



Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)

Secretariat provided by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

Report of the 27th Meeting of CMS Standing Committee

Bonn, 22–25 June 2004

Agenda Item 1: Opening Remarks

1. The Chair, Ms. Neal (United Kingdom), opened the meeting, which coincided with the 25th anniversary of the Convention, a time to reflect on the past and look forward to new challenges. Taking place midway through a triennium, with the Eighth Conference of the Parties scheduled to take place in late 2005, it also provided an opportunity for a careful examination of the effective use of budgetary funds. She thanked the German Government for having provided excellent facilities and interpretation services, and the Secretariat for having produced and distributed the documentation for the meeting. She welcomed all the participants.

2. Mr. Schwenzfeier (Head of Division, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, representing the Host Government) welcomed the participants on behalf of Mr. Flasbarth, the Director of the Nature Conservation Department, at the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, who had asked to be kept informed of the Committee's discussions. It was the pleasure of the Ministry and the City of Bonn to host the meeting. He agreed that the 25th anniversary of the Bonn Convention was an occasion for looking back at achievements of which all could be proud. They should also look to the future, bearing in mind that the 2010 Johannesburg target for decelerating the loss of biodiversity was only six years away. He reminded the Committee that the European Union had decided to be even more ambitious, by setting the full halting of biodiversity loss by 2010 as its target. The WSSD goal was undoubtedly a political objective and CMS should play a leading role in attaining it. He expressed his hope that the Committee's work would be a complete success.

3. Mr. Müller-Helmbrecht (CMS Executive Secretary) welcomed the participants (**list at Annex 2**), regretting the absence of the representative of Oceania. He thanked the German Government for hosting the meeting, providing the venue and interpretation services, and contributing to the organization. He drew attention to the provisional agenda of the meeting (CMS/StC27/1/Rev.2), stressing the vital importance of the meeting for the future of CMS as it celebrated its 25th anniversary.

Agenda Item 2: Adoption of the Agenda, Work Schedule and Rules of Procedure

4. Mr. Müller-Helmbrecht invited the Committee to consider the provisional agenda and the provisional annotated agenda and meeting schedule (CMS/StC27/2). He proposed that some items on the agenda would be best addressed in a closed session reserved for Contracting Parties participating in the meeting, with observers excluded. There was no objection to his proposal.

5. It was also proposed that some agenda items be moved within the meeting schedule, for practical reasons. It was so agreed.

6. The agenda (**Annex 3**) and the meeting schedule were adopted as amended.
7. Mr. Müller-Helmbrecht then invited the Committee to consider its Rules of Procedure (CMS/StC27/Inf.10). He recalled that, at the 26th meeting of the Standing Committee, the Secretariat had been requested to examine the question of amending the rules of procedure, with regard to the competence of the Chair to decide urgent expenditure cases unforeseen in the budget decided by the Conference of the Parties; it had been ascertained that such an amendment would not be appropriate. Only if the Conference of the Parties decided to amend paragraph 19 of the financial rules appended to Resolution 7.1 could such a move be envisaged.
8. It was agreed that the existing rules of procedure remained in force for the 27th meeting.
9. The Chair invited the Committee to note the report of its 26th meeting (CMS/StC27/Inf.5). It did so.
10. Mr. Müller-Helmbrecht suggested that the Committee follow the example of reporting at CITES, which meant that a succinct report listing the Committee's decisions and action points would be produced within four weeks of the meeting or as soon as possible thereafter, in addition to a full-length meeting report. That would not directly affect the way in which regional representatives communicated with other parties, but that communication could be improved and intensified. The suggestion met with the Committee's approval and it was agreed that the draft succinct report of action and decision points would be distributed to the Committee expeditiously (**ACTION POINT**).

Agenda Item 3: Secretariat report on inter-sessional activities since Standing Committee 26

11. Mr. Müller-Helmbrecht recalled that it had been customary practice for the Secretariat's report on inter-sessional activities to be embodied in the CMS Bulletin. Since the latest issue of the Bulletin was dedicated to the Silver Anniversary, the report of the secretariat had instead been produced as a separate document (CMS/StC27/5).
12. Mr. Glowka (CMS Agreements Officer) presented the document, highlighting the fact that one new Party had joined the Convention on 1 June 2004: Mauritius was the first small island developing nation to join; that there was concern that 15 Parties had yet to name a focal point; and that 23 Parties still had not appointed a scientific councillor. He also drew attention to the adverse effect on the Secretariat's information management activities of the lack of an Information Officer; nevertheless outreach activities had continued in connection with the 25th anniversary. CMS had had its corporate look consolidated by a restructured web site (<http://www.cms.int>); it would be a cornerstone information tool, with its new look, new functions and universal access. Recent printed materials included a new, larger format CMS brochure in five languages (CMS/StC27/Inf.14); a brochure on cetacean conservation, undertaken with the Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society (WDCS); and a collection of official Convention texts in various languages, produced in close cooperation with the German Government.
13. Mr. Müller-Helmbrecht said that CMS brochure mentioned by Mr. Glowka could readily be produced in other languages and urged members of the Committee to promote that activity (**ACTION POINT**). He informed the Committee of a workshop to be staged at the 3rd IUCN World Conservation Congress, in Bangkok, Thailand, in November 2004, in which NGOs would be participating.

14. Mr. Schwenzfeier (Representative of the Depositary) announced that the ratification of the Headquarters Agreement had been completed. Welcoming Mauritius as the 86th Member State of the Convention, he said that the German Foreign Ministry ran campaigns to encourage new countries to sign the Convention.

