



## ELEVENTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES OF WILD ANIMALS: 3-9 NOVEMBER 2014

The Eleventh Conference of the Parties (COP11) of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) opens today in Quito, Ecuador and will continue through Sunday, 9 November 2014. Representatives from governments, inter- and non-governmental organizations as well as scientists will come together to discuss conservation threats, barriers to migration and the need for increased cooperation across the globe under the theme of "Time for Action."

The COP is expected to take decisions on a number of issues including: proposed listings on the CMS Appendices of 32 migratory species under threat, including the polar bear, the African lion and more than 20 shark species; species Action Plans for the conservation of argali, Pacific loggerhead turtles and the saker falcon; Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023 to provide vision, leadership and a driving force toward the full and effective implementation of commitments related to migratory species; a new initiative on Central Asia, including a programme of work for the conservation of large mammal migrations in this region; and a series of institutional issues, including on concerted and cooperative action, an implementation/review mechanism for the Convention, and options for a new structure and *modus operandi* of the Scientific Council. In addition, a CMS report entitled "Central Asian Mammals Initiative: Saving the Last Migrations," will be launched and numerous side events will take place.

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF CMS

Migratory species are vulnerable to a wide range of threats, including habitat shrinkage in breeding areas, excessive hunting along migration routes and degradation of their feeding grounds. As a result of international concern over these threats, CMS was adopted in 1979 and entered into force on 1 November 1983. CMS, also known as the Bonn Convention, recognizes that States must be the protectors of migratory species that live within or pass through their national jurisdictions and aims to conserve terrestrial, marine and avian migratory species throughout their ranges. CMS currently has 120 parties.

The Convention was designed to allow for expansion and revision of commitments and to provide a framework through which parties may act to conserve migratory species and their habitat by: adopting strict protection measures for migratory species that have been characterized as being in danger of

extinction throughout all or a significant portion of their ranges (species listed in Appendix I of the Convention); concluding agreements for the conservation and management of migratory species that have an unfavorable conservation status or would benefit significantly from international cooperation (species listed in Appendix II); and joint research and monitoring activities. At present, over 100 migratory species are listed in Appendix I.

CMS also provides for the development of specialized regional agreements for Appendix II species. To date, seven agreements and 19 memoranda of understanding (MoUs) have been concluded. The seven agreements aim to conserve: populations of European Bats; cetaceans of the Mediterranean Sea, Black Sea and contiguous Atlantic area; small cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas; seals in the Wadden Sea; African-Eurasian migratory waterbirds; albatrosses and petrels; and gorillas and their habitats. The 19 MoUs aim to conserve: the Siberian crane; the slender-billed curlew; marine turtles of the Atlantic coast of Africa; marine turtles of the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia; the Middle-European population of the great bustard; the bukhara deer; the aquatic warbler; West-African populations of the African elephant; the saiga antelope; cetaceans in the Pacific islands region; dugongs; the Mediterranean monk seal; the ruddy-headed goose; grassland birds of southern South America; high Andean flamingos; South Andean Huemul; migratory sharks; and raptors (birds of prey in Africa and Eurasia). These agreements and MoUs are open to all range States of the species, regardless of whether they are parties to the Convention.

Eight Action Plans have also been concluded on the: Central Asian Flyway; Sahelo-Saharan Antelopes; Chinese Crested Tern; Black-faced Spoonbill; Spoon-billed Sandpiper; Madagascar Pond Heron; White-winged Flufftail; and Lesser Flamingo. There are also three initiatives on bycatch, Eurasian Aridland Mammals and Houbara Bustard, as well as three Special Species Initiatives on the Central Asian Flyway, Central Asian Mammals and Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna.

**COP7:** The seventh meeting of the COP (18-24 September 2002, Bonn, Germany) added 20 species to Appendix I and 21 to Appendix II, with the fin, sei and sperm whales and the great white shark being listed on both. COP 7 also adopted resolutions on: electrocution of migratory birds, offshore oil pollution, wind turbines, impact assessment and by-catch. The COP adopted decisions on, *inter alia*: future action on the Antarctic minke, Bryde's and pygmy right whales; improving the conservation status of the leatherback turtle; an agreement on dugong conservation; the American Pacific Flyway Programme; and the Central Asian-Indian Waterbird Flyway Initiative.

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**COP8:** The eighth meeting of the COP (20-25 November 2005, Nairobi, Kenya) addressed: the review of CMS implementation; sustainable use; the target to significantly reduce the current rate of biodiversity loss by 2010; measures to improve the conservation status of Appendix I species, including projects on Sahelo-Saharan antelopes and the Siberian crane; measures to improve the conservation status of Appendix II species, including raptors, migratory sharks and marine turtles; proposals for amendments to Appendices I and II; the CMS 2006-2011 Strategic Plan; the CMS Information Management Plan; and financial and administrative arrangements. The meeting added 11 species to Appendix I and 16 to Appendix II, with the basking shark, bukhara deer and short-beaked common dolphin listed on both, and witnessed the signing of new MoUs on the West-African elephant and the saiga antelope.

