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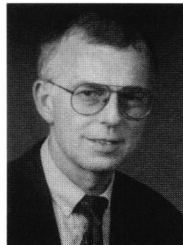
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Bulletin

CONTENTS

Partnership and Progress	1
CMS Looks Seaward	2
Conservation Activities	
Indian Ocean - South-East Asia	
Marine Turtle MoU	4
Albatrosses and Petrels	5
Great Bustard	6
Rescue of African Penguins From	
An Oil Spill	7
Cetacean Research in Senegal	
and the Gambia	8
Inauguration of Lake Prespa	
National Park in Albania	9
New GEF Project for	
Siberian Cranes	10
WBSJ Signs Siberian Crane MoU	10
Slender-billed Curlew	11
Cetacean Workshop in Guinea	12
Agreements	
AEWA	14
Agreements Unit	14
EUROBATS	15
ASCOBANS	16
ACCOBAMS	17
Other News	
IWC Meeting	17
GROMS	18
Migration and Mythology	18
CMS and IWC MoU sign MoU ..	19
Personalia	20
CMS at EXPO 2000	21
WCMC under the Flag of UNEP..	22
CMS launches Official Poster ...	22
CMS Workshop in Japan	23
New Parties to CMS	23
Calendar of Events	24
Map of the CMS Parties	24



Partnership and Progress

By Arnulf Müller-Helmbrecht,
Executive Secretary of CMS

Welcome Republic of Congo, Georgia, Uganda, Croatia and New Zealand! Five new Parties to CMS in the first eight months of the new Millennium, increasing the number of CMS Parties to 70 (effective 1 October 2000), broadening the geographic area and global coverage of the UN-based CMS.

The first theme which I would like to address is "partnership", a concept which is now embodied in a number of resolutions adopted by the CMS Conference of the Parties. Only a few CMS Parties have taken active steps towards to take this notion forward so far, but others are in the process of establishing partnerships with promising programmes or projects. This is a most welcome development. The Secretariat would be pleased to pass on details of relevant examples to other industrialised CMS Parties and organisations so that they can be copied *mutatis mutandis*.

In view of the fact that I have learned from the authorities, from scientists and NGOs of some new Parties that the willingness to do more for the conservation and management of migratory species is greater than their financial and personnel capacity allows, "partnership" provides an opportunity to pool precious resources.

The Secretariat has made further advances in liaising with other biodiversity-related conventions. For the recent COP 5 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), held at UNEP's headquarters Nairobi, Kenya in May 2000, a study - jointly initiated by UNEP and the CMS and CBD Secretariats - was submitted. The report entitled "How the Implementation of CMS Complements the Implementation of CBD" is available online on the CMS web site or on request direct from the CMS Secretariat. The report and the respective decisions of the CBD COP will be submitted to the next CMS Standing Committee Meeting.

However, this is not the only progress since the last edition of the CMS Bulletin. Not only are partnerships between industrialised and developing countries gaining momentum, but also the lead taken by some Parties in the development and conclusion of Agreements for migratory species under CMS (in accordance with Article IV of CMS) is beginning to bear fruit.

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For example, Australia's Environment Minister, Senator Hon. Robert Hill, is investing political will, personnel capacity and funds with the aim of having an Agreement for the better protection of Albatrosses and Petrels of the Southern Hemisphere developed and concluded. Also, Environment Australia contributed substantially to the conclusion of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for Marine Turtles of the Indian Ocean and part of the Pacific. The Environment Ministry of Germany is driving forward the development of an arrangement for a better conservation and sustainable management of Sturgeon species, most of which are migratory and definitely over-exploited. The Secretariat has finalised the MoU on the middle European population of the Great bustard (*Otis tarda*) which is now open for signature. Other activities are in a preparatory phase, so it would be premature to report about them at this stage.

The permanent Secretariat of the AEWA has been established within the CMS Secretariat in Bonn. ASCOBANS and EUROBATS held their MOP 3 back-to-back in Bristol, UK in July. Apart from reflecting on the good progress in their implementation, they decided to integrate their Secretariats in the Agreements Unit of the CMS Secretariat as of next year. There is also every reason to believe that the three vacant posts in the CMS Secretariat will be filled in the next few weeks.

May I also take this opportunity to thank all of you who have contributed actively in the progress which the Secretariat can report in this edition of the Bulletin. I believe that the value which the Parties (I would prefer to say: the migratory animals) receive for the investment is at least on a par with other conventions and international organisations. I express hope that the internal conditions of and external conditions for the CMS and Agreements Secretariats will enable this standard to be maintained in the time to come.

CMS Looks Seaward

by Douglas Hykle, Deputy Executive Secretary

Increasingly, the orientation of the Convention on Migratory Species is moving beyond the terrestrial environment and towards the sea. In the wake of the two cetacean agreements — ASCOBANS and ACCOBAMS — concluded in Europe in the 1990s, CMS instruments now extend further afield to cover marine turtles of the Atlantic coast of Africa and the Indian Ocean, and eventually to seabirds of the Southern Hemisphere. In addition, over the years CMS has financed numerous small-scale projects, surveys and workshops focusing on marine species.

The time is opportune, therefore, to assess how best to integrate the work of CMS into much larger institutional processes, such as initiatives undertaken within the framework of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Until now, CMS has not participated actively in the work of UNCLOS, nor of various bodies operating within the ambit of the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

The First Meeting of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Ocean Affairs (UNICPO), held at the UN Headquarters in New York from 30 May to 2 June 2000, provided a window on the work of various organisations and instruments whose objectives are pertinent to CMS. UNICPO was established to facilitate the annual General Assembly debate on oceans and the law of the sea, by suggesting issues to be considered by the GA and identifying areas where co-ordination and co-operation at the intergovernmental and interagency levels should be enhanced.

The May 2000 UNICPO conference accorded special attention to the problem of illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing, one that is inextricably linked to the global issue of over-fishing and by-catch. The latter, of course, is of particular relevance to many of the migratory species which CMS aims to conserve — namely, seabirds, marine mammals and marine turtles — and which are increasingly affected by fisheries interactions. The Government of Australia organized an expert consultation on IUU fishing in Sydney, in May 2000, and a further technical consultation will be convened by FAO in Rome from 2-6 October 2000.

There is a whole host of organisations, instruments and programmes with which CMS needs to interact if greater prominence is to be given to the man-induced threats posed to migratory species frequenting the high seas and coastal areas. Apart from UNCLOS, these include, in no particular order:

- the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, and its *Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries* (1995),

the *International Plan of Action for Reducing the Incidental Catch of Seabirds in Longline Fisheries* (1999) and the *Agreement to Promote Compliance with International Conservation and Management Measures by Fishing Vessels on the High Seas* (1993, not yet in force);

- the United Nations Environment Programme, and its *Regional Seas Programme* and the *Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities*;
- the International Maritime Organization and the *International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships* (1973/1978); and
- the Subcommittee on Oceans and Coastal Areas (SOCA) established under the UN Administrative Committee on Coordination (acting *inter alia* as a task manager for Chapter 17 of Agenda 21, which concerns protection of the marine environment and its living resources).

This list is certainly not exhaustive, but it gives an idea of the needs and possibilities for collaboration in specific areas. With limited resources and personnel capacity, it will be important for CMS to concentrate its efforts on specific initiatives with realistic goals and for one or more CMS Parties to take responsibility for co-ordinating their development. Synergistic collaboration with other relevant organisations should be actively pursued.

Resolution 6.2 on By-Catch, adopted by the Sixth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CMS (Cape Town, November 1999) highlights the problem of by-catch in relation to seabirds, marine turtles and cetaceans, and calls upon Contracting Parties, the Secretariat and Scientific Council to undertake various activities. For each of these taxonomic groups, progress is being made.

Until fairly recently, the high mortality of albatrosses on longlines set for tuna fishing, primarily in the Indian and Southern Oceans, received much less prominence than that of dolphins, which benefited from a global moratorium on large-scale pelagic driftnet fishing activated in December 1992 (pursuant to UN General Assembly resolution 46/215 of 1991). The International Plan of Action for Seabirds developed under the FAO's Committee on Fisheries (COFI) and approved in February 1999, begins to redress that imbalance. The ongoing development of an Agreement on the conservation of Southern Hemisphere albatrosses and petrels, under the leadership of the Australia, is the most visible and immediately achievable objective for seabirds within the framework of CMS.

