

**7th Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the
CMS Scientific Council (ScC-SC7)**

Bonn, Germany, 17 – 20 September 2024

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**INSECT DECLINE AND ITS THREAT TO
MIGRATORY INSECTIVOROUS ANIMAL POPULATIONS**

(Prepared by the Secretariat)

Summary:

The document invites the Scientific Council to review, based on Decisions 14.216 and 14.217, the report 'Insect Decline and its Threat to Migratory Insectivorous Animal Populations', and agree on actions to implement these Decisions.

INSECT DECLINE AND ITS THREATS TO MIGRATORY INSECTIVOROUS ANIMAL POPULATIONS

Background

1. COP14 adopted Decisions 14.216-14.217 Insect Decline and its Threat to Migratory Insectivorous Animal Populations which read as follows:

14.216 Directed to the Scientific Council

The Scientific Council is requested, subject to the availability of resources, to consider and, as appropriate, to provide recommendations to COP15 on:

- a) *the findings of the report “Insect Decline and its Threat to Migratory Insectivorous Animal Populations”;*
- b) *prioritizing the main factors causing the established loss of insect biomass;*
- c) *collecting additional relevant information regarding the current insect decline, and assessing its cascading effects on migratory insectivorous animal species, including the role of insects in connectivity;*
- d) *developing guidelines for the prioritized actions identified.*

14.217 Directed to the Secretariat

The Secretariat is requested, subject to the availability of resources, to:

- a) *disseminate the report on “Insect Decline and its Threat to Migratory Insectivorous Animal Populations” to relevant stakeholders, and raise awareness of its findings and recommendations in appropriate forums;*
- b) *support the Scientific Council in reviewing the findings and recommendations of the report and in implementing any follow-up actions as part of its programme of work.*

2. There is consensus among the scientific community on the dramatic declines of insect biodiversity and biomass in many parts of the world. This is backed up by the first IPBES global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services,¹ which also highlights the rapid declines in insect populations and abundance.
3. Insect biodiversity plays a vital role in the proper functioning of many of the world's ecosystems and their services. Insects are an essential food resource for numerous vertebrate species that feed on them and rely on them for rearing their offspring, many of which are migratory species. Insect decline can therefore have a significant impact on a range of migratory insectivorous species, especially bird and bat species.
4. However, there are still important gaps in our understanding of the conservation status, population trends and threats to insect species, and the impacts of these on migratory species that rely on them, particularly in some regions. Filling these knowledge gaps and analysing in detail the different drivers of insect decline is important for identifying priority actions that can be taken to address these losses.

¹ IPBES (2019) *Global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services*. E. S. Brondizio, J. Settele, S. Díaz, and H. T. Ngo (editors). IPBES Secretariat, Bonn, Germany. 1148 pages. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3831673>

5. To this end, the Conference of the Parties, at its 13th meeting (COP13, 2020), adopted [Resolution 13.6 Insect Decline and its Threat to Migratory Insectivorous Animal Populations](#), which, inter alia, calls upon the Parties to encourage and support scientific research on the impact of insect decline on migratory insectivorous animal populations. The Resolution also calls upon the Parties to promote continued cooperation and collaboration between scientists, professionals, stakeholders and international bodies whose work is related to insect decline.
6. In April 2023, thanks to voluntary contributions from the Governments of Germany and Australia, the Secretariat commissioned the Leibniz Institute for the Analysis of Biodiversity Change (LIB) to produce a report on the impacts of insect decline on migratory insectivorous animals and presented an early draft to ScC-SC6. ScC-SC6 welcomed the report and requested the Secretariat to finalize it, taking into account, as appropriate, the comments made at ScC-SC6 and submitted in writing to the Secretariat after the meeting. ScC-SC6 further requested the Secretariat to prepare a document for consideration by COP14, which would include a proposal directed to the Scientific Council to continue aspects of Decision 13.129, subject to the availability of resources, and specified areas for further work on specific topics.
7. The Leibniz Institute for the Analysis of Biodiversity Change incorporated a new section on impact of insect decline on migratory insectivorous fish, addressed the comments received by ScC-SC6 and finalized the report which was then submitted by the Secretariat to COP14.
8. The key messages and recommendations of the report '[Insect Decline and its Threat to Migratory Insectivorous Animal Populations](#)' were presented to COP14 as document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.4.2/Rev.1](#), while the full report was made available as information document [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Inf.30.4.2](#). The report provides a review of the relevant scientific literature assessing the status of insect decline populations, the main factors driving insect decline, and the direct and indirect impacts of these on migratory insectivorous animal species.

Implementation of Decisions 14.216 - 14.217

9. In implementation of Decision 14.217, the Secretariat publicized and made further use of the report in the context of the World Migratory Bird Day 2024 campaign. The theme of the 2024 campaign is "[Protect Insects, Protect Birds](#)" and the report was used to develop key messages and a range of other materials for the campaign. Together with partners and the support of the authors of the report, the Secretariat is planning to organize a special webinar on insects for the upcoming second peak day of World Migratory Bird Day on 12 October 2024.
10. In line with Decision 14.216, the report 'Insect Decline and its Threat to Migratory Insectivorous Animal Populations' is being presented to the ScC-SC7 for consideration and further action.

Recommended actions:

11. ScC-SC6 may consider the following actions:
 - a) Invite the Secretariat, subject to availability of resources, to commission a study to collect additional relevant information regarding the current insect decline, and assess its cascading effects on migratory insectivorous animal species, including the role of insects in connectivity, and to possibly propose guidelines for the prioritized actions identified.
 - b) Establish an intersessional Working Group with the Terms of Reference set forth in the Annex, to review the report 'Insect Decline and its Threat to Migratory Insectivorous Animal Populations' and provide recommendations and guidelines for the consideration of the Scientific Council in line with Decision 14.216.

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE CMS SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL WORKING GROUP ON INSECT DECLINE

The Seventh Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council (ScC-SC7) held from 17 to 20 September 2024, decided to establish a Working Group on the above subject.

1. Purpose

The Working Group shall have the mandate to support the Scientific Council in implementation of Decisions 14:216, in particular to:

- a) Provide recommendations on the findings of the report “Insect Decline and its Threat to Migratory Insectivorous Animal Populations” and prioritize the main factors causing the established loss of insect biomass;
- b) Develop guidelines for the most urgent or prioritized actions identified, addressing the cascading effects of insect decline on migratory insectivorous species. While the guidelines should be globally applicable, they could also define region-specific measures.

2. Membership

- A. The Working Group should consist of the following members, striving to maintain a balance of gender and regional representation:
 - a) Sessional Committee members;
 - b) Experts from Parties and other Observers;
 - c) Representatives of other MEAs and organisations, as appropriate.
 - d) Scientific community involved in matters related to insect decline, preferably with a focus on migratory species and insects issues;
- B. If and when needed, experts external to the Working Group and interested in contributing to the objectives of the Working Group may be invited to join meetings or to support specific tasks.

3. Organization of work

- A. The Working Group will select its chair from among its members.
- B. The Working Group will mainly operate electronically by communicating via email and possibly making use of a dedicated workspace or virtual meetings. In-person meetings may be held in the margins of the Sessional Committee meetings.
- C. The Chair of the Working Group will report on progress to the Sessional Committee.
- D. The CMS Secretariat will identify the members of the Working Group, keep the membership list, and will support and facilitate the coordination of the activities and the organization of meetings of the Working Group.

4. Duration

The Working group is established for the intersessional period until COP15.