



# CMS Bulletin



Bulletin of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)

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*The fact that nine months have passed since the publication of the last issue of the CMS Bulletin does not mean there has been little news to report. On the contrary, the period has been marked by progress on several fronts. For its part, the Secretariat has been busy developing Agreements, organizing meetings and promoting the Convention – leaving little time to inform readers of the latest developments. We hope this issue of the Bulletin will make up for the unexpectedly long silence.*

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## Special supplement:

*The Siberian crane: a status report*  
by Dr. George Archibald,  
Director of the International Crane Foundation

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## Secretariat News

### New staff

At the beginning of June of this year, the Secretariat added a third professional staff member. Dr. Eugeniusz Nowak, whom many readers will know as a member of the Scientific Council, has been seconded to the Secretariat by the German Government for a period of two years. He will continue to serve on the Scientific Council and will devote a portion of his time to the Council's activities.

In April, Ms. Beth Rule began her functions as secretary (full-time), replacing Ms. Marilyn Wagner who left the Secretariat at the end of February after completing nearly two years of service as a part-time secretary.

### Meetings

This year the Secretariat devoted a considerable amount of time and effort in organizing two important CMS meetings. The Standing Committee met in Bonn in February, and this was followed by a meeting of the Scientific Council in May. Both meetings were well-attended and have given renewed impetus to many initiatives under the Convention. As far as time has allowed, staff members have also participated in a number of regional and international meetings to try to promote the Convention as widely as possible. Further details are given elsewhere in the **Bulletin**.

### Work on Agreements

Another major preoccupation of the Secretariat has been the development and promotion of new Agreements under the Convention's auspices. Attention has been focused in particular on two

broad Agreements for migratory waterbirds – one covering the region of Africa-Eurasia and the other for the Asia-Pacific region. In addition, a period of concentrated work in the month of May led to the successful conclusion of a memorandum of understanding intended to promote urgent conservation measures for the western and central populations of the Siberian crane. These and other initiatives are described in the sections that follow.

### **Conference proceedings**

The proceedings of the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Geneva, 1991) are now with the printers, and should be available for distribution very soon.

### **New postal code**

Finally, the Secretariat would like to draw attention to the fact that the postal code for the area in Bonn where it is located has changed. With effect from 1 July 1993, the postal code is **D-53177 BONN**; the old code, D-5300 BONN 2, should no longer be used. (Please refer to the box on the first page for the full address of the UNEP/CMS Secretariat.) ■

## **New Parties**

The Secretariat is pleased to announce the addition of two new Parties to CMS, bringing the current membership to 41 States. The Convention entered into force for Monaco on 1 June 1993 – a timely development in the light of the proposed Agreement on the conservation of small cetaceans in the Mediterranean and Black Seas.

The Republic of Guinea has deposited its instrument of accession, and the Convention will enter into force for that country on 1 August 1993. As Guinea shares a common border with two other CMS Parties (Mali and Senegal) and one signatory (Côte d'Ivoire), the prospects for regional co-operation on conservation matters can only be enhanced by this latest accession.

The Secretariat has been informed that the Senate of the Philippines adopted a resolution on 30 March 1993 concurring with that country's

ratification of the Bonn Convention, and that the procedures for ratification by Morocco are in their final phase. A number of other non-Party States in Europe and Latin America are also thought to be close to joining the Convention.

The Secretariat has written to all non-Parties to encourage them to join the Convention. A special approach has been made to the Government of Kenya, with a view to encouraging that country to become a full member of the Convention before the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties, which will be held in the Kenyan capital in June 1994.

Some central and eastern European countries, responding to an invitation made last November to join CMS, have noted that the obligation to pay contributions will impede accession in the near future due to the currently difficult economic situation of their countries. ■

## **CMS Booklet**

The Secretariat has produced a new booklet in English, French and Spanish to explain the aims and operation of the Convention to people interested in the conservation of migratory species. Production of the booklet was made possible through financial assistance provided by the U.K. Department of the Environment. The German Government has expressed interest in producing a German language version in the coming months.

Parties and others who wish to have extra copies of the booklet for their use are requested to advise the Secretariat of their needs. ■

## **Standing Committee**

Representatives from all geographic regions participated in the meeting of the CMS Standing Committee held in Bonn from 24-25 February. (The alternate for Africa, Burkina Faso, attended in place of the regular member, Niger.) Other CMS Parties from Africa, Europe and Latin

America were present as observers, as was the Chairman of the Scientific Council.