Agenda Item 4: Reports from Standing Committee Members and Observers

15. Mr. Williams (Representative of Western Europe) reported on CMS-related activities in Western Europe. A number of CMS-related meetings had taken place since the previous Standing Committee meeting, or were due to take place later in 2004. They included the 4th meeting of ASCOBANS parties in Esbjerg, Denmark from 19 to 22 August 2003; the 1st Standing Committee meeting of AEWA in Bonn, 24–25 November 2003; the 5th meeting of AEWA's Technical Committee in the United Kingdom, from 30 March to 2 April 2004; the 12th Scientific Council in the United Kingdom from 31 March to 3 April 2004; the Waterbirds Around the World Conference in the United Kingdom, from 3 to 8 April 2004; the 1st meeting of the signatories to the Great Bustard MoU, in Austria, 17–18 September 2004; and Spain would be hosting the second meeting of ACCOBAMS parties from 9 to 12 November 2004, in Mallorca. With regard to Agreements and MoUs, he announced that the Agreement on Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) had been ratified by Spain (12 August 2003) and the United Kingdom (2 April 2004), while France was working on its ratification and it was hoped it would ratify before the end of the summer. Concerning the Monk seal action plan, he said that Spain had expressed a willingness to act as the lead country on a more formal agreement or MoU, if the Secretariat could discover how receptive other countries involved would be to that proposal (**ACTION POINT**).

16. Turning to the area of research, Mr. Williams said that following the approval of CMS Scientific Council at its 12th meeting, the United Kingdom would commission research into the merits of a CMS regional agreement on migratory raptors. The terms of reference were yet to be agreed, but it needed to be considered whether such an agreement would bring a conservation benefit; and if it would, whether an MoU or an Agreement would prove to be the best vehicle; which species should be covered; the geographical scope of the region; and the need to draft an agreement and action plan. The research specification would be advertised internationally through CMS Secretariat. The United Kingdom was seeking to let a research contract looking at the links between climate change and migratory species and the reliability of forecasting models, but the step had been delayed, primarily because the research specification needed further clarification, but it was hoped the contract could be let in the summer. As far as practical conservation was concerned, he said that Spain was continuing work towards the control and eradication of Ruddy ducks and hybrids; Spain remained ready to cooperate with the United Kingdom in any field related to the problem.

17. The United Kingdom was continuing with its interim programme of culling and has submitted an application for funding from the European Union. The United Kingdom was grateful to Spain and other EU Member States for tackling the problem. Spain was helping to implement the Monk seal action plan in Atlantic waters, with a particular focus on the main colony in Mauritania. The Great Bustard was being re-introduced into the United Kingdom, initially on a trial basis, as part of a 10-year project to be reviewed annually. Spain had launched a publication in 2003 under the title "Wintering of waterbirds in Spain", which included data from the period 1980–2001. Finally, Spain has taken account of the CoP7 resolutions in helping to find solutions to problems caused by wind farms and electricity lines.

18. Mr. Domashlinets (Representative of Central and Eastern Europe) reported on CMS-related activities in Central and Eastern Europe. The 5th meeting of Signatory States to CMS Siberian Crane Memorandum of Understanding had taken place in April 2004 in Moscow, Russian Federation; the revised Conservation Plans for the western, central and eastern populations of the species had been adopted. The 9th meeting of the Advisory Committee to EUROBATS had taken place in Vilnius, Lithuania, from 17 to 19 May 2004. The 2nd Regional International Meeting on Sustainable Management of the Sturgeon Populations of the Northwestern Black Sea and Lower Danube River had been held in Tulcea, Romania, from 24 to 27 November 2003; the Regional Strategy for the Conservation and Sustainable Management of the Sturgeon Population, in accordance with CITES, was drafted; it had to be adopted and signed by the relevant Range States. A CMS presentation had been made at the EECCA Regional Workshop on Compliance with and Enforcement of MEAs, Kyiv, Ukraine, 22–25 March 2004. CMS presentations to promote the Convention and its agreements and MoU had also been made at the 3rd All-Russian Congress on Environmental Protection, Moscow, 18–20 November 2003; at the International Workshop on Capacity-Building for Biodiversity in Central and Eastern Europe, Island of Vilm, Germany, 3–6 December 2003; and at the 2nd International Meeting on Bird Census, Zhytomyr, Ukraine, 26–30 April 2004. Belarus had acceded to CMS in 2003 and the Convention had entered into force on 1 September 2003. Ukraine had acceded to ACCOBAMS in 2003, the agreement entering into force on 1 January. AEWAs had entered into force in Slovenia on 1 October 2003. Latvia and Slovenia had acceded to EUROBATS on 1 August 2003 and 3 January 2004 respectively. Efforts had been made to finalize the MoU and Action Plan for the Saiga antelope. The Range States had been requested to sign the MoU in Berlin, Germany, on 23 June 2004, the 25th anniversary of the adoption of CMS.

19. Mr. Domashlinets went on to say that a survey of cetaceans along Ukraine's 12-mile coastline was being conducted; new data on dolphin numbers, migration and foraging places were being obtained and processed; dolphin monitoring networks in Ukraine were being set up. A major GEF project on "Conservation of Biodiversity in the Azov-Black Sea Ecological Corridor" had been launched in Ukraine in 2003. Much attention would be paid to research into and conservation measures for migratory birds included in the AEWAs appendix. A project supported by CMS Scientific Council on the aquatic warbler under the relevant MoU was expected to be implemented in Ukraine and Belarus. The fundraising letters for Bukhara deer conservation and research had been sent through CMS Secretariat in early 2004.

