

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

Bonn, Germany, 17 – 20 September 2024

UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Report

REPORT OF THE MEETING

I. OPENING OF THE MEETING AND ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

1. Ms Narelle Montgomery, Chair of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) Scientific Council (ScC) and of its Sessional Committee (ScC-SC), thanked all members of the ScC-SC for their vote of confidence in her and Daniel Fernando to continue in their roles as Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee. Whilst the large volume of tasks directed to the ScC indicated the high level of regard that Parties had for their work, resources were limited to progress intersessional work. It was important during ScC-SC7 to identify and agree the upcoming intersessional work programme. The short intersessional period until COP15, due by March 2026, resulted in up to twelve months to complete the work anticipated to submit to COP15 for consideration. It was thus necessary to focus the ScC's efforts on results that were achievable with the resources available. Engagement with the work programme through established working groups (WGs) was critical, along with encouraging broader participation in the ScC's activities.
2. Ms Amy Fraenkel, Executive Secretary of CMS, welcomed everyone to this first CMS governing body meeting since COP14, which had important outcomes and significantly raised awareness on migratory species. The new State of the World's Migratory Species (SoWMS) report underscored the importance of the work of CMS, whilst the Samarkand Strategic Plan for Migratory Species (SPMS) provided a science-based set of priorities. She noted that CMS would be closely engaged in the upcoming Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) COP, with side events accepted. She noted the importance to CMS of the guidance provided by ScC-SC7 on priorities and needs, and thanked all involved in organizing the meeting.

ITEM 2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND MEETING SCHEDULE

Item 2.1 Provisional Agenda and Documents and 2.2 Provisional Annotated Agenda and Meeting Schedule

3. The Chair invited comments on documents [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Doc.2.1/Rev.2 Provisional Agenda and Documents](#) and [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Doc.2.2 Provisional Annotated Agenda and Meeting Schedule](#). As there were no comments, both were adopted.

II. STRATEGIC AND INSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

ITEM 3. PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR THE SESSIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL FOR THE INTERSESSIONAL PERIOD BETWEEN COP14 AND COP15

4. The Secretariat introduced document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Doc.3](#) *Programme of Work for the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council for the intersessional period between COP14 and COP15* prepared by the Secretariat. A key objective of the ScC-SC7 was to finalize its Programme of Work (POW) for the intersessional period and discuss and agree modalities for its delivery. The POW consisted of four parts - Part A: Strategic, institutional and legal matters and Cross-cutting conservation issues, Part B: Aquatic species conservation issues, Part C: Avian species conservation issues, and Part D: Terrestrial species conservation issues. ScC-SC7 was invited to review, further develop and adopt its POW.
5. The ScC-SC7 appointed Mr Rob Clay as Chair of the Avian species WG, Mr Barry Baker as Chair of the Aquatic species WG and Mr Alfred Oteng-Yeboah as Chair of the Terrestrial species WG.
6. Mr James Williams (Party-appointed Councillor, UK) noted that it would aid prioritization during the intersessional period to add a column in the POW tables relating to work under the new Samarkand SPMS. The Chair requested the WG Chairs to take note of this suggestion.
7. Noting that the only guidance on prioritization available to the ScC-SC was the Samarkand SPMS, Mr Simon Nemptov (Party-appointed Councillor, Israel) considered that a clear direction in addressing topics would help in setting the scientific programme, and proposed setting prioritization codes.
8. The Chair concurred that the meeting should identify which work was achievable and feasible, and could be done with the available resources; the meeting should aim to complete the tables' status column.
9. The Secretariat agreed that it should be possible to identify feasibility for each item, adding that all COP decisions could be considered as priority, and the conclusion of activities was more dependent on funding.
10. Mr Barry Baker (COP-appointed Councillor for Bycatch) considered that everything in essence was high priority, and setting artificial priorities was not the role of the ScC-SC; it came down to what was feasible and practical, with people identified to carry out these particular tasks.
11. Ms Amy Fraenkel, Executive Secretary of CMS, informed that COP14 had adopted the provisional CMS POW and had asked the Standing Committee (StC) to finalize it. StC members had held an informal meeting recently, and a final draft was approved, which should be adopted shortly, and the topic of future POWs would also be discussed at the next formal meeting of the StC. She added that the POW did have a priority column, and that ScC-SC WGs had generally worked out details of how to move forward on the various areas of their work. She added that COP14 adopted the Samarkand SPMS, which set forth strategic priorities.

12. The Chair concluded that seeing the broader CMS POW would assist the WGs, who could consider both the strategic plan and the broader programme. The Secretariat agreed to make the draft available online to ScC-SC7, under the “Other Documents” section.
13. ScC-SC7 agreed on the need to identify and agree on a realistic and achievable POW and related tasks for this shortened intersessional period, making the best use of available resources.

ITEM 4. ANNEX TO THE PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR THE SESSIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL FOR THE INTERSESSIONAL PERIOD BETWEEN COP14 AND COP15 - PART A: STRATEGIC, INSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL MATTERS AND CROSSCUTTING CONSERVATION ISSUES

14. The Secretariat introduced document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Doc.3/Annex/Part A Programme of Work: strategic, institutional and legal matters and crosscutting conservation issues](#), which contained a table with all COP 24 Decisions and tasks contained in CMS Resolutions that were targeted to the ScC. The meeting agreed to the order for consideration of Annex Part A and related agenda items.

III. SCIENTIFIC ASSESSMENTS AND REPORTS

ITEM 5. STATE OF THE WORLD’S MIGRATORY SPECIES - IMPLEMENTATION OF RESOLUTION 14.4 AND DECISIONS 14.23 – 14.24

Plenary of 17 September

15. The Secretariat introduced document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Doc.5 State of the World’s Migratory Species](#), prepared by the Secretariat, which outlined guidance required from the ScC in order to deliver mandates from Resolution 14.4 and relevant Decisions on the Conservation Status of Migratory Species. Resolution 14.4 requested the Secretariat to develop a SoWMS report for each alternate COP, and requested the ScC to provide guidance on scope and any additional spotlight sections, and on development of an online CMS Data Dashboard. Decisions 14.23 and 14.24 set forth related mandates to the Secretariat and the ScC, including identification of major developments regarding the conservation status of migratory species for a possible report to present to COP15.
16. The ScC was invited to consider which topics to cover in the spotlight sections of the next report, and which in-depth case studies to develop, also to provide guidance on the possible functionalities of the CMS Data Dashboard, and on identifying any major developments regarding the conservation status of migratory species including emerging trends or threats. ScC-SC7 was invited to establish an intersessional WG.
17. As the first SoWMS had been well received at COP14, the Chair noted that it was important to start work on its second edition, whilst the timeframe for its consideration by the ScC-SC had been very limited.
18. Mr Barry Baker (COP-appointed Councillor for Bycatch) noted his full support for the report, but would have liked an opportunity to peer review the SoWMS, which had some factual errors in relation to bycatch.
19. Recognizing the importance of the report, Mr James Williams (Party-appointed Councillor, UK) considered that, in terms of spotlight sections, more could be done in mobilizing marine data by drawing expertise from the OSPAR Convention. He also advised to build on case studies produced for the Migratory Species and Climate

- Change report and to refer to CBD tools when developing the CMS Data Dashboard. In relation to identifying major developments, he recommended a horizon-scanning exercise to look at broader issues and position CMS for maximum impact.
20. Ms Rima Jabado (COP-appointed Councillor for (Marine) Fish) advised that prior engagement with IUCN Specialist Groups was necessary before using IUCN knowledge products, such as Important Shark and Ray Areas (ISRAs), when establishing the CMS Data Dashboard.
 21. Mr Rob Clay (COP-appointed Councillor for Birds) informed that the next IUCN Red List would include a suite of American shorebirds with Threatened status, especially long-distance migrants, and this information should be included in CMS reports. He added that the USA and Canada would have bird reports ready by early 2025, which would have useful sources of information in relation to migratory birds of the Americas.
 22. Mr Fernando Spina (COP-Appointed Councillor for Connectivity/Networks) supported the establishment of a WG on the Conservation Status of Migratory Species report to keep track of priorities.
 23. BirdLife International suggested covering impacts of dams and pesticides (such as used in locust control) on migratory species in the spotlight sections, and, for avian species groups, covering bustards, and more on seabirds, especially gadfly petrels. Monitoring of populations and threats, and the issue of shifting baselines of migratory species could also be covered. BirdLife International was currently updating its online datazone, and could contribute this information to the CMS Data Dashboard and join the WG.
 24. The International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) recommended highlighting issues related to connectivity and take as potential spotlights and inclusion of case studies on migratory species and climate change, especially those that demonstrated the benefits of climate change mitigation. IFAW further advised a greater focus on marine species. Whilst Table 1 (Indicative list of key Dashboard components) captured ideas well, IFAW considered that a breakdown of CMS-listed and non-listed species would be useful, and recommended to maintain a focus on threats through the Dashboard, including trade, reflecting on work done by UNEP-WCMC. IFAW further noted the need to keep up-to-date with IUCN data as the Red List was updated.
 25. Given the high profile of pandemics and the role of avian influenza, Ms Ruth Cromie (COP-appointed Councillor for Invasive species, disease, feral animals, insects, and marine pests and weeds (Wildlife Health)) suggested to cover health as an additional spotlight section.
 26. Noting that the report had been well received in Argentina, Ms Vanesa Tossenberger (COP-appointed Councillor for Aquatic Mammals) agreed that it was important to continue it, with key focus areas being connectivity, climate change and pollution.
 27. In conclusion, ScC-SC7 acknowledged the positive impact of the report and agreed to establish an intersessional WG to guide the next edition. The suggested topics for case studies and key topics for spotlight sections, including mobilizing marine data; the impacts of pesticides and dams; migratory species and climate change; connectivity; and wildlife health would be considered by the WG, along with other potential ideas.
 28. The Chair invited members to join the intersessional WG on the State of the World's Migratory Species report. The following members volunteered to join this WG at the meeting: João Loureiro, Rima Jabado, Edson Gandiwa, Daniel Fernando, Askar Davletbakov, Barry Baker, Rob Clay, Ruth Cromie, Alfred Oteng-Yeboah, Stephen

Okiror, Sathyakumar Sambandam, Mark Simmonds, Daliborka Stankovic, Des Thompson, Vanesa Tossenberger, Australia, IFAW, BirdLife International, BEES, ACCOBAMS, UNEP-WCMC, James Williams, AEMLAP, FACE, the Born Free Foundation, IUCN.

Plenary of 19 September

29. The Chair reported strong interest in joining the WG, whose TORs were agreed.
30. Ms Vanesa Tossenberger (COP-appointed Councillor for Aquatic Mammals) volunteered to take on the role of WG Chair.