Apart from the normal business of the Committee – including a review of Convention finances and progress on Agreements – the Committee's discussions focused on the first draft of a strategy paper on the future development of the Convention, arrangements for the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties and other activities to be completed in time for that meeting.

Although far from complete, the draft strategy paper was well-received by the Committee. The next draft will incorporate *inter alia* an executive summary, an action plan outlining implementation of the strategy over the next triennium, an elaboration of the possible relationship between CMS and the Convention on Biological Diversity, and an examination of the potential for alternative sources of funding for migratory species conservation.

### Conference of the Parties

The Committee concluded that the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties would be held at UNEP headquarters in Nairobi in 1994. While a preference was expressed that the meeting be held in the second quarter, the Committee gave the Secretariat flexibility to investigate the various options available and to decide on the final programme in consultation with the Chairman.

Following recent consultations, it now appears likely that a five-day meeting of the Parties will be held in the first two weeks of June 1994, to be preceded by a one-day scientific symposium and a 1 1/2 day meeting of the Scientific Council. The possibility of organizing a short meeting, in conjunction with the conference, to discuss and/or conclude an Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds has been left open as an option.

### Next meeting

The Committee unanimously supported a proposal to hold its next meeting in Buenos Aires in January 1994, in association with the meeting of the General Assembly of IUCN – the World Conservation Union. The Director-General of IUCN, Dr. Martin Holdgate, has responded

favourably to the idea, and the Secretariat has forwarded the Committee's request to the authorities in Argentina.

For planning purposes, members of the Committee (Australia, Germany, India, Niger, Panama, and the United Kingdom) and representatives of Parties that may wish to attend as observers should block the dates of 16 and 17 January in their calendars. Further information, including precise dates, will be provided in the next issue of the **Bulletin**. ■

## Scientific Council

### New members

There have been numerous changes in the membership of the Scientific Council since the last issue of the **Bulletin**. The following new members have been appointed by Parties to the Convention, bringing to 37 the number of experts serving on the Council.

Australia:	Ms. Karen Weaver (replacing Dr. Bill Phillips)
Belgium:	Dr. Roseline Beudels
Denmark:	Dr. Jesper Madsen
Guinea:	Mr. Abdel Kader Bangoura (pending entry into force of the Convention on 1 August 1993)
India:	Mr. Shri S.C. Dey (replacing Mr. Shri S. Deb Roy)
Monaco:	Dr. Marie-Christine Grillo
Norway:	Ms. Gunn Paulsen (replacing Mr. Steinar Eldøy)
South Africa:	Dr. Michael Cohen

As of 16 July 1993, only seven CMS Parties were not represented on the Council: Argentina, Benin, Panama, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sri Lanka, and Zaire.

## Meeting in Bonn

A full meeting of the Council was held in Bonn from 17-19 May. In addition to the 24 Councillors present, observers from four CMS Parties participated, making it the best-attended of any Scientific Council meeting held to date.

A wide range of issues was discussed. Priorities for development of Agreements were drawn up and a provisional list of species or groups that might be candidates for Agreements in all regions was elaborated. The groundwork was laid to begin a thorough review of the Appendices to ensure that they provide a sound basis for the Convention's activities. To this end, several taxonomic groups were identified as requiring investigation to determine whether or not the species they contain are migratory or non-migratory and to assess the extent to which they are threatened.

## Action for Appendix I species

Councillors presented information gathered so far on species identified at the last conference as requiring urgent attention, and drew up plans for finalizing the review reports for the next meeting. The Council emphasized the need to promote and assist concerted action for Appendix I species. To that end, consideration was given to four species on which to focus attention during the next triennium: the Monk seal (*Monachus monachus*), Dama gazelle (*Gazella dama*), Ruddy-headed goose (*Chloephaga rubidiceps*) and Siberian crane (*Grus leucogeranus*). Four other species were also identified, subject to their inclusion in Appendix I: the Great bustard (*Otis tarda*), Scimitar-horned oryx (*Oryx dammah*), the entire species of Houbara bustard (*Chamdotis undulata*) and White-headed duck (*Oxyura leucocephala*).

