



CMS COP-6 HIGHLIGHTS MONDAY, 15 NOVEMBER 1999

Delegates convened in a brief morning Plenary to hear a report from the Credentials Committee. Following Plenary, the COW heard reports from the working groups on information management, the Strategic Plan and various species, and considered draft resolutions and recommendations on related topics.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chair Hepworth invited delegates to review the draft report of COP-6 (UNEP/CMS/Conf.6/L.1) and noted it would be revisited when translations are available. In relation to co-location of Agreement Secretariats, Douglas Hykle, CMS Deputy Executive Secretary, reported on changes made to the terms of reference (TOR) (UNEP/CMS/Conf.6.14.2). He noted that the revised TOR were drafted in consultation with UNEP, ASCOBANS, EUROBATS and the Secretariat and suggested that the revisions did not necessitate a separate draft resolution and requested that the COW's approval be reflected in the report of the meeting.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT: Svein Aage Mehli (Norway), Chair of the working group on information management, noted that the draft resolution on information management (UNEP/CMS/Res. 6.11) deals with two issues, information management and national reporting, and suggested both should be reflected in the resolution title. He drew attention to the annex to the draft resolution which lists 19 suggested actions and details how each action relates to the Strategic Plan, its priority level, resource needs, degree of difficulty, capacity and partners. He also highlighted the proposed implementation costs through 2005 which includes an allotment of US\$40,000 for 2000. GERMANY raised questions regarding the implementation costs, especially regarding the US\$40,000, since the current budget which incorporates 2000 is finalized and does not reflect this allotment. In response, Müller-Helmbrecht said the Secretariat would attempt to identify possible funds and potential funding sponsors. The UK requested clarification on how the costs reflected in the resolution were formulated. Mehli said the costs were a sum of the estimated cost of the 19 proposed actions. FRANCE suggested explicitly stating that the budget figures reflect estimated costs. With these and other minor revisions, the COW adopted the resolution.

STRATEGIC PLAN: On the CMS Strategic Plan (UNEP/CMS/Res.6.3/Rev.1), working group Chair Anne-Marie Delahunt (Australia) said that the working group had produced an annex to the resolution which distills the main aspects of the original Strategic Plan document (UNEP/CMS/Conf.6.12). EGYPT requested that the role and membership of the proposed intersectoral planning working group on strategy be clarified. ISRAEL, with the UK, suggested that the group consider options to facilitate measurement of inputs and outputs of all appropriate CMS institutions, in addition to the Secretariat. NORWAY proposed Israel as Chair and the

UK as Vice-Chair. NORWAY requested adding a paragraph highlighting the need for greater synergy with the CBD. ESTONIA stated its intention to become a Party and hoped advice on how to avoid potential internal political deadlocks would be provided. Noting the objective to attract new Parties, Chair Hepworth suggested the needs of new Parties should be reflected in the resolution annex. The COW adopted the resolution with amendments accommodating these requests.

STANDING COMMITTEE: Chair Hepworth highlighted the revised draft resolution on the Standing Committee (UNEP/CMS/Res.6.5/Rev.1) with a revised regional representation of: two representatives each for Africa and Europe; and one representative each for Asia, Central and South America, Oceania and North America and the Caribbean. He noted that the insufficient number of Parties from North America and the Caribbean to the CMS prevented the election of representatives for this region. The PHILIPPINES called for two representatives for the Asia region. Chair Hepworth noted that granting Asia two representatives would require more signatories in the region. He commented that regional members could not serve more than two consecutive terms of office and said regional members elected at COP-5 would serve through COP-7. SENEGAL said representatives should not be obligated to continue through COP-7 and Hykle proposed modifying the text from "shall" to "can" continue. URUGUAY suggested including text calling for an equitable balance between the geographical coverage and diversity of migratory species within each region. The UKRAINE requested that provision be made for countries with economies in transition to also receive payment of travel costs. Delegates adopted the resolution as amended. With regard to Committee membership, the COW noted the following representation for regional groups (substantive member/alternate): Africa: Congo/Morocco and South Africa/Kenya; Oceania: Philippines/Australia; Asia: Pakistan/Sri Lanka; Central and South America: Uruguay/Argentina.

SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL: On the draft resolution on the Scientific Council (UNEP/CMS/Rec. 6.6/Rev.2), Hykle noted the need to consider a procedure for appointing a Councillor for Asiatic fauna. GUINEA noted the African Group's nomination of Nigeria for Vice-Chair of the Scientific Council. Chair Hepworth confirmed the nomination would be included in a postal ballot with any other nomination. The COW accepted an amendment to allow advisory bodies of CMS associated Agreements to participate in Council meetings as observers without voting rights. The COW amended two of the areas of expertise for the COP-appointed Councillors, to "large terrestrial mammals" and "cetaceans and fish" and added text specifying that the Councillor for Asiatic fauna's selection shall be confirmed by the Standing Committee following the Secretariat's invitation to Parties to nominate appropriate candidates.

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SPECIES-SPECIFIC RESOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: The COW heard reports from species-specific working group deliberations and considered draft resolutions and recommendations for adoption. The NETHERLANDS outlined the evolution of an Action Plan for the Great Cormorant drafted by Denmark and the Netherlands. All of the species-specific draft resolutions and recommendations were adopted with proposed amendments, with the exception of the resolution on conservation of the Marine Turtles in the African Atlantic Coast.

Albatrosses: AUSTRALIA noted general agreement on the urgent need for actions described in the draft resolution on albatrosses (UNEP/CMS/Res.6.4/Rev.1) and the addition of paragraphs supporting the actions of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) and the FAO International Plan of Action for Reducing Incidental Catch of Seabirds in Long-line Fisheries. He said the resolution builds on the recommendations of the Scientific Council and calls upon Parties, Range States and international organizations which have a role in conserving albatrosses.

Marine Turtles of the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia: The PHILIPPINES emphasized the value of collaboration to conclude an agreement and supported endorsing the resolution of the meeting on Indian Ocean and Southeast Asian Regional Cooperation for the Conservation and Management of Marine Turtles and their Habitats (UNEP/CMS/Conf.6/Inf.14). He introduced the draft recommendation on regional coordination for Marine Turtles of the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia (UNEP/CMS/Rec.6.6), noting that the recommendation endorses the MOU on ASEAN Sea Turtle Conservation and encourages States of the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asian region to participate in an agreement. AUSTRALIA supported the recommendation and expressed willingness to collaborate with Parties and non-Parties.

Houbara and Great Bustards: The EU highlighted agreement on the urgent situation of the Houbara and Great Bustard and noted that the draft recommendation on the working groups on the Houbara and Great Bustard (UNEP/CMS/Rec.6.4) emphasizes urgent action and the use of timetables to obtain concrete results before the next Scientific Council meeting. ZIMBABWE underscored the need to address conservation threats posed by foreign hunters. Noting its Houbara Bustard working group, IUCN endorsed the recommendation and requested that its willingness to assist such groups be reflected in the recommendation's preamble.

Sahelo-Saharan Antelopes: BELGIUM highlighted broad support for further conservation efforts and consideration of a MOU. NIGERIA, supported by TUNISIA and SENEGAL, requested taking the Djerba Declaration directly into account. In support, FRANCE stressed that developing a MOU should not impede implementation efforts. BELGIUM proposed modifying text encouraging Range States "to consider the possibility of concluding the MOU" to state "envisage an agreement." Müller-Helmbrecht, noting the language was weaker than that of the Djerba Declaration, asked Range States whether they could accept the proposed recommendation. BELGIUM explained that the intent of the proposed language was to ensure immediate action would not be obstructed. NIGER, supported by SENEGAL and BURKINA FASO, stressed the recommendation should support the Djerba decisions and immediate measures in the field. Drawing attention to text urging Range States to implement the Action Plan in the spirit of the Djerba Declaration, Chair Devillers doubted the language could be strengthened. Chair Hepworth proposed annexing the Djerba Declaration to the recommendation.

