



CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES

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14th MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

Samarkand, Uzbekistan, 12 - 17 February 2024

REPORT OF THE 14TH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF MIGRATORY SPECIES OF WILD ANIMALS

INTRODUCTION

1. At the invitation of the Government of Uzbekistan, the 14th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS COP14 or COP14) was held in the Silk Road Samarkand Congress Centre, Samarkand, Uzbekistan from 12 to 17 February 2024. “*Nature Knows No Borders*” was the theme of the Conference, serving as a reminder that the journeys of migratory species do not adhere to political boundaries, and that their survival was dependent on international collaboration and transboundary conservations efforts.
2. On 11 February 2024, a High-Level Segment event was held. During this open event, ministers and other senior government officials and high-level representatives of international organizations engaged in a special dialogue with a focus on strengthening transboundary cooperation for the conservation of migratory species in Central Asia, and in sharing experiences related to international or transboundary cooperation on migratory species conservation in the form of statements.
3. *Champion Night*, an event dedicated to recognizing governments and other organizations and individuals that had made long-term financial commitments to specific initiatives aimed at benefitting migratory species, was held on 12 February.
4. The Conference was attended by representatives of the following 74 Parties and 5 non-Parties:
Parties: Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Benin, Brazil, Burundi, Congo (Brazzaville), Cook Islands, Costa Rica, Côte d' Ivoire, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Eritrea, Estonia, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Guinea-Bissau, Hungary, India, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Libya, Lithuania, Madagascar, Malawi, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, Uruguay, Uzbekistan and Zimbabwe.
Non-Parties: Bhutan, , Nepal, Qatar, Russia and the United States of America.
5. Observers from governmental and non-governmental bodies or agencies were also represented. The complete list of participants appears as an Annex to this report.

I. OPENING OF THE MEETING AND ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

6. The Opening Ceremony, held on Monday, 12 February 2024, comprised ceremonial, cultural and official elements and a welcome to Samarkand.
7. The ceremonial and cultural events comprised:
 - a video presentation showcasing migratory species and habitats of Uzbekistan and beyond, linked to the COP14 theme “*Nature Knows No Borders*”; and
 - a ballet performance that highlighted global threats to migratory species.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

8. COP14 was inaugurated through the delivery of a keynote address by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan, His Excellency (HE) Mr Abdulla Aripov, who expressed gratitude to the CMS Secretariat and UNEP for holding the conference in Uzbekistan and welcomed everyone to the ancient city of Samarkand, a global centre of dialogue. He emphasized that migratory species served as an integral part of the planet’s ecosystems yet faced serious threats such as climate change, habitat loss, illegal hunting and trafficking, resulting in species disappearing, including in Central Asia. In Uzbekistan, great attention was being paid to migratory wild animals, including the adoption of new legal documents and institutional strengthening, whilst the number of protected areas in the country had tripled. He highlighted efforts to improve the conservation of rare birds and mammals and their habitats and to combat desertification in the Aral Sea. Uzbekistan was ready to mobilize to protect migratory species and he welcomed the approval of new strategic plans, the adoption of ecological corridors to enable animal movements, and impact assessments of infrastructural developments. He further noted Uzbekistan’s close cooperation with neighbouring countries for transboundary national parks, especially for Snow Leopard (*Panthera uncia*) protection. He concluded that COP14 would serve to further improve the effectiveness of the conservation of wild animals.

WELCOMING ADDRESSES

9. Ms Inger Andersen, United Nations (UN) Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) noted that CMS had been instrumental in conserving migratory species for over forty years. A clear framework for migratory species conservation was needed, as the drivers for their demise were part of the wider triple planetary crisis. Concluding that migratory species were in trouble, which put humanity in trouble, Ms Andersen encouraged all nations to live up to the COP14 theme and work together across borders.
10. Ms Amy Fraenkel, CMS Executive Secretary, expressing deep gratitude and appreciation to Uzbekistan for hosting COP14, highlighted that CMS had a unique and essential role as the only global UN treaty addressing the conservation of migratory species and their habitats. Implementing CMS directly contributed to achieving the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), combating desertification, and contributing to climate change mitigation. The theme of COP14 “*Nature Knows No Borders*” underscored the fundamental mission of the Convention to strengthen international cooperation and highlighted the launch at COP14 of the *State of the World’s Migratory Species* report.
11. Mr Carlos Manuel Rodriguez, CEO and Chairperson of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) noted that the GEF-8 replenishment was all about integration across sectors, conventions and stakeholders and that joint and coordinated financial and policy work across sectors was mandatory and urgent. He stressed that if nature had no borders, the global conservation financial mechanisms should have no borders either. GEF projects had provided significant support to the conservation of migratory species, and the GEF-8 biodiversity strategy emphasized integrated conservation to strengthen ecosystem connectivity and integrity. GEF

integrated programmes provided support contributing to the maintenance of intact and connected ecosystems critical to the survival of migratory species. GEF noted the constructive and forward-looking vision within the CMS COP14 document on Resource Mobilization related to enhancing engagement with the GEF and looked forward to strengthening this during the GEF-9 replenishment process as a strategic ally.

12. Ms Grethel Aguilar, Director General of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) stressed that bold decisions were needed to safeguard nature. Ms Aguilar highlighted that the “*Nature Knows No Borders*” theme of COP14 resonated strongly with IUCN, and concluded that solutions that transcended national borders were needed to address the challenges faced and to ensure a future where migratory species thrived.

OPENING OF THE PLENARY SESSION

13. The opening plenary meeting of COP14 was chaired by Mr Jitendra Kumar, India, representing the COP13 Presidency. He noted Rule 12 of the Rules of Procedure, which stated that a representative of the current COP Presidency acted as Chair until the COP elected a new Chair at its first session.
14. Mr Kumar conveyed appreciation to the Government of Uzbekistan and commended the efforts of the CMS Secretariat. Noting an emphasis in the Gandhinagar Declaration adopted at COP13 on maintaining and restoring ecological connectivity as one of the top priorities for CMS. He then declared CMS COP14 open.

ITEM 2. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

15. The Chair recalled Rule 12 of the Rules of Procedure for the election of the Chair of the COP and the Chair of the Committee of the Whole (COW), who would also serve as Vice-Chair of the COP, and the Vice-Chair of the COW.
16. The Conference elected the following officers by acclamation:

Conference of the Parties

Chair: HE Mr Aziz Abdukhakimov (Uzbekistan)

Vice-Chair: Mr Colin Galbraith (United Kingdom)

Committee of the Whole

Chair: Mr Colin Galbraith (United Kingdom)

Vice-Chair: Ms Humbulani Mafumo (South Africa)

17. In accordance with Rule 13 of the Rules of Procedure, the Bureau of the Conference was complete and comprised all members of the Standing Committee (StC), the Chair of the Scientific Council (ScC), the Chair and Vice-Chair of the COP, and the Vice-Chair of the COW. The Bureau would hold its first meeting during the evening of 12 February.
18. HE Mr Aziz Abdukhakimov took his seat as the new Chair of the COP.

ITEM 3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND MEETING SCHEDULE

Item 3.1 Provisional Agenda and Documents

Item 3.2 Provisional Annotated Agenda and Meeting Schedule

19. The Chair referred the meeting to documents UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.3.1/Rev.4 *Provisional Agenda and Documents* and UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.3.2/Rev.1 *Provisional Annotated Agenda and Meeting Schedule*.
20. Israel requested clarification on organizing work to ensure that small Parties could attend all the meetings of the Working Group (WG) that were expected to be established by the COW.

The Secretariat explained that, given the heavy agenda, some meetings would take place in parallel and encouraged delegations to coordinate.

21. There being no further comments, both documents were adopted by consensus.

ITEM 4. RULES OF PROCEDURE

22. The Chair informed that no proposals to amend the Rules of Procedure had been received and that the applicable Rules of Procedure for this meeting would be those adopted by COP13.

23. There being no comments, the Rules of Procedure were adopted.

ITEM 5. ESTABLISHMENT OF IN-SESSION COMMITTEES

24. The Chair recalled that Rule 3.3 of the Rules of Procedure provided for the establishment of a Credentials Committee comprised of not more than five Representatives from at least three regions. In line with the practice of the COP to elect one representative from each of the five CMS regional groups, each region was called on to nominate their representatives.

25. The following nominations were made:

Oceania: no nominations

Africa: Kenya

Asia: Saudi Arabia

Europe: United Kingdom

South and Central America & the Caribbean: Costa Rica

26. The COP confirmed by consensus the constitution of the Credentials Committee as nominated.

27. In accordance with Rule 6 of the Rules of Procedure, the COP established the COW. The Chair noted that the meeting might wish to establish further WGs to discuss the draft budget and other issues but that this would be taken up by the COW.

ITEM 6. ADMISSION OF OBSERVERS

28. The Chair of the COP referred the meeting to document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.6 *Admission of Observers* and invited the Parties to admit the Observers as listed.

29. There being no objections, the Observers listed in COP14/Doc.6 were admitted by consensus.

II. REPORTS

ITEM 7. REPORT OF THE OUTGOING COP PRESIDENCY

30. Mr. R Raghu Prasad, India, presented the report of the outgoing COP Presidency, noting the Gandhinagar Declaration, which highlighted the need for ecological connectivity to enhance the conservation of migratory species and their habitats. He stated that, in celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of Project Tiger in 2023, the Prime Minister of India had launched the International Big Cat Alliance for the conservation of seven big cats. In adherence to CMS COP Decision 13.46, the Government of India had been collaborating with the Central Asian Flyway (CAF) Range States and the CMS Secretariat in order to establish an institutional framework for the CAF under the CMS umbrella. He noted that India had also launched "Project Dolphin" to focus on the conservation of river and marine dolphins. As of 1 July 2022, India banned the manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of single use plastic items. India also chaired the first Extraordinary Meeting of the CMS COP on 28 November 2023, where a resolution on Financial and Administrative Matters was adopted.

31. Mr Prasad expressed his gratitude to all Parties, the CMS Secretariat, the StC and representatives of intergovernmental and civil society organizations for their support during India's presidency of the CMS COP.

ITEM 8. REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODIES OF THE CONVENTION

Item 8.1. Standing Committee

32. India, acting as Chair of the StC, presented the report under Item 8.1., noting that India chaired three meetings between February 2020 and February 2024:
- 52nd meeting (StC52), held virtually from 21-29 September 2021;
 - 53rd meeting (StC53), held from 19-20 October in Bonn 2022; and
 - 54th meeting (StC54), held on 11 February 2024 in Samarkand.
33. India mentioned that, in the margins of COP13, several Parties had announced pledges under the Migratory Species Champions Programme. The total value of voluntary contributions received or pledged in 2020 and 2021 for implementing the Programme of Work (POW) was approximately €4.06 million. Contributions were received from the Governments of Australia, Germany, India, Japan, Monaco, Sweden and Switzerland, as well as from UNEP and the MAVA Foundation. To improve the collection of information on Parties' actions to fulfil their commitments under the Convention, the National Reporting Format was revised. The StC published the status of arrears on the CMS website and noted some improvement in raising the arrears. He noted that financial constraints of the Convention had resulted in an understaffed Secretariat, affecting the health of some staff members. The positive progress towards achieving some of the targets of the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species (SPMS) 2015-2023 was noted, especially those relating to awareness-raising, improved governance arrangements and area-based conservation measures.
34. StC52 endorsed a new CMS-CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) Work Programme and a Joint Programme of Work for the CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative and agreed on Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Intergovernmental Task Force on phasing out lead. StC53 discussed the SPMS 2024-2032 in terms of the type of product to develop and the process for undertaking the work required. Thus, with the Secretariat's support, the StC established an intersessional WG tasked to develop a draft SPMS for consideration by COP14. India noted that the SPMS 2024-2032 set forth the key strategic priorities for CMS, while providing linkages with and responding to broader global priorities, notably the GBF.
35. India thanked the Secretariat for its dedicated work, alongside strong support from the wider CMS Family, the NGO community and other collaborative partners and donors, including in the organization of StC meetings.

Item 8.2. Scientific Council

36. The Chair of the CMS Scientific Council, Ms Narelle Montgomery (Australia) summarized the activities of the ScC-SC since COP13, which included reviewing a number of COP14 documents. Two meetings of the Sessional Committee (ScC-SC) had been held:
- 5th meeting – June/July 2021, online
 - 6th meeting – July 2023, Bonn.
37. Ms Montgomery highlighted the key items that the sessional meetings had focused on, including cooperation with the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and the *State of the World's Migratory Species*, and noted the importance for CMS to further engage in work on climate change, including strengthening links with other frameworks. The ScC-SC worked to improve applicability of the light pollution guidelines, and its WGs and Task Forces (TFs) addressed a wide range of issues such as illegal hunting, recreational in-water interactions, and a major work on disaggregation of avian

families and genera listed on Appendix II. Ms Montgomery recommended a greater use of online meetings for meetings of working groups and task forces of the ScC, and urged Parties to support increasing the number of Party-appointed Councillors from three to four per region, in recognition of the substantial workload. Ms Montgomery thanked the ScC-SC members and Councillors for their hard work and invited COP14 to recognize the significant contributions of the three COP-appointed Councillors stepping down from the ScC-SC after many years of service – Mr Rodrigo Medellín, Mr Giuseppe Notarbartolo di Sciara and Mr Colin Galbraith.

ITEM 9. REPORT OF THE DEPOSITARY AND HOST COUNTRY

38. The Depositary and Host Country, Germany, presented document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.9 *Report of the Depositary*. Since the last Report of the Depositary, published at the StC53 in October 2022, no further countries had acceded to the Convention. There were now 133 Parties to the Convention, comprising 132 Member States and the European Union. Since the last Report, Germany, in its capacity as Depositary, had not received any notifications from Parties regarding objections, reservations or withdrawals.

ITEM 10. STATEMENTS

Item 10.1. Party States (including regional economic integration organization (REIOs))

39. The Chair invited Parties to make brief statements and encouraged the provision of written statements.
40. New Zealand, speaking on behalf of the Oceania region, highlighted regional work including the 11th Meeting of Partners of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAF) in March 2023 hosted by Australia, which progressed on issues that supported the work of CMS, including: hosting the first meeting of the CMS Intergovernmental Task Force on Illegal Hunting, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway and the development of its programme of work; the 4th Meeting of Signatories to the Pacific Islands Cetaceans Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 2021; and the regional Whale and Dolphin Action Plan 2022-2026.
41. Saudi Arabia referred to its close work with the CMS Secretariat and confirmed its commitment to continue supporting work on the conservation of migratory species and in particular on the South-west Asia initiative on the illegal killing of birds.
42. Belgium, speaking on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its Member States, highlighted the preparation of the new Strategic Programme and coordination with IPBES on ecological connectivity. They urged strengthening regional and global coordination among all stakeholders and welcomed the first-ever report on the *State of the World's Migratory Species*.
43. Uruguay, speaking on behalf of the South and Central America and Caribbean region, recalled the need to support developing nations in capacity building and implementation, and reiterated their commitment for a successful COP14.
44. Zimbabwe, speaking on behalf of the Africa group, advised that synergies with other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) must be recognized and duplication of efforts avoided to deliver for migratory species. They requested that Parties support Africa's proposals to protect migratory species and their habitats and encouraged COP participants to join the 6th session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-6) in Kenya in February 2024.

Item 10.2. Non-Party States

45. The Chair invited non-Parties to give statements but received no intervention.

Item 10.3. CMS Agreements

46. Representatives of the following CMS agreements gave short presentations summarizing progress made during the inter-sessional period: Agreement on the Conservation of

Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP); Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas (ASCOBANS); Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area (ACCOBAMS); Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA); Agreement on the Conservation of Populations of European Bats (EUROBATS); and Agreement on the Conservation of Gorillas and Their Habitats (Gorilla Agreement).

Item 10.4. IGOs and NGOs

47. Intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were invited to provide written statements to the Secretariat for incorporation into the COP14 Proceedings. The following organizations provided short oral statements under this item:
- The International Whaling Commission (IWC) highlighted that the changing threats to cetaceans required more complex challenges based on strong science. IWC highlighted bycatch as the most serious threat to cetaceans, in addition to ship strikes, pollution, climate change, underwater noise and whale watching. Collaboration with CMS and its daughter agreements, ASCOBANS and ACCOBAMS, was essential to combat these growing threats. Highlights of collaboration included a Whale Watching Handbook, a conservation management plan for the Mediterranean population of Fin Whale (*Balaenoptera physalus*), work focused on small cetaceans and Concerted Actions.
 - The Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the Office of Legal Affairs of the UN (DOALOS), which acted as the Secretariat of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of UNCLOS of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (UN Fish Stocks Agreement), highlighted the upcoming third World Ocean Assessment. They indicated that it was being prepared under the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects, and would consider, among others, marine species, include migratory marine species, and their habitats. DOALOS further noted that it was for the time being performing the secretariat functions under the Agreement under UNCLOS on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement) and highlighted the synergies between that Agreement and CMS.
 - The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) stated that it worked closely with CMS and other biodiversity-related conventions, including through the GBF, which provided an overall plan for action on biodiversity. This ambitious plan aimed to protect and restore nature, to prosper with nature, to share the benefits fairly and to invest and collaborate for nature. The updating of national biodiversity strategies and action plans undertaken by Parties to the CBD to align their national targets with the GBF provided an important opportunity for the integration of activities under CMS and other biodiversity-related conventions.
 - BirdLife International made a statement on behalf of Bat Conservation International, Benin Environment and Education Society (BEES), BirdLife International, Born Free Foundation (Born Free), Conservation Without Borders, Deep Sea Conservation Coalition, Defenders of Wildlife, Fauna and Flora International (FFI), Humane Society International, HSI Australia, International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), Law of the Wild, OceanCare, Pan African Sanctuary Alliance, Panthera, TRAFFIC, Vulture Conservation Foundation, Wetlands International, Whale and Dolphin Conservation (WDC), Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). They highlighted the *Status of the World's Migratory Species* report launched at COP14, and that CMS was the key global mechanism through which governments and stakeholders could deliver actions to bring the GBF targets to life for migratory species

and their habitats.

- The Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) highlighted the increasing prominence of biodiversity within ASEAN's agenda and the need for robust cross-sectoral and transboundary cooperation. ACB established the ASEAN Flyway Network to promote the conservation of migratory waterbirds along the EAAF, while the ASEAN Biodiversity Plan promoted synergies among MEAs under the GBF, including the relevant targets of the SPMS 2024-2032.

ITEM 11. REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

48. UNEP briefly summarized document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc. *Report of the Executive Director of UNEP*, which highlighted the long-standing collaboration between UNEP and CMS and welcomed the contributions of CMS to the GBF. UNEP looked forward to further cooperation with CMS, including in the GEF Early Action Support Project and roll-out of the Data Reporting Tool for MEAs (DaRT). The Secretariat of the Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP) hosted by UNEP contributed to the implementation of the CMS Gorilla Agreement. UNEP further noted collaboration with CMS through the African Elephant Fund (AEF), established to support the implementation of the African Elephant Action Plan (AEAP), and the regional strategy for the conservation of Monk Seals in the Mediterranean.

ITEM 12. REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT

ITEM 22. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF WORK 2020-2023

Opening COP Plenary (12 February)

49. Items 12 and 22 were taken together. The Executive Secretary summarized the Secretariat's activities during the 2020-2023 quadrennium, including the information contained in document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.22 *Implementation of the Programme of Work 2020-2023*.
50. Nearly all high-priority activities adopted by COP13 were completed, including strengthened science-based activities, the publication of *Climate Change and Migratory Species* and the launch of the *State of the World's Migratory Species*. Synergies were advanced at the international level through productive engagements, and CMS developed a number of guidelines, including the CMS Light Pollution Guidelines. Other key areas for CMS were the activities delivered by the Energy Task Force (ETF), addressing illegal and unsustainable taking of migratory species through region-specific CMS Task Forces, and enhancing range-wide cooperation for species through regional initiatives and MOUs.
51. High-priority activities that needed funding included preventing migratory bird poisoning, phasing out lead ammunition and fishing weights, and improving communications.
52. The SPMS 2024-2032 was a key output, which should serve as a roadmap for addressing priorities for migratory species conservation.
53. The POW 2024-2026 would be finalized immediately after COP14, enabling the Secretariat to accurately reflect and cost the new mandates adopted at COP14.
54. The COP Chair thanked the meeting for the work done and adjourned the Plenary.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

55. Document 22. The COP took note of the report contained in UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.22 *Implementation of the Programme of Work 2020-2023*.

OPENING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (COW)

56. The Chair of the COW, Mr Colin Galbraith (United Kingdom), opened the first session of the COW on Monday, 12 February. The Chair recalled Rule 6 of the Rules of Procedure and proposed that Parties continued to work on some issues in WGs. He noted that any comments

on documents would be referred to the relevant WG for bringing to the COW. He invited small delegations to feed any comments through the working programme.

57. The Parties agreed on the establishment of the following WGs, which would meet through the week to discuss issues that required further work and contribute to the development of Conference Room Papers (CRPs):
- Budget WG
 - Institutional and Crosscutting Issues WG
 - Aquatic WG
 - Avian WG
 - Terrestrial WG

III. ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY MATTERS

ITEM 13. BUDGET AND ADMINISTRATION

Item 13.1. Execution of CMS Budget 2021-2023

Committee of the Whole (12 February)

58. The Secretariat introduced this item outlining the status of contributions to the Trust Fund as of 31 October 2023. The Secretariat provided an overview of the implementation of the CMS budget from 2021 to 2023. Of the total assessed contributions of €8,751,747 for 2021-2023: €6,731,984 in contributions had been paid by 31 October 2023; €979,823 were paid after 31 October 2023; and €1,039,940 in contributions were still owed. Sixty Parties had paid their contributions, and 70 Parties still had contributions due, excluding the three new Parties.
59. On the status of prior year contributions in arrears, 33 Parties still owed a combined contribution of €355,557, bringing the total of unpaid contributions to €1,408,485, as of 31 December 2023, including the three new Parties. The Secretariat urged Parties to pay their outstanding contributions in accordance with CMS Resolution 13.2.
60. The Secretariat noted that a request for approval to move funds was adopted at StC53, emphasizing that it did not change the bottom line. The Trust Fund balance as of 31 December 2023 was €2,821,891.
61. Israel questioned how priority levels were determined. In response, the Secretariat called attention to an extensive review and consultation process on ranking, noting that the COP made the final decisions.
62. The COW noted document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.13.1 and recommended that the COP do the same.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

63. The COP noted the report contained in Document 13.1 *Execution of the CMS Budget 2021-2023*.

Item 13.2. Budget 2024-2026 and Programme of Work for the intersessional period between COP14 and COP15

Committee of the Whole (12 February)

64. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.13.2/Rev1 *Budget 2024-2026 and Programme of Work for the intersessional period between COP14 and COP15*, which described budget scenarios for 2024–2026.
65. Under Scenario 1 (zero nominal growth), no increase was foreseen with respect to the approved budget for the triennium 2021–2023. This option provided funding for all regular Secretariat staff positions currently filled (or under recruitment), using the standard salary scale from COP13 with a two per cent increase per annum. The figures for the remaining budget

items remained as adopted by COP13. Under Scenario 1, the total budget to be shared by Parties was €8,751,749.

66. Scenario 2 (zero real growth) would see an 11.56 per cent increase from the 2021–2023 budget. It included increased meeting costs for the StC and ScC and Umoja costs, plus two per cent inflation across all budget items from the COP13 budget. Additional Party-appointed Councillors would also be added (one per region). Under Scenario 2, the total budget would be €9,763,014.
67. Scenario 3 assumed moderate growth and included the addition of funds for strengthening the capacity of the Secretariat by adding several new positions and increasing the amount of technical and information materials and services. Scenario 3 foresaw an increase of 17.09 per cent with respect to the zero real growth budget scenario (Scenario 2), with a total budget of €11,431,361.

Noting difficulties faced by developing countries in complying with their contributions given increasing prices and to avoid overburdening Parties, Brazil expressed a preference for Scenario 1.

68. The Secretariat explained there had been a mistake in the agenda item before it was revised, that the StC addressed potential consequences for being in arrears and also noted the need for clarification on what “holding office” meant and what constituted a CMS body. The conclusion was that the issue needed to be discussed by the COP.
69. The COW took note of the document, which would be discussed in detail by the Budget WG.