## Amendment of the Appendices

The Council considered a draft proposal prepared by the International Waterfowl and Wetlands Research Bureau and The Wildfowl and Wetland Trust to list *Oxyura leucocephala* in Appendix I. The total population now numbers about 19,000 birds and is highly fragmented. The species is threatened by hybridization with an introduced species – the Ruddy duck (*Oxyura jamaicensis*) –

whose range has been expanding. It is hoped that the European Economic Community will formally sponsor the proposal for listing *Oxyura leucocephala* at the next meeting of the Parties.

In this context, Parties to the Convention are reminded that **proposals for amending the CMS Appendices must be submitted to the Secretariat at least 150 days before the start of the meeting.** As the conference is provisionally scheduled to take place in June 1994, proposals should be ready by January 1994 at the latest.

## Working groups

The Council established three small working groups in order to carry out specific tasks prior to its next meeting. One is charged with elaborating an Action Plan for sahelo-saharan mammals, investigating the potential for developing a CMS Agreement in the region, and preparing proposals for listing sahelo-saharan mammals in the Appendices.

A second working group is to prepare national status reports on the Houbara bustard and to take further measures as may be necessary concerning the listing of the species in the Appendices. It is hoped this work will lead to the development of an Agreement for the long-term conservation of the species, which has been hunted intensively for many years. Pakistan represents an important wintering area for the population that breeds in Asia.

A third working group will prepare for the Council's consideration at its next meeting a document on the contentious issue of the revision of the IUCN "Categories of threat" and the implications of this work for CMS.

\* \* \* \* \*

The next meeting of the Council will be held in June 1994, in Nairobi, before the meeting of the Conference of the Parties. ■

## New Agreement

### Memorandum of understanding on the Siberian crane

The Siberian crane (*Grus leucogeranus*) has the longest migration route of all crane species, ranging thousands of kilometers from its breeding areas in the Asian Arctic to wintering grounds in south and west Asia. It depends on natural wetlands and favourable conditions in the breeding areas and in the wintering grounds, as well as in key stop-over sites during migration.

These western and central populations of the species are on the brink of extinction, having been reduced to fewer than an estimated twenty birds. Little is known about the cranes' migration routes or of the factors which have led to the present critical situation. However it is thought that hunting and destruction of wetlands have been responsible for the drastic decline in their numbers.

During the recent meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention (9-16 June), the CMS Secretariat convened a series of meetings which led to the conclusion of a Memorandum of Understanding concerning conservation measures for the western and central populations of the species.

The most recent attempt to develop an agreement among the Range States concerned for co-operative conservation actions arose during a wetland symposium held in Karachi, Pakistan, in December 1991. After that meeting, the International Crane Foundation (ICF) prepared a first draft of a formal Agreement under the Bonn Convention. However, it was considered that a less formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) among the Range States (Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, India, Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) would be a more practical way of promoting short-term actions.

A draft MoU was developed by a small working group and the Secretariat during the Scientific Council meeting held in Bonn from 17-19 May 1993. The document was further refined in

Kushiro during a series of meetings attended by government representatives and interested non-governmental organizations. It was signed on 16 June 1993 by representatives of Pakistan, the Russian Federation, the Wild Bird Society of Japan and the UNEP/CMS Secretariat. The International Crane Foundation made arrangements to sign at a later date as a representative could not be present on that day. Unfortunately, due to shortness of time, it was not possible for the Indian delegation to secure authorization to sign, however the Government of India has indicated to the Secretariat that it will accord the MoU the highest attention. None of the other six Range States was present in Kushiro.

The MoU provides for actions to be taken collectively by all of the Range States concerned, as well as specific measures to be implemented in each country. A more comprehensive Species Conservation Plan is to be developed within one year by the Russian Federation, in close collaboration with the other Range States.

The conclusion of the memorandum in such a short time emphasizes the urgency of the actions to be taken. It is the first instrument of its kind to be considered an agreement under Article IV(4) of the Bonn Convention and the first Agreement to be signed by a State that is not yet a Party to the parent Convention (i.e., the Russian Federation). The memorandum will take effect on 1 July 1993 and will remain in force for three years, after which time it may be renewed automatically.