IV. INTERPRETATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

Item 4.1 Subject areas of COP-appointed Councillors

Plenary of 17 September

31. The Secretariat introduced document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Doc.4.1](#) *Subject areas of COP-appointed Councillors* prepared by the Secretariat. COP14 mandated the ScC to review existing COP-appointed Councillor subject areas and propose any changes to COP15. The Secretariat had prepared a paper to initiate discussion on whether to keep or change the current nine subject areas, and had identified areas not currently covered by COP-appointed Councillors, including taxonomy and nomenclature; critical habitat, human-wildlife conflict and co-existence; indigenous knowledge; pollution beyond marine pollution; deep seabed mineral exploitation; invasive species; and insects. The ScC-SC was asked to determine whether there were any new COP-appointed Councillor subject areas required for the next two triennia, or to replace or refocus any existing subject areas. The ScC-SC was further asked to consider how to encourage greater involvement of Party-appointed Councillors in the work of the ScC-SC.
32. The Chair noted that the subject area of “Invasive species, disease, feral animals, insects, and marine pests and weeds” was not meant to have one person only to cover all the topics that it embraced, and focus could be shifted from one subject area to another. She added that the COP-appointed Councillors carried out a significant amount of work, and it was important to ensure that the ScC had the right subject area mix.
33. Ms Ruth Cromie (COP-appointed Councillor for Wildlife Health) was aware that there was not enough focus on invasive species, whilst the health agenda had given an increased remit for CMS through the Task Force on Avian Influenza and Wild Birds. She added that the Migratory Species and Health WG, which had found that unsustainable exploitation of resources was driving ill health, needed to be operationalized and also contribute to work on poisoning. She recommended using the word ‘health’ over ‘disease’.
34. The Chair advocated to look within the ScC to cover gaps such as invasive species, by engaging with other Scientific Councillors more fully.
35. Noting that there were many different forms of pollution, with the most chronic pollution also causing health issues, Mr Mark Simmonds (COP-appointed Councillor for Marine Pollution) highlighted the lack of a COP-appointed Councillor for light pollution; Party-appointed Councillors could be promoted to play this and other roles.
36. Mr Graeme Taylor (Party-appointed member for Oceania) considered that it was not possible to have a COP-appointed Councillor for every threat; there would be new topics

- that needed to be addressed and others that could be dropped, depending on decisions of each COP cycle.
37. Noting that all subject areas listed were important and the value of reviewing them every second triennia, Mr James Williams (Party-appointed Councillor, UK) highlighted the importance of motivating volunteers and of funding availability.
 38. Mr Barry Baker (COP-appointed Councillor for Bycatch) considered that some areas not covered could potentially be picked up by existing subject areas. As bycatch was a human-wildlife conflict issue, he could potentially pick up other human-wildlife conflict issues, whilst deep sea mining could be considered as a pollution issue.
 39. The Chair noted that assigning leads to tasks would be important to capture.
 40. Mr João Loureiro (Party-appointed member for Europe) offered his involvement in invasive species, adding that many species changed their migratory behaviour, including invasive species, such as Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiaca* in Portugal.
 41. Mr Des Thompson (COP-appointed Councillor for Climate Change) added that invasive species had contributed to 60% of global plant and animal extinctions and that the threat was growing, so this subject area deserved prominence.
 42. BirdLife International considered that wildlife take could be added as a subject area for a Scientific Councillor, as it would be hard to find someone to cover all taxonomic areas.
 43. ScC-SC7 recognized the need to engage Party-appointed Councillors in its work and to review and potentially update subject areas every two triennia to ensure their focus.
 44. The Chair concluded that the meeting agreed that COP-appointed Councillor subject areas should be continued with a change to the name of the 'Invasive species, disease, feral animals, insects, and marine pests and weeds' subject area to 'Wildlife Health'.

Plenary of 19 September

45. The Chair reminded the meeting of the intention to change the title of the Invasive species, disease, feral animals, insects, and marine pests and weeds subject area to Wildlife Health, and to review the list for gaps. She indicated that no gaps had been noted, and the Secretariat would draft a simple paper with these recommendations to consider at ScC-SC8 for approval at COP15.
46. Mr Barry Baker (COP-appointed Councillor for Bycatch) welcomed ScC members with relevant expertise to lead on issues relating to marine turtles within the Aquatic WG.
47. The Chair encouraged members to embrace input of other partners with expertise, and informed that Australia was ready to lead on the issue of light pollution.
48. Ms Vanesa Tossenberger (COP-appointed Councillor for Aquatic Mammals) recommended Mr Carlos Mario Orrego (Party-appointed member for South and Central America and the Caribbean) as a specialist on marine turtles, who later confirmed his availability to provide expertise.
49. Mr João Loureiro (Party-appointed member for Europe) informed that he had expertise on invasive species which he was willing to contribute.

Item 4.2 Overview of the Working Groups and Task Forces established under the CMS Scientific Council and its Sessional Committee

50. The Secretariat introduced document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Doc.4.2](#) *Overview of the Working Groups and Task Forces established under the CMS Scientific Council and its Sessional Committee*, prepared by the Secretariat, which was mandated by COP14 to provide an overview of WGs and Task Forces. The document showed the WGs with open duration in Annex 1, WGs with limited duration in Annex 2, and the TORs of some WGs in Annex 3, for which a revised version was available, with additional TORs for the WG on Illegal and Unsustainable Taking of Wildlife. One change was proposed in Annex 3, amending the name of the Task Force on Avian Influenza and Wild Birds to Avian Influenza and Wildlife. The ScC was requested to review the list of Scientific WGs and Task Forces, review, amend and approve the TORs and invite the Secretariat to finalize the revised TORs of the Task Force on Avian Influenza and Wild Birds.
51. Ms Ruth Cromie (COP-appointed Councillor for Wildlife Health) added that the change from wild birds to wildlife in Annex 3 was necessary, as a number of mammalian taxa were being affected by and were at risk from avian influenza.
52. Noting that there were some differences between TORs, Mr James Williams (Party-appointed Councillor, UK) recommended to check consistency of TORs against the template, and that all WGs should be time-limited. He added that tasks of all WGs and Task Forces should be clear for the next triennium, and it was good governance to have regular reviews to ensure that work ongoing was still useful and relevant. He requested a document showing the full list of all WGs.
53. Mr Graeme Taylor (Party-appointed member for Oceania) agreed that WGs should not be ongoing without a purpose, but there should be an option for renewal, whilst all needed to report back to the COP.
54. The Chair questioned if a timeframe should be applied to any WGs of open duration in Annex 1A. The Secretariat added that some timeframes should match the duration of the Samarkand SPMS. The Secretariat informed that all scientific WGs established under the ScC were listed, as the ScC only had a mandate for these, but the list could be extended.
55. Ms Vanesa Tossenberger (COP-appointed Councillor for Aquatic Mammals) considered that it would be difficult to set time limitations for all WGs established for long-term issues, as they were linked to resolutions, which had a long horizon themselves. She suggested to determine timeframes according to the work required under each WG, and to define that all WGs would be reviewed at each pre-COP ScC-SC meeting.
56. Whilst agreeing that timeframes could be considered, Mr Fernando Spina (COP-Appointed Councillor for Connectivity/Networks) noted that some WGs or Task Forces would probably always be required, such as Aquatic Mammals, whilst others, such as Avian Influenza and Wild Birds might not. He recommended retaining the open-ended WGs, which should report to COPs, even if there were no urgent issues to report on.
57. AEMLAP recommended to retain open-ended WGs, and to ensure that every COP renewed the mandate of the WGs, as had been done for the AEMLAP WG.
58. Noting that one size did not fit all, Mr Mark Simmonds (COP-appointed Councillor for Marine Pollution) highlighted the situation of WGs led by COP-appointed Councillors reviewing their own mandates, which needed to report back to the ScC and the COP.

59. The Chair considered that WG reporting lines could be clarified, and recommended that the ScC-SC review the list of WGs and Task Forces to check that each was still active.
60. The Secretariat reminded the meeting that reviewing the activities of each group went beyond the mandate given by COP14, and recommended to go through the list to give guidance, for instance to check if all groups were active or if some were dormant; providing guidance in the pre-COP ScC meeting would not allow time for change.
61. Mr Edson Gandiwa (Party-appointed member for Africa) questioned how WGs aligned to the POW. The Chair agreed that cross-referencing WGs to the POW would be useful.
62. Mr Graeme Taylor (Party-appointed member for Oceania) questioned if all WGs had a contact person on the CMS website, and the process for joining, suggesting that groups without a lead person could be considered inactive.
63. Mr James Williams (Party-appointed Councillor, UK) noted that the majority of WGs and Task Forces were linked to work in the POW, but considered that the work of the Preventing Poisoning WG had been largely taken over by other WGs.
64. Ms Ruth Cromie (COP-appointed Councillor for Wildlife Health) concurred that the Preventing Poisoning WG had been inactive during the last intersessional period, but there were some elements, such as poison baits and lead weights that still needed to be looked at, which might not be taken up by other groups.
65. BirdLife International considered that poison baits were largely taken up by the Illegal and Unsustainable Taking of Wildlife WG and the (as yet to be established) Vulture WG, which could also consider drugs, whilst rodenticides and pesticides could potentially be tasked to the Raptors MOU, though this would restrict it to the Africa-Eurasia region. BirdLife International recommended that the new proposed WG on Insects could take the issue of pesticides on board.
66. Mr Fernando Spina (COP-Appointed Councillor for Connectivity/Networks) advised caution in closing the Preventing Poisoning WG whilst issues such as lead poisoning remained unsolved.
67. The Secretariat proposed to add lead persons to the list for each WG and Task Force and continue the discussion at the next meeting. The Chair concluded that the Secretariat would work on this for review by ScC-SC8 with more information that would help in making a decision.
68. The Chair indicated that the WGs listed in Annex 1B would be reviewed by the ScC-SC7 Terrestrial WG, whilst the meeting agreed that the WG on Ecological Connectivity shown in Annex 2 should be extended to COP15, and that 'wild birds' should be changed to 'wildlife' in the title of the Task Force on Avian Influenza and Wild Birds in Annex 3A. The Secretariat added that a final consultation with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) was still needed in relation to the Task Force on Avian Influenza and Wild Birds.
69. In relation to Annex 3B, Ms Ruth Cromie (COP-appointed Councillor for Wildlife Health) suggested new text in relation to role and scope, and noted a minor error; she would submit proposed amendments in writing to the Secretariat.
70. A minor amendment was suggested for Annex 3B, an error highlighted in the Spanish version of Annex 3C, and harmonization of language required in relation to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), whilst IFAW recommended a minor

revision, which it would submit in writing to the Secretariat. The meeting agreed that the Secretariat would incorporate the submitted amendments.

71. In conclusion, ScC-SC7 agreed that all WGs should have defined duration and clear reporting mechanisms. ScC-SC7 recognized the potential to merge or close inactive groups, and the need for regular updates and reviews.

Item 6.1.1. Insect Decline and its Threats to Migratory Insectivorous Species

Plenary of 17 September

72. The Secretariat introduced document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Doc.6.1.1](#) *Insect Decline and its Threats to Migratory Insectivorous Animal Populations* prepared by the Secretariat. COP14 mandated the ScC to consider the findings of the report, examine the issue and develop guidelines for the prioritized actions identified. The report, which had been presented to ScC-SC6 and to COP14, introduced the main factors causing the loss of insect biomass and identified gaps for future research, especially the need to look at impacts on migratory bats. The report represented a first step to understand the impact of insect decline on migratory species. It was proposed to form an intersessional WG on insect decline to advise the Secretariat and to assist in developing guidance. SC-SC7 was invited to request the Secretariat to commission a study to assess the effects of insect decline on migratory species and to develop guidance. The Secretariat welcomed Mr David Ott (Liebniz Institute) to the meeting as an author of the report.
73. Mr Timm Reinhardt (Party-appointed Councillor, Germany) would be interested to participate in the WG and to see a mandate developed, and noted the comment from BirdLife International that part of the work could be linked with the Preventing Poisoning WG. He questioned which body should take on developing guidance. The Secretariat answered that developing guidance could not be achieved by the Secretariat alone, and welcomed a Council member taking the lead and forming a group.
74. Mr Mark Simmonds (COP-appointed Councillor for Marine Pollution) noted that light pollution was likely to be playing a role in insect decline, offering potential for merging. The Chair also noted the link to artificial light impacting insects.
75. The Born Free Foundation considered that the title implied impacts on insectivorous birds, but insect decline would have a wider effect on the whole ecosystem.
76. Noting that this was a complex topic, intertwined with the work of other WGs, Mr David Ott (Liebniz Institute) recommended that representatives of other WGs could potentially be represented on this WG. He added that looking at the ecosystem approach was one of the gaps to address in the future.
77. ScC-SC7 recognized the complexity of the issue, the need for further research, and the potential for collaboration with other WGs on related topics such as light pollution and poisoning.
78. The Chair proposed to set up a consultative group at this stage, rather than an intersessional WG, which could outline potential next steps and linkages with existing WGs, bringing in other experts after securing engagement of ScC members; guidelines for mitigating decline could be one area to build in.

Plenary of 19 September

79. The Chair confirmed establishment of a consultative group and invited the Secretariat to contact individuals not participating in ScC-SC7 who had expressed an interest in being part of this group, and report back to the ScC.