For marine turtles, there is increasing evidence of the serious threat posed by longline fisheries — to the extent that, within the last year, a Hawaiian-based fishery was temporarily closed pending the completion of an environmental impact assessment. Marine turtle specialists have called on the FAO's Committee on Fisheries to consider the development of an action plan comparable to that agreed for seabirds in 1999, one that recognises the potential for technological "solutions" benefiting one taxonomic group to have adverse effects on others. This may be another area in which CMS could contribute expertise, resources and institutional support — for example, through its Scientific Council advisor on marine turtles (Dr. Colin Limpus), co-sponsorship of research projects aimed at developing effective mitigation measures, and the institutional frameworks provided by the two Memoranda of Understanding on marine turtles.

CMS has funded a number of projects that aim to provide policy-makers with basic information with which to begin to develop longer-term conservation strategies for small cetaceans. These include capacity-building, support for workshops and basic surveys, notably in West Africa and South-East Asia. Expertise within the Scientific Council, notably in the person of Dr. William Perrin, has been responsible for stimulating much of this activity. The possibility of more substantial support for expanded activities in South-East Asia, through a bilateral assistance programme, is currently under discussion.

Clearly, CMS has an important contribution to make in these areas of marine conservation, and it will be important for the Contracting Parties to reflect this in the way they interact with the Convention and its organs. Parties are reminded of the invitation — agreed by the CMS Standing Committee several years ago — to nominate an agency other than the one with which the Secretariat normally communicates, to receive CMS correspondence on a regular basis. This decision recognized that, whereas the Secretariat usually communicates with environment ministries or nature conservation departments, other agencies with competence for marine issues are often poorly informed about CMS. One might anticipate, as well, that as CMS turns increasingly towards the sea, the future make-up of delegations to the Conference of the Parties should be more representative of this shift in emphasis. Finally, if the problem of by-catch and its impact on migratory species covered by CMS is to be addressed in a meaningful way, it is imperative to engage regional fish management organisations — to which many CMS Parties belong — in the pursuit of workable solutions.

Indian Ocean - South-East Asia Marine Turtle MoU Concluded Under CMS

Co-operative efforts to conserve globally threatened marine turtles received a boost in July with the adoption of the text of a *Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Marine Turtles and their Habitats of the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia*. The Memorandum is the second of its kind to be concluded under the auspices of the Convention on Migratory Species.

Twenty-four States were represented at the negotiation session, hosted by the Malaysian Department of Fisheries and held near the coastal city of Kuantan, from 11-14 July. The meeting built upon the solid progress made at a first round of consultations convened by Environment Australia, in Perth, in October 1999. Once again, the discussions benefited from the presence of a number of resource persons affiliated with IUCN and its Marine Turtle Specialist Group.

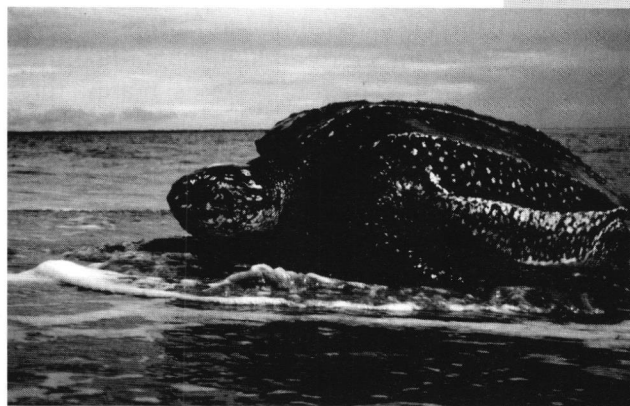
The Memorandum of Understanding puts in place a framework through which States of the region — as well as other concerned States — can work together to conserve and replenish depleted marine turtle populations for which they share responsibility. It acknowledges a wide range of threats to marine turtles, including habitat destruction, direct harvesting and trade, fisheries by-catch, pollution and other man-induced sources of mortality. The Memorandum recognizes the need to address these problems in the context of the socio-economic development of the States concerned, and to take account of other relevant instruments and organisations. A small secretariat and an advisory committee will be established to help implement its provisions. Voluntary contributions will be secured to guarantee that this essential co-ordination function is provided at the initial critical stage of the Memorandum's existence.

The Meeting agreed to work towards finalising a Conservation and Management Plan at the next intergovernmental session to be held in early 2001, at which time the Memorandum of Understanding will be open for signature. The Memorandum further envisages the development of sub-regional plans, where these are not already in place, to give effect to the specific actions needed to conserve the region's marine turtles and their habitats.

The CMS Secretariat is acting as Depositary for the Memorandum of Understanding and is providing basic secretariat services until the office established under the Memorandum is operational, hopefully by the end of 2001. The full text of the Memorandum of Understanding, in English, can be found on the CMS Web site. Arabic and French language translations are being prepared by the Malaysian Government.

The negotiation session was funded, for the most part, by a generous contribution of the Government of the United States, with additional support from CMS and Environment Australia. The staff of the Malaysian Department of Fisheries are to be congratulated on the excellent arrangements for the meeting and their warm hospitality. This included visits to an impressive interpretation centre devoted to marine turtle conservation and a hatchery that has successfully returned to the ocean thousands of Green turtle hatchlings that would otherwise have perished.

While it may be too late, regrettably, to reverse the precipitous decline of Leatherback turtles nesting on the east coast of peninsular Malaysia, it is hoped that the adoption of this Memorandum of Understanding will give renewed impetus to conservation programmes for these and other threatened marine turtles throughout the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia region.



Leatherback Turtle

© J.Fretey

Albatrosses and Petrels

The Australian Minister of the Environment, Hon. Senator Robert Hill, has personally intervened to improve the conservation of seabirds in the Southern Hemisphere. On his instructions, the Australian CMS focal point, Anne-Marie Delahunt, and CMS Scientific Councillor, Andrew McNee, with major support of Environment Australia have spent much of their time since returning from CMS COP6, preparing a draft agreement



Buller's Albatross, © Bios

and Action Plan on the conservation of the Southern Hemisphere albatrosses and petrels. Australia organised and hosted a consultative meeting in Hobart, Australia, from 10-14 July 2000, attended by the authorities of various Range States and intergovernmental organisations. Senator Hill opened the meeting, stressing the various factors of threat for the birds and the urgent need for international coordinated action to improve the conservation status of the albatross and petrel species. He confirmed the willingness of the government of Australia to progress further the process of negotiating and concluding an Agreement under the CMS.

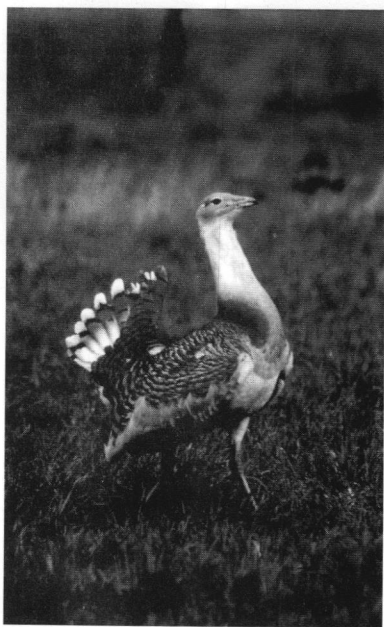
At the negotiations, the participants made good progress with the development of an Agreement and Action Plan. The meeting established that an Agreement under the auspices of CMS was the best way forward. The proposals tabled by Australia concerning its provisions were broadly accepted by the other participants. All species covered by the Agreement are to be treated as if they are threatened by extinction; conservation and management provisions were elaborated; and an outline organisational structure of the Agreement - the role of the Meeting of Parties, Advisory Committee and the Secretariat - was agreed in principle.

Other issues still to be clarified are whether to enshrine the "precautionary principle" in the Agreement text, the precise structure and role of the Advisory Committee, and the wording of the arbitration clause. The draft Action Plan also needs further refinement and input from world experts. Environment Australia undertook to progress the drafting of the Agreement and consult with other governments over the time and place of the next negotiation meeting. CMS Scientific Council Chairman, Dr. Colin Galbraith, is organising the revision of the Action Plan. The Report of the Hobart meeting appears on the CMS website.