The immediate priority is to obtain the signatures of the other Range States concerned. The Secretariat will also be seeking the approval of the Government of India to convene a meeting of technical experts in India in late 1993 or January 1994 to discuss details of implementation of the memorandum. In the meantime, efforts will be made to begin taking action on some of the measures agreed upon in the Action Plan.

For readers who are interested in more information on the Siberian crane, this issue of the **CMS Bulletin** contains a special report prepared by Dr. George Archibald, Director of the International Crane Foundation (United States). ■

## Agreement Update

### European Bats Agreement

Entry into force of the *AGREEMENT on the conservation of bats in Europe* is now just a few months away. The AGREEMENT has been signed by nine Range States, of which six (Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom) have taken the necessary legislative steps to be formally bound by its provisions.

The ratifications of Ireland and Luxembourg are so recent that the legal instruments have yet to be presented to the Government of the United Kingdom, which serves as depositary. The deposit of either instrument will cause the AGREEMENT to enter into force 90 days from that date, since the necessary five ratifications will have been attained. Thus, the AGREEMENT will likely come into effect some time in October or November of this year. The Secretariat has been informed that the German parliament has also ratified the AGREEMENT but that the deposit of the instrument of ratification is awaiting publication of the text in the official gazette.

The interim secretariat for the AGREEMENT, the U.K. Department of the Environment, publishes an informative newsletter – "Eurobat Chat" – to keep bat fanciers abreast of news of interest. It has also produced a poster to help promote the AGREEMENT, which is now available free of charge in English, French and German. For copies, please write to Mrs. Melanie Johns, Department of the Environment, Wildlife Division, Room 902, Tollgate House, Houlton Street, BRISTOL BS2 9DJ, United Kingdom (FAX: +44 272 218182). ■

### Baltic-North Sea small cetaceans agreement

The *Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas* (ASCOBANS) has now obtained four of the six ratifications needed for entry into force. Belgium and the United Kingdom ratified the agreement on 14 May 1993 and 13 July 1993, respectively, joining the Netherlands and Sweden which signed

in 1992. The German ratification will be finalized in July after publication of the text of the agreement in the official gazette. The Secretariat has been informed that the Danish parliament will consider ratification of the agreement later this year. All of the above bodes well for the agreement entering into force early next year.

There have been several other positive developments to report in relation to ASCOBANS. The Government of Ireland has expressed interest in having the agreement extended to cover at least the Irish Sea, and the United Kingdom has indicated that it will apply the spirit of the agreement in all of its coastal waters, including northern and western waters which do not form part of the agreement area.

A comprehensive survey of small cetaceans in the North Sea and southern Baltic Sea – the first of its kind in the region to be co-ordinated on an international scale – is being planned for 1994. Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the European Community have already committed funding to the ECU 1.4 million (US\$ 1.7 million) project, which the conclusion of ASCOBANS helped to initiate.

The interim secretariat, provided by the Sea Mammal Research Unit (Cambridge, U.K.), represented ASCOBANS at the meeting of the Scientific Committee of the International Whaling Commission, held in Kyoto earlier this year. It has also been investigating the possibility of holding a session later this year, in conjunction with another meeting, to discuss matters concerning the agreement before it enters into force. ■

### African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (formerly Western Palearctic Waterfowl Agreement)

The Secretariat is in the final phase of updating the draft *Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA)* – the new name for the Agreement being developed under Article IV(3) of the Bonn Convention. The proposed Agreement aims to conserve Western Palearctic Anatidae, in particular, over their entire range from western Siberia and the arctic regions of Scandinavia, Greenland, Iceland and northeast Canada, through the whole of Europe and Africa.

The draft Agreement was elaborated by the Government of the Netherlands between 1988 and June 1991, and it was intended to be negotiated and adopted shortly thereafter under the sponsorship of the European Economic Community (EEC). However, no further progress was made. After consultations in the autumn of 1992 with a number of Scientific Councillors, other experts and the Chairman of the CMS Standing Committee, the Secretariat concluded that the Agreement needed to be revised. At the request of the Chairman of the Standing Committee, the EEC Commissioner for the Environment suggested in February 1993 that the UNEP/CMS Secretariat take the lead to develop the Agreement and promised EEC financial support.