Item 6.1.2 Pastoralism and Migratory Species

Plenary of 17 September

80. The Secretariat introduced document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Doc.6.1.2 Pastoralism and Migratory Species](#) prepared by the Secretariat, which requested the ScC to establish a multi-stakeholder WG on pastoralism and review the TORs. Pastoralism was confirmed as the main threat to Argali Sheep (*Ovis ammon*). Tasks of the WG over the next intersessional period were to review the impact of transhumance on biodiversity, existing models and best practices, and to provide recommendations to support Parties in addressing impacts of pastoralism on CMS-listed species and in realizing potential benefits to ecosystem health and resilience associated with holistic management. The Secretariat proposed that the WG mandate would expire at the next meeting.
81. Noting the links between pastoralism and insects, Ms Vanesa Tossenberger (COP-appointed Councillor for Aquatic Mammals) believed that the persistence of medicines used in pastoralism required an ecosystem approach. Born Free gave an example of non-decomposing dung pats due to anti-parasitic drugs directly impacting insects and other invertebrates, and fish and the aquatic environment when they reached waterways.
82. Mr Rubén Moreno-Opo (Party-appointed member for Europe) raised the issue of sustainable agriculture and migratory species and suggested drafting a document to outline specific measures to help Parties; the management of agricultural practices and landscapes had direct impacts on the disappearance of a number of migratory species.
83. The Secretariat advised that the WG needed to look at what kinds of measures the COP might want to adopt.
84. Mr Fernando Spina (COP-Appointed Councillor for Connectivity/Networks) considered that it was very timely to consider these issues, noting the restoration law within the EU which followed changing agricultural practices.
85. AEMLAP reported that land use issues were addressed by its Action Plan on landbirds, and land use and land use changes were included in the Abuja Declaration with support of six West African countries. AEMLAP considered it timely for CMS to address land use and land use changes, agriculture and pastoralism as factors influencing migratory birds.
86. Mr João Loureiro (Party-appointed member for Europe) noted that there were many issues to consider, such as photovoltaic panels taking over agricultural land, and the needs of habitat restoration for steppe birds within an agricultural landscape.
87. Mr Sathyakumar Sambandam (Party-appointed member for Asia) noted that he had studied the impact of pastoralism on migratory mammals in the high Himalayas.
88. Mr Rob Clay (COP-appointed Councillor for Birds) reminded the meeting that the WG was focused on pastoralism, whilst the discussion in relation to agriculture and wider land use was much broader. The ScC-SC needed to determine if the WG was adopting this wider remit or would focus only on pastoralism.

89. Ms Amy Fraenkel, Executive Secretary of CMS, agreed that agricultural and urban expansion had significant impacts on migratory species, and the Samarkand SPMS included the issues of habitat destruction and fragmentation. She advised that this WG should focus on the narrower topic of pastoralism, whilst wider land use could be brought up as an emerging issue at COP15. She added that the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) was working on insects, and CMS could join forces with them.
90. ScC-SC7 agreed to establish the WG on Pastoralism and CMS-listed Species. The Chair concluded that the WG should focus on pastoralism, but noted the need to also address agricultural issues more closely in the future.
91. The following members volunteered to join the Pastoralism and CMS-listed Species WG: Rubén Moreno-Opo, Sathyakumar Sambandam, Edson Gandiwa, the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), the Born Free Foundation, Stephen Okiror, Ruth Cromie and Rob Clay.

Plenary of 19 September

92. The Chair invited new comments in relation to Pastoralism. There being none, it was taken that these would be raised within the WG.

Item 6.1.3 Transfrontier conservation areas for migratory species

Plenary of 17 September

93. The Secretariat introduced document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Doc.6.1.3](#) *Transfrontier conservation areas for migratory species* prepared by the Secretariat. CMS had commissioned an online tool identifying opportunities for transboundary conservation in Africa, noting the challenge of transboundary area delineation. The Secretariat had organised a series of webinars on the usefulness and functionality of the Tool for the three identified regions, as well as a standalone event organized for all CMS Parties of those regions, and conducted a survey. Recommendations were also drawn up, including circulating the survey further and improving the content and visibility of information provided about the data layer methodology. The ScC-SC was requested to review the usefulness of the Tool, make recommendations on its further use and inform on its future expansion.
94. The Chair noted that the meeting requested the Secretariat to circulate the survey further and develop some concrete guidelines based on specific feedback received.
95. Drawing on the experience of Zimbabwe, Mr Edson Gandiwa (Party-appointed member for Africa) considered that the Tool was useful in aiding transfrontier initiatives. Noting that political decisions were key for transfrontier areas, he recommended adding more layers to strengthen baselines, and to show the ranges of wildlife. He denoted that the Tool should integrate data from all land uses and stakeholders to guide decisions, so that it did not present only a conservationist view; with an expanded reach, it could become an independent tool useful for decision making.

Plenary of 19 September

96. The Chair invited a discussion on this issue, but no further comments were forthcoming.

Item 6.1.4 Infrastructure Development and Migratory Species

Plenary of 17 September

97. The Secretariat introduced document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Doc.6.1.4 Infrastructure Development and Migratory Species](#) prepared by the Secretariat, which proposed TORs and composition of the WG on Infrastructure and Migratory Species for ScC-SC7 to consider.
98. The Chair noted that the document linked to other frameworks, such as the Energy Task Force, and welcomed volunteers to participate in this group.
99. Noting that the TORs were broad, Mr James Williams (Party-appointed Councillor, UK) considered that major prioritization was needed to review what could be achieved within this intersessional period. He recommended the WG to cross reference with work going on under the Climate Change WG, adding that infrastructure presented barriers in both physical and non-physical terms.
100. Mr Fernando Spina (COP-Appointed Councillor for Connectivity/Networks) stated that energy infrastructures were relevant to consider with different atlases, and there was good potential to overlay and analyse the presence of migration corridors or flyways.
101. Speaking as a member of the Energy Task Force, Mr Graeme Taylor (Party-appointed member for Oceania) urged clear lines of work to avoid overlap. He recommended synergy with the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP), which was looking to set up a WG on wind turbines / infrastructure.
102. ScC-SC7 agreed to establish the WG on Infrastructure and Migratory Species. The following members offered to join the WG: WCS, Stephen Okiror, Alfred Oteng-Yeboah, Rob Clay, Daliborka Stankovic, Edson Gandiwa, the Born Free Foundation, Vanesa Tossenberger, UNEP-WCMC, and Fernando Spina. The Secretariat would also approach other entities.

Plenary of 19 September

103. The Chair informed that revised TORs were available as document CRP6.1.4, [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Doc.6.1.4](#), the main amendment being addition of the duration.
104. Mr James Williams (Party-appointed Councillor, UK) noted that the TORs had lost some information, which the Chair indicated would be reinstated.

Item 6.1.5 Implementation of Resolution 13.5 (Rev.Cop14) CMS: International Light Pollution Guidelines for Migratory Species

Plenary of 17 September

105. Mr Mark Simmonds (COP-appointed Councillor for Marine Pollution) introduced document [ScC-SC7/Doc.6.1.5 Implementation of Resolution 13.5 \(Rev.Cop14\) CMS: International Light Pollution Guidelines for Migratory Species](#). Decision 14.222 directed the Secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, to consider preparation of additional annexes for adoption by COP15 on how to avoid and mitigate the negative effects of light pollution in taxa; to disseminate the CMS International Light Pollution Guidelines for Migratory Species widely; and to support implementation through webinars or other activities. It was recommended to hold an online consultation meeting

and draw up a list of interested organisations. He indicated that new appropriate leadership was needed for this subject area.

106. The Chair thanked Mr Simmonds and Ms Laetitia Nunny for conducting this work, which led to development of the guidelines as a tool for Parties to use, and encouraged dissemination and awareness.
107. The Secretariat suggested that two main issues needed to be discussed at an online expert meeting - possible modalities for future guidelines, and messages to send to COP15.
108. Ms Amy Fraenkel, Executive Secretary of CMS, highlighted the need to disseminate the guidelines widely to get them into the hands of those who could use them.
109. Noting the great enthusiasm of those involved, Mr Mark Simmonds (COP-appointed Councillor for Marine Pollution) considered that there had been good opportunities to disseminate the guidelines. He reminded that he would sign off on leadership on this issue, which he believed Australia would take on.
110. Ms Narelle Montgomery (Party-appointed member for Oceania) confirmed that Australia would take up the lead in the facilitation of an expert consultation related to possible future guidelines.

Plenary of 19 September

111. The Chair invited discussion on Decision 14.221 in which the ScC was requested to consider issues relating to light pollution and mitigation methods, but no further comments were forthcoming.

Item 6.1.6 Climate Change and Migratory Species

Plenary of 17 September

112. Mr Des Thompson (COP-appointed Councillor for Climate Change) introduced document [ScC-SC7/Doc.6.1.6](#) *Climate Change and Migratory Species*, noting special thanks to the previous COP-appointed Councillor for Climate Change, Mr Colin Galbraith. He reminded the meeting of the importance to be nature positive in the journey to become climate positive. COP14 mandated the ScC to attend to ten actions, starting with the re-establishment of the WG on Climate Change, and agreeing its POW. Building on the important report launched at the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) COP28, an international meeting was planned for February 2025 in Edinburgh to make progress on implementing Decision 14.214. Workshops were planned to discuss the issues of facilitating range changes of migratory species, and nature-based solutions. The ScC was invited to provide advice on the meeting, and comments on the document, on linkages between work being undertaken and on issues pertaining to migratory species with regard to UNFCCC COP29.
113. The Chair welcomed the Edinburgh meeting and the linkages with other WGs, and noted the need to recognize them.
114. The UK added that it was doing background preparatory work for the Edinburgh meeting.
115. IFAW anticipated that the long list of items for the ScC to consider under Decision 14.214 could be adequately captured by the Edinburgh meeting, but considered that sub point d) on the role of migratory species in maintaining and enhancing climate change

mitigation and adaptation would need higher prominence. IFAW offered to participate in the WG and to help the UK in any preparatory work for the Edinburgh meeting.

116. Mr Mark Simmonds (COP-appointed Councillor for Marine Pollution) noted that the International Whaling Commission (IWC) was conducting much work relating to climate change that could be brought forward into the Edinburgh meeting and other fora, and the IWC Scientific Committee was interested to be involved.
117. Mr Des Thompson (COP-appointed Councillor for Climate Change) clarified that participants could join the meeting online as well as in person in Edinburgh.
118. Ms Vanesa Tossenberger (COP-appointed Councillor for Aquatic Mammals) noted that the Edinburgh meeting was relevant for all migratory species, and encouraged all ScC-SC members to participate in it.
119. The Born Free Foundation offered to contribute to the WG in relation to terrestrial migratory species, especially elephants, and to help the UK in preparation of the Edinburgh meeting. Ruth Cromie (COP-appointed Councillor for Wildlife Health) also offered to join the WG.
120. ScC-SC7 agreed to the international, in-person meeting in Edinburgh, which would re-establish the CMS Climate Change and Migratory Species WG, taking forward work under COP14 Decisions, and developing outcomes to be taken to COP15.

Plenary of 19 September

121. The Chair noted that some minor amendments were shown in document CRP4.2 part C, [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Doc.4.2](#), mainly to clarify that this WG would contribute to the GBF, and drew attention to the climate change WG meeting in February 2025 in Edinburgh, being organized by Mr Des Thompson (COP-appointed Councillor for Climate Change).
122. Mr Sathyakumar Sambandam (Party-appointed member for Asia) volunteered for this WG, as he was already looking closely at climate change adaptation in the Himalayas.

Item 6.1.7 Incorporating Indigenous and local knowledge to support effective migratory species conservation

123. Mr Daniel Fernando (Vice-Chair of the ScC) took on the role of Chair, while Ms Narelle Montgomery (in her capacity as Party-appointed member for Oceania) introduced document [ScC-SC7/Doc.6.1.7 Incorporating Indigenous and local knowledge to support effective migratory species conservation](#). Decision 14.9 requested the SC, subject to availability of resources, to assess the significance of multiple systems of knowledge and understanding, and provide a report to COP15 with suggestions for enhanced implementation of the Convention. The document provided a review of current practices in international fora, a summary of mechanisms instituted and useful resources and draft TORs for the WG. She welcomed suggestions and encouraged the meeting to set realistic tasks to focus on in the intersessional period. The StC would be invited to join the WG.
124. Germany considered this a significant policy issue under discussion in different Conventions, and it was important to avoid overlap with these other processes. Germany added that mechanisms for participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities formed an important governance and policy question mandated to the Secretariat for

decision by the COP, whilst the ScC should focus strictly on assessing significance of multiple systems of knowledge and providing a report to COP15.

