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In this issue:

New Co-ordinator on board	1
CMS strategy document	2
Neotropical species list	2
Asian/Australasian Waterfowl Agreement Working Group	2
Corrections to the Convention text	3
Questionnaire on participation of developing countries	3
European bats agreement	3
Baltic/North Seas small cetacean agreement	4
Meeting on draft small cetacean agreement for the Mediterranean and Black Seas	4
Promotion of CMS	5
International Whaling Commission meetings	5
Forthcoming meetings of interest	7

Special supplement:

Results of questionnaire on participation of developing countries
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Secretariat News

New Co-ordinator on board

Arnulf (Ulf) Müller-Helmbrecht began his duties as Co-ordinator of the UNEP/CMS Secretariat at the beginning of August.

Mr. Müller-Helmbrecht, 50, is a former employee of the German government, with more than 20 years' experience in the civil service. Since 1976 he has worked mainly in the field of nature conservation. He was involved in negotiations on national and European legislation, the development and implementation of regulations for protecting endangered species, the organization of an international conference on the protection of the Alps, and the establishment of a legal system for conservation in Eastern Germany.

In this work, as well as by travelling through countries in Africa, Asia and America, he has gained experience and a good knowledge of the conflicts between human settlement requirements and the need for conservation of wild species and their habitats.

Joining the Secretariat staff, Mr. Müller-Helmbrecht thanked Douglas Hykle for his excellent work during the interim period since the return, last year, of Judith Johnson to the Australian government. He expressed his hope that together it will be possible to strengthen the activities of the Secretariat and to increase the effectiveness of CMS worldwide.

Mr. Müller-Helmbrecht added: "I am highly motivated to translate the goals of the Bonn Convention into action. The key to successful work will be political and administrative guidance and assistance by the Contracting Parties, as well as UNEP, the continuing co-operation of the CMS Standing Committee and Scientific Council, and good teamwork within the Secretariat.

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I believe the prospects for progress are very good at the moment because public awareness of global environmental problems has been aroused by the UNCED Conference in Rio de Janeiro. Some of the issues dealt with there, as well as the new Convention on Biological Diversity, are closely related to CMS. Linking these issues in future discussions may help to convince more countries to join the Bonn Convention.

I will try to maintain and strengthen contacts within UNEP and with other UN specialized agencies, Governments of Contracting as well as non-Contracting Parties, and international governmental and non-governmental organizations, in order to co-ordinate activities for migratory species.

I am optimistic that with the administrative assistance of UNEP and support from the Depositary and other Parties, it will be possible to make visible progress, especially in increasing the Convention's membership and in initiating regional agreements for the conservation of migratory species on all continents." ■

Other Secretariat activities

The resolutions adopted by the Conference of the Parties in September 1991 were circulated in July. It is hoped that they serve as a reminder to everyone associated with the Convention of how much work we all must accomplish before the next meeting!

At the same time, Parties were invited to offer to host the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties, which should be held by September 1994. Offers should be received by the Secretariat by the end of 1992 to enable the Standing Committee to decide upon the venue at its next meeting. ■

Standing Committee

CMS strategy document

The Chairman of the Standing Committee, Robert Hepworth, visited the Secretariat on 12-14 August, to discuss the preparation of a

strategy for the future development of the Convention. A broad outline was developed and it was agreed that a further meeting would be held later this year, with the Chairman of the Scientific Council, to consider a first draft of the strategy. Discussion of the document will be a major point on the agenda of the next meeting of the Standing Committee, which has tentatively been scheduled for 24-25 February 1993, at the offices of the Secretariat. A formal announcement of the date will be made later this year. ■