In January 1993, the Secretariat contracted the International Waterfowl and Wetlands Research Bureau (IWRB) to update the draft Agreement, in order to include migratory African waterbirds, to ensure complementarity and harmonization with the draft Asia-Pacific Waterbird Agreement and to allude to the principal conclusions of the Earth Summit (Rio de Janeiro, 1992) with regard to sustainable development. At the same time, the Management Plan and Action Plan were updated and a new Action Plan for African storks, ibises and spoonbills was elaborated. This work – sponsored by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) – was completed at the end of April 1993.

The Secretariat now intends to finalize the draft by the end of July and to circulate it in August 1993 to the governments of the Range States and several international organisations for comment. Provided financial and material support is forthcoming, a meeting of the Range States will be held next year.

The Netherland's Ministry for Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries has reiterated to the Secretariat the offer of the Netherlands to act as depositary for the Agreement, to finance the Agreement secretariat for an initial period of three years, and to organize the first meeting of the Parties. It has also expressed its readiness to support further development of the draft text. ■

### **Asia-Pacific Waterbird Agreement**

The initiative to develop an *Agreement on the Conservation of Migratory Waterbirds of the Asia-Pacific Region (APWA)* will soon be put to the

relevant governments for comment. Formerly the "Asian/Australasian Waterfowl Agreement", the proposed Agreement was first considered by a working group of the Scientific Council in Karachi, Pakistan, in December 1991. A second series of meetings, held in Otsu and Kushiro, Japan, in October 1992 reviewed a Management Plan prepared by the International Waterfowl and Wetlands Research Bureau (IWRB) under contract to the UNEP/CMS Secretariat. The meetings were attended by members of the working group participating in a related Asian Wetland Symposium, and observers from 12 governments and from various inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations. A third draft of the Agreement, including an Action Plan for waterbirds, was circulated and discussed in June 1993, at the time of the Ramsar conference held in Kushiro, Japan.

The present title is thought to reflect better the geographic and taxonomic scope of the Agreement. The Secretariat is now revising the Agreement text with a view to ensuring that its provisions are compatible with those of the draft African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement being developed concurrently. The revised Agreement text, Action Plan and Management Plan will be circulated in the coming months to all Range States and to other organizations concerned. ■

### **Draft Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans in the Mediterranean and Black Seas**

An intergovernmental meeting was held in Athens in October 1992 to discuss the text of this draft Agreement. Many useful comments and suggestions for improvement were received during and after the meeting, which was attended by the national focal points for Specially Protected Areas of the Barcelona Convention, and representatives of other governments and non-governmental organizations. Unfortunately, due to other commitments, the CMS Secretariat has not been in a position to produce a revised draft as soon as it would have liked. However, it expects to be able to prepare a second draft of the Agreement for circulation to all Range States and other interested organizations in the third quarter of this year. ■

## Recent meetings

### Seminar on African-European Co-operation in Nature Conservation

The Department of National Parks and the Ministry of the Environment of Senegal hosted a seminar in Dakar, from 21-24 June 1993, on co-operation between countries of Europe and north and north-eastern Africa. The seminar was organized by the secretariat of the Bern Convention and was attended by representatives of several French-speaking African countries (Algeria, Burkina Faso, Morocco, Senegal and Tunisia) and by representatives of Belgium, France, Spain and Switzerland. Of interest to CMS were the reports provided by African representatives on the state of nature conservation in their countries.

Regional and global nature conservation conventions – including CMS – were presented and discussed. In this context, it was noted that the Bern Convention has a limited mandate and does not have the means to co-operate on matters related to conservation throughout Africa. The Bonn Convention was recommended as the most appropriate framework for coordination of matters concerning conservation of migratory species.

The Co-ordinator informed the participants about the activities of CMS, in particular the draft African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement. This project generated considerable interest among the delegates, some of whom promised to give the greatest possible support to its further development. ■

### Ramsar conference

The fifth meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention was held in Kushiro, Japan, from 8-16 June 1993. Attendance was excellent, with over 70 Parties and 23 observer States participating. There was, of course, a very large contingent from Japan including representation from several levels of government, non-governmental organizations and the press. In all, there were over 1,200 registered delegates.

The meeting adopted a number of resolutions aimed at furthering the objectives of the Ramsar Convention. They dealt with such matters as further guidance on the implementation of the "wise use" concept, formalization of a review process for sites subject to change in ecological character, guidelines on management planning for Ramsar sites and other wetlands, and the establishment of a "Scientific and Technical Review Panel". The meeting also adopted a recommendation of interest to CMS concerning the relationship between the Ramsar Convention, the Global Environment Facility and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Australia formally offered to host the sixth meeting of the Parties to Ramsar in 1996. The budget for the 1994-1996 triennium was adopted virtually as presented, but not without extensive discussions behind the scenes after reservations were voiced during plenary session.

