



CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES

Distribution: General

UNEP/CMS/Conf.10.16
7 October 2011

Original: English

TENTH MEETING OF THE
CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
Bergen, 20-25 November 2011
Agenda Item 18

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CAPACITY BUILDING STRATEGY 2009-2011

(Prepared by the Secretariat)

I. Background

1. The CMS Strategic Plan 2006-2011 adopted by the Parties at COP8 (Para 34 - Objective 4) states that “the Plan must also make provision for helping to develop the capacity of bodies involved in implementing the Convention and its legal instruments, especially in developing countries”. It sets out two main prescriptions: (i) the establishment of CMS networks and national liaison systems or committees by the CMS focal points and scientific councillors in each country and (ii) the enhancement of regional capacity for participating in CMS implementation activities, particularly in those regions where CMS is underrepresented.

2. In 2008, UNEP/CMS/Conf.9.30 Capacity Building Strategy was subsequently adopted in order to support and improve national capacity to implement the mandate of the Convention. This initiative aims at identifying capacity building gaps of Parties and further addressing them through various capacity building activities, encouraging exchange of resources, experience and information among all stakeholders and partners as well as guiding decision-makers to create and maintain successful conservation of migratory species at national and international level.

3. The CMS Capacity Building Strategy is based on the CMS Strategic Plan 2006-2011 and Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building. The Strategy emphasizes the identification and dissemination of best practices. With respect to its implementation, it promotes a bottom-up approach in identifying specific objectives, strategies and activities that will be used to reflect the needs of countries and regions. This bottom-up approach not only considers the views and priorities expressed by governments, but also those of relevant organizations and stakeholders. The approach also takes into account the importance of national ownership of capacity building and technology support initiatives, while building on the existing capacities.

II. Capacity Building Activities implemented during 2009-2011

4. For the triennium 2009-2011, the Secretariat had limited funds available that have hampered the full implementation of the Strategy. However, with the limited resources made

available the following activities were undertaken in accordance with the adopted Capacity Building Strategy.

5. Over the last triennium, the CMS Secretariat has participated in 40 national, international and regional meetings to present to national and international representatives the content and aspirations spelt out in the Convention and its related agreements and MOUs including different modes of their implementation. By doing so, not only awareness was raised with different stakeholders on the importance of CMS and its instruments, but also a conscious effort to synchronize strategies, in particular with the regional offices of UNEP, MEA Secretariats and international NGOs, action plans as well as national cooperation in implementing conservation measures, was made. The Secretariat actively attended and presented the Convention at meetings and events on average once a month.

Joint National and Regional Capacity Building Workshop Programme

6. An integral part of the CMS Capacity Building Strategy is the information sharing at regional level. It was acknowledged in the CMS Capacity Building Strategy that joint regional workshops were seen to be a useful tool to exchange concrete information on specific needs and capacity building opportunities for the particular area combining bottom-up and top-down approaches.

7. An example of working jointly on awareness raising and technical assistance is the active participation of CMS in the Ramsar Advisory Missions (RAM). Special attention is given to assisting member states to Ramsar, which at the same time are member states to CMS and/or AEWA, in the management and conservation of listed sites whose ecological character is threatened. AEWA and CMS frequently participate in Ramsar advisory missions. Further information can be found under http://www.ramsar.org/cda/en/ramsar-documents-rams/main/ramsar/1-31-112_4000_0. As wetlands and migratory species only flourish in unison, governments and secretariats alike benefit from combined missions of the two conventions. This guarantees the most comprehensive capacity building for Ramsar sites - the habitat of millions of migratory birds - and increase the visibility of CMS. The RAM to Mozambique in August 2009 is one such successful example, which also helped with the accession of the country to CMS in 2009. The mission group advised the Government of Mozambique on how to mitigate threats caused by oil and gas extraction for instance and to ensure compliance with Ramsar obligations.

8. Similarly, CMS's capacity building workshop for the Latin American and Caribbean region held in Panama in 2010 and funded by the Government of Spain included the contribution from other UN organizations, MEA Secretariats and NGOs. In the preparations and execution of the event, CMS was supported by UNEP/ROLAC and the Audubon Society Panama. Joint capacity building initiatives ultimately increases regional capacity and provides countries with a comprehensive overview of regional conservation from the bottom up as well as the top down. The usefulness of this workshop as confirmed by the participants was reflected in the feedback, participants provided directly thereafter.

9. Further information on the Latin American and Caribbean workshop can be found under http://www.cms.int/bodies/meetings/workshops/panama_2010/taller_agosto.htm.