125. Mr Barry Baker (COP-appointed Councillor for Bycatch) considered that the TORs were too broad, and did not favour StC members or representatives from other Multilateral Environment Agreements (MEAs) joining the WG.
126. Mr Graeme Taylor (Party-appointed member for Oceania) noted the importance of this topic, especially in the Oceania region, where many indigenous communities were managing migratory species; New Zealand bodies had a legal obligation to work with Maori communities and take account of local traditional knowledge. He stated that a WG was needed to discuss these issues, and provide an opportunity to involve other knowledge systems.
127. The Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) reminded the meeting of a guidance on using traditional knowledge that had been developed under a CITES working group, which was available as a draft on the CITES website.
128. Noting the important role of community-based conservation in Africa, Mr Edson Gandiwa (Party-appointed member for Africa) considered it important to discuss this issue and to see how to incorporate other forms of knowledge moving forward, with potential to learn lessons from other Conventions.
129. IFAW noted that it should be possible to separate issue of how to incorporate traditional knowledge versus representation of groups, and that the ScC could focus on ways to bring in other knowledge systems. He advised that language needed clarification, for instance in not lumping traditional knowledge with community-based knowledge.
130. Under point c) of the WG membership, Mr Des Thompson (COP-appointed Councillor for Climate Change) questioned if the WG was looking for traditional knowledge holders or traditional knowledge experts.
131. Ms Narelle Montgomery (in her capacity as Party-appointed member for Oceania) noted that the document was not designed to stray beyond its mandate, but acknowledged that the line was blurred between the roles of the Secretariat and the ScC. She offered to revise the WG TORs to ensure it was focused on science and technical aspects, and indicated that the WG would not be able to tackle all issues during this intersessional period, but it should be able to make progress.
132. The Chair concluded that there was interest to have an informal WG to discuss the amended TORs. After the discussion, Ms Narelle Montgomery returned to the position of Chair.
133. Barry Baker, Graeme Taylor, Des Thompson, Juergen Friedrich (Germany), the Born Free Foundation, Edson Gandiwa and Alfred Oteng-Yeboah participated in this informal WG.

Plenary of 19 September

134. The WG on multiple systems of knowledge, including traditional and indigenous knowledge was established and its TORs adopted. Zeb Hogan, the Born Free Foundation, SPREP, Australia and WCS expressed an interest in joining the WG.

PROGRAMME OF WORK: STRATEGIC, INSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL MATTERS AND CROSSCUTTING CONSERVATION ISSUES

135. The Chair introduced document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Doc.3/Annex/Part A](#) *Strategic, Institutional and Legal Matters and Crosscutting Conservation Issues*, which comprised a table summarizing mandates and activities for each topic.

Strategic and Institutional Matters

Samarkand Strategic Plan for Migratory Species

136. The Secretariat informed that the intersessional WG with responsibility to develop the Samarkand SPMS concluded its work at COP14, and the Secretariat was now looking at actions, baselines and indicators, as well as a monitoring framework and a new template for reporting taking on board the Samarkand SPMS. This work would be submitted to the ScC when available.
137. Mr James Williams (Party-appointed Councillor, UK) noted the need to cross-link StC work on the Samarkand SPMS with the input from the ScC, and of learning lessons from the process and from the GBF monitoring framework. He offered to contribute to that work, but considered that the WG should be established under the StC first.
138. The Secretariat informed that there was a list of previous members of the intersessional WG, which it aimed to re-establish and open up to new members, who could join when the notification came around.
139. UNEP-WCMC offered to join the WG.

Participation of Non-Governmental Organizations and Other Groups in CMS Processes

140. The Chair informed that the revised TORs for the WG on multiple systems of knowledge, including traditional and indigenous knowledge, were available as CRP6.1.7, and requested the ScC-SC7 to confirm them.
141. The Born Free Foundation believed that the TORs were improved. There were sensitive areas between traditional knowledge and traditional beliefs, such as the belief that gorilla meat could improve a person's strength, the latter having no place in a ScC.
142. The following members offered to participate in the WG on multiple systems of knowledge, including traditional and indigenous knowledge: the Born Free Foundation, Zeb Hogan, SPREP, and Australia..

Cooperation between the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and CMS

143. Noting the importance of cooperation with IPBES, especially in relation to connectivity, and the Decision 14.12, the Secretariat referred to the fast-track methodological assessment on integrated biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning and ecological connectivity, which had been approved by the IPBES Plenary in 2023. IPBES had recently issued a call for expression of interest to host the Technical Support Unit (TSU), and published a call to nominate experts for the assessment. The CMS Secretariat had brought the call for hosting the TSU to the attention of its Parties and observers by a notification. The IPBES Secretariat was planning a webinar to introduce the process of nominating experts and scope of the assessment and to outline the expertise required. ScC members were invited to engage in the assessment as experts, and to register for

the webinar if interested. In relation to Decision 14.13, the ScC was requested to consider the findings of a number of assessments, including of the Sustainable Use of Wild Species, from a CMS perspective. Further mandates were ongoing under relevant Resolutions.

144. Ms Amy Fraenkel, Executive Secretary of CMS, informed that Decision 14.13 directed the ScC to a list of IPBES products that were relevant for work of the Convention, including the IPBES-IPCC co-sponsored workshop report on biodiversity and climate change. She encouraged the WGs established by the ScC to contribute to assessment of the outcomes of the IPBES assessments, work that could be reflected in the body of the ScC-SC7. She added that IPBES was keen to establish closer links with CMS, and although the fast-track assessment on ecological connectivity was a long time in the making, CMS needed to make the most of its successful completion and continue to contribute to this process and to the other relevant products.
145. Mr Alfred Oteng-Yeboah (COP-appointed Councillor for Terrestrial Mammals) was pleased to note that after a long trial the CMS-supported assessment on connectivity was approved by IPBES. He questioned how to encourage the relationship between IPBES and CMS National Focal Points (NFPs).
146. The Chair noted that communication between MEA NFPs would vary significantly between countries; however, the Secretariat would recirculate notifications issued by IPBES to CMS NFPs if relevant, after which it was beholden on the NFPs in each country to engage.
147. Mr Fernando Spina (COP-Appointed Councillor for Connectivity/Networks) emphasized the need to circulate and advertise cooperation through the scientific community, including through members of the WG on Ecological Connectivity.

Scientific Council

148. Under Resolution 12.4 (Rev.COP14), which emphasized the need for the ScC to establish close links with equivalent bodies in other MEAs, the Secretariat reported that it had participated in a UN Environment Programme (UNEP) meeting on strengthening the science policy interface between CMS, CBD and the Convention on Wetlands, and was in liaison with other MEAs.

Scientific Assessments and Reports

Atlas on Animal Migration

149. Mr Fernando Spina (COP-Appointed Councillor for Connectivity/Networks) informed that the ScC was requested to provide advice and guidance on updating existing and developing new modules of the atlas, on improving its usability, and promoting the knowledge and use of modules. He considered the atlas as crucial work for CMS, as reflected in the Samarkand SPMS, and fundamental to connectivity. As CMS was close to being able to deliver a global atlas on animal migration, he urged all Councillors and delegates to contribute in kind and to identify support for its necessary completion.
150. Ms Amy Fraenkel, Executive Secretary of CMS, noted that CMS was fortunate to have different entities contributing to the development of migration atlas products, such as the Global Initiative on Ungulate Migration (GIUM) Atlas of Ungulate Migration, which had attracted significant press coverage. She stressed that it was essential to know the movements and habitats of migratory species, how to achieve connectivity and implement the GBF, and understand the wider landscapes used by migratory species.

She highlighted results from South Sudan, where ungulates had been found to move out of protected areas across railroads and oilfields, and stressed the need to brainstorm through the WG on Connectivity and other bodies to raise the atlas up for significant resource mobilization.

151. The Chair mentioned the online Marine Turtle Breeding and Migration Atlas (TurtleNet) as a good example, where tracking movements of turtles were very tangible to people.
152. The Born Free Foundation questioned whether the atlas focused on the biological definition of migration or the legal definition of migration as per the CMS definition. It was willing to contribute to the atlas for primates, noting that GIUM and the Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI) atlases referred only to ungulate migrations.
153. The Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area (ACCOBAMS) noted that the IUCN Marine Mammal Protected Areas Task Force (MMPATF) had been trying to work out the best way to illustrate migrations, and their efforts could complement CMS efforts. ACCOBAMS noted that the scientific information from tagging was clearly useful, but sometimes the sample sizes were very low.
154. Mr Fernando Spina (COP-Appointed Councillor for Connectivity/Networks) reported that he was planning a meeting with GIUM colleagues to take an analytical approach to define pathways.

Interpretation and Implementation of the Convention

Implementation of Articles IV and V of the Convention

155. The Chair noted that Resolution 12.8 instructed the Secretariat and the ScC to apply the criteria in developing and evaluating proposals for future Agreements. There were no comments.

Crosscutting Conservation Issues

Illegal and Unsustainable Taking of Wildlife

156. The Chair informed that the revised TORs were contained in CRP4.2 part E.
157. Noting that COP14 had requested the ScC (Decision 14.184) to review all work on this topic across the Convention, the Secretariat proposed that this additional WG looked at terrestrial species as well as inputs from the aquatic and avian WGs, especially to identify the main drivers and scale of wildlife take, to look at conservation status, and to ensure with other partners that taking of wildlife was legal and sustainable.
158. The European Federation for Hunting and Conservation (FACE) considered that the TORs were fit for purpose, but suggested to include the background and purpose.
159. The Chair advised the Secretariat to develop a standard template for WGs that could capture the main sections represented, but noted that it was important to maintain flexibility, as WGs were established for different purposes.
160. IFAW noted its agreement with FACE, as this information related back to the COP14 decision. IFAW questioned if the focal areas for the ScC were drawn from the analysis, or if there was scope to consider measures beyond those listed as i-iv in the TORs.

161. The Secretariat replied that the measures represented an agglomeration of different outcomes from resolutions relating to aquatic and avian decisions as well as the Decision adopted by COP13.
162. Mark Simmons (COP-appointed Councillor for Marine Pollution) considered that the TORs were very broad, and questioned if, in the aquatic realm, the potentially illegal take of whales by Japan would be included in the review. He expressed concern by what the WG would be taking on in relation to marine issues, noting that the concept came more from the terrestrial side, which was easier to engage with.
163. Mr João Loureiro (Party-appointed member for Europe) considered that the TORs were workable and offered his expertise to the WG.
164. Ms Amy Fraenkel, Executive Secretary of CMS, noted that the text was taken verbatim out of the COP decision, and the role of the ScC was to review the analysis. COP Decisions 14.184 and 14.185 were quite detailed, and the ScC was invited to consider how best to carry out this work.
165. Mr Simon Nemptzov (Party-appointed Councillor, Israel) considered that this issue went to the heart of the Convention, and enforcement was a vital issue. He recommended adding a fifth measure to the TORs: "*Make recommendations for improved compliance by the Parties on preventing illegal and unsustainable take of species.*" The Born Free Foundation supported this suggestion.
166. Ms Amy Fraenkel, Executive Secretary of CMS, noted that making recommendations was implied under Decision 14.184 d), which requested the ScC to provide recommendations to COP15, whilst IFAW noted that this was also captured in part 1 b) of the TORs.
167. Ms Vanesa Tossenberger (COP-appointed Councillor for Aquatic Mammals) recommended to integrate Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) in the text, but stressed that countries, such as Argentina, which were not part of any RFMOs, should not be excluded from the measures taken.
168. Mr Barry Baker (COP-appointed Councillor for Bycatch) noted that Argentina had past problems with respect to RFMOs, and it would be good to accommodate their concerns.
169. UNEP-WCMC considered that the TOR heading provided clear guidance, but recommended to add text relating to the identification of data gaps, with a role for the WG to identify gaps and bring them to light.
170. ScC-SC7 approved the establishment of the WG on illegal and unsustainable taking of wildlife.
171. The following members volunteered to join the WG: João Loureiro, Simon Nemptzov, James Williams (UK), Vanesa Tossenberger, FACE, IFAW, WCS, UNEP-WCMS, Edson Gandiwa, Fernando Spina. FACE proposed the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC) to join the WG.
172. Noting appreciation for the level of interest in this subject, Ms Amy Fraenkel, Executive Secretary of CMS, considered that the ScC should consider which areas needed the greatest attention; some illegal take did not attract much attention, especially take related to national and local use or trade. She added that illegal take was widely relevant, citing the KMGBF targets 4, 5 and 9 and noted that sustainable management of wildlife was on the agenda for CBD COP16.

Ecological Connectivity

173. The Chair informed that the main amendments made to the WG TORs in document CRP4.2 part D were to correct references to the GBF.
174. The Secretariat added that it is proposed to extend the WG duration, whilst tasks e) and f) of Decision 14.195 referring to recommendations would continue to be addressed. In relation to connectivity data, a survey was ready for distribution, and members were urged to circulate it widely once it was published by the Secretariat; once data were collected, review and further analysis would be done and results provided to the ScC.
175. ScC-SC7 decided to re-establish the WG on Ecological Connectivity, with the aim of enhancing the scientific understanding of connectivity issues, and providing advice on these in relation to migratory species.
176. Mr Fernando Spina (COP-Appointed Councillor for Connectivity/Networks) agreed to continue to lead the WG on Ecological Connectivity. He noted that the data collected were important to build efficient conservation strategies, especially databases on animal movements, but it was necessary to overlay other information strata, such as infrastructure. He noted his willingness to continue to lead this WG.
177. In bringing different types of data together, Mr James Williams (Party-appointed Councillor, UK) recommended to make better use of work done by the UN Biodiversity Lab.

Impact Assessment and Migratory Species

178. The Secretariat informed that Decision 14.205 requested the ScC to consider information submitted by Parties regarding the application of cumulative effects assessments and the need for further guidance. The Secretariat had sent a notification to Parties in June seeking feedback, and an overview of responses was available in Information document 16, [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Inf.16](#). The Secretariat welcomed comments from ScC-SC7 on this activity, which needed funding to implement, although no funding was available and no lead had been identified within the ScC.
179. The Chair noted that Parties and others could still provide information on this issue, which needed wide input.
180. SPREP informed that CITES had guidance for migratory species, including case studies that also had cumulative effects, which could be looked at in the framework of the WG.
181. Mr Barry Baker (COP-appointed Councillor for Bycatch) indicated that he dealt with this topic and would consider leading on this issue.

Wildlife Health

182. The Chair noted that the TORs of the WG on Migratory Species and Health were covered in document CRP4.2 part B, [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Doc.4.2](#), whilst the TORs of the Scientific Task Force on Avian Influenza and Wild Birds needed to be finalized with FAO as the Task Force was co-convened by the two organisations.
183. ScC-SC7 decided to establish a WG on Migratory Species and Health, with the aim of providing a focus for CMS work and involvement in related issues.

184. Ms Ruth Cromie (COP-appointed Councillor for Wildlife Health) agreed to continue to lead the Task Force, which was focused on production of guidance, periodic statements with key messages, and representing the wildlife side at meetings. For this intersessional period, it would focus on a new statement, as there had been further developments of avian influenza, and there was good guidance from Oceania to build on. She noted the need to translate documents, and thanked Mr Rob Clay (COP-appointed Councillor for Birds) and colleagues for organizing translations into Spanish and Portuguese.
185. The UK informed that the UK's Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) had an intern starting work to develop case studies on migratory species.
186. The Born Free Foundation requested CMS to facilitate NGO input, for instance to capture issues such as spillover and spillback when dealing with captive animals, and to speak in events where observer NGOs were not present.
187. Ms Ruth Cromie (COP-appointed Councillor for Wildlife Health) noted that CMS could contribute through the health framework to promote resilient ecosystems. She added that the WG would need a diverse representation of experts, and hoped to receive input from Parties and from One Health Case studies.
188. Mr Simon Nemtzov (Party-appointed Councillor, Israel) noted that CITES was also dealing with One Health issues, and had a potential role in the WG.
189. The Chair confirmed that ScC-SC7 considered the WG TORs agreed, and that the joint Task Force TORs would be finalised by the Secretariat with FAO and presented to ScC-SC8.
190. The following members offered to join the WG: Ruth Cromie, Timm Reinhardt, the Born Free Foundation, WCS, Simon Nemtsov, Des Thompson.

Impacts of Plastic Pollution on Aquatic, Terrestrial and Avian Species

191. The Secretariat informed that activities would carry over from the POW from the last intersessional period, with work in the Asia-Pacific region, whilst looking for funds to enable coverage of other regions. Plastic pollution was not listed as the most severe threat for non-marine species within the Conservation Status of Migratory Species report, and this issue had not been prioritized in the past.
192. The Chair informed that all taxa Councillors were noted as leads, given the relevance of plastic pollution to all taxa groups.
193. Ms Amy Fraenkel, Executive Secretary of CMS, noted that since CMS began work on this topic, there had been developments globally of a binding legal instrument on plastic pollution, whose scope was not limited to oceans. She added that most plastic pollution came from land-based sources, and there was much research ongoing.
194. Noting that microplastics were a known threat in the oceans, the Born Free Foundation highlighted that there was also a plastic menace in Central Africa forests to apes, such as pollution from miners' drinks.

Conservation Implications of Animal Culture and Social Complexity

195. The Secretariat informed that Decision 14.228 requested the ScC to consider the outputs of the Expert WG on Animal Culture and Social Complexity and invite newly

appointed Councillors to engage in the WG. Decision 14.229 was based on recommendations arising from the Expert WG's last workshop and the ScC, and provided an overview of plans to implement the many mandates. The Secretariat noted that a special publication on animal culture was planned for early 2025, drawing on peer-reviewed papers, which would address mandates b) and d) of Decision 14.229, making this topic better known across the CMS family, whilst a plan of action on how to make species-specific reviews available was being prepared. Mandate d) of Decision 14.229 foresaw increased collaboration with IUCN.

196. Mr Fernando Spina (COP-Appointed Councillor for Connectivity/Networks) praised the contribution of Ms Philippa Brakes (Chair of the Expert WG on Animal Culture and Social Complexity), who deserved wide support.

197. The Chair noted the WG's high level of productivity, and encouraged others to join.

Future CMS Activities Related to Invasive Alien Species

198. Although adoption of Resolution 11.28 on invasive species dated from COP11, the Secretariat underlined that only limited actions were underway, and was encouraged that Mr João Loureiro (Party-appointed member for Europe) had offered to look into this, and to check if the resolution was fit for purpose, in order to take it forward.

199. Mr Alfred Oteng-Yeboah (COP-appointed Councillor for Terrestrial Mammals) noted that Invasive Alien Species (IAS), which were a particular threat to indigenous species, had been dealt with extensively within CBD, whilst there was a recent assessment by IPBES. He noted that Thailand was seeking support to combat Blackchin Tilapia (*Sarotherodon melanotheron*), an invasive fish species introduced from West Africa and displacing native fish species, and asked whether CMS fish specialists could offer support.

200. Mr João Loureiro (Party-appointed member for Europe) noted that most IAS problems related to plants and fish, and he was available to provide expertise.

201. IUCN encouraged synergy and collaboration with the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) Invasive Species Specialist Group.

Concerted Actions

202. The Secretariat noted that encouraging and assisting Parties to undertake and review existing and develop new Concerted Actions (CAs) was an ongoing activity.

203. Reflecting on the Baltic Proper population of Harbour Porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*), Mr Mark Simmonds (COP-appointed Councillor for Marine Pollution) questioned the process that followed adoption of a CA. The Secretariat replied that the process was explained in Resolution 12.28.

204. ASCOBANS noted that a major effort went into the CA for Harbour Porpoise, and believed that more actions towards the species' conservation should be added.

205. Ms Vanesa Tossenberger (COP-appointed Councillor for Aquatic Mammals) noted the interest of Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay to propose a CA for COP15 for Lahille's Bottlenose Dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus gephyreus*), which was listed in Appendix I and II of the Convention by COP14. The Chair replied that the ScC would take note that progress was being made and looked forward to review progress at its next meeting.

206. The Chair added that CAs always came through to the ScC for review, and once a CA was in place, the proponents were required to submit a report, and there was potential to bring forward a new CA for any species listed on CMS Appendix I or Appendix II.
207. Mr James Williams (Party-appointed Councillor, UK) considered that the CA process was very important, especially implementation carried out by relevant Parties, and urged the use of indicators to measure success.

REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUPS

Aquatic Working Group

208. Mr Barry Baker (COP-appointed Councillor for Bycatch) reported that the Aquatic WG had reviewed document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Doc.3/Annex/Part B POW Annex Part B: Aquatic Species Conservation Issues](#), and had made amendments as provided in CRP3/Annex/Part B. It also noted the outcomes of the second IWC-CMS Workshop on Cetacean Ecosystem Functioning, summarized in [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Doc.6.2.1](#), and noted the workshop report. He considered that most of the POW was achievable within the current intersessional period, with adequate detail to provide confidence for this.
209. Mr Baker noted that some Resolution texts seemed better suited as Decision texts, as they contained achievable, timebound actions, such as work relating to vessel strikes on marine megafauna. For reporting on topics not included in the national report format, the WG suggested that the Secretariat should ascertain whether it could amend the national report template in the current shortened intersessional period. The WG also requested the Secretariat to provide a list of all items requiring funding, so that any interested stakeholders could consider funding.
210. Mr Baker noted a workshop being organized jointly by ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS for navies and NATO on underwater noise and cetaceans in Toulon, France in November 2024. Australia reported to the WG that significant gaps in knowledge regarding impacts, mitigation and monitoring remained for anthropogenic underwater noise. The Australian Government was developing National Anthropogenic Underwater Noise Guidelines that would inform best practice management and decision making.
211. Mr Zeb Hogan (COP-appointed Councillor for (Freshwater) Fish) recommended inclusion of freshwater fish in the draft decisions on bycatch at COP15, noting that the current decisions only included marine species.
212. The Born Free Foundation informed that, as a partner in Ecoflix, a not-for-profit streaming platform, it was developing an advance warning system to avoid ship strike of marine mammals, including use of drones travelling ahead of ships to inform and avoid strike, which could provide information on the presence and movement of whales.

Avian Working Group

213. Mr Rob Clay (COP-appointed Councillor for Birds) reported that the Avian WG proposed two documents for adoption without change – document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Doc.6.3.1 International Single Species Action Plan for The Sooty Falcon 2024-2036](#) and document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Doc.6.3.2 West African Vulture Conservation Action Plan 2023 - 2043](#). The WG worked through document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Doc.3/Annex/Part C Annex Programme of Work for the ScC: Avian Species Conservation Issues](#) and updated various items, as contained in [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/CRP.3/Annex/Part C](#), which also noted upcoming activities to advance the POW. A number of agenda items would require significant external resources.

214. Mr Clay concluded that the WG recommended streamlining and consolidating workstreams and initiatives on infrastructure as far as possible, in light of limited resources and the fact that focal points of the relevant agreements and initiatives were often the same persons. He also raised awareness of relevant new technologies, e.g. for detecting bird hits on powerlines.
215. BirdLife International announced devastating news for CMS and its MOU on the Slender-billed Curlew (*Numenius tenuirostris*), which, after exhaustive surveys and modelling, was being announced in the journal *Ibis* as extinct, with this reflection expected to appear in the IUCN Red List in October 2025. BirdLife International expected that the CMS MOU for this species would need to be disbanded on the grounds of ultimate failure, this being the first mainland avian extinction from the Western Palearctic for many centuries.
216. BirdLife International urged CMS to use this opportunity to ensure that the Slender-billed Curlew had not disappeared in vain and that publicity about its extinction could be used to prevent further extinctions, especially in light of a significant number of additional shorebirds likely to be uplisted on the IUCN Red List as globally Threatened or Near Threatened. A World Curlew Symposium focused on preventing extinction of the eight other curlew species was planned in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway, where the Far-Eastern Curlew *Numenius madagascariensis* was endemic. BirdLife International requested CMS and AEWA to consider how to constructively mark this unfortunate milestone – the end of the Slender-billed Curlew, and indeed its MOU, such as through a ceremonial ‘funeral’ or memorial service for the bird at COP15 and/or at AEWA MOP9.
217. The Chair encouraged engagement of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) in helping to organize the World Curlew Symposium.
218. Mr Zeb Hogan (COP-appointed Councillor for (Freshwater) Fish) recommended that the Secretariat initiate a broader discussion on how to handle extinction of migratory species, noting that some freshwater migratory fish had also recently become extinct.
219. Ms Amy Fraenkel, Executive Secretary of CMS, considered that a wide discussion was needed to assess what the conservation community could do to prevent extinction, and welcomed advice for initial internal discussions. She indicated that it was important to highlight these events through an outreach programme.
220. Mr Simon Nemtzov (Party-appointed Councillor, Israel) informed that CITES have considered whether to remove species presumed to be extinct from its appendices, but given that trade in their skins or other parts could continue, it was reticent to remove them from appendices. He suggested that CMS could add an asterisk denoting ‘*presumed to be extinct*’ against such species, whilst not removing them from the list.
221. Mr Barry Baker (COP-appointed Councillor for Bycatch) supported the retention of species presumed to be extinct on lists, noting that he had once declared a species of bird extinct that was later rediscovered.
222. The Chair noted that CMS had a process to delist species, but this had not been used.

Terrestrial Working Group

223. Mr Alfred Oteng-Yeboah (COP-appointed Councillor for Terrestrial Mammals reported on discussions on the POW of the Council for terrestrial species during the intersessional period, contained in document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Doc.3/Annex/Part D Annex Programme of Work for the ScC: Terrestrial Species Conservation Issues](#), as well as documents [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Doc.6.4.1 Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative](#), [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Doc.6.4.2 CMS Jaguar Initiative](#) and [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Doc.6.4.3/Rev.1 Central Asian Mammals Initiative](#). Mr. Sathyakumar Sambandam (Party-appointed member for Asia) presented a study on transboundary conservation hotspots for CAMI and actions taken by two CAMI Range States to the WG, which discussed the methodology used. The WG considered it worthwhile to promote the study, and proposed that the Secretariat organize a webinar to promote it globally.
224. Mr Edson Gandiwa (Party-appointed member for Africa) presented a report on the status of African Cheetah *Acinonyx jubatus* in Zimbabwe to the WG, which concluded that cheetah populations were in decline, meriting eligibility for CMS Appendix I listing, which the WG agreed to recommend. It was noted that additional support was needed to recover African Cheetah populations.
225. Mr Oteng-Yeboah reported that the CITES-CMS Joint POW on Jaguar (*Panthera onca*) was yet to be developed due to a lack of funding and ongoing discussions in the CITES context, whilst work on Tigers (*Panthera tigris*) and other Asian big cats was ongoing within CAMI, including preparation of a Strategy for the Conservation of the Persian Leopard (*Panthera pardus tulliana*).
226. The Chair thanked all WG Chairs and the Secretariat teams for their support, and all who took part in creating the annotated versions of the POW.

ITEM 7. CMS APPENDICES

Plenary of 17 September

Item 7.1 Treatment of Species Included within Aggregated Families Listed under Appendix II and Potential Taxa for Listing

227. Mr Rob Clay (COP-appointed Councillor for Birds) introduced document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Doc.7.1 Treatment of Species Included within Aggregated Families Listed under Appendix II and Potential Taxa for Listing](#), prepared by Mr Stephen Garnett (COP-appointed Councillor for Birds). COP14 requested the ScC to develop, maintain and update the list of species annexed to Resolution 14.19 showing migratory species with unfavourable conservation status listed through aggregated families, as well as the list of species annexed to Resolution 14.20 on potential avian taxa for listing showing those species that met CMS listing criteria but were not listed. COP14 further requested the ScC to advise on priority avian taxa for listing and develop a strategic approach to maximizing their conservation. The ScC was recommended to have the methodology and analyses of species peer reviewed, and to establish a WG for prioritizing avian species, especially those listed in Annexes to Resolutions 14.19 and 14.20, and to develop lists for other taxonomic groups and advice in a strategic approach. The meeting was invited to comment on this and endorse the draft TORs.
228. The Chair noted that this item represented a significant amount of work through an approach that could be applied to other taxonomic groups.

229. BirdLife International noted that species listed in the Annexes of Resolutions 14.19 and 14.20 were conceptually quite different, with less need for prioritization in 14.19 than in 14.20. BirdLife International offered to join the WG.
230. Mr James Williams (Party-appointed Councillor, UK) considered that the work done to produce a list of species that qualified for listing was very useful and should be done for other taxonomic groups. He also sought clarification on prioritization.
231. The Chair confirmed that the WG should develop a process for prioritizing avian species and advice to the Parties, whilst the Annexes should be reviewed each COP cycle; providing a list of eligible species would benefit Parties.
232. Mr Rob Clay (COP-appointed Councillor for Birds) considered that the text on prioritization referred back to decisions taken by the ScC, and was intended to describe the process.
233. ScC-SC7 recognized the need for a clear process to review and update the annexes to resolutions 14.9 and 14.20 and the importance of providing Parties with a list of species that met CMS listing criteria.
234. The following members volunteered to join the WG, which became the WG on Taxonomic and Nomenclatural Issues and on Potential Taxa for Listing: BirdLife International, João Loureiro, UNEP-WCMC, Australia and Rob Hendricks, with Stephen Garnett taking the lead.

Item 7.2 Aligning the Nomenclature and taxonomic References for Species listed in the CMS Appendices with global Biodiversity Initiatives

235. Mr Rob Clay (COP-appointed Councillor for Birds) presented document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Doc.7.2](#) *Aligning the Nomenclature and taxonomic References for Species listed in the CMS Appendices with global Biodiversity Initiatives*, prepared by Mr Stephen Garnett (COP-appointed Councillor for Birds), which aimed to ensure that Parties had access to the most up-to-date nomenclature and taxonomy. The document recommended the ScC-SC to prepare a report on the governance, financing and operational processes used by the Catalogue of Life to provide contemporary standardized taxonomy and nomenclature, and establish a WG to develop such a report.
236. Mr James Williams (Party-appointed Councillor, UK) questioned how often the Catalogue of Life was updated and how often CMS should employ changes made within it. Mr Rob Clay (COP-appointed Councillor for Birds) replied that the WG was set up to look at this and related issues.
237. Mr João Loureiro (Party-appointed member for Europe) noted that it was hard to keep up-to-date with taxonomic changes.
238. BirdLife International was part of the WG on avian checklists, which was trying to get a unified checklist for birds, and would be aligning with the new list in the Handbook of the Birds of the World as the current reference for avian taxonomy.
239. Mr Mark Simmonds (COP-appointed Councillor for Marine Pollution) reported that the Aquatic Mammals WG had a robust discussion on taxonomy in the margins of COP14, and tended to default to the Society of Marine Mammalogy; discussions were ongoing.
240. Mr Simon Nemptsov (Party-appointed Councillor, Israel) noted that in CITES, choosing what was convenient sometimes took precedence over what was taxonomically correct,

for ease of reference and implementation, and CMS likewise should not base decisions on scientific reasoning alone. He cautioned that adopting the Catalogue of Life wholeheartedly needed to be done carefully, whilst Parties sometimes put appendices with species names in their legislation, with implications on implementation at national levels, and therefore taxonomy should not change continuously.

241. The Secretariat agreed that, while similar discussions were ongoing under CITES, the Catalogue of Life was a useful centralised reference, but there were indeed legal issues to take into consideration; contact with the CITES Secretariat would be maintained.
242. ScC-SC7 highlighted the need for accuracy and stability in taxonomic references, the importance of harmonizing with CITES, and the potential challenges of frequent taxonomic changes.
243. The Chair noted that this intersessional WG would have some work to do, and there was potential to merge it with the intersessional WG for Item 7.1, which was later agreed. Rob Clay reported that Stephen Garnett had offered to lead the WG. The following volunteered to join the WG: BirdLife International, AEWA, Edson Gandiwa and Vanesa Tossenberger.

Plenary of 19 September

Amendment of CMS Appendices

Taxonomy and Nomenclature and the Guidance on the Creation of an Advisory List of Species Aggregated in Families and Genera Listed under Appendix II / Guidance on the Treatment of Species included within Aggregated in Families listed under Appendix II / Potential Avian Taxa for Listing

244. The Chair recapped that, based on earlier discussions within ScC-SC7, the TORs proposed within documents [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Doc.7.1 Treatment of Species Included within Aggregated Families Listed under Appendix II and Potential Taxa for Listing](#) and [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Doc.7.2 Aligning the Nomenclature and taxonomic References for Species listed in the CMS Appendices with global Biodiversity Initiatives](#) had been merged. The TORs for the resulting WG on Taxonomic and Nomenclatural Issues and on Potential Taxa for Listing were shown in document CRP7.1-7.2 [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/CRP.7.1 – 7.2](#).
245. Mr Mark Simmonds (COP-appointed Councillor for Marine Pollution) stressed that the list of the marine mammal species and subspecies of the Society of Marine Mammalogy was the reference for taxonomy and nomenclature of aquatic mammals and there was no need to change this reference. ACCOBAMS noted that it and the IUCN MMPATF supported use of this list. Ms Vanesa Tossenberger (COP-appointed Councillor for Aquatic Mammals) also considered this list to serve as the best guidelines for the taxonomy of marine mammals.
246. ACCOBAMS put forward Ms Gianna Minton (IUCN) to join the WG.
247. ScC-SC7 confirmed the merging of WGs proposed in documents 7.1 and 7.2 into one, the WG on Taxonomic and Nomenclatural Issues and on Potential Taxa for Listing. Mr Rob Clay (COP-appointed Councillor for Birds) volunteered Stephen Garnett (COP-appointed Councillor for Birds) to chair this WG, which he could chair himself if needed. Members who had volunteered their participation were: BirdLife International, João Loureiro, UNEP-WCMC, Australia, Rob Hendricks, AEWA, Edson Gandiwa, Vanesa Tossenberger and Gianna Minton.

Item 7.3 Maintaining Lists of Species Included in CMS Appendices

248. The Secretariat shared information on the existing lists, presented possible actions to improve online databases and related challenges, and introduced options to keep track of CMS Appendix II birds listed at genus or family levels. The Convention text mandated CMS to keep lists of range states of migratory species listed in CMS Appendices and other more specific lists. An authoritative list of taxa listed in Appendix I and II was available on the CMS website. There were two advisory lists – Species List (with 657 CMS-listed species from Appendix I and II) and Species+ (with 1,377 species listed in CMS and its agreements). However no list or database showed all listed species, and it was recommended to have an updated list of species from CMS Appendices. Potential actions were to update the Species List, work with UNEP-WCMS to update the CMS-related part of Species+, work with Parties to ensure that information held in databases served their needs, and seek financial resources. There were financial and technical challenges, whilst a policy decision was also needed.
249. The Secretariat sought input from the ScC-SC as to which of the options presented to keep track of CMS Appendix II birds listed at genus or family levels would be the most helpful as an advisory list, and whether there were merits in keeping two databases with different content, what would be the most appropriate selection of species to show, and how to improve the quality and reliability of data in both databases.
250. Mr Simon Nemptov (Party-appointed Councillor, Israel) considered that CMS needed to streamline all information into one authoritative list, and it was not necessary to include non-CMS-listed species.
251. UNEP-WCMC stated that it had worked carefully with the Secretariat on Species+, and reassured the meeting that, while there was some divergence, it was still aligned with the Convention, and a process and system were in place to update it, with funding from the CITES core budget and the EU, although these funds did not cover updating with respect to CMS. There had been about 30,000 visits to the Species+ pages and 10,000 active users, so it was a widely used resource.
252. Mr Edson Gandiwa (Party-appointed member for Africa) considered that updating was essential, and it would assist Parties to be aware of distribution changes over time.
253. Mr Mark Simmonds (COP-appointed Councillor for Marine Pollution) highlighted the need for clear objectives for the direction of this process, which had potential to bring new species into CMS Appendices and to affect existing species and populations.
254. Mr James Williams (Party-appointed Councillor, UK) noted that a variety of information was required for different purposes through a logical approach to work out what was needed for what purpose and when.
255. Noting that migratory species confined within the boundaries of a single country and non-migratory species could not be taken on board by CMS, Mr Fernando Spina (COP-Appointed Councillor for Connectivity/Networks) considered that a database separate from CITES would be key, with information that optimized database effectiveness.
256. BirdLife International advocated for a user-friendly format, with data that could be downloaded in a simple Excel file of listed species, combined with IUCN Red List threats.
257. Considering that the current Species List database was not easy to use and was hard to search, Ms Vanesa Tossenberger (COP-appointed Councillor for Aquatic Mammals)

recommended further development of the Species+ database; collaboration with CITES would also raise awareness of the functioning of CMS.

