



**CONVENTION ON
MIGRATORY
SPECIES**

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Agenda Item 30.3

RENEWABLE ENERGY AND MIGRATORY SPECIES

(Prepared by the Secretariat)

Summary:

This document reports on progress in implementing Resolution 10.11 (Rev.COP13) *Power Lines and Migratory Birds*, Resolution 11.27 (Rev.COP13) *Renewable Energy and Migratory Species* and Decisions 13.106-13.108. It includes proposed draft Decisions.

RENEWABLE ENERGY AND MIGRATORY SPECIES

Background

1. Renewable energy is an essential part of addressing climate change – one of the greatest threats to people and biodiversity. Meeting global energy demand, set to increase by 30 per cent by 2040, while achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement to keep global temperature rise well below 2°C, preferably to 1.5°C, requires an urgent transition to low-carbon economies. However, renewable energy infrastructure can have critically adverse impacts on species and ecosystems if placed in wildlife-sensitive areas.
2. The Conference of the Parties (COP) has been addressing the issue of energy and migratory species through various Resolutions and Decisions. Resolution 7.05 (Rev.COP12) *Wind Turbines and Migratory Species* and Resolution 7.04 *Electrocution of Migratory Birds* instruct the Secretariat to compile information on the collision and electrocution of migratory birds. Resolution 10.11 (Rev.COP13) *Power Lines and Migratory Birds* also instructs the Secretariat to update the available information on the mitigation of these threats to migratory birds. These requests were later addressed in more detail by CMS Resolution 11.27 (Rev.COP13) *Renewable Energy and Migratory Species*.
3. Resolution 11.27 (Rev.COP13) endorses the *Guidelines for Sustainable Deployment* ([UNEP/CMS/COP11/Doc.23.4.3.22](#)) and instructs the Secretariat to convene a multi-stakeholder Task Force on Reconciling Selected Energy Sector Developments with Migratory Species Conservation (the [Energy Task Force, ETF](#)).
4. COP13 also adopted [Decisions 13.106-13.108](#) *Support to the Energy Task Force*, which read:

13.106 Directed to Parties, IGOs & NGOs, Others

Parties, including their representation from both environment and energy ministries and authorities, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders from the energy sector are encouraged to contribute to the implementation of the Energy Task Force Work Plan, including through the provision of financial and technical assistance to support the ongoing operations of the Energy Task Force.

13.107 Directed to the Scientific Council, Working Groups & Task Forces

The Energy Task Force, with input from the Scientific Council as appropriate, is requested, subject to the availability of resources, to:

- a) investigate best practices to standardize methodologies in planning, managing and monitoring renewable energy infrastructure and its impact on biodiversity, effective evidence-based mitigation measures as well as methods for cumulative assessment;*
- b) collate best practices and suggest means of integrating biodiversity into national policies for renewable energy mix and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), as per Decision 13.108, below;*
- c) produce guidance and review tools for assessing and mitigating for cumulative impacts of (renewable) energy and power line developments on migratory species, including those beyond national borders, across flyways and throughout species' ranges; this includes i. standardized approaches for post-construction monitoring of renewable energy projects, and review of existing tools, such as GenEst, ii. the collation of species' mortality data in national and global mortality databases, iii. analysis of methods for establishing cumulative*

impacts under determined spatial scale and population-level effects, including such effects resulting from species displacement due to construction and operation of energy infrastructure, iv. strengthening national procedures to deliver licensing and permitting of energy infrastructure;

- d) *undertake these activities in collaboration with the specialized organizations referred to in Resolution 7.2 (Rev.COP12) Impact Assessment and Migratory Species, building on the principles expressed in that Resolution;*
- e) *report to the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP14) on the above activities.*

13.108 Decision directed to: Parties

Parties are:

- a) *encouraged to integrate biodiversity and migratory species considerations in national energy and climate policy and action plans, providing data and recommendation to national government processes, to enhance synergies between the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and CMS and to support an evidence-based renewable energy mix into design and implementation of renewable energy policies such as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Energy and Climate Plans, inter alia integrating Strategic Environmental Assessments and species sensitivity mapping into the climate targets' decision-making processes;*
- b) *invited to provide to the Energy Task Force and the Secretariat information and indicators that have been integrated into national climate action plans and NDCs;*
- c) *requested to report to COP14 on the above activities in their National Reports.*

