



**CONVENTION ON  
MIGRATORY  
SPECIES**

UNEP/CMS/COP14/Report

ANNEX 4  
Original: English

14<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES  
Samarkand, Uzbekistan, 12 - 17 February 2024

**OPENING AND CLOSING STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES  
DÉCLARATIONS D'OUVERTURE ET DE CLÔTURE ET DISCOURS  
DISCURSOS DE APERTURA Y DE CLAUSURA DE LA REUNIÓN**

Note:

*This annex only contains the opening and closing statements that were submitted to the Secretariat electronically. The statements are presented in their original language. /*

*Cette annexe ne contient que les déclarations d'ouverture et de clôture qui ont été soumises au Secrétariat par voie électronique. Les déclarations sont présentées dans leur langue originale. /*

*En el presente anexo figuran únicamente las declaraciones de apertura y de clausura que se presentaron a la Secretaría en forma electrónica. Las declaraciones se presentan en su idioma original.*

**OPENING STATEMENT, MS AMY FRAENKEL – EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF CMS /  
DÉCLARATION LIMINAIRE, MME AMY FRAENKEL – SECRÉTAIRE EXÉCUTIVE DE CMS /  
DISCURSO DE APERTURA, SRA AMY FRAENKEL – SECRETARIA EJECUTIVA DE CMS**

**HE Mr Abdulla Nigmatovich Aripov**, Prime Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan,  
**HE Mr Aziz Abdukhakimov**, Minister of Ecology, Environmental Protection and Climate Change,  
**Ms Inger Andersen**, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme,  
**Mr Carlos Manuel Rodriguez**, CEO and Chairperson of the Global Environment Facility (GEF),  
**Ms Grethel Aguilar**, Director General of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN),  
Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and gentlemen,

I am honoured and very pleased to welcome you to this 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS COP14), here in the magnificent city of Samarkand.

Your Excellency, **Prime Minister Aripov**, I would like to express my deepest gratitude and appreciation to the people and Government of Uzbekistan for hosting COP14. Your leadership and commitment to the conservation of migratory species and their habitats are deeply valued.

I also wish to extend my sincere thanks to His Excellency, **Mr Aziz Abdukhakimov**, and his entire team at the Ministry of Ecology, Environmental Protection and Climate Change for their incredible work and dedication at all levels, which made this COP a reality.

And to the UNEP Executive Director, the GEF CEO and the Director General of IUCN for being here to open what I believe will be a landmark CMS COP.

We are at a pivotal moment in the history of the Convention. While the Convention was adopted in 1979, only in 2019 did we have the first global assessment on the state of biodiversity. And that assessment found that biodiversity was being lost at an unprecedented rate, and that the global

biodiversity targets agreed in 2010 had largely not been achieved. The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) was adopted in 2022 and includes many key priorities for CMS. What is needed now is implementation.

CMS has a unique and essential role. It is the only global UN treaty addressing the conservation of migratory species and their habitats. This focus is incredibly **profound** because it is about real issues that are happening in countries all over the world involving an incredible variety of amazing species, communities, history and tradition, which are all key to arriving at pragmatic solutions.

This focus is proving to be increasingly vital for achieving the broader global priorities to address biodiversity loss, climate change, and other environmental changes. Implementing CMS will directly contribute to achieving the GBF, combating desertification, and contributing to climate change mitigation.

The theme of COP14, “**Nature Knows No Borders**”, underscores the fundamental mission of the Convention to strengthen international cooperation for the conservation of migratory species and their habitats across their full range. Yesterday during the High-Level Segment, we heard about the truly extraordinary accomplishments and commitments of the governments of Central Asia and the work of many other CMS Parties and UN and other organizations—as well as about some of the challenges for the future. This set the stage for the ambitious agenda of this week.

In just a few hours from now, we will be launching the first-ever “*State of the World's Migratory Species*” report at the Opening Press Conference of COP14. This ground-breaking report will provide a scientific foundation and set the context for the many discussions that will be taking place here at COP14 on what actions are needed to address the threats and conservation needs of migratory species.

While some of the findings are alarming, the report includes many reasons for hope. It finds that 44 percent of species listed under CMS are showing population declines, yet 31 per cent are stable, and 12 per cent are increasing. It also finds that the global extinction risk is growing for all migratory species including those not listed on CMS, with more than 22 percent of CMS species threatened with extinction. One of the most startling findings is that nearly all of the CMS-listed fish species are threatened with extinction.

The good news is that we know what is needed to turn this around, and the report provides many concrete areas for action. And in this room, we have the governments, UN organizations, scientists, conservation groups, and many others who are leaders in this field and are here to discuss a great range of issues and next steps on specific species, regional initiatives, and cross-cutting issues needed to advance progress under CMS. I know we are up to the task, and look forward to an intense, productive and positive week of working together.

Here in Uzbekistan, there are also enormous opportunities to continue the leadership and vision we have already seen. For example, the conservation of nature and migratory species could be highlighted in the country priorities as the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Uzbekistan is finalized.

Finally, I have saved my greatest thanks for the entire CMS team and our extended family of agreements for the absolutely incredible work over the course of the intersessional period since our last COP, and in particular in preparing for this COP in a most professional, collaborative and simply excellent way.

Thank you.

Message to COP14 / Message à la COP14 / Mensaje a la COP14

**OPENING PLENARY SPEECH BY MR CARLOS MANUEL RODRIGUEZ, CEO OF THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY (GEF) / DISCOURS D'OUVERTURE DE LA PLÉNIÈRE PAR M CARLOS MANUEL RODRIGUEZ, DIRECTEUR GÉNÉRAL DU FONDS POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT MONDIAL (FEM) / DISCURSO DE APERTURA DEL PLENARIO POR SR CARLOS MANUEL RODRIGUEZ EL DIRECTOR GENERAL DEL FONDO MUNDIAL PARA EL MEDIO AMBIENTE (FMAM)**

Honourables HE Abdulla Nigmatovich Aripov, Prime Minister of Uzbekistan, HE Mr Aziz Abdukhakimov, Minister of Ecology, Environmental Protection and Climate Change of Uzbekistan, Ms Amy Fraenkel, Executive Secretary of CMS, Ms Inger Andersen, Executive Director UN Environment Programme (UNEP), Ms Gretel Aguilar, Director General IUCN,

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

It is a great honour for the GEF and for me personally, to attend the opening ceremony of CMS COP14.

This is the first time the CEO of the GEF has attended the CMS COP. Please allow me to tell you why this is important.

The GEF8 replenishment was all about integration. Integration across sectors, conventions and stakeholders. For the GEF transcending sectoral and conventional boundaries **is imperative for amplifying impacts and achieving sustainable results.**

Neither the climate nor migratory species recognize borders, languages, flags, or any other limitations to their habitats, **so joint and coordinated financial and policy work across sectors is mandatory and urgent.**

Currently, our engagements with recipient countries primarily involve ministries of environment, with sporadic involvement from other sectors like Agriculture, Energy, and Health. To truly effect change, **we must extend our reach across central governments more comprehensively. We need to go to the next level.**

**The GEF has always invested beyond the national borders.** If Nature has no borders so, the global conservation financial mechanisms shouldn't have any.

I am ready and glad to engage with parties, scientists, stakeholders, and the Secretariat **to chart a strategic long-term course of action within this convention.**

If we fail to collaborate across all biodiversity-related conventions it will undermine the GEF institutional mandate.

When it comes to our own portfolio, **GEF projects have provided significant support to the conservation of migratory species.** While the GEF is not a financial mechanism for CMS, we have enjoyed a productive relationship with the convention.

**In our current funding cycle, GEF-8,** our biodiversity strategy emphasizes integrated land and seascape-scale conservation that strengthens ecosystem connectivity and integrity.

For example, **China has invested significant GEF resources in wetland conservation** providing protection and management of important migratory bird habitat along important migratory waterbird flyways. Tiger and snow leopard range states, including Uzbekistan, have used their GEF resources for the conservation of important predator habitat and the GEF has supported regional coordination and transboundary conservation efforts and agreements for these species.

Also, several of the GEF's integrated programs provide support for effective management of protected areas, Ramsar sites, Key Biodiversity Areas, and other important sites for migratory species.

Collectively these investments contribute to the maintenance of intact and connected ecosystems that are critical to the survival of migratory species.

Dear colleagues,

We note the constructive and forward-looking vision within the CMS COP 14 document on Resource Mobilization related to enhancing engagement with the GEF and we look forward to strengthening our engagement with CMS during the GEF-9 replenishment process.

I am pleased today to reaffirm that the GEF's actions as a strategic ally are to stand by your side, fighting to achieve common goals.

I hope that my presence here is a strong and compelling message to this COP. Central Asia's potential for sustainable development is immense, and we must seize this opportunity through increased investment and multilateral cooperation.

Our role as the financial mechanism for the Rio Conventions should not limit our engagement solely to these conventions. **The GEF's institutional mandate necessitates collaboration across all biodiversity-related conventions.**

We notice the successful implementation process of channelling actionable guidance and recommendations to the CMS through the GEF, and we believe this is a good practice that other biodiversity-related conventions should follow. We are confident that **we will achieve concrete, strengthened, and much higher impact results.**

Let us continue this vital work, expanding our horizons and striving for even greater achievements. Together, we can realize a sustainable and resilient future for all.

Thank you.

### **Statements / Déclarations / Declaraciones**

#### **COP13 PRESIDENCY / PRÉSIDENCE DE LA COP13 / PRESIDENCIA DE LA COP13 - INDIA**

Thank you Chair.

India hosted CMS COP13 in February 2020 at Gandhinagar, Gujarat, where the "Gandhinagar Declaration" highlighted the imperative need for "Connectivity" to enhance the conservation of migratory species and their habitats. Despite the unprecedented challenges posed by the global COVID-19 pandemic following the COP, India, alongside member parties, the CMS Secretariat, scientific communities, and civil society organizations, remained committed to and implemented numerous actions pledged during COP13 in Gandhinagar.