258. UNEP-WCMC noted that taxonomic differences between CITES and CMS explained the different lists for CITES and CMS at Species+, providing a platform for divergence between the two Conventions. Species+ was downloadable in Excel, for CMS and its daughter agreements.
259. The Secretariat added that, as migratory status was not stable and as species could change their behaviour, it was important that the database indicated which species were considered non-migratory.
260. It was agreed that a working group would assist the Secretariat in improving the online databases and provide a platform to discuss and exchange information, as per the TORs contained in document UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Outcome 7.
261. In conclusion, ScC-SC7 agreed to further discuss and refine the approach to maintaining these lists, including the potential use of Species+, and highlighted the need for a single authoritative source and the importance of regular updates.
262. The following members offered to join the WG: James Williams, Stephen Garnett, Narelle Montgomery, Graeme Taylor and UNEP-WCMC.

Plenary of 19 September

263. The Chair indicated that ScC-SC7 had established a WG to embrace species listing, the WG on Maintaining Lists of Species Listed in CMS Appendices, with the TORs illustrated in document [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/CRP 7.3](#), CRP7.3.
264. Mr James Williams (Party-appointed Councillor, UK) noted the importance of strategic lists to enable Parties to consider which species met different criteria.

V. FORMAL AND CONCLUDING BUSINESS

ITEM 8. DATE AND VENUE OF THE 8TH MEETING OF THE SESSIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL (ScC-SC8)

265. The Chair informed that the date of the next meeting would be agreed after the date of COP15 had been set.
266. Ms Amy Fraenkel, Executive Secretary of CMS, informed that planning was underway with the government of Brazil for setting dates for COP15, which she expected would be held in the first quarter of 2026.
267. Mr James Williams (Party-appointed Councillor, UK) considered that the agenda for ScC-SC8 would be very heavy, and recommended having a five-day meeting in order to allow enough time for substantive deliberation of all issues.
268. Ms Rima Jabado (COP-appointed Councillor for (Marine) Fish) informed that the next CITES COP and IUCN Congress were scheduled for November / December 2025, and many members of the ScC-SC were likely to attend one or both of these meetings.

ITEM 9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

269. Noting the ongoing fires in the Amazon Basin and the recent killing of protected area personnel in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Born Free Foundation reminded the meeting that people put their lives on the line as an outcome of conservation decisions.
270. The Chair concurred that there were indeed ramifications of conservation decisions, and urged CMS to lend support to Brazil in the run up to COP15.

ITEM 10. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

271. Ms Amy Fraenkel, Executive Secretary of CMS, noted her pleasure in welcoming everyone in Bonn, the great productivity of the work concluded, and the high level of passion and time investment. The goodwill and volunteering work of the ScC-SC, especially the Councillors, was highly commendable. She thanked Narelle Montgomery and Daniel Fernando for guiding the meeting through the rich discussions, Dagmar Zíková for organizing the meeting, the whole CMS team for all their work behind the scenes, the report writer and interpreters, and those who provided technical support. She concluded that the new POW should be adopted imminently with notification of funding, so the full list of items for which funding was required would be available.
272. The Chair considered that this efficient meeting demonstrated the collegiality and expertise in the room, and urged all participants to keep the enthusiasm alive.

CHAMPIONS PLUS AWARD

273. Ms Amy Fraenkel, Executive Secretary of CMS, welcomed Mr Graner, Deputy President of the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation of Germany (BfN), to receive the Champions Plus Award for the long-term support that BfN had provided to CMS on the Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI) and the terrestrial species that it covered. BfN has supported the implementation of the CAMI Work Programmes since 2016 by funding studies and hosting expert meetings on Vilm in Northern Germany, where BfN maintained its International Academy for Nature Conservation. Through this support, CMS had produced the conservation roadmaps and action plans for Persian Leopard, Asiatic Wild Ass, Bukhara Deer and Saiga Antelope, and supported discussions on anti-poaching measures, involving local communities, incorporating species' conservation into infrastructure planning and capacity building to strengthen transboundary cooperation between range states. CMS was signing a new agreement with BfN extending their support for work during this intersessional period. BfN and CMS also collaborated on the Klaus-Toepfer Fellowship Programme, which enabled individuals working on environmental matters to learn about international nature conservation. Ms Fraenkel expressed gratitude on behalf of the CMS Secretariat and the network of alumni of this programme.
274. Mr Graner, Deputy President of BfN, thanked Ms Fraenkel for the invitation to meet at ScC-SC7 and was pleased to accept this award on behalf of BfN, noting the commitment of Germany to the implementation of CMS for biodiversity conservation. BfN had held regular expert meetings with CMS since 2009, and provided particular support for the implementation of CAMI, and he thanked CMS and its Parties for recognizing this role through presentation of the Champions Plus award. In signing a new work programme for the period 2024-2027, BfN was confirming its continued support for CMS and CAMI and the long-standing cooperation. He thanked the CMS Secretariat for being a strategic partner in BfN's Klaus-Toepfer Fellowship Programme for Future Leaders in Nature Conservation from Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia aimed at young professionals.

Annexes:

Annex 1: List of Participants

Annex 2: Reports by In-session Working Groups (Aquatic, Avian, Terrestrial) to plenary

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

SESSIONAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

COP-APPOINTED MEMBERS

Barry Baker	COP-appointed member, Bycatch	barry.baker@latitude42.com.au
Robert Clay	COP-appointed member, Birds	rclay@manomet.org
Ruth Cromie	COP-appointed member, Invasive species, disease, feral animals, insects, and marine pests and weeds	ruth.cromie@outlook.com
Zeb Hogan	COP-appointed member, Fish	zhogan@unr.edu
Rima Jabado	COP-appointed member, Fish	rimajabado@hotmail.com
Alfred Oteng-Yeboah	COP-appointed member, Terrestrial Mammals	alfred.otengyeboah@gmail.com
Mark Peter Simmonds	COP-appointed member, Marine Pollution	mark.simmonds@sciencegyre.co.uk
Fernando Spina	COP-appointed member, Connectivity/Network	fernaspina2022@gmail.com
Des Thompson	COP-appointed member, Climate Change	desba.thompson@outlook.com
Vanesa Tossenberger	COP-appointed member, Aquatic Mammals	Vanesa.tossenberger@gmail.com

PARTY-APPOINTED MEMBERS

AFRICA		
Edson Gandiwa	Zimbabwe, Parks and Wildlife Management Authority	egandiwa@zimparcs.org.zw
Stephen Fred Okiror	Uganda, Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities	sfokiror@gmail.com
ASIA		
Askar Davletbakov	Kyrgyzstan, Institute of Biology of the NAS KR	davaskar5@gmail.com
Daniel Fernando	Sri Lanka, Blue Resources Trust	daniel@blueresources.org
Sathyakumar Sambandam	India, Wildlife Institute of India	ssk@wii.gov.in
EUROPE		
João Loureiro	Portugal, Institute of Nature Conservation and Forests (ICNF)	joaloureiro@icnf.pt

Rubén Moreno-Opo	Spain, Ministry for the Ecological Transition	rmorenoopo@miteco.es
Daliborka Stankovic	Serbia, Institute for Multidisciplinary Research	daliborkabstankovic@gmail.com
OCEANIA		
Narelle Montgomery	Australia, Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water	narelle.montgomery@dcceew.gov.au
Graeme Taylor	New Zealand Department of Conservation	gtaylor@doc.govt.nz

SESSIONAL COMMITTEE OBSERVERS

SCIENTIFIC COUNCILLORS

Simon Nemptsov	Israel, Nature and Parks Authority	simon@npa.org.il
Peter Puchala (Online)	Slovakia, State Nature Conservancy of Slovak Republic	peter.puchala@sopsr.sk
Timm Reinhardt	Germany, Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN)	Timm.Reinhardt@bfn.de
James Williams	United Kingdom, Joint Nature Conservation Committee	James.Williams@jncc.gov.uk

PARTY OBSERVERS

Mark Carey (Online)	Australia, Department of Climate Change, Energy and the Environment	mark.carey@dcceew.gov.au
Caroline Daisley	United Kingdom, Defra	Caroline.Daisley@defra.gov.uk
Barbara Engels	Germany, Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN)	barbara.engels@bfn.de
Jürgen Friedrich	Germany, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV)	juergen.friedrich@bmu.bund.de
Berit Gewert	Germany, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV)	berit.gewert@bmu.bund.de
Thomas Graner	Germany, Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN)	vz-zbl@bfn.de
Sara Kophamel (Online)	Australia, Australian Government Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water	sara.kophamel@dcceew.gov.au

Sarah Scott	United Kingdom, Joint Nature Conservation Committee	sarah.scott@jncc.gov.uk
-------------	---	-------------------------

INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS AND UN SPECIALISED AGENCIES

Frances Davis	UNEP-WCMC	frances.davis@unep-wcmc.org
Martin Hitziger	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, SPREP	martin.hitziger@googlemail.com
Kelly Malsch	UNEP-WCMC	Kelly.Malsch@unep-wcmc.org
Gianna Minton	IUCN SSC Cetacean Specialist Group	gianna.minton@gmail.com
Andrew Szopa-Comley	UNEP-WCMC	andrew.szopa-comley@unep-wcmc.org

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS AND OTHER AGENCIES AND BODIES

Bianca Becherer	International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW)	bbecherer@ifaw.org
Matthew Collis	International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW)	mcollis@ifaw.org
Nicola Jane Crockford	BirdLife International	nicola.crockford@rspb.org.uk
Maximin Djondo	Benin Environment and Education Society	bees@hotmail.fr
Viola Duemmler	Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)	vduemmler@wcs.org
Alexander Griffin	European Federation for Hunting and Conservation (FACE)	cy.griffin@face.eu
Vicky Jones	BirdLife International	vicky.jones@birdlife.org
Ann-Kristin Konzak	International Alliance against Health Risks in Wildlife Trade, GIZ	ann-kristin.konzak@giz.de
Laetitia Nunny	Ocean Care	lnunny@oceancare.org
David Ott	Leibniz Institute for the Analysis of Biodiversity Change (LIB)	d.ott@leibniz-lib.de
Ian Redmond	Born Free Foundation	ele@globalnet.co.uk
Nora Leonie Rust	International Alliance against Health Risks in Wildlife Trade, GIZ	nora.rust@giz.de

CMS FAMILY

Simone Panigada	ACCOBAMS Secretariat	panigada69@gmail.com
Maylis Salivas	ACCOBAMS Secretariat	msalivas@accobams.net
Sergey Dereliev	AEWA Secretariat	sergey.dereliev@un.org
Melissa Lewis	AEWA Secretariat	melissa.lewis@un.org
Jenny Renell	ASCOBANS Secretariat	jenny.renell@un.org
Bettina Reinartz	ASCOBANS Secretariat	Bettina.Reinartz@un.org

Olivier Biber	UNEP/CMS/AEMLAP	o.biber@bluewin.ch
---------------	-----------------	--------------------

