

## CMS COP10 HIGHLIGHTS: THURSDAY, 24 NOVEMBER 2011

CMS COP10 convened on Thursday, 24 November, in Bergen, Norway. CoW Chair Lutalo thanked delegates for their commitment in the seven sessions of the CoW over the past four days and listed 23 documents and 17 resolutions that would be forwarded to the plenary for adoption. He thanked Norway for the organization of the meeting, the Secretariat for the preparations and presentations of documents, the ScC for the reviews and all delegates for their contributions to the CoW. EGYPT thanked the Chair for his role in the meeting and requested that updated resolutions be available before the plenary. Chair Lutalo closed the meeting of the CoW at 17:05. Meanwhile the marine issues and budget and future shape working groups continued their work and the saker falcon working group concluded its discussions.

### COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

#### CONSERVATION ISSUES: Conservation Emergencies:

The Secretariat presented the document and draft resolution on *modus operandi* for conservation emergencies (UNEP/CMS/Conf.10.38 and Res.10.2), explaining that the Secretariat has been reacting to emergencies, such as the mass mortality of the Mediterranean monk seal in 1997, outbreak of avian influenza in 2005 and die-off of saiga antelope in 2010, on a case-by-case basis, and needed to develop a standard procedure for these responses.

The EU and its members states recognized the importance of mechanisms to respond in emergencies, but preferred these be supported by voluntary contributions rather than the core budget. URUGUAY, supported by CHILE and the FAO, proposed adding reference to the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE). The FAO also proposed amendments to text referring to FAO crisis management mechanisms. IUCN informed delegates of grants for emergencies available through its Save Our Species (SOS) programme.

**Climate change and migratory species:** The CMS Secretariat introduced draft resolutions on climate change and migratory species (UNEP/CMS/Res.10.19). SENEGAL and BURKINA FASO highlighted the impact of climate change on migratory species and expressed support for the resolution. WCS stressed the linkages between this draft resolution and the draft resolution related to ecological networks (UNEP/CMS/Res.10.3.Rev.1).

**Migratory Aquatic Species: Review of freshwater fish:** The CMS Secretariat introduced the document and draft resolution on the review of freshwater fish (UNEP/CMS/Conf.10.31 and Conf.10.33 and UNEP/CMS/Res.10.12) aimed at informing how CMS can best protect and manage these species and developing a systematic way of identifying species that might qualify for listing.

PARAGUAY proposed amendments referring to her country's work on migratory fish in the Rio de la Plata Basin. IUCN indicated its willingness to work with the ScC to continue updating the list of threatened, transboundary migratory freshwater fish. He proposed adding text to the executive summary of the review (UNEP/CMS/Conf.10.31) related to GIS data on all dams, not just large dams.

**Assessment of bycatch in gill net fisheries:** The Chair of the marine issues working group presented revisions on assessments of bycatch in gillnet fisheries (UNEP/CMS/Conf.10.33) and cited the associated resolution (UNEP/CMS/Res.10.14) and the report of an assessment study (UNEP/CMS/Inf.10.30).

ECUADOR said that the study report underrepresents the Latin American region's fisheries. ASCOBANS remarked on an error regarding an Exclusive Economic Zone in the Mediterranean region which does not exist, and said that many countries were not taken into account. The EU and its member states supported the resolution, and would provide amendments, saying it would enable an efficient approach for fisheries management. The CoW agreed to forward the draft resolution to the COP.

**Programme of work for cetaceans:** The CMS Secretariat presented the draft resolution on the global programme of work for cetaceans (UNEP/CMS/Res.10.15), noting that it follows from a COP8 decision on adverse human-induced impacts on cetaceans (UNEP/CMS Res.8.22) for the development of a work programme for further strategic action. He explained the resolution outlines an expanded strategic role for the ScC Aquatic Mammals Working Group (AMWG), key global activities for the CMS and proposed actions for each region. The CMS Secretariat outlined the substantive changes to the resolution, including operative text on the role of the AMWG.

EGYPT highlighted the need to consider the financial resources required for the implementation of the regional programmes.

The CoW agreed to forward the draft resolution to the COP.

**Underwater noise:** The CMS Secretariat introduced and outlined amendments to the draft resolution on further steps to abate underwater noise pollution for the protection of cetaceans and other migratory species (UNEP/CMS/Res.10.24.Rev.1), noting the revised title referred to "migratory species" rather than "biota." Among the amendments, the Secretariat outlined the addition of an operative paragraph on integrating issues of marine noise into the management of MPAs.

Highlighting the challenges for developing countries of costs of some new technologies, EGYPT underscored the need to propose simple techniques for reducing marine noise. ARGENTINA proposed the addition of reference to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, and, with delegates agreeing that any concerns with this text amendment could be discussed informally, the CoW agreed to forward the draft resolution to the COP.

**Marine debris:** AUSTRALIA introduced the draft resolution on marine debris (UNEP/CMS/Res.10.4), explaining it had been revised by the marine working group. He outlined the problem of marine debris, noting that 60-80% of debris is plastic and that approximately 70% of marine debris is estimated to be resting on the seabed.

CAMEROON, the EU and its member states and others expressed support for the resolution. SENEGAL noted the resolution allows CMS to cooperate more effectively with the International Whaling Commission and others on these issues. Noting the problems with plastics, the REPUBLIC OF CONGO stressed the need to consider the replacement of these with biodegradable materials.

**Wildlife Diseases:** The CMS Secretariat reported on the Task Force on Avian Influenza and the Task Force on Wildlife Diseases Resolution (UNEP/CMS/Conf.10.42 and UNEP/CMS/Res.10.22) saying that the resolution highlighted recent outbreaks of avian influenza and the need for constant monitoring and continued synergies of CMS with the World Health Organization (WHO), OIE and FAO on information and control of wildlife disease.

CHILE called for recognition of rising transmission of wildlife diseases to domestic livestock. NORWAY added that livestock disease transmission to wildlife is also prevalent. NEW ZEALAND recommended an extension of the Task Force mandate beyond 2012, adding that the process of verification of disease incidence reports may affect the speed of intervention. IUCN, supported by BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL, said that the Species Survival Network deals with wildlife diseases and health through the Wildlife Health Specialist Group asking that this be mentioned in the document. WCS cited the 2004 One World, One Health initiative, which supports field veterinary programmes and research on transmission of diseases.

**Guidelines for Small-Grants Programmes:** The CMS Secretariat introduced the revised Guidelines (UNEP/CMS/Conf.10.43) saying that they have become more relevant since the COP10 Donors Meeting on Tuesday where funding was proposed for the programme. He remarked that the funding was for developing country projects that enhance conservation of CMS-listed species.

**Migratory Avian Species: Bird Flyway Conservation Policy:** On the guidance on global flyway conservation and options for policy arrangements (UNEP/CMS/Res.10.10.Rev.1), AUSTRALIA supported the inclusion of marine debris, citing it as a threat to migrating birds. IRAN provided text requesting parties to provide financial resources to enable timely completion of the work.

**Improving the conservation status of migratory landbirds in the African-Eurasian region:** GHANA introduced the draft resolution on measures of improving the conservation status of migratory landbirds in the African-Eurasian region (UNEP/CMS/Res.10.27) saying that landbirds were not adequately covered under existing instruments, including the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) and underscoring the urgent need to reduce mortalities of landbirds. The EU and its member states supported the resolution and offered amendments in writing. SWITZERLAND said they would like to participate in development of the action plan. SENEGAL, CAMEROON and GUINEA commended Ghana for the resolution.

**Taxonomy and nomenclature of birds listed on the Appendices:** The CMS Secretariat introduced the relevant documents (UNEP/CMS/Conf.10.32 and UNEP/CMS/Res.10.13). CITES welcomed the extension of cooperation on taxonomy and nomenclature of birds with CMS, noting it would reinforce the leadership role of CITES and CMS on species nomenclature.

**Minimizing the risks of poisoning to migratory birds:** SWITZERLAND introduced discussion on minimizing the risk of poisoning to migratory birds, and BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL outlined the background document (UNEP/

CMS/Inf.10.40) and draft resolution (UNEP/CMS/Res.10.26). Calling the poisoning of migratory birds a significant and avoidable cause of mortality, BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL listed the categories of poisoning to be considered by the proposed working group, including deliberate, accidental and secondary poisoning.

Many delegations supported the resolution, including MOROCCO, PAKISTAN, EGYPT, INDIA, ETHIOPIA and KENYA. NORWAY supported the establishment of a working group to address this issue. The EU and its member states expressed broad support for the proposal, but asked that the working group be further specified. NEW ZEALAND advised replacing reference to poisoning of "wildlife" with "migratory species" to avoid preventing control of alien species.

AEWA proposed amending the reference to its work on phasing-out lead shot, noting its actions are related specifically to hunting in wetlands.

#### CMS OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS:

**Capacity-Building:** The CMS Secretariat introduced a report on the implementation of the capacity-building strategy, work plan for the next triennium and relevant resolution (UNEP/CMS/Conf.10.16, UNEP/CMS/Conf.10.17 and UNEP/CMS/Res.10.6), explaining that the overarching goal is to build awareness at the grassroots level to implement the Convention as well as strengthen institutional capacity to implement the CMS instruments.

The CoW agreed to forward the resolution to the CoW.

**"Year of the..." Species Campaigns:** The CMS Secretariat reported on campaigns on: the 2009 Year of the Gorilla (YoG); 2010 International Year of Biodiversity; 2011-12 Year of the Bat; and the CMS/CBD collaboration on the annual World Migratory Day (UNEP/CMS/Conf.10.13). Responding to EGYPT's request for an evaluation of the YoG's contribution to gorilla conservation, the CMS Secretariat referred to the Annual Global Species Campaigns evaluation (UNEP/CMS/Inf.Doc.10.29). EGYPT lamented the challenge of addressing cultural perceptions of bats and EUROBATS offered support and identified a bat expert in Egypt. The US informed on a fund to support the widows of those who have died in protecting gorillas.

**CMS Ambassadors:** The CMS Secretariat reported on and the CoW applauded the role of CMS Ambassadors, thanking the four CMS Ambassadors: Kuki Gallmann; Peter Schei; Ian Redmond; and Stanley Johnson.

**Implementation of the Outreach and Communication Plan:** The CMS Secretariat presented the report on the implementation for the Outreach and Communication Plan since COP9 (UNEP/CMS/Conf.10.14 and UNEP/CMS/Res.10.7). AUSTRALIA and NEW ZEALAND said that the new website should be in line with future shape and budget discussions.

#### IN THE CORRIDORS

Many delegates' spirits lifted on Thursday, as the rains lightened after Wednesday's downpour and the working group on the Saker falcon made substantial progress towards resolving debates over the proposed Appendix I listing. Some delegates previously opposed to the listing were open to compromise in light of an amendment to the resolution to consider downlisting the falcon at COP11—a decision that would depend on whether its conservation status improved.

As COP participants anticipated the final day of the meeting, other delegates were just arriving, in preparation for MOP2 of the Gorilla Agreement scheduled for the weekend. Gorillas were in the spotlight throughout the day, as CMS Ambassador Ian Redmond presented a video on the 2009 Year of the Gorilla at a lunchtime side event, part of which was also shown in the CoW. Rumblings of news on other primates also moved through the halls, with mention of interest in a possible chimpanzee MoU.