It is now important that all Range States as well as relevant IGO's, NGO's and scientific institutions take an active part in the final negotiations required to conclude this vital Agreement. Next it will be essential to secure the membership of all countries exercising sovereign rights in the migration range of the albatross and petrel species and which undertake fishing and other activities impacting on the species' habitat.

Great Bustard - Can CMS help the population recover ?

After long and intensive consultations the CMS Secretariat has finalised the text of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of the Middle-European Population of the Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*). The final draft of the text has now been circulated to the Range States and co-operating international organisations, the IUCN, BirdLife International and the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC).



Great Bustard © B. Block,
Landesumweltamt Brandenburg,
Staatliche Vogelschutzwarte

While the Iberian and Russian populations number several thousand birds, the Great Bustard has become extinct or has been reduced to vagrant status in parts of its former range. Even in some countries where the Great Bustard has managed to survive, its numbers are counted in dozens rather than hundreds. The Memorandum should give rise to greater co-operation to help sustain the fragmented populations of the species in middle-Europe.

It is proposed that signatures of authorised representatives of the Range States should be collected at a small signing ceremony at the Second World Conservation Congress of IUCN in Amman, Jordan taking place this October.

The MoU calls for the strict protection of the species and the maintenance and restoration of its habitat. It also includes an Action Plan with two sections - one of general applicability and a second listing specific actions appropriate for each Range State.

Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*)

- one of the heaviest bird species capable of flight (male birds can reach 15-17 kg; hens between 5 and 8kg)
- migration: most of the populations do not migrate. However, in the severest winters they are able to migrate over long distances, e.g. in 1978 the Brandenburg population migrated to the Champagne region of France, but only 50% returned
- the Great Bustard is one of the most endangered birds in Europe. In many areas where the species was once to be found, it has already disappeared.

Threatened by:

- more intensive agriculture; fertilisers used instead of leaving land fallow
- constant working of the land disturbs the birds during the mating season and incubation
- draining of wetlands
- herbicides and pesticides; removal of food, difficulties with raising young
- Fragmentation of the landscape, interruption of flyways
- predators pose a danger to the young, in the main, ravens, foxes and increasingly badgers and martens

Range States for the MOU

Albania, Austria, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, the FYR of Macedonia, Ukraine

Wildlife Rescue: Saving 46 000 African Penguins from an Oil Spill



A heavily oiled African Penguin from the *Treasure* spill awaits rescue.

© L.G. Underhill

Since the 15th century we have exploited African Penguins *Spheniscus demersus*. We have eaten them and their eggs, scraped away their guano-nesting habitat, reduced their food supply by over-fishing, and killed thousands by oiling. A population once in its millions decreased by 90% last century, leading to an IUCN Vulnerable classification and listing in Appendix II of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS).

On 23 June this year the ore-carrier *Treasure* sank a few kilometres from two South African islands, Dassen and Robben, which together support 40% of the penguin's remaining population. Leaking fuel oiled 23 000 birds, which have been collected for cleaning and release by the Southern African Foundation for the Conservation of Coastal Birds, an NGO with 30 years of experience in rescuing oiled penguins. This massive operation, which has required over a thousand volunteers helping daily, ranks as one of the largest animal rescues ever attempted anywhere. An additional 20 000 birds at risk to oiling were transported to Port Elizabeth to swim the 800 km home. These birds are now returning to unoiled waters. Three carried satellite transmitters and their successful swims home were anxiously followed on the World Wide Web by thousands of people. Three thousand orphaned chicks have been collected for artificial rearing and subsequent release.

Of the 46 000 birds rescued, only about 1500 have died to date. Estimates are that the

by John Cooper and Les Underhill

Treasure oiling will have killed 1% of the species' population; if nothing had been done fully 25% would have died. Based on follow-ups of previous oiling disasters, we know that released penguins breed again and survive for many years (some to get oiled once more). So the outlook for the majority of the *Treasure* birds is good, and the remarkable rescue operation that has captured the world's imagination is certain to be a conservation success.

However, what is also certain, is that oiling disasters will continue to happen; the Cape sea route is a stormy one and carries many ships. Reacting against such incidents will continue to be necessary to save the African Penguin, but what can be done proactively?

At the 6th Conference of Parties of the CMS, held in South Africa last year, a resolution called for "co-operative action" for the species. The time has now come for this to be put into effect. At a two-day workshop on the conservation of the world's four species of *Spheniscus* penguins, to be held in September in Chile as part of the Fourth International Penguin Conference, a proposal that a Memorandum of Understanding should be negotiated between Namibia and South Africa (the only two breeding range states) will be discussed. If an MoU can be developed under the CMS, then its action plan will set out how the African Penguin, assaulted by humanity for five hundred years, can continue to survive another hundred.

John Cooper and Les Underhill, BirdLife International and Avian Demography Unit, University of Cape Town, www.uct.ac.za/depts/stats/adu/oilspill



Thousands of oiled African Penguins await cleaning by SANCCOB at a temporary facility in an old warehouse in Cape Town.

© L.G. Underhill

Cetacean Research in Senegal and The Gambia

by Koen Van Waerebeek

The second phase of the West African Cetacean Research and Conservation Programme (WAF CET-2), a follow-up to the UNEP/CMS sponsored WAF CET-1 project, was initiated in Senegal and the Gambia in November 1999 co-ordinated by the author as Principal Investigator for the NGO *Marine Education and Research* (MER). Operating funds and field equipment were provided for the implementation of field activities both in Senegal and the Gambia.

Basic infrastructure set-up for a new study centre of cetaceans within the Dakar-based association *Conservation and Research of West African Aquatic Mammals* (COREWAM) was successfully put in place. Dr. Abdoulaye Djiba, Dr. Mamadou Diallo and Mr. Edouard Ndiaye ensured the daily operation of the centre. Curatorial care was given to COREWAM's growing cetacean reference collection, while several new specimens, including one hump-backed dolphin, were added. The identity of a small baleen whale recently stranded at Ngazobil (which may have been by-caught and which was utilised by the locals) is currently under investigation. Minke whales, for instance, are known to enter Senegal's coastal waters with some regularity (Van Waerebeek *et al.*, 1999). The remains of the specimen were buried for later retrieval of the skeleton.

One highlight was the discovery in November 1999 of a small, but apparently healthy, community of endangered Atlantic hump-backed dolphins *Sousa teuszii* located in a protected area within the confines of the *Parc National du Delta du Saloum*, Senegal. Best group estimates for pods sighted on subsequent days (probably the same individuals) were between 26 and 30 specimens. These constitute the first scientifically authenticated (by KVV) sightings of Atlantic hump-backed dolphins in the Saloum delta since 1979. Dolphins of the same community are thought to wander across the border into contiguous waters of the Gambia's Niimi National Park, but may

otherwise be residential in this larger area. It exemplifies the importance of international coordination to better protect border-straddling mammal populations which are not necessarily known to be migratory.

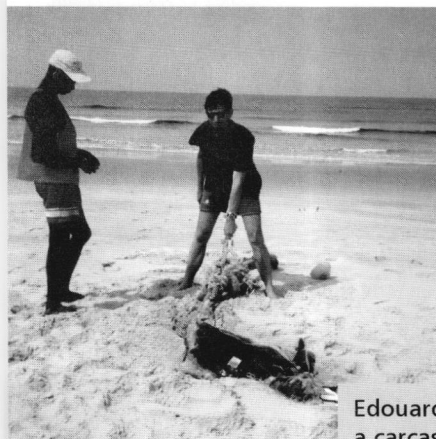
A hump-backed dolphin carcass collected on a near-by island, as well as a bottlenose dolphin carcass found stranded on Djinack Island were ominous signs of the fisheries by-catch problem, as confirmed by Park Rangers of both nations. Field work in the area will be intensified in order to assess the status of dolphin populations.

