerning the Conservation of the Manatee and Small Cetaceans of Western Africa and Macaronesia
- Central Asian Flyway
- Central Asian Mammals Initiative
- Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna