

CMS COP10 HIGHLIGHTS: WEDNESDAY, 23 NOVEMBER 2011

CMS COP10 convened on Wednesday, 23 November, in Bergen, Norway. The working groups made progress on some of the outstanding issues and the CoW, *inter alia*, recommended Appendix listings of the giant manta ray, red-footed falcon, argali mountain sheep, far-eastern curlew, bristled-thighed curlew and bobolink.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

BIRD FLYWAY CONSERVATION POLICY: Many parties expressed support for the draft resolution (UNEP/CMS/Res.10.10.Rev.1), including KAZAKHSTAN and others, relating to work on cranes and ecological site networks, and BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL, relating to conservation of albatrosses and petrels and to bycatch mitigation and monitoring measures.

The Secretariat agreed to ensure this draft resolution is coordinated with priorities for CMS Agreements (UNEP/CMS/Res.10.16).

MIGRATORY TERRESTRIAL MAMMALS: UNEP-WCMC presented the findings of the Review on Terrestrial Mammals, including bats (UNEP/CMS/Conf.10.44 and UNEP/CMS/Inf.10.15).

MIGRATORY MARINE TURTLES: UNEP-WCMC introduced the main findings of the review on marine turtles (UNEP/CMS/10.45 and UNEP/CMS/Inf.10.16).

The US supported the cooperation between the Indian Ocean South-East Asia (IOSEA) and the Abidjan MoUs as well as synergies among other turtle instruments.

PROPOSALS SUBMITTED BY PARTIES TO AMEND THE APPENDICES OF THE CONVENTION: The CMS Secretariat introduced proposals submitted by CMS parties (UNEP/CMS/Conf.10.15) to add five species to Appendix I and three species to Appendix II of the Convention.

Giant Manta Ray: ECUADOR presented the proposal to include the Giant Manta Ray (*Manta birostris*) (Proposal I-5 and II-3) in Appendix I and II, highlighting its vulnerability to human exploitation such as direct or indirect fishing pressure.

The EU and its member states, SENEGAL, AUSTRALIA, CHILE, the US and others expressed support for the proposal. NORWAY highlighted the threatened status of *M. Alfredi*, with MADAGASCAR noting it would support its listing as well. SHARK ADVOCATES INTERNATIONAL, on behalf of a coalition of NGOs, expressed strong support for the proposal.

The CoW agreed to recommend the listing to plenary.

Argali Mountain Sheep: KAZAKHSTAN introduced the joint proposal with TAJIKISTAN to list the Argali mountain sheep (*Ovis ammon*) (Proposal II-1) in Appendix II, noting their threatened status and the fact that their conservation requires a transboundary approach. He identified the Saiga antelope MoU as a good precedent for a possible Argali MoU.

PAKISTAN, INDIA, UZBEKISTAN, the EU and its member states, SAUDI ARABIA, the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and WWF-RUSSIA expressed support for the proposal.

The CoW agreed to recommend the listing to plenary.

Saker Falcon: The EU and its member states introduced the proposal to list the Saker falcon (*Falco cherrug*), excluding the population in Mongolia (Proposal I-1 Rev) in Appendix I, highlighting that it is listed under CITES Appendix II. Given ongoing discussions in the working group, no decision was made. SWITZERLAND supported listing of the falcon and SAUDI ARABIA questioned whether listing is the best tool to conserve and improve the status of the species. CITES called for coherence and consistency to inform the decision about this listing proposal.

Red-footed Falcon: The EU and its member states presented their proposal to list the red-footed falcon (*Falco vespertinus*) (Proposal I-2) in Appendix I, noting this proposal is required by the action plan for the CMS Raptors MoU. UKRAINE, noting it is a range state for the species, supported the proposal.

The CoW agreed to recommend the listing to plenary.