10. In the same vein, CMS participated together with UNDP, UNECE, CITES, CBD and Ramsar in a workshop on Multilateral Environmental Agreements designed for countries of the region and held in Albania in 2010. It was organized jointly by UNEP and the Ministry of

Environment, Forests and Water Administration of Albania and brought together representatives from national environmental institutions and agencies, NGOs, academia and IGOs working in environmental issues in the region.

11. The workshop strengthened the country's participation in international environmental cooperation, enhanced their capacity to implement MEAs at the national level, including compliance and implementation of CMS and its related instruments, identified opportunities to integrate MEA requirements into national plans and strategies and identified gaps and needs for further capacity building, training and other activities.

12. At CBD COP10 in 2010, the Aichi Targets of Biodiversity for 2011-2020 were adopted. CBD conducted a series of regional workshops for the implementation of these targets with the aim of updating the current National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs). The CMS Secretariat either participated or was represented by CITES at the regional NBSAPs workshops held in Vilm (Germany), Kasane (Botswana) and Beirut (Lebanon) to ensure migratory species conservation is also incorporated into the biodiversity agenda and to encourage CMS National Focal Point (NFP) bonds with their CBD counterpart. Enhanced communication and cooperation avoids duplication of efforts for both MEAs and enables mainstreaming biodiversity issues into all sectors of the economy and development plans as well as guarantees transparent implementation of national targets.

13. In autumn 2011, CMS received funds from the Governments of Sweden and Switzerland to organize jointly with UNEP/DELCA a Regional Preparatory COP10 Workshop for the African region. The workshop would address the needs to enhance the capacity of CMS NFPs of the African countries to prepare, participate and negotiate effectively for CMS COP10.

14. Priority in organizing the event was given to Africa, which is a major hub for migratory species and where membership of the CMS and its instruments is one of the highest (e.g., 42 out of 54 countries are Parties to the Convention, in autumn 2011); however, the strengthening of capacity to implement the instruments still remains low. This event will provide an opportunity for CMS Parties from Africa to have an overview of the issues and priorities for the region to be discussed at COP10 and thus provide an avenue for COP10 participants from the region to be well versed with issues, discuss them beforehand and possibly prepare common positions on topics of regional interest or importance. In addition, the workshop will also be used to further empower COP participants with the necessary negotiation techniques and skills to be utilized at the COP as well as any other multilateral environmental negotiations. Furthermore, the workshop will serve as a mechanism to identify gaps and the need for further capacity building activities and follow up training.

Development of the CMS Handbook

15. In order to meet their responsibilities with regard to the implementation of the Convention at the national level, government officials and scientists need explicit instructions and a clear definition of their roles. Elaborating these instructions and definitions will be the first step in compiling a "CMS Handbook" which the Secretariat will draft for National Focal Points in the course of the next triennium. It will provide concrete guidance on implementation of the Convention at the national, sub-regional, regional and global level, among other issues.

16. At the 37th Meeting of the Standing Committee, Terms of Reference (TOR) for the NFPs as well as the Standing Committee (StC) members were adopted which clarified their roles and responsibilities to better play an active and effective role in the work of the Convention.

17. As the primary contacts in CMS Parties, the NFPs are of great importance for CMS as well as for the Parties themselves. The CMS NFPs serve as a link with the CMS Secretariat as well as the responsible institutions in the country through maintaining a constant flow of information. The ToR of CMS NFPs gives guidance as to how the NFPs might contribute more effectively to the operation of CMS and facilitate interactions between the Party they represent and the CMS Secretariat.

18. For details on the NFP Terms of Reference please visit the link below: http://www.cms.int/bodies/StC/37th_stc_meeting/Doc_23_tor_nfp.pdf.

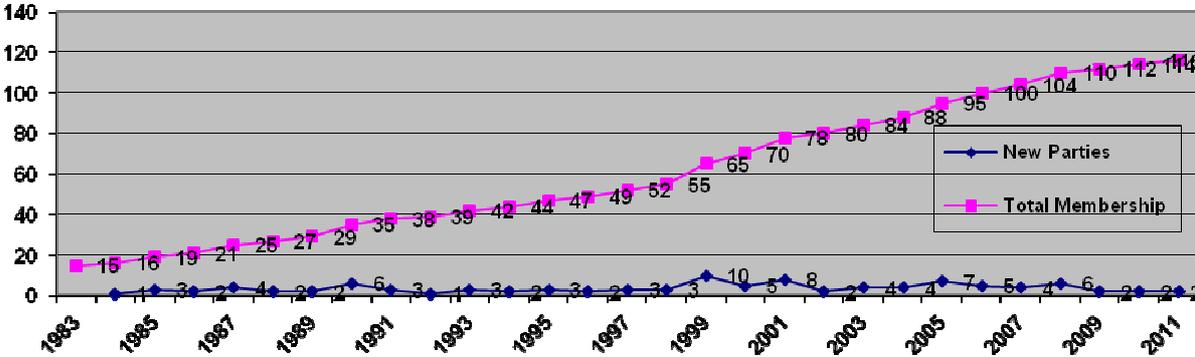
19. For the StC Members, the function of the individual member is that of a mediator between the Secretariat and the NFPs. Res.9.15 repealed Res.6.6 and called for clear and updated instructions on duties of Standing Committee representatives. The purpose was to increase effective communication between the Parties and the Secretariat and offer a strong vessel of regional presentation and thematic importance.