20. Ms. Acero Villanes (Representative of the Americas and the Caribbean) reported on CMS-backed projects being carried out in the Americas and submitted a number of relevant documents. In Peru, populations of the marine otter and Humboldt penguin along the southern coast of Peru were being evaluated in coordination with Chilean specialists, since their distribution was cross-border; the final report would be submitted within a few months. The first stage of the project for the conservation of marine turtles along the Peruvian coast had been completed by the Peruvian Association for Wildlife Conservation (APECO), and a report had been submitted to the Secretariat and the Scientific Councillors; the second tranche of CMS funding for the completion of the research by the end of the year was awaited. In Argentina, the project on Joint Actions for the Conservation and Management of the Ruddy-headed goose, in Argentina and Chile, had been carried out by Wetlands International, and the final report had been sent to CMS Secretariat. The project on estimating the abundance and use of habitats and identification of numbers of the Plata River dolphin, run by the Argentine Wildlife Fund, would be finalized in 2005. In Chile, implementation of priority actions for the conservation of high Andean flamingos, under the aegis of the National Forestry Corporation (CONAF), was to be finalized by the end of the year; the project was being jointly carried out with Bolivia, Argentina and Peru. In 2004, an official visit had been made to the Peruvian authorities, to develop, through a joint accord, the conservation of

Andean flamingos, since the species were distributed between the countries concerned. In Bolivia, efforts were being made towards coordinating activities with Chile, Peru and Argentina for the conservation of Andean flamingos. In Paraguay, the draft version of the final report had been submitted for the project for the Conservation of the Saffron-cowled blackbird, carried out by the country's GUYRA Association.

21. Turning to actions carried out in Peru in the framework of CMS, Ms. Acero Villanes explained that part of the activities of the Focal Point represented by the National Institute for Natural Resources (INRENA) was to evaluate and monitor migratory bird species in the wetlands along the Peruvian coast, to determine the importance of those habitats in order to encourage their conservation. In May 2004, the head of INRENA in Peru had signed the addenda to the agreement on the protection of Andean flamingos and other endangered inhabiting the wetlands of the Andean countries, with administrative bodies in Chile, Argentina and Bolivia, in the framework of the completion of CMS observation exercise; the document had been co-signed by the representative of Chile, Juan Pablo Contreras Rodríguez, Director of the Antofagasta Region of the National Forestry Corporation (CONAF); by the Argentine delegate, Patricia Marconi, of the Yuchan Foundation; and by the representative of Bolivia, Omar Rocha Olivo, Executive Director of the Centro de Estación Biológica Teórica y Aplicada. At the meeting attended by the representatives of the aforementioned countries, it was agreed that a census would be jointly conducted of the populations of Andean flamingos in January 2005. In August 2004, a training course would be held in Peru on the methodology of flamingo censuses by specialists from CONAF (Chile), Fundación Yuchan (Argentina) and Bolivia. She added that the countries of the region felt that CMS Secretariat should continue to support the efforts being made in those countries, in the form of research projects, but that it was also urgent to boost capacity-building further with a view to ensuring the joint conservation of migratory species. It was recommended that once CMS's budgetary problems were overcome, each region should have a coordinator within the Secretariat. As a priority, a regional meeting needed to be held before the next COP in 2005.

22. Mr. El Mastour (Standing Committee Vice-Chairman; Representative of Africa) gave a brief presentation of recent developments in his region. Ms. Zacharia (Representative of Africa) explained that the United Republic of Tanzania had been asked to replace Kenya at very short notice and had obtained no communication from the Kenyan authorities with regard to a report on the Africa region.

23. Mr. Prasad (Representative of Asia) reported on some of the main developments and activities carried out in Sri Lanka for the conservation of migrant species. A second area had been identified as a Ramsar-protected wetland and had been demarcated and gazetted as a protected area under Flora and Fauna Protection Ordinance. A new office had been created for the protection of wild fauna. Invasive alien flora species had and would be removed to control floral diversity and establish natural ecosystems as feeding grounds for waders and other water birds, as part of an ADB-PAMOWLC funded project. The conservation activities of the Kumana Bird National Park had been reactivated and special areas had been selected to improve the natural habitat of birds. Night patrols had been extended to beaches along the southern coast to minimize the activities of predators against turtle nests. Investigations had been initiated to establish the cause of the record low number of hawksbill turtles observed nesting in 2004. Research had also been instigated to establish the possible threat from Asian influenza.

24. Mr. Hepworth (UNEP/UNON) outlined a paper (CMS/StC27/Inf.7.2) prepared by the Division of Environmental Conventions (UNEP), giving information about substantive UNEP support given to environmental conventions. UNEP had supported pilot projects in Ghana, Indonesia, Panama and Seychelles for the harmonization of national reporting and information

management for biodiversity-related treaties including CMS. UNEP-WCMC had produced a preliminary consolidated report format and guidelines on establishment of a coordinated national reporting mechanism for the global biodiversity-related conventions. It was envisaged that the international level recommendations would be considered by the secretariats and COPs of those conventions. He gave details of the GRASP (Great Apes Survival Project) launched in 2001, a WSSD Type II Partnership, whose added value had been clearly demonstrated at the preparatory meeting held in Paris, 26-28 November 2003. He went on to describe other partnership activities and support given to CMS activities, including those relating to Sahelo-Saharan Antelopes, the Bukhara deer, the Central Asian Bird flyway and the Marine Turtle MoUs. He offered information on capacity-building activities and the organization of the 10th Meeting of MEA Secretariats held in Nairobi, 8 and 9 March 2004. He concluded with information about the Headquarters Agreement, activities relating to the 25th anniversary of CMS, and administrative and personnel issues.