Committee of the Whole (17 February)

70. CRP13.2 *Budget 2024-2026*, including CRP13.2 *Annex 6 Programme of Work 2024-2026*, was forwarded to the COW by the Finance and Budget Sub-Committee. Kenya, as its Chair, presented a summary of discussions held, stating that the group had agreed on a budget ready for consideration and approval by the COP to enable the Convention to continue with its mandate.
71. In relation to Parties eligible for funding to CMS meetings in paragraph 10, Samoa, on behalf of the Pacific Small Island Development States (SIDS), proposed the amendment “to accord first priority to funding for least developed countries and SIDS”. This was supported by Switzerland, Cook Islands, Belgium, Israel, the EU and its Member States, Maldives, New Zealand, Australia, Germany, Georgia, Norway and Senegal. Brazil said it could agree to the amendment, while reiterating that, in its view, all developing countries must be considered.
72. Israel raised the issue of budget prioritization in relation to implementation of the POW. The CMS Executive Secretary explained that, for COP12 and COP13, the Secretariat had been able to prepare a POW with costing and proposed prioritization, which was reported on in the implementation of the budgets. However, due to capacity issues in the Secretariat, this was not achieved prior to COP14, but appeared as an additional CRP and as a provisional POW following the same approach. A draft with costs and proposed prioritization would be finalized immediately after the COP, and, in reference to paragraph 18 of the CRP, the StC was requested to hold an online meeting to consider the draft and adopt a final POW. The document would be published on the CMS website, and Parties would be alerted to its availability.
73. In relation to contractual services, Australia expressed concern that no funding was allocated for servicing government bodies during 2024-2025, noting potential ramifications for intersessional meetings. Stating that the budget presented to COP13 had taken a similar approach, using this budget line for COPs, the Executive Secretary of CMS indicated that CMS had generally received support from intersessional meeting hosts for translations. However, if no such funds were available, the need to shift funds for ensuring the provision of translation would be addressed.

74. With the amendment in paragraph 10, the document was recommended for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

75. On UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.13.2/Rev.1 *Budget 2024-2026 and Programme of Work for the Intersessional Period between COP14 and COP15*, the Finance and Budget Sub-Committee made some changes, including prioritizing funding for participation in Convention meetings for least developed countries and SIDS. The COP then adopted these documents, endorsing, on an exceptional basis, the provisional POW for the intersessional period between COP14 and COP15, as contained in Annex 6, and requested the Secretariat to finalize the POW for final adoption by the StC, according to the proposed changes and its six annexes found in CRP13.2/Rev.2 and CRP13.2/Rev.2/Annex.6.

Item 13.3. Resource Mobilization

Committee of the Whole (12 February)

76. The Chair welcomed the participation of GEF at COP14.
77. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.13.3 *Resource Mobilization*, which reported on resources mobilized for implementation of the POW 2020-2023, and outlined activities carried out to raise support for funding needs for the inter-sessional period between COP14 and COP15. The Secretariat reported on funds received, indirect financial contributions and in-kind contributions, enabling support from other sources, and submissions to grant proposals. The document also reported on CMS inputs relating to the eighth replenishment period of the GEF Trust Fund (GEF-8, 2022-2026). Amendments to Resolution 10.25 (Rev. COP12) reflected necessary updates, which included priorities for migratory species to fully benefit from GEF funding available.
78. It was recommended that COP14 provided guidance to the Secretariat on resource mobilization and further engagement with the GEF, as well as adopt the draft amendments to Resolution 10.25 (Rev. COP12) contained in Annex 1 of the document.
79. The United Kingdom supported the text prepared for this session with its amendments and proposed the following additional paragraph, which it considered would support the work of CMS and its Parties: *“Welcomes CBD COP Decision 15/7 on Resource Mobilisation and the establishment of the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund under the GEF and encourages Parties to utilize this mechanism to support the delivery of their national priorities for CMS.”*

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

80. On CRP13.3 *Resource Mobilization*, which contained the draft Resolution on enhancing engagement with the GEF, the EU and its Member States proposed bracketing text referring to the SPMS for the period 2024-2032, as the Plan had not yet been agreed. They also proposed adding language on the need to avoid creating an additional reporting burden that would risk diverting attention from implementation. With these amendments, the draft Resolution was recommended for adoption by the COP.

Final COP Plenary Session (17 February)

81. The COP adopted the amendments to Resolution 10.25 (Rev.COP12) as contained in CRP13.3/Rev.1, which incorporated comments made in the COW.

IV. STRATEGIC AND INSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

ITEM 14. STRATEGIC PLANNING

Item 14.1. Implementation of the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023

Committee of the Whole (13 February)

82. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.14.1 *Implementation of the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023*, prepared by the Secretariat. The SPMS was adopted by COP11 and revised by COP12. COP13 provided instructions and guidance on the assessment of the plan through Decisions 13.1-13.3.
83. The UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) provided a brief summary of the progress in implementation of SPMS 2015-2023, based on a synthesis of information from multiple sources, including assessment of the priority indicators. Overall, positive progress had been made by Parties, many of which had identified critical sites for migratory species. Despite ongoing efforts, the conservation status of many migratory species continued to decline. The findings aligned well with the goals specified in the new Strategic Plan.
84. The COW took note of the assessment of progress and agreed to recommend the deletion of decisions 13.1-13.3.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

85. The COP took note of the assessment of progress towards achieving the SPMS 2015-2023 targets and agreed to delete Decisions 13.1, 13.2 and 13.3.

Item 14.2. New Strategic Plan for Migratory Species

Committee of the Whole (13 February)

86. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.14.2 *New Strategic Plan for Migratory Species*, prepared by the Secretariat, which contained in Annex 1 a draft Resolution and in Annex 2 draft Decisions. The document reported on progress in implementing CMS COP Decisions 13.4 to 13.5, options for a follow-up plan and outcome 2 of StC53. The COP was recommended to adopt the draft Resolution and draft Decisions contained in the document Annexes and delete Decisions 13.4 to 13.5.
87. Cook Islands welcomed the document on the SPMS 2024-2032 and supported its six main elements. They noted that traditional knowledge of migratory species was not reflected in the strategy and considered this to be an important source of information to better understand the conservation of migratory species and their habitats.
88. Bahrain supported the document and commended it in relation to the GBF.
89. The EU and its Member States acknowledged the SPMS 2024-2032 and its alignment of resolutions to climate change and ecological connectivity. They appreciated linkages to wider global priorities including the GBF and the BBNJ Agreement, with goals to establish marine protected areas (MPAs) in areas beyond national jurisdiction. They proposed adoption of the plan and supported its measures for monitoring, with some submitted amendments. They expressed concern relating to the development of indicators and the national reporting template, and that the term “conservation status” had no agreed definition. They encouraged that assessments be standardized and that measurable change in conservation status should be adopted through use of the IUCN Red List Status as the primary tool. They supported implementation of the SPMS 2024-2032 across its territories and were committed to cooperate with relevant regional bodies to reach the SPMS 2024-2032 goals.
90. New Zealand supported the document and recommended its adoption, suggesting that development of indicators could be done after COP14, and updating of the reporting template prior to COP15.

91. The United Kingdom stressed CMS' role in implementing the GBF, for which the SPMS 2024-2032 was relevant.
92. South Africa supported the SPMS 2024-2032 and emphasized it required provision of adequate financial resources and the building of necessary capacity to enable Parties, especially developing countries, to fully implement it.
93. While welcoming the SPMS 2024-2032, Maldives highlighted that transboundary pollution issues impacting migratory species should be reflected in the document.
94. Brazil stressed that the proposed plan did not take into account the specific needs of developing countries relating to capacity building, financial resources, technical and scientific cooperation and technology transfer to enable implementation. Brazil suggested a modification of language to Target 4.3.
95. Georgia highlighted the importance of the SPMS 2024-2032 for improving implementation of CMS goals and was essential for integrating its goals and targets into National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs). This approach would strengthen synergies among MEAs, one of the goals of the SPMS 2024-2032.

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

96. CRP14.2 *New Strategic Plan for Migratory Species* included new Resolutions and new decisions.
97. The EU and its Member States agreed with the majority of the text but recommended the addition of a footnote in relation to areas beyond national jurisdiction. They expressed concern regarding introduction of the term "developing countries" in the preamble. Brazil, supported by Argentina, emphasized the importance of acknowledging the specific circumstances of developing countries and preferred its retention. New Zealand, Chair of the Institutional and Crosscutting Issues WG, confirmed that the WG had concluded as a compromise to include the term "developing countries" in a preambular paragraph. Brazil further noted that CMS Resolution 10.25 already included the term.

Committee of the Whole (17 February)

98. CRP14.2/Rev.2 *New Strategic Plan for Migratory Species* included deletion of Decisions 13.4 and 13.5. The Chair summarized the changes made and requested the EU or Brazil to report back on discussions in relation to the phrase "developing countries", a phrase also used in CRP30.4.5. After a break in the COW, the EU read out the proposed amended text agreed by Brazil and the EU and its Member States, developed with the input of other Parties: "*Recognising the challenges faced by Parties and the specific challenges faced by developing country Parties, in particular least developed countries and SIDS*". New Zealand, as Chair of the Institutional and Crosscutting WG, expressed gratitude to WG members and Parties for reaching this compromise. Cook Islands supported the amendment, in particular the inclusion of SIDS, and, with the EU and its Member States, sought confirmation of changes proposed in draft Resolution Target 5.3. The Chair confirmed that the textural changes previously agreed would be included. The document as amended was recommended for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

99. The COP adopted the SPMS 2024-2032 under the name of the "Samarkand Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2024-2032" ("Samarkand SPMS"), based on a proposal of Uzbekistan during a session of the Institutional and Crosscutting Issues WG, a draft Resolution and draft Decisions, as modified by the Institutional and Crosscutting WG and contained in CRP 14.2/Rev.2, and deleted Decisions 13.4 and 13.5.

ITEM 15. SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL

Item 15.1. Evaluation of the Results of the Restructuring of the Scientific Council

Committee of the Whole (13 February)

100. The Secretariat introduced the document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.15.1 *Evaluation of the Results of the Restructuring of the Scientific Council*, which summarized the outcome of the evaluation of the results of ScC restructuring, confirmed the effectiveness of the new setup of the ScC-SC and proposed next steps to implement the relevant recommendations of ScC-SC6. The document also proposed a procedure for replacing COP-appointed Councillors in the inter-sessional period, if needed. The ScC-SC requested the Secretariat to explore increasing the number of Party-appointed Councillors on the ScC-SC from each region from three to four, after considering the financial implications of such an increase.
101. Australia supported increasing the number of Party-appointed Councillors from each region on the ScC-SC to enhance the progress of workstreams, and also asked the ScC-SC to provide, to each session of the COP, an overview of all WGs and TFs established by the ScC for the last triennium.
102. The EU and its Member States believed that it was premature to increase the number of Party-appointed Councillors on the ScC-SC, based on the budgetary implications, and proposed postponing this discussion to COP15. They supported amending the Rules of Procedure of the ScC to account for the possibility of a member resigning or no longer being able to serve, and supported the draft Decision on COP-appointed Councillors in Annex 3. They cautioned that the ScC should not veer towards discussing policy or governance.
103. The United Kingdom, supported by New Zealand, highlighted the benefit of increasing the ScC-SC's membership considering the workload, which would provide for a greater expertise base and sharing work, and noted that some Parties' participation could be self-funded. While better use could be made of virtual meetings of the ScC, they believed technical and policy discussions would be better in person.
104. The Chair asked Australia, the EU and its Member States, United Kingdom and New Zealand to work together in a small group to find a way forward.

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

105. CRP15.1 *Evaluation of ScC Restructuring* was recommended for adoption following the resolution of the issue by the small group.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

106. Document 15.1 *Evaluation of the Results of the Restructuring of the Scientific Council* contained proposed amendments to Resolution 12.4. A small contact group recommended not to increase the number of Party-appointed Councillors on ScC-SC per region from three to four, and had proposed additional changes to the draft Resolution and draft Decisions contained in CRP15.1, which the COP adopted.
107. The COP did not agree to increase in the number of Party-appointed Councillors on ScC-SC per region from three to four, based on the analysis of the financial implications of such an increase; the COP further adopted amendments to Resolution 12.4 and to the Terms of Reference for the ScC; adopted amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the ScC and its Sessional Committee; and adopted Decisions contained in CRP15.1.

Item 15.2. Scientific Council Membership

Committee of the Whole (13 February)

108. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.15.2 *Scientific Council Membership*, which contained Annexes with information on both a comparative analysis of and full details of candidates for COP-appointed Councillor positions for Aquatic Mammals and

Climate Change. The Secretariat informed the COW that the COP-appointed Councillors for Aquatic Mammals (Mr Giuseppe Notarbartolo di Sciara), Climate Change (Mr Colin Galbraith) and Terrestrial Mammals (Mr Rodrigo Medellín) were stepping down from their positions. Since two COP-appointed Councillors shared the responsibility for Terrestrial Mammals, the Secretariat did not seek nominations for this subject area.

109. The Secretariat requested regional groups to put forward nominations for the COP to consider, and to provide their recommendations for Party-appointed Councillors and their alternates for the intersessional period, and to communicate their recommendations to the Secretariat.

Committee of the Whole (17 February)

110. The COW recommended retaining the current COP-appointed Councillors for Birds, Bycatch, Connectivity/Networks, Fish, Invasive species, disease, feral animals, insects, marine pests and weeds, Marine Pollution and Terrestrial Mammals for the intersessional period between COP14 and COP15, and to appoint Ms Vanesa Tossenberger as Councillor for Aquatic Mammals and Mr Des Thompson as Councillor for Climate Change.
111. Ms Tossenberger expressed gratitude to the outgoing COP-appointed Councillor for Aquatic Mammals and her commitment to meet requirements of the post. Israel questioned if the outgoing COP-appointed Councillor Mr Rodrigo Medellín for Terrestrial Mammals would be replaced. The Secretariat confirmed that there was no need for a replacement, as this position had been held by two Councillors.
112. In thanking all COP-appointed Councillors for their commitment to the Convention, the Chair recommended retention of existing COP-appointed Councillors and approval of the new COP-appointed Councillors for Aquatic Mammals and for Climate Change.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

113. The COP agreed to reappoint the current COP-appointed Councillors for Birds, Bycatch, Connectivity/networks, Fish, Invasive Species and Disease, and Marine Pollution for the next intersessional period, as recommended by the COW.
114. The COP appointed Ms Vanessa Tossenberger as Councillor for Aquatic Mammals and Mr Des Thompson as Councillor for Climate Change.
115. At the invitation of the Chair, nominations (from among Party-appointed Scientific Councillors) for Regional Membership of the ScC-SC were made as follows:

Africa

Members: Mr Edson Gandiwa (Zimbabwe), Mr Stephen Okiror (Uganda)

Alternates: Mr Kahsay Gebretensae Asgedom (Ethiopia), Mr Selby Remie (Seychelles)

Asia

Members: Mr Sathyakumar Sambandam (India), Mr Daniel Fernando (Sri Lanka), Mr Askar Davletbatkov (Kyrgyz Republic)

South and Central America and the Caribbean

Members: Mr Carlos Mario Orrego Vásquez (Costa Rica), Mr Andrei Langeloh Ross (Brazil), Mr Héctor Samuel Vera Alcaraz (Paraguay)

Europe

Members: Mr João José de Bastos Loureiro (Portugal), Mr Ruben Moreno-Opo Diaz-Meco (Spain), Ms Daliborka Stankovic (Serbia)

Alternates: Mr Jean-Philippe Siblet (France), Mr James Williams (United Kingdom), Mr Simon Nemtsov (Israel).

Oceania

Members: Ms Narelle Montgomery (Australia), Ms Senivasa Waqairamasi (Fiji), Mr Graeme Taylor (New Zealand)

ITEM 16. ELECTION OF PARTIES TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE

Committee of the Whole (13 February)

116. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.16 *Election of Parties to the Standing Committee*. The Secretariat reminded the COW that the StC would be renewed at every ordinary meeting of the COP, and that each member could not serve for more than two consecutive terms, with no limit on the number of terms for alternate members. The StC included: three Parties from Africa; three Parties from Europe; two Parties from Asia; two Parties from South and Central America and the Caribbean; and one Party from Oceania. In addition, there were 11 regional representatives serving as alternate members.
117. Regarding the current StC composition, the Secretariat confirmed only Georgia was not eligible for a third term and Uzbekistan would automatically serve on the StC in the next triennium as the host of COP14, together with Germany as Depositary. Regional groups were requested to submit nominations for the next StC, which would take over at the end of COP14.
118. In response to a query from Israel, the EU and its Member States, confirmed that one Europe region seat would go to a non-EU country and one to an EU country.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

119. The Chair of the COP invited regions to present their nominations for members and alternates for the StC for the next triennium. The following nominations were made:
- Africa: Members: Algeria, Kenya, Zimbabwe; Alternates: Morocco, Uganda, Seychelles.
 - Asia: Members: Bahrain, India; Alternates: Bangladesh, Maldives.
 - Europe: Members: Italy, Monaco, United Kingdom; Alternates: Croatia, France, Montenegro.
 - South and Central America and the Caribbean: Members: Panama, Uruguay; Alternates: Costa Rica, Peru.
 - Oceania: Member: New Zealand; Alternate: Cook Islands.
120. The Chair noted that the StC Chair and Vice-Chair, as well as the Chair and members of the Sub-Committee on Finance and Budget, would be elected at StC55 immediately following the close of COP14.
121. The nominations were accepted.

ITEM 17. CMS CONTRIBUTION TO THE KUNMING-MONTREAL GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK

Committee of the Whole (13 February)

122. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.17 *CMS Contribution to the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework*, prepared by the Secretariat. The document reported on the CMS contribution to the GBF, including progress on implementation of Resolution 13.1 *Gandhinagar Declaration on CMS and the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework* and Decision 13.8 *Migratory Species in the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework*. It highlighted CMS engagement leading to the GBF and its Monitoring Framework and implementation, including the Bern III Conference. The draft Resolution and Decisions urged alignment of CMS priorities in NBSAPs. COP14 was recommended to adopt the Resolution in Annex 2 and the draft Decisions in Annex 3 and delete Decisions 13.7 and 13.8.
123. Convinced that the GBF presented opportunities to enhance cooperation between MEAs and other bodies and processes, Switzerland recommended strengthening the linkage between CMS and the GBF in Annex 2. It submitted changes relating to the Bern III Conference

outcomes and a proposed new paragraph relating to facilitating the Bern Process for cooperation among Parties to relevant MEAs. Switzerland also proposed new text focused on engagement in the Bern Process to complement draft Decisions 14.AA and 14.BB.

124. Cook Islands stressed that collaboration between CMS and the CBD was beneficial for small countries with limited technical and financial resources to effectively implement MEAs. They urged MEAs to work towards reporting alignments to enable small countries to meet their reporting requirements and urged partners to provide resources and technical and technological capacity to support NBSAP implementation. Cook Islands further urged Parties to integrate migratory species into National Invasive Species Strategies and Action Plans.
125. Drawing attention to the fact that the GBF reflected a political balance achieved after a long process, Brazil advised that it should be approached through a systematic and integrated perspective to avoid any possible revision of the commitments made or disruption of the balance achieved in the CBD. Brazil further urged COP14 to take finance mobilization provisions into account, and proposed modifications to the draft Resolution on Annex 2, which it provided in writing.
126. The EU and its Member States welcomed the document and valued the steps already undertaken to contribute to the implementation of the GBF, including the preparation of the Samarkand SPMS, engagement in the Bern Process and producing guidelines relating to ecological connectivity and landscape scale planning. The EU supported the Resolution and draft Decisions on CMS engagement in CBD processes, related to the GBF implementation in areas of relevance to CMS, contribute to the work of the CBD *Ad Hoc* Technical Expert Group on the GBF Indicators, and develop a new Joint Work Programme with the CBD Secretariat.
127. Philippines supported the document and its draft Decisions. They collaborated with other South-east Asian nations in developing the ASEAN Biodiversity Plan, which aligned with the GBF and the SPMS. Philippines proposed additional text under draft Decision Annex 3 to address the need for Parties to advocate CMS related targets under the GBF.
128. WCS supported the document and its draft Decisions and urged Parties to add reference to ecological integrity. WCS highlighted that all aspects of CMS implementation should be included in NBSAPs, as well as in their outreach and fundraising strategies.
129. The United Kingdom proposed revisions to Annex 3 of the document relating to effective implementation of Bern III Conference outcomes and how to support and apply the monitoring framework agreed under CBD. The United Kingdom mentioned that an operational paragraph was needed to Annex 2 to repeal Resolutions 8.18, 10.18 and 13.1. The United Kingdom also thanked the Secretariat for actively engaging in the promotion of the conservation needs of migratory species in the GBF and welcomed the ambitious outcome achieved.
130. Kenya, in the process of revising its National Framework to align with CBD Decision 15.5 relating to national targets and indicators, was committed to ensure a coordinated approach to implementation of MEAs and supported the document, including its Resolution and draft Decisions in Annexes 2 and 3.
131. South Africa supported the draft Decisions and the consolidation of the three Resolutions on CMS collaboration with CBD and its processes into a single Resolution.
132. Zimbabwe suggested that a specific instruction directed to the Secretariat to explore the feasibility of a financing mechanism under GEF would be useful under draft Decision 14.BB. They recommended Parties to have a specific window in the GBF implementation for CMS and for the issues prioritized in the Samarkand SPMS.
133. Born Free argued that work done by CMS on animal culture and social complexity was key to the GBF implementation and should be promoted more broadly within the CBD and other

relevant policy fora.

134. CBD affirmed that all goals and targets of the GBF were relevant to CMS, with targets focused on the conservation and sustainable use of species and on protecting and restoring ecosystems including their integrity and connectivity. Targets addressing underlying drivers of change, related to production and consumption patterns, to biodiversity values, to strengthening the means of implementation, and to engaging Indigenous Peoples, women and youth were equally important. Intended to be a broad framework, the GBF had the potential to enhance coherence among activities undertaken under MEAs, including CMS; an early opportunity to realize this coherence was the updating of NBSAPs currently underway.
135. IUCN called on CMS to continue strengthening synergies through the GBF implementation and encouraged Parties and stakeholders to implement the Samarkand SPMS and integrate their CMS obligations and the Samarkand SPMS actions into their NBSAPs. IUCN stressed the importance of ensuring coherence with other MEAs, including UNCLOS on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction. IUCN invited Parties to consider the Global Species Action Plan as a guide to integrate CMS work into NBSAPs and recommended the IUCN *Connectivity Guidelines* and Technical Report on *Connectivity and Linear Transport Infrastructure* as useful resources in achieving proposed SPMS Goal 2 (maintaining and restoring habitats and ranges of migratory species, supporting their connectivity) and Goal 3 (eliminating or significantly reducing threats affecting migratory species).
136. Uganda represented the Africa region at the Bern III Conference, which aimed for efficient and effective implementation of the GBF. Uganda supported the proposed harmonization of strategies and synergies and argued that there was a need to strengthen policy and frameworks and support capacity at the national and regional levels.
137. Having made provisions to protect biodiversity, Côte d'Ivoire supported the comments made and invited the Secretariat to consider the specific nature of developing countries.
138. The Secretariat was expected to prepare a CRP in relation to the interventions and had been working on guidance relating to the commitment of Parties to the GBF. This guidance would be shared with UNEP and the UN Development Programme (UNDP), which were involved in the NBSAP updating process.

Committee of the Whole (17 February)

139. CRP17/Rev.1 *CMS Contribution to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework* was recommended for adoption by the COP.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

140. The Chair explained that the COW had referred the issue to the Institutional and Crosscutting Issues WG, which prepared CRP17/Rev.1. The COP adopted the Resolution and Decisions contained in this CRP, and deleted Decisions 13.7 and 13.8.

ITEM 18. SYNERGIES AND PARTNERSHIPS

Item 18.1. Synergies and Partnerships

Committee of the Whole (13 February)

141. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.18.1 *Synergies and Partnerships*, which reported on progress on implementing Resolution 11.10 (Rev.COP13) *Synergies and Partnerships* and Decision 13.9 *NGO participation in CMS processes*. It included examples of CMS engagement with UN agencies, MEAs, NGOs, civil society and other groups, highlighted the importance of engagement, and outlined activities to further strengthen collaboration and cooperation.

142. The Secretariat proposed exploring ways to increase its engagement with other stakeholders, including Indigenous Peoples, local communities and youth groups.
143. Australia, supported by the EU and its Member States, called for enhanced engagement with Indigenous Peoples groups and youth. They suggested that the ScC Chair could facilitate discussions on the value of traditional and Indigenous knowledge systems in conserving migratory species and forwarding the results of these discussions to the next COP.
144. Australia also requested:
- the CMS Secretariat to collaborate with partners such as the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to undertake existing opportunities related to the tangible and intangible cultural values associated with migratory species and their conservation; and
 - the ScC to assess the significance of multiple systems of knowledge and understanding, including traditional and Indigenous knowledge, for supporting effective migratory species conservation, and reporting to COP15 suggestions on ways CMS might facilitate inclusion of additional systems of knowledge and understanding for enhanced implementation of the Convention.
145. The EU and its Member States pointed to youth participation under the CBD and CITES to enhance participation and suggested strengthening collaboration with regional fisheries and regional seas conventions.
146. South Africa suggested merging Agenda items 17, 18.1 and 18.2 into one agenda item.
147. Brazil noted that partnerships must be institutionally and structurally appropriate for achieving CMS mandates and roles, noting they could complement each other but not overlap. Brazil added that commitments taken under the Convention could not be reinterpreted and preferred using the term “complementarity” instead of “synergies” and that excessive burdens should not be placed on the Secretariat, particularly in terms of budget.
148. Brazil argued that the phrase “multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary scope of approaches to collaboration” was unclear.
149. The United Kingdom requested a reference to the BBNJ Agreement.
150. Israel noted that some traditional practices could be harmful to migratory species and encouraged including, in the text proposed by Australia, that the ScC should also look at harmful traditional practices.
151. Switzerland considered that the Bern process should be “welcomed” rather than “noted”.
152. Philippines suggested: an additional operative paragraph on engaging with the World Coastal Forum; language reflecting that protecting migratory species habitats was a key role of national and subnational governments; and that the capacity of local and subnational governments should be strengthened.
153. Argentina supported the removal of reference to the promotion of a new platform, noting there was no mandate for this.
154. New Zealand cited potential benefits of close cooperation with the BBNJ Agreement and encouraged Parties and other stakeholders to engage in that process. New Zealand did not support the proposal on subnational and regional governments.
155. CITES noted the recent adoption of a resolution on cooperation and synergies with CMS, and ongoing cooperation among Secretariats through the Liaison Group of Biodiversity-related Conventions.

156. BirdLife International supported inserting reference to other stakeholders to help advance synergies.
157. The High Seas Alliance indicated that once the BBNJ Agreement entered into force it would help CMS Parties achieve CMS objectives by extending the tools available to conserve biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction.
158. DOALOS welcomed the report on CMS engagement in UN-Oceans, the inter-agency mechanism seeking to enhance coordination, coherence and effectiveness of activities of the UN system and the International Seabed Authority (ISA) on ocean and coastal issues. They noted that the principals of organizations participating in UN-Oceans endorsed a statement of commitments related to the BBNJ Agreement, including, among others, identifying possible areas for collaboration and synergy, and considered joint activities in relation to the BBNJ Agreement and its complementarity with relevant legal instruments, frameworks and bodies.

Committee of the Whole (17 February)

159. On CRP18.1/Rev.1 *Synergies and Partnerships*, BirdLife International highlighted the need to deliver synergies on the ground, and its readiness to work with all relevant stakeholders to develop and implement projects. They mentioned the World Coastal Forum Partnership's knowledge products, namely the *State of the World's Coastal Ecosystem Report* and the *World Coastal Ecosystem Conservation Toolkit*, which would be presented at COP15.
160. Brazil proposed several changes to make the text more consistent with the BBNJ Agreement.
161. The draft Resolution and draft Decisions were recommended for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

162. The COP Chair explained that CRP18.1/Rev.1 had been further modified by the COW, and the COP adopted CRP18.1/Rev.2 and deleted Decisions 13.9 and 13.10.

Item 18.2. Cooperation with the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)

Committee of the Whole (13 February)

163. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.18/Rev.1 *Cooperation with the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)*, which described agreement at the last IPBES plenary to undertake a fast-track methodological assessment of integrated biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning and ecological connectivity, which CMS had been calling for. CMS should nominate experts and review drafts.
164. The United Kingdom welcomed the document, highlighting the need for evidence-based action to practically engage on the assessment of spatial planning and interconnectivity, and for the ScC to provide advice to CMS Parties based on IPBES reports. The United Kingdom provided suggestions to strengthen the text.
165. New Zealand noted that the CMS Parties should ensure through their contributions that decisions from IPBES are implementable by Parties.

166. The Chair requested the Secretariat to issue a CRP document containing proposed changes.

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

167. CRP18.2 *Cooperation with IPBES* was recommended for adoption by the COP.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

168. The COW forwarded CRP18.2 to the COP, which adopted amendments to Resolution 10.8 (Rev.COP13), adopted new Decisions contained in Annex 2, and deleted Decisions 13.11 to 13.13.

Item 19.1. Communication, Outreach and Information ManagementCommittee of the Whole (13 February)

169. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.19 *Communication and Information Management*, prepared by the Secretariat. The document reported on a summary of communication, outreach and information management activities carried out by the Secretariat and highlighted activities aimed at raising awareness of migratory species. The Secretariat initiated a strategic review of its communication and outreach activities focused on identifying challenges and proposing a way forward.
170. Egypt stressed communication was crucial to CMS implementation and encouraged MEAs to work together on joint communication messages. Egypt supported the document and its draft Decision and urged CMS to strengthen communication linkages with MEAs.
171. Born Free reiterated the importance of communication and encouraged CMS and its Parties and partners to link with the new non-profit organization EcoFlix, which operated a new and effective communications tool.
172. Since no textual additions were raised, the Chair concluded that the COW agreed with the document and recommended its adoption by the COP.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

173. The COP adopted two Decisions in Annex 1 of Document 19 and noted the documents.

V. SCIENTIFIC ASSESSMENTS AND REPORTS**ITEM 20. ATLAS OF ANIMAL MIGRATION**Committee of the Whole (13 February)

174. The CMS COP-appointed Councillor for Connectivity and Ecological Networks introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.20 *Atlas of Animal Migration*, prepared by the Secretariat. The document reported on the positive developments towards an atlas, foreseen as a long-term initiative. It highlighted progress in the development of four modules of the atlas: the Atlas for migratory mammals in the Central Asian region, the Atlas of bird migration in the Eurasian-African region, which was publicly accessible since May 2022, the Marine Turtle Breeding and Migration Atlas "TurtleNet" and the Global Initiative on Ungulate Migration (GIUM).
175. Egypt supported the document and underscored the need to take innovative approaches based on scientific information. It is necessary to link conservation work to socioeconomic situation and address the continued illegal killing of migratory species.
176. The EU and its Member States encouraged Parties to support the continuation of this work, both with new groups of migratory animals and in new regions. The EU proposed a lighter process for gathering feedback, for example through a notification, and proposed that the ScC be asked to provide further advice and guidance to the Secretariat on updating existing and developing additional modules of the Atlas.
177. Bahrain recognized that mapping contributed to improved understanding of migratory patterns, and urged progress in draft Decision 14.BB element d) relating to additional modules, especially for a future CAF atlas.
178. India acknowledged the relevance of mapping in contributing to the implementation of CMS and the GBF and welcomed the draft Decisions, echoing the need for a CAF atlas.

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

179. The Secretariat reported that the CRP20/Rev.1 *Atlas on Animal Migration* had been prepared following comments made in the COW, and that some technical information had been updated.
180. The EU and its Member States reiterated its call to include “external” when referring to resource availability.
181. It was recommended that the COP take note of the Atlas and adopt the draft Decisions with amendments reflecting this discussion.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

182. The COP took note of the report concerning the Atlas, and adopted new Decisions in CRP20/Rev.1 prepared by the Secretariat.

ITEM 21. CONSERVATION STATUS OF MIGRATORY SPECIES

Item 21.1. State of the World’s Migratory Species

Item 21.2. Assessment of the Risk Posed to CMS Appendix I-listed Species by Direct Use and Trade

Item 21.3. In-depth Review of the Conservation Status of Individual CMS-listed Species

Committee of the Whole (13 February)

183. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.21/Rev.1, which included the background information on reports presented under agenda items 21.1., 21.2 and 21.3, and proposed draft Resolution and draft Decisions in Annexes 1 and 2 respectively. The COW discussed the following associated documents, which considered ScC-SC recommendations:
- UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.21.1 *State of the World’s Migratory Species*;
 - UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.21.2 *Assessment of the Risk Posed to CMS Appendix I-listed Species by Direct Use and Trade*; and
 - UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.21.3 *In-depth Review of the Conservation Status of Individual CMS-listed Species*.
184. The Secretariat noted that, going forward, a report on State of the World’s Migratory Species would be prepared every six years at alternate COPs beginning at COP16.
185. UNEP-WCMC introduced documents UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.21.1 to Doc.21.3, highlighting that the report on the *State of the World’s Migratory Species* found that half the sites used by migratory species were not protected and there were major gaps in identifying sites for many species. The report identified hundreds of species that would benefit from increased protection.
186. UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.21.2 found that 88 per cent of species were at risk from use both at the domestic and international level, with 55 species at high risk.
187. UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.21.3 contained in-depth reviews for ten species: five from Appendix I and five from Appendix II. The review concluded that an Appendix I listing could benefit two of the Appendix II-listed species through increased protection.
188. It was recommended that the COP adopt the draft Resolution and draft Decisions in Annexes 1 and 2 of UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.21/Rev.1 and take note of the associated reports UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.21.1, Doc.21.2 and Doc.21.3.
189. Peru, speaking also on behalf of Argentina, and supported by Costa Rica, Panama, Uruguay and the Dominican Republic, supported taking into account the different uses of species in trade in document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.21.2, including lethal and non-lethal use. They emphasized that species whose survival was threatened by trade required more attention.

190. On the proposed draft Resolution on the *State of the World's Migratory Species* report, Israel requested adding text on "including the assessment of the risk posed to CMS Appendix I-listed species by direct use and trade" to the provision on reviewing conservation status.
191. Israel noted that the methodology should be looked at more closely, and that a decision was needed using the Resolution 12.9 Review Mechanism.
192. The EU and its Member States supported the proposal for a regular review starting at COP16; underscored the need for synergies with IPBES assessments, including on connectivity; and supported the idea of developing an online CMS data dashboard, subject to available funding.

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

193. CRP21 *Conservation Status of Migratory Species* was recommended for adoption by the COP, which was also recommended to note the following: *State of the World's Migratory Species* (UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.21.1); *Assessment of the risk posed to CMS Appendix I-listed species by direct use and trade* (UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.21.2); and *In-depth review of the conservation status of individual CMS-listed species* (UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.21.3).

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

194. The COP noted the three reports: *State of the World's Migratory Species*; *Assessment of the Risk Posed to CMS Appendix I-Listed Species by Direct Use and Trade*; and *In-Depth Review of the Conservation Status of Individual CMS-Listed Species*. The COP also adopted the draft Resolution and Decisions contained in CRP 21, and deleted Decisions 13.17 and 13.18, and Decisions 13.24 to 13.26.

VI. INTERPRETATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

ITEM 23. NATIONAL REPORTS

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

195. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.23 *National Reports*, noting it contained, in Annex 3, an analysis of CMS National Reports to COP14, prepared by UNEP-WCMC, based on the information provided by Parties, and thanks to voluntary financial contributions by Germany and Switzerland. It assessed progress made towards implementing the Convention between COP13 and COP14 and was based on the 55 National Reports submitted by the reporting deadline, representing 41 per cent of Parties. Sixty National Reports were on the CMS website.
196. UNEP-WCMC explained that many Parties reported progress in, among others, strengthening governance arrangements and participating in cooperative international initiatives. National Reports highlighted some areas where implementation needed to be strengthened, such as efforts to tackle harmful incentives affecting migratory species, including subsidies. In addition, a small number of reporting Parties had yet to fully prohibit the taking of CMS Appendix I-listed species. Parties also cited the lack of financial resources and technical capacity as barriers to the effective implementation of CMS. Key priorities included actions to strengthen legislation and policies and increase research and monitoring.
197. New Zealand requested language on aligning with the goals and targets of the Samarkand SPMS.
198. Noting the range of reports requested by the COP, the United Kingdom suggested that the StC undertake a review of reporting requirements when it looked at the reporting format, and advise COP15 on a strategic way forward.
199. The Chair noted further consultations would take place on this issue.

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

200. CRP23. *National Reports*. Following discussion between the United Kingdom and New Zealand, the Secretariat summarized the resulting amendments, as contained in CRP23, and the COW recommended it to the COP for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

201. The COP adopted amendments to Resolution 12.5 and decisions contained in Document 23, with the modifications made in the COW, as reflected in CRP 23. The COP also took note of the *Analysis of CMS National Reports to COP14* contained in Annex 3, and deleted Decisions 13.14 and 13.15.

ITEM 24. REVIEW MECHANISM AND NATIONAL LEGISLATION PROGRAMME

Committee of the Whole (14 February)

202. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.24 *Review Mechanism and National Legislation Programme*, which contained Annex 1 with draft Operational Guidelines for the Review Mechanism and Annex 2 with a set of draft Decisions.
203. The EU and its Member States welcomed the provision of guidelines and proposed adjustments, supported by OceanCare.
204. Madagascar, supported by the Food and Agricultural Organization of the UN (FAO), recommended an addition to draft Decision14.AA in Annex 2, for the Secretariat to continue and enhance collaboration with existing initiatives facilitating national legislative review, such as the CITES National Legislation Project and the Sustainable Wildlife Management Programme led by FAO with a consortium of partners including the Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), Centre de Coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement (CIRAD) and WCS.
205. WCS supported the interventions by the EU and its Member States and Madagascar and advised the Secretariat to collaborate with other initiatives that were working with Parties to update their legislation.
206. India recommended taking this document to the Institutional and Crosscutting Issues WG, especially to discuss the Review Mechanism and Resolution 12.9.
207. The Chair confirmed that a CRP would be produced, which, after further WG discussions, would come back to the COW.

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

208. Following a modification by the United Kingdom, the adoption of CRP24 was recommended subject to a revision relating to the intervention of Madagascar.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

209. As recommended by the COW, the COP adopted the operational guidelines and draft Decisions contained in CRP24/Rev.1 and deleted Decisions 13.20 to 13.23.

ITEM 25. REVIEW OF DECISIONS

Committee of the Whole (14 February)

210. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.25 *Review of Decisions*, which reported on the implementation of Decisions not addressed in any other document.
211. The EU and its Member States supported the list of decisions to be renewed or deleted in Annex, except for the proposal to delete Decision 13. and Decision 13.71.

212. The Secretariat clarified the work carried out with the CITES Secretariat under Decision 13.16 and that it would retain Decision 13.71 (a). The EU and its Member States thanked the Secretariat for working to ensure retention of Decisions 13.16 and 13.71.

213. The Chair recommended that, with retention of Decisions 13.16 and 13.71, the COW recommend this paper for adoption. This was agreed.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

214. The COP deleted Decisions 13.6, 13.71(b), 13.72, 13.73 (a), 13.74, 13.75 and 13.137, and renewed 13.16, 13.71(a), and 13.73 (b).

ITEM 26. DEFINITION OF THE TERMS 'RANGE STATE' AND 'VAGRANT'

Committee of the Whole (14 February)

215. The COP-appointed Councillor for Birds introduced this issue and document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.26/Rev.1 *Definition of the Terms 'Range State' and 'Vagrant'*, which included an Annex with guidance on use of the term 'vagrant'. COP13 had requested the ScC to develop pragmatic guidance for the terms for 'Range State' and 'vagrant', and the ScC had established an intersessional WG to address this. The ScC-SC6 could not agree to recommend guidance for adoption by the COP, but nevertheless agreed to present the report including draft Guidance produced in the Working Group to the Conference of the Parties in following up on its mandate in Decision 13.140. Discussion was taking place in the Institutional and Crosscutting Issues WG.

216. The EU and its Member States supported the recommendation to take note of the report, and recommended that the COP should decide that no further work on this matter was needed.

217. Zimbabwe urged Parties to consider adopting the draft guidance provided by the WG, which South Africa suggested to refine for consideration by COP15.

218. The United Kingdom recommended application of the precautionary principle. They noted that a range of views were expressed on the guidance in ScC-SC6, and welcomed hearing views of Parties that were not present in the ScC. They stated that they would be disappointed if this COP could not adopt the guidance that the COP had requested.

219. Israel echoed the comments made by the EU and its Member States and considered that the final conclusion of ScC-SC6 was to take note of the document and take no further action.

220. New Zealand requested the Secretariat to make guidance available for use by Parties as appropriate.

221. Senegal noted the document and supported the position of the EU and its Member States.

222. Australia welcomed the development of guidance material, especially on determining species vagrancy, and supported the adoption by the COP of the guidance material.

223. The EU and its Member States agreed to note the report but considered that adoption of the guidance would introduce a new term not part of the Convention text, which risked opening the door to an exception, adding ambiguity and uncertainty. It, therefore, did not recommend the use of guidance by Parties.

224. After summarizing the issue, the Chair concluded that different opinions remained; therefore, the Institutional and Crosscutting WG would further discuss and seek clarity on this issue. The COP-appointed Councillor for Birds regarded this an acceptable way forward and agreed to take part in the WG discussion.

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

225. The COW recommended that the COP appreciated the work undertaken by the ScC on implementation of Decision 13.140 and noted the report contained in document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.26/Rev.1 *Implementation of Decision 13.140: Guidance on the Use of the Term “Vagrant”*.

Final COP Plenary (17 Plenary)

226. The COP appreciated the work undertaken by the ScC on implementation of Decision 13.140 and noted the report contained in document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.26/Rev.1 *Implementation of Decision 13.140: Guidance on the Use of the Term “Vagrant”*.

ITEM 27. AQUATIC SPECIES CONSERVATION ISSUES

Item 27.1. Fisheries-induced Threats

Item 27.1.1 Bycatch

Committee of the Whole (14 February)

227. The COP-appointed Councillor for Bycatch introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.27.1.1/Rev.1 *Bycatch*, which contained a review of existing technical mitigation techniques to reduce bycatch of sharks and draft Decisions directed to Parties, the ScC and the Secretariat.
228. OceanCare reiterated the draft Decision’s provision on the need for time-bound action plans and measures for effective bycatch mitigation for the Harbour Porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*) and noted work through ASCOBANS to address this issue.
229. Egypt underscored the need for a definition of bycatch to ensure effective implementation and synergies among biodiversity-related conventions to ensure a common understanding of terminology.
230. Senegal highlighted the importance of testing bycatch mitigation techniques.
231. Cook Islands did not support the development of decisions by CMS to include fishing licence conditions, as this was the domain of national fisheries administrations. Cook Islands indicated that CMS should use voluntary language such as “requested to”. It noted that bycatch management was based on the scientific and compliance information that was fishery and context-specific and that fisheries-specific measures should be applied through relevant Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs).
232. Nigeria noted that bycatch should not be addressed without also addressing illegal fishing.

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

233. CRP27.1.1 *Bycatch* was recommended for adoption by the COP. The COP was also asked to take note of the report in Annex 1 and the recommendations in Annex 2.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

234. The COP took note of the report “*Technical mitigation techniques to reduce bycatch of sharks - there is no silver bullet*” and recommendations on the technical mitigation techniques to reduce bycatch of sharks. The Chair explained that the COW had also considered the draft Decisions found in Annex 3 of Document 27.1.1/Rev.1, and that the Aquatic WG had proposed additional changes, reflected in CRP 27.1.1, which the COP adopted. The COP also deleted Decisions 13.61 to 13.63.

Item 27.1.2. Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs)

Committee of the Whole (14 February)

235. The COP-appointed Councillor for Marine Pollution introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.27.1.2/Rev.1 *Fish Aggregating Devices. ‘An Introduction to FADs as*

a *Source of Marine Debris*' was provided in Annex 1 and draft Decisions in Annex 2.

236. OceanCare referred to FADs-related problems and the need to collaborate with ACCOBAMS and the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean.
237. Egypt requested that the document go to the Aquatic WG to be strengthened, before the COW could forward to the COP for adoption.

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

238. CRP27.1.2 *Fish Aggregating Devices* was recommended for adoption by the COP, and the COP was recommended to take note of the report in Annex.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

239. The COP noted the report '*An introduction to FADs as a source of marine debris*' and adopted the draft Decisions, as reflected in CRP27.1.2.

Item 27.1.3. Maltreatment and Mutilation of Seabirds in Fisheries

Committee of the Whole (14 February)

240. The Chair of the Intersessional and Crosscutting WG introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.27.1.3/Rev.3 *Maltreatment and Mutilation of Seabirds in Fisheries*.
241. Brazil agreed with the WG's conclusions and highlighted that the problem was not only confined to Brazil, but attributed to a rogue group of fishers.
242. Egypt highlighted threats to birds and recommended further research on these issues by CMS.
243. The Chair noted the only proposed change was to add reporting to the StC under paragraph 14.AA of the CRP.

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

244. CRP27.1.3 *Maltreatment and Mutilation of Seabirds in Fisheries* was recommended for adoption by the COP.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

245. As recommended by the COW, the COP adopted CRP27.1.3.

Item 27.2.1 Effects of Marine Pollution on Migratory Species

Committee of the Whole (14 February)

246. The COP-appointed Councillor for Marine Pollution introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.27.2.1/Rev.2 *Effects of Marine Pollution on Migratory Species*.
247. Egypt approved the draft Decisions but recommended to add enhancement of actions at national and regional levels.
248. OceanCare supported the comprehensive review of this multifaceted topic, and encouraged partners to make funding available to address marine pollution.

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

249. CRP27.2.1 *Marine Pollution and Migratory Species* was recommended to the COP for adoption. The COP was also asked to take note of the associated report in Annex 1.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

250. Document 27.2.1./Rev.2 *Effects of Marine Pollution on Migratory Species* included the report on "*Migratory Species and Marine Pollution: A brief overview of issues*" in Annex 1, which the COP took note of. The Chair explained that the Aquatic WG had proposed additional changes to the draft Decisions reflected in CRP27.2.1, which the COP adopted.

Item 27.2.2. Marine Noise

Committee of the Whole (14 February)

251. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.27.2.2/Rev.2 *Marine Noise*, prepared by the Joint Noise Working Group of CMS, ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS, the ScC and the Secretariat.
252. Australia explained that they were developing underwater noise guidelines that would consider impacts on marine wildlife, as well as current international best practice standards and mitigation measures, which they expected to publish in June 2024 and share through the ScC.
253. The EU and its Member States provided minor editorial comments in writing in relation to draft Decision 14.CC element d).
254. Egypt approved the draft Decisions taking into consideration the input of Australia on guidelines and mitigation measures.

Committee of the Whole

255. CRP27.2.2/Rev.1 *Marine Noise* was recommended for adoption, with the COP also asked to take note of the report in Annex 1 of document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.27.2.2/Rev.2.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

256. The COP noted the report of the Joint CMS/ACCOBAMS/ASCOBANS Noise WG contained in Annex 1 of document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.27.2.2/Rev.2, deleted Decisions 13.58, 13.59 and 13.60 and adopted draft Decisions found in CRP27.2.2/Rev.1.

Item 27.2.3 Vessel Strikes

Committee of the Whole (14 February)

257. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.27.2.3/Rev.1 *Vessel Strikes*, which contained Annex 1 with a draft Resolution, Annex 2 with guidance on reducing the risk of vessel strikes to Whale Sharks, and Annex 3 with draft Decisions. Related Information document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Inf.27.2.3 contained a study on global ship strikes of Whale Sharks (*Rhincodon typus*). The document also highlighted the need for proactive measures, research, monitoring, and international cooperation to reduce vessel strike risk.
258. Egypt supported the document and referred to the impacts of vessel strikes on migratory whales.
259. OceanCare, speaking also on behalf of IFAW and WWF, urged close collaboration between MEAs and with the private sector and highlighted threats of vessels strikes and potential ways to address them.
260. Kenya took note of the report and supported the adoption of the draft Decisions to reduce risks of vessel strikes on marine megafauna.
261. ACCOBAMS noted its long history in dealing with ship strikes in the Mediterranean Sea and endorsed the document.