India assumed the G20 presidency in 2022 and convened the G20 Environment and Climate Ministers meeting in Chennai in July 2023, and the G20 Leaders' Summit in New Delhi during September 2023. The G20 for the first time underscored the importance of forests in providing crucial ecosystem services and committed to scale up efforts to protect, conserve, sustainably manage forests and combat deforestation. The G20 emphasized that the destruction of peatlands, mangroves, coral reefs, grasslands, forests, and other ecosystems contribute to climate change, biodiversity loss and land degradation. The G20 members also emphasized the commitment to the

swift and effective implementation of the GBF and the updating of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs).

In October 2023, India hosted a country-led initiative under the United Nations Forum on Forests in Dehradun, which brought together close to 120 delegates from 40 countries and 20 international organizations and discussed on the need for adopting an integrated approach to prevent and manage wildfires and fostering regional, inter-continental, and international cooperation for the management of transboundary wildfires affecting ecosystems.

Celebrating the 50th anniversary of Project Tiger last year, the Honourable Prime Minister of India launched the International Big Cat Alliance for the conservation of seven big cats namely Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Cheetah, Jaguar and Puma. This alliance aims to strengthen global efforts and partnerships, providing a platform for the convergence of knowledge, best practices, and direct support to recovery efforts in potential range habitats.

In adherence to Decision 13.46 of CMS COP13, the Government of India has been collaborating with the CAF Range States and the CMS Secretariat for the establishment of an institutional framework for the Central Asian Flyway (CAF) under the CMS umbrella, with the goal to maintain and enhance the conservation, protection, restoration, and sustainable management of all migratory bird species occurring in the CAF, and their habitats. A draft resolution and terms of reference for the Central Asian Flyway Initiative, along with the establishment of a CAF Secretariat hosted by India, are presented for consideration during COP 14.

India launched the ambitious “Project Dolphin” to focus on the conservation of both riverine and marine dolphins. The project addresses conservation concerns and aims to empower stakeholders, such as river-dependent populations, in reducing river pollution and promoting sustainable fishery and other livelihood options through scientifically oriented conservation methods.

India has banned the manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of single use plastic items as of 1 July 2022.

India also chaired the First Extraordinary Meeting of the COP to the CMS on 28 November 2023, wherein the resolution on Financial and Administrative matters was adopted by the COP.

India expresses gratitude to all CMS Parties, the CMS Secretariat, the Standing Committee, representatives of Inter-Governmental Organizations, Civil Society Organizations, and others for their unwavering support during India’s presidency of the CMS.

Thank You Chair.

**REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CHAIR OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE /  
RAPPORT ET RECOMMANDATIONS DU PRÉSIDENT DU COMITÉ PERMANENT /  
INFORME Y RECOMENDACIONES DEL PRESIDENTE DE LA COMISIÓN PERMANENTE**

Thank you Chair,

India assumed the position of the Chair of the Standing Committee during the 51<sup>st</sup> meeting of the CMS Standing Committee held on February 22, 2020, in Gandhinagar, Gujarat. From February 2020 to February 2024, India chaired three meetings of the CMS Standing Committee.

The 52<sup>nd</sup> session of the Standing Committee (StC52) took place virtually from September 21 to September 29, 2021; the 53<sup>rd</sup> meeting (StC53) was held ‘in-person’ in Bonn, from 19 to 20 October 2022 and the 54<sup>th</sup> meeting held yesterday here in Samarkand.

Subsequent to COP13, the CMS Secretariat had engaged in the development of the post-2020 GBF, working on the issue of zoonotic diseases, partnerships and joint work planning with organizations,

and participating in relevant events to promote the CMS priorities set out in the Gandhinagar Declaration adopted by COP13.

In the margins of COP13, several Parties had announced generous pledges under the Migratory Species Champion programme. The total value of voluntary contributions received or pledged in 2020 and 2021 for the Programme of Work implementation was approximately EUR 4.06 million. These contributions had been received from the Governments of Australia, Germany, India, Japan, Monaco, Sweden and Switzerland, as well as from UNEP and the MAVA Foundation.

In order to address the need to improve collection of information on Parties' actions to fulfil commitments under the Convention, the National Reporting Format has been revised.

The importance of Range State consultations as a necessary step in the development of listing proposals was recommended by the Standing Committee.

Chair, having unpaid contributions is a persistent concern within the Convention and accordingly the Standing Committee had published the status of arrears of contributions on the CMS website and there had been some significant but not substantial improvement in raising the arrears. The Secretariat has been engaging bilaterally with the Parties, using diplomatic channels and have been communicating with Parties to address this issue in relation to the arrears.

The Standing Committee noted that the financial constraints of the Convention have resulted in the Secretariat being understaffed, affecting the health of some staff members.

A summary relating to implementation of each of the targets in the SPMS 2015-23 was taken up in the Standing Committee. Overall, positive progress had been made towards the achievement of some SPMS targets, especially those relating to awareness raising, improved governance arrangements and area-based conservation measures. Despite notable progress in these areas, however, progress towards the achievement of some other targets was lacking.

Options for follow-up to the *Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023* and for development of the SPMS 2024-2032 was discussed in StC53, both in terms of the type of product that could be developed and the process for undertaking the work required.

The Standing Committee established an Intersessional Working Group tasked with developing, with support from the Secretariat, a draft concise *Strategic Plan for Migratory Species* as a follow-up to the SPMS 2015-2023, for consideration by COP14.

In line with the direction from StC53, the new SPMS sets forth the key strategic priorities for CMS, while providing important linkages and responding to wider global priorities, notably the GBF. The new SPMS is in line with the strategic directions included in the work programme adopted at COP13, as well as longer-term resolutions, including on climate change, renewable energy, infrastructure, ecological connectivity, and conservation measures for CMS species. The timeframe for the SPMS covers the period 2024-2032.

Accordingly, a new Resolution and new Decisions to adopt the SPMS 2024-2032 are placed before COP14 for consideration.

In StC52, a new CMS-CITES Joint Work Programme and African Carnivore Initiative was endorsed and the Terms of Reference for the Intergovernmental Task Force on phasing out lead were also agreed upon. The Standing Committee appointed a new Scientific Councillor and provided important and necessary budgetary authority to deal with the unexpected costs associated with Umoja.

StC53 also finalised the Rules of Procedure and adopted the report on Migratory Species in the post-2020 GBF.

India wishes to take this opportunity to thank all the members of the Standing Committee, the observer Parties, observer organizations and above all the CMS Secretariat for their unwavering support for organizing the meetings of the Standing Committee.

Thank you Chair.

**OPENING STATEMENT FOR THE OCEANIA REGION /  
DECLARATION D'OUVERTURE POUR LA REGION OCÉANIE /  
DISCURSO DE APERTURA POR LA REGIÓN OCEANÍA**

Tēnā koutou katoa. Good morning dignitaries and colleagues, New Zealand is speaking on behalf of Oceania countries present at this meeting.

Firstly, thank you to the Government of Uzbekistan and the city of Samarkand for hosting us in this splendid venue in this beautiful city. Thank you also to the Secretariat for all your work intersessionally, and in supporting this COP.

Oceania Parties have been busy since the last COP taking concrete actions, on our own and collaboratively, to conserve migratory species in our region.

I'd like to share a small number of highlights with you from the last intersessional period:

1. Australia hosted the 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Partners of the East Asian – Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) in March 2023. The meeting brought together Partners from across the region for the first time since 2018 and successfully progressed a range of important items which support the work of CMS. This included hosting the first meeting of the CMS Intergovernmental Task Force on Illegal Hunting, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in East Asian-Australasian Flyway (EAAF) and the development of its programme of work. We were also pleased that the Government of the Philippines were able to announce its hosting of the next Meeting of the Partners in 2025 during the High-Level Segment yesterday.
2. EAAFP MOP11 also adopted the Single Species Action Plan for the Christmas Island Frigatebird, which is now being jointly presented by Australia and the Philippines to COP14 for endorsement.
3. Our work under the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) has been focussing on monitoring levels and trends of breeding populations and reducing threats. Work is being carried out under ACAP to support implementation of the CMS Concerted Action for the Appendix I listed Antipodean Albatross.
4. The 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Signatories to the Pacific Islands Cetaceans MOU took place in 2021 and among other things secured agreement on a Whale and Dolphin Action Plan 2022-2026 for the region.
5. In June 2022, South Pacific Regional Environment Programme, with input from all our Pacific Parties, launched its Pacific Island Regional Marine Species Programme 2022-2026 which includes five marine species action plans for the Pacific, including Dugongs, marine turtles, whales and dolphins, sharks and rays, and seabirds.
6. Further north, Philippines is working closely with the EAAFP and the Asian Development Bank on the implementation of the Regional Flyways Initiative which intends to mobilize large-scale financing to support the protection, maintenance, and restoration of wetlands important for waterbird conservation in East and South-east Asia. Philippines has also been actively working with other countries in the Southeast Asian region to promote marine protected area networks through the Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reef, Fisheries and Food Security, a regional cooperation of six-member countries.

Priority issues for Oceania Parties at COP14 include initiatives relating to threats to our marine species such as bycatch, marine pollution and climate change.

Under Australia's leadership, Light Pollution Guidelines for Migratory Species are being presented to COP14 for consideration that now include two new Appendices covering migratory bats and migratory landbirds.

Governance issues are also important for our region. We look forward to adopting a robust and forward looking Strategic Plan that sets up CMS to do its best over the next ten years, with strong synergies with other MEAs and organizations.

Coming from island nations in the Oceania region, the COP14 theme "*Nature Knows No Borders*" has very different implications for us, compared to land-locked countries like Uzbekistan. However for all of us here, we are united in the need to ensure continued consultation and collaborative action to ensure conservation of our migratory species. CMS provides the framework for us to talk to each other, and listen to each other, and we're looking forward to using this week to do just that.

Thank you.

**OPENING STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND ITS MEMBER STATES**

/

**DECLARATION D'OUVERTURE AU NOM DE L'UNION EUROPEENNE ET DE SES ÉTATS**

**MEMBRES /**

**DISCURSO DE APERTURA POR PARTE DE LA UNIÓN EUROPEA Y SUS ESTADOS**

**MIEMBROS**

Mr(s) Chairman, Your Excellencies, Ms Executive Secretary, distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Belgium speaks on behalf of the EU and its Member States.

The EU and its Member States would like to express their sincere gratitude to the government of Uzbekistan for hosting this important meeting in the beautiful and historical city of Samarkand. We are also highly appreciative of the huge amount of work undertaken by the Secretariat, the Standing Committee and the Scientific Council in preparation of this COP.

The EU and its Member States recognize the invaluable role that migratory species play in maintaining the health and balance of ecosystems across the globe. We consider this global gathering a major milestone in accelerating the implementation of the GBF, including the preparation of a new Strategic Plan for Migratory Species, initiating the development of a joint Programme of Work with the CBD Secretariat to collaborate on implementation and capacity-building, and engaging with the upcoming IPBES assessment on spatial planning and ecological connectivity, among others.

We also appreciate the continuous work of the CMS Family in bringing forward Concerted Actions, Initiatives and species-specific Action Plans, addressing the complex challenges on a global scale. These endeavours should be sustained, enhanced, and supplemented with additional actions necessary to improve the conservation of migratory species and their habitats, in particular through strengthened collaboration at regional and global level with sector organizations and partners, other biodiversity-related conventions, UN entities, NGOs, and other stakeholders.

We also thank the proponents for their science-based proposals to amend the Appendices, helping to ensure the long-term survival of these animals and the ecosystems they inhabit.

Furthermore, we welcome the launch, at this meeting, of the first-ever report on the *State of the World's Migratory Species*, as well as new global guidelines and best practices to minimize impacts



on migratory species. These landmark outcomes will be a good basis for the identification of needs and priorities for future actions.

Finally, we look forward to working closely with all of you, and are fully committed to make this meeting a success.

**OPENING STATEMENT FOR THE SOUTH AND CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN REGION /**  
**DÉCLARATION D'OUVERTURE POUR LA RÉGION DE L'AMÉRIQUE DU SUD, DE L'AMÉRIQUE CENTRALE ET DES CARAÏBES /**  
**DECLARACIÓN DE APERTURA PARA LA REGIÓN DE AMÉRICA DEL SUR Y CENTRAL Y EL CARIBE**

América Central, del Sur y el Caribe quiere agradecer al Gobierno de Uzbekistán por tan cálida acogida y por permitirnos disfrutar de este hermoso país con tan rica cultura y milenaria historia el cual conoceremos estos días.

Como una región megadiversa, reafirmamos nuestro compromiso con la conservación y el uso sostenible de la diversidad biológica. En línea con los principios de la soberanía de los Estados sobre los recursos naturales y de responsabilidades comunes pero diferenciadas, el equilibrio de las cuatro dimensiones del desarrollo sustentable (ambiental, social, económica e institucional), tenemos que velar para que las Partes de la Convención tengan medios de implementación adecuados y previsibles, incluyendo la asistencia técnica y financiera a los países en desarrollo, la transferencia de tecnología en términos concesionales así como la creación de capacidades para la gestión y conservación de las especies migratorias.

Al recordar el lema de esta 14ª Conferencia de las Partes – “*Nature Knows No Borders*” – destacamos además que nuestros objetivos sólo pueden lograrse mediante la cooperación efectiva entre las regiones y países, en todas modalidades posibles: trilateral, Norte-Sur, Sur-Norte, Sur-Sur.

Hacemos votos para que la reunión sea fructífera para lo cual comprometemos los esfuerzos para una participación efectiva desde nuestra importancia como Región para las especies migratorias del Planeta.

**STATEMENT OF BAHRAIN / DÉCLARATION DE BAHREÏN / DECLARACIÓN DE BAHREIN**

Bahrain extends gratitude to the CMS Secretariat for this opportunity to address the esteemed gathering. We appreciate Uzbekistan's gracious hosting of this significant event.

Since recently acceding as the 133<sup>rd</sup> Party to CMS in March 2022, we have evaluated our implementation efforts through our first National Report. We are dedicated to enhancing conservation and fostering strong partnerships with other Parties for effective global action.

In line with the theme of “*Nature Knows No Borders*”, Bahrain would like to proudly highlight that we host diverse CMS-listed species, including the largest breeding colony of the Socotra Cormorant in the Hawar Island Protect Area. Our seagrass beds provide essential foraging grounds for threatened species like Dugongs and Green Turtles.

As longstanding signatories of the IOSEA Marine Turtles MOU since 2007 and the Dugong MOU since 2010, we recognize the importance of international collaboration in safeguarding marine ecosystems.

In conclusion, Bahrain is committed to preserving migratory species and their habitats. We look forward to a productive and successful COP.

Thank you.

## **STATEMENT OF ESWATINI / DÉCLARATION DE L'ESWATINI / DECLARACIÓN DE ESWATINI**

Thank you, Mr President

The delegation of Eswatini congratulates the Government of Uzbekistan, and its people for their hospitality and for successfully hosting the COP14 in this beautiful City of Samarkand. Appreciation is extended to the CMS Secretariat for the great effort in coordinating participation in this important conference.

Mr President, this Conference provides an excellent opportunity for Contracting Parties and Cooperating Partners to the CMS, to review progress made thus far on the conservation of migratory species and their habitats, how best to address the threats faced by migratory species and how to apply modern conservation initiatives that will take into consideration development and climate change effects.

The Parties to the CMS are meeting at this COP under a well thought theme: “*Nature Knows No Borders*”. Eswatini fully appreciates the importance of understanding wildlife movements. We are currently working on bringing down borders between the adjacent national parks so that we can have one big national park on the North-eastern part of the country to fully appreciate and promote migration of species.

The proposed *Samarkand Strategic Plan for Migratory Species (SPMS) 2024-2032* is a very welcome initiative. Our belief is that this new strategic plan should be aligned to the other MEAs and other guiding frameworks being implemented in the various regions.

The utmost goal of CMS is to foster the conservation of migratory species. Eswatini advances that more research should be undertaken so there can be up to date status of migratory species to ensure that the appropriate conservation efforts and measures are applied.

In alignment with the theme of the Conference, Eswatini is signatory to Transfrontier Conservation Area (TFCA) agreement with its neighbours, South Africa and Mozambique. The aim of this initiative is to ensure joint efforts by the three countries especially when it comes to protecting migratory species and broadly the landscape. We believe CMS Parties can learn from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) TFCA Programme as the SADC Region has been implementing this programme for more than 20 years.

We advocate for the involvement and benefit of communities in all conservation initiatives.

In conclusion, Eswatini looks forward to participating in this COP by sharing experiences and working with all delegates in ensuring that the meeting is a success.

Thank you, Mr President.

## **STATEMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA / DÉCLARATION DU ROYAUME D'ARABIE SAOUDITE / DECLARACIÓN DEL REINO DE ARABIA SAUDI**

Mr. Chair and distinguished guests,

On behalf of the Saudi Arabia Government, the Saudi delegation would like to congratulate the Uzbekistani government for their generosity and kindness on hosting CMS COP14 and for chairing this important meeting. We also would like to thank MS Amy Fraenkel, the Executive Secretary of CMS, and her team in the Secretariat for their hard work in preparing for this important meeting, and for the support they have given us over the last three decades, since the Kingdom joined in 1991.

Dear honourable guests, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is located between three continents, surrounded by 2,000km of coastal areas and located at two important flyways. This makes the country an important area for biodiversity and ecological connectivity. Therefore, during the last eight years the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has begun a large change towards protecting the environment under our vision 2030, establishing, under the Environment Strategy, five centres along with the establishment of the special forces for the Environment to implement these regulations. Among these five centres the National Centre for Wildlife is the focal point for CMS and the conservation authority in Saudi Arabia.

The centre works closely with the Secretariat on the conservation of migratory species. Recently the NCW organized a regional meeting with full cooperation from the Secretariat for the Working Group for South-west Asia tackling the issue of illegal hunting, taking and trade, and towards the establishment of the Task Force for illegal hunting in South-west Asia. In this regard the Kingdom has already shown its commitment to support and supervise this task force.

Dear delegates, under the 2030 vision, the Kingdom has ambitions, and dreams to protect their wildlife and their habitats. Along with the protected areas increase from four per cent in 2016 to 18 per cent at the beginning of 2024, and the plan to reach 30 per cent of terrestrial and 30 per cent of marine areas to be protected by 2030. In addition, the coastal areas along the Red Sea and the Arabian Gulf are important habitats for two flyways - the African-Eurasian and Central Asian flyways. Therefore, legislation is included for the protection of wetland birds and to ensure a no hunting zone along the entire coast to 20km inland. Moreover, the country is involved regionally in work to mitigate the effect of electrocution through insulation of dangerous powerline under the Egyptian Vulture LIFE project, which may also be relevant to vulnerable AEWA species.

Dear Distinguished Delegates, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is committed to implement the CMS objectives and is looking forward to continuing working with the Secretariat and all Parties and non-Parties to apply the main goal of conservation of migratory species and habitats, and I wish you to have a fruitful and successful meeting.

### **STATEMENT OF SRI LANKA / DÉCLARATION DE SRI LANKA / DECLARACIÓN DE SRI LANKA**

On behalf of the Government of Sri Lanka, I extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Government of Uzbekistan for graciously hosting this momentous CMS COP14 in the historic city of Samarkand. We also express our sincere appreciation to the Secretariat for their diligent efforts in organizing this gathering, particularly amidst the challenges posed by the global COVID-19 pandemic.

It is with great honour that I deliver the statement of the Government of Sri Lanka to the esteemed delegates assembled at CMS COP14. This occasion serves as a poignant reminder of the interconnectedness of all living beings and the collective responsibility we bear in safeguarding our planet's rich biodiversity.