25. Mr. O'Sullivan (BirdLife International) congratulated CMS Parties, Secretariat and partners on the 25th anniversary of the Convention, and Mr. Müller-Helmbrecht whose work as Executive Secretary had been central to the achievements of the Convention over so many years. BirdLife International had been closely involved with CMS since its very beginning in the late 1970s and the relationship had never been closer or more productive. BirdLife and CMS Secretariat had very recently concluded a MoC setting out formally how they would work together, in particular BirdLife committing itself to the use of its networks in over 100 countries worldwide to promote the Convention and its work. CMS and BirdLife were working together on many projects as set out in the Project Overview paper and the review of the Implementation of the 2000–2005 Strategic Plan. The work covered the whole range of species from geese to warblers. BirdLife continued to grow but it still often lacked the necessary resources to react as efficiently, generously and imaginatively as the Convention deserved. The organization was, however, determined to try harder and to find ways to achieve a more effective focus for its work with the Parties, the Secretariat, the Scientific Council and the Standing Committee. He felt that the custom of asking certain observers to withdraw during discussion of finances was unusual among international treaties and wondered whether CMS might not benefit in various ways from having those observers present during those discussions. He asked for the matter to be given due consideration at the Committee's convenience. The Memorandum of Cooperation between CMS and BirdLife International signed in June 2004 was distributed.

26. Mr. Hagemeyer (Wetlands International) said that since March 2003 a new tripartite Joint Work Programme (JWP) between CMS-AEWA and Wetlands International had been in force, making the existing MoU (1997) more substantial. Besides more generic aspects, such as cooperation in the fields of communication, meetings and promotion, waterbird conservation activities currently lay at the core of the JWP. Waterbird conservation had traditionally been one of the core areas of work of Wetlands International and the need for an international approach had been identified from the very start, 50 years before. Activities of particular interest for CMS were waterbird monitoring, namely the International Waterbird Census (IWC), Waterbird Populations Estimates (WPE) and global flyway activities, and he presented information about progress made in all three. Application of the monitoring data on migratory waterbirds for the development of indicators to measure progress towards the 2010 target had been an important field of work for the organization. Since the very explicit articulation of the global 2010 target in Europe had generated significant policy interest and funding, and since IWC data from Europe were in the best state of organization, pilot projects had been developed in Europe over the previous years to develop the monitoring and an indicator to measure progress towards the target, using population trends derived from the waterbird time series in the organization's databases. Work was under way in Europe in close collaboration with the European Commission and EEA. Wetlands International had also been working on the conservation of single species and would continue to do so. CMS had been a

valuable partner in that work and had gone to small projects in South America; he mentioned three Ruddy-headed goose projects funded by CMS in Argentina and Chile. Other single species work included that on the White-headed duck and the Siberian crane, where the involvement of Wetlands International in the MoU had been stepped up and formalized, in view of the link to the Central Asian Flyway site network.

27. Mr. Hagemeyer went on to raise two cross-cutting issues, Avian flu and the suitable use of waterbirds and related issues, such as the use of non-toxic shot for hunting waterbirds. Besides the focus on waterbirds, the other wetland taxa mentioned in the JWP included migratory freshwater fish, aquatic mammals and marine turtles. A new Specialist Group on freshwater fish had recently been established by the organization, marking an increased effort to work on that important group. Activities on other taxa had mainly involved local projects implemented by various Wetlands International offices around the world. Having outlined Wetlands International's strategy for the future, he congratulated CMS on its 25th anniversary.

28. Mr. Müller-Helmbrecht reminded the Committee that all regional representatives were expected to inform the meeting of recent developments concerning new Member States or news concerning MoUs/Agreements. He had hoped that the number of Parties to the Convention would rise to 90 in time for the 25th anniversary. It seemed feasible that that number would be reached by the end of 2004, with the possible or likely accession of Rwanda (of vital importance for GRASP, the Great Apes Survival Project), Djibouti, Yemen, Samoa and Austria. Real progress towards the accession of Cape Verde had been reported and there was an indication that Seychelles might wish to accede.

29. Mr. Müller-Helmbrecht recalled that the contribution to CMS work by NGOs was vital. The question of whether NGO observers were invited to attend certain parts of meetings was at the discretion of the Chair. It was for the Standing Committee itself, or COP, to decide whether they were invited, for example, to attend discussions of financial matters. NGOs could in any case be informed of CMS' finances but discussions had traditionally been held in closed session. The Chair said that members of the Standing Committee would be sounded out in time for the next meeting; there were obviously arguments for and against (**ACTION POINT**).

Agenda Item 5: Administrative and financial matters

(This agenda item was subject to a closed session. This portion of the report is found in Annex 1 and is subject to restricted distribution to Standing Committee members.)

Agenda Item 6: Institutional matters

Agenda Item 6.1: CMS 25th anniversary

30. Mr. Müller-Helmbrecht gave information (contained in various documents presented to the Committee) about various events being held in Germany in connection with the 25th anniversary of the Bonn Convention, which would also be celebrated in Berlin on 23 June 2004.

31. On 23 June 2004, members of the Committee travelled to Berlin for a celebration of CMS 25th anniversary, at ceremonies attended by the Executive Director of UNEP, Mr. Töpfer, and other dignitaries.

Agenda Item 6.2: Cooperation with other bodies and processes

32. Mr. Müller-Helmbrecht presented the Secretariat document (CMS/StC27/9) explaining the progress achieved in cooperation with other bodies and processes, but also the lack of progress in certain areas due to the delay in recruiting an Interagency Liaison Officer as approved at the previous COP. Many aspects of the work programme had been affected. The Committee was invited to consider the fact that joint CMS/CBD work programmes, and the joint programmes planned with Ramsar, needed to be fully implemented by all stakeholders, including the Parties to the respective conventions.

33. The Chair said that the Committee took note of the good achievements detailed in the document while adding that much more could be achieved; the greatest possible synergy with other bodies was highly desirable.

Agenda Item 6.3: 2010 Target

34. Mr. Glowka presented the Secretariat document (CMS/StC27/10) on CMS's contribution to achieving the 2010 target; the Committee was asked to review the fourth and final version of the UNEP-WCMC paper attached, and to provide specific guidance on the next steps for the Scientific Council and the Secretariat, taking into consideration the need for financial resources. The paper had been prepared at the request of the Standing Committee which had discussed the matter at its previous meeting. It had already been discussed at the 12th meeting of the Scientific Council and comments had been received. The issue was a strategic one for which reason it was discussed following, rather than before, discussion of agenda item 7.