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

262. CRP27.2.3/ *Vessel Strikes* was recommended for adoption by the COP.

Final COP Plenary

263. The COP adopted a draft Resolution including guidance in Annex 2 of document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.27.2.3/Rev.1, and draft Decisions, as modified by the Aquatic WG and contained in CRP27.2.3.

Item 27.2.4. Deep-Sea MiningCommittee of the Whole (14 February)

264. The Secretariat introduced UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.27.2.4/Rev.1 *Deep-Sea Mining*, noting draft Resolution in Annex 1, draft Decisions in Annex 2, and a letter submitted on 2 February to CMS by the ISA contained in UNEP/CMS/COP14/Inf.27.2.4.
265. Several countries supported adopting a precautionary approach with respect to deep-sea mining (DSM), underscoring the need for more information on the impacts of DSM on migratory species. Many speakers also expressed their support for the draft Decision and Resolution.
266. Cook Islands stressed the need for Parties to enhance monitoring and research efforts to better understand the potential impacts of deep-sea minerals extraction on migratory species and a regional environmental management plan including a systematic environmental risk assessment of impacts as well as a cumulative impact assessment.
267. France supported a ban on DSM, focusing on the CMS mandate, strengthening knowledge of the impacts of DSM and working with the ISA.
268. Monaco stressed the importance of reliable scientific data when deciding on steps to take on activities that could affect marine migratory species, and that CMS should continue work on this issue within its mandate.
269. Brazil and India expressed support for the draft Resolution and Decisions and adopting a precautionary approach on all seabed mining, and recalled the importance of discussions on the Mining Code under the ISA.
270. New Zealand noted that best available information on the impacts of DSM on migratory species should be shared with the ISA and support its work on areas beyond national jurisdiction. While supporting the draft Resolution and Decisions, they noted process issues and sought enhanced consultations in the future.
271. Germany supported a moratorium on DSM and stated it would not engage, nor support any work plans until it was ensured that deep-sea mineral extraction had no harmful impacts on migratory species and the ecosystems that they rely on.
272. India informed that it would not engage in DSM until sufficient and robust scientific information had been obtained to make informed decisions as to whether DSM could be undertaken without significant damage to the marine environment. India considered that a decision on DSM should rest with the ISA utilizing the best available knowledge at the time.
273. Egypt asked that countries refrain from engaging in DSM until robust scientific information was available.
274. Australia emphasized that impacts on migratory species and their prey and on the ecosystems on which they depend were not sufficiently understood and stated they continue to work via ISA to get robust environmental rules for DSM.
275. The Netherlands agreed that the document should focus on migratory species, their prey and the ecosystems on which they depend.
276. Spain noted its moratorium on DSM until more information regarding impacts become available and stated that safeguards must be in place to ensure marine ecosystems are not affected.
277. Norway agreed that before any DSM exploitation could take place, more knowledge of the effect of such activities was needed. They underscored the need to respect the mandates of existing international institutions and argued that the document confused competencies of relevant institutions and organizations. They recommended that ISA mandates should be

spelled out, BBNJ Agreement references should be more precise, UNCLOS language more streamlined, and the CMS role more precise according to its mandate.

278. Samoa noted progress made in the Pacific region on calling for a DSM moratorium, and asked others to join the moratorium.
279. Belgium stated the resolution should relate directly to migratory species and not seabed mining more broadly and asked that the Secretariat inform ISA of the COP14 decision on this issue.
280. Fiji noted its ten-year moratorium on DSM, that environmental and social impacts must be considered, and that the ISA, BBNJ Agreement and the CBD must work together on this issue
281. Bahrain shared the concerns raised in the document and supported the Resolution and Decisions.
282. Costa Rica emphasized the need to follow best scientific knowledge and urged Parties to develop Marine Protected Areas.
283. IUCN presented a statement welcoming the Secretariat's work on deep-sea mining given concerns about the potential impacts of a poorly understood proposed activity in areas of the deep sea that are critical habitats for many migratory species. IUCN reiterated its position and mandate to its Members to maintain a moratorium on deep-seabed mining and stressed that essential conditions for a regulatory regimen on such activity were still to be met.

Committee of the Whole (17 February)

284. Following extensive discussions in a sub-group of the Aquatic WG, chaired by the United Kingdom, CRP27.2.4 *Deep-sea Mining*, was brought back to the COW for discussions on the remaining bracketed text. Many speakers emphasized the need for more robust scientific information on the impacts of DSM on migratory species and their habitats and adopting a precautionary approach before engaging in deep-sea mineral extraction.
285. On a preambular paragraph referencing CBD Decision 15/24 (on conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity), Norway, supported by Belgium, preferred "Recalling" the Decision rather than "Welcoming" or "Noting" it, stating that this would be discussed at the upcoming session of the UNEA. Norway proposed reference to the same CBD Decision in an operative paragraph and also asked that, in a provision directed to the ScC, the brackets be lifted around "collaborate" in reference to the ISA.
286. Regarding an operative paragraph on urging Parties "not to engage in or support" deep-seabed mineral exploitation activities until sufficient and robust scientific information had been obtained to ensure that they did not cause harmful effects to migratory species, their prey and their ecosystems, Norway proposed replacing the bracketed text to "support" deep-seabed mineral exploitation activities with "sponsor" and asked that the brackets be lifted. In response, Germany, supported by Ireland, the United Kingdom, Belgium, Seychelles, Argentina and the Netherlands, did not agree with Norway's proposal, referring to a long discussion that had taken place in the subgroup on this issue. Germany also noted this would better ensure that applications under the ISA by non-CMS Parties would not be supported.
287. The United Kingdom added that it would not sponsor or support the issuing of exploitation licences for DSM until sufficient scientific evidence was available to assess the potential impact on marine ecosystems and until strong environmental regulations were adopted by the ISA, and supported Germany's proposal on that basis.
288. Argentina, recognizing the potential for conflict with work undertaken under the ISA, commented that it would have been helpful if the ISA Secretary-General had been present at COP14. Argentina noted the letter from the ISA to CMS but expressed that the information in the letter was insufficient.

289. Sweden reiterated that any extraction of minerals must be preceded by scientific knowledge of the consequences and methods of extraction. Following this discussion, Norway withdrew its proposal, saying it could accept “supporting”.
290. Egypt highlighted that, in the Mediterranean, many migratory species had already been affected by DSM techniques.
291. Spain, noting that many threats to biodiversity and migratory species already existed, urged addressing this issue before the impacts on biodiversity and migratory species became irreversible.
292. Panama also highlighted other threats, including climate change and pollution, and called on governments to work with CBD and the BBNJ Agreement to ensure the safeguarding of migratory species and ecosystems.
293. OceanCare, speaking on behalf of the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition, comprised of more than 100 organizations, commented that without robust science, safeguards could not be guaranteed. They pointed to low understanding of the deep-sea and of speculative activities related to DSM.
294. With these amendments, the document was forwarded to the COP for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

295. The Chair explained that the Aquatic WG had made additional changes to this document and received modifications made in the COW as reflected in CRP27.2.4/Rev.1, which was adopted by the COP.

Item 27.3. Marine Wildlife Watching

Item 27.3.1 Recreational in-Water Interactions

Committee of the Whole (14 February)

296. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.27.3.1/Rev.1 *Recreational In-Water Interactions*, which had an annex containing *Guidelines for Recreational In-Water Interactions with Marine Wildlife*. The Aquatic WG had finished work on this issue and CRP27.3.1 was available.

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

297. CRP27.3.1 *Recreational In-Water Interactions* was recommended for adoption and, with the associated Guidelines, was forwarded to the COP.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

298. The COP adopted the draft amendments to Resolution 12.16 and draft Decisions as contained in CRP 27.3.1/Rev.1. The COP also endorsed, as part of the draft amendment to Resolution 12.16 of the *Guidelines for Recreational In-Water Interactions with Marine Wildlife*, contained in CRP 27.3.1/Annex 2 and deleted Decisions 13.66 to 13.68.

Item 27.4. Area-based Conservation Management Item

Item 27.4.1. Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs)

Committee of the Whole (14 February)

299. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.27.4.1 *Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs)*, which contained Annex 1 with a report of the Marine Mammal Protected Area Task Force of the IUCN SSC and Annex 2 with the draft Decisions. The Aquatic WG had finished discussion on the document, and a CRP was available.
300. Bahrain made suggestions on the identification of IMMAs in the Persian Gulf and recommended socio-economic aspects to consider.

301. Egypt supported the statement of Bahrain and noted work in the Mediterranean in cooperation with ACCOBAMS to create a system of protected IMMAs.
302. WDC supported the document and its draft Decisions and encouraged Parties to use IMMAs.
303. Noting that it had organized the first IMMA workshop in 2017 with IUCN, ACCOBAMS supported the draft Decisions in the document.

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

304. With respect to CRP27.4.1 *Important Marine Mammal Areas*, the COP was asked to take note of Annex 1, and the draft Decisions were recommended for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

305. The COP Chair explained that the Aquatic WG had proposed additional changes to UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.27.4.1 reflected in CRP27.4.1. The COP took note of the report of the Joint IUCN SSC/WCPA Marine Mammal Protected Areas Task Force, deleted Decisions 13.54 to 13.57, and adopted new decisions found in CRP27.4.1.

Item 27.4.2. Important Shark and Ray Areas (ISRAs)

Committee of the Whole (14 February)

306. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.27.4.2/Rev.1 *Important Shark and Ray Areas*, which was prepared by the Secretariat. The initiative was already endorsed by the 4th Meeting of Signatories (MOS4) to the MOU on the Conservation of Migratory Sharks (Sharks MOU). ScC-SC6 recommended the document for adoption.

307. Egypt welcomed the draft Decisions and encouraged all Range States to sign the MOU during COP14.

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

308. CRP27.4.2/ *Important Shark and Ray Areas* was recommended for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

309. The COP adopted a draft Resolution and draft Decisions and noted the criteria and process for identifying ISRAs, as found in CRP27.4.2.

Item 27.4.3. Seagrass Ecosystems

Committee of the Whole (14 February)

310. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.27.4.3 *Seagrass Ecosystems*, prepared by the Secretariat.

311. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) commended efforts detailed in the document to promote sustainable management of seagrass ecosystems and their role in supporting migratory species. The UAE proposed the inclusion of new preambular text welcoming the CMS-led 2030 Seagrass Breakthrough initiative that was announced at UNFCCC COP28 as to emphasize collective commitments towards seagrass conservation and restoration and highlight the need for respective financing mechanisms.

312. Bahrain supported amendments proposed by the ScC that captured the vital role and functionality of seagrass ecosystems and welcomed the 2030 Seagrass Breakthrough.

313. Egypt supported inclusion of the amendments proposed by the UAE, and emphasized the economic value of seagrass ecosystems, which provided refuge for many migratory species.

314. Kenya supported the draft Resolution in Annex 1 on *Conservation and Sustainable Management of Seagrass*.

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

315. On CRP27.4.3/Rev.1 *Seagrass Ecosystems*, the EU and its Member States suggested including a reference to the GBF Target 1 (plan and manage all areas to reduce biodiversity loss), as Targets 2 (restore 30 per cent of all degraded ecosystems) and 3 (conserve 30 per cent of lands, waters and seas) were already mentioned. With this amendment, it was recommended for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

316. The Chair explained that the Aquatic WG had proposed additional changes. The COP adopted the draft Resolutions and Decisions contained in CRP27.4.3/Rev.1 with an additional revision made in session that would be reflected in the post-COP final outcome.

Item 27.5. Marine Mammals**Item 27.5.1. Conservation Priorities for Cetaceans**Committee of the Whole (14 February)

317. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.27.5.1/Rev.1 *Conservation priorities for cetaceans*, prepared by the Secretariat and the ScC, with a Resolution contained in Annex 2. The Aquatic WG was reviewing the document and would produce a CRP.
318. Egypt welcomed the draft Decisions and noted overlap between this and other documents. It urged partners to support a workshop for a Red Sea Action Plan for cetaceans.
319. Brazil, with Argentina, expressed support for the document, which was in line with its objective of protecting its more than 50 species of cetaceans, especially migratory whales. It requested the Secretariat to prioritize support for a capacity-building workshop for implementation of an action plan for South Atlantic whales, which had not yet been held due to a lack of resources.

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

320. On CRP27.5.1 *Conservation Priorities for Cetaceans*, draft Decisions and Resolutions were recommended for adoption by the COP. The COP was also asked to take note of the report contained in UNEP/CMS/COP14/Inf.27.5.1.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

321. The COP took note of the reports and recommendations included in UNEP/CMS/COP14/Inf.27.5.1 a) and b) and noted the conservation recommendations for Range States of specific cetacean species in Annex 1 of the document. The COP also adopted the draft Resolution and draft Decisions included in CRP27.5.1, and deleted Decisions 13.80 to 13.85 and repealed Resolution 10.15 (Rev.COP12).

Item 27.5.2. Single Species Action Plan for the Atlantic Humpback Dolphin (*Souza teuszii*)Committee of the Whole (14 February)

322. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.27.5.2/Rev.2 *Single Species Action Plan for the Atlantic Humpback Dolphin (*Souza teuszii*)*, prepared by the Secretariat. The Aquatic WG proposed no changes to the document. The mandate for the work came from Concerted Action (CA) 12.3 (Rev.COP13), which foresaw development of a species action plan; Annex 2 contained the draft SSAP. A related information document contained factsheets.
323. Senegal hosted the Marine Megafauna Week meeting in 2023, which led to a declaration by the Range States in support of the document and the SSAP and urged other Parties to support it.
324. Benin had contributed to the development of the SSAP and echoed the statement of Senegal in calling on Parties to adopt the document and the SSAP to encourage conservation action.

325. The COW recommended the document for adoption by the COP.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

326. The COP adopted the draft Resolution, including the SSAP included in Annex 2 of document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.27.5.2/Rev.2, and adopted its draft Decisions.

Item 27.5.3. Sirenians, Pinnipeds and Otters

Committee of the Whole (14 February)

327. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.27.5.3/Rev.1 *Sirenians, Pinnipeds and Otters*, prepared by the Secretariat.

328. Egypt welcomed the document and highlighted the need to conserve Dugongs in the Arabian Gulf and the Red Sea and called for an Action Plan for the Dugong population of the Red Sea.

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

329. CRP27.5.3 *Sirenians, Pinnipeds and Otters* was recommended by the COW for adoption by the COP.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

330. After referral of document 27.5.3/Rev.1 *Sirenians, Pinnipeds and Otters* to the Aquatic WG, the COW forwarded it to the COP, which adopted new draft Decisions, as contained in CRP27.5.3 and deleted Decisions 13.55, 13.56(c), 13.81(a) and (b), and 13.82(a).

Item 27.6. Marine Turtles

Item 27.6.1. Marine Turtles

Committee of the Whole (14 February)

331. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.27.6.1/Rev.1 *Marine Turtles*, prepared by the Secretariat, which the Aquatic WG proposed to accept. Related document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Inf.27.6.1 contained a draft report of an ongoing *Marine Turtle Legislative Review for the Asia-Pacific Region* prepared by WWF.

332. The Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (IAC) looked forward to working together with CMS and Parties on the conservation of marine turtles.

333. Egypt, which had been monitoring marine turtles in the Red Sea for many years, supported the document.

334. Senegal informed that during the 3rd Meeting of Signatories of the Atlantic Turtles MOU, Signatories reviewed the situation of turtles along the Atlantic coast, and revised, updated and adopted the regional Conservation Management Plan. Senegal supported the document and its draft Decisions.

335. India highlighted the importance of the 9th Meeting of the Signatory States to the IOSEA Marine Turtles MOU scheduled in Tanzania in 2024 as a forum to discuss future actions in detail.

336. WWF drew attention to the legislative review for the Asia-Pacific Region, which aimed to assess and harmonize marine turtle legislation and close gaps in policies at a national level. WWF had received 22 country responses during a regional survey to conduct a preliminary analysis and encouraged remaining Parties to respond.

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

337. On CRP27.6.1 *Marine Turtles*, Brazil, as a party to the IAC, urged that the IAC and CMS cooperate and coordinate to implement decisions, review threats, share expertise, and make the best use of resources; and noted that the Secretary of the IAC was attending a CMS COP for the first time at COP14. The document was recommended to the COP for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

338. The COP adopted the draft Resolutions found in CRP27.6.1 and deleted Decisions 13.69 and 13.70.

Item 27.6.2 Single Species Action Plan for the Hawksbill Turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) in South-East Asia and the Western Pacific Ocean Region

Committee of the Whole (14 February)

339. The Secretariat introduced UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.27.6.2/Rev.1 *Single Species Action Plan for the Hawksbill Turtle (Eretmochelys imbricata) in South-East Asia and the Western Pacific Ocean Region*.
340. Cook Islands, supported by Philippines, underscored the need for financial and technical assistance to implement the SSAP and urged Parties in a position to do so to support it.
341. Senegal, supported by Egypt, stated that a global action plan for the Hawksbill Turtle was needed, citing threats including poaching.

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

342. CRP27.6.2 *SSAP for the Hawksbill Turtle in South-East Asia and the Western Pacific Ocean Region* was recommended for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

343. This document was discussed in the Aquatic WG and as recommended by the COW, the COP adopted the draft Resolution, including the SSAP in UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.27.6.2/Rev.1, and new draft Decisions found in CRP27.6.2.

Item 27.7. Fish

Item 27.7.1. Single Species Action Plan for the Angelshark (*Squatina squatina*) in the Mediterranean Sea

Committee of the Whole (14 February)

344. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.27.7.1 *Single Species Action Plan for the Angelshark in the Mediterranean Sea*, which was developed by the Advisory Committee of the Memorandum of Understanding of Migratory Sharks (Sharks MOU) to guide Mediterranean Range States in activities for Angelshark conservation, with financial support from Monaco.
345. IUCN commented that the Mediterranean region was one of last strongholds for the species.

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

346. CRP27.7.1 *SSAP for the Angelshark in the Mediterranean Sea* was recommended for adoption by the COP.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

347. The COP adopted the draft Resolution, including the SSAP in Annex 2 of document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.27.7.1, and the draft Decisions in CRP27.7.1.

Item 27.7.2 Freshwater Fish Including the European Eel

Committee of the Whole (14 February)

348. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.27.7.2/Rev.1 *Freshwater Fish, including the European Eel*, which was further discussed in the Aquatic WG.

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

349. On CRP27.7.2/Rev.1 *Freshwater Fish, including the European Eel*, the United Kingdom indicated it had several amendments relating to, among others: not dictating actions taken by the StC; facilitating Secretariat and Party leadership to progress work ahead of the COP; how sharing of data would occur; development and dissemination of guidelines and management

tools; and collaboration with the CITES Secretariat on the European Eel (*Anguilla anguilla*).

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

350. The COW returned to this issue. CRP27.7.2/Rev.1 *Freshwater fish and the European Eel* included deletion of Decisions 13.76 to 13.79. The Fisheries Secretariat looked forward to work with CMS on this urgent topic. The CRP was recommended for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

351. The COP adopted the draft Decisions contained in CRP27.7.2/Rev.1 and deleted Decisions 13.76 to 13.79.

Item 27.7.3 Implementation of the CMS Appendix I-listing for the Oceanic Whitetip Shark (*Carcharhinus longimanus*)

Committee of the Whole (14 February)

352. Maldives introduced the document for this agenda item UNEP/COP/CMS14/Doc.27.7.3 *Implementation of the CMS Appendix I-listing for the Oceanic Whitetip Shark (Carcharhinus longimanus)*. They emphasized that the fact that this CMS Appendix I-listed species remained in trade, indicated that global implementation of the Appendix I-listing was inadequate. The document contained proposed decisions that would help improve implementation of the listing for this species.
353. The EU and its Member States welcomed the effort of Maldives, noting the species had declined by 50 per cent in Europe over three generations.
354. Senegal called for efforts to improve the conservation status of the species.

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

355. CRP27.7.3 *Implementation of the CMS Appendix I-listing for the Oceanic Whitetip Shark (Carcharhinus longimanus)* was recommended by the COW for adoption by the COP.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

356. The COP adopted the draft Decisions contained in CRP27.7.3.

ITEM 28. AVIAN SPECIES CONSERVATION ISSUES

Item 28.1 Prevention of Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds

Committee of the Whole (14 February)

357. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.28.1/Rev.1 *Prevention of illegal killing, taking and trade of migratory birds*.
358. Kenya, supporting the proposed amendments within the document, drew attention to Kenya's punitive penalties for taking endangered species.
359. Georgia and Saudi Arabia also made interventions, with the latter noting its work with BirdLife International and the Secretariat and the organisation of a workshop to establish a Southwest Asia Task Force on this issue.

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

360. On CRP28.1 *Prevention of Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds*, Saudi Arabia recommended adding reference to "the Southwest Asia region" in a footnote in the CRP, explaining the preference for the terms illegal hunting, taking and trade, rather than killing. With this amendment, the CRP was recommended for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

361. The COP amended Resolution 11.16 (Rev.COP13), adopted the draft Decisions contained in CRP28.1/Rev.1 and deleted Decisions 13.27 to 13.33.

Item 28.2. Action Plan for Migratory Landbirds in the African-Eurasian Region (AEMLAP)Committee of the Whole (14 February)

362. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.28.2 *Action Plan for Migratory Landbirds in the African-Eurasian Region (AEMLAP)*, prepared by the Secretariat, which highlighted activities during the intersessional period, including updating the AEMLAP POW and renewing membership of the AEMLAP WG, for which a Coordination Unit was established at the Swiss Ornithological Institute.
363. Kenya noted development of a SSAP for Grey Crowned-crane (*Balearica regulorum*), and that it was working with Madagascar to develop a plan for Madagascar Pond-heron (*Ardeola idea*).

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

364. On CRP28.2 *AEMLAP*, BirdLife International proposed language to prioritize action for Yellow-breasted Bunting (*Emberiza aureola*), supported by the United Kingdom and Saudi Arabia.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

365. As recommended by the COW, the COP adopted the draft amendments to Resolution 11.17 (Rev.COP13) and the draft Decisions found in CRP28.2/Rev.1, and deleted Decisions 13.34 to 13.38.

Item 28.3. Preventing Poisoning of Migratory BirdsCommittee of the Whole (14 February)

366. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.28.3 *Preventing Poisoning of Migratory Birds*, which addressed, among other issues, preventing lead poisoning of migratory birds from ammunition and the Lead Task Force (Lead TF), which had yet to meet due to a lack of resources.
367. Kenya noted that poisoning affecting migratory birds was not limited to lead poisoning and stated that the Government of Kenya prohibited poisoning of species.
368. South Africa emphasized the need for available and affordable alternatives to lead ammunition, expressed concern that the Lead TF had not yet met, and urged sending this issue to the Finance and Budget Sub-Committee.
369. BirdLife International also expressed concern with the lack of progress in getting the Lead TF up and running and stressed that progress must be made in the upcoming triennium.

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

370. Following a small amendment by the EU and its Member States, CRP28.3 *Preventing Poisoning of Migratory Birds* was recommended for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

371. As recommended by the COW, the COP amended Resolution 11.15 (Rev.COP13), adopted draft Decisions found in CRP28.3/Rev.1 and deleted Decisions 13.39 and 3.40.

Item 28.4. Flyways**Item 28.4.1. Flyways**Committee of the Whole (14 February)

372. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.28.4.1/Rev.1 *Flyways*, prepared by the Secretariat, which highlighted activities carried out to implement the POW on Migratory Birds and Flyways 2014-2023 and the strategic review of all CMS Flyways-relevant documents, WGs, TFs and other instruments. The document was discussed in the Avian WG.
373. Australia supported the document, highlighted progress made in implementing this Resolution, and noted the importance of collaboration between CMS and the East Asian-Australasian

Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) and partners of the West Pacific Flyway.

Committee of the Whole (17 February)

374. On CRP28.4.1 *Flyways*, Australia proposed deletion of wording agreed by the Avian WG, that still remained in the CRP under Decision 14.EE f). The EU and its Member States proposed to reinstate the words “*covering the entire life cycle of species*” in relation to supporting analyses of datasets and the development of new tools and techniques. Philippines proposed an additional preambular paragraph on acknowledging the work of the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity in collaborating with non-Parties in ASEAN for establishing the ASEAN flyway networks and fostering regional cooperation for the conservation of migratory waterbirds and the wetlands that supported them. With these amendments, the document was recommended to the COP for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

375. As recommended by the COW, the COP amended Resolution 12.11 (Rev.COP13), adopted the draft Decisions in CRP28.4.1/Rev.1 and deleted Decisions 13.41 to 13.46.