Scientific Council

Neotropical species list

Dr. Roberto Schlatter (Chile), the Scientific Council expert on neotropical fauna, has begun to prepare a list of Chilean migratory species that might be candidates for listing in the CMS Appendices. In a letter to the Secretariat, Dr. Schlatter encouraged representatives from other CMS Parties in the region to do the same in their respective countries, and expressed the hope that regional agreements would be developed for neotropical species, citing flamingoes in particular. Anyone who is interested in assisting in the preparation of a list of candidate species is invited to contact Dr. Schlatter, either directly or through the CMS Secretariat. ■

Asian/Australasian Waterfowl Agreement Working Group

The working group for a draft Asian/Australasian waterfowl agreement, established under the Scientific Council's auspices, is scheduled to meet for the second time in Otsu, Japan on 14 October. The organizers of the Asian Wetland Symposium (*see Forthcoming meetings, below*) have kindly offered to reserve an evening for the working group to discuss progress and future work on the agreement. The symposium is expected to be well-attended by governmental and non-governmental representatives from Asia and Oceania. It will provide an excellent opportunity to give greater exposure to this important regional initiative. Coincidentally, a

number of CMS Scientific Councillors and focal points are expected to participate in the symposium and in the meeting of the Ramsar Standing Committee, which follows immediately afterwards.

With the concurrence of the Chairmen of the Scientific Council and Standing Committee, the Secretariat has arranged for the International Waterfowl and Wetlands Research Bureau (IWRB) to carry out additional work on the draft agreement, in preparation for the October meeting. The consultancy will deal with, among other things, the geographic and taxonomic coverage of the proposed agreement, the conservation status of the species concerned, as well as measures to be included in regional action plans. In response to comments received from Australia, IWRB has also been asked to assess the implications and practicability of extending the draft agreement to cover all migratory birds in Asia and Australasia. ■

Depositary

Corrections to the Convention text

Having finalized the proofs for the corrected versions of the Convention text in French and Spanish, the Secretariat has had discussions with the Depositary concerning procedures to be followed before the texts are submitted to the United Nations for eventual publication. The Secretariat emphasized the desirability of concluding the process of verification as soon as possible, with the assistance of selected governments, so that the official texts reflect the changes agreed upon by the Conference of the Parties in September 1991.

The German version of the text of the Convention has been found to differ from at least the English and French versions in certain respects. Since the German text is equally authentic to the English, French, Russian and Spanish versions, according to Article XX of the Convention, it has been recommended that it be corrected, as the French and Spanish versions were at the last meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

The Secretariat has also requested the Depositary to consider making available updated versions of the text of the Convention, including the Appendices, in Arabic, Chinese and Russian – with a view to facilitating efforts to attract new Parties to the Convention. ■

Questionnaire

An analysis of the results of a questionnaire circulated last February to selected CMS Parties and Signatories appears as a special supplement to this issue of the Bulletin. The questionnaire sought advice with respect to the kind of assistance developing countries need to fulfil their obligations under CMS, and how best to accommodate their interests in the activities undertaken by the various bodies established under the Convention.

Completed questionnaires were received from the following Parties and Signatories: *Chad, Chile, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Israel, Niger, Panama, Sri Lanka, Tunisia and Uruguay.* Although more responses would have been desirable, those received represent a cross-section of the regional membership of the Convention. The completed questionnaires provide valuable information that the Secretariat will use in developing the terms of reference for a more comprehensive consultancy to examine the issue of participation of developing countries. Comments on the results and the Secretariat's analysis are welcome. ■

Agreement Update

European Bats Agreement

The Agreement on the Conservation of Bats in Europe has been signed by seven of the 11 Range States that signed the Final Act concluding the text of the Agreement in September 1991. The signatures of Finland, Greece, Ireland and Norway are still awaited, as are those of about 20 other Range States that did not participate in the meeting last September. Sweden has signed the Agreement without reservation as to ratification, and the Netherlands' formal acceptance was

announced on 17 March 1992. With the United Kingdom's ratification on 7 September 1992, only two more instruments of ratification, acceptance or approval are needed before the Agreement enters into force. The interim secretariat for the Agreement, the Department of the Environment (U.K.), has recently added a staff member to assist with relevant activities.

