

SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL COMMENTS
(arising from ScC-SC2)

TAXONOMY AND NOMENCLATURE
UNEP/CMS/COP12/Doc 25.3

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COP12

The draft Resolution on Taxonomy and Nomenclature included in Annex 4 of the document is recommended for adoption by the Conference of Parties.

GENERAL COMMENTS ON THE DOCUMENT

With regards to Birds:

- The reference proposed for birds is very important but it is expensive and not easy to obtain for many countries. CITES uses other references as well. CITES Animals Committee will evaluate the impact of adopting the same reference.
- The work on disaggregation of the bird families has different implications at higher and lower taxonomic level, i.e. at family level and at species level. It is urgent to do this work and adopting the new reference for Passerines provides a good opportunity to undertake this analysis.
- Regarding the new reference, there is free online access to this information through 'HBW Alive'. Searching on a species will allow access to detail about any taxonomic/nomenclature treatment and on every species page, in the right-hand column, the full classification is shown including the option to "Show genus text", which will also provide explanation of any changes in the treatment of genera. As recognized in the draft resolution 'biological taxonomy and nomenclature are dynamic'. Future taxonomic/nomenclature updates for passerines, as with non-passerines will be made by BirdLife International in date-stamped updates of the checklist coinciding with IUCN Red List updates. These can be found at <http://datazone.birdlife.org/species/taxonomy>.
- In September 2017 the Agreement on Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) will examine their taxonomy and will decide which reference they will adopt, among a range of options including the Handbook of the Birds of the World.

With regards to Fish:

The Council generally agreed with the proposals in the document:

- The online version of Eschmeyer, W. N., R. Fricke, and R. van der Laan (eds.), Catalog of Fishes: Genera, Species, References (<http://researcharchive.calacademy.org/research/ichthyology/catalog/fishcatmain>) should be adopted as reference for fish at the time of listing new species on the Appendices of CMS.
- The Secretariat should preserve a hard-copy excerpt from the online reference as the standard reference for the newly listed species.

- As more changes to the new taxonomy for mobulids might still be done in the near future, a conservative approach should be applied as suggested; the new taxonomy for mobulids as reflected in the version of Eschmeyer as of 28 April, should therefore not be adopted at COP12.
- Applying the old taxonomy for mobulids would not have negative implications for their conservation, as all species of mobulids are included in CMS Appendices.

COMMENTS ON SPECIFIC SECTIONS/ INCLUDING POSSIBLE PROPOSALS FOR TEXT REVISION

Several edits to Annex 3 to UNEP/CMS/COP12/Doc.25.3 were suggested:

With regard to Fish:

Page 8, last line:

- The family name for *Pangasianodon gigas* should be Pangasiidae.

Pages 6 and 7 (table)

- A reference to White et al. 2017 should have been included.
- *M. japonica* will be recognized as *M. mobular* in Eschmeyer after the next update of the online catalog.