



A Special Report on Selected Side Events at CMS COP9

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Events convened on Monday, 1 December 2008

Partnership between Italy's Ministry of the Environment and the City of Rome Presented during the Opening Ceremony of CMS

Presented by CMS & FAO



His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco underscores the relationship between species and human survival.

James Butler, Deputy Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in his welcome address, emphasized partnerships to fight biodiversity loss, and underscored FAO's commitment through, *inter alia*, the adoption of methods to address food security.

Robert Hepworth, CMS Executive Secretary, said the Convention is a real catalyst to promote the conservation of migratory species and highlighted its current membership of 110 States, the successful Year of the Dolphin campaign in 2008, and the 2009 Year of the Gorilla initiative.

His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco underscored the relationship between species and human survival and outlined the conservation activities undertaken by the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation.

Stefania Prestigiacomo, Minister for Environment, Land and Sea, Italy, announced that her ministry with the National Wildlife Institute would launch the 20 year-study on Italy's migratory bird flyways (Migration Atlas) on Tuesday. She also noted that, together with the municipality of Rome, the Ministry would sign an agreement to set up a research and rehabilitation center for bats.

Fabio de Lillo, Environment Commission of the City of Rome, highlighted the importance of the "urban green network," which aims at forming habitat corridors linking green areas surrounding the city to the center of Rome.

Stefania Prestigiacomo and Fabio de Lillo then signed the agreement to establish a research and rehabilitation center for the conservation of bats.

Chris Butler-Stroud, Chief Executive Officer of the Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society (WDCS), on behalf of NGOs and all other CMS partners, said the greatest obstacle to conservation is not the tragedy of the commons, but the tyranny of borders, and said CMS offers the key to look past borders, and towards connectivity.

Achim Steiner, UNEP Executive Director, in a video recorded speech, noted the CMS' contribution in fostering cooperation efforts and highlighted the role of flagship species that could "touch the heart and mind" of the public for raising awareness.

More information:

<http://www.fao.org/>
<http://www.cms.int/>
<http://princealbertfoundation.org/>
<http://www.minambiente.it/>
<http://www.comune.roma.it/>
<http://www.wdcs.org/>
<http://www.unep.org/>

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Launch of the Year of the Gorilla Campaign

Presented by CMS Secretariat

Robert Hepworth, Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), noted that the Year of the Gorilla campaign launched by CMS relies heavily on partners, especially Great Apes Survival Project (GRASP) and World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA), to bring together key actors and deliver the campaign. He stressed the need to raise awareness of the issues related to the post-conflict and conflict areas, and to raise resources to promote more gorilla-watching activities and tourism, help rangers combat poaching, and conserve habitats and forests through range States. He reported that the new CMS technical series on Gorillas is available.

John Mshelbwala, Chair of CMS Scientific Council, noted the importance of adopting the action plans laying out the conservation actions needed to safeguard the long-term survival of the four gorilla taxa. He said these plans will help to mobilize resources. Mshelbwala stressed the importance of concerted actions and welcomed the Year of the Gorilla, which will help to raise awareness of species conservation, loss of vegetation and impacts of climate change.

Michel Perret, France, highlighted the importance of promoting the conservation of gorillas, noted past meetings in Paris to address the issue, and stressed the need to implement the agreements negotiated among range States. Perret stressed that there is a global awareness of climate change, deforestation and degradation of forests, and said that climate change financial mechanisms may benefit the forest and great apes.

Patrick van Klaveren, Monaco, explained the involvement of Monaco in CMS campaigns called "the year of" and underscored the need to finance projects that find alternative approaches for living in harmony with gorillas. He said the Year of the Gorilla is a partnership among public and private entities and NGOs, which is a new way to look at conservation after the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

Melanie Virtue, GRASP, noted that GRASP is a partnership among government, NGOs and UN agencies, and highlighted a number of projects for great apes conservation. Virtue said that one of the chief financial sources will come from Reducing Emissions from Deforestation (REDD), and that such climate projects will provide multiple benefits, including avoiding deforestation, assisting local communities and enhancing ecosystem services.

Gerald Dick, WAZA, said that WAZA is "happy to be an official partner" of the Year of the Gorilla. He noted the importance of raising awareness for conservation. He said that an educational kit will be made available to the public next year that will contribute to the conservation of gorillas.