Robert Hepworth, acting in his capacity as head of the interim secretariat, gave a short talk about the Agreement to participants attending a National Bat Conference, held in Stirling, U.K. from 4-6 September. He has also confirmed that provision has been made to include a discussion on implementation of the Agreement, during the 6th European Bat Research Symposium scheduled for Évora, Portugal (22-27 August 1993). ■

Baltic and North Seas Small Cetacean Agreement

The Netherlands and Denmark have signed the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas, bringing to five the number of signatures affixed to date. Germany, Sweden and the United Kingdom had already signed; Sweden's signature is without reservation as to ratification. Belgium, Finland and the European Economic Community signed the Final Act concluding the text of the agreement, but have yet to sign the agreement itself, which will enter into force 90 days after five Range States have formally agreed to be bound by its provisions.

The interim secretariat, provided by the Sea Mammal Research Unit (Cambridge, U.K.) became operational in June 1992, under the direction of Dr. Christina Lockyer. Specific enquiries about the agreement may be directed to the following address:

Interim Secretariat
 Agreement on the Conservation
 of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic
 and North Seas
 c/o Sea Mammal Research Unit
 British Antarctic Survey
 High Cross
 CAMBRIDGE CB3 0ET
 United Kingdom

Tel/Fax: (+44 223) 30 12 82

The United Nations Secretary-General, depositary for the Agreement, has provided the CMS Secretariat with a small number of certified true copies of the Agreement in English, French, German and Russian. The depositary has advised that copies will be communicated as soon as possible to the States and Regional Economic Integration Organizations concerned. ■

Related News

In July 1992, the Government of the United Kingdom published a report commissioned by its Environment Department into the stranding of 105 common dolphins (*Delphinus delphis*) on the coasts of southwest England in early 1992.

Detailed post-mortem examinations of a number of the dolphins suggested that fisheries entanglement was probably the reason for a sudden increase in strandings; other causes (such as contamination from pollutants) were ruled out. Copies of the report by the Institute of Zoology are available from the U.K. Department of the Environment, Room 902, Tollgate House, BRISTOL, United Kingdom BS2 9DJ. ■

Draft Agreement on the Conservation of Mediterranean and Black Sea Small Cetaceans

Final arrangements are being made for an intergovernmental meeting to consider a draft Agreement on the conservation of small cetaceans in the Mediterranean and Black Seas, to be held in Athens from 26-27 October 1992. The meeting, co-sponsored by the Council of Europe, UNEP/CMS, and the UNEP Co-ordinating Unit for the Mediterranean Action Plan, will be attended by officials concerned with the Specially Protected Areas Protocol of the Barcelona Convention, and other experts.

The meeting will review an Action Plan that has already been approved for implementation by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, and will consider further initiatives within the framework of the Bonn Convention, and mechanisms for co-ordination and exchange of information. ■

Recent meetings

Promotion of CMS at Biodiversity Convention negotiations

Between November 1990 and May 1992, UNEP organized seven negotiating sessions to prepare a new international legal instrument on the conservation of biological diversity. CMS was represented at the last two decisive sessions, held in Nairobi, by the Chairman of the Standing Committee, who was attending the meetings as a member of the United Kingdom delegation. Mr. Hepworth also took advantage of his visit to UNEP headquarters to meet with the Executive Director, Dr. Mostafa K. Tolba.