Sri Lanka, endowed with a tapestry of rich and diverse ecosystems, has long acknowledged the paramount importance of conserving migratory animals and their habitats. Our island nation serves as a crucial sanctuary for countless species of birds, marine mammals, and reptiles during their awe-inspiring journeys across continents and oceans. From the awe-inspiring presence of Blue Whales along our coastlines to the vibrant migratory bird populations that grace our wetlands, these magnificent creatures not only epitomize our natural heritage but also play an indispensable role in maintaining ecosystem equilibrium and resilience.

However, despite our unwavering efforts, migratory animals continue to confront an array of daunting challenges, including habitat degradation, pollution, climate change and unsustainable exploitation. The degradation of vital habitats such as wetlands, forests and coastal regions poses a grave threat to the survival of these species. As stewards of our natural environment, it is incumbent upon us to confront these challenges head-on and strive towards sustainable solutions.

In alignment with our steadfast commitment to CMS and its associated agreements, the Government of Sri Lanka has implemented a comprehensive suite of conservation initiatives aimed at safeguarding migratory animals and their habitats. These encompass the establishment of protected areas, the enforcement of robust wildlife conservation laws, and the promotion of community-driven conservation endeavours. Moreover, we have actively engaged in regional and international collaborations to address transboundary conservation imperatives and foster the sustainable management of shared resources.

However, we acknowledge that our endeavours must be redoubled. This necessitates a holistic approach that harmonizes conservation imperatives with sustainable development objectives, all while prioritizing the welfare of local communities and future generations.

In closing, let us reaffirm our unwavering commitment to the conservation of migratory animals and their habitats. Through concerted action and collaborative endeavour, we can ensure that these majestic creatures continue to adorn our skies, seas, and landscapes for posterity. The moment for decisive action is upon us, and the Government of Sri Lanka stands resolute in its dedication to this noble cause.

Thank you.

### **STATEMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA / DÉCLARATION DE L'AFRIQUE DU SUD / DECLARACIÓN DE SUDÁFRICA**

Thank you Mr Chair,

South Africa supports the statement made by Zimbabwe of behalf of Africa and extend gratitude to the Government of Uzbekistan, and its people for their hospitality and hosting of COP14 in this beautiful City of Samarkand.

Migratory species remind us of the importance of synergies with other conventions and Multilateral Environmental Agreements. To strengthen the implementation of the CMS and other MEAs at a national level, South Africa established a MEA's Forum as a coordinated implementation mechanism with a view to consolidate efforts and to align the work of different MEAs and for ease of reporting.

South Africa developed a National Biodiversity Management for seven Vulture Species found in South Africa, as a vulture conservation strategy in response to Paragraph 12 of the Raptors MOU Text, which calls for Signatories to prepare and submit a national or regional strategy or equivalent documents. This was achieved through a National Vulture Task Force which was established bringing together representatives from relevant government departments and other stakeholders to facilitate an integrated approach to vulture conservation. The Task Force works hand in hand with the National Wildlife Poisoning Prevention Working Groups and the Lead Task Team. The National Wildlife Poisoning Prevention Working Groups and the Lead Task Team are specifically established to deal with poisoning issues as provided for Resolution 11.15 and other relevant Resolution and decisions on Lead poisoning.

South Africa looks forward to fruitful deliberation and successful COP14.

Thank you, Mr Chair.

### **STATEMENT OF SUDAN / DÉCLARATION DE SOUDAN / DECLARACIÓN DE SUDÁN**

Thank you Chair,

First and foremost, Sudan would like to express its sincere gratitude to the CMS Secretary, the organizing committee, and the Government of Uzbekistan. Sudan would also like to extend the appreciation to the beautiful city of Samarkand. It is through their collaborative efforts that we have

been given the opportunity to gather here and share a common interest in the conservation of migratory species.

Sudan, a country known for its diverse wildlife and rich natural resources, has been facing numerous challenges in recent years. Political instability, economic struggles, and environmental issues have posed significant obstacles for the nation. However, despite these circumstances, Sudan remains committed to the conservation and protection of migratory species.

With great determination, Sudan has actively engaged in efforts to join the CMS as a Party. Recognizing the importance of international cooperation in safeguarding migratory animals, Sudan has worked tirelessly to meet the requirements and obligations set forth in the Convention. Sudan, although not a Party to CMS, has entered into four MOUs with CMS:

1. Birds of Prey (Raptors) MOU signed on 22 October 2008, and attended the last meeting in Dubai July 2023;
2. Dugong MOU- Signed on 19 February 2013;
3. IOSEA Marine Turtles MOU signed on 1 May 2014; and
4. Sharks MOU signed on 17 February 2014.

Sudan has made significant achievements in terms of migratory species, including:

1. The successful implementation of the Migratory Soaring Birds (MSB) Project along the Rift Valley/Red Sea flyway; with the support of a UNDP/GEF-funded initiative, BirdLife International has provided valuable data on migratory birds in Sudan on their website.
2. The collaboration between Sudan and the RESSOURCE Project has resulted in the designation of the Khor Abu Habil Inner Delta as a Ramsar site. This significant achievement took place on 10 April 2022 when the site was officially recognized as a Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention. The Inner Delta serves as a habitat for numerous migratory birds, including seven endangered species such as the Critically Endangered Rüppell's Vulture and the Sociable Lapwing. This designation is a testament to the fruitful outcomes of this partnership.
3. The Wind Energy Utility Scale Power Generation Project in Sudan and its Impact on MSB and Power Systems: Sudan's "killer line" disconnection, Wind Turbines, and MSB.
4. Surveying Sudan's Lions: Assessing Needs and Baseline Data: Dinder National Park, bordering Ethiopia, spans 10,000 km<sup>2</sup> and is a vital protected area. Adjacent to this, there are 5,000 km<sup>2</sup> of additional protected areas, including Alatash National Park. To understand and conserve the lions, the Wildlife Conservation Research Unit (WildCRU) has received funds for a comprehensive survey and needs assessment. Dinder has not received significant support from donors or NGOs, so WildCRU aimed to identify how external assistance can help safeguard the park and its lions. This survey and assessment provided crucial data for targeted conservation strategies, ensuring the long-term survival of Sudan's lions and sustainable management of Dinder National Park.
5. The Sudanese Wildlife Society is dedicated to preserving the Egyptian Vulture and Sociable Lapwing, two remarkable bird species. These birds face threats such as habitat loss, energy sector, hunting, and poisoning. The society actively engages in initiatives to protect them. The society also works to raise awareness, conduct research, and implement conservation strategies. Its efforts involve collaborating with local communities, government agencies and international organizations. Its programmes focus on habitat restoration, anti-poaching measures and education initiatives.
6. Promote collaboration and partnership among various sectors such as health, livestock, and wildlife at both national and international levels, similar to Sudan's One Health platform

established in 2021. This platform acknowledges the significant role of wildlife in disease transmission, emphasizing the need for effective management.

Finally, the Wildlife Institute's roles and responsibilities in Sudan:

The Wildlife Forces have a wide range of responsibilities, including the safeguarding, maintenance, and management of wildlife and the environment. They are also tasked with detecting and prosecuting poachers. Furthermore, the Wildlife Forces ensure the safety of clients, visitors and tourists, and serves as the CITES Management Authority in Sudan.

The Wildlife Research Center has objectives and mandates. These include conducting wildlife surveys and exploring new sites for relocation and protection. It also monitors and protects wildlife populations according to designated schedules. Additionally, the centre conducts research to conserve natural environments in protected areas and promotes environmental awareness and the importance of wildlife conservation. The integration of scientific research in resource management is another key responsibility of the Wildlife Research Center. Moreover, the centre aims to discover the potential contributions of wildlife in enriching human life and encourages investment and tourism in wildlife.

Thank you for your support and please keep Sudan in your prayers.

### **CMS Agreements / Accords de la CMS / Acuerdos de la CMS**

#### **STATEMENT FROM THE AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF ALBATROSSES AND PETRELS (ACAP) / DÉCLARATION DE L'ACCORD SUR LA CONSERVATION DES ALBATROS ET DES PÉTRELS (ACAP)/ DECLARACIÓN DEL ACUERDO SOBRE LA CONSERVACIÓN DE ALBATROS Y PETRELES (ACAP)**

I'm very pleased to be here in Uzbekistan representing the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP). It's great to be able to meet up again with CMS colleague after four years. ACAP is a daughter or child agreement of the CMS, and many, if not all, the thirteen ACAP Parties are represented here at this meeting. Several other CMS participants who are not ACAP Parties are nevertheless taking an interest in ACAP's activities and advice.

We have the pleasure this month to be celebrating the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the entry into force of ACAP (February 2004). This followed signature of the Agreement on 19 June 2001, which we now celebrate as World Albatross Day.

In an information paper (INF10.3.1) we provide an update on ACAP meetings and activities over the past four years. Despite some delays caused by the COVID pandemic, we managed to continue with our programme of meetings and activities over this period. In May 2023 we held our first in-person meeting since 2019.

Following our 2019 declaration of a Conservation Crisis for albatrosses and petrels, we've continued our task of reviewing and updating ACAP's advice for achieving and maintaining a favourable conservation status for albatrosses and petrels. Our main focus is on providing and continually updating best practice advice for avoiding seabird mortality in fisheries operations. We produce a range of guidelines and fact sheets, some of which I have brought copies of.

We've continued to review population trends and to set priorities for land-based conservation issues at breeding sites, and to encourage national and regional conservation plans. These have included the Australia/New Zealand/Chile plan for the Antipodean Albatross, which is also supported by the CMS Concerted Action Plan adopted in 2020.

Some recent issues we are focusing on include the current outbreak of avian influenza, and looking into the potential impact on seabirds of offshore windfarms. ACAP's Advisory Committee meeting in

Edinburgh last May set up an intersessional group to update guidelines on the avian influenza outbreak.