Item 28.4.2. Initiative for Central Asian Flyway

Committee of the Whole (14 February)

376. India presented document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.28.4.2 *Initiative for Central Asian Flyway (CAF)*, prepared by the Secretariat, which contained proposals for adoption of a draft Resolution and draft Decisions to establish the Initiative for CAF under CMS, and the adoption of Terms of Reference.
377. Bangladesh supported the Initiative for CAF and mentioned it had conducted satellite tracking of migratory birds in collaboration with IUCN Bangladesh.
378. WWF welcomed the Initiative for CAF.
379. BirdLife International acknowledged the leadership of India in developing the Initiative, which filled a key global gap in flyway conservation.
380. Uzbekistan, which hosted a CAF meeting in 2001 on migratory waterbirds, supported India's comments and the establishment of the Initiative for CAF, which would synergize CMS and non-CMS instruments.

Committee of the Whole (17 February)

381. CRP28.4.2 *Initiative for Central Asian Flyway* included a Resolution and draft Decisions and deletion of one Decision. India noted its commitment to establish a CMS Coordinating Unit for the CAF Initiative . The EAAFP noted that the CAF was an integral part of the Global Flyway Network, and that it would continue to lend its support. The CRP was recommended for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

382. As recommended by the COW, the COP adopted the draft Resolution and draft Decisions, found in CRP 28.4.2/Rev.1, and deleted Decision 13.46.

Item 28.5. Action Plan for Birds

Item 28.5.1. Action Plans for Birds

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

383. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/COP/CMS/Doc.28.5.1/Rev.2 *Action Plans for Birds*, which highlighted the development processes for three new SSAPs, namely for Christmas Island Frigatebird (*Fregata andrewsi*) and Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*) in Asia, while an International Single Species Action Plan for Sooty Falcon (*Falco concolor*) would be considered for adoption upon its finalization by the Standing Committee in the intersessional period between COP14 and COP15, based on draft Decision 14.BB in Annex 2. The

International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Yellow-breasted Bunting (Emberiza aureola) had been adopted by the Standing Committee in line with Decision 13.48, in November 2023.

384. Bangladesh, supported by India, proposed adding text to reflect that it was developing, with India, a proposal for listing the Indian Skimmer (*Rynchops albicollis*) under Appendix I and an SSAP for this species for consideration at COP15.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

385. As recommended by the COW, the COP amended Resolution 12.12 (Rev.COP13) and draft Decisions contained in CRP 28.5.1/Rev.1.

Item 28.5.2. Action Plan for the Christmas Island Frigatebird

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

386. Australia introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.28.5.2/Rev.1 *Christmas Island Frigatebird Single Species Action Plan*. Australia and Philippines were the only two Range States for this species that were Parties to CMS.
387. Philippines supported Australia in efforts to develop a SSAP for the Christmas Island Frigatebird.
388. BirdLife International stated it was ready to support implementation of the SSAP.
389. With no further comments, it was recommended for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

390. As recommended by the COW, the COP adopted the draft amendments to Resolution 12.12 (Rev.COP13), including the *International SSAP for the Conservation of the Christmas Island Frigatebird (Fregata andrewsi)* contained in document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.28.5.2/Rev.1 Annex 1.

Item 28.5.3. Action Plan for the Great Bustard in Asia

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

391. Mongolia introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.28.5.3/Rev.1 *Action Plan for the Great Bustard in Asia*, prepared by the Mongolian Government, along with the Eurasian Bustard Alliance and the Wildlife Science and Conservation Centre of Mongolia. The Action Plan, prepared in consultation with Range States, researchers and organizations and reviewed by Hungary, would promote urgent work needed in Asia and mobilization of resources.
392. Kazakhstan supported adoption of the Action Plan and thanked Mongolia for its leadership.
393. Also supporting adoption of the Action Plan, IUCN noted the input of experts from every Asian Range State, including members of the IUCN SSC Bustard Specialist Group. Noting that the Action Plan included a comprehensive overview of the status of the species and conservation actions, IUCN urged Parties to adopt the plan and encouraged partners to provide resources for its implementation and to find ways to mitigate the threat of power lines.
394. The COW recommended the document for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

395. The COP adopted the draft amendments to Resolution 12.12 (Rev.COP13), including the *Action Plan for the Great Bustard in Asia*, contained in UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.28.5.3/Rev.1.

Item 28.6. African-Eurasian Vultures

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

396. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.28.6/Rev.1 *Conservation of African-Eurasian Vultures*, prepared by the Secretariat, which ScC-SC6 recommended for adoption. Three NGOs supported the implementation of the Vulture Multi-species Action Plan (Vulture MsAP), facilitated by the Secretariat, which prepared a mid-term Implementation Review launched at COP14. A West African Vulture Action Plan was also under development. Significant progress had been made in regions where funding was available, but enhanced coordination capacity was needed.

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

397. CRP 28.6 *African-Eurasian Vultures* was recommended for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

398. Following the document's referral to the Avian WG and as recommended by the COW, the COP adopted the draft amendments to Resolution 12.10 and the draft Decisions, found in CRP 28.6.

Item 28.7 Saker Falcon Global Action Plan

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

399. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/7Doc.28.7/Rev.1 *Saker Falcon (Falco cherrug) Global Action Plan (SAKERGAP)*, prepared by the Saker Falcon Task Force in cooperation with the Secretariat. Annex 1 included a proposed amendment to Resolution 11.18 (Rev.COP12), and Annex 2 included the draft Decisions. ScC-SC6 recommended that COP14 adopt the document. The species is of cultural significance in many parts of its range. However, it suffered threats including electrocution, unsustainable trapping and habitat degradation, and was in rapid decline in Central Asia, and an adaptive management framework would provide renewed focus for its conservation.
400. Mongolia, an important Range State for the Saker Falcon, supported the document, but suggested to keep the SAKERGAP goal in its entirety in the second operative paragraph, and include text relating to CITES, with a minor amendment, as the third operative paragraph.

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

401. For CRP28.7 *Saker Falcon (Falco cherrug) Global Action Plan (SAKERGAP)*, the COP-appointed Councillor for Birds indicated that some revised text had been agreed in the Avian WG for review. Noting the Saker Falcon's significant decline and its distribution in transboundary areas of Asia with frequent movement between Range States, and NGOs including the Biodiversity Research and Conservation Centre added that any planned harvest of the species in one country should be conducted in full cognisance of other Range States.

Committee of the Whole (17 February)

402. CRP28.7 *Saker Falcon (Falco cherrug) Global Action Plan (SAKERGAP)* included amendments and draft Decisions and was recommended to the COP for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

403. The COP adopted the draft amendments to Resolution 11.18 (Rev.COP12) and new draft Decisions found in CRP28.7/Rev.2.

ITEM 29. TERRESTRIAL SPECIES CONSERVATION ISSUES

Item 29.1. Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivore Initiative (ACI)

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

404. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.29.1/Rev.1 *Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative*, prepared by the Secretariat, which included Decisions and one Annex, and an addendum with comments from ScC-SC6, recommending its adoption. The

CMS and CITES Secretariats had developed the initiative in close consultation with Range States and worked on a Joint POW in relation to the African Lion (*Panthera leo*), Cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus*) and African Wild Dog (*Lycaon pictus*), as well as organizing the second ACI Range States meeting. Priority issues revolved around funding, partnership and cooperation, and addressing conflict and co-existence, illegal trade, disease management and a lion database. Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe were asked to provide data and information on the conservation status of their Cheetah populations for review by ScC-SC7.

405. CITES stated that it was in the process of implementing decisions and acknowledged the support of donors and Uganda for hosting the second Range States meeting. Prioritised results were noted by the CITES Animals Committee at its meeting in 2023. CITES would continue to support the Range States within its mandate and in cooperation with CMS.
406. Noting that it had hosted both Range State meetings and the support from partners, Uganda urged all Range States to support implementation of the Decisions outlined in the document.
407. India noted that the Joint Initiative was a welcome mechanism for conservation of emblematic species, and highlighted its lead in the conservation of big cats in Asia, including the reintroduction of Cheetah into India in partnership with African countries. India also stated that it had launched a Big Cat Alliance for seven cats, which aimed to reach out to all Asian Range States to conserve species in the wild, and invited partners to join this alliance. India encouraged Parties to support the POW and the actions being undertaken following adoption of Resolution 13.4.
408. As an ACI Range State, Senegal commended this important initiative coordinated by two conventions, which would strengthen conservation of threatened carnivores in Africa. Senegal supported the Initiative and adoption of draft Decisions.

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

409. CRP29.1 *Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative* was recommended for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

410. This document had been referred to the Terrestrial WG, which proposed additional changes and, as recommended by the COW, the COP adopted CRP 29.1.

Item 29.2. Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna

Item 29.2.1. Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna Concerted Action

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

411. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.29.2.1/Rev1 *Report on the Implementation of the Concerted Action for Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna*, prepared by the Secretariat, which contained a recommendation to extend the range of CMS work on Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna and to close the Concerted Action, carrying over incomplete activities to the Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna Initiative (SSMI), as proposed by Morocco. Activities undertaken included stock-taking of activities, preparation of an action plan and organization of the third regional seminar in March 2023 in Morocco, when Range States agreed to extend the Concerted Action to the Danakil and adjoining desert and semidesert and add the African Wild Ass (*Equus africanus*). It noted potential for future addition of Soemmerring's Gazelle (*Nanger soemmerringii*). The Terrestrial WG agreed with the recommendations.
412. Noting that the African Wild Ass was a top priority for Range States, Ethiopia welcomed the document and supported the draft Decision on African Wild Ass and called on Parties to also support it.
413. Highlighting the threatened status of species and a low level of awareness, Egypt welcomed extending the Concerted Action to cover the Danakil and adjoining deserts and semideserts, and addition of the Road Map for the Conservation of the African Wild Ass to the Action Plan.

Egypt approved establishment of the SSMI, and noted its interest in addition of other species present in Egypt.

414. The UAE commended the collective effort under the CMS Framework. They noted they had spearheaded reintroductions of Scimitar-horned Oryx (*Oryx dammah*), Addax (*Addax nasomaculatus*) and Dama Gazelle (*Nanger dama*) in Chad, leading to an increase in their populations in the wild, with positive impacts on the conservation status on these species. They supported formation of the SSMI, including recognition of UAE support, which would highlight conservation strategies underway and encourage support for similar initiatives.
415. Conservation Force highlighted the potential benefits of game rangers in Texas, United States of America, contributing to reintroduce species to the wild. These hunters relied on legal regulated hunting of Sahelian animals on their ranches to be able to boost and restore their populations in the wild, including research, also for Barasingha (*Rucervus duvaucellii*) in India. Conservation Force noted its readiness to contribute to the SSMI.
416. Israel, which had supported reintroduction efforts of Sahelian antelopes and ostriches to Senegal, welcomed the SSMI and other efforts, but was concerned by the reintroduction approach of ranchers in Texas, which could only gain authorization for hunting by demonstrating their support for conservation.
417. Senegal had contributed to this Concerted Action, with reintroduction programmes for Dama Gazelle, Dorcas Gazelle (*Gazella dorcas*) and Scimitar-horned Oryx, and noted sites where Oryx were reproducing in the wild. Senegal supported the addition of the African Wild Ass to the Initiative, noting its reduction in range and population size.
418. The Chair noted that adoption of the document would result in deletion of Decision 13.101, closure of the Concerted Action on Sahelo-Saharan megafauna, and the removal of species from the list in Resolution 12.28 *Concerted Actions*. The document was recommended for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

419. The COP agreed to close this Concerted Action, as recommended by the COW.

Item 29.2.2. Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna Initiative (SSMFI)

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

420. Morocco introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.29.2.2 *Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna*, which included Annex 1 with proposed amendments to Resolution 9.21 (Rev.COP13) to establish a Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna Initiative (SSMFI). Morocco noted that it hosted the third regional seminar for the conservation and restoration of Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna in 2023 with Range States, partner organizations and experts to evaluate progress and plan actions. The 16 Range States were encouraged to learn from a successful series of reintroductions and protection measures. The meeting in Morocco considered the addition of other species and geographical extension, to enable improved coordination of activities across the Sahara and Danakil area.
421. Noting that it was a SSMF Range State, Algeria encouraged transfrontier projects and supported the document as proposed. It had conducted surveys and managed hunting reserves to ensure the mammals were protected, including in captivity and semi-captivity, and organised awareness raising.
422. Senegal, Egypt and others supported the establishment of the SSMFI, which focused on threatened species.
423. The Chair noted the amendment proposed by the EU and its Member States to the beginning of paragraph 4 of the draft Resolution, which now read: “*Instructs the Secretariat to take up the role of coordinating the Initiative and implementation of the Action Plan and, subject to the*

availability of resources, convene regular Range State meetings...” With this amendment, the COW recommended the document for adoption by the COP.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

424. Following discussions in the Terrestrial WG and as recommended by the COW, the COP adopted amendments to Resolution 9.21 (Rev.COP13) contained in CRP29.2.2/Rev.1 and adopted the POW contained in Annex 2 of Document 29.2.2.

Item 29.3 Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI)

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

425. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/COP/CMS/Doc.29.3/Rev.2 *Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI)*, which highlighted two studies on “*Transboundary Conservation Hotspots for the Central Asian Mammals Initiative*” and on “*Potential for Community-based Wildlife Management of CAMI Species*”. Discussions would continue in the WG.
426. Turkmenistan noted that implementation of the One Health system would be helpful for CAMI.
427. The Chair informed that this would be returned to once a CRP was made available following discussions in the WG.

Committee of the Whole (17 February)

428. Following discussions in the Terrestrial WG, CRP29.3 *Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI)* was considered by the COW and recommended for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

429. The COP adopted the draft Decisions found in CRP 29.3.

Item 29.4 African Elephant

Item 29.4.1 African Elephant Action Plan (AEAP)

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

430. Zimbabwe introduced UNEP/CMS/COP/Doc.29.4.1 *Endorsement of the African Elephant Action Plan*, jointly submitted with Cameroon. Zimbabwe noted amendments to the Plan, including considering separating the mono-specific African Elephant (*Loxodonta africana*) into two species: Savanna Elephant (*L. africana*) and Forest Elephant (*L. cyclotis*). The Plan ranked Priority Objectives to reflect the continental consensus that conflict between humans and elephants must be addressed with urgency, and the increased recognition of the need to understand and address the impacts of climate change in management planning for African Elephant conservation. Zimbabwe also stated that the Plan could help Range States submit proposals for funding to the African Elephant Fund and other funding sources.
431. Kenya supported the proposed amendments, asked that the Secretariat get actively involved, and suggested amending the Resolution to reflect that any new and innovative funding should be to support implementation of the AEAP.
432. The EU and its Member States preferred reference to new and innovative funding “instruments” rather than “models”.
433. Uganda stressed the need for continued monitoring and observation, and collaboration with other Range States, and raised the potential of hybridization between elephant species.
434. Benin, noting both Forest and Savannah Elephants occurred in their country, urged CMS and Parties to support the AEAP.
435. Senegal supported Uganda’s proposal to strengthen studies and monitoring, particularly in countries where both species of elephant occurred, and highlighted the potential for hybridization between both species.

436. Côte d'Ivoire stated that elephants lived in protected areas and nature reserves in Côte d'Ivoire but were still threatened due to a decrease in their surface area. They mentioned the signing of an MOU among 13 countries in West Africa, and that most elephants in Côte d'Ivoire were tagged so their movements could be tracked.
437. Born Free, urging adoption of the amended AEAP, stated that elephants occurred in 37 African countries, and that it was working on a novel funding mechanism.
438. Conservation Force commented that the AEAP would strengthen dialogue among African countries, and should help Range States develop national management plans, particularly in West and Central Africa, where such national plans were still lacking.
439. CITES noted its Standing Committee had adopted a resolution on the AEAP and, supporting the exploration and innovative funding mechanism, and pointed to a CITES paper on this issue.
440. Document 29.4.1 *Endorsement of the African Elephant Action Plan* was referred to the Terrestrial WG, which proposed additional changes as contained in CRP29.4.1/Rev.1. With the proposed amendments, it was recommended that the COP adopt the draft Resolution and endorse the AEAP.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

441. As per the COW recommendations, the COP adopted the amendments to Resolution 12.19 and endorsed the AEAP as found in CRP29.4.1/Rev.1.

Item 29.4.2. West African Elephant MOU

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

442. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/COP/CMS14/Doc.29.4.2 *African Elephant*, which addressed the MOU concerning Conservation Measures for the West African Populations of the African Elephant (West African Elephant MOU). A meeting of the Signatories discussed three options: Option A, terminate the MOU; Option B, adopt the AEAP as the core strategy for African Elephant conservation under the MOU; and Option C, maintain the status quo. The Signatories agreed on Option B, and also decided to recognize the two elephant species separately in the MOU.
443. The document was recommended to the COP for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

444. As recommended by the COW, the recommendations in document UNEP/COP/CMS14/Doc.29.4.2 *African Elephant* were adopted by the COP, and Decisions 13.99 and 13.100 deleted.

Item 29.5. African Wild Ass

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

445. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.29.5/Rev.2 *Conservation of the African Wild Ass (Equus africanus)*, prepared by the Secretariat. The Terrestrial WG recommended the document for approval without amendments, and the ScC recommended approval of the draft Decisions. It was proposed to incorporate the Road Map into the SSMI, which included setting out activities of former Range States Djibouti, Egypt, Somalia and Sudan, where efforts to confirm the possible presence of African Wild Ass were ongoing.
446. There being no comments, the Chair proposed, and the COW agreed, to recommend the document for adoption, noting the deletion of Decision 13.98.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

447. The COP adopted the Decisions found in the Annex of UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.29.5/Rev.2 and deleted Decision 13.98.

Item 29.6. Jaguar**Item 29.6.1. Jaguar Conservation Measures**Committee of the Whole (15 February)

448. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.29.6.1 *Jaguar Conservation Measures*, which followed a request of support from Costa Rica on behalf of Argentina, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. The CMS and CITES Standing Committees had approved the CMS-CITES Joint Work Programme for 2021-2025. The COP was recommended to merge Decisions of document 29.6.1 with those in document 29.6.2.
449. Brazil noted that conservation of the Jaguar (*Panthera onca*) was a high priority for Brazil, and the productive discussions of the workshop in Brazil in 2023.
450. CITES reported that it had adopted a number of decisions on Jaguar, including establishment of a coordination committee for the Jaguar 2030 Road Map and a Range States meeting. The CITES Secretariat had been requested to develop a Joint Work Programme with Range States and others establishing specific activities for Jaguar conservation. This would be submitted to the 33rd meeting of the Animals Committee and the CITES Standing Committee. CITES recommended that both Secretariats organize a second meeting of Jaguar Range States.
451. The Chair noted that the CRP would combine Items 29.61 and 29.62.

Item 29.6.2. Initiative for the JaguarCommittee of the Whole (15 February)

452. Costa Rica introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.29.6.2/Rev.1 *CMS Jaguar Initiative (Panthera onca)*, which included in Annex 1 a draft Resolution for setting up the initiative. Range States had worked with the Secretariat to set up an inter-governmental mechanism that would help them meet obligations under the Convention. A CMS Jaguar initiative would act as a platform for conservation action for Jaguar, working on maximising existing synergies between CMS, CITES and others, and in light of the Jaguar 2030 Road Map. It called on Parties to adopt the Resolution, on Parties and NGOs to support the Work Programme and provide funds for its implementation, and on the ScC to report on progress.

Committee of the Whole (17 February)

453. CRP29.6.2 *CMS Jaguar Initiative* was merged with CRP29.6.1 *Jaguar Conservation Measures* and included a draft Resolution and a draft Decision. Welcoming the Joint CITES-CMS Jaguar Initiative, IUCN noted that its published review on the Jaguar could help to inform the POW and offered its support.
454. Panthera, on behalf of the Jaguar 2030 Road Map Committee, commended the Range State Parties for their commitment to this proposal, which built upon years of cooperative work and noted the need for transboundary conservation.
455. Argentina further commended the work undertaken and Brazil, noting the Jaguar's role as a symbol of biodiversity, highlighted that its conservation was a priority.
456. Highlighting the Jaguar's role as an indicator of ecosystem health, Costa Rica stressed that the new initiative would improve Jaguar conservation and further benefit other felines. This was supported by Peru, which noted its national plan for the Jaguar.
457. The document was recommended for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

458. UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.29.6.1 *Jaguar Conservation Measures* was discussed in the Terrestrial WG, which recommended merging this document with UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.29.6.2 *CMS Jaguar Initiative* and proposed a Resolution and draft Decisions contained in CRP29.6.2, which were adopted by the COP.

Item 29.7. Pastoralism

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

459. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.29.7 *Pastoralism and Migratory Species*, prepared by the Secretariat. The document identified pastoralism as a threat to different species groups. Considering complexities, additional analyses were needed to identify priority areas of work under the auspices of CMS, and a multi-stakeholder approach was recommended. The Terrestrial WG had made some additions to the text in the CRP and recommended it for adoption by the COP.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

460. After referral to the Terrestrial WG, and recommendation by the COW, the COP adopted the draft Decisions contained in CRP 29.7.

ITEM 30. CROSSCUTTING CONSERVATION ISSUES

Item 30.1. Intentional Take

Item 30.1.1. Priorities for Addressing Illegal and Unsustainable Taking of Migratory Species

Committee of the Whole (13 February)

461. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.1.1/Rev.1 *Priorities for Addressing Illegal and Unsustainable Taking of Migratory Species*, prepared by the Secretariat, which included a proposal to mobilize efforts to address these issues. The document defined what was understood as to constitute illegal taking and sustainability and examined the need for a more holistic approach to address gaps in legislation, policies and programmes.
462. Nigeria proposed amendments to clarify that sustainable use should not be promoted, as the use of wildlife should not be considered an integral part of wildlife management. It requested the ScC to develop general guidance on adaptive harvest management and that Task Forces should be referenced as processes to engage with.
463. Kazakhstan supported the document, noting the risk posed by wildlife trade, and acknowledged that trade posed controversial logistical and political issues. It suggested a close alignment with CITES in approaching illegal trade, and that confiscated wildlife specimens should be disposed of appropriately and not enter illegal trade.
464. The United Kingdom welcomed the document, and recommended a more coordinated approach with CITES and other relevant bodies. It reiterated its commitment to this issue, noting priorities of its wildlife crime unit to prevent illegal take, including of European Eel, and highlighted the need for training on illegal taking in national school curricula.
465. The EU and its Member States acknowledged the complex challenges of illegal taking and noted the importance of the BBNJ Agreement. They suggested that the Resolution be amended accordingly to address all CMS species and that fishing was a priority. They further suggested the use of migration ranges to include marine species, as appropriate.
466. Israel advised that all trade should be sustainable, highlighted the issue of confiscated wildlife and its relation to CITES, and proposed amendments in the paragraph concerning enacting the national sale of wildlife specimens.

467. Egypt commented that the wildlife trade had been taking place for a long time, but recent changes often rendered it unsustainable, including in Egypt, where local communities used to catch species sustainably. Egypt added that wildlife law enforcement required significant resources and should be conducted in a collaborative way.
468. The Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF) noted a lack of reference to the ACI and to the taking of predators in general, although illegal taking was a key threat to many predators.
469. WCS urged Parties to prevent illegal taking of migratory species and recommended that addressing domestic use of migratory species should be considered a priority by CMS.
470. Kyrgyzstan recommended adding text referring to local legislative issues, including local courts and the need for local measures to combat illegal taking. It further recommended strengthening national forces to ensure the sustainability of legal taking and to address trafficking and improve regular monitoring for improved species management.
471. Kenya highlighted that community-led approaches to design and to implementation would lead to a reduction in illegal killing by increasing incentives for wildlife stewardship. Kenya proposed some changes to Resolution 11.3.1 by deleting new text and adding supporting community-led approaches and specific measures instead of community livelihoods.
472. FFI, also speaking on behalf of WWF, supported the document and the interventions made, especially concerning confiscated wildlife.
473. Born Free recommended that Parties respect Article III Paragraph 5 of the Convention on prohibiting the taking of species and submitted wording in writing relating to supporting efforts to develop regional and international binding agreements to tackle wildlife trafficking.