During the final session, which immediately preceded the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Mr. Hepworth and UNEP's Deputy Executive Director, Mr. Anthony Brough, co-hosted a reception at UNEP headquarters on behalf of CMS. Well over 100 delegates to the biodiversity negotiations attended the gathering, which served to promote the role of CMS in furthering the aims of the Earth Summit in general and the Biodiversity Convention in particular. Mr Hepworth gave a short address at the reception, in which he explained the expanding role of CMS and recent progress with regional Agreements. He concluded with the following remarks:

"... the Bonn Convention has much to offer in the context of UNCED and the Biodiversity Convention. It seems essential that we should make use of effective, existing machinery like the Bonn Convention to cover particular areas within the broad umbrella to be provided by the Biodiversity Convention and Agenda 21. Funding is bound to be an issue, and a dialogue between existing and new organizations will be essential. Existing organizations will also have to consider how they need to change themselves in the light of the UNCED process.

From the 'Bonn point of view', I can say that our Standing Committee — which has a globally representative membership — is

already seized of the needs and opportunities presented by the Earth Summit and the Biodiversity Convention. We have, therefore, commissioned a major review of our future strategy for helping migratory species throughout the globe. The review has been timed to allow us to take on board the outcome of Rio and to make recommendations to the next Bonn conference, which is due in 1994."

The Chairman of the Standing Committee adds,

"Since I spoke in Nairobi, the final text of the Biodiversity Convention has been agreed, and signed immediately by 153 states — a record for a wildlife convention. The Convention gives every scope for us to pursue the conservation of migratory species and exciting new potential for funding our work, which I shall now discuss with the Standing Committee and the Secretariat. The Biodiversity Convention itself contains provisions encouraging co-operation with existing conventions, including one — Article 23(h) — which was agreed at our request. Existing Conventions which adapt effectively to the new framework provided by UNCED are likely to be more successful in the future". ■

International Whaling Commission Scientific Committee meeting

The CMS Secretariat attended part of the annual meeting of the Scientific Committee of the International Whaling Commission (IWC), held this year in Glasgow, U.K. from 9-22 June 1992. The Secretariat had an opportunity to provide an update on developments concerning the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas, and to encourage the exchange of information between the IWC Secretariat and relevant organizations, including secretariats for regional agreements.

Apart from the main business of this year's meeting — the development of a revised management procedure for commercial whaling — the work of the sub-committee on small cetaceans was of particular interest to CMS. Among other things, new information was provided on the population biology and

exploitation of the white whale (*Delphinapterus leucas*) and narwhal (*Monodon monoceros*). Following a review of data on several dolphin species taken in Japanese drive fisheries, the sub-committee concluded that the population of striped dolphins (*Stenella coeruleoalba*), in particular, cannot support continued exploitation at the current level in the coastal waters of Japan. The Scientific Committee recommended that there be an interim halt to all direct catches of striped dolphins until a proper assessment of the population is made.

Three priority topics for future meetings of the Committee were considered: a review of the abundance and exploitation of small cetaceans in South American coastal and riverine waters, with special reference to the fishery for small cetaceans as bait in Chile; a review of the status of small cetaceans occurring in inshore waters of the Southeast Asia/Indo-Malay region; and a global review of the status of the genus *Lagenorhynchus*, of which three species or populations are listed in Appendix II of CMS. ■

During the meeting, the Vice-Chairman (Dr. Peter Bridgewater of Australia) and I were able to give more tangible expression to the need for links between CMS and IWC by securing amendments to a resolution on small cetaceans (IWC/44/25 REV). The amendments we promoted also give specific recognition to regional agreements under Article IV of CMS as important tools in conserving these migratory species. Earlier this year similar recognition for the role of CMS in conserving cetaceans was obtained within the Agenda 21 document agreed by heads of State at the UNCED Conference in June 1992 (see Chapter 9, paragraph 94 of Agenda 21).

Naturally much of the real work takes place outside the formal meeting sessions. I was able to speak bilaterally with several delegations about the new Baltic and North Seas Agreement on small cetaceans, and I believe that several additional signatures will soon be forthcoming, hopefully allowing the agreement to come into force by the end of this year or early in 1993." ■

Annual Meeting of the International Whaling Commission

Contribution from the Chairman of the Standing Committee, Robert Hepworth, who represented CMS at the 44th Meeting of the International Whaling Commission held in Glasgow from 29 June to 3 July 1992.