Overall, looking at the 20 years of ACAP and the conservation crisis facing albatrosses and petrels, I would like to highlight the fact that ACAP Parties and other interested countries and groups, have dedicated these years to the search for solutions to the threats facing these birds – and solutions have been identified and are now being implemented, if only in part, by many countries. We don't need to despair but we do need ongoing and increasing commitment worldwide to implement those solutions. And we need more Parties to ACAP, so those who are Range States for our species, please do consider attending ACAP meetings to find out more about us, and let's hope that some will decide to join the Agreement.

**STATEMENT FROM THE SECRETARIAT OF THE AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF CETACEANS OF THE BLACK SEA, MEDITERRANEAN SEA AND CONTIGUOUS ATLANTIC AREA (ACCOBAMS) TO CMS COP13 /**  
**DECLARATION DU SECRETARIAT DE L'ACCORD SUR LA CONSERVATION DES CETACES DE LA MER NOIRE, LA MER MEDITERRANEE ET LA ZONE ATLANTIQUE ADJACENTE (ACCOBAMS) A LA COP13 DE LA CMS /**  
**DECLARACION DE LA SECRETARIA DEL ACUERDO SOBRE LA CONSERVACION DE LOS CETACEOS DEL MAR NEGRO, EL MAR MEDITERRANEO Y LA ZONA ATLANTICA CONTIGUA (ACCOBAMS) A LA COP13 DE LA CMS**

Dear Executive Secretary of CMS, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates to the CMS, Observers,

The improvement of the conservation status of cetacean species in the Mediterranean, its contiguous Atlantic zone and the Black Sea, as well as the reduction of the adverse impact caused by human activities posed to these migratory marine mammals is the main focus of the ACCOBAMS work and mandate.

Important decisions are jointly taken by the 24 Parties to ACCOBAMS, not only through Resolutions adopted by Meetings of the Parties, but through a strong operational component, which is key to regional efforts in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea region, which unfold into data gathering, technological developments, monitoring and survey field work, functional human networks, and cross sectoral cooperation.

Important progress has been achieved by ACCOBAMS since CMS COP13 in 2020, in terms of assessment, monitoring and mitigation of human activities, adverse effects due to ship strikes, fisheries interactions, underwater noise, pollution and marine litter.

On its key objective of improving knowledge about cetacean population estimates and distribution, the "ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative" was the first-ever baseline information on the state of cetacean populations in the Mediterranean and Black Seas enabling future monitoring. It was particularly useful to the preparation of the 2023 Mediterranean Quality Status Report adopted last December by the Barcelona Convention COP13.

ACCOBAMS is currently paving the way for the launching of the next synoptic basin-wide survey in the framework of a Long-Term Monitoring Programme, adopted through Resolution 8.10.

On the objective of reducing human pressures posed on cetacean species, unwanted interactions with fisheries still require particular attention, as the use of illegal driftnets in the Mediterranean Sea is still evident from the frequent entanglement of large whales. In the Black Sea high bycatch rates of harbour porpoise is a growing concern, calling for joint action by ACCOBAMS, Black Sea countries, the European Commission, GFCM and the Black Sea Commission.

ACCOBAMS continues to engage with ASCOBANS and the Joint Bycatch Working Group, notably through a Workshop organized in April 2023, at the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the European Cetacean Society.

Considerable work on anthropogenic noise within the Joint CMS/ACCOBAMS/ASCOBANS Working Group contributes to enhancing knowledge on threats posed to cetaceans, as well as with UNEP/MAP on the implementation of IMAP Ecological Objective 11 – Energy including Underwater Noise – and on candidate indicators for future assessments.

A second workshop - jointly organised with ASCOBANS - is planned in October 2024 in order to gather National Navies and NATO representatives with a view to discuss how to mitigate noise produced by military activities.

Regarding maritime traffic, ACCOBAMS adopted Resolution 8.18 and held workshops on the prevention of ship strikes with cetaceans, focusing on the reduction of vessel speed recommended by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) within the recently adopted Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA) in the North-western Mediterranean Sea—the first-ever PSSA based on the exclusive objective of protecting marine animals, i.e. Sperm Whale and Fin Whale, the most affected populations by marine traffic in the Mediterranean.

Four ACCOBAMS countries undertook a pivotal and proactive approach by submitting such proposals to the IMO in order to reduce the risk of ship strikes that are hugely affecting populations.

ACCOBAMS stands ready through its knowledge hub - NETCCOBAMS platform - to provide a technological solution in support of the reduction of the shipping footprint, as well as to pursue awareness-raising efforts, including with the maritime sector, in support of cetacean conservation in the Mediterranean and Black Seas, notably with a view to implement IMO future associated measures in this PSSA entirely situated in the ACCOBAMS area.

ACCOBAMS has been given the honour and the opportunity to hold a side-event on this subject during the week and would appreciate counting with the participation of the distinguished delegates.

Thank you very much for your attention.

I wish you all the best of successes for COP14.

**STATEMENT FROM THE SECRETARIAT OF THE AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF SMALL CETACEANS OF THE BALTIC, NORTH EAST ATLANTIC, IRISH AND NORTH SEAS (ASCOBANS) TO CMS COP14 /**

**DECLARATION DU SECRETARIAT DE L'ACCORD SUR LA CONSERVATION DES PETITS CETACES DE LA MER BALTIQUE, DE L'ATLANTIQUE DU NORD-EST, DE LA MER D'IRLANDE ET DE LA MER DU NORD (ASCOBANS) A LA COP14 DE LA CMS /**

**DECLARACIÓN DE LA SECRETARÍA DEL ACUERDO SOBRE LA CONSERVACIÓN DE LOS PEQUEÑOS CETÁCEOS DEL MAR BÁLTICO, ATLÁNTICO NORORIENTAL, MAR DE IRLANDA Y MAR DEL NORTE (ASCOBANS) A LA COP14 DE LA CMS**

Information Document 10.3.2 contains a report on progress made on activities undertaken within the framework of ASCOBANS since COP13 in early 2020. I won't go into detail as the report is pretty comprehensive but would like to highlight that the ASCOBANS Meeting of the Parties in 2020 was the first ever governing body meeting of the CMS Family that was held fully online. The next Meeting of the Parties, MOP10, will take place in September in Denmark.

Since COP13, ASCOBANS has organized 14 meetings and eight workshops, and there are nine working groups which have reported their work to the Advisory Committee.



ASCOBANS has developed Guidelines for cetacean-sensitive Maritime Spatial Planning for the ASCOBANS region, which will be proposed for adoption at MOP10. In addition, two technical publications on bycatch have been released since 2020, one on analysis of different methods aboard commercial fishing vessels, and one on cost-benefit analysis for mitigation measures in fisheries with high bycatch. ASCOBANS has also produced yearly progress reports on the implementation of conservation plans for the Harbour Porpoise in the Baltic Proper, in the North Sea, and in the Western Baltic, Belt Sea, and the Kattegat.

Regarding synergies with CMS, we continue to work with CMS and ACCOBAMS on the Joint Noise Working Group, with ACCOBAMS on a Joint Bycatch Working Group as well as joint workshops on specific topics.

We are also increasingly working with the Secretariats of the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (HELCOM), International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES), OSPAR Commission, and the European Commission; and exchanging information with the North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO), as opportunities and needs arise. And finally, ASCOBANS together with CMS, continues to work closely with the International Whaling Commission on bycatch, strandings, marine debris and other issues.

Thank you.

**STATEMENT BY ANDREAS STREIT, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF POPULATIONS OF EUROPEAN BATS (EUROBATS)/ DECLARATION D'ANDREAS STREIT, SECRETAIRE EXECUTIF DE L'ACCORD SUR LA CONSERVATION DES POPULATIONS DE CHAUVES-SOURIS D'EUROPE (EUROBATS)/ DECLARACIÓN DE ANDREAS STREIT, SECRETARIO EJECUTIVO DEL ACUERDO SOBRE LA CONSERVACIÓN DE LAS POBLACIONES DE MURCIÉLAGOS EN EUROPA (EUROBATS)**

Your Excellency, the Minister for the Environment of Uzbekistan, Excellencies and delegates, dear Executive Director Inger and dear Amy,

I very much regret to not be able to be with you during these important days of CMS CoP14, even more, because it would have been my last CoP. But I am happy to report that the recruitment of my successor is well under way and we hope to find an excellent replacement by end of July, when I am going to retire.

I am equally happy to report that the EUROBATS Agreement is in good shape and continues to grow. After Bosnia and Herzegovina not that long ago the next big and important accession we are expecting is the one of Spain.

Despite the aftermaths of the Covid Pandemic, our 9th Session of the Meeting of Parties could be successfully held in person in October 2022 and was generously hosted by the government of Croatia. I take this opportunity to once again express my sincere gratitude to our Croatia hosts for their outstanding hospitality.

I also wish to thank all of our Parties for their continuing support, in particular those who support EUROBATS with additional and very much needed voluntary contributions. These are Croatia, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro and Switzerland. Thank you very much indeed!

To conclude I wish you all every possible success for this CoP14 to further strengthen our common goal, the conservation of migratory species of wild animals.

Thank you very much.

**AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF GORILLAS AND THEIR HABITATS: PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF GORILLAS AND THEIR HABITATS (GORILLA AGREEMENT) / ACCORD SUR LA CONSERVATION DES GORILLES ET DE LEURS HABITATS : RAPPORT SUR L'ETAT D'AVANCEMENT DE LA MISE EN ŒUVRE DE L'ACCORD SUR LA CONSERVATION DES GORILLES ET DE LEURS HABITATS (ACCORD GORILLA) / ACUERDO SOBRE LA CONSERVACIÓN DE LOS GORILAS Y SUS HÁBITATS: INFORME SOBRE LOS PROGRESOS REALIZADOS EN LA APLICACIÓN DEL ACUERDO SOBRE LA CONSERVACIÓN DE LOS GORILAS Y SUS HÁBITATS (ACUERDO SOBRE LOS GORILAS)**

Thank you, Mr Chair,

The CMS Secretariat as Interim Secretariat of the Agreement for the Conservation of Gorillas and their Habitats is pleased to report to COP14 progress on the implementation of the Agreement since COP13.