In the Gambia an agreement was signed between the Department of Parks and Wildlife Management (DPWM) and MER to jointly implement the WAF CET-2 programme. Mr. Alpha Jallow, Mrs. Anna Cham and Dr. Linda Barnett made up the Gambian aquatic mammal working group and provided the following information. Eighteen data collection points have been set up along the Atlantic south coast, the Gambia river North Bank Division and the Lower River Division. Each of the sites was monitored using local observers, either DPWM and Department of Fisheries (DoF) employees stationed there, or volunteers. Folders with photocopies of datasheets, writing material and drawings of whales and dolphins were provided. Already several dozen sightings were registered by the Gambian observers, attributable to at least six species including bottlenose dolphins, common dolphins, Atlantic hump-backed dolphins, and possibly rough-toothed dolphins, *Kogia* spp., and sperm whales. As with similar schemes in other countries, while dedication and field observation skills often are high, reliable species identification may be a problem. Abilities will be fine-tuned through joint sorties with cetacean experts, in particular the author. Anecdotal information would suggest that from March-May and October-December higher numbers of cetaceans are sighted coinciding with the seasonal presence of Bonga-fish (*Ethmalosa fimbriata*) and *Sardinella* on which the dolphins presumably feed.

Senior Gambian Fisheries Officers at DoF in Banjul were briefed on the aims of WAF CET-2 and a closer collaboration on cetacean data collection will be ensured thanks to Mrs. Cham who works with both departments. Three stranded specimens, one short-finned pilot whale and two skulls of bottlenose dolphins from the Atlantic coast, were added to the DPWM reference collection.

A new, intensive field data collecting effort is scheduled for September-October 2000.

Dr. Koen Van Waerebeek, COREWAM Scientific Councillor, Cité ISRA Villa #276, Thiaroye Azur, km16 Rte. de Rufisque, Dakar, SENEGAL



Edouard Ndiaye and Koen van Waerebeek with a carcass of an Atlantic hump-backed dolphin

Inauguration of Lake Prespa National Park in Albania

Important Step in Conserving Migratory Birds and Other Biological Resources

On 31 May 2000 the President of Albania, Dr. Rexhep Meidanj inaugurated Lake Prespa National Park at a ceremony attended by 500 guests. The Park, covering an area of 27,750 hectares is situated at the point where Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Greece meet. The Park is being prominently featured at the EXPO 2000 in Hanover in the Albanian pavilion.

Formed more than two million years ago, the region of Lake Ohrid and the Greater and Lesser Prespa Lakes offers an important habitat for a multitude of wild animals and plants some of which do not occur elsewhere in the world.

Tens of thousands of birds spend the winter at the lakes or rest there during their migration. With the National Park and a new Landscape Reserve (also 27,000 hectares, connecting Lake Ohrid with Prespa National Park), Albania has doubled the area of its protected regions.

The year-long co-operation between EURONATUR, a German-based international NGO, and the NGO *Preservation & Protection Natural Environment in Albania* (PPNEA) made it possible to put into effect the project to create the Lake Prespa National Park into effect. Financial support was provided by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) through the German Society for Technical Co-operation (GTZ).

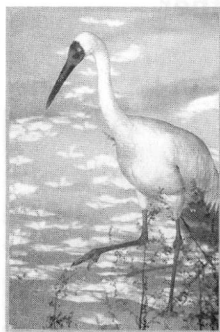
Dr. Gjicknuri (Chairman of the Albanian NGO PPNEA) and Dr. Fremuth (EURONATUR) stressed the important role of the CMS Secretariat in securing funding from the German government for this project. Arnulf Müller-Helmbrecht emphasised how fruitful co-operation between Germany, Albania, NGOs and the CMS Secretariat had been. "The region has been of global importance — for millions of years — because of its unique biological diversity and the fact that it is an important breeding, stop-over or wintering site. Threatened migratory species such as the Dalmatian pelican (*Pelicanus crispus*) and the Slender-billed curlew (*Numenius tenuirostris*) are to be found here."

In addition to this positive development for Albanian conservation, the CMS Executive Secretary received the good news that Albania will take the necessary steps to join CMS and related Agreements.



© CMS Albanian State President Dr. R. Meidanj (left) and high level representatives of Albania and Germany at the opening ceremony

New GEF Project Begins on Wetlands for Siberian Cranes



© Bios

by Claire Mirande and Prentice Crawford

Following a period of intensive preparation led by the International Crane Foundation (ICF), a Global Environment Facility (GEF) project on the *Conservation of Wetlands and Migratory Corridors Required by Siberian Cranes and Other Waterbirds* began in March. The PDF B phase of the project, which covers China, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakstan and the Russian Federation, will be completed in March 2001 with the submission of a comprehensive five year Full Project proposal.

The project is being implemented through UNEP, and is being co-ordinated by ICF and the Convention on Migratory Species. The project aims to conserve the critical sites that are used by Siberian Cranes for breeding (in Russia), staging during migration (all four countries), and the main wintering grounds (in China and Iran). National experts are carrying out the work in each of these countries.

Plans will be developed to conserve the overall biodiversity at selected wetlands, most of which are of international importance for a variety of reasons. The project will focus on specific management activities at these sites, and will also strengthen co-ordination of the flyway site networks used by the Siberian Cranes in Eastern and Central Asia, in cooperation with existing initiatives including the CMS MoU on the Siberian Crane, North East Asia Crane Site Network, and the Asia Pacific Migratory Waterbird Strategy.

The first project Steering Committee meeting was hosted in Moscow on 15-17 March by the All Russian Research Institute for Nature Conservation and Reserves. The process for developing the GEF Full Project proposal was reviewed, national workplans were prepared, and mechanisms for flyway coordination discussed. Between May and December, information will be collected on current and planned activities, legal protection status, threats, and the views of local communities at the project sites.

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Wild Bird Society of Japan Signs Siberian Crane MoU

The Wild Bird Society of Japan (WBSJ), renowned for its satellite tracking of migratory birds, signed the Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for the Siberian Crane on 18 May 2000.

It is hoped that the WBSJ will be in a position to contribute transmitters and make available data to assist efforts to rescue the remaining Siberian cranes in Western and Central Asia from the brink of extinction.



Dr. Noritaka Ichida, Director of WBSJ, International Centre and Douglas Hykle, CMS

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UPDATE

Slender billed Curlew - Expeditions in Iran and Russia

by Dr. Umberto Gallo-Orsi, BirdLife

Since 1998, there have been no sightings of the Slender-billed Curlew at Merja Zerda, the traditional wintering site in Morocco, and the only wintering sites are probably along the coasts of the Persian Gulf. In order to verify a number of scattered observations in Iran, two expeditions were carried out there in January, February and March 2000 with the support of the Iranian authorities.

Although no Slender-billed Curlew were observed, the expeditions, one by a Russian - Dutch team and the other by a French group, located important concentrations of Dalmatian pelican (*Pelecanus crispus*) and other poorly known species such as the Crab plover (*Dromas ardeola*) and the Broad-billed sandpiper (*Limicola falcinellus*). They also confirmed the existence of large areas of ideal winter habitat for the species. The two teams will visit Iran again next winter under the co-ordination of the Slender-billed Curlew Working Group (SbCWG).

The last confirmed record refers to 3 juveniles observed in Oman, which confirms the importance of the Persian Gulf and the fact that the species is still breeding somewhere in northern Kazakhstan or western Siberia. Surveys carried out in June in some of the presumed breeding areas, failed once more to locate any birds. Recent research in Russia and Kazakhstan has ascertained that overgrazing and drainage are causing dramatic habitat loss which is affecting a large number of species and might be the most current threat for the Slender-billed Curlew and the Sociable plover (*Cettusia gregaria*).

The SbCWG and CMS are discussing the organisation of an expert meeting in early 2001, in order to analyse in depth the present status of the species and decide on future activities. Also, an updated Action Plan shall be developed for discussion and approval by a meeting of Key Range States, tentatively scheduled for 2002.

Further good news for CMS's efforts to conserve the Slender-billed Curlew came on 18 April 2000, when Italy signed the Memorandum of Understanding.



Slender-billed Curlew © C.H. Gomersall (RSPB)

Workshop in Guinea-Conakry on the Conservation and Management of Marine Mammals in West Africa

By Dr. Eric Archer and Dr. Koen Van Waerebeek

A CMS-sponsored workshop on the conservation and management of West African marine mammals was held in Conakry, Guinea, from May 8 to 12, 2000. The goal was to develop a collaborative regional action plan for conducting basic research on the local marine mammal fauna and identifying populations in need of co-ordinated management efforts.