35. The Committee was asked how it wanted to move ahead with the process. The main points for consideration were: whether other fora were aware of CMS's work; how to measure the effectiveness of CMS work with regard to the 2010 target; ways of integrating 2010-related activities into work of the Strategic Plan; measuring the achievement of the 2010 target (Convention or global); how to ensure access to good regional information and its management or synthesis with regard to the 2010 target (assisted by the Information Management System and the related Plan); the need to develop partnerships with related Conventions and the rest of the CMS family; technical issues such as indicators regarding meeting the 2010 target.

36. Emphasizing the complexity of the issue, the Chair suggested that the two most important points to be considered were: measuring and evaluating the performance concerning the Convention's contribution to the global aim; and the question of one or more indicators, a difficult, opaque subject further complicated by the different interpretations of the term. Sometimes existing indicators proved inadequate but were difficult to improve upon and they would have to make do with them.

37. Mr. Fragoso (UNEP-WCMC), agreeing that the subject was a complex one and therefore ruling out an in-depth discussion at such a meeting, said that the Convention needed both to assess its own achievements and its contribution to overall progress, and to examine progress made by other bodies. Succeeding in determining what CMS had achieved in terms of its own goals by 2010 would be a fantastic achievement in itself; nevertheless many of the activities being carried out elsewhere in relation with 2010 were relevant to CMS and vice versa. The specific issue of migration was where CMS would naturally make a unique contribution to the global process and could even lead by example. The question of costs and methods of such an exercise would pose CMS with a major challenge. The document under consideration pointed to potential partners and highlighted the relevant issues, but it was important not to lose the momentum already attained.

CBD had already been contacted and it was desirous of exchanges of information with CMS. He agreed with the representative of Wetlands International that greater synergy would be welcome with BirdLife International and Wetlands International (both of which had valuable data at their disposal) in order to convey the wider picture concerning migratory water birds, in Europe at least. It might be important to concentrate on accurate figures relating to specific species – and trumpet any achievements in reducing the decline – rather than trying to be fully comprehensive, which was an all but impossible task.

38. Members of the Committee urged that more attention be paid by governments and, above all, international bodies such as CMS, to taking more conservation action in the future, rather than indulging in an assessment of what had been done. It was a fact that certain species were declining in number and CMS needed to consider what practical actions (projects, etc.) needed to be taken in the field to counter that. The view was expressed that CMS would be brought firmly into the international limelight if it took action aimed at achieving the 2010 target, rather than attaching itself to an analysis of statistics concerning what may have been achieved. It had to be decided whether the 2010 target was a political or a real target – in the latter case, specific activities should be carried out with regard to declining species. It would be important for the Convention to be able to show that it had saved given species from decline or extinction, rather than focus on theoretical issues. The real challenge for CMS was to achieve the specific targets set by its own projects by the year 2010. It emerged from the discussion that there was support for taking a global view vis-à-vis the target, rather than considering only the situation in CMS Parties. It was suggested that that would be simpler, more prestigious for the Convention and more useful in the long term with regard to the conservation of migratory species; the opposing view, also expressed, was that on the contrary CMS already had readily available information concerning CMS Parties and protected species, whereas seeking global information would be more difficult and could actually take until 2010 to compile into a worldwide migratory species index, for example. It was subsequently agreed that such an index would indeed be too complex and time-consuming; what was required instead was global information concerning the species covered by the Convention but going beyond the populations detected in the Contracting Parties. Another point made was that it would be important for CMS to alert the world community to the general failure to halt and reverse the decline in biodiversity – as probably would still be the case in 2010 - rather than focusing on trumpeting its own (possibly limited) achievements vis-à-vis specific species.

39. With regard to the question of indicators, the existing instruments already offered information on a range of protected species concerning all the main ecosystems. It would not be possible, however, to cover all taxa or species, which implied that indicators were intrinsically limited. However, the sheer figures about threatened species, such as the albatross, should be enough to persuade the COP to take action to protect them. Moreover, powerful data would have a stronger political effect if the message was simple, making the public relations exercise easier. A simple graphical image often galvanized decision-makers into action. With regard to developing partnerships, CMS had proven its worth when it came to agreements and memoranda of understanding; it needed to forge ahead with successful projects on the ground in order to win political support and by extension financial assistance. Exemplary achievements would be more impressive than comprehensive analysis with too broad a picture of results. Information already existed; it was vital to convey achievements in an accurate but confident manner. Other bodies, such as FAO, should be approached and asked to provide information about species not covered or paid full attention by CMS, such as certain migratory fish species, which had a particular economic value.

40. The Chair said that the Committee had pointed to the way forward. Suggesting that another workshop might be required to examine such a complex issue, she said that it had emerged from the

meeting that much more work was needed, focusing on CMS itself and its available data. In preparation for any such workshop, she asked WCMC to present the available data in a more graphic form, focusing on Appendix I species or a sub-set such as concerted action species (**ACTION POINT**). FAO might be approached to provide certain data in addition, and CBD might also offer ideas as to how the whole question should be addressed. She therefore asked the Secretariat to look into the CBD's timetable and approach (**ACTION POINT**), so that the two bodies could engage in a useful and ongoing dialogue. Making all existing indicator-type information available was to be treated as a matter of urgency. It would be easier to envisage the use of indicators once more concrete data was presented to the Committee. She said that the Scientific Council would have a role to play in examining ideas in time for the next meeting of the Standing Committee – still five years ahead of the 2010 target. She added that, in her experience, the establishment of accurate indicators and practical conservation measures went hand in hand.