In October 2021, the Interim Secretariat published the report “*Legal Assessment of the Implementation of the Convention on Migratory Species and the Gorilla Agreement in Cameroon and Nigeria*”. The assessment was made possible through the funding from the Government of Germany. It covers two CMS-listed species - the Cross River Gorilla and the Nigerian-Cameroon Chimpanzee. The study analyzed more than 60 national laws and regulations of Cameroon and Nigeria to verify the implementation level of selected norms contained in the Convention text and the Gorilla Agreement.

In December 2023, with funding from the Government of Luxembourg, the Fourth Meeting of the Parties to the Gorilla Agreement was held in Paris in conjunction with the Third Council Meeting of the Great Apes Survival Partnership. The Meeting adopted resolutions on priority conservation measures for Gorillas that include the themes of large-scale development, health and illegal trade as well as on the institutional arrangements of the Agreement.

The Parties noted that the Gorilla Agreement is unique among the CMS Agreements, in that it does not have its own independent secretariat and agreed to move the Secretariat to the Greater Virunga Transboundary Collaboration pending high-level confirmation from Gorilla Agreement Parties that is currently being collected by the Interim Secretariat. Meanwhile, the CMS remains the Interim Secretariat of the Gorilla Agreement.

Thank you.

**STATEMENT OF THE ACTING EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY / DÉCLARATION DU SECRÉTAIRE EXÉCUTIF PAR INTÉRIM DE LA CONVENTION SUR LA DIVERSITÉ BIOLOGIQUE / DECLARACIÓN DEL SECRETARIO EJECUTIVO EN FUNCIONES DEL CONVENIO SOBRE LA DIVERSIDAD BIOLÓGICA**

The CBD Secretariat congratulates Uzbekistan and the CMS Secretariat for the excellent organization of COP14.

The CBD works closely with CMS and other biodiversity-related Conventions, including through the liaison group of biodiversity-related Conventions and the Bern process coordinated by UNEP with the support of Switzerland.

The Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) provides an overall plan for action on biodiversity, including through CMS and other biodiversity-related Conventions. It is a hugely ambitious plan, aiming to protect and restore nature, to prosper with nature, to share the benefits fairly and to invest and collaborate for nature. While some of the 2030 action targets focus on species (in particular, targets 4, 5 and 9), all of the 23 targets are relevant to CMS. Achievement of the goals and targets requires a whole-of-Government and whole-of-society approach with the full

engagement of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, women and youth as well as business and finance, among others.

On the other hand, the decisions adopted at CMS COP14 will support implementation of the GBF.

The updating of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, currently being undertaken by Parties to the CBD as they align their national targets with the GBF, provides an important opportunity for the integration of activities under CMS and other biodiversity-related Conventions. The CBD Secretariat is committed to working closely with the CMS Secretariat to support the Parties of both instruments in achieving our common objectives and the goals and targets of the GBF.

**STATEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL WHALING COMMISSION (IWC) TO CMS COP14 /  
DECLARATION DU COMMISSION BALEINIÈRE INTERNATIONALE (CBI) A LA COP14 DE LA  
CMS /  
DECLARACIÓN DE LA COMISIÓN BALLENERA INTERNACIONAL (CBI) A LA COP14 DE LA  
CMS**

**MS. MARTHA ROJAS URREGO**

The International Whaling Commission (IWC) is pleased to support CMS COP14 hosted by the Government of Uzbekistan. We would like to thank the Government of Uzbekistan and the CMS Secretariat for the excellent organization for COP14.

**Overview**

The IWC is an intergovernmental organization with a membership of 88 Contracting Governments, established under the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling signed in 1946. The IWC focuses on the conservation and sustainable management of whales and other cetaceans, many of which are migratory. Thus, we work very closely and in close cooperation with CMS. Many of the agenda items of this COP16 are relevant to the IWC and we will be contributing to these during this week.

The IWC's mandate for the conservation of whale stocks and management of whaling hasn't changed, but the threats to cetaceans have changed considerably, and the IWC has evolved to meet these new and considerably more complex challenges, on the basis of strong science, provided by its Scientific Committee. Bycatch is seen as by far the single most serious, direct threat to cetaceans and is a real risk for many other migratory species. Ship strikes, pollution (including from plastics), climate change, underwater noise and whale watching are also growing or potential threats to whales, dolphins and porpoises. The IWC has risen to these challenges through an increasing number of globally recognized scientific research, capacity building and outreach programmes.

**Co-operation with other organisations**

This ever-broader range of threats calls for collaboration with an ever-increasing number of partner organizations. The IWC is particularly pleased to be collaborating with CMS and its daughter agreements ASCOBANS and ACCOBAMS on the frontlines of these efforts, including bycatch, whale watching, ship strikes and the role of cetaceans in the ecosystem. I will briefly mention five highlights of progress made through this collaboration:

- Firstly, we developed a *Whale Watching Handbook* that has been a highly successful and evolving tool tailored to advise and support the whale watching industry, regulators and the public to ensure responsible, sustainable and educational whale watching.
- Secondly, our collaboration with ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS on issues such as bycatch, strandings, marine debris and ship strikes. IWC is also working with ACCOBAMS in the development of a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for the Mediterranean Fin Whale.

- Third is work focused in small cetaceans. The IWC's Small Cetaceans group continues to collaborate with CMS's Aquatic group to share knowledge and pool resources on small cetacean species that are subject to bycatch, trade, traditional use and direct consumption.
- Concerted Action Plans are a fourth important focus. We have been working together on the development of CMS Concerted Action plans for a number of different species including the Arabian Sea Humpback Whale, Franciscana Dolphin, Atlantic Humpback Dolphin and Harbour Porpoise .
- Finally, CMS and IWC have co-hosted two workshops on the Ecosystem Function of cetaceans. The outcomes of the most recent workshop will be delivered to the IWC Scientific Committee meeting in April 2024.

The IWC has also been also an active member of the Group of Biodiversity-related Conventions. Our collaboration with this group has provided additional opportunities to work with CMS and other biodiversity-related conventions with an important focus on the development, and now, on the implementation, of the GBF, and in addressing relevant emerging threats to cetaceans, such as tracking illegal trade, ensuring migratory corridors and maintaining marine natural heritage sites.

Through these and many other programmes of work, there is much synergy between the CMS, its daughter agreements, and the IWC. The IWC looks forward to contributing to this COP14 and to continued dialogue and collaboration on issues of mutual interest, noting that the IWC will host a meeting of its Scientific Committee in April 2024 in Slovenia and the 69<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Commission in Peru in September 2024, providing further opportunities to progress our common agenda.

Thank you.

### **IGOs and NGOs / OIG et ONG / OIGs y ONGs**

#### **STATEMENT OF THE ASEAN CENTRE FOR BIODIVERSITY / DÉCLARATION DU CENTRE DE L'ASEAN POUR LA BIODIVERSITÉ / DECLARACIÓN DEL CENTRO ASEAN PARA LA BIODIVERSIDAD**

Let me join the other delegates in expressing our gratitude to the gracious host, the Government of Uzbekistan, for welcoming us to the historic city of Samarkand.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), established in 1967, initially focused on cooperation in various sectors to promote peace and stability in the Region. Over the last 25 years, environmental concerns, particularly biodiversity conservation, have also become increasingly prominent within ASEAN's agenda.

Indeed, we subscribe to this COP's theme, "*Nature Knows No Borders*," as ASEAN acknowledges the interconnectedness of our wildlife resources across terrestrial and marine ecosystems, emphasising the need for robust cross-sectoral and transboundary cooperation.

The ASEAN region is at the heart of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway (EAAF), supporting the migration of approximately 50 million birds annually. For this reason, the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB), with Singapore as the lead ASEAN Member State, established the ASEAN Flyway Network to strengthen the contribution of South-east Asian countries in conserving migratory waterbirds along the EAAF as they pass through our sub-region, enhancing transboundary cooperation and habitat management efforts.

Collaboration and dialogue within and among ASEAN are essential for advancing conservation efforts and addressing environmental challenges. Currently, the ACB is facilitating the development of our Regional Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, or the "*ASEAN Biodiversity Plan*". Through this biodiversity plan, the region will be able to promote synergy among the MEAs, taking into account the priority areas of the ASEAN under the GBF, as they relate to the targets of other MEAs, including

the relevant targets of the Samarkand Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2024–2032, anticipated to be adopted in this COP.

We are pleased that these collaborative efforts are in line with this year's ASEAN Chairpersonship of Lao PDR with the theme “*Enhancing Connectivity and Resilience*”.

The ACB stands ready to advance the agenda of global and regional cooperation in South-east Asia, on the conservation of migratory species as put forward by the Parties and partners here in Samarkand at CMS COP14.

### **JOINT STATEMENT OF NGOS / DÉCLARATION COMMUNE DES ONGS / DECLARACIÓN CONJUNTA DE ONGS**

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

I am making this statement on behalf of the following organizations (in alphabetical order): Bat Conservation International, Benin Environment and Education Society (BEES), BirdLife International, Born Free Foundation, Conservation Without Borders, Deep Sea Conservation Coalition, Defenders of Wildlife, Fauna and Flora International, Humane Society International, HSI Australia, International Fund for Animal Welfare, Law of the Wild, OceanCare, Pan African Sanctuary Alliance, Panthera, TRAFFIC, Vulture Conservation Foundation, Wetlands International, Whale and Dolphin Conservation, Wildlife Conservation Society, and WWF.

Let me start by [echoing others in] expressing our sincere appreciation to the Host Government of Uzbekistan for welcoming us in stunning Samarkand for CMS COP14. Situated at the heart of the Central Asian region, Uzbekistan is of critical importance for a wide range of migratory species, and people of all nationalities have also been converging here along the Silk Road for centuries.