Far-eastern curlew: John O'Sullivan, CMS Appointed Councillor for birds, presented two proposals for Appendix I listings (Proposals I-3 and 4): from the Philippines, for the far-eastern curlew (*Numenius madagascariensis*); and from the Cook Islands, for bristle-thighed curlew (*Numenius tahitiensis*). For *N. madagascariensis*, he explained IUCN listed the species as a vulnerable species, pointing to species declines of 30-49% in the past 30 years. For *N. tahitiensis*, he noted particular threats to the species on its wintering grounds from rats, cats and dogs, as it undergoes a severe molt. The EU supported both the listings, and the CoW recommended these to plenary.

Bobolink: O'Sullivan also presented a proposal, from Bolivia, to list the bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*) (Proposal II-2) on Appendix II, explaining that, although the species is numerous, evidence suggests there has been a 52% decline in its population. This listing proposal was supported by PARAGUAY, URUGUAY, ECUADOR and ARGENTINA, and the CoW recommended the listing to plenary.

IPBES: The CMS Secretariat introduced the revised resolution on cooperation between IPBES and CMS (UNEP/CMS/Resolution 10.8/Rev.1), which the CoW agreed to.

PRIORITIES FOR CMS AGREEMENTS: The CMS Secretariat introduced the revised resolution on perspectives for future Agreements renamed "priorities for CMS Agreements" (UNEP/CMS/Res. 10.16/Rev 1). NORWAY proposed moving the reference to endorsing future CMS actions to an annex, but the EU and its member states did not agree. The CoW did not make a decision.

GUIDELINES ON THE INTEGRATION OF MIGRATORY SPECIES INTO NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGIC AND ACTION PLANS (NBSAPS) AND OTHER OUTCOMES FROM CBD COP10:

The CMS Secretariat introduced the amended resolution (UNEP/CMS/Res.10.18.Rev.2). The EU noted that, since the guidelines were not being negotiated, parties' comments should not be included. EGYPT said that the guidelines provide a non-binding framework for parties, not binding rules, and urged parties to make adjustments at the national level. Delegates agreed to forward the resolution to plenary.

ENHANCING ENGAGEMENT WITH THE GEF: The CMS introduced resolution UNEP/CMS/Res.10.25. The EU and SOUTH AFRICA said that new text from the working group on collaboration with relevant bodies of the GEF and secretariats of other biodiversity-related MEAs to investigate national options for enhancing engagement with the GEF was unnecessary as it had already been adequately covered in the resolution. Delegates agreed to the amended resolution.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-2020: The CMS Secretariat introduced the draft strategic plan resolution (UNEP/CMS/Res.10.5). The EU presented changes to this resolution on behalf of the working group, highlighting that they considered the period 2015-2020 insufficient to implement the strategic plan and have favored 2015-2023.

On the 2012-2014 Strategic Plan, she asked for delegates' guidance on whether to adopt the updated Strategic Plan (UNEP/CMS/10.22.Rev1) or to extend the current Strategic Plan to 2014. The EU suggested and delegates agreed, adoption of the updated Strategic Plan.

SYNERGIES AND PARTNERSHIPS: The CoW considered the revised draft resolution on synergies and partnerships (UNEP/CMS/Res.10.21/Rev.1). The Secretariat presented new operative text, on, *inter alia*, coherent means to address species-level biodiversity conservation and avoiding duplication of work across MEAs.

BARRIERS TO MIGRATION: Hein Prinsen, Bureau Waardenburg, presented on the review of and guidelines for mitigating conflict between migratory birds and electricity power grids, offering an overview of the loss of birds to collisions and electrocution. The CMS Secretariat introduced the background documents (UNEP/CMS/Conf.10.29.Rev.2 and Conf.10.30.Rev.2) and associated draft resolution on power lines and migratory species (UNEP/CMS/Res.10.11). The EU and its member states underscored the need to prevent and reduce impacts caused by power grids.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND MIGRATORY SPECIES: The CMS Secretariat introduced discussion on the draft resolution on migratory species conservation in light of climate change (UNEP/CMS/Res.10.19), using the example of ocean acidification to highlight the complexity of climate change. She outlined the draft resolution, including sections on: species population management and monitoring; critical sites and ecological networks; and climate change mitigation and adaptation, and land use planning. NORWAY proposed convening a working group to develop a paper to present messages from the CMS to the 17th Conference of the Parties (COP17) of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in December 2011.