20. The ToR of the Standing Committee Members can be found under http://www.cms.int/bodies/StC/37th_stc_meeting/Doc_13_tor_stc.pdf.

Accession of new Parties

21. Increasing the membership not only provides better conservation of migratory species, since more range states are included, but also adds to the bottom-up knowledge the members can share within the Convention.

22. The Convention itself has increased its regional capacity through the accession of six new Parties since COP9, filling the gaps on the global conservation map of migratory species. The graph below shows the steady increase in membership. The Convention strives to keep this momentum going until all regions are covered as much as possible, which will enhance the capacity of the Convention.



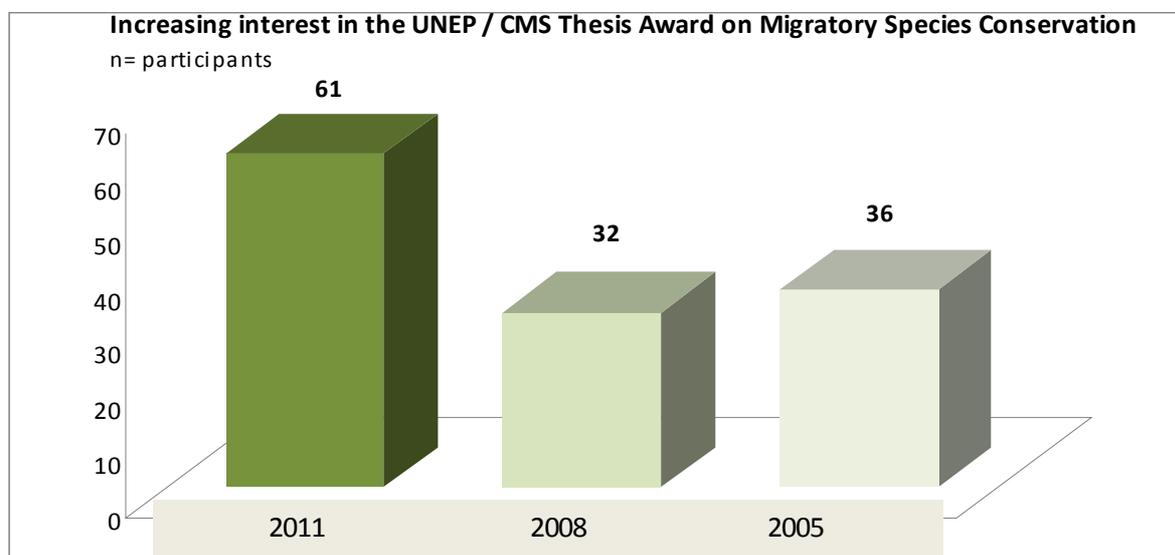
Enhancing Scientific Knowledge and Capacity

23. The CMS Thesis Award, run in cooperation with Lufthansa and the Zoological Research Museum Alexander Koenig in Bonn, Germany, plays a significant role in terms of awareness raising and thus strengthening or building capacity on scientific research of migratory animals. For one, the Thesis Award grants the best research project focussing on migratory species a prize of €10,000 for further scientific research and insight in specific conservation. For the other, it enhances links and cooperation with the universities shedding light on global conservation know-how. This in turn, feeds back to CMS and its Parties and the global scientific communities.

24. For COP10, more than 60 PhD theses on migratory species, nearly twice as many as for COP9, have been received (see graph below).

25. They focus on the biology of marine and terrestrial mammals, birds, reptiles, marine and freshwater fish, and insects. Many of the theses are related to the impact of climate change on migratory species; invasive species; grasslands and agriculture; marine ecosystems; and long distance migration.