We, the international biodiversity community, are coming together here in this historic place for the first time since the adoption of the GBF and find ourselves at yet another crossroads.

The first ever *Report on the Status of the World's Migratory Species* prepared by UNEP/WCMC and launched today brings into stark perspective the daunting task we have before us.

We are currently on a pathway to losing many of migratory species we are committed to, and on whom many Indigenous Peoples and local communities depend on for their livelihoods or cultural and spiritual values. And with them will disappear the ecosystem services they provide, not to mention the phenomenon of animal migration that has inspired humans throughout our existence.

There is – yet again – no time to lose. The coming week will be a test of whether you, the Parties, are ready to make the necessary ambitious commitments under CMS which in turn will deliver implementation of various relevant targets of the GBF.

We firmly believe CMS is THE global mechanism through which Governments and stakeholders can deliver concerted and cooperative action from global to local on their relevant commitments under the GBF, bringing the GBF targets to life for migratory species and their habitats along their migratory routes, especially as regards securing connectivity and ecological integrity, area-based conservation, recovery of endangered species and assuring that any use of species is legal and sustainable and does not increase the risk of pathogen spillover.

Let's ensure that CMS COP14 reflects this historic location and goes down in history as the moment when we all acknowledge the current crisis of migratory species and take the ambitious decisions needed to put our planet and its precious wildlife on a pathway of implementation and resource mobilization.

The next Report on the *Status of the World's Migratory Species* must show tangible evidence that CMS implementation is significantly contributing to delivering on halting and reversing the decline of our shared migratory species of wildlife on land, in the air, and in the water.

As representatives of the international civil society community, we look forward to continuing our strong support to the CMS Parties, CMS governing bodies and the wider CMS community to deliver conservation action for migratory species and their habitats.

Thank you Chair.

### **OPENING STATEMENT OF OCEANCARE / DÉCLARATION LIMINAIRE D'OCEANCARE / DISCURSO DE APERTURA POR OCEANCARE**

OceanCare extends best wishes to everyone attending CMS COP14 in Samarkand and we look forward to working with you constructively in the meeting. We are an international marine conservation organisation with a long history of working within the CMS framework, including with its daughter agreements – particularly ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS – and we are proud to be a partner to the Convention.

In particular, but not exclusively we are currently:

- actively contributing to the workstreams addressing marine pollution, such as marine debris and ocean noise, and specific species conservation efforts with a focus on cetaceans;
- contributing to intensifying the collaborative conservation efforts and support to regional and coastal communities to address the “aquatic wild meat” issue; and
- helping in the further development of the conservation of animal cultures and promoting and supporting the science-based concept of Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs).

During the past triennium, OceanCare has contributed to and helped to conclude numerous tasks related to the CMS Work Programme, working closely with the CMS Secretariat and relevant experts, including:

- Production of the Guidance document on “Best Available Technology (BAT) and Best Environmental Practice (BEP) for Mitigating Three Noise Sources: Shipping, Seismic Airgun Surveys, and Pile Driving”, which was published as Technical Series No. 46 in June 2023;
- Review of the implementation of the previous Programme of Work on Cetaceans, including a gap analysis and recommendations for future priorities for cetacean conservation (UNEP/CMS/COP14/Inf.27.5.1a); (this evaluation was made in close collaboration with relevant COP-appointed Councillors and Partners);
- Together with our partner, the Benin Environment Education Society (BEES), we assisted West African coastal States in the preparation and facilitation of a series of online workshops which led to the development of a “Draft Action Plan to address Aquatic Wild Meat Harvests in West Africa” (see UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.1.2/Rev.3/Annex 1/Appendix 2a); and
- Providing support for numerous other initiatives, including an analysis of Fisheries Aggregating Devices (FADs) (UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.27.1.2/Annex 1).

There has never been a more important time in human history for governments to intensify collaborative efforts and ambition in averting the human-made triple crisis of biodiversity loss, climate change and pollution. CMS has a vital role to play, as it provides wide ranging expertise and guidance to addressing these inter-related crises in support of meeting the global objectives of the Convention, those agreed within the GBF and the Sustainable Development Goals, including SDGs 13, 14, 15 and 17.

In order to be successful, COP14, hosted by the Government of Uzbekistan, should continue its tradition of being an open, transparent and productive forum, allowing civil society to contribute fully

to the core dialogues. This will further help to build effective working relationships and workstreams with all stakeholders. We also encourage member nations to maintain their support, including of a monetary nature, for the Convention and to guard against diminishing its ability to help populations and species in need by opposing any attempts to narrow its jurisdiction.

In response to the crisis that migratory species and their habitats face, OceanCare encourages Parties to:

- Support all the proposals to add marine species/subspecies to the Appendices and commend the Programme of Work for Cetaceans;
- Adopt ambitious Decisions and Resolutions identifying clear conservation actions and measures addressing and mitigating threats to marine species such as FADs, Vessel Strikes, Ocean Noise, Light Pollution and, in particular, support the new work proposed on marine pollution, including an intersessional workshop;
- Adopt and support the Aquatic Wild Meat (AWM) Action Plan developed by West African Countries and endorse the continued AWM work stream globally;
- Intensify habitat conservation efforts by promoting the employment of the IMMAs and Important Shark and Ray Areas (ISRAs) concept and the protection of sea grass meadows;
- Employ strictest caution in the context of Deep-Sea Mining, an activity with so many unknown but potentially irreversible impacts on migratory species and their habitats, which therefore should not be allowed to proceed, recalling the International Seabed Authority (ISA)'s obligation to ensure effective protection for the marine environment from harmful effects.

We note the proposals to take matters forward on climate change and, in this context and more generally, encourage Parties to build synergies with other international bodies, for example in the development of workshops where plans and approaches can be developed and carefully honed.

Making COP14 a success means halting the degradation of the relevant ecosystems and the threats to migratory species; it's not just about hope, but the intrinsic understanding that there is no alternative to comprehensive, collaborative and precautionary action if we want to stand a chance of allowing species and populations of wild animals to thrive. This means properly protecting them and restoring their ecosystems. This will only come about if the decisions made at this and preceding COPs are implemented, fully complied with and, where appropriate, enforced – and likewise the provisions and obligations of the Convention itself.

OceanCare will have a team of four at the COP, and if we can assist you in any way, please let us know.

**STATEMENT BY THE BORN FREE FOUNDATION /**  
**DECLARATION DE LA FONDATION BORN FREE /**  
**DECLARACIÓN DE LA FUNDACIÓN BORN FREE**

Born Free is a UK-based international wildlife protection charity. We promote compassionate conservation to enhance the survival of threatened species in the wild and protect natural habitats, while respecting the needs and safeguarding the welfare of individual animals. As a leading wildlife charity, we oppose the exploitation of wild animals in captivity and campaign to keep them where they belong – in the wild.

We have been attending CMS meetings since 2014, and were proud to become a CMS Partner Organization in 2018 with the endorsement of the late and greatly missed Mr Bradnee Chambers.

We thank the Government of Uzbekistan for hosting this meeting, the CMS Secretariat for its coordination, and the Parties, CMS bodies and other stakeholders who have worked on and submitted proposals and documents.

We regard CMS as being a vitally important and progressive Convention. In particular we value highly the work of the Convention on a wide range of cross-cutting conservation issues, including habitat connectivity, animal culture and social complexity, wildlife crime and trafficking, the health of migratory species, and the interconnection between biodiversity protection and climate. CMS also plays a vital role in the implementation of globally agreed mechanisms, including the GBF and the Sustainable Development Agenda.

While we support the proposals to list additional species on the Convention's Appendices, we emphasize the value of accompanying listings with Concerted Actions aimed at ensuring the effectiveness of the listings. We also appreciate the documents examining the significance of the risks posed to CMS-listed species by direct use and trade.

We have a challenging agenda ahead of us. That said, the publication of the report on the *State of the World's Migratory Species* will act as a timely reminder of the vital importance of the work of the Convention, and its significance to wider efforts to halt and reverse the global decline in biodiversity and address the crisis facing the natural world.

**STATEMENT OF THE DUTCH ELASMOBRANCH SOCIETY / DÉCLARATION DE LA SOCIÉTÉ NÉERLANDAISE D'ÉLASMOBRANCHES / DECLARACIÓN DE LA SOCIEDAD HOLANDESA DE ELASMOBRANQUIOS**

The Dutch Elasmobranch Society would like to express their support for COP14 in Samarkand. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to the Government of Uzbekistan for their hospitality at this meeting. We also thank the CMS Secretariat for their hard work in organizing the meeting, as well as the local organizers.

The CMS COP will be pivotal for moving forward on the agreements and decisions already made, as well as building the foundation for new decisions and future work. Nature does indeed know no borders, and the bringing together of experts and policy makers from around the world is fundamental for the implementation of the CMS decisions. Movement and migration of marine organisms are especially difficult to comprehend as they are largely unseen and often unrecorded. International cooperation is essential and as a Cooperating Partner in the Sharks MOU, the Dutch Elasmobranch Society is actively committed to help implement the MOU's objectives and to assist in protecting species across their range. We support the proposals for the species of elasmobranchs to be added to the CMS Appendices, as well as the Concerted Actions and Single Species Action Plans (SSAPs) for elasmobranchs, both those already in existence and those being discussed. We note that at COP13 the Tope Shark (*Galeorhinus galeus*) was included in Appendix II of CMS and is, since 2023, on Annex 1 of the Sharks MOU. We would like to call on Contracting Parties that are Range States to consider developing a SSAP for this species in their waters, aimed at protecting critical life stages and habitats, with particular emphasis on the North-east Atlantic subpopulation.

**United Nations Environment Programme / Programme des Nations Unies pour l'Environnement / Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Medio Ambiente**

**REPORT OF MS INGER ANDERSEN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, UNEP /  
RAPPORT PAR MME INGER ANDERSEN, DIRECTEUR EXECUTIF DU PNUE  
INFORME POR SRA INGER ANDERSEN, DIRECTOR EJECUTIVO ADJUNTO DEL PNUMA**

Thank you Chair, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I thank you for the opportunity to present the report of the Executive Director of UNEP on Programmatic and Administrative Matters as set out in document COP14/Doc.11 to this meeting. The report provides highlights to the long-standing collaboration between UNEP and CMS.