Mr. Abdel Kader Bangoura, CMS Focal Point from Guinea, (far right) on the podium at the meeting

© Bangoura

The workshop was hosted and organised by the Guinean Ministry of Agriculture and was ably coordinated by Mr. Abdel Kader Bangoura, CMS Focal Point in Guinea. In attendance were governmental representatives from Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Gambia, Guinea-Conakry, Senegal, Togo, as well as officials from four Guinean Ministries, and a number of observers. Guinea's national press reported extensively on the workshop.

The first and second day of the workshop were largely occupied by various seminars and training sessions presented by Drs. W.F. Perrin (CMS Scientific Councillor), E. I. Archer (SWFSC) and K. Van Waerebeek (CMS/ WAF CET Projects co-ordinator). These included a general overview of the evolution and biology of marine mammals, followed by a review of the known or suspected distribution of cetaceans and manatees in West African waters. This list was later supplemented by data from reports presented by representatives from the attending countries. Other information disseminated among the participants included: methodologies for specimen collection, preparation and curation; cetacean survey techniques, especially methods of estimating abundance via line-transect surveys as well as some low-cost alternatives; methods for fisheries and by-catch monitoring; West African manatees and aspects of ecotourism. Of particular interest were examples of artisanal fishery and market survey methods successfully used in Peru and the Philippines, applicable in areas with incidental or direct takes of small cetaceans. Also discussed was the importance of community support for conservation programs and ways to increase local awareness of the issues.

With this information as background, the participants split into four working groups to develop the outline of an action plan for the region. One group discussed the need to conduct basic biological studies on the distribution and abundance of cetaceans and manatees in the region, analyze this information and translate the results in non-technical wording which could be understood by a wider public. Additionally, it was considered important to identify potential threats to the animals and evaluate strategies of conservation that could be employed, details of which were treated by a second group. Captures of aquatic mammals in artisanal and industrial fisheries, pollution and other forms of habitat degradation, certain harmful traditional practices, developing commercial interests and an absence of political will to tackle problems efficiently were cited as the major causes for concern.

In connection with marine mammal research, it was recognised that a coordinated network of data collection and processing, and dissemination was needed to maintain open lines of communication and help coordination between the institutes and scientists involved. The participants also expressed a desire to improve their ability to carry out conservation research through better training, access to equipment and published knowledge.

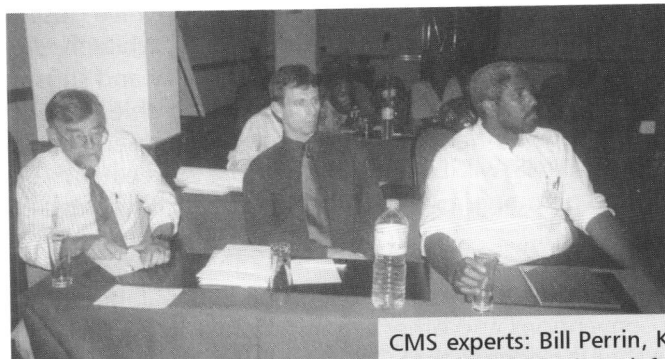
As science cannot be conducted in a vacuum, another group examined the role that national politics, and institutional and legal elements play in the implementation and enforcement of conservation programs. Of primary importance in this arena is ensuring that small cetaceans are a focal issue in the construction of national conservation and management plans. As many of these aims are money-dependent, the group also looked for ways to obtain the necessary funding.

The fourth working group explored ways to increase local community participation and communication through informational and educational programs. Wide agreement existed on the idea that it was essential to involve all parts of society, most importantly the many local community associations as well as regional NGOs; established organisations well-positioned to interact with the people on a local level. Fisheries communities and agents should actively participate to implement programs. Properly planned aquatic ecotourism was cited as one activity that can dramatically increase local awareness about conservation while providing a sustainable income.

The workshop was considered successful in identifying many of the important issues regarding the conservation and management of West African marine mammals. In a region of this size, it is only through collaborative efforts that sustainable conservation programs can be developed. All of the workshop participants appreciated the need for this level of cooperation, and felt that it was important to include the participation of both public and private organisations, international institutions, universities, research centres, NGOs, and any other intellectual or material resources in their future efforts.

Specific follow-up actions agreed upon included the drafting of a regional Action Plan for the Conservation of Cetaceans in West Africa proposed by the Government of Guinea and the establishment of a regional information reference centre on cetaceans as a conduit between CMS and local researchers.

A boat trip to the Iles de Loos, off Conakry, was intended to demonstrate the basics of coastal small-boat sighting surveying but with the lack of cetaceans it evolved into a spontaneous and fruitful colloquium on the role of conservation and resource management in African societies and a pleasant get-to-know-your-colleague outing, as essential to co-operation as any formal activity.



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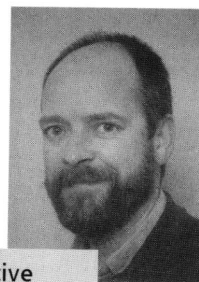
CMS experts: Bill Perrin, Koen Van Waerebeek and Eric Archer (from left to right)

AEWA Secretariat has Moved to Bonn

At the First Session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA), it was decided to accept the invitation of the Fifth Conference of the Parties to CMS (Geneva, 1997) to co-locate the newly established Permanent Secretariat for AEWA with the CMS Secretariat. At the end of June 2000 the AEWA Secretariat left the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries of the Netherlands to join the Agreements Unit at the UN-Premises in Bonn, Germany. With this move, the role of the Netherlands in the development of the Agreement will change, but not come to an end. The State Secretary of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries, Ms Geke Faber, informed the Meeting of the Parties in her opening speech that the Netherlands would continue to give its full support to the Agreement.

At the beginning of 2000 the post of Executive Secretary of the AEWA was advertised. The interviews took place in April and after screening several candidates Dr. Klaus Töpfer, the Executive Director of UNEP, decided to offer the post to Bert Lenten, who had been the Secretary of the AEWA Interim Secretariat, responsible for its day-to-day work since the beginning of 1996.

Dr. Gerard C. Boere, former member of the CMS Standing Committee, was also instrumental in the development of AEWA, being the person who drafted the Agreement in close co-operation with the CMS Secretariat and various NGO's. The first of November 1999, the date that the Agreement entered into force, has become a milestone, due to all the efforts of the Secretariat.



Bert Lenten, Executive Secretary of AEWA

Bert Lenten's appointment will ensure that the transition from Interim to Permanent Secretariat causes the absolute minimum disruption to the Agreement's current activities. For the next three years his priority will be to increase the number of contracting Parties and, last but not least, to implement the Agreement.

Arnulf Müller-Helmbrecht, on behalf of the CMS Secretariat, expressed his delight at Bert Lenten's appointment as well as at the arrival of the Permanent AEWA Secretariat in Bonn. "I very much look forward to working closely with Bert to ensure that the significant progress achieved so far by AEWA continues into the future."

Green Light for the Agreements Unit

The Third Sessions of the Meeting of Parties to both EUROBATS and ASCOBANS, held respectively 24-26 and 26-28 July in Bristol took the historic decision to join the CMS Agreements Unit, which will be administered by UNEP. This move will involve closer institutional and administrative ties with the Secretariat of the parent Convention, while the Agreements Secretariats will remain responsible to their Parties for matters of policy and substance. With more administrative support from UNEP/CMS, the Secretariats will be able to concentrate their efforts more on core tasks of implementation and promotion of conservation of their targeted species. EUROBATS and ASCOBANS will become part of the Agreements Unit on 1 January 2001, when they will join the permanent AEWA Secretariat which was established in Bonn in July (see separate article).

CMS fully supports moves to achieve greater co-operation and collaboration among the various biodiversity-related Conventions and other organisations with similar aims. The establishment of the Agreements Unit is evidence that CMS practises what it preaches. EUROBATS and ASCOBANS have derived benefits from the collocation arrangements of the past few years. The benefits of the Agreements Unit will be even greater, which should be good news for migratory species.

Agreements



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EUROBATS

Welcome to the UNEP Family

The 3rd Session of the Meeting of Parties to EUROBATS convened at the generous invitation of the Government of the United Kingdom in Bristol from 24 to 26 July 2000. All Parties, eight more Range States and several NGOs were represented. A number of major decisions to further strengthen and develop the Agreement were taken.