Activities to implement Resolution 11.27 (Rev.COP13) Renewable Energy and Migratory Species and Decisions 13.106-13.108

5. During the current intersessional period, the [Framework Energy Task Force \(ETF\) Workplan 2021-2024](#) was defined. The ETF's main goal remains to mitigate threats to migratory species through promoting safeguards, planning and stakeholder engagement. The ETF Workplan is the guiding document for the ETF, as well as the key monitoring tool to measure progress at each of the annual ETF meetings. The implementation of the ETF Workplan has been financially supported by the Governments of France, India and Germany.
6. In May 2022, a new Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) was signed with BirdLife International for the coordination of the Energy Task Force. This PCA establishes a detailed programme of activities, linked to the ETF Workplan, and mechanisms to monitor its implementation.
7. The [5th](#) and [6th](#) meeting of the ETF (ETF5 and ETF6) took place in 2020 and 2022. Additionally, several online and in-person activities have been delivered to fulfil the CMS mandate. These workshops and webinars have addressed all the thematic areas of work of the ETF Workplan, from promoting new guidelines, and supporting the mainstreaming of migratory species conservation in the policies of International Finance Institutions (IFIs) to expanding its geographical remit to under-researched regions (such as the Americas). A detailed description of all the activities carried out can be found in Annex 1 of this document.
8. A detailed report on the progress against the ETF Workplan 2021-2024 can be found in [ETF6/Doc2](#). The activities linked to the scientific prioritization and to resource

mobilization were highlighted as areas where further progress was needed. On the other hand, the activities linked to the promotion of relevant guidance and stimulating communication and information exchange showed good progress.

9. With regards to Decision 13.107 (a), the ETF, through its implementing partner, members and stakeholders, has been able to disseminate and promote several tools focused on managing and monitoring the impacts of renewable energy infrastructure. Some of these tools include the [Migratory Soaring Bird Tool](#) and [AVISTEP](#), launched in 2022 by BirdLife International and presented at various ETF webinars. A complete list of the technical guidance delivered within the ETF can be found on the [ETF](#) website, under the 'resources' section.
10. In relation to the engagement with IFIs, the ETF has supported – virtually and in-person – several consultations on updated policies and safeguards of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the European Investment Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, Equator Principles EP4 and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.
11. Over the current intersessional period, the ETF membership has increased, with 24 new members and observers including CMS Parties, international financial institutions, research organizations and NGOs. A continuously updated list of members and observers is available from the [Energy Task Force website \(ETF Members and Observers Lists\)](#).
12. The ETF has continued to facilitate cooperation among CMS and its daughter agreements such as the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA), the Agreement on the Conservation of Populations of European Bats (EUROBATS), the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas (ASCOBANS), the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area (ACCOBAMS) and the Memorandum of Understanding for the conservation of birds of prey in Africa and Eurasia (Raptors MOU). The Secretariats, technical bodies and relevant working groups have continued to cooperate and have undertaken relevant work on the impact of powerlines, wind turbines and other renewable energy technologies on migratory species, as reflected in various guidance produced within the framework of the ETF.
13. The ETF Technical Working Group (TWG) held its first meeting in February 2021, and reported on its updated composition and progress against its research priorities at [ETF6](#). The TWG reported little progress against these priorities, mainly due to the lack of financial resources.
14. The ETF Powerline Working Group convened its first meeting in February 2021 and also reported on its updated composition and deliverables at [ETF6](#).
15. With regards to Decision 13.107 (b) - (e) and as discussed in an ETF webinar organized in March 2023, ETF members and observers noted that the collation of species' mortality data in global databases was a very complex task for the ETF to deliver on its own, and recommended a clearer focus to be defined through a new Decision.

Discussion and analysis

16. The ETF is successfully implementing its Workplan, increasing its membership and reaching out to new stakeholders and allies. As an example, the ETF has participated in most of the renewable energy and conservation forums such as the United Nations

Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) COP27. As of today, the ETF is transitioning from its initial focus on migratory birds in the African-Eurasian region to a multi-taxa agenda that includes birds, bat species, marine and terrestrial mammals and their interactions with renewable energy infrastructure. The ETF's technical guidance is also expanding from powerlines and wind farms to sensitivity mapping and to other sources of renewable energy such as solar or hydropower technologies.

