

BRIEFING TO THE COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME ON THE TWELFTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO CMS AND ITS HIGH-LEVEL EVENTS

Introduction

The UN Environment Secretariat of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) is pleased to provide a briefing on its Twelfth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CMS (COP12) and its High-Level Events to be held in Manila, the Philippines, from 22 to 28 October 2017.

Held every three years, the COP is the main decision-making body for the conservation of wildlife at a global level. The slogan of COP 12 is **Their Future is Our Future – Sustainable Development for Wildlife and People** to emphasize the indispensable contributions of migratory animals' services to human wellbeing.

In preparation of COP12, the Second Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council (SC-SC2) will be held from 10 to 13 July 2017 at the CMS Secretariat premises in Bonn, Germany to review documents and provide advice on any scientific and technical matters.

The official webpage of the CMS COP is: www.cms.int/cop12.

Species proposals

On 25 May (by the deadline of 150 days before COP), **35 species proposals** for inclusion in the CMS Appendices were received by the Secretariat. The listing proposals come from all the continents: Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe and Oceania and include 13 mammals, 16 birds and 6 fish species.

Several species, including the endangered Whale Shark, the Gobi Bear and Asian Wild Horse and several vultures, have been proposed for Appendix I, which affords full protection and requires no taking, while others such as the Giraffe, the Lion and the Leopard have been proposed for Appendix II, which requires international cooperative conservation measures. A number of species have been proposed for both appendices such as the Chimpanzee.

In accordance with the text of the Convention, Parties are invited to communicate any comments on the proposals to the Secretariat by 23 August 2017.

More information can be found at: www.cms.int/en/news/urgent-protection-proposed-some-worlds-most-known-species.

Key issues

Preventing Poisoning with a Focus on Lead

Following the adoption of the Guidelines on preventing bird poisoning adopted by the CMS COP11 in 2014, further work has been done on the issue and a resolution is being presented to COP12 to request the establishment of a global Lead Task Force to bring together key players and promote actions to minimize use of lead in hunting ammunition, fishing weights as well as leaded paint, discarded lead and that emanating from industrial mining and smelting processes.

Marine Debris

Recognizing marine litter as a main threat for marine life including many CMS-listed species, a resolution is being presented to COP12 calling for actions to tackle the problem, including that of 'ghost gear' and micro-plastics.

Underwater Noise

As a result of a lengthy consultation process involving governments, organizations and the private sector, comprehensive guidance on using EIAs to assess the impacts of anthropogenic marine noise on marine migratory species was developed during the triennium and is being presented to COP12 for endorsement.

Vultures

To tackle the ongoing crisis a multi-species action plan for the conservation of African Eurasian vultures is being presented to COP12 for adoption. The plan covers the whole geographic ranges of 15 species of Old World vultures.

African Carnivores Initiative

An initiative developed jointly with CITES is being presented to COP12 to provide a framework to coordinate conservation activities for key species – the African Wild Dog, the Cheetah, the Leopard and the Lion in the region and coherently address common issues.

Sustainable use of bush meat including aquatic wild meat

COP12 will be asked to consider and decide upon proposed measures to manage the impact of bushmeat and aquatic wild meat harvests and to tackle the associated issues of poverty, habitat degradation, human population growth and overexploitation of natural resources.

Energy and Migratory Species

The reconciliation of energy deployment and conservation of wildlife is on the agenda to draw attention to progress made under the Energy Task Force, the establishment of which was requested by COP11 in 2014 and Parties will consider future developments of the initiative.

Sustainable tourism

In line with the theme of the Conference as well as the designation of 2017 as International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, much emphasis is being given to wildlife-based tourism. A resolution submitted by the COP host country specifically urges Parties to put in place appropriate measures, such as national action plans, regulations and codes of conduct to ensure that ecotourism activities do not negatively affect species but rather create sustainable social and economic benefits for both conservation and local communities. In addition, guidance on boat-based marine wildlife watching developed by the Secretariat will be presented for endorsement.

Review mechanism

COP 12 is being presented with the results of an intersessional process which explored options for strengthening implementation of the Convention through the development of a review process based on a comparative analysis of best practices of similar mechanisms of MEAs, including pros, cons and costs involved.

Budget

COP12 will review budget scenarios for 2018-2020. An adequate increase is sought to ensure the operations of the Secretariat and delivery of the large mandate.

More information can be found at: www.cms.int/en/meeting/twelfth-meeting-conference-parties-cms

High-level Events

Three High-Level Events will be held on 22 October:

- A Leadership Dialogue Breakfast, chaired by Erik Solheim, on the CMS agenda and the main theme of the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA3) “Pollution Free Planet”. It will result in a message to be conveyed from the COP to UNEA3;
- A High-Level Panel Discussion on the role of wildlife conservation in the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals. The discussion will be facilitated by a leading international broadcast journalist and will result in a Declaration to be submitted to the Conference for endorsement;
- An award ceremony under the Migratory Species Champion Programme aiming to recognize governments, organizations or individuals that provide long-term support for the implementation of specific initiatives.

Side events and exhibits

Parties, country observers and relevant organizations are encouraged to contribute actively to the success of the meeting by showcasing their work or any related issue of interest in the form of a side event or exhibitions. The dedicated webpage is: www.cms.int/en/cop12/side-events

Next steps:

- Ensure highest countries representation;
- Raise additional funding to support the participation of all delegates from countries eligible for funding;
- Complete all documents by given deadline i.e. Resolutions and Decisions that do not include a scientific element by 24 July (90 days) and all remaining documents in all languages by 23 August (60 days) www.cms.int/sites/default/files/033_timeline_COP12_docs_complete_e.pdf.

Attachments: COP12 background document and document outlining CMS work on pollution-related issues