African Elephants: BELGIUM, supported by TOGO and SENEGAL, noted agreement on the need for immediate action and cooperation to conserve Elephant populations in West and Central Africa. On the draft recommendation on cooperative action for the African Elephant (UNEP/CMS/Rec.6.5), ZIMBABWE called for specific action for West and Central African elephant populations, which are most vulnerable, and suggested the geographical scope should be reflected in the recommendation's title. He offered to share expertise with Range States and suggested trans-locating

adult savannah elephants to areas where populations of the same genetic source are threatened. KENYA suggested extending this initiative once all Range States accede to the CMS. NIGER called for concerted action among Range States sharing the same species of elephants and supported the conservation of local elephant varieties. SENEGAL asked if the trans-location would require payment to Zimbabwe. Devillers, Chair of the Scientific Council, supporting the Zimbabwe proposal to specify the geographic scope of the recommendation, explained that the current title could lead to confusion with the more general list of species admitted for cooperative action. He noted that Zimbabwe's proposal did not suggest trans-locating species throughout Africa but was an offer of cooperation and that Zimbabwe was aware of the danger's associated with artificial placement of species. ZIMBABWE confirmed that the proposal to trans-locate elephants was motivated by African solidarity rather than financial benefit.

The DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO and MALI highlighted the impact of increased poaching and called for urgent implementation of an action plan. FRANCE suggested making reference to draft agreements and action plans instead of to a single MOU. The UK said the IUCN African Elephant Specialist Group should be represented in the proposed working group. Noting that the African Elephant is listed in Appendix II, Müller-Helmbrecht, clarified that cooperative action does not preclude regional action.

African Turtles of the Atlantic Coast: NIGERIA highlighted discussions on signing the MOU on Conservation for Marine Turtles and noted the need for collaboration, data compilation, funding and a further workshop. He noted the draft resolution would soon be ready for consideration.

BY-CATCH: The UK recapitulated the major points of the draft resolution on by-catch (UNEP/CMS/REC. 6.10/Rev.1), stressing that by-catch poses a grave threat to petrels, albatrosses, turtles and cetaceans. Underscoring the need to address by-catch with urgency and vigor, he encouraged the use of best practices for mitigating technology. He withdrew an explanatory memorandum on the resolution (UNEP/CMS/Conf.6.16), noting controversy surrounding the legal content of the document. MONACO, AUSTRALIA, URUGUAY, SENEGAL and BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL supported the resolution. MONACO suggested forwarding the resolution to the UN regional seas programmes. The COW adopted the resolution.

CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR APPENDIX I SPECIES: Chair Hepworth requested an update from the Scientific Council on the status of the two bird species that Italy had proposed for concerted action (UNEP/CMS/Res.6.1/Rev.1). Devillers said consultations with BirdLife International, the Italian delegation and the Scientific Council had resulted in the recommendation to add the Ferruginous Duck but not the Audouin's Gull at this time, as it is adequately addressed by other agencies.

IN THE CORRIDORS

As discussions on elephants lumbered, some delegates pondered rumors of trade in elephants between countries with flourishing and dwindling populations. While some construed this as a conservation measure, others queried the peppering of Elephants with different genetic backgrounds throughout Africa and the heavy costs of having Elephants "delivered." Some delegates insightfully observed that replacing elephants would not alleviate the seminal problem of poaching.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

PLENARY: Plenary will meet at 10:00 am.

COW: Following a brief Plenary, the COW will reconvene to consider *inter alia*, budgetary matters, the Marine Turtle of the African Atlantic Coast, the date and venue of COP-7 and Standing Committee elections.