Discussion: In response to a participant's question, Melanie Virtue said that the chief threats to gorillas are habitat loss, especially through logging, and poaching for bushmeat. Participants discussed the role of the media in enhancing gorilla conservation and the importance of making documentary programmes made by foreign broadcast services freely available to national TV's in African countries. Mshelbwala noted the importance of the media to not fuel conflicts through sensational journalism.

One participant noted that the Year of the Gorilla is also the year of habitat because all depends on the health of the forests. Mshelbwala said that ordinary people can help in two ways: the ones that live near the gorillas need to change habits and embrace new ones; and others can contribute financially.



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More information:

<http://www.cms.int>
<http://www.unep.org/grasp>
<http://www.waza.org>

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2008 CMS Champions

Presented by CMS Secretariat

Stanley Johnson conferred the title of Champion to Mohammed Akotey, Minister of Environment, Niger, for his active involvement in the CMS initiative for the conservation of the Sahelo-Saharan Antelopes. Receiving the award, Minister Akotey said the country has reserved 10 million hectares of land for this effort, set up legislation to curb the illegal poaching of the antelope, and raised awareness among the local on appropriate conservation measures.

Johnson conferred the title of Champion to Wolfgang Burhenne, International Council for Environmental Law, for conceiving the idea to create a convention on the conservation of migratory species. Receiving the award on his behalf, Judge Amelio Postiglioni of Italy's Supreme Court, called for the effective implementation of international regulation on nature protection and for reports on country performances.

Johnson conferred the title of Champion to Aldo Cosentino, Ministry of Environment, Italy, for his generous contributions in supporting CMS with the implementation of various projects and initiatives in science and research. Federico Cinquepalmi, on behalf of Aldo Cosentino, noted the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) programme of work on Protected Area, and highlighted the need to identify the protected areas in accordance with countries' and regional necessities to establish interconnected networks.

Johnson conferred the title of Champion to George Archibald, Siberian Crane Foundation, for his long-standing commitment and collaboration with CMS in the protection of cranes. Archibald said that CMS brought a new dimension to conservation of the Siberian cranes that live in 11 different countries.

Johnson conferred the title of Champion, *in absentia*, to: Michael Iwand, Pollsman/TUI for his central role in establishing a partnership between CMS and TUI, the largest international tourism firm; and to Abdulaziz Abdalla, Pollmans/TUI, for his substantial contribution to the implementation of the "Year of the Dolphin."

Johnson awarded the title of Champion to Roberto Schlatter, Universidade Austral, Chile for the implementation of CMS scientific activities in the Latin American region. Schlatter highlighted the increased involvement of Latin American countries in the CMS, particularly since 1995, and underscored the value of the CMS in fostering cross-border cooperation on migratory species.

Johnson conferred the title of Champion to Margi Prideaux, CMS/WDCS, for her long-standing cooperation with CMS in the protection of marine mammals. Prideaux, in a video recorded speech, said as the world regionalizes, civil society will be needed to speak for and, in the future, represent, the interests of wild populations.

Johnson conferred the title of Champion to Karin Bieri, CMS, for her inexhaustible and outstanding effort as an intern and consultant in supporting the CMS Secretariat. Bieri outlined her tasks and contributions to CMS.

Johnson conferred the title of Champion to Scott Newman, FAO, and Taej Mundkur, FAO, for their dedication and commitment in supporting CMS in the coordination and advancement of the task force on Avian Influenza.



Stanley Johnson, CMS Ambassador, presents the CMS Champion Award to Mohamed Akotey, Minister of Environment, Niger.

More information:

<http://www.cms.int>
<http://www.savingcranes.org>
<http://www.uach.cl>
<http://www.wetlands.org>
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L-R: Judge Amelio Postiglioni, Supreme Court, Italy; Karin Bieri, CMS Secretariat; George Archibald, Siberian Crane Foundation; Mohamed Akotey, Minister of the Environment, Niger; Federico Cinquepalmi, Ministry of the Environment, Italy; Taej Mundkur, FAO; Roberto Schlatter, Universidad Austral, Chile; and Scott Newman, FAO



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For more information on the CLIMATE-L.ORG project, contact Kimo GOREE at kimo@iisd.org or visit <http://www.climate-l.org>