17. The implementation of the ETF Workplan is progressing, with renewed focus on key geographical areas where, previously, the ETF has had little engagement (such as the American and Asian Flyways), the elaboration of strategic documents that should facilitate engagement with IFIs, a small-grants programme to be launched by BirdLife International in the second part of 2023, and the production and adoption of new guidance in areas such as solar and offshore wind energy.
18. At ETF6, the membership highlighted the need to engage with the corporate sector and IFIs to mainstream migratory species protection into industry policies and safeguards. The members and observers also highlighted the need to encourage the international donor community to mainstream funding related to the transition to renewable energy. Finally, they requested an assessment of the impacts of energy-related infrastructure such as lithium mining or photovoltaic panel production. It is expected that the ETF will produce guidance in these areas over the next intersessional period.
19. While, since it was established, the ETF has focused on migratory birds, its Terms of Reference¹ note that the ETF will cover all migratory taxa as identified by CMS and its associated instruments, and that the timing and extent of taxonomic expansions shall be decided by the ETF members, depending on available funding. During the ETF webinar in October 2022, representatives from ASCOBANS gave a presentation on offshore wind construction and its impact on cetaceans, noting the rapid development of the industry to meet renewable energy targets. A new Decision, therefore, is proposed to extend the scope of the ETF to cetaceans.
20. As mandated by [Decisions 13.130-13.134 Infrastructure Development and Migratory Species](#), the Scientific Council's Sessional Committee established a multi-stakeholder Working Group at its 5th meeting ([UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC5/Outcome 13](#)). The Working Group was tasked with reviewing available information relevant to linear infrastructure development and potential impacts on migratory species, identifying areas where further assistance is needed to enhance the implementation of Resolution 7.2 (Rev.COP12) *Impact Assessment and Migratory Species* and providing recommendations on the future direction of work on this subject matter under CMS. The recommendations of the Working Group, contained in Annex 2 of Document [UNEP/CMS/LI-IWG/Report](#) are subject to discussion by the Scientific Council's Sessional Committee at its 6th meeting.

Recommended actions

21. The Conference of the Parties is recommended to:
 - a) take note of the detailed list of activities carried out by the ETF contained in Annex 1 of this document;
 - b) adopt the draft Decisions contained in Annex 2 of this document;
 - c) delete Decisions 13.106-13.108.

¹ [Annex to Resolution 11.27 \(Rev.COP13\)](#)

ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY THE ETF

- ETF communication documents, spatial mapping tools, and publications by ETF Members and Observers:
 - [The LIFE BTP project, 'Biodiversity integrated into territories and policies'](#)
 - [Mitigating biodiversity impacts associated with solar and wind energy development: guidelines for project developers](#)
 - [Quick guidance preventing electrocution on birds](#)
 - [Wildlife and power lines: guidelines for preventing and mitigating wildlife mortality associated with electricity distribution networks](#)
 - [AVISTEP](#) – avian sensitivity tool for energy planning
 - [TransMit](#). – evidence-based toolkit for mitigating powerline-related avian mortality
- Energy Task Force fact sheets and case studies:
 - [Safeguard Species in Energy Planning](#)
 - [Towards Bird-friendly Powerlines in Egypt](#)
 - [Regional Wind Farm Planning in Jordan](#)
 - [Strategic Environmental Assessment in Kenya](#)
 - [Mainstreaming best practice guidelines for assessing and monitoring impacts on birds at wind energy facilities in South Africa](#)
 - [Bridging the science-implementation gap in South Africa](#)
 - [Retrofitting Powerlines for Saker Falcons in Mongolia](#)
 - [Powerlines and Bird reporting Portal - Germany](#)
- Interim ETF meetings in April 2021, December 2021 and December 2022
- Workshop in April 2020 hosted by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) and The Biodiversity Consultancy focused on the review of the new IUCN guidelines on Mitigating Biodiversity Impacts Associated with Solar and Wind Energy Infrastructure
- Webinars/presentations hosted by the ETF:
 - November 2020, 'nature-sensitive renewable energy agenda'
 - December 2020, ['Renewable energy with nature at its core: The Energy Task Force'](#)
 - September 2021, IUCN hosted 'Renewable energy and biodiversity: implementation of the mitigation hierarchy'
 - September 2021, Climate Week, New York, webinar, ['Meeting global goals on climate, nature and sustainable development through a nature-sensitive renewable energy transition'](#)
 - November 2021, 12th MAVIR Bird Conservation Conference, ['Synergies for energy infrastructure and the conservation of migratory species: the need for multi-stakeholder cooperation and innovation'](#)