From 1 January 2001 EUROBATS will be administered under UNEP in the newly established CMS Agreements Unit together with AEWA and ASCOBANS. Synergies, greater efficiency through economies of scale and close co-operation are expected to arise from co-locating the Agreement Secretariats and giving them a common administrative framework.

Another important resolution adopted in Bristol deals with an amendment of the Agreement. It was given an appendix to facilitate the addition of more bat species. The amendment also introduced a better definition of the scope of the Agreement and more expressly invites non-European Range States to accede to the Agreement. Once the amendment enters into force, the Agreement title will be the "Agreement on the Conservation of Populations of European Bats".

To commemorate the 10th anniversary of the signing of the Agreement, the Meeting declared the year 2001 to be the "International Year of the Bat". The Parties will make additional efforts to promote bat conservation as well as public awareness and will encourage countries across the world to participate in initiatives to improve the conservation of bats of all species.

In further resolutions the Parties established a new Action Plan with the priorities for the implementation of the Bat Conservation and Management Plan and refined the reporting system within the Agreement.

It was a particular pleasure for the Meeting of Parties to welcome Romania as the 20th Party to the Agreement. A number of further countries are expected to accede before the end of the year.



Mr. Peter Lina, Chair of the Advisory Committee, Ms. Eva Suchomelova, Vice Chair of the Meeting, Mr. Roger Pritchard, Chair of the Meeting and Mr. Andreas Streit, EUROBATS Executive Secretary (from left to right)

© EUROBATS



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ASCOBANS

Welcome to the UNEP Family

From 26 - 28 July 2000 the Third Meeting of Parties to ASCOBANS met in Bristol, UK. At the invitation of the Government of the United Kingdom, representatives of the 8 North and Baltic Sea Parties, France and Norway, and a large number of intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations met in Bristol to review progress made and difficulties encountered in achieving ASCOBANS' objectives since the last Meeting of Parties, held in Bonn, Germany in 1997 and discuss the way ahead in the upcoming triennium.

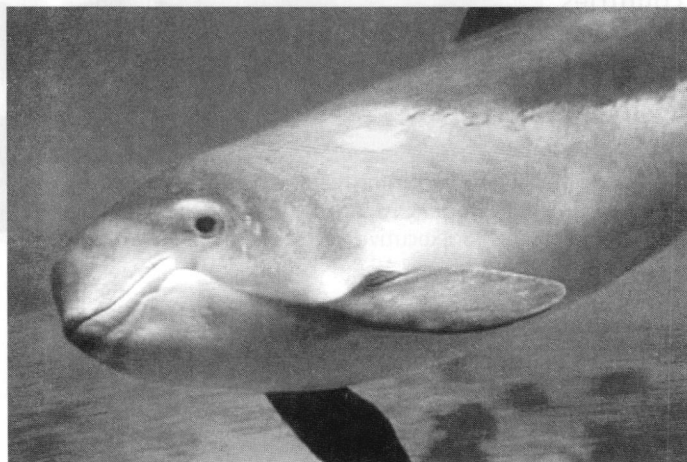
By-catch, the incidental entanglement of cetaceans in fishing gear is the most important threat to cetaceans in European waters. While whales and dolphins are no longer deliberately hunted in the Agreement area, several thousand are killed each year in by-catch. In order to allow depleted stocks to recover, by-catch must be significantly reduced. Consequently, one of the most important objectives of the Agreement is the reduction of the number of small cetaceans incidentally caught by fisheries. Marine pollution poses another severe threat requiring international co-operation. Hazardous substances, such as heavy metals and organic pollutants, accumulate on their way through the food chain and reach highest levels in the body tissues of marine mammals, affecting their health. Acoustic disturbance is a further growing cause for concern.

The Meeting of Parties therefore set clear limits for the incidental take of harbour porpoises and identified the following key actions needed to address the issue of cetacean conservation in the Agreement area:

- Elaboration of a recovery plan for the threatened harbour porpoise in the Baltic Sea.
- Development of further advice on measures to reduce by-catch.
- Further work on population structure, abundance and distribution.

The meeting also expressed the views that the European Community should take initiatives to reduce cetacean by-catch in the ASCOBANS area and that the Agreement area should be extended southwards and westwards to include the waters of Spain, Portugal and the Republic of Ireland.

In addition, the 3rd Meeting of Parties to ASCOBANS followed AEWA and EUROBATS in agreeing on the formal integration of the ASCOBANS Secretariat, which has been co-located with the CMS Secretariat in Bonn since 1998, into the newly established Agreements Unit of that Secretariat. The administrative support provided through the Agreements Unit will enable the ASCOBANS Secretariat to concentrate its efforts to a greater extent than before on substantive aspects of conservation. The policy development of ASCOBANS will remain the sole responsibility of the Parties to ASCOBANS.



Harbour porpoise, © F. Graner

Agreements & CMS



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ACCOBAMS

Soon in force?

ACCOBAMS is close to coming into force. With the announcement of Croatia and Romania that they ratified the Agreement in June, just one more Mediterranean country is required. Several countries are well advanced with their ratification procedures and there are good grounds for hoping that the Agreement will enter into force before the end of the year 2000.

At a sub-regional level there is another piece of good news: the Franco-Italo-Monegasque marine mammal sanctuary has been agreed; Monaco and France have already ratified. Implementation will start soon and already increasing amounts of scientific research are being undertaken in the Zone. Even now, WWF France is organising a campaign at sea off Cap Ligures, within the sanctuary, with the aim of starting a census of bottle-nosed dolphin populations in coastal waters.

Furthermore, a new study in the form of a thesis entitled "The role and importance of undersea canyons on the fringes of the continent for the summer distribution of cetaceans in the NW Mediterranean" will improve our knowledge of the spread and ecology of cetaceans in this area.

Last June, the basis of legal protection of cetaceans formed part of a presentation at the Monegasque pavilion at the EXPO 2000 at Hanover.

The Secretariat has continued to liaise with ASCOBANS and took part in the meeting of the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee last March.

IWC Meeting

The 52nd Annual Meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) was held from 3-6 July in Adelaide, Australia.

While the world's attention naturally focussed on the high profile and controversial issues whether to lift the moratorium on commercial whaling and to establish a whale sanctuary in the southern oceans, the meeting also considered the importance of co-operating with other organisations. Further details of the outcome of the meeting can be found on the IWC web-site <http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/iwcoffice/>

Over the past year, IWC has increased its collaboration with the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas (ASCOBANS), the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES), the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) and the Southern Ocean GLOBEC (SO-GLOBEC).

In addition to this, the Commission empowered its secretariat to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with CMS on closer co-operation and exchanging information on areas of common interest (see article). CMS has concluded similar agreements with other organisations including the Secretariat of CBD, the Ramsar Bureau and Wetlands International.

The Global Register of Migratory Species (GROMS)

Knowledge about animal migration is very patchy. While considerable information is available concerning birds, research into fish migration has been confined to just the economically important species. Documents concerning mammals and insects are widely scattered. GROMS - the Global Register of Migratory Species - seeks to address the problem by summarising the current state of knowledge in a standardised relational database connected to a Geographical Information System (GIS).

The database provides fully referenced information on species, populations, bibliography, monitoring organisations and experts. Distribution maps, migration routes and point data have been geo-referenced in *ARCVIEW* and can be exported to other GIS projects.

Inputting data began in June 1998 and now 1800 species have been entered. The basic unit within GROMS are "populations", defined either taxonomically down to subspecies level, geographically or by age and sex. These last categories are important as migratory behaviour differs considerably between male and female and adult and juvenile seals, for example. Geographically or genetically defined populations are the management units for conservation. To date, GROMS contains 1111 populations (mainly waterbirds and seals).

Maps are important tools representing movements of migratory species. GROMS

contains GIS format maps showing areas (species' range and distribution), lines (flyways) and points (sightings). One interesting fact to emerge from analysis of the data so far is that diversity of migratory species does not increase towards the tropics and is high in temperate regions. Certain "hot spots" have also been identified - where species concentrate seasonally either for breeding, feeding or moulting. Many of these areas lie outside the priority areas for biodiversity conservation and much of the responsibility for conserving migratory species lies with the industrialised countries and countries whose economies are in transition. Extending the use of the GIS facility as the project evolves in phase II starting in 2001 will help to identify potential threats to species arising from change in land-use, development and pollution.

