



A Special Report on Selected Side Events at CMS COP 9

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Events convened on Friday, 5 December 2008

## Bats in Africa

Presented by EUROBATS



Andreas Streit, Executive Secretary of the Agreement on the Conservation of the Populations of European Bats (EUROBATS), discusses the arrangements for a workshop in 2009 on African bats.

### More information:

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Andreas Streit, Executive Secretary of the Agreement on the Conservation of the Populations of European Bats (EUROBATS), said the event aims to discuss the preliminary arrangements towards reaching an agreement on the conservation of populations of African bats. He highlighted that a capacity building workshop on African bats will take place in Africa, in 2009, organized in collaboration with UNEP and CMS, to identify priorities and actions for the future agreement.

Tony Hutson, EUROBATS, reported on a workshop that took place in Mauritius, in November 2008, that reviewed bat population assessment and monitoring techniques, and another one held in Cambridge, UK, in July 2008, to discuss bats and diseases. He noted that some African countries have not yet identified the bat species they host, and said he had a list of African bats to distribute. Hutson invited participants to update the list and make corrections. He said the workshop should identify the priorities for projects and actions on African bats, and noted that 2011 will be the Year of the Bat.

Participants highlighted the importance of identifying the species and conservation obstacles to elaborate action plans, raise awareness and make available tools for monitoring and understanding bat species. Participants agreed that the workshop should be held in September 2009, in Nairobi, Kenya.



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# Conservation of seabirds in the Nordic sea-regions

Presented by the Nordic Council of Ministers

Gudrun Schneider, Ministry of Environment, Norway, presented the operations and regional coverage of the Council, and said the Council's four environment priorities for 2009 are combating climate change, halting biodiversity loss, promoting ecological management of the seas, and motivating sustainable consumption and production.

Henrik Skov, Institute for Water and Environment, Denmark, presented on the status of wintering waterbirds in the Baltic Sea. He said the project's short-term objective is to provide the population status of wintering birds in the Baltic Sea in light of climate change and eutrophication, in order to determine the management implications. He highlighted the areas studied, as well as the data collection and analysis methods. Using the models, Skov predicted that the waterbird breeding distribution would be shifting North, food for waterbirds would decline, and fewer carnivorous waterbirds would venture southwards due to eutrophication. He said the findings would be used to develop an action plan for the Baltic Sea region.

Morten Ekker, Directorate for Nature Management, Norway, presented on the topic, "Nordic Seabirds in a changing environment: status, causes and measures," and said the region showed negative trends. He said the breeding and colonies of seabirds had fallen during the last five years, due to a decline in food availability, which he hypothesized was due to climate change. He argued that the decline in sandeel, the seabirds primary food source, led to breeding failure, and that other causal factors included over harvesting of fish, and environmental and oil pollution. Ekker highlighted several constraints to addressing the problems, and recommended, *inter alia*: taking into account dietary needs of the seabirds in fisheries management; enforcing scientific quotas for fishing; increasing focus on oil contingency plans; and imposing stiffer sanctions for illegal oil dumping. He said a follow-up Nordic Action Plan will begin in 2009, and suggested that it needs to include the Baltic Sea and national Red Lists.

Discussion centered on two aspects: approaches to collaboration and identification of strategic partners; and the causes of reduced seabirds breeding, with participants suggesting alternative causes and causal links. In response to participants' questions, Ekker noted the need to localize existing guidelines on seabird colonies and tourism, acknowledged the existing collaboration with the Pacific region scholars that are studying seabirds, and reported no evidence of northward shift in the seabird breeding areas or new disease and predators in the environment.



Henrik Skov, Institute for Water and Environment, Denmark, predicts that food for the waterbirds in the Baltic Sea will decline over time.



Morten Ekker, Directorate for Nature Management, Norway, hypothesizes that the decline in seabird colonies and breeding in the Baltic Sea region is linked to climate change.

#### More information:

<http://www.norden.org>

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