Agenda Item 6.4: Location of Secretariat and co-located Agreements

41. Mr. Müller-Helmbrecht introduced the agenda item, saying that there were two aspects to it. First, the expansion of the co-located and CMS Secretariats required a move to another building. Second, the German Government had offered to move the entire United Nations family to a new United Nations "campus".

42. Ms. Kanza explained that the Secretariats based in Bonn no longer fitted comfortably in the same premises at Haus Carstanjen. Temporary arrangements were in operation but the United Nations Security Coordination Unit had discovered flaws in the security arrangements at OBS, the new building in use.

43. Mr. Schmitz (Representative of the Depository) said that an expert had been contacted regarding the security issue. The Executive Secretary said that he was confident a solution could be found.

44. Mr. Stempel (ASCOBANS) explained that Haus Carstanjen, albeit an attractive location, had become overcrowded, housing 500 staff whereas it was intended for only 150. The growth of staff of Agreement Secretariats, and the increased number of agencies in Bonn, was projected to bring the total number of staff to over 700 by 2006. The German Government had generously offered to house the bodies in a new "United Nations Campus", in the former parliamentary district of Bonn, where suitable office space and conference facilities, with capacity of up to 6000, would be located on the same site. Plans should be finalized by 2006–2007. The result would be a considerable improvement since only one location would replace the current three. It should be possible for the Secretariat to move into the new office space by the middle of 2005. Synergies could be facilitated with other agencies and savings could be made.

45. The Executive Secretary thanked the German Government for its generous offer, pointing out that there had already been several moves since CMS and its Secretariat had been first established.

46. The Chair echoed the Executive Secretary's gratitude, formally recording the Standing Committee's thanks to the German Government, and noting that the physical move would inevitably cause disruption in the crucial lead-up to the next COP.

Agenda Item 6.5: Delegation of Authority

(This agenda item was subject to a closed session. This portion of the report is found in Annex 1 and is subject to restricted distribution to Standing Committee members.)

Agenda Item 6.6: Any other institutional matters

47. Mr. Müller-Helmbrecht reminded the Committee that the issue of the legal personality of the CMS Secretariat had yet to be settled and the question would need to be addressed at some time in the future.

Agenda Item 7: Strategic planning

Agenda Item 7.1: Implementation of CMS Strategic Plan (2000–2005)

48. Mr. Glowka presented the Secretariat report (CMS/StC27/12) and its annex, a review of Implementation of CMS Strategic Plan (2000–2005). The Committee was invited to consider the review report and seek a consensus on the proposed actions aimed at ensuring that the implementation of CMS Strategic Plan (2000–2005) remained on track and the need to make the review report more comprehensive, in time for COP8, taking into consideration the need to build a strong baseline for monitoring and report in the implementation of the next Strategic Plan (2006–2011). In reply to a question about whether it would have benefited the Strategic Plan if there had been clearly defined deadlines and actions in place, he pointed to the performance indicators in the annex (there had been a performance working group looking at ways of measuring achievements), but since no time or target was indicated he wondered how useful they were. He agreed that the outcome-oriented nature of the future Strategic Plan would therefore need to be emphasized.

49. Agreeing with that point, the Chair expressed her thanks to all Parties and partners for the considerable energy expended on a considerable amount of activity, as recorded in the report.

50. Mr. Glowka then presented a document with a concept for evaluating the implementation of CMS Strategic Plan, prepared by UNEP-WCMC in consultation with the Secretariat (CMS/StC27/12/Add.1). At its 26th meeting the Standing Committee had already considered the means to conduct the impending assessment of the implementation of the Strategic Plan. He noted that access to and management of information had to be improved but that the architecture for input of information was already in place in the form of the CMS Information Management System; there were financial implications to be borne in mind. The Committee was invited to consider and provide further guidance on the concept for the Strategic Plan's evaluation, in the context not only of the review needed for the existing and proposed Strategic Plan but also of the technical, financial and personnel implications of undertaking the activities proposed. It was felt that the WCMC's concept might be an example to be followed. Essentially, there was a need to make the review report more comprehensive by pulling in all sources of information potentially at the Secretariat's disposal; they needed to find ways of achieving that goal.

51. Invited to give a brief overview of the concept as it currently stood, Mr. Fragoso said that the proposal was to make the evaluation of the Strategic Plan an ongoing exercise and that the evaluation should be based on sources and mechanisms that informed the regular operation of the Convention. That would lay the necessary, or minimal, bases for a proper evaluation of the Strategic Plan. The document listed the four core information sources available to CMS: party

reports; project reports (for both CMS-backed and CMS-related projects); the Scientific Council; and specialist agencies associated with CMS, including its related Agreements. He explained a table appended to the document which described the information resources for assessing implementation as pinpointed by the performance working group. Another aspect that should be emphasized was finding concrete indicators for assessing the contribution by the work of CMS to the achievement of the Johannesburg targets. He said that reporting frequency should be increased to annual in certain cases.

52. Asked how the ongoing assessment was to work in practice and how much the process would cost, Mr. Fragoso said that cycles of the various information elements could be staggered to ensure a constant input of information rather than the intermittent submission of information as occurred at present; furthermore information on groups of species could be updated more continuously than was currently the case. The cost of the exercise was uncertain but was expected to be minimal since the Convention would be monitoring itself; the method proposed would have the advantages of being low-cost, simple and quick. The actual cost would, of course, depend on the extent to which and regularity with which the monitoring of all the different species was implemented. Mr. Glowka gave an assurance that the budget decided at COP7 had earmarked funds for the very purpose of the assessment of CMS implementation, which should cover any extra costs incurred when implementing the proposed assessment. Mr. Fragoso added that the aim was not so much a radical change of approach as a gradual shift towards a more forward-looking, continuous methodology. Replying to another question about any negative factors with regard to the evaluation exercise, he said that the lack of any conservation activities in certain Parties had been identified as the main drawback.