A new Graphical User Interface (GUI) has been designed enabling interactive maps to be displayed on the world-wide web and allowing simple species reports to be generated. The menus for the retrieval system have been specially adapted to the needs of conservationists and policy makers. A pilot version of this feature can be tested at <http://www.groms.de>.

The GROMS project is led by:

Dr. Klaus Riede, Centre for Development Research, Walter-Flex-Straße 3, D-53113, Bonn, Germany (email: k.riede.zfmk@uni-bonn.de).

Migration and Mythology

From time immemorial, animals have migrated vast distances across the globe, but only in the last few centuries has technological progress slowly enabled humankind to emulate these voyages. It is still a mystery to modern science how these creatures navigate, so it is little wonder that migratory animals captured the imagination of early societies and feature so strongly in fable, folklore, legends and myths.

All those who work for and with CMS are aware of the value of migratory species in environmental, ecological and genetic terms, but the text of the Convention also stresses the animals' educational, cultural and aesthetic importance.

The Secretariat of CMS is planning to collect contributions illustrating cultural, spiritual and moral values attributed of migratory species. Readers of the Bulletin are therefore invited to send the Secretariat contributions, such as stories, fairy tales, songs, rhymes, poems, pictures and drawings about migratory species. A project with the aim of publishing a compendium of the material received is under consideration.

Co-operation between CMS and the International Whaling Commission (IWC)



On the podium: P. van Klaveren, A. Müller-Helmbrecht, M. O'Sullivan, Dr.R. Gambell, Dr. P. Rijnders (from left to right)

On 26 July 2000 the heads of the Secretariats of CMS and IWC formally signed the new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between their two Secretariats. The ceremony took place in Bristol, UK, immediately before the opening of the MoP3 of ASCOBANS.

Mark O'Sullivan, Acting Chief of the Global Wildlife Division in the DETR (the UK Environment Ministry) and National Focal Point for CMS, presided over the formalities. He welcomed the conclusion of the MoU and expressed his optimism that the Secretariats would "administer the MoU sensitively and subtly" thus contributing to the critical "attempts of all nations to secure the fullness of sustainable development and maintain the diversity of life on earth".

Arnulf Müller-Helmbrecht, the CMS Executive Secretary explained that the conclusion of the MoU was both important and timely. The work on small cetaceans carried out by globally reputed scientists under IWC on the one hand and the increasing activities for whales and dolphins under CMS, ASCOBANS and ACCOBAMS on the other, required regular and well co-ordinated co-operation in order to assure synergy and to avoid duplicating action.

Retiring IWC Secretary, Dr. Ray Gambell, said how pleased he was that the consultations over the MOU had been brought to a satisfactory conclusion. He would have to leave its implementation to his successor, Dr. Nicola Grandy. He stressed that the existing links between IWC and CMS as well as ASCOBANS mainly in the fields of research on small cetaceans would receive a new dimension and quality through the formal basis which the MOU provides.

Dr. Pieter Rijnders, the Chairman of the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee and one of the experts who has been contributing to the scientific work of IWC for a long time acknowledged the role the MoU could play and stressed the already existing links. These comments were echoed by Patrick van Klaveren, representing the Principality of Monaco which provides the ACCOBAMS interim secretariat.

PERSONALIA

Dr. Ray Gambell OBE, retires this summer as head of the International Whaling Commission Secretariat after a distinguished career of more than 20 years. His successor is **Dr. Nicola Grandy**, a marine biologist by training. She currently works for the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in Paris.

Peter Bridgewater was Chairman and Vice Chairman of the CMS Standing Committee from 1992 to 1997 where he represented Oceania. He rendered great service to the Convention as Australian CMS Focal Point. Like Rob Hepworth (see below), his involvement also extended to the early stages of CBD. Now he is Director of UNESCO's Man and Biosphere Programme, based in Paris.

Robert Hepworth, who has most recently served as the Head of the Global Wildlife Division in the UK's Environment Ministry, the DETR, has taken up a new appointment with UNEP, as Deputy Director of the Division for Environmental Conventions. Rob is eminently well qualified for his new job, as he is bringing with him many years' experience of implementing and negotiating international wildlife conventions and legislation. He served as Chairman of the CMS Standing Committee from 1991 to 1994, and presided over CMS COP5 (Geneva, 1997) and over the Committee of the Whole at COP6 (Cape Town, 1999). He was similarly active in the fora of CITES.

Andrew McNee, CMS Scientific Councillor left his post at the end of July. Most recently he was actively involved in the development of the Resolutions and Recommendations of CMS on by-catch and albatrosses

Wetlands International

Mrs. Robin Schaap is stepping down from her position as International Director of Wetlands International as of 1st September. Her intention is to stay involved with Wetlands International over time and continue to use her experience and skills on behalf of the organisation. Wetlands International expects to circulate information about her successor as soon as possible.

Dr. Gerard Boere served the Convention as former Vice Chairman of the CMS Standing Committee (1997-1999), CMS Focal Point of the Netherlands and he is recognized as the "father" of the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA). He will be seconded by his Government as International Programme Co-ordinator to Wetlands International (ICU) based in Wageningen. The tasks of his new post will be focused on international treaties/conventions and the development of new flyway agreements. The new CMS Focal Point will be **Jan Willem Sneep**, Deputy Head of the International Nature Management Division, who has been a member of the Dutch delegation to CMS since 1994 and the Head of delegation to the MoP's AEWA, ASCOBANS and EUROBATS.

Dr. Arthur Mitchell has resigned from the position of Executive Director of Wetlands International to take up a new position in Indonesia on 26 June 2000. Dr. Mitchell's last day with WI-AP was on Saturday 17 June 2000.

Dr. Taej Mundkur has been appointed as Interim Executive Director pending consideration of future arrangements to select a new Executive Director. Dr Mundkur has been with WI-AP for many years and has demonstrated his dedication and enthusiasm to the organisation in all the work he has done.

CMS at EXPO 2000 Hanover



Reception of the Heads of German based UN Secretariats: Kofi Annan with Arnulf Müller-Helmbrecht

Visit of Kofi Annan to the UN-Pavilion

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan visited EXPO 2000 in Hanover on the 2nd of July, to mark the occasion of the "UN-Day of Honour". The remarkable UN Pavilion, built in the shape of a giant Nautilus shell, houses an exhibition showing the full range of the UN's activities across the world. CMS is represented in the environment section. The CMS presentation wall shows an impressive illuminated picture of a flock of larger-than-life ducks on their migration flight as well as examples of other migratory species. Short texts in German, English, French and Spanish explain the work of CMS to the visitors.

Congresses and workshops

A number of side events on environmental themes were organised during EXPO 2000. One concerned the Global Nature Fund's "Living Lakes" Conference from 16 June - 17 June 2000 where Mr. Müller-Helmbrecht was a panellist and spoke about the importance for CMS of UNESCO's Man and Biosphere (MAB) and World Heritage Sites. He and MAB Director Dr. Peter Bridgewater agreed to develop a programme of collaboration between their two organisations.

The achievements of the trilateral co-operation between the Netherlands, Denmark and Germany, which was initiated under CMS as the "Agreement on the Conservation of the Seals in the Wadden Sea" formed the basis of the contribution of Jens Enemark (Head of the Agreement Secretariat) at the workshop "Integrated Management of International Waters". This workshop was held in conjunction with a high level discussion, entitled "the Sustainability Challenge". This was in turn one of ten discussions between experts and decision-makers in the series "The Global Dialogue" which deals with ten diverse issues of international concern. The session was organised by the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) and the Expo 2000 GmbH, in cooperation with several international institutions such as UNEP, GEF, Leadership of Environment and Development (LEAD) and the German Society for Technical Co-operation (GTZ).

Country pavilions

A number of national exhibitions focus on environmental issues, many of direct relevance to CMS and its activities. Albania, for instance, features the newly designated Prespa National Park (see Article), while Monaco focuses on an agreement creating a Mediterranean sanctuary for marine mammals.

The Blue Flag of the United Nations is Waving in Cambridge

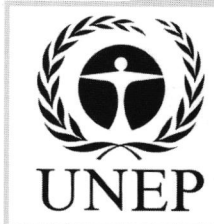


Since 3rd July the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) has been an integral part of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). UNEP/WCMC will be responsible for developing a biodiversity information and monitoring system that will support the work of decision-makers in governments, the private sector and by conservation and development agencies.