The CMS Secretariat took advantage of the presence of the large number of governmental and non-governmental representatives in Kushiro to promote the Bonn Convention and to convene several meetings of direct relevance to CMS. Over 250 copies of the new CMS booklet were distributed.

As reported elsewhere in the **Bulletin**, a memorandum of understanding on conservation measures for the western and central populations of the Siberian crane was concluded, and a meeting was held to discuss the latest draft of the proposed Asia-Pacific Waterbird Agreement.

The Secretariat also convened an informal meeting with a number of international and national NGOs, assisted by the Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee, Dr. Peter Bridgewater. It was organized as a follow-up to a similar meeting arranged by the Chairman of the Standing Committee during the recent meeting of the International Whaling Commission. The purpose of the session was to give some information about recent Bonn Convention activities – in particular, the strategy paper on the future development of the Convention – and to obtain feedback from NGOs on the initiatives that are being considered by the Standing Committee.

Finally, the Secretariat and Dr. Roberto Schlatter (the Conference-appointed Scientific Councillor from Chile) hosted an informal session with

government officials from several Latin American countries and a few key non-governmental organizations from the region. Many were eager to learn more about CMS as a potential framework for regional initiatives concerning migratory species. ■

## **International Whaling Commission**

The annual meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) was held in Kyoto, Japan, from 10-14 May 1993. The meeting passed a number of resolutions of interest to CMS. One resolution, which acknowledged the relevance of ASCOBANS for the protection of harbour porpoises, requested Range States to carry out further research and recommended a reduction of by-catches. A second resolution called for the IWC's small cetacean working group to continue to investigate the question of how to address small cetacean issues within the IWC, including an examination of the role of other international and regional organizations. A third resolution invited Governments to carry out a study of whalewatching activities, requested the IWC Secretariat to prepare a consolidated report on the subject, and established a working group to make recommendations to the next meeting of the IWC.

The Chairman of the Standing Committee, Robert Hepworth, who represented CMS at the meeting, adds the following comment:

"Whilst in Kyoto, the Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee (Dr. Peter Bridgewater of Australia) and I took the opportunity to convene a meeting of non-government bodies to hear their views on the future of CMS.

"There was a lively debate, and we have noted a number of points for consideration in the next draft of the strategic review to be presented by the Standing Committee to the next meeting of CMS parties in 1994. A central message was that CMS needs to present a clearer image of its objectives in order to attract more support and additional Parties. NGOs also recognised that they could play an important role in trying to get support for CMS in individual states.

"The idea of a special project fund aimed at developing countries was also welcomed, although NGOs are aware of possible financial and political obstacles. They also thought that Article

IV Agreements should be produced more speedily.

"We were able to distribute the new CMS booklet at Kyoto – this was well received. I hope the Secretariat will be able to organise a similar meeting at the forthcoming meeting of parties to the Ramsar Convention in Kushiro.

"Once again much of the real work took place outside the formal meeting sessions. I was able to speak bilaterally to several delegations concerned with ASCOBANS, and I hope that further signatures will soon be forthcoming, allowing the agreement to come into force by the end of this year. I was also able to help secure a reference to the role of ASCOBANS in a resolution passed by IWC to promote the conservation of the harbour porpoise." ■

## **IWRB Executive Board Meeting**

The Co-ordinator attended the 25th meeting of the Executive Board of the International Waterfowl and Wetlands Research Bureau (IWRB) in St. Petersburg, Florida (12-14 November 1992).

He informed participants from about 50 countries of the progress that CMS has made during the past three years and the plans for the next two years, particularly with respect to the conservation of migratory waterbirds. During a workshop, Dr. Gerard Boere (Netherlands) gave a talk on the draft African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement.

On several occasions, national delegates and speakers from international NGOs emphasized the importance of concluding the drafts of the African-Eurasian and the Asian-Pacific waterbird Agreements; some organisations, particularly IWRB, expressed their wish to assist the UNEP/CMS Secretariat in further development of proposals. The Co-ordinator met with scientists and government representatives of several CMS Parties and non-Party States, explaining the importance of joining CMS and of playing an active role in the Convention in order to co-ordinate conservation measures for migratory species.