26. The top 14 theses have been shortlisted based on the summaries and conservation statements submitted, which will be reviewed and final decision taken by the jury before COP. The ten expert members of the jury met at the Zoological Research Museum Alexander Koenig in Bonn on 20 September 2011 to select the winner. The 2011 Thesis Award, sponsored by Deutsche Lufthansa, will be presented at CMS COP10, 20-25 November 2011, in Bergen, Norway.



Computer-Based Capacity Building

27. Key to successful conservation of migratory animals is a comprehensive overview of national CMS implementation, forming the basis of analysis and monitoring from the bottom up. This is portrayed in the receipt of national reports submitted to each COP by the Parties. In order to facilitate this timely data collection, the Secretariat, together with UNEP-WCMC, is developing an online system of national reporting for use at the next reporting period.

28. The CMS website, as it currently stands, is technically outdated, static and poorly facilitates information sharing with other websites. There is a potential by using the newest technology to make the CMS website more interactive and user-friendly for the Parties. The idea is also develop one portal/website for the CMS Family. In order to make a head start on a suitable concept, an internal website working group has been created, currently represented by the Bonn based CMS instruments. This process is supported by a Junior Professional Officer (JPO) funded by the Government of Germany and specialising in Information and Communication Management. Should this project be approved and funds secured, then the preparatory efforts of the working group will accelerate the realisation of the web-based restructure in the next triennium. More information on the computer based capacity building can be found under UNEP/CMS/Inf.10.25 CMS Family Website Proposal.

29. The United Nations Information Portal on Multilateral Environmental Agreements (InforMEA), launched in June 2011, presents a mechanism to effectively retrieve and store information on a number of MEAs gathered in one place. This enables the user to reduce time and effort by cross-referencing specific information common to relevant organizations included in the project.

30. CMS Parties are unable to use this service yet, as the technically outdated CMS website currently prevents full integration in the InforMEA portal due to incompatibility. Subject to availability of resources, it is hoped that the CMS website will be updated into a state of the art, which ensures compatibility with InforMEA and will enable it to directly retrieve CMS data into the generic portal. More information on InforMEA can be found under UNEP/CMS/Conf.10.10 Harmonization of Information and Knowledge Management for MEAs.

Enhancement of Capacity at the CMS Secretariat

31. Capacity Building has risen in importance across the conservation community and was brought to the attention of the Conference of the Parties by UNEP/CMS/Conf.9.30. Progress in the strengthening of capacity has been slow due to inadequate human and financial resources.

32. In order to effectively undertake necessary activities intended to strengthen and enhance the capacities of the Parties to effectively enforce and implement the Convention, the Governments of Germany and Finland provided additional support in the form of JPOs who will be working on the African and Central Asian regions and the respective instruments. Responsibilities that fall under these positions will lead to the combination and streamlining of activities in Africa and Central Asia such as capacity building, the development of national action plans or pilot projects for the conservation of migratory species and their habitats in conjunction with other conventions and organizations.

Joint Capacity Building activities through the Biodiversity Liaison Group (BLG) Programme

33. There have been on-going discussions since September 2010 with the most recent meeting being held in September 2011. The Biodiversity Liaison Group convened to discuss *inter alia* the collaboration for the implementation of the strategic plan for biodiversity 2011-2020. (See <http://www.cbd.int/cooperation/doc/blg-07-02-en.pdf> for more information). CMS welcomed the chance to create synergies via the NBSAP process.

34. The CMS Secretariat has developed guidelines, which will be reviewed and hopefully adopted by COP10, which demonstrate to CMS Parties how to include the CMS objectives and aspirations in NBSAPs (UNEP/CMS/Conf.10.27). CMS's role hereby is to encourage effective communication and liaison among the NFPs of both conventions and to inform on the specific needs of migratory species; in other words actively stimulate and monitor the use of these guidelines.

35. In addition, joint work programmes with Ramsar, CITES and CBD are under further development and also being updated to include capacity building activities as part of the effort to harmonize and simplify common conservation goals and enhance the Secretariats' cooperation.

III. Financing Capacity Building Activities

36. The main problem hindering the development of capacity building and its activities is inadequate financing. Without sufficient and continuous funding over several years, training, workshops and other capacity building activities cannot be generated.

37. Due to inadequate funding some of the planned activities for 2009-2011 were not implemented and hence have been shifted to the Capacity Building Action Plan for 2012-2014.

Action requested:

The Secretariat requests the Conference of the Parties to:

- a. take note of the activities implemented during 2009-2011 and thank the governments that have provided financial and human resources for this work; and
- b. agree to the actions suggested in document UNEP/CMS/Conf.10.17, draft Resolution 10.6 and draft Resolution 10.7.