Committee of the Whole (17 February)

474. CRP30.1.1/Rev.1 *Priorities for Addressing Illegal and Unsustainable Taking of Migratory Species* included amendments and several new decisions. Israel proposed in Decision 14.CC b) to replace the word “terrestrial” by “migratory”. After some discussion and inputs from Australia, WWF and WCS, in which gaps in addressing taking of both terrestrial and aquatic species were raised, the Executive Secretary of CMS read out the proposed amended paragraph: “*Establish a Working Group on the taking of migratory species for various uses, taking into account ongoing work under the Convention*”. With this proposed amendment, the CRP was recommended for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

475. The Chair noted further modifications by the COW, and the COP adopted the amendments to Resolution 11.31 and draft Decisions contained in CRP30.1.1/Rev.2.

Item 30.1.2 Aquatic Wild Meat

Committee of the Whole (13 February)

476. The Secretariat presented document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.1.2/Rev.3 *Aquatic Wild Meat and Action Plan to Address Aquatic Wild Meat Harvests in West Africa*, prepared by the ScC and its Aquatic Wild Meat WG and the Secretariat. CMS was the only MEA addressing this specific threat. The document included a request to support West African Parties in development of an action plan.
477. BEES, speaking also on behalf of OceanCare, noted that documentation was lacking in West Africa, where marine fauna had long been caught for local consumption for meat, traditional uses and beliefs. Wider hunting and intentional capture of marine fauna had expanded for commercial purposes, resulting in fragmentation of populations, including African Manatee (*Trichechus senegalensis*) and dolphins. They recommended the draft Action Plan for West Africa and called on partners to support it. They encouraged CMS to identify the depth of this issue and measures to reduce the demand for aquatic wild meat.

478. The EU and its Member States supported continuation of the work of the Aquatic Wild Meat WG and the draft Resolution to address wild meat harvest in West Africa. Recognizing the collective effort and key role of Parties and others, they recommended adding research recommendations, including in relation to food security and wild meat use.
479. Senegal noted that illegal practices had grown, and if they were not addressed urgently, migratory marine species would decline in West Africa.

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

480. *CRP30.1.2 Aquatic Wild Meat and Action Plan to Address Aquatic Wild Meat Harvests in West Africa* was recommended for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

481. The COP took note of the report found in Annex 1 of UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.1.2/Rev.3, adopted a new Resolution, including an action plan, found in Annexes 2 and 3, adopted draft Decisions contained in CRP30.1.2, and deleted Decisions 13.64 and 13.65.

Item 30.1.3. Terrestrial and Avian Wild Meat

Committee of the Whole (13 February)

482. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/30.1.3 *Addressing Unsustainable Use of Terrestrial and Avian Wild Meat of Migratory Species of Wild Animals*, prepared by the Secretariat. An analysis of terrestrial species had been undertaken, while an analysis of avian species was underway.
483. The EU and its Member States recommended adoption of the draft Decisions in Annex 2 of document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.1.1 and agreed to delete Decisions 13.109 to 13.112. They suggested follow-up work based on recommendations under document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.1.1 for avian wild meat, and encouraged Parties, non-Parties and others to monitor and implement management plans for species subject to unsustainable or illegal taking.
484. WCS urged Parties to include all decisions of the ScC-SC6 and recommended inclusion of ScC-SC text in a different font to enable text to be clearly identified.

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

485. Following agreement to delete decisions from COP13, UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.1.3 *Terrestrial and Avian Wild Meat* was recommended for adoption, taking note of the Executive Summary of the study contained in the Annex to the document.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

486. The COP took note of the Executive Summary found in the Annex to document UNEP/CMS/COP14/30.1.3, and deleted Decisions 13.109 to 13.112, as recommended by the COW.

Item 30.2 Conservation Planning and Management

Item 30.2.1 Ecological Connectivity

Item 30.2.1.1 Ecological Connectivity – Policy Aspects

Item 30.2.1.2 Ecological Connectivity – Technical Aspects

Committee of the Whole (13 February)

487. The COP-appointed Councillor on Connectivity and Ecological Networks introduced this issue and relevant documents:
- UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.2.1.1 *Ecological Connectivity – Policy Aspects*
 - UNEP/CMS/COP14/Inf.30.2.1.1 *Initiatives on Connectivity*
 - UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.2.1.2 *Ecological Connectivity – Technical Aspects*

488. The documents reported on the initiatives of the CMS Secretariat and the ScC-SC Ecological Connectivity WG, including the involvement of the CMS Executive Secretary and the Secretariat, which had contributed to connectivity being recognized as a major component of global conservation strategies. They highlighted the importance of connectivity for all aspects of conservation and sustainable use, offered an overview of existing initiatives on connectivity and a vision of the unique role CMS played for connectivity, and stimulated new initiatives to further support this role of CMS.
489. The EU and its Member States called for finding ways to improve connectivity, and proposed that the text of the draft Resolution be amended to include the wording “habitats connection without hindrance to cover ecological connectivity, as not only species would benefit from it, and the habitats also need this connectivity”.
490. The United Kingdom put forward suggested amendments to fourteen paragraphs and summarized them for the COW, including on preambular language on the Samarkand SPMS and clarifications on some references to resolutions and other language for accuracy, and suggested the inclusion of a new preambular paragraph on Ecologically and Biologically Significant Marine Areas. The United Kingdom proposed a new operative paragraph, requesting that the Secretariat report to the COP on this issue.
491. WCS proposed several amendments, including language on ecological integrity, and stated that assessments of ecological connectivity were critical to inform conservation planning.
492. BirdLife International called for referring to the needs of birds, to flyways, and to the CMS *Atlas on Animal Migration*.
493. WWF suggested a modification in the document to include a reference to Important Marine Mammal Areas.
494. Egypt underscored that some of the terminology required further clarification and could cause confusion, such as integrity and resilience.

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

495. The Secretariate prepared the CRP30.2.1.1. *Ecological Connectivity – Policy Aspects*. The EU and its Member States, supported by the United Kingdom and Switzerland and with a contribution from the Centre for Large Landscape Conservation, raised one amendment, while Switzerland suggested to recognize the changed definition of the term “connectivity”. With these changes, the CRP was recommended for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

496. On *Ecological Connectivity – Policy Aspects*, the COP adopted the consolidated Resolution, as well as the Decisions found in CRP 30.2.1.1/Rev.1, and deleted Decisions 13.113 to 13.115.
497. On *Ecological Connectivity – Technical Aspects*, the COP took note of the four reports found in Annexes 1 to 4 of UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.2.1.2.

Item 30.2.2 Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCAs)

Committee of the Whole (13 February)

498. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.2.2/Rev.2 *Transfrontier Conservation Areas*, which highlighted TFCAs in Africa, in particular.
499. Zimbabwe, supported by Uganda, indicated that countries in Eastern and Southern Africa had not been consulted and their views were not reflected. They suggested deferring the draft Decisions directed to Parties to COP15 pending a thorough consultation process.

500. Uganda cited the need for capacity building on the use of proposed tools, noting this could be done through technical support to Parties involved.
501. The United Kingdom proposed minor amendments to the draft Decision.
502. The Chair informed that the paper would be referred to the Institutional and Crosscutting WG and would come back to the Committee as a CRP.

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

503. CRP30.2.2 *Trans-frontier Conservation Areas* was recommended for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

504. The COP adopted new decisions found in CRP 30.2.2 and deleted Decisions 13.116 to 13.118.

Item 30.2.3 Community Participation and Livelihoods

Committee of the Whole

505. The Secretariat introduced Document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.2.3 *Community Participation and Livelihoods*, which contained an analysis of case studies on community involvement in species conservation. The Secretariat explained that a study on the “*Potential for Community-Based Wildlife Management of CAMI species*” was forthcoming.
506. The United Kingdom, supported by the EU and its Member States, noted that the term “communities” should be understood to mean “Indigenous Peoples and local communities”.
507. Egypt stated that Indigenous Peoples and local communities should be involved in decision making.
508. Born Free stressed that collaboration among communities along migration routes should be fostered.

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

509. On CRP30.2.3/Rev.1 *Community Participation and Livelihoods*, the United Kingdom, supported by the EU and its Member States, requested that, in agreement with the preambular paragraph on communities, the remaining references to “communities”, which had been changed to “Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities” (IPLCs) revert back to the original language. The Snow Leopard Conservancy, supported by Conservation Force, urged for the inclusion of IPLCs in decision-making processes.
510. Israel proposed a new preambular paragraph on recognizing that traditional interactions by IPLCs with wildlife could sometimes be harmful to wildlife populations. Conservation Force responded that such language with negative connotations could do more harm than good for conservation. Zimbabwe did not agree with the submission by Israel.

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

511. New Zealand explained that community involvement was important and should be encouraged. Israel withdrew its proposal. The COW then recommended this document for adoption by the COP.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

512. As recommended by the COW, the COP adopted a new Resolution which included “*Key Guiding Principles on the involvement of Communities in the Conservation of Migratory Species*”, and a Decision found in CRP30.2.3/Rev.4. The COP also deleted Decisions 13.119 to 13.121.

Item 30.3 Infrastructure

Item 30.3.1. Infrastructure and Impact Assessment

Committee of the Whole (13 February)

513. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.3.1/Rev.1 *Infrastructure Development and Migratory Species*, prepared by the Secretariat. The document reported on the implementation of Decisions 13.130 to 13.134 and addressed cumulative effects assessments for which the Secretariat had identified a need.
514. The United Kingdom highlighted the importance of considering cumulative impacts of infrastructure developments, and recommended flexibility in how Parties delivered in this respect. It proposed amendments emphasizing good quality impact assessments that included cumulative effects, and recommendations in terminology.
515. The EU and its Member States supported the amended text proposed by the ScC and the Secretariat. They encouraged Parties to observe and fulfil the recommended actions, and to take account of ecological connectivity and restoration when planning infrastructure.
516. The UAE recognized the importance of impact assessments and encouraged the development of biodiversity management plans. Referring to proposed text in Annex 1 relating to sharing plans and assessments, they believed in a more flexible approach that encouraged transparency and fostered a collaborative environment for best practices. The UAE confirmed their commitment to the principle of sustainable development in relation to infrastructure.
517. India noted the WG findings of significant gaps in funding for migratory species and the lack of capacity to implement actions. It urged dialogue and building capacity and drew attention to the need to consider political sensitivity under Annex 2.
518. The Chair informed that the paper would be referred to the Institutional and Crosscutting WG to develop a CRP.

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

519. The COW recommended that the COP adopt CRP30.3.1/Rev.1 *Infrastructure Development and Migratory Species*.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

520. The COP adopted the amendments to Resolution 7.2 (Rev.COP12) and the draft Decisions contained in CRP 30.3.1, and deleted Decisions 13.130 to 13.134.

Item 30.3.2. Renewable Energy and Migratory Species

Committee of the Whole (13 February)

521. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/30.3.2 *Renewable Energy and Migratory Species*, which reported on progress in implementing Resolutions 10.11 (Rev.COP13) and 11.27(Rev.COP13) and Decisions 13.106-13.108. The document highlighted activities carried out by the ETF, which had focused on migratory birds, but would be extended to address all migratory taxa. It included a new Decision that proposed extending the scope of the ETF to cetaceans.
522. The EU and its Member States noted that the development of new infrastructure for renewable energy was important for sustainable development but posed increasing threats to migratory species, and most Parties faced challenges in performing impact assessments. They encouraged Parties to engage with the ETF and learn from its experiences; expressed support for the draft Decisions and ScC amendments; and proposed amendments, including to enable the energy sector to take actions to reduce negative impacts.
523. WDC suggested new wording relating to habitat loss and degradation in draft Decision 14.AA of document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.3.2/Add.1, to give a greater focus on impacts on

ecosystems.

524. Egypt reported on best practice relating to energy, and recommended working together to prepare guidelines as well as in implementation and training.
525. The United Kingdom supported the draft Decisions, except 14.AA d), which requested Parties to report on progress in their National Reports, including monitoring of the efficacy of measures taken, to COP15. The United Kingdom suggested narrowing this request to reduce the burden on Parties.
526. The UAE considered migratory species routes and behaviour in renewable energy developments, while the Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund had supported successful mitigation actions in Mongolia that could be highlighted in case studies to encourage the inclusion of innovative technologies and promote the inclusion of lessons learned into guidance for policy makers.
527. The Chair informed that the Institutional and Crosscutting Issues WG would review the CRP.

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

528. On CRP30.3.2 *Renewable Energy and Migratory Species*, the United Kingdom proposed replacing “requested” with “encouraged” in subparagraph a) of draft Decision 14.AA on integrating biodiversity and migratory species conservation needs into national energy and climate policy and action plans. The EU and its Member States indicated that they could not accept the United Kingdom’s proposal. The Chair requested both Parties to informally consult to find a resolution. Following consultations, the EU and its Member States and the United Kingdom agreed on “recommended” with respect to a provision on integrating biodiversity and migratory species conservation needs into national energy and climate policy action plans.
529. BirdLife International encouraged increased resourcing from Parties for the ETF.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

530. As recommended by the COW, the COP took note of a list of activities to be carried out by the ETF elaborated on in UNEP/CMS/COP14/30.3.2, adopted draft Decisions contained in CRP30.3.2/Rev.1, and deleted Decisions 13.106 to 13.108.

ITEM 30.4. THREATS

Item 30.4.1 Climate Change

Committee of the Whole (February 14)

531. The United Kingdom Scientific Councillor introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.4.1/Rev.3 *Climate Change and Migratory Species*, prepared by the ScC. Annex 2 contained draft Decisions, including draft TOR for a CMS ScC WG on Climate Change and Migratory Species. A related information document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Inf.30.4.1 contained a review *Climate Change and Migratory Species: a review of impacts, conservation actions, ecosystem services and indicators*.
532. Brazil, which supported the document, reminded the meeting that it would host the 30th session of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP30) in 2025, during which they expected Indigenous Peoples and local communities to play a key role.
533. South Africa recommended to add ecosystem-based adaptation where reference was made to nature-based solutions, consistent with CBD and UNFCCC language.
534. The EU and its Member States had considered mainstreaming climate in internal legislation and proposed strengthening language in the documents and proposed amendments.

535. New Zealand informed that climate change impacts were already being felt by migratory species in Oceania and supported the document and its draft Decisions.
536. IFAW, on behalf of BEES, BirdLife International, Born Free, High Seas Alliance, HSI, Law of the Wild, OceanCare, Pan African Sanctuaries Alliance, Panthera, Save Our Seas, WCS, WDC and WWF, highlighted that the work of CMS was crucial to address the impacts of climate change on migratory species. They welcomed the document and its draft Decisions and highlighted that CMS was well-placed to play a leading role and to promote it in other MEAs.
537. Senegal supported adoption of the document and the amendments tabled by the EU and its Member States and South Africa, especially concerning nature-based solutions. Senegal noted impacts of climate change on marine turtles, which were losing their breeding sites in coastal areas, while rising temperatures were having wide impacts on reptiles.
538. Maldives welcomed the document and, in Revised Annex 1 to Resolution 12.21, proposed an additional point on degraded areas under 'Measures to facilitate species adaptation in response to climate change'.
539. FFI underlined the role of local communities in combating climate change and suggested adding an operative paragraph to urge Parties and non-Parties to involve Indigenous Peoples and local communities, especially where climate change mitigation measures were required.

Committee of the Whole (17 February)

540. CRP30.4.1 *Climate Change and Migratory Species* included proposed amendments to Resolution 12.21, and a recommendation to re-establish a WG under the ScC, take note of document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Inf.30.4.1 and delete Decisions 13.126 and 13.128. The United Kingdom suggested two edited corrections, supported by the EU and its Member States, which also proposed addition of the word "external" in paragraph 14.DD. With these proposed amendments, the CRP was recommended for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

541. Following modifications made in the COW, the COP took note of UNEP/CMS/COP14/Inf.30.4.1, adopted the amendments to Resolution 12.21 and the draft Decisions contained in CRP30.4.1/Rev.1, and deleted Decisions 13.126 to 13.128.

Item 30.4.2. Insect Decline and Its Threat to Migratory Insectivorous Animal Populations

Committee of the Whole (February 14)

542. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.4.2/Rev.1 *Insect Decline and its Threat to Migratory Insectivorous Animal Populations*, prepared by the Secretariat with input from the ScC. The review was financially supported by Germany and Australia, and the full text is available as document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Inf.30.4.2. Draft Decisions provide guidance for the continuation of work in the next triennium.
543. Australia welcomed the report on insect decline and its key messages and declarations and expressed its readiness to further support the ScC to review findings and follow-up on recommendations of the review.
544. The United Kingdom welcomed the report and provided some drafting suggestions.

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

545. CRP30.4.2 *Insect Decline and its Threat to Migratory Insectivorous Animal Populations* was recommended by the COW for adoption by the COP.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

546. The COP took note of the summary of the report contained in Annex 1 to document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.4.2/Rev.1, adopted the decisions in CRP30.4.2, and deleted Decision 13.129.

Item 30.4.3 Wildlife Disease

Committee of the Whole (13 February)

547. The COP-appointed Councillor for Wildlife Health introduced documents UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.4.3 *Wildlife Disease* and UNEP/CMS/COP14/Inf.30.4.3 *Migratory Species and Health*, which contained a *Review of Migration and Wildlife Disease Dynamics, and the Health of Migratory Species, within the Context of One Health*. Document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.4.3 reported on the renewed interest in health including zoonoses following COP13, which took place in the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic. It also included, in Annex 2, proposed amendments to Resolution 12.6 *Wildlife Disease and Migratory Species*, in Annex 3, a new proposed resolution on *Avian Influenza*, and in Annex 4 draft Decisions.
548. The EU and its Member States supported the One Health approach and recommended that the World Health Organization (WHO) be engaged on this issue before its next Assembly meeting in May 2024.
549. Israel stressed that pathogen spillover should be emphasized more, as it represents risk to wildlife but also in terms of the risk to humans. CMS focal points should engage with WHO.
550. Australia and the United Kingdom supported the stand-alone resolution on *Avian Influenza*.
551. Born Free supported the CMS approach to wildlife diseases and in adopting a precautionary approach.
552. CITES noted it was instructed to collaborate with CMS on the risk of pathogen spillover from wildlife trade.
553. WCS stressed the importance of addressing pathogen spillover, which poses a significant risk to wildlife, livestock and people, even if not always accompanied by symptoms of disease. WCS also supported CMS focal point engagement with WHO.
554. The United Kingdom preferred replacing the term “wildlife disease” with “wildlife health” to reflect the terminology used by One Health.
555. The Institutional and Crosscutting Issues WG was tasked with further discussing this issue.

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

556. CRP30.4.3 *Wildlife Disease* was recommended for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

557. As recommended by the COW, the COP took note of the summary of the report *Migratory Species and Health: A Review of Migration and Wildlife Disease Dynamics, and the Health of Migratory Species, within the Context of One Health*. The COP also adopted the amendments to Resolution 12.6 *Wildlife Disease*, a new Resolution on *Avian Influenza*, and the draft Decisions contained in CRP30.4.3.

Item 30.4.4 Light Pollution

Committee of the Whole (14 February)

558. The COP-appointed Councillor for Marine Pollution introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.4.4 *Light Pollution Guidelines for Wildlife* along with the CMS Light Pollution Guidelines contained in Annex 2.
559. Australia supported the document, which developed national guidelines into a global guidance, and suggested to add “International” to the title, to differentiate the global guidance from the

earlier national guidance document.

560. New Zealand noted that the additional species groups added to the revised guidelines would help Parties address threats to migratory species. They asked the CMS Secretariat to make the guidelines available on its website.
561. OceanCare suggested that the work on light pollution should continue, led, if possible, by a COP-appointed Councillor.
562. The EU and its Member States supported the guidelines.

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

563. CRP30.4.4 *Light Pollution* was recommended for adoption following Australia's proposal to change the name of the Guidelines to "International" Light Pollution Guidelines for Migratory Species, to distinguish them from national guidelines.

Final COP Plenary

564. As recommended by the COW, the COP adopted amendments to Resolution 13.5, the draft Decisions, and the *CMS International Light Pollution Guidelines for Migratory Species* contained in CRP30.4.4/Rev.1. It also deleted Decisions 13.138 and 13.139.

Item 30.4.5 Plastic Pollution

Committee of the Whole (14 February)

565. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.4.5/Rev.1 *Impacts of Plastic Pollution on Aquatic, Terrestrial and Avian Species*, which was prepared by the Secretariat and the ScC.
566. Annex 1 contained an executive summary of the Report *Impacts of Plastic Pollution on Freshwater Aquatic, Terrestrial and Avian Migratory Species in the Asia and Pacific Region*, with the full report contained in UNEP/CMS/COP14/Inf.30.4.5. Annex 2 contained the draft Decisions.
567. The document also addressed the issue of ghost gear under Resolution 12.20 on Marine Debris, reporting on the work of the Global Ghost Gear Initiative.
568. On mobilization of resources, Brazil urged consideration of specific challenges faced by developing countries.
569. The EU and its Member States, noting the funding required to develop reports, suggested subsuming 14.BB a) under 27.2.1.
570. Maldives called for support to upstream activities on migratory species, and an additional decision directed to the Secretariat, stating that, subject to resources, Parties' capacity to address plastic pollution to reduce negative impacts on migratory species should be increased.
571. FFI noted the importance of local voices and practices in the development and implementation of effective locally appropriate actions.

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

572. On CRP30.4.5/Rev.1, the EU and its Member States did not agree to language on specific challenges faced by "developing countries" in 14.BB. Brazil favoured retaining it, and the Chair noted this would be discussed in conjunction with CRP14.2 to find a solution.

Committee of the Whole (17 February)

573. CRP30.4.5/Rev.2 *Plastic Pollution* included the phrase "developing countries" in draft Decision 14.BB, for which the Chair proposed to transpose the same wording used in CRP14.2.

574. Antigua and Barbuda, as one of the first Caribbean countries to ban single use plastics, noted its commitment to address plastic pollution and its support for the plastics treaty being negotiated, as well as the need to continue to address abandoned gear. Further noting their input to developing the Global Ghost Gear Initiative (GGGI) toolkit, they proposed amending the text to Decision 14.AA c) to read: “*Implement strategies to increase gear traceability through the implementation of fishing gear marking schemes in line with the FAO voluntary guidelines and participate in the ongoing FAO global assessment of ALDFG*”. With these additions, the CRP was recommended for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

575. The COP took note of the Executive Summary and Conclusions of the report *Impacts of Plastic Pollution on Freshwater Aquatic, Terrestrial and Avian Migratory Species in the Asia and Pacific Region*, contained in Annex 1 to document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.4.5/Rev.1, adopted the Decisions contained in CRP30.4.5/Rev2, and deleted Decisions 13.123 to 13.125.

Item 30.5 Conservation Implications of Animal Culture and Social Complexity

Committee of the Whole (14 February)

576. On behalf of Chair of the Expert Working Group on Animal Culture and Social Complexity, the Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.5/Rev.1 *Conservation Implications of Animal Culture and Social Complexity*, which was prepared by the ScC and its Expert WG on the Conservation Implications of Animal Culture and Social Complexity. The Annexes contained recommendations from the second CMS Workshop on the Conservation Implications of Animal Culture and Social Complexity, and draft Decisions.

577. IUCN made a statement on *Human and Animal Culture as Determinants of Dynamic Spatial Units for Species Conservation Action*.

578. The EU and its Member States encouraged stakeholders, to organize appropriate activities to facilitate Parties to address the recommendations and draft Decisions.

579. Senegal underscored that Chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*) and other migratory species relied on cultures that allowed them to survive in hostile environments.

580. Monaco recalled that the issue of culture for conservation began at COP11 with cetaceans and had expanded to include other species.

581. The United Kingdom welcomed the work being undertaken and highlighted how the practical application of such information could help achieve positive conservation outcomes.

582. OceanCare encouraged Parties to adopt and accept the Expert WG’s work on animal culture and complexity.

583. Born Free highlighted the social complexity of some of the CMS-listed species and urged following international consensus principles for ethical wildlife control.

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

584. The COW recommended adoption of Decisions in CRP30.5 *Conservation Implications of Animal Culture and Social Complexity* and that the COP take note of the reports and the recommendations of the Expert WG.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

585. As recommended by the COW, the COP took note of the reports referenced in the document and the recommendations of the Expert WG, adopted Decisions contained in CRP30.5, and deleted Decisions 13.101 to 13.105.