The Board elected Dr. Chris Kalden as the new President of IWRB. Dr. Kalden is well-informed about CMS, having chaired the Scientific

Committee during the last meeting of the Conference of the Parties. Moreover, in his former capacity as head of the Directorate for Nature Management in the Ministry for Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries, he was involved in the development of the draft Western Palearctic Waterfowl Agreement.

The Executive Board decided on a forward plan for IWRB for the next three years as well as a new structure for its research groups, both of which emphasize more research, monitoring and conservation efforts for waterbirds and their wetland habitats. Additionally IWRB laid the foundation for a global scientific network by concluding a memorandum of agreement with the Asian Wetland Bureau (AWB) and Wetlands for the Americas (WA). ■

### **Strengthening of International Legal Instruments on Environment**

Strengthening international legal instruments in the field of the environment, in particular enhancing the participation of more countries in multilateral treaties and improving their implementation, was one of the issues discussed at the pan-European Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe", held in Lucerne, Switzerland, 28-30 April 1993, and the 17th session of the UNEP Governing Council, held in Nairobi in May 1993.

#### ***"Environment for Europe"***

Ministers of the Environment of 50 countries met in Lucerne to look for ways and means to improve the catastrophic ecological situation in the Central and Eastern European countries. In this regard they considered it useful for CEE countries to join and implement multilateral environmental treaties on an international and regional basis.

The analysis of answers given to a questionnaire showed that there are many difficulties and obstacles that impede CEE countries from acceding or implementing international and regional conventions, *inter alia*, lack of the necessary administrative infrastructure, support for environmental policies in general, information on the conventions and educated and trained personnel, as well as difficulties in internal legislation.

As part of the follow-up to the meeting, the UNEP Regional Office for Europe plans to carry out a more in-depth analysis of the issues raised, the results of which may be relevant to CMS as it seeks to attract a larger membership.

#### ***UNEP Governing Council***

The Governing Council discussed at length the insufficient engagement of many countries worldwide in environmental conventions and other international legal instruments. In its Decision No. 17/12 the Governing Council "calls on Governments that have not yet done so to sign, ratify or accede to those international conventions in the field of the environment to which they are eligible to become parties". In his official speech, Germany's Deputy Minister for the Environment specifically urged the countries concerned to join and to implement the Bonn Convention.

For its part, UNEP's Environmental Law and Institutions Unit has proposed co-ordination of existing secretariats of environmental conventions with a view to achieving wider participation of countries. ■

## **Depositary**

The Standing Committee discussed the continuing problem of the unavailability of official, correct texts of the Convention in the working languages of the Convention (English, French and Spanish). The Committee recognized the importance of finalizing the correction procedures as soon as possible in order to avoid having the United Nations publish outdated texts and for acceding countries to have access to current texts in the official languages.

The Depositary agreed that work on the Convention texts should be completed in time for the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties and that, in the meantime, it would request the United Nations Secretariat to suspend publication of the versions supplied in 1991 until the Depositary is in a position to provide the corrected texts.

The Depositary has now proposed to circulate to all Parties and Signatories for comment the French text of the Convention incorporating the changes agreed by the Conference of the Parties in Geneva in 1991, together with a small number of additional corrections proposed by the Government of France as a consequence of its thorough examination of the French text. If, after expiry of the comment period, there are no further corrections to be made, the Depositary will circulate the corrected text to all Parties and

States entitled to become parties to the Convention.

Although verification of the Spanish text has yet to be finalized, it is hoped that a similar procedure can be carried out this year. The Depositary confirmed in February that the Convention texts in Arabic, Chinese and Russian were being revised, however there are no further developments to report in this regard. Work to correct the German text has not yet begun. ■