53. The Chair warned against making the existing process any more complicated. The most important practical goal was to send as quickly as possible the most comprehensive possible report to COP8, drawing on information that was immediately available to the Secretariat – from the Parties and other sources outlined in the document. She detected an overeagerness to improve the methodology for the future strategy which was standing in the way of addressing the urgency of the forthcoming COP. Little time remained before a report had to be sent, comprising an assessment or analysis of information already made available. She suggested that an improved methodology should be implemented for the next Strategic Plan (2006–2011).

54. Mr. Fragoso said that what the Chair had urged – namely to send as quickly as possible the most comprehensive possible report to COP8 – should not present any problems. The basic tools were already in place and so the exercise for 2005 would not be overly difficult. He went on to say that a rolling document was already in place for the current biennium and he agreed that the aim was to produce a comprehensible summary document highlighting both the achievements and the challenges that lay ahead. Nonetheless he felt that it was absolutely necessary already to look ahead to the following period, 2006–2011, when the assessment should be greatly expanded in terms of the number of species covered. The Committee needed to recognize the fact that the exercise for that period would be complex and that continuity was called for in the assessment of such a large number of species. The Chair said she was reassured by those arguments.

55. In the ensuing discussion it was pointed out that, in addition to the different sources of information (the national reports, essentially), the main issue was the task of evaluating the indicators themselves to decide whether they would be useful in the future; that might be the task of the performance working group. The Scientific Council could also play its part in revising the indicators in use. Above all, it was vital for all information to be posted on the website, so that everyone working on the species concerned also had access to information gathered by CMS. In that connection it was important for the Parties to respect the existing deadline for presenting their

reports – i.e. five to six months before the COP – which should be facilitated by the new electronic reporting format. It was pointed out that the WCMC pre-filled some of the information in the reports, to encourage the Parties to complete the information supplied. National reports would be an increasingly useful source of information for future management activities; but it was pointed out that in the past they had supplied little information about the outcome of conservation measures taken under the Convention. Mr. Glowka recalled that the new website incorporated a search function and agreed that it was important for as many national reports as possible to be posted on the website before COP, which was already the goal of the Information Management System.

56. More analysis of the information that had been gathered was called for, since the provision of stark information was not sufficient. In reply, it was pointed out that the information was being analysed at various forums – the COP and Scientific Council, principally – but it was agreed that information on specific performance of species covered by the different Agreements within the “CMS family” remained hazy; again time and resources were of the essence, but value would undoubtedly be added to the available information if more analysis were carried out. The Committee asked how baseline data would be combined with national data to come up with conclusive answers; in reply it was pointed out that the Information Management System addressed that to some extent but the degree to which it was successful depended on the chosen goal. Assurances were given that the accumulation of large amounts of information, without analysis, had rightly been abandoned. Global issues, such as the question of specific threats posed to endangered species, were crucial factors to be borne in mind at the COP. The fact that the Scientific Council met immediately before the COP enabled major strategic issues to be discussed there, since those were where CMS could make the biggest impact.

57. The Chair summed up saying that there existed a large quantity of information from various sources to be examined, to ensure that the report was as comprehensive as possible. It had to be considered how best to use and improve the performance indicators. If necessary the performance working group might be resurrected (or reconvened) to address the Strategic Plan 2006–2011. It was hoped that the proposed structure of the draft report would be ready for the next meeting of the Standing Committee, with more structure and content. There existed money in the budget for that purpose and she requested WCMC to develop a structure and build in all relevant information, including that supplied by or developed under the auspices of the Scientific Council (**ACTION POINT**). Information from the national reports should then be built into the report in a structured way, once those reports were available (the Information Management System assisted in that) – i.e. probably after the next meeting of the Standing Committee. It was important for all information to be made available on the Internet as soon as usefully possible. Parties should be given assistance with producing their reports at the earliest possible stage.

Agenda Item 7.2: Development of CMS Strategic Plan (2006–2011)

58. Mr. Glowka presented the Secretariat document (CMS/StC27/13), containing the report of the open-ended Strategic Plan Working Group, chaired by Mr. Biber (Switzerland). The Standing Committee was invited to provide comments on the revised draft Strategic Plan (2006–2011) and provide further guidance to the Working Group chair, if necessary, on procedural and/or substantive matters relating to the points raised in the paper. The Scientific Council led the way in determining how the Convention should implement the Strategic Plan as it had already developed its own draft implementation plan for that period, covered by the following agenda item.

59. Mr. Biber (Switzerland) recapitulated the process so far, stressing the fact that the broadest possible consultation had been striven for. The latest reactions had been received in February 2004 and the work of the Scientific Council had been paramount. The result was a far-reaching document

with a lengthy – possibly excessively long – introduction, but the goals and objectives outlined were, in his view, satisfactory; each goal had its own objectives. He was open to suggestions for modifications to the text. In his view the introduction needed reworking, or even omission altogether. It was also important to decide what was to be done with the document. It could not be presented to the COP as it stood and required considerable further work. He reminded the Committee that there would be only one more meeting of the Standing Committee before the next COP. He felt that the performance working group should make its input, with a suggestion of the indicators for measuring performance over the coming triennium.

60. Thanking the chair of the working group for his personal investment, the Chair said that she assumed that the text did not have to be finalized during the current meeting and that there would be another meeting of the Committee before the next COP. There should be some inter-sessional consultations if possible. She opened up discussion about the general impression given by the document.