CMS SECRETARIAT

Amy Fraenkel	CMS Secretariat, Executive Secretary	amy.fraenkel@un.org
Aydin Bahramlouian	CMS Secretariat	aydin.bahramlouian@un.org
Catherine Brueckner	CMS Secretariat	catherine.brueckner@un.org
Ximena Cancino	CMS Secretariat	ximena.cancino@un.org
Laura Cerasi	CMS Secretariat	laura.cerasi@un.org
Amie Figueiredo	CMS Secretariat	amie.figueiredo@un.org
Heidrun Frisch-Nwakanma	CMS Secretariat	heidrun.frisch-nwakanma@un.org
Umberto Gallo-Orsi	CMS Secretariat	umberto.galloorsi@un.org
Melanie Jakuttek	CMS Secretariat	Melanie.jakuttek@un.org
Florian Keil	CMS Secretariat	florian.keil@un.org
Tine Lindberg-Roncari	CMS Secretariat	tinelindberg@hotmail.com
Fernando Neda	CMS Secretariat	fernando.neda@un.org
Clara Nobbe	CMS Secretariat	clara.nobbe@un.org
Maria Jose Ortiz Noguera	CMS Secretariat	maria-jose.ortiz@un.org
Andrea Maria Pauly	CMS Secretariat	andrea.pauly@un.org
Fernando Ivan Ramirez	CMS Secretariat	ivan.ramirez@un.org
Tilman Carlo Schneider	CMS Secretariat	tilman.schneider@un.org
Barbara Schoenberg	CMS Secretariat	barbara.schoenberg@un.org
Vittoria Semplici	CMS Secretariat	vittoria.semplici@un.org
Melanie Virtue	CMS Secretariat	melanie.virtue@un.org
Dagmar Zikova	CMS Secretariat	dagmar.zikova@un.org
Consultants and others		
Yoana Mihaylova	CMS Secretariat, Intern	yoana.mihaylova@un.org
Pauline Temple	CMS Secretariat	temple1.pauline@gmail.com
Isobel Quirk	CMS Secretariat, Intern	Isobel.quirk@un.org
Özgül Yahyaoglu	CMS Secretariat, Intern	ozgul.yahyaoglu@un.org
Niklas Zimmer	CMS Secretariat, Intern	niki.zimmer@gmx.at

REPORT WRITER AND INTERPRETERS

Tim Dodman	Report writer	tim@timdodman.co.uk
Caroline Bechtold	Germany, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV)	caroline.bechtold@bmuv.bund.de
Ines de Chavarria	con:sens language professionals	dechava@gmx.de
Anna Delarocque	German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL)	anna.delarocque@bmel.bund.de

Andrea Lenhart	German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL)	andrea.lenhart@bmel.bund.de
Annika Mattes	Freelancer	a.mattes@sprichwoertlich.com
Ariane Stark	Germany, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV)	ariane.stark@bmuv.bund.de

ANNEX 2**CHAIR'S REPORT ON THE OUTCOMES OF THE AQUATIC WORKING GROUP****Membership of the Working Group**Sessional Committee members:

Daniel Fernando, Fernando Spina, Graeme Taylor, João Loureiro, Mark Simmonds, Narelle Montgomery, Rima Jabado, Vanesa Tossenberger, Zeb Hogan.

Observers:

- Scientific Councillors: James Williams, Timm Reinhart, Simon Nemtsov.
- Parties: Birthe Thormann (Germany), Caroline Daisley (UK).
- IGOs: Maylis Salivas (ACCOBAMS), Simone Panigada (ACCOBAMS), Gianna Minton (IUCN SSC Cetacean Specialist Group), Martin Hitziger (SPREP), Ann-Kristin Konzak (International Alliance against Health Risks in Wildlife Trade / GIZ), Nora Leonie Rust (International Alliance against Health Risks in Wildlife Trade / GIZ).
- NGOs: Bianca Becherer (IFAW), Matthew Collis (IFAW), Laetitia Nunny (OceanCare), Max Djondo (Benin Environment and Education Society), Viola Duemmler (Wildlife Conservation Society), Ian Redmond (Born Free Foundation), Alexander Griffin (FACE).

Secretariat:

Melanie Virtue, Heidrun Frisch-Nwakanma, Jenny Renell, Andrea Pauly, Isobel Quirk, Pauline Templé, Daan de Leur.

Proceedings

The Aquatic Working Group reviewed UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Doc.3/Annex/Part B, on aquatic species conservation issues, and made amendments as provided in CRP 3.b.

The Aquatic Working Group also noted the outcomes of the 2nd IWC-CMS Workshop on Cetacean Ecosystem Functioning, summarized in UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Doc.6.2.1, and noted the workshop report contained in UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Inf.6.2.1. It was highlighted that the IWC, at its 69A meeting in Lima, Peru (23-27 September 2023), will be considering a proposal for a pilot project to advance this topic through a consultancy in 2025 and a workshop to further review pilot project results in 2026.

General observations

It was noted that some resolution text seems to be better suited as decision text given that they contain achievable timebound actions, and that the Parties should be mindful of this when proposing new text.

Regarding decisions requiring Parties to report on topics that are not currently included in the national report format, it was suggested that the Secretariat ascertain whether it will be able to amend the template in the shortened intersessional period, and then look at implications of not amending the form.

Members asked if the Secretariat could provide a list of all items requiring funding, so that any interested stakeholders could consider funding.

Observations on the Decisions on Marine Noise

ACCOBAMS noted that together with ASCOBANS they are organizing a joint workshop with navies and NATO on underwater noise and cetaceans in Toulon, France, on 26-27 November 2024. They are working with the Joint Noise WG of CMS, ACCOBAMS, and ASCOBANS. Report of the workshop will be provided to the next meeting of the ScC-SC.

Australia reported that: “Anthropogenic underwater noise is a widely acknowledged increasing cumulative pressure in the marine environment and there remain significant gaps in knowledge regarding impacts, best-practice mitigation and appropriate long-term monitoring for both marine and freshwater species. The delegation can support recommended reviews and updates of reports developed to manage underwater noise. However, it should be noted that the Australian Government is developing **National Anthropogenic Underwater Noise Guidelines** that will provide a compilation and analysis of current scientific evidence and global best-practice management of underwater noise. This guidance will inform preparation of environmental impact assessments, regulatory decision-making and conservation planning for protected marine mammals, reptiles and plunge-diving seabirds. Australia is also progressing a number of other projects in relation to underwater noise and regulatory guidance will be developed that considers the environmental impact assessment process under national law. It is anticipated that all guidance developed will be shared through Scientific Council at COP15. Australia is aware of **gaps** in international best-practice approaches to implementing **long-term post-construction monitoring programs** for marine species such as cetaceans.”

CHAIR'S REPORT ON THE OUTCOMES OF THE AVIAN WORKING GROUP

Membership of the Working Group

Dr. Olivier Biber (CMS AEMLAP), Dr. Reto Spaar (SOI), Dr. Rob Hendriks, Dr. Joao Loureiro, Graeme Taylor, Dr. Ruth Cromie, Dr. Daliborka Stanković, Alexander Griffin (FACE), Dr. Rubén Moreno-Opo, Dr. Sathyakumar Sambandam, Dr. Simon Nemtzov, Dr. Askar Davletbakov, Sergey Dereliev (AEWA Secr.), Melissa Lewis (AEWA Secr.), Dr. Fernando Spina, Dr. Vicky Jones (BirdLife International), Nicola Crockford (BirdLife International), Kelly Malsch (UNEP-WCMC), Dr. Andrew Szopa-Comley (UNEP-WCMC), Dr. Sarah Scott, Caroline Daisley, Prof. Des Thompson, Professor Edson Gandiwa, Stephen Fred Okiror. L

The Avian Working Group examined all the documents assigned to it and concluded its business. No in-session CRPs were produced for the following documents:

1. Agenda Item 6.3.1 International Single Species Action Plan for The Sooty Falcon 2024-2036

The Council made no changes to this document. The draft Action Plan was recommended to the CMS Standing Committee for adoption.

2. Agenda Item 6.3.2 West African Vulture Conservation Action Plan 2023 – 2043

The Council made no changes to this document. The draft Action Plan was recommended to the CMS Standing Committee for adoption.

An in-session document with comments or edits, was prepared for the Avian part of Agenda Item.

Programme of Work for the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council for the intersessional period between COP14 and COP15, CRP 03.C. These primarily added status updates and noted upcoming actions to advance activities and deliver expected outputs.

General comments from the Working Group to be considered by Plenary

Related to the discussion on the Avian part of Agenda Item 3. Programme of Work for the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council for the intersessional period between COP14 and COP15, the need for streamlining and consolidating workstreams and initiatives on infrastructure (such as ongoing work under the Energy Task Force, and under the Working Group on Linear Infrastructure, as well as under CMS daughter agreements such as AEWA, Eurobats and others), to the extent possible, in the light of limited resources and the fact that focal points to these agreements and initiatives are the same persons in many countries.

In addition, awareness of relevant new technologies e.g. for detecting bird hits on powerlines was raised as an important aspect.

WORKING GROUP ON TERRESTRIAL SPECIES CONSERVATION ISSUES

The Terrestrial Working Group met on Wednesday, 18 September to discuss the Programme of Work of the Council for terrestrial species over the intersessional period, contained in Document UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC7/Doc.3/Annex/Part D, as well as Documents 6.4.1, 6.4.2 and 6.4.3.

Starting with Document 6.4.3 on the Central Asian Mammals Initiative, the Party-Appointed Councillor for the Asia region, Mr. Sathyakumar Sambandam from India, as requested by Decision 14.168, presented the study 'Transboundary Conservation Hotspots for the Central Asian Mammals Initiative' and actions taken by CAMI Range States to promote the conservation of selected transboundary hotspots. As Range States had only been asked to submit reports shortly before the meeting, Mr Sambandam had only received reports from Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

The Working Group then discussed the methodology used to prepare the study, as requested by Decision 14.169 (a). Generally, the Group felt that the methodology that was used produced a good outcome. The representative of the UK felt that there was not a great amount of detail on how the scores for different areas and thresholds were assigned and hence, it was difficult to fully comment on the utility of the methods. This was the case, for example for the categories of 'population status' and 'potential for conservation success'.

Nevertheless, the Group felt that it was worthwhile promoting the study as requested by Decision 14.169(b). The Party-Appointed Councillor for the Asia region proposed that the Secretariat organize a webinar for all CMS Parties to promote the study globally. The Councillors for the Africa region, committed to introducing the study at the SADC TFCA Network meeting (Zimbabwe) and EAC Transboundary Protected Areas Technical Working Group (Uganda) and at the upcoming national consultations on Transfrontier Conservation work, taking place in Uganda in the context of the IGAD Horn of Africa Wildlife Enforcement Network (HAWEN) discussions.

On Agenda item 6.4.1 on the African Carnivores Initiative, the representative of Zimbabwe, Mr Edson Gandiwa, presented the report Status of the African Cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus*) in Zimbabwe, which the Party had been requested to submit under Decision 14.165. The report arrived at the conclusion that Cheetah populations in Zimbabwe were declining, resulting in a conservation status that would make Cheetah eligible for an Appendix I listing under CMS. A member of the IUCN Cat Specialist Group, as requested, confirmed that the findings in the report broadly aligned with the previous Report on the Conservation status of the Cheetah populations of Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe and considerations for listing on CMS appendices through a statement read out by the Secretariat. The Working Group agreed to recommend to the Standing Committee that the Cheetah population of Zimbabwe be listed on Appendix I of CMS, noting that it was important that Zimbabwe and other Cheetah range states are provided additional resources and support to recover their Cheetah populations.

Regarding agenda item 6.4.3 on the CMS Jaguar Initiative, the Secretariat informed the Working Group that the CITES-CMS Joint Programme of Work was yet to be developed, due to lack of funding and ongoing discussions in the CITES context. However, the Secretariat was likely to receive funding for this work shortly, allowing the work to move forward.

With regards to Tigers and other Asian big Cats, the Secretariat informed the Group that the work was ongoing within the context of the Central Asian Mammals Initiative and that e.g. a Strategy for the Conservation of the Persian Leopard had been prepared.

The Working Group concluded its tasks by updating the Work Programme contained in Annex D of Document 3.

Thank you.