Item 30.6 TourismCommittee of the Whole (14 February)

586. Document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.30.6/Rev.1 *Ecotourism and Migratory Species* was introduced by the United Kingdom, with proposed amendments to Resolution 12.23, including a new Annex to the Resolution containing guidance on ecotourism and migratory species. UNEP/CMS/COP14/Inf.30.6 contained a wider review of migratory species ecotourism.
587. The EU and its Member States noted that the work of the United Kingdom and the Secretariat would help with the development, implementation and revision of national tourism plans.
588. India called attention to the benefits of low impact tourism to local communities and including them in the implementation of tourism plans and cited the negative impacts of unplanned tourism.
589. Born Free warned against unsustainable tourism, and advised that guidelines were needed, which could also bring impetus to IUCN guidelines.
590. Brazil proposed to distinguish between recreation and ecotourism and discussed connectivity between protected areas.

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

591. CRP30.6 *Ecotourism and Migratory Species*, following an amendment by the United Kingdom, was recommended for adoption by the COP.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

592. As recommended by the COW, the COP took note of UNEP/CMS/COP14/Inf.30.6, adopted amendments to Resolution 12.23 contained in CRP30.6/Rev.1, endorsed the guidelines annexed to the Resolution, and deleted Decisions 13.135 and 13.136.

ITEM 31. AMENDMENTS OF CMS APPENDICES**Item 31.1 Taxonomy and Nomenclature**Committee of the Whole (14 February)

593. Document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.31.1/Rev.1 *Taxonomy and Nomenclature* was prepared by the ScC and the Secretariat and contained four annexes. UNEP/CMS/COP14/Inf.31.1 contained an excerpt from the standard reference for fish for each fish species listed in CMS Appendices.
594. There being no comments, the COW approved sending the recommendations detailed in the document to the COP for adoption.

Final COP Plenary

595. The COP: adopted the recommendations on the taxonomy of aquatic mammals included in Annex 1 of the document; adopted the amendments to Resolution 12.27 contained in Annex 2 of UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.31.1/Rev.1, including its List of Standard References included in Annex 3; and adopted the draft Decisions contained in Annex 4.

Item 31.2 Disaggregation of Avian Families and Genera Listed on Appendix IICommittee of the Whole (14 February)

596. The COP-appointed Councillor for Birds introduced UNEP/CMS/COP/Doc.31.2/Rev.1 *Guidance on the Disaggregation of Families and Genera Listed in Appendix II*, which was prepared by the ScC and discussed in the Avian WG. The Annexes included guidance on the treatment of species and a request to the ScC to establish an advisory list of species within the families and genera aggregated under Appendix II.

597. The United Kingdom expressed its support for Option 1.b, for the ScC to create and maintain an advisory list of migratory species in Appendix II with an unfavourable conservation status.
598. The recommendations were approved by the COW and forwarded to the COP for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 Plenary)

599. The COP adopted the draft Resolution contained in Annex 1 of the document and the draft Decisions contained in Annex 2.

Item 31.3. Potential Avian Taxa for Listing

Committee of the Whole (14 February)

600. The ScC introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.31.3 *Potential Avian Taxa for Listing*. A draft Resolution was contained in an Annex.
601. The EU and its Member States proposed that Parties “take note of” rather than “endorse” the list of avian species that were likely to meet the criteria for listing in the Appendices.
602. New Zealand noted that it was planning, with BirdLife International, to bring a listing on gadfly petrels to COP15.
603. Bangladesh announced that it would prepare a listing proposal for Masked Finfoot (*Heliopais personatus*) for consideration at COP15, noting its dependence on coastal mangroves.

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

604. CRP31.3 *Potential Avian Taxa for Listing* was recommended for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

605. The COP adopted the Resolution and Decisions contained in CRP31.3.

Item 31.4. Proposals for Amendment of Appendices I and II of the Convention

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

606. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.31.4/Rev.1 *Proposals for Amendment of Appendices I and II of the Convention*, which presented a summary of proposals, including information on updates. The COP was expected to take decisions on the proposals.

Item 31.4.1. Proposal for the Inclusion of the Eurasian Lynx (*Lynx lynx*) in Appendix II and Balkan Lynx (*Lynx lynx balcanicus*) in Appendix I of the Convention

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

607. North Macedonia introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.31.4.1/Rev.1 *Proposal for the Inclusion of the Eurasian Lynx (Lynx lynx) in Appendix II and Balkan Lynx (Lynx lynx balcanicus) in Appendix I of the Convention*. North Macedonia, as a proponent of the proposal, informed that the Eurasian Lynx populations were fragmented and the Balkan Lynx subspecies highly threatened. North Macedonia expected that the proposal would build on current actions to maintain populations, improve connectivity, and remove barriers to migration. The Convention required that listed species demonstrated migratory behaviour; both Eurasian Lynx and Balkan Lynx met these criteria, as they engaged in altitudinal migration and dispersal. Cooperation between Range States would contribute to improve their status, address threats, conduct research and build capacity for monitoring and conservation activities.
608. Supporting this proposal, Albania explained that Balkan Lynx had been protected in Albania since 1969 under national legislation.
609. Turkmenistan reported that there was a small population of Eurasian Lynx between Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan located in the southern part of both countries, and inclusion of this species would strengthen cooperation. Turkmenistan supported the proposal.

610. Urging Parties to adopt the proposal, Born Free expressed the proponents had made a strong case for these listings clearly demonstrating their migratory status, and indicating how the species would benefit from international cooperation.
611. While applauding the efforts of proponents to increase the conservation status of this apex predator, Conservation Force requested further information about predictable movements of lynx. Whilst it was clear that the species dispersed, including young animals, and exhibited altitudinal movement, it did not consider these movements to be an indication of migration.
612. North Macedonia informed that male Eurasian Lynxes foraged large distances in different directions, while females also showed long philopatric behavioural movements. While research was lacking from Asia, North Macedonia expected that adoption of this proposal would promote conservation actions and improve knowledge.
613. The COW recommended the proposal to the COP for adoption.

Item 31.4.2. Proposal for the Inclusion of the Pallas's Cat (*Felis manul*) in Appendix II of the Convention

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

614. Kazakhstan, also on behalf of Uzbekistan, introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.31.4.2/Rev.1 *Proposal for the Inclusion of the Pallas's Cat (Felis manul) in Appendix II of the Convention*, and urged Parties to support the proposal for this rare species in strong decline across its wide range. Many populations were transboundary, with home ranges covering large distances, and prone to numerous threats, including habitat degradation. Twenty per cent of its range was covered by the CAMI area. An Appendix II listing would enhance conservation measures and raise its profile at national and regional levels.
615. Uzbekistan supported the listing, which would enhance the species' conservation, and was ready to collaborate in its recovery.
616. Turkmenistan noted the presence of different populations of the species in its protected areas, while the majority of animals were transboundary, moving between Turkmenistan and Iran, and Turkmenistan and Afghanistan. Implementation of its conservation strategy developed in 2019 would be enhanced by the listing.
617. Born Free believed the proponents had adequately met requirements to demonstrate the relevance of the species to CMS, which was in a strong position to foster collaboration to support this initiative.
618. The COW recommended the proposal to the COP for adoption.

Item 31.4.3. Proposal for the Inclusion of the Guanaco (*Lama guanicoe*) in Appendix II of the Convention

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

619. Chile introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.31.4.3 *Proposal for the Inclusion of the Guanaco (Lama guanicoe) in Appendix II of the Convention*, highlighting that Guanaco, a species in arid and semiarid regions of South America, had a broad but fragmented distribution, with isolated populations threatened. Migratory movements were essential for connectivity between populations, which were often blocked by human activities, including fencing, mining and oil and gas developments. Chile noted that an Appendix II listing would help to drive actions to maintain connections, restore populations and safeguard habitat.
620. Noting that it had a large population of Guanaco that had suffered major decline, Argentina supported the proposal of Peru, Chile, Bolivia and Paraguay, which would help to conserve the species through agreements between Range States.

621. WCS supported adoption of the proposal and expressed its commitment to continue collaboration with Range States and local communities for its conservation, to address illegal trade and to equitably manage shared populations.

622. The COW recommended the proposal to the COP for adoption.

Item 31.4.4. Proposal for the Inclusion of Lahille's Bottlenose Dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus gephyreus*) in Appendix I and II of the Convention

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

623. Argentina, also on behalf of Brazil and Uruguay, introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.31.4.4 *Proposal for the Inclusion of Lahille's Bottlenose Dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus gephyreus*) in Appendix I and II of the Convention*. This sub-species, estimated at 600 individuals, endemic to coastal waters of southern Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina, and under marked decline in the Rio Plata Estuary, was classified as Vulnerable by IUCN and Endangered in the three countries. Recent studies confirmed movements of the species between countries. Listing would help drive improvements in national and regional management, and the Range States would take forward a CA if the proposal was adopted.

624. Noting the dolphin's occurrence in two of its protected areas and inclusion in its national plan for marine cetaceans, Brazil informed that it was working on bycatch issues, but that population decline would only be halted by cooperation between all Range States, which would be enhanced by adoption of this proposal.

625. Uruguay was committed to protect this threatened dolphin, and was working with all types of industrial fisheries and had set out protection measures. Listing on CMS Appendices would support regional management between the Range States.

626. The United Kingdom supported the listing proposal, which would promote conservation.

627. Peru supported the proposal recognizing the threats the dolphin faced.

628. Concerned about this dolphin's status since 2018 due to bycatch and disease, IWC recommended it as a priority for a conservation management plan and supported the proposal.

629. The COW recommended the proposal to the COP for adoption.

Item 31.4.5. Proposal for the Inclusion of the Baltic Proper Population of the Harbour Porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*) in Appendix I of the Convention

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

630. The EU and its Member States introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.31.4.5 *Proposal for the Inclusion of the Baltic Proper Population of the Harbour Porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*) in Appendix I of the Convention*. The main threats to this population of some 500 individuals across nine countries were bycatch and contaminants, while underwater noise could cause displacement and behavioural impacts. Regular movements between countries had been identified. As measures to protect the species had so far proven insufficient, its inclusion on CMS Appendix I would promote more efforts to improve its conservation status.

631. The United Kingdom supported the proposal, noting that this population was highly threatened and that bycatch was a priority area of focus for marine conservation efforts in the United Kingdom.

632. Mentioning significant decline of this small population, OceanCare stressed that the listing would help to generate new conservation actions, building on work being undertaken by ASCOBANS and other partners.

633. WDC supported the proposal, while also maintaining the species' status on CMS Appendix II.
634. The COW recommended the proposal to the COP for adoption.

Item 31.4.6. Proposal for the Inclusion of the Peruvian Pelican (*Pelecanus thagus*) in Appendix I and II of the Convention

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

635. Peru introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.31.4.6 *Proposal for the Inclusion of the Peruvian Pelican (*Pelecanus thagus*) in Appendix I and II of the Convention*, which had submitted jointly with Chile, Ecuador and Panama. As a guano bird, this species had important ecosystem functions, contributing to trophic flows. El Niño patterns greatly influenced its prey and movements, hence promoting movements of birds from Peru to Ecuador and other countries. With a significantly decreased population, and affected by threats such as bycatch and diseases, the species was classified as Critically Endangered (CR). Listing on CMS Appendix I and II would improve its status and lend support for protection of its coastal habitats.
636. Argentina, supported by Brazil, argued that listing would promote more effective conservation among Parties, and supported the proposal.
637. The COW recommended the proposal to the COP for adoption.

31.4.7. Proposal for the Inclusion of the Magellanic Plover (*Pluvianellus socialis*) in Appendix I of the Convention

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

638. Chile, also on behalf of Argentina, introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.31.4.7/Rev.1 *Proposal for the Inclusion of the Magellanic Plover (*Pluvianellus socialis*) in Appendix I of the Convention*. This migratory plover restricted to the southern part of South America had an estimated population of between 1,500 and 1,700 individuals, but possibly as low as 500. Its global conservation status was currently being evaluated, and significant threats were identified. The proposal intended to promote collaboration between Chile and Argentina, create a WG, recovery plan and guidelines to evaluate energy impacts, and create and protect a binational migratory corridor.
639. Brazil supported the proposal, which it considered important to ensure bilateral cooperation.
640. Peru supported the proposal and the need for Range States to work together.
641. The COW recommended the proposal to the COP for adoption.

Item 31.4.8 Proposal for the Inclusion of the Southern African Population of the Bearded Vulture (*Gypaetus barbatus meridionalis*) in Appendix I of the Convention

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

642. South Africa introduced document UNEP/CMS/CMS14/31.4.8 *Proposal for the Inclusion of the Southern African Population of the Bearded Vulture (*Gypaetus barbatus meridionalis*) in Appendix I of the Convention*. The population was regionally classified as CR due to its small and declining population size, restricted range, range contraction, and susceptibility to several threats in Lesotho and South Africa. South Africa explained that this distinct population should be managed and conserved as such. The population size was estimated to be 334, including approximately 100 breeding pairs. Movements were predictable, cyclical and crossed borders between Lesotho and South Africa, with the baseline model estimating that there would only be 62 birds (20 breeding pairs) remaining in the wild within 50 years if no further interventions were implemented.
643. Zimbabwe, Uganda, Senegal and Malawi noted that South Africa had consulted with the Africa Group and supported the proposed listing. Uganda noted that, in addition to listing, conservation measures also needed to be implemented.

644. The listing was recommended to the COP for adoption.

Item 31.4.9 Proposal for the Inclusion of the Sand Tiger Shark (*Carcharias taurus*) in Appendix I and II of the Convention

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

645. Brazil introduced document UNEP/CMS/CMS14/31.4.9/Rev.2 *Proposal for the Inclusion of the Sand Tiger Shark (*Carcharias taurus*) in Appendix I and II of the Convention*, put forward by Brazil and Panama, stating that the latest data showed that the species had not been observed in a long time in some areas. Although there was no protection at the global level, there was some indication of recovery. However, Brazil considered that the proposed listing in Appendix II would ensure coordinated protected measures in regions where there were transboundary movements and help species conservation.
646. Israel, Senegal, the United Kingdom, Costa Rica, Maldives and others voiced their support for the proposal. Senegal noted the species was sometimes threatened by bycatch.
647. Maldives, while not a Range State, informed that their country was a shark sanctuary.
648. Australia, a Range State, where the species was known as Grey Nurse Shark, reported it had discussed the proposal with Brazil and Panama only after submission. It noted some inadvertent errors, including that the distribution map was an inaccurate reflection of the distribution of the two subpopulations in Australia. It underscored that it would be useful for proponents of proposals to consult with all Range States before proposals were submitted.
649. Australia explained that the two subpopulations in Australia were genetically distinct and geographically isolated, and under strict national protection. The east coast subpopulation did not leave Australian waters and, thus, did not meet the definition of migratory. However, movements were less clear for the west coast subpopulation, for which a precautionary approach was needed. Australia reiterated that listing species on Appendix II required that they would benefit from international cooperation. Australia expressed that listing this species could weaken the Convention and divert attention from those species that required conservation.
650. IUCN noted an 80 per cent decline in the species in the Indian Ocean and Australia, that it could travel quickly across international boundaries, and that it had an unfavourable conservation status.
651. Several other organizations spoke of the need for the listing, including WCS that expressed support for the proposal.
652. The listing was recommended to the COP for adoption.

Item 31.4.10. Proposal for the Inclusion of the Blackchin Guitarfish (*Glaucostegus cemiculus*) in Appendix II and the Mediterranean Sea Population of this Species in Appendix I of the Convention

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

653. Israel introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP/Doc.31.4.10 *Proposal for the Inclusion of the Blackchin Guitarfish (*Glaucostegus cemiculus*) in Appendix II and the Mediterranean Sea Population of this Species in Appendix I of the Convention*, explaining that the species was assessed by IUCN in 2019 as CR globally, since populations had undergone an over 90 per cent reduction in three generations. Israel thanked the Chair of the IUCN SSC Shark Specialist Group for work on this assessment and on shark and ray conservation. Israel further mentioned that the species was subject to targeted and untargeted fishing, especially illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) artisanal fishing in West Africa, and their high-quality fins were in high demand and exported. Israel mentioned that all species of the genus *Glaucostegus* spp. (which included this species) were listed on Appendix II of CITES in 2019.

654. Senegal noted confusion between this species and the Common Guitarfish (*Rhinobatos rhinobatos*).
655. It was recommended that the COP amend the Appendices to include the proposed listings.

Item 31.4.11 Proposal for the Inclusion of the Bull Ray (*Aetomylaeus bovinus*) in Appendix II and the Mediterranean Sea Population of this Species in Appendix I of the Convention

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

656. Israel introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.31.4.11 *Proposal for the Inclusion of the Bull Ray (*Aetomylaeus bovinus*) in Appendix II and the Mediterranean Sea Population of this Species in Appendix I of the Convention*, explaining that the species was assessed by IUCN in 2016 as CR globally and in the Mediterranean Sea, as populations had undergone over 80 per cent reduction in three generations. Israel noted that the species was not targeted, was usually taken as bycatch, and was discarded or kept for local human consumption. It was recently listed on Annex II of the Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity Protocol for the Mediterranean under the Barcelona Convention.
657. Senegal and Egypt expressed support for the proposal, which was then recommended to the COP for adoption.

Item 31.4.12 Proposal for the Inclusion of the Lusitanian Cownose Ray (*Rhinoptera marginata*) in Appendix II and the Mediterranean Sea Population of this Species in Appendix I of the Convention

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

658. Israel introduced this proposed listing as contained in UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.31.4.12 *Proposal for the Inclusion of the Lusitanian Cownose Ray (*Rhinoptera marginata*) in Appendix II and the Mediterranean Sea Population of this Species in Appendix I of the Convention*, noting that the species was first analyzed in 2007 by the ScC, which recommended its inclusion on the Appendices of the Convention, but a listing proposal had not been submitted. Israel noted it had a generational length of 27 years, one offspring per year, and, according to a 2021 assessment by IUCN, a 90 per cent reduction in three generations.
659. Egypt supported the proposal, which was then recommended for adoption by the COP.

Item 31.4.13. Proposal for the Inclusion of the Gilded Catfish (*Brachyplatystoma rousseauxii*) in Appendix II of the Convention

Item 31.4.14. Proposal for the Inclusion of the Laulao Catfish or Piramuta (*Brachyplatystoma vaillantii*) in Appendix II of the Convention

Committee of the Whole (15 February)

660. Brazil introduced both proposals (UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.31.4.13 and UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.31.4.14), noting that the two species were similar Amazonian fish, and that efforts to protect freshwater species were rare. Brazil explained that the Secretariat had requested a reassessment of freshwater species to understand which could benefit from listing under the Appendices. Brazil noted that both freshwater species had long migration routes, and were threatened by deforestation, mining and hydroelectric dams, and overfishing, and that all but one Range State were Parties to the Convention.
661. The EU and its Member States noted evidence of increasing harm to the species. Uruguay supported both proposed listings.
662. WCS underscored efforts of local and other organizations and the need to improve management throughout migratory routes.
663. Both proposals were recommended to the COP for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

664. The COP Chair noted that the COW had examined 14 proposals to amend the CMS Appendices, recommending that the COP adopt them. The COP adopted all 14 proposals, which resulted in the inclusion of the following taxa on the CMS Appendices:
665. **MAMMALIA**
- Eurasian Lynx (*Lynx lynx*) on Appendix II and Balkan Lynx (*Lynx lynx balcanicus*), as a subspecies of the Eurasian lynx, in addition, on Appendix I
 - Pallas's Cat (*Felis manul*) on Appendix II
 - Guanaco (*Lama guanicoe*) on Appendix II
 - Lahille's Bottlenose Dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus gephyreus*) on Appendices I and II
 - Baltic Proper population of the Harbour Porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*) on Appendix I.
666. **AVES**
- Peruvian Pelican (*Pelecanus thagus*) on Appendices I and II
 - Magellanic Plover (*Pluvianellus socialis*) on Appendix I
 - Southern African population of the Bearded Vulture (*Gypaetus barbatus meridionalis*) on Appendix I.
667. **PISCES**
- Sand Tiger Shark (*Carcharias taurus*) on Appendices I and II
 - Blackchin Guitarfish (*Glaucostegus cemiculus*) on Appendix II and the Mediterranean Sea population on Appendix I
 - Bull Ray (*Aetomylaeus bovinus*) on Appendix II and the Mediterranean Sea population on Appendix I
 - Lusitanian Cownose Ray (*Rhinoptera marginata*) on Appendix II and the Mediterranean Sea population on Appendix I
 - Gilded Catfish (*Brachyplatystoma rousseauxii*) on Appendix II
 - Laulao Catfish or Piraqueta (*Brachyplatystoma vaillantii*) on Appendix II.
668. Israel, while applauding the adoption of the listing proposals, noted that the need to list reflected a failure in the conservation of migratory species, and that the goal should be to improve the status of species and take them off the Appendices.

ITEM 32. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONCERTED ACTION PROCESS

Item 32.1 Concerted Actions

Committee of the Whole (14 February)

669. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.32.1/Rev.1 *Concerted Actions*, which was submitted by the ScC and the StC, with support from the Secretariat.
670. The United Kingdom stressed the need to ensure that guidelines in the Annex followed through from the resolution, and suggested new operative paragraph language to reflect this.

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

671. On CRP32.1 *Concerted Actions*, noting its proposal had not been incorporated into the new text, the United Kingdom requested amending two paragraphs. Australia was not comfortable with the proposals. The Chair informed that the United Kingdom's proposals would be integrated into the next iteration of the CRP for further consideration.

Committee of the Whole (17 February)

672. CRP32.1/Rev.1 *Concerted Actions*, and the CRP was recommended for adoption with some amendments.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

673. The COP adopted amendments to Resolution 12.28 (Rev.COP14) as contained in

CRP32.1/Rev.1.

Item 32.2 Assessment of Progress in the Implementation of Concerted Actions and Possible Proposals for Their Extension

Committee of the Whole (14 February)

674. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.32.2 *Assessment of Progress in the Implementation of Concerted Actions and Possible Proposals for their Extension*. The Secretariat noted that paragraph 8 of the document contained an overview of eight CAs for which no report on implementation was available, and the Secretariat suggested the COP could consider closing these concerted actions.
675. As there were no interventions, the COW agreed with the recommendations in the document and that the CAs listed in paragraph 8 of document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.32.2 would be closed.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

676. Document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.32.2 *Assessment of Progress in the Implementation of Concerted Actions and Possible Proposals for their Extension*. Under Agenda item 32.2, the COW considered reports on the implementation of CAs for nine species or groups of species and took note of the reports contained in documents UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.32.2.1 through 32.2.9. The COW recommended closing three CAs under items 32.2.1, 32.2.5 and 32.2.6 as well as those listed in paragraph 8 of document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.32.2 and extending six CAs under items 32.2.2, 32.2.3, 32.2.4, 32.2.7, 32.2.8 and 32.2.9, as Parties favoured their continuation. The COP adopted these recommendations.
677. The COW considered the six new proposals for the following CAs for specific species or groups of species under the New Proposals for Concerted Actions for the triennium 2024-2026, found in Documents 32.3.1 to 32.3.5 and 32.3.7/Rev.1:
- Chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*)
 - Straw-coloured Fruit Bat (*Eidolon helvum*)
 - Pallas's Cat (*Felis manul*)
 - Eurasian Lynx (*Lynx lynx* and *Lynx lynx balcanicus*)
 - Franciscana Dolphin (*Pontoporia blainvillei*)
 - Blue Shark (*Prionace glauca*)
678. The COP adopted these proposed CAs, without objection.

Item 32.2.1. Report on the Implementation of the Concerted Action for the Nut-Cracking Populations of the Chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes verus*) of West Africa

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

679. The IUCN Species Survival Commission Primate Specialist Group Section on Great Apes Working Group on Chimpanzee Cultures (WGCC) introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.32.2.1 *Report on the Implementation of the Concerted Action for the Nut-Cracking populations of the Chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes verus*) of West Africa*, prepared by the CMS Expert WG on Animal Culture and Social Complexity and the IUCN WGCC. The document reported on coordination of implementation and progress in public engagement across Chimpanzee Range States in West Africa. Activities were integrated with the IUCN Regional Action Plan for Conservation of Chimpanzees. The report identified a broader initiative on Chimpanzee cultures and behavioural diversity as an outcome and recommended to replace this CA with one that embraced other cultural behaviours.
680. Noting that this CA had led to involvement of the IUCN WGCC, which engaged with further Chimpanzee Range States, Born Free agreed with the outcome of the CA and to embrace a new CA that should cover all 21 Chimpanzee Range States.