61. Mr. Müller-Helmbrecht praised the text of the document for its exemplary clarity; several members of the Committee echoed the Executive Secretary's praise of the document, commending the improvements made and citing it as the overarching document driving the whole process. Mr. Müller-Helmbrecht singled out the introduction for its emphasis of the goal of rescuing natural resources for future generations, which was in keeping with the United Nations' goals in general and the development goals in particular; his view was that it was important for those not familiar with CMS to know what the Convention's goals were. Others went even further, suggesting that the introduction should contain specific examples of what had been achieved in terms of increasing the population of endangered species. It was generally agreed that unfortunately CMS's work was not self-explanatory and that accordingly the Convention still had to be promoted, as had been illustrated by the poor results of attempts to raise funds for the Bukhara deer MoU; Mr. Müller-Helmbrecht insisted that other stakeholders would be required to assist the Scientific Council with the implementation of the Strategic Plan and they would need to be convinced of the Convention's role. The setting of priorities and the specific identification of main actors had to be incorporated into the implementation process – the priorities and key actors in the process had already identified at earlier COPs.

62. During the discussion by the Committee, it was suggested that the introduction might be slightly shortened rather than dropped. Any temporal references in the document should be removed so that the document would not lose its topicality later on. In all, the text still needed to be "fine-tuned" or "nuanced" further, with regard to CMS's mission in general. Specifically, it needed to reflect the fact that CMS's mission was to ensure that wildlife was managed and conserved, since it was not in a position to manage and conserve directly. The fact that the strategic goals referred to "all" species was too ambitious, as not "all" species could be protected. It was also pointed out that specific mention of sustainable development was required, although Mr. Biber felt it went without saying – it might even be included as one of the operational objectives of CMS.

63. Mr. Biber (Switzerland) thanked the Executive Secretary and the Committee for their constructive comments and expressed the hope that the discussion could continue a little longer. He urged members of the Standing Committee to put all their proposals, including those made during the meeting, in writing as soon as possible so that the text could be fine-tuned, nuanced and improved. He wanted more specific proposals in particular for the introduction, which he felt, sounded too "desperate" as it stood; conceding that it should not be omitted, he agreed it could be shortened. In his opinion, the introduction should concentrate on pointing out the specificities of CMS and its relationship vis-à-vis other conventions. It was important to distinguish between target groups: within the conservation community, where CMS should not need promotion, and outside of

it where it obviously did. It was necessary to establish whether the document under consideration was the right place to discuss the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

64. The Chair noted general support for the new draft and reiterated the appeal for comments to be sent in writing within two weeks (**ACTION POINT**). Reference to other actors and other matters (raised respectively by Mr. Müller-Helmbrecht and Mr. Biber) also ought to be incorporated into the text. The goals of CMS would be valid for many years to come and setting specific targets would be a matter for later stages in the whole process. She recalled, regarding the tone of the introduction, that not everyone in the governments concerned was convinced of CMS's relevance and many still needed to be won over; there seemed to be a consensus that desperate pleas (i.e. apologies or self-justification) were not called for, as CMS could be proud of its achievements, but that an appeal for support might nonetheless be required.

65. Mr. Glowka explained that, with regard to moving to an Implementation Plan, the example was set by the Scientific Council. It was important to bear in mind that it was necessary to make that move, and that the modalities needed to be considered. Mr. Williams (United Kingdom) mooted the idea of a United Kingdom-led and partially funded workshop to look at the modalities of moving from the Strategic Plan to the Implementation Plan. The idea was supported – and the United Kingdom thanked – provided the workshop did not prove to be a ponderous, slow or costly instrument. Inter-sessional brainstorming by email would be a useful tool. It was recalled that the work on the Scientific Council Implementation Plan had been greatly helped by the Edinburgh workshop, as it had concentrated minds. Committee Members were welcome to put their ideas to the United Kingdom and to volunteer to participate in the workshop or suggest key participants, possibly other than Standing Committee Members. Its main task was the development of the implementation plan and the identification/evaluation of performance indicators; the performance working group might be revitalized for that purpose.

66. The Chair said that it was agreed that the workshop would be activated later in the year 2004 and that Mr. Biber would lead an email working group (**ACTION POINT**). It was suggested that a first draft should be prepared, as had proved extremely useful at the Scientific Council workshop, for discussion by the workshop participants, to ensure that ideas were streamlined and focused. It was pointed out that the Secretariat ought not to be burdened with the task of producing a first draft document for consideration by the workshop. A facilitator would have to be found, preferably an outside consultant, who might work on the first draft. The relevant goals 4, 5 and 6 contained in the present document were very much the competence of the Standing Committee and it was vital for the Committee to assist the Secretariat with the formulation of the working programme; a start should be made over the coming weeks since time was short.

Agenda Item 7.3: Development of the Scientific Council Implementation Plan (2006–2011)

67. Mr. Galbraith presented the Secretariat note (CMS/StC27/14), setting out the draft Strategy Implementation Plan 2006–2011. He recalled that an intensive workshop had been held on 27 and 28 November 2003 in Edinburgh, United Kingdom, attended by a hard core of participants, to review and enhance the draft CMS Strategic Plan 2006–2011, as a basis for developing the Scientific Council Strategy, along with a number of related issues. The development was work in progress. The aim had been to produce a clear document that clearly measured and timetabled activities, a significant step forward. Work would continue to evolve, with the principles being reviewed every triennium and every three triennia. There was a proposal that a “shopping list” of new projects for consideration should be drawn up. Outcomes as opposed to species were the main concern, but many species were in rapid decline. Success in reversing that trend was of fundamental importance for the Convention's work.

68. The Committee was requested: to note the progress made by the Scientific Council in producing a strategy for its work and its contribution to the development of CMS Strategic Plan 2006–2011; to advise on the approach adopted by the Council in developing its Strategy Implementation Plan, and on the format of the draft Strategy Implementation Plan; to comment on the possible use of the Scientific Council Implementation Plan as a model for the development of implementation plans for other components of the Convention; to consider the content of the draft Plan and comment on the feasibility of the proposed actions, taking into consideration the need for financial and other resources, while noting