"This was a particularly sensitive IWC meeting. There are deeply held views on whaling and they were expressed strongly at the meeting, both by IWC Parties and NGOs. There is no doubt that the debate will continue following the decision in Glasgow not to lift the current moratorium on commercial whaling.

IWC's future role is difficult to predict whilst uncertainty remains about a resumption of whaling. Whatever decisions are finally taken, IWC has a vital store of expertise and scientific knowledge on which CMS can draw. I pointed this out in my opening statement to the meeting on behalf of CMS (available from the CMS Secretariat), emphasizing also the growing role played by the Convention in promoting regional agreements for the conservation of small cetaceans.

Forthcoming meetings of interest to CMS

14 October	Otsu, Japan	Second meeting of the CMS Asian/Australasian waterfowl agreement working group. <i>Contact:</i> UNEP/CMS Secretariat.
15-20 October	Otsu/Kushiro, Japan	Asian Wetland Symposium. <i>Contact:</i> Prof. H. Isozaki, Ramsar Centre Japan, c/o Town Planning, 606 Sunny Plaza Bld., 2-2-10 Shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku, TOKYO, 160 Japan. FAX: (+ 81 3) 33 50 58 55.
20-23 October	Kushiro, Japan	11th meeting of the Standing Committee of the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar). <i>Contact:</i> Ramsar Convention Bureau, Rue Mauverney 28, CH-1196 Gland, Switzerland. FAX: (+41 22) 999 0169.
26-27 October	Athens, Greece	Intergovernmental meeting to discuss a draft agreement on the conservation of small cetaceans in the Mediterranean and Black Seas. <i>Contact:</i> UNEP/CMS Secretariat.
31 October	London, U.K.	Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society Conference. <i>Contact:</i> WDCS, 19A James Street West, BATH, Avon BA1 2BT, United Kingdom. FAX: (+44 225) 48 00 97
12-14 November	Keoladeo, India	International Wetlands Symposium with special reference to Keoladeo National Park. <i>Contact:</i> Harsh Vardan, Tourism and Wildlife Society of India, C-158 A, Dayanand Marg, Tilak nagar, JAIPUR 302004, India.
12-19 November	St. Petersburg, Florida, USA	International Waterfowl and Wetlands Research Bureau XXXV Executive Board Meeting and Technical Workshops. <i>Contact:</i> IWRB, SLIMBRIDGE, Gloucester, GL2 7BX, U.K. FAX: (+44 453) 89 06 97.
23-27 November	Apia, Samoa	UNEP/SPREP Workshop on Strengthening Environmental Legislation in the South Pacific Region. <i>Contact:</i> UNEP, Environmental Law and Institutions Programme Activity Centre, P.O. Box 30552, NAIROBI, Kenya. FAX: (+ 254 2) 23 01 98.
30 November - 4 December	Strasbourg, France	11th meeting of the Standing Committee of the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention). Strasbourg, France. <i>Contact:</i> Conseil de l'Europe, B.P. 431 R6, F-67006 STRASBOURG Cedex, France. FAX: (+ 33 88) 41 20 00.

1993

February (tentative date)	Nairobi, Kenya	5th meeting of the Planning and Co-ordination Committee, Marine Mammal Action Plan. <i>Contact:</i> UNEP, Oceans and Coastal Areas Programme Activity Centre, P.O. Box 30552, NAIROBI, Kenya. FAX: (+254 2) 23 01 27.
24-25 February (tentative date)	Bonn, Germany	9th meeting of the CMS Standing Committee. <i>Contact:</i> UNEP/CMS Secretariat.
9-16 June	Kushiro, Japan	5th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar). <i>Contact:</i> Ramsar Convention Bureau, Rue Mauverney 28, CH-1196 Gland, Switzerland. FAX: (+41 22) 999 0169.