681. Uganda welcomed the report, which provided important lessons and insights into possible actions that could be implemented across Range States. Uganda had undertaken long-term Chimpanzee research, identifying variations in traits and attributes, the findings of which had helped it to develop a national Chimpanzee Conservation Strategy, as well as ecotourism-based actions. Uganda welcomed the recommendations of the report and supported the need to adopt a new CA on cultural diversity covering all 21 Chimpanzee Range States.
682. The Chair informed that a new CA for the following triennium would be proposed. The COW agreed to take the paper forward for adoption by the COP.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

683. The COP adopted the report and formally approved the closure of the CA.

Item 32.2.2. Report on the Implementation of the Concerted Action for the Giraffe (*Giraffa camelopardalis*)

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

684. Niger introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.32.2.2 *Report on the Implementation of the Concerted Action for the Giraffe (*Giraffa camelopardalis*)*, prepared by Niger. Activities planned during 2019-2023 were not achieved due to the COVID-19 pandemic and a lack of funding. Niger thus requested that the CA be renewed for a period of three years, following changes proposed in the timeline of the document. The ScC in the addendum to the document recommended its renewal.
685. Benin stated that although it was not a Giraffe Range State, it shared a transboundary national park with Niger, where there were plans to consider reintroduction of the Giraffe. Benin thus supported renewal and continuation of this CA.
686. Born Free expressed disappointment that actions planned had not been implemented and urged COP14 to endorse the adjusted timeline and encourage funders to support the activities proposed, with emphasis on Target 4 in relation to national strategies and Target 9 on awareness-raising.
687. The COW agreed to continue with the CA, noting the appropriate changes to the timeline outlined in the document, and to take the paper forward for adoption by the COP.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

688. The COP approved the continuation of this CA.

Item 32.2.3. Report on the Implementation of the Concerted Action for the Humpback Whales (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) of the Arabian Sea

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

689. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.32.2.3 *Report on the Implementation of the Concerted Action for the Humpback Whales (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) of the Arabian Sea*, on behalf of the Arabian Sea Whale Network (ASWN), which had developed the document. The document, endorsed by the Aquatic WG, included a suite of actions for this unique population that remained in the Arabian Sea year-round. It aimed for a government-led regional Conservation Management Plan (CMP), which had not yet been achieved. A further extension was requested to enable wider consultation, noting improved enabling conditions for its adoption in the next triennium following a workshop in Oman in 2022.
690. Australia, as Chair of the IWC Standing WG on CMPs, noted that the IWC Executive Secretary had highlighted, to the High-Level Segment of CMS COP14, that CMPs were an excellent example of the way to protect cetaceans. Australia thus supported the proposal.
691. Noting that this whale had not been reported in Maldives since 2022, Maldives argued that extension of the CA was crucial for its proper establishment and implementation and supported

the report.

692. Argentina supported the extension of the CA.
693. India supported extension of the CA, noting that India included Humpback Whale in Schedule 1 of its Wildlife Protection Act, and as a species under its Species Recovery Programme.
694. The COW agreed to take the paper forward for adoption by the COP.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

695. The COP adopted the report, and formally approved the extension of this CA.

Item 32.2.4. Report on the Implementation of the Concerted Action for the Eastern Tropical Pacific Sperm Whales (*Physeter macrocephalus*)

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

696. The Expert WG on Animal Culture and Social Complexity introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.32.2.4 *Report on the Implementation of the Concerted Action for the Eastern Tropical Pacific Sperm Whales (*Physeter macrocephalus*)*, authored by the WG in collaboration with Red de Cachalotes del Pacífico. Seven Sperm Whale clans were known from the region, defined by their codas (click patterns), and there was strong support for Sperm Whale clans having distinct behaviours, ecologies and distributions. Research in low-income Range States and assessment of the potential of autonomous recording technologies were advised. The document was discussed in the Aquatic WG, and COP14 was recommended to approve its continuation.

697. Argentina supported the continuation of this work.
698. The COW agreed to continue with the CA and take the paper forward for adoption by the COP.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

699. The COP approved the continuation of this CA.

Item 32.2.5. Report on the Implementation of the Concerted Action for the Atlantic Humpback Dolphin (*Sousa teuszii*)

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

700. The COP-appointed Councillor for Marine Pollution introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.32.2.5 *Report on the Implementation of the Concerted Action for the Atlantic Humpback Dolphin (*Sousa teuszii*)*. A key outcome of the CA was the SSAP, which was approved by the COW for adoption by COP14. The CA was considered completed, and COP14 was recommended to note the report and close the CA.

701. The COW agreed to close the CA and take the paper forward for adoption by the COP.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

702. The COP adopted the report and formally approved the closure of the CA.

Item 32.2.6. Report on the Implementation of the Concerted Action for the Populations of Harbour Porpoises (*Phocoena phocoena*) in the Baltic Sea and Iberian Peninsula

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

703. WDC introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.32.2.6 *Report on the Implementation of the Concerted Action for the Populations of Harbour Porpoises (*Phocoena phocoena*) in the Baltic Sea and Iberian Peninsula*, also on behalf of the Coalition Clean Baltic, Humane Society International and ORCA. The document reported on implementation of activities, linked to document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.31.4.5, which proposed inclusion of the Baltic Proper population on CMS Appendix I. Activities included supporting the ASCOBANS Recovery Plan for the Baltic Sea Harbour Porpoise, conducting research and advising governments, with

engagement with the IWC Scientific Committee and HELCOM. The Aquatic WG had discussed the document and agreed to close the CA, given reassurance that work to conserve Harbour Porpoise would be taken in other forms. WDC reminded Parties that the Iberian population was in poor conservation status.

704. ACCOBAMS stressed the need to address conservation of the Iberian Harbour Porpoise.

705. The Chair summarized that actions would carry on in other formats, and noted the need to address the situation of the Iberian population. The COW agreed to close the CA and take the paper forward for adoption by the COP.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

706. The COP adopted the report and formally approved the closure of the CA.

Item 32.2.7. Report on the Implementation of the Concerted Action for the Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*) in Asia

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

707. Mongolia introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.32.2.7 *Report on the Implementation of the Concerted Action for the Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*) in Asia*, which it had prepared with the Eurasian Bustard Alliance and the Wildlife Science and Conservation Centre of Mongolia. The development of a revised Action Plan for the Great Bustard in Asia had been a central focus of the current CA, with its revision submitted to COP14. Noting that sustained action was necessary to secure Great Bustard status in Asia, Mongolia encouraged extension of the CA.

708. Acknowledging work done by Mongolia and the Eurasian Bustard Alliance, the EU and its Member States supported continuation of the CA, encouraged Range States and all stakeholders to continue research and cooperation with the consideration of the CAF, and further encouraged Range States to join the CA in near future.

709. The COW agreed to continue with the CA and take the paper forward for adoption by the COP.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

710. The COP approved the continuation of this CA.

Item 32.2.8. Report on the Implementation of the Concerted Action for the Antipodean Albatross (*Diomedea antipodensis*)

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

711. New Zealand introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.32.2.8 *Report on the Implementation of the Concerted Action for the Antipodean Albatross (*Diomedea antipodensis*)*, which was jointly prepared by New Zealand, Australia and Chile. The report had been discussed in the Avian WG. Annex 1 contained details of activities carried out to address the serious decline of the species, which only bred in New Zealand but ranged across southern oceans, and which was subject to threats, especially from long-line fisheries. New Zealand highlighted the value of working cooperatively to develop and improve mitigation use to reduce take, including improving observer networks and electronic monitoring, liaising with regional fisheries organisations and outreach, and recommended continuation of the CA.

712. The COW agreed to recommend continuation of the CA and take the paper forward for adoption by the COP.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

713. The COP approved the continuation of this CA.

Item 32.2.9. Report on the Implementation of the Concerted Action for the Common Guitarfish (*Rhinobatos rhinobatos*) and the Bottlenose Wedgefish (*Rhynchobatus australiae*)

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

714. IUCN introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.32.2.9 *Report on the Implementation of the Concerted Action for the Common Guitarfish (Rhinobatos rhinobatos) and the Bottlenose Wedgefish (Rhynchobatus australiae)*, prepared by the IUCN SSC Shark Specialist Group. The term “Rhino Rays” was used collectively for five family-level groups comprising 69 species, which represented the most imperilled group of sharks and rays, 75 per cent of which were globally threatened. Due to overlapping distributions, identification difficulties and similar threats, all species of guitarfishes, wedgefishes and giant guitarfishes were included in this CMS CA. Noting efforts to regulate trade in their products through CITES and given needs to build a knowledge base and to develop a global strategy and regional plans, steps were underway for a global review of fisheries interactions, a global Rhino Ray symposium and a global conservation strategy. IUCN recommended extension of the CA.
715. Senegal took note of the report and supported its adoption, including extension and revision of the CA, noting that some Rhino Rays were included in CMS Appendices. Thus, it was important to continue and revise the CA and take account of recently listed species.
716. Kenya reported that it was in the process of formulating a national sharks conservation strategy and supported adoption of the report.
717. Considering that the CA was crucial for conservation of these threatened species, Maldives supported the document.
718. The COW agreed to recommend continuation of the CA and to take the paper forward for adoption by the COP.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

719. The COP approved the continuation of this CA.

Item 32.3. New Proposals for Concerted Actions for the Triennium 2024-2026

Item 32.3.1. Proposal for a Concerted Action for Chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*) Behavioural Diversity and Cultures Already Listed in Appendix I and II of the Convention

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

720. IUCN introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.32.3.1 *Proposal for a Concerted Action for Chimpanzee (Pan troglodytes) Behavioural Diversity and Cultures Already Listed in Appendix I and II of the Convention*, submitted by the CMS Expert WG on Culture and Social Complexity and the IUCN WGCC. The proposed CA would serve as a broader CA for Chimpanzee behavioural diversity and cultures, replacing the CA for the nut-cracking populations of the Chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes verus*) of West Africa. The plan proposed to: establish a steering committee to define conservation targets and best approaches to implement the culture concept in conservation; conduct biodiversity research to identify and rectify data gaps, and set up a clearinghouse; and establish a framework to embed local conservationists and researchers in conservation efforts. IUCN urged stronger partnerships among Range States to implement activities to identify and preserve Chimpanzee behavioural diversity and cultures.
721. Pan African Sanctuary Alliance noted that the recognition of animal culture set CMS apart from other conventions, and that such a CA would help conserve other species in the same ecosystem.
722. Senegal supported the proposal, acknowledging the need for further research and studies.

723. The proposal was recommended for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

724. The COP adopted the proposal and formally approved the new CA.

Item 32.3.2. Proposal for a Concerted Action for the Straw-coloured Fruit Bat (*Eidolon helvum*) Already Listed in Appendix II of the Convention

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

725. Kenya introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.32.3.2 *Proposal for a Concerted Action for the Straw-coloured Fruit Bat (*Eidolon helvum*) Already Listed in Appendix II of the Convention*, submitted by Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda, the Max Planck Institute of Animal Behaviour (MPI-AB), the Rwanda Wildlife Conservation Association, and Ngaoundéré University in Cameroon. Noting its wide distribution in Africa, Kenya stated that the species required enhanced efforts to conserve the populations and their habitats at local, national and subnational levels. The report detailed activities, goals and benefits of the proposed CA. Kenya requested Parties to support the CA and encouraged funding.

726. Bat Conservation International supported the CA, noting that bats had long distance migrations on all continents except Antarctica, and the identification of 1,460 bat species.

727. The proposed CA was recommended for adoption by the COP.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

728. The COP adopted the proposal and formally approved the new CA.

Item 32.3.3. Proposal for a Concerted Action for the Pallas's Cat (*Felis manul*) Proposed for Listing in Appendix II of the Convention

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

729. Pallas's Cat International Conservation Alliance (PICA) introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.32.3.3 *Proposal for a Concerted Action for the Pallas's Cat (*Felis manul*) Proposed for Listing in Appendix II of the Convention*, submitted by the IUCN SSC Cat Specialist Group, the Manul WG, and PICA. This cat, with an extensive but fragmented range across South-west and Central Asia, to the Russian Federation and China, had received little conservation attention. While widespread in Mongolia and China, populations in other parts of the range were small and isolated, and the species had declined or disappeared in several western parts of its distribution. The proposed CA recommended to add Pallas's Cat to CAMI, as over 90 per cent of its range lay within the CAMI region, and it existed in all CAMI countries. The proposed CA directly linked to the proposed listing of Pallas's Cat on CMS Appendix II; both proposals would increase the profile of the species.

730. Turkmenistan supported the proposal.

731. India, supporting the proposal, noted it was a Range State with a high level of protection, and highlighted transboundary cooperation with Bhutan and Nepal.

732. The proposal was recommended for adoption by the COP.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

733. The COP adopted the proposal and formally approved the new CA.

Item 32.3.4 Proposal for a Concerted Action for the Eurasian Lynx (*Lynx lynx*) Proposed for Listing in Appendix II (and Appendix I for *Lynx lynx balcanicus*) of the Convention

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

734. UNEP introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.32.3.4 *Proposal for a Concerted Action for the Eurasian Lynx (*Lynx lynx*) Proposed for Listing in Appendix II (and Appendix I for *Lynx lynx balcanicus*) of the Convention* on behalf of the IUCN SSC Cat Specialist Group and the

Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention, noting that the Eurasian Lynx had several subspecies across the region, which the document elaborated on. The document presented a logical framework for the activities under the proposed CA aimed at improving the knowledge base and strengthening transboundary cooperation for the conservation of the four southern subspecies of Eurasian Lynx in Europe and Asia.

735. Turkmenistan supported increased transboundary cooperation and monitoring of the lynx.

736. The proposal was recommended for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

737. The COP adopted the proposal and formally approved the new CA.

Item 32.3.5 Proposal for a Concerted Action for the Franciscana Dolphin (*Pontoporia blainvillei*) Already Listed in Appendix I and II of the Convention

Committee of the Whole (16 February)

738. Argentina introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.32.3.5 *Proposal for a Concerted Action for the Franciscana Dolphin (*Pontoporia blainvillei*) Already Listed in Appendix I and II of the Convention*, which was submitted by the Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay. Argentina reported that the species had been identified in 11 management areas, and that the proposed activities under the CA included: establishing a scientific committee with governments, NGOs, and the CMS and IWC Secretariats; convening a meeting in 2024 to develop an action plan in line with the IWC, which would include undertaking an evaluation of the species' status in each Range State; and evaluating and assessing MPAs. Argentina underscored the importance of coordinating efforts with IWC on research, monitoring, mitigation and awareness raising.

739. Uruguay and Brazil intervened as the co-proponents of the proposed CA, with Brazil stating that, while there was a national plan in Brazil, a joint initiative was critical for the recovery of the population, with many deaths due to bycatch.

740. Australia, as Chair of the IWG Standing WG on CMPs, supported this CA, in response to actions called for in the exiting IWC CMP, and considered that the CMS proposal would not compete with the CMP, but was intended to complement it.

741. IWC and IUCN supported the proposal.

742. The CA was recommended for adoption.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

743. The COP adopted the proposal and formally approved the new CA.

Item 32.3.6 Proposal for a Concerted Action for the Oceanic Whitetip Shark (*Carcharhinus longimanus*) Already Listed in Appendix I of the Convention

744. This proposal was withdrawn.

Item 32.3.7/Rev.1 Proposal for a Concerted Action for the Blue Shark (*Prionace glauca*) Already Listed in Appendix II of the Convention

745. Law of the Wild introduced document UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.32.3.7/Rev.1 *Proposal for a Concerted Action for the Blue Shark (*Prionace glauca*) Already Listed in Appendix II of the Convention* on behalf of the Marine Research and Conservation Foundation (MARECO), as amended by the Aquatic WG. The Blue Shark was wide ranging and one of the most heavily fished sharks, with an estimated 10 million caught annually, frequently in target multi-species fisheries. It would benefit from improved management, strengthened political will, and the bridging of fisheries and conservation priorities. Activities of the CA would, among others, support an assessment of the impacts of fisheries, and address inconsistencies in efforts to conserve the Blue Shark among Range States.

746. Senegal supported the proposal.

747. Maldives, supporting the proposal, emphasized the need to identify critical habitats and increase understanding of migratory routes.

748. The CA was recommended for adoption by the COP.

Final COP Plenary (17 February)

749. The COP adopted the proposal and formally approved the new CA.

Closing of the Committee of the Whole

750. The Chair of the COW, Mr Colin Galbraith, thanked the Government of Uzbekistan for hosting the meeting, all technical and interpretation services for their invaluable support, delegates from Parties and observers for their input, and WG Chairs, as well as the ScC and its Chair and Councillors, who volunteered their time. The Chair also thanked the Secretariat and reflected on his time over 30 years in attending ten CMS COPs in a number of roles and thanked the United Kingdom for its support. Reflecting on what had been achieved during the COW, the Chair considered that the resolutions and listings would give CMS a new framework for actions, including nature-based approaches, and urged all delegates to stand up for the conservation of migratory species.

751. The Executive Secretary of CMS thanked all delegates and members of the Secretariat for their hard work and noted Mr Colin Galbraith's leadership as Chair of the COW, and for bringing passion and knowledge to the COP over many years.

752. The Chair formally closed the COW.

VII. FORMAL AND CONCLUDING BUSINESS

753. The Chair of the COP, HE Mr Aziz Abdukhakimov, Minister of Ecology, Environmental Protection and Climate Change, Uzbekistan, opened the final COP plenary on 17 February.

ITEM 33. REPORT OF IN-SESSION COMMITTEES

Item 33.1 Report of the Credentials Committee

754. The Chair of the Credentials Committee noted that, of 92 registered Parties, 77 credentials had been assessed and 72 were accepted. As three of these Parties were in arrears, 69 Parties were eligible to vote. The report of the Credential Committee was approved.

Item 33.2 Report of Committee of the Whole and the Working Groups

755. As all WGs had reported to the COW on a daily basis, they did not report further to the COP Plenary. The Finance and Budget Sub-Committee completed its work after convening sessions throughout the week, and CRP 13.2/Rev.2 with six associated annexes, including CRP 13.2/Rev.2/Annex 6, were ready for consideration by the COP. The Avian, Terrestrial, Aquatic, and Institutional and Crosscutting WGs considered and completed all items that were sent to them, and the documents and CRPs put forward were agreed in the COW and forwarded to the COP for adoption.

756. The Chair of the COW, Mr Colin Galbraith, reported on the Committee's work.

ITEM 34. ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS, DECISIONS AND AMENDMENTS TO THE APPENDICES

757. At the invitation of the Chair, the COP adopted during its closing session the Amendments to the Appendices of the Convention, as endorsed by the COW, through inclusion of taxa in the

Appendix (or Appendices) indicated in the list presented in Annex 1 of the COP14 Report.

758. At the invitation of the Chair, the COP adopted during its closing session the documents and CRPs listed in Annex 2 of this report, containing Resolutions, Decisions and Concerted Actions. The Chair of the COP also detailed under the reports of corresponding Agenda Items, all of which had been endorsed by the COW, following review and amendment, as appropriate, by the WGs. Several documents had been further amended by the COW itself, and all other texts adopted were the versions endorsed by the COW. The documents listed in Annex 2 of this report follow the sequence of their adoption by the COP (which followed Agenda item order).

ITEM 35. DATE AND VENUE OF THE 15TH MEETING OF THE COP

759. The Executive Secretary of CMS noted several discussions and a serious proposal concerning the hosting of CMS COP15 but was not in a position to make any announcements. Parties interested in hosting COP15 were requested to inform the Secretariat of their interest as soon as possible. The Executive Secretary anticipated that an announcement would be made soon to confirm the COP15 host.

ITEM 36. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

760. The Chair gave the floor to the Secretariat to raise any other business. No other matters were raised.

ITEM 36. CLOSING STATEMENTS

761. Delegates making closing statements all thanked the Government of Uzbekistan, the Chair of the COP, the Chair of the COW, the ScC-SC and WGs, the interpreters, translators, Secretariat and all support personnel involved in hosting and/or contributing to the professional organization of the COP.

762. The United Kingdom, Monaco, Georgia, Norway and Switzerland expressed the need for adequate resources for the Secretariat to meet the objectives set by the COP. They requested that support to increasing the number of COP-appointed Councillors from three to four per region be reconsidered by COP15, and strongly urged Parties and non-Parties to consider providing voluntary support.

763. The United Kingdom announced its intention to provide £50,000 to an in-person workshop on migratory species and climate change, and £50,000 for enabling delegates to attend meetings over the next triennium.

764. Panama, on behalf of South and Central America and the Caribbean, noted the significant number of species listed from their region and the need for their conservation, as well as for habitats and other smaller species, and stressed their commitment to connectivity.

765. New Zealand, on behalf of the six Parties of Oceania at the COP, highlighted the many successes of importance to Oceania and the spirit of compromise. They encouraged all Parties to pay their contributions in a timely manner and underscored their support in increasing COP-appointed Councillors from three to four per region. They thanked those NGOs that were actively supporting conservation in Oceania.

766. Saudi Arabia, on behalf of the Asia region, mentioned the significant milestone of the first *State of the World's Migratory Species* report, and its achievements. They looked forward to working with all Parties and partners over the next intersessional period.

767. Belgium, on behalf of the EU and its Member States, highlighted the major challenges ahead and the importance of taking on board the GBF in the CMS community. They anticipated that

efforts to conserve listed species would lead to their recovery. They called upon all Parties in arrears to regularize their situations and to make voluntary contributions. They urged implementation of COP14 decisions at the national level.

768. Zimbabwe, on behalf of the Africa region, highlighted the role of local people and Indigenous Peoples. They expressed the need to emphasize implementation of the conservation and sustainable use of migratory species as a collective process. They noted the many challenges that Africa faced, for which innovative resource mobilization mechanisms were welcomed.
769. WWF, on behalf of BEES, BirdLife International, Born Free, Defenders of Wildlife, IFAW, OceanCare, Pan-African Sanctuary Alliance, Panthera and WDC considered that COP14 gave partners hope through, for example, adoption of the DSM Decision, the strong link to the GBF and the increased focus on building migratory species into NBSAPs.
770. Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI) informed that they would encourage partners to consider the role of migratory species to strengthen ecological connectivity within the frameworks that they were involved in.
771. IUCN noted the positive outcomes of COP14, expressed pride that its tools, knowledge and experts had been deeply involved, and looked forward to strengthening partnerships in the future.

ITEM 37. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

772. The Chair informed that delegates would have a period of one month from the date of the posting of the meeting report to submit their amendments. There were no objections to the report submitted in the form of daily reports, and the report was adopted.

ITEM 38. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

773. The Chair of the COP considered that the intensive week of discussions had transformed the Conference venue into something that Samarkand was known for historically – a melting pot of knowledge transfer and dialogue. He remarked on the success of the COP, on its many delegates from across the world and on its extensive media outreach. He reiterated the importance of the COP to Uzbekistan and its relevance to the government's conservation ambitions, with the COP theme "Nature knows no borders" serving as a necessary responsibility. He further reiterated important collaborations within Central Asia for migratory species and transboundary conservation, and the urgency of addressing climate change. In assuming the COP presidency, Uzbekistan would, amongst other targets, focus on tangible and results-oriented actions, strengthening connectivity and awareness, combating illegal wildlife trade and promoting robust climate change mitigation measures.
774. The Executive Secretary of CMS, Ms Amy Fraenkel, extended thanks to the people and Government of Uzbekistan and to Minister Aziz Abdukhakimov for chairing the COP and highlighted some key outcomes of the COP, including adoption of the Samarkand SPMS, the launch of the Central Asian Flyway Initiative, and important resolutions on deep-sea mining, infrastructure, light pollution and wildlife health. Ms Fraenkel urged all delegates to carry forward the spirit of collaboration and determination forged during COP14 and looked forward to working together in striving to ensure a brighter, more sustainable future for migratory species.
775. The Chair thanked the Executive Secretary for her closing remarks, and declared the meeting closed.