CRITICAL SITES AND ECOLOGICAL NETWORKS FOR MIGRATORY SPECIES: The CMS Secretariat introduced the report on this item (UNEP/CMS/Conf.10.39) and the draft resolution as amended to include the comments of ScC17 (UNEP/CMS/Res.10.3/Rev.1 Annex/Rev.1). He emphasized the need to recognize the link between species and their habitats and, in particular, protect stopover sites and migratory corridors.

Many parties supported the resolution. The EU and its member states, together with IUCN, supported the ScC proposals to extend the draft's terrestrial focus to marine areas, with ARGENTINA opposing and, on the request of CoW Chair Lutalo, agreed to consult to harmonize text. The CoW agreed on a generic approach with reference to some specific examples where appropriate.

PLENARY

In the afternoon, COP10 Chair Størkersen opened the plenary. The COP then heard progress reports from the sessional committees and the credentials committee.

PROGRESS REPORT OF SESSIONAL COMMITTEES: CoW Chair James Lutalo outlined the discussions of the CoW, and the chairs of the various working groups and committees provided reports. Among them, the Chair of the working group on the strategic plan, Ines Verleye (EU) said the group, in its two meetings, had agreed on text for the draft resolution (UNEP/CMS/Res.10.5) and Terms of Reference for the intersessional working group on the Strategic Plan 2015-2020.

PROGRESS REPORT OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE: Nicola Scott (New Zealand), as Chair of the Credentials Committee, highlighted discrepancies found in the Rules of Procedure across languages and noted that the Rules provide no guidance on the language of submission of credentials.

WORKING GROUPS

SAKER FALCON: This group reconvened over lunch and in the afternoon to discuss the draft resolution and revise its content. They agreed to insert language to the effect that actions on falcons should be consistent with other international instruments, in recognition of CITES's work on illegal trade. They also added language recognizing CITES as the principal MEA for ensuring that international trade is legal, sustainable and traceable. The group considered, in case of an Appendix I listing, an exclusion from listing to allow for sustainable taking if the conservation status improves.

BUDGET/FUTURE SHAPE: During the morning, the joint working group on budget/future shape finalized their recommendations on categorization of activities outlined by the intersessional Working Group for the Future Shape of CMS as short-, medium-, or long-term. They noted that medium- and long-term activities would be recommended for consideration by the intersessional Working Group on the Strategic Plan.

MARINE ISSUES: The Marine Issues working group reconvened during the day and evening. Chair Baker opened discussions on on by-catch of CMS-listed species in gillnet fisheries (UNEP/CMS/Res.10.14). One participant called for text urging the ScC to use information from scientific assessments to provide advice on best-practice mitigation techniques.

On further steps to abate underwater noise pollution for the protection of cetaceans and other biota, (UNEP/CMS/Res.10.24), another participant stressed: the pressures from increased sources of ocean noise; the role of marine protected areas (MPAs) to reduce and avoid noise pollution; and the need for increased research. One participant opposed reference to MPAs beyond national jurisdiction.

CLIMATE CHANGE: This group, chaired by Brita Slettemark, Norway, met in the evening. The group reviewed the draft "Message to Durban" from Bergen, Norway, emphasizing the need to underline key messages, *inter alia*: reduced greenhouse gas emissions and impacts of climate change mitigation and adaptation measures on biodiversity.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Participants continued to tackle a daunting number of agenda items under a gloomy Norwegian sky. Sharing an umbrella along the cobbled corridor connecting the meeting venues, two participants murmured that too many overlapping events had been scheduled, straining small delegations and leaving somewhat-disappointed speakers at side events with small audiences.

But the torrential downpour in Bergen did not dampen delegates' spirits, as heartening progress was made in the working group on the future shape of the CMS and its family of instruments. Meeting late into the night, the budget discussions were faced with the challenge of matching resources to the future shape proposals. Last but by no means least, many welcomed both the presence at the COP of high-level officials from the US and the donors' financial pledges for CMS activities.