- October to November 2021, UNFCCC COP26, '[Renewable energy with nature at its core](#)'
- February 2022, China Biodiversity Conservation and Green Development Foundation Dialogue on Biodiversity Friendly Renewable Energy
- March 2022, UNFCCC Middle East and North Africa Regional Climate Week, '[Nature-sensitive renewable energy deployment in MENA: Successes, challenges and opportunities](#)'
- April 2022, 6th Conference on Wind Energy and Wildlife Impacts, 'Synergies for energy infrastructure and migratory species conservation: Governance through multi-stakeholder collaboration'
- June 2022, UNFCCC SBs56 side event, 'Transformative, nature-safe solutions for adaptation and renewable energy we want for Africa'
- July 2022, Dutch Development Bank FMO event, 'Synergies for energy infrastructure and migratory species conservation: Governance through multi-stakeholder collaboration'
- August 2022, Birds and Energy Conference, 'CMS Energy Task Force: A global Platform'
- October 2022, Safe Energy: Flyways Conference on Energy and Birds, 'Synergies for energy infrastructure and migratory species conservation: Governance through multi-stakeholder collaboration'
- October 2022, ETF online webinar, 'Offshore wind: new developments and lessons learned'
- November 2022, UNFCCC COP27, four side events on renewable energy and biodiversity

DRAFT DECISIONS

RENEWABLE ENERGY AND MIGRATORY SPECIES

Directed to Parties

14.AA Parties are:

- a) requested to integrate biodiversity and migratory species considerations in national energy and climate policy and action plans, and legislation and regulations on siting of new energy infrastructure;
- b) encouraged to support an evidence-based renewable energy mix in the design and implementation of renewable energy policies such as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Energy and Climate Plans, and integrate Strategic Environmental Assessments and species sensitivity mapping into decision-making processes for climate targets;
- c) invited to provide to the Energy Task Force and the Secretariat information and indicators that have been integrated into national climate action plans and NDCs;
- d) requested to report progress in their National Reports in implementing Resolution 11.27 (Rev.COP13) *Renewable Energy and Migratory Species*, including monitoring of the efficacy of measures taken, to the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP15).

Directed to Parties, intergovernmental and non-government organizations, and others

14.BB Parties, including their representatives from both environment and energy ministries and authorities, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and other stakeholders from the energy sector are encouraged to support the implementation of the Energy Task Force Workplan and the ongoing operations of the Energy Task Force.

Directed to the Energy Task Force

14. CC The Energy Task Force is requested, subject to the availability of resources, to:

- a) review tools and provide guidance for assessing and mitigating the impacts of renewable energy and power line developments on migratory species across flyways and throughout species' ranges, including in areas beyond national jurisdiction; this includes standardized approaches for post-construction monitoring of renewable energy projects, and a review of existing tools, such as AVISTEP;
- b) produce guidance on the format and scope of a database on CMS Appendix I species mortality caused by renewable energy developments;
- c) coordinate the collation of mortality data for birds and bats with other CMS task forces working on similar initiatives, such as the CMS Saker Falcon Task Force,

the CMS Intergovernmental Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean (MIKT) and the CMS Asia Pacific Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds Intergovernmental Task Force;

- d) expand the scope of the ETF to include the impacts on cetaceans of offshore renewable energy;
- e) engage with the corporate and international financial sector to support the integration of best practices and mainstreaming of migratory species into industry policies and safeguards;
- f) encourage the international donor community to mainstream biodiversity into funding strategies related to the transition to renewable energy.

Directed to the Secretariat

14. DD The Secretariat shall, subject to the availability of resources:

- a) include in its communication strategy the guidance and tools produced by the ETF, as well as the engagement with IFIs and the full range of renewable energy agents;
- b) support the ETF and ensure its membership is increased and its scope regularly reviewed to address all potential threats from renewable energy infrastructure to migratory species;
- c) seek partnerships with the United Nations Framework Convention against Climate Change (UNFCCC) and other relevant entities, to expand the role and awareness of the ETF and the implementation of safeguards, spatial planning tools and guidance to avoid the negative impacts on migratory species of renewable energy infrastructure;
- d) support the organization of ETF workshops to raise the awareness and increase the capacity of government representatives who are working in the areas of renewable energy and migratory species.