## Forthcoming meetings of interest to CMS

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|-------------------|-------------------------|---|
| 8-15 August       | Maun, Botswana          | <b>African Crane and Wetlands Workshop.</b> <i>Contact:</i> International Crane Foundation, E 11376 Shady Lane Road, BARABOO, WI 53913-9778, USA. FAX: (+1 608) 356 94 65.  |
| 22-27 August      | Évora, Portugal         | <b>Sixth European Bat Research Symposium.</b> <i>Contact:</i> Jorge Palmeirim and Luísa Rodrigues, Dept. de Zoologia, Faculdade de Ciências, Universidade de Lisboa, P-1700 LISBOA, Portugal FAX: (+ 351 1) 759 77 16.  |
| 10 - 12 September | Reading, U.K.           | <b>1993 National Bat Conference.</b> <i>Contact:</i> The Bat Conservation Trust, c/o The Conservation Foundation, 1 Kensington Gore, LONDON SW7 2AR, U.K. FAX: (+44 71) 823 96 90.  |
| 12-16 September   | Langebaan, South Africa | <b>Migration, Dispersal and Nomadism. Eighth Thematic Symposium of the Southern African Ornithological Society.</b> <i>Contact:</i> Prof. Les Underhill, Avian Demography Unit, Department of Statistical Sciences, University of Cape Town, RONDEBOSCH, 7700, South Africa. FAX: (+27 21) 650 39 18. |
| 14-15 September   | Stralsund, Germany      | <b>Ostseeküste international - Natur ohne Grenzen.</b> <i>Contact:</i> Jochen Lamp, WWF-Projekt Ostseeschutz, Dänholmhaus 8, 18439 STRALSUND. FAX: (+49 0 38 31) 29 70 18.  |
| 19-25 September   | San José, Costa Rica    | <b>International Wildlife Management Congress.</b> <i>Contact:</i> The Wildlife Society, IWMC Secretariat, 5410 Grosvenor Lane, BETHESDA, MD 20814-2197, USA. FAX: (+1 301) 530 24 71.  |
| 20-25 September   | Palanga, Lithuania      | <b>Baltic Birds - 7th Conference on the Study and Conservation of Birds in the Baltic Region.</b> <i>Contact:</i> Dr. Mečislovas Žalakevičius, Laboratory of Ornithology, Institute of Ecology, Akademijos St. 2, 2600 VILNIUS, Lithuania. FAX: (+7 01 22) 35 92 57.                                  |
| 21-22 September   | Strasbourg, France      | <b>"L'année européenne de la conservation de la nature".</b> <i>Contact:</i> Mlle. M-F Glatz, Conseil de l'Europe, Direction de l'Environnement et des Pouvoirs Locaux, Centre Naturopo, F-67075 STRASBOURG CEDEX. FAX: (+33 88) 41 27 15.  |

- 29 September - 2 October      Esbjerg, Denmark      **Eighth International Scientific Wadden Sea Symposium on Birds and their Ecology in the Wadden Sea.** *Contact:* Karsten Dahl, The National Forest and Nature Agency, Slotsmarken 13, DK-2970 HØRSBOLM. FAX: (+45 45) 76 54 77.
- 11-15 October      Geneva, Switzerland      **Intergovernmental conference on the Convention on Biological Diversity.** *Contact:* Dr. Elizabeth Dickson, Interim Secretariat for the Convention on Biological Diversity, 15, Chemin des Anémones, CH-1219 CHATELAINE GENEVA, Switzerland. FAX: (+41 22) 727 25 12.
- 12-15 October      Antalya, Turkey      **Eighth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution (Barcelona Convention).** *Contact:* UNEP/Coordinating Unit for the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP), P.O. Box 18019, 48, Vassileos Konstantinou Avenue, GR-116 10 ATHENS, Greece. FAX: (+30 1) 729 11 60.
- 18-24 October      Odessa, Ukraine      **Black Sea Basin Wetlands Workshop.** *Contact:* IWRB, SLIMBRIDGE, Gloucester GL2 7BX, U.K. FAX: (+44 453) 89 06 97.
- 9-12 November      Maastricht, The Netherlands      **Conserving Europe's Natural Heritage. Towards a European Ecological Network.** *Contact:* Dr. Graham Bennett, Institute for European Environmental Policy, Jansbuitensingel 14, NL-6811 AB ARNHEM, The Netherlands. FAX: (+31 85) 45 32 10.
- 29 November - 3 December      Strasbourg, France      **Bern Convention: 13th Annual Standing Committee meeting.** *Contact:* Bern Convention Secretariat, Council of Europe, B.P. 431 R6, F-67000 STRASBOURG CEDEX. Fax: (+33 88) 41 27 81/2/3/4.