A public ceremony was organised to celebrate the opening of the first new United Nations institute in Great Britain for 50 years. In his video address to the ceremony, the UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, underscored the importance of WCMC's work: "As part of the UN Environment Programme, you will help the world community confront one of its most daunting challenges: protecting the Earth's precious biodiversity. We may be at the dawn of a new millennium, but the environmental problems we face are painfully familiar. They may even be getting worse."

From its global headquarters in Nairobi, UNEP is at the centre of an expanding network of environmental monitoring centres. It sets great store by WCMC's high reputation as an independent, authoritative information service, which makes itself available to users all over the world. Therefore the efforts of UNEP, in association with one of WCMC's other sponsors, the World Conservation Union (IUCN), and with the encouragement of the Government of the United Kingdom, have succeeded in bringing WCMC under the UNEP umbrella.

"Maintaining the diversity of life on earth is central to sustainable development", said Mark Collins, Chief Executive of UNEP/WCMC. "By becoming a UNEP Centre, WCMC will enhance its international status, be better placed to collate and disseminate biodiversity information to people everywhere and will be able to attract staff and students of high calibre from around the world".



CMS Launches Official Poster

To mark the opening day of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) conference, UNEP Executive Director Dr. Klaus Töpfer, together with CBD Executive Secretary Hamdallah Zedan (pictured) and Executive Secretary Arnulf Müller-Helmbrecht

of CMS, inaugurated the official CMS poster at UNEP head-quarters in Nairobi. The Head of the Ramsar Bureau and a Representative of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention also participated.

As reported in greater detail in Bulletin 10, the winning poster is based on a design conceived by one of 150 competing school children from Bonn, Germany. The contest was held last year to mark the Convention's 20th anniversary. Ten other prize-winning posters and additional information on the two conventions were also on view at the launch. "This event symbolizes the powerful synergies that exist between the biodiversity and migratory species agreements," said Dr. Töpfer. "Dolphins, turtles, birds, and the other 5,000 - 10,000 migratory species that exist in the world are an essential and vulnerable part of the biodiversity that the CBD aims to conserve and sustainably use."



NEWS

CMS Workshop in Japan

In May of this year, the Wild Bird Society of Japan (WBSJ) took the initiative to organise a small workshop on CMS in Japan. The WBSJ, a BirdLife partner organisation, is one of Japan's premier non-governmental organisations, with a growing membership of avid conservationists.

The workshop — the idea of Dr. Noritaka Ichida, Director of the WBSJ's International Centre — brought together like-minded NGOs, legal experts and some government representatives to hear about the potential benefits of Japan's membership in CMS. Throughout the day-long briefing session, led by the CMS Deputy Secretary, participants probed the finer points of the Convention, demonstrating an impressive knowledge and interest in this unique tool for the conservation of migratory animals.

The aims of the workshop were fully realised. These were to demonstrate the merits of CMS, to clarify certain misunderstandings, and to generate support from *within* Japan to overcome a reluctance, in some circles, to embrace its objectives. With the active support of the informal network created by Dr. Ichida, new contacts will be made and extended system-atically over the coming year.



Participants in the CMS - Japan workshop

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CMS Welcomes Three New Parties

Since the publication of Bulletin 10 the number of Parties to CMS has risen to 70 with the accession of the following countries:

Uganda — Thanks to its geographical position combined with a great variety of terrain types Uganda supports an incredible range of biodiversity. In order to protect and effectively manage these invaluable resources on a sustainable basis, the National Park Department was established in Uganda as long ago as 1952. The organisation presently manages 10 parks which support the extraordinary diversity of animals and nature.

New Zealand — New Zealand's National Parks and protected areas cover about 30 percent of its land area. They are of irreplaceable value as they offer a safe place for endangered flora and fauna. There are many wetland areas and some of the large coastal sites are important for wintering migratory waders which reach the southernmost point of their migration in these islands.

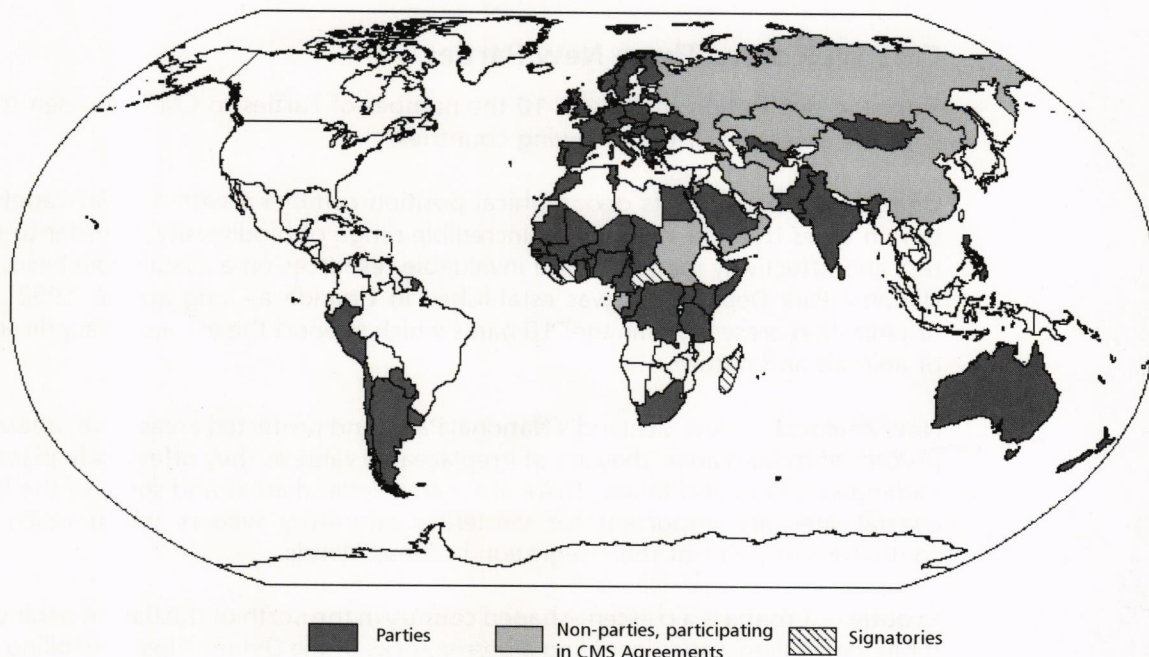
Croatia — Croatia is a crescent-shaped country in the north of the Balkan peninsula. It has varied landscapes including a barren rocks of the Dinaric Alps, the rolling hills of the Zagorje region north of the capital, Zagreb, and the fertile agricultural region of the Pannonian Plain in the east. Forests cover over one third of the territory. 440,000 ha are protected as National Parks, Nature Parks or other designations. Croatia also acceded to EUROBATS, ACCOBAMS and AEWA.

DATES	TITLE	VENUE	ORGANISED BY
15 - 20 September	90th Annual International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies	Indianapolis, Indiana	IAFWA
21 - 22 September	CMS Standing Committee Meeting	Bonn, Germany	CMS
4 - 11 October	IUCN World Congress	Amman, Jordan	IUCN
16 - 19 October	Conference on the Conservation of Migratory Waterbirds and their Habitats	Okinawa, Japan	Env. Australia / Agency Japan
23 - 24 October	AEWA:1st Technical Committee Meeting	Bonn, Germany	AEWA
23 - 29 October	Second Pan-Asian Ornithological Congress	Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka Ornithology
28 October - 1 November	Marine turtle workshop (Western Indian Ocean region) - dates to be confirmed	Abu-Dhabi	U.A.E.
6 - 10 November	3rd meeting of the Regional Seas Convention and Action Plans	Monaco	UNEP
11 November	Coordination Meeting on the Marine Mammal Action Plan (MMAP)	Monaco	UNEP
13 - 16 November	Workshop on Marine Turtle Biology and Conservation in the Mediterranean	Cairo, Egypt	Darwin Initiative

Map of CMS Parties

Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

Map of CMS Parties, Signatories and other participating States (as of 01.10.2000)



The boundaries shown on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by UNEP/CMS.

For the full list of Parties to CMS, please see the CMS website: www.wcmc.org.uk/cms