I would like to start by welcoming the contributions of the CMS Secretariat to the preparation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, the GBF. UNEP recognizes the important role that CMS has in its implementation. In this regard, we appreciate the active participation and contribution of the CMS Secretariat and Party representatives in the Bern III Conference on '*Cooperation among the Biodiversity-related Conventions*' for the implementation of the GBF organized by UNEP last month in Bern, Switzerland. UNEP is very much looking forward to continue cooperation with CMS based on the outcomes of the Conference.

Tying in with this, the GEF Early Action Support project was recently launched signifying UNEP's commitment to working with countries in aligning national strategies with the GBF objectives. The Early Action support includes the Data Reporting Tool for MEAs (DaRT) for rapid alignment of National Targets and National Biodiversity and action Plans. DaRT has been developed in consultation with biodiversity-related conventions to increase effectiveness in national reporting and collaboration. It has been recognized by CMS COP13 and is being rolled out to 170 countries with the participation of CMS National Focal Points.

On the programmatic cooperation between UNEP and CMS, a wide range of activities are ongoing to support the implementation of the Convention.

On the protection of terrestrial species, the Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP) contributes to the implementation of the CMS Gorilla Agreement via several projects involving the CMS Secretariat, for example in conservation of the Critically Endangered Cross River Gorillas.

Further, UNEP's Central Asian Mammals and Climate Adaptation (CAMCA) project contributes to CMS' Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI). It supports the update of the linear-infrastructure atlas and climate-smart conservation planning for three CMS-listed species: Snow Leopards, Argali Sheep and Bukhara Deer.

The CMS Secretariat is a long-standing ex-officio member of the Steering Committee for the African Elephant Fund, which has completed 63 projects to date. The activities address elephant conservation across the African continent and have contributed in diverse ways in accomplishing the objectives of CMS and other relevant environmental conventions. The revised African Elephant Action Plan (AEAP) approved by the African Range states in March last year places the reduction of human-elephant conflict as the priority objective of the fund. We are looking forward to the endorsement of the action plan by the CMS COP during this week.

UNEP is pleased to note that the Regional Seas Conventions provide a platform for many of the joint activities on the protection of the aquatic species, manifesting the benefits that cross-convention cooperation can yield. In this context, I would like to highlight the Med-Monk Seal Project in the Mediterranean and the establishment of Marine Protected Areas in Côte d'Ivoire and Albania marking progress in marine biodiversity conservation, with significant implications for the achievement of GBF targets.

I would like to thank all donors that have funded the wide range of UNEP activities in support of the implementation of CMS.

The Executive Director's report further highlights UNEP's commitment to strengthening the interlinkages between science and policy-making for effective conservation efforts. As part of our collaborative arrangements, UNEP-WCMC has supported countries by conducting an analysis of national reports to guide strategic interventions for species protection. The *State of the World's Migratory Species* report prepared by UNEP-WCMC launched today provides vital information in addressing conservation challenges of the world's migratory species.

Chair, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

On administrative matters, UNEP would like to draw attention to the fact that the growing programmatic portfolio of the Convention requires additional resources in the Secretariat, and

therefore Parties are kindly encouraged to settle their assessed contributions in full early in the year to ensure continuity of operations.

In closing I would like to reiterate UNEP's commitment to enhancing cooperation among biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements. This includes UNEP's strong continued support and collaboration with CMS in the realization of its mandate.

Thank you for your attention.

### **Closing Statements / Déclarations de Clôture / Discursos de Clausura**

#### **CLOSING STATEMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM, MONACO, GEORGIA, NORWAY AND SWITZERLAND / DÉCLARATION FINALE DU ROYAUME-UNI, DE MONACO, DE LA GEORGIE, DE LA NORVEGE ET DE LA SUISSE / DECLARACIÓN FINAL DEL REINO UNIDO, MÓNACO, GEORGIA, NORUEGA Y SUIZA**

Thank you Chair.

On behalf of the United Kingdom, Monaco, Georgia, Norway, and Switzerland, I would like to reiterate our sincere gratitude to the Government of Uzbekistan for hosting this Conference of Parties. We have felt hugely privileged to have been able to experience a bit of this stunning country.

I would also like to thank you, Chair, the Secretariat, the chairs of our Working Groups, our COP-appointed Scientific Councillors, all the Parties and observers, the translators and all the local staff who have taken part this week for the tremendous amount of hard work which has brought us to this successful conclusion.

We have agreed an expansive and ambitious set of Resolutions and Decisions this week, which, when implemented, will advance the conservation of migratory species. Our challenge now is to put policy into practice.

If we wish to continue to further this important work and deliver against our ambitions, we must ensure this Convention and our Secretariat has the support it needs to operate effectively.

We have heard loud and clear the intense pressure the Secretariat is under and the need for further resources to meet those priority objectives **we** have set for them. And we were disappointed that we could not go further towards meeting those needs at this COP.

In this vein, the UK noted that in the discussion of Document 15.1 about the review of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council, many Parties spoke in favour of the increase of Party-appointed Councillors from three to four per region. Parties noted the modest increase in funds required, and the increase in capacity and range of expertise that this would offer to the Sessional Committee to address its high workload. We are disappointed that this has not been supported. We therefore wish to request that this increase is reconsidered at COP15.

We recognize the challenging financial situation many Parties face domestically, but we would strongly urge Parties and non-Parties, in a position to do so, to consider what further voluntary support they can provide to this Convention.

In an effort to meet the needs identified this week, the UK are pleased to be able to announce our intention to provide fifty thousand Great British Pounds towards the in-person workshop on migratory species and climate change to support the implementation of Resolution 12.2, and fifty thousand Great British Pounds to support the participation of eligible delegates in Convention meetings over this next triennium.

## **CLOSING STATEMENT OF IUCN / DÉCLARATION DE CLÔTURE DE L'UICN / DECLARACIÓN FINAL DE LA UICN**

IUCN is very pleased with the outcome of COP 14 and deeply grateful to the Government of Uzbekistan and the city of Samarkand for the warm welcome that we have received. We thank everyone involved – we know there are many of you – and especially the Secretariat, the Scientific Council, and the translators for such a smooth organization and for their support. As IUCN we are proud of the Union's tools, knowledge and experts so deeply involved, and look forward to strengthening our partnerships in the future.

### **Speech to Closing Session of COP / Discours de Clôture de la Session de la COP / Discurso para la Sesión de Clausura de la of COP**

#### **MS AMY FRAENKEL, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY / SECRÉTAIRE EXÉCUTIVE / SECRETARIA EJECUTIVA**

**Minister Abdukhakimov, Esteemed delegates, Colleagues, Friends,**

As CMS COP14 draws to a close here in the magnificent city of Samarkand, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the people and **Government of Uzbekistan**.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to you **Minister Abdukhakimov**, and through you to **the President of Uzbekistan, His Excellency Shavkat Mirziyoyev, and His Excellency Prime Minister Aripov** for being a superb host of CMS COP14. Mr Minister, you told me that you wanted to make this the best CMS COP ever, and I believe you have succeeded.

This COP has been a COP of many firsts. On Monday we launched the first-ever ***State of the World's Migratory Species*** report, and as a result of the media attention, the Convention and the plight of migratory species has reverberated all around the world, with over 2,400 articles, across 103 countries, in 40 languages. While many of the findings are alarming, others are encouraging, and show the key importance of CMS and the work that we have all been advancing here in Samarkand. The report provides many specific areas for action, and with the results of this COP14, we are already stepping up to do what is necessary.

This COP has also brought together many extremely important entities – some for the first time – not only in the field of biodiversity, but also finance, fisheries, law, and many others. The COP was attended by the leadership and senior officials from the UNEP, the GEF, IUCN, UNCLOS, the World Bank, Ramsar, CBD and others. I was also very pleased to see many of the sister agreements to CMS here. I am grateful for all of your commitment and engagement, and express our readiness to deepen our collaboration at all levels.

Holding COP14 in Central Asia has also been a significant milestone for multilateralism, for the region and beyond, highlighting the importance of transboundary cooperation in safeguarding our planet's biodiversity.

Today, as we bid farewell, we do so with a renewed sense of purpose and determination. COP14 has yielded significant outcomes, including the adoption of the *Samarkand Strategic Plan for Migratory Species*, the launch of the Initiative for Central Asian Flyway, and important resolutions on Deep-Sea Mining, infrastructure, light pollution and wildlife health. Fourteen additional species were added for international conservation efforts under the Convention.

The launch of the Global Partnership on Ecological Connectivity (GPEC) underscores our collective efforts to ensure that we identify, connect and protect areas of importance for the survival of migratory species.

I am pleased to acknowledge the outstanding contributions of our nine Migratory Species Champions, including the Government of Uzbekistan. Your commitment is deeply appreciated and crucial for allowing us to carry out even a small part of our critically-important work. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to each of you.

With the Government of Uzbekistan taking up the role of the CMS COP Presidency until the next COP, I have full confidence that they will continue to champion multilateral action for migratory species, both in Central Asia and globally. We greatly look forward to working together in the coming years.

In closing, I once again express my deepest gratitude to you, Minister Abdukhakimov and your entire team. I would like to express my greatest thanks to my colleagues in the CMS Secretariat, for their tireless passionate work that led us to the incredible results we celebrate today. I would like to thank all of the CMS Parties and other delegates for your leadership and invaluable contributions to the success of COP14. I also want to thank all of the interpreters, local staff, drivers, artists, photographers, media teams and all others that came together to deliver this amazing COP14.

When we leave Samarkand, I know we will all carry with us the spirit of collaboration and determination forged here during COP14, and look forward to our continued work together as we strive to ensure a brighter, more sustainable future for migratory species and our planet.

Thank you.