**COP9:** COP9 (1-5 December 2008, Rome, Italy) listed 11 species on Appendix I of the Convention, including three dolphin species and the West African manatee, as well as the cheetah, with the exception of the populations of Botswana, Zimbabwe and Namibia for which quotas are in place under the Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). Species listed in Appendix II include the African wild dog, saiga antelope and several dolphin populations. Following intense negotiations, mako sharks, the porbeagle shark and the northern hemisphere population of the spiny dogfish were also listed on Appendix II. The proposal to list the saker falcon on Appendix I was withdrawn, but a resolution was adopted that set out the direction for future work on this species, and proposed listing it at COP10 unless its conservation status improves significantly.

**COP10:** COP10 (20-25 November 2011, Bergen, Norway) adopted 27 resolutions, including on: synergies and partnerships; overview of the process regarding the “future shape” of CMS, budget and enhanced engagement with the Global Environment Facility (GEF); wildlife disease and migratory species; migratory terrestrial species; global programme of work for cetaceans; and bird flyway conservation policy. The COP listed: under Appendix I, the saker falcon, the red-footed falcon and the far eastern and bristle-thighed curlew; under Appendix II, the argali mountain sheep and bobolink; and under Appendix I and II, the giant manta ray.

### INTERSESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

**AEWA MOP5:** The fifth Meeting of the Parties (MOP) to the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA) (14-18 May 2012, La Rochelle, France) adopted 27 resolutions. Among the meeting’s main achievements was the adoption of a budget that will allow the Secretariat to maintain its current level of staff and activities. In addition, the African Initiative will benefit from additional technical assistance through the provision of a France-based and funded technical coordinator, who will work directly with African subregional coordinators.

**SHARKS MoU MoS1:** The First Meeting of Signatories (MoS) to the MoU on the Conservation of Migratory Sharks (24-27 September 2012, Bonn, Germany) adopted the Conservation Plan, with further work to be done on prioritizing actions. The working group on administrative and budgetary considerations, limited to Signatory States, focused on issues concerning the terms of reference for the Advisory Committee and the rules of procedure for amending the list of shark species covered by the MoU.

**RAPTOR MoU MoS1:** MoS1 to the MoU concerning the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia (Raptors MoU) (9-11 December 2012, Abu Dhabi, United Arab

Emirates) agreed on: a process on future work and national reporting; the creation of the Raptors MoU Coordination Unit and Technical and Advisory Group; identification of priority areas to address the threats facing birds of prey; and the endorsement of CMS Resolution 10.11 on power lines and migratory birds.

**DUGONG MoU MoS2:** MoS2 to the MoU on the Conservation and Management of Dugongs and their Habitats throughout their Range (19-20 February 2013, Manila, the Philippines) pointed to progress in dugong conservation, noting ten new Signatories since the first meeting in 2010, as well as a proposed GEF project focused on seven countries.

**GREAT BUSTARD MoU MoS3:** MoS3 to the MoU on the Conservation and Management of the Middle-European Population of the Great Bustard (8-12 April 2013, Szarvas, Hungary) adopted a new Action Plan for the period 2012-2016. The meeting revised the Medium-term International Work Programme to elaborate how the plan will be implemented in coming years. Participants adopted a series of guidelines on reintroduction, population monitoring and mitigation of the impacts of infrastructure, as well as a joint research programme. They also highlighted synergies with CMS Resolution 10.11 on power lines and Resolution 10.26 on poisoning, as well as with components of the Raptors MoU Action Plan.

**CMS STANDING COMMITTEE 41:** The 41st Meeting of the Standing Committee (27-28 November 2013, Bonn, Germany) discussed the increased competition for funding with other multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and the need for synergies, policy coherence and greater efficiency. The Secretariat highlighted progress in the development of an international action plan for the conservation of the argali sheep as well as the Central Asian Initiative to conserve migratory mammals. Participants also discussed: the future shape of CMS; progress in implementing Resolution 10.9 (reform of the Scientific Council); the review and the viability of MoUs and agreements; and opportunities to merge common services and areas in the CMS Family.

**RAPTOR MoU TAG1:** The First Meeting of the Technical Advisory Group (TAG1) (21-24 January 2014, Edinburgh, Scotland) developed a two-year work plan (2014-2015) inclusive of 10 key tasks. Among the highest priorities identified were activities to address the central threats to migratory birds of prey, such as electrocution, poisoning and illegal persecution.

**CMS SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL 18:** The Scientific Council (1-3 July 2014, Bonn, Germany) discussed: the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023; the Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI), including the draft resolution and the draft Argali Action Plan to be reviewed and submitted to the COP; impacts of invasive alien species on animals listed under CMS; and individual listing proposals submitted to COP11 for the amendment of CMS Appendices, including the polar bear, the African lion, and shark and ray species; the draft Saker Falcon Global Action Plan; and the reduction of the risk of bird poisoning and illegal killing of migratory birds.

**CENTRAL ASIAN MAMMALS INITIATIVE STAKEHOLDER MEETING:** The meeting (23-25 September 2014, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan) discussed the next steps in the conservation of CMS-listed Central Asian mammal species, including the snow leopard, argali sheep, saiga antelope, Asiatic wild ass and the Iranian cheetah. They adopted a declaration requesting CMS Parties to adopt the CAMI resolution at COP11. They also requested Parties to establish a post for an officer within CMS to coordinate the implementation of the CAMI Programme of Work.