CMS ENERGY TASK FORCE

Supporting a nature-sensitive rapid transition to renewable energy

The challenge: the urgent need for a renewable energy transition

Renewable energy is an essential part of addressing climate change - one of the greatest threats to people and biodiversity. Meeting global energy demand, set to increase by 30% by 2040, while achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement to keep global temperature rise well below 2˚C, requires an urgent transition to low-carbon economies. However, renewable energy infrastructure can have critically adverse impacts on species and ecosystems if placed in wildlife sensitive areas. Birds and bats die from collisions and electrocutions with wind turbines and powerlines. Annually, hundreds of thousands of collisions occur in countries across the African-Eurasian region alone. Poorly sited infrastructure can also lead to significant financial and legislative challenges, including retrofitting costs, fines and lawsuits. In addition, renewable energy infrastructure sited in carbon rich ecosystems can release significant amounts of stored carbon into the atmosphere.

The consideration of biodiversity in development planning is particularly vital over the next five years, as renewable energy capacity is forecast to expand by 50% between 2019 and 2024. Countries will revise their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) in 2025. Immediate engagement with Parties to the Paris Agreement is therefore essential to ensure climate action strategies employ nature-sensitive renewable energy.

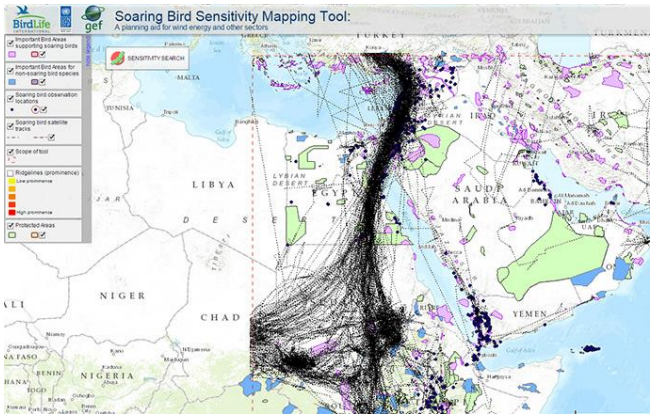
The CMS Energy Task Force: a platform for smart policies and technical guidance

The Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) Energy Task Force (ETF) was established in 2016 to work towards reconciling renewable energy development with the conservation of migratory species. The ETF provides a forum for developing and disseminating best practice policy and technical guidance, and engagement of relevant stakeholders, including governments, investors, scientists, the private sector and civil society, and multilateral actors. BirdLife International, the world's largest nature conservation partnership, coordinates the ETF on behalf of the CMS Secretariat.

Spearheading the solution: at national and global levels

The ETF facilitates the use of best practices via the promotion of science-based responsible and innovative renewable energy solutions. The ETF is uniquely placed to spearhead national and global action and deliver crucial solutions on reconciling renewable energy and biodiversity, by:

- Being the go-to for member governments on expertise for reconciling renewable energy with migratory species (e.g. through soaring bird sensitivity mapping), and in building capacity and expertise on mainstreaming nature-sensitive renewable energy;
- Contributing towards achieving the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals, the objectives of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity;



- Filling knowledge gaps through research and collaboration, and the provision of scientific advice to other leading knowledge hubs, such as the IUCN; and
- Being the preferred source of scientific advice, tools, data and information on migratory species for major finance institutions such as the International Finance Corporation and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

The first phase of the ETF, with the generous financial support from the German government, has laid the foundation for shifting renewable energy investments to minimize negative impacts on migratory species. Its **Accomplishments** include:

- A global assessment of predicted impacts of large-scale renewable energy on birds and mammals (BTO);
- Identification of research priorities and development of a research database (BirdLife International);
- Analysis of progress of CMS Parties in reconciling energy development with the conservation of migratory species;
- An information package on the sustainable deployment of renewable energy technologies and power lines;
- Concept on spatial mapping tools to assess potential risks, and guidance to governments for meeting commitments under the Paris Agreement with minimal impact on biodiversity;
- Development of sensitivity mapping in Africa and Japan; proposals for East Asia and India (BirdLife);
- Case studies on power line and wind energy developments integrating biodiversity considerations;
- International benchmark multi-stakeholder events on mainstreaming biodiversity in the energy sector;
- Policy inputs to meetings of the CMS Conference of the Parties, including towards establishing the ETF as a mechanism for reporting on NDCs and integrating SEAs and species sensitivity mapping into the climate targets' decision-making processes;
- Development of the global industry standard handbook for post-construction monitoring of wind-farms;
- Concepts on standardisation of collision mortality data for birds and bats;
- Establishment of a business pool of relevant companies and service providers;

Priority action is needed now

With U.S. $660 billion of planned annual investments for renewable energy deployment over the next few years and into the next decades, investment in the right technologies is needed now. Multi-year funding is required to support the ETF to deliver on its future work, which will focus on:

- Leading the development and global uptake of guidance for the sustainable deployment and retrofitting of renewable energy infrastructure and best practice tools such as sensitivity mapping;
- Supporting continued research and monitoring of multi-level impacts of renewable energy infrastructure on migratory species.

Proposed four-year annual budget (2021-2024):

Item Description	**Total Annual Budget (€)**
Coordination and technical support	105,000
Communication, events, outreach activities and materials	30,000
Government engagement workshops (regional)	80,000
Small grants to ETF members to carry out activities nationally	35,000
Total *(inclusive of overheads)*	**250,000**

Contacts for more information
CMS (Bonn Convention) – A multilateral environmental treaty of the UN providing a global platform for the conservation and management of migratory animals and their habitats through cooperation on policies, agreements and action plans.
Dr Tilman Schneider | **UNEP/CMS Secretariat** | Platz der Vereinten Nationen 1, 53113 Bonn, Germany | tilman.schneider@un.org

BirdLife International – The world's largest nature conservation partnership, uniquely placed to engage with and mobilise society globally on the topic of conserving migratory species across the renewable energy sector.
Dr Ashton Berry | **BirdLife International** | The David Attenborough Building, Cambridge, CB2 3QZ, UK | ashton.berry@birdlife.org

https://www.cms.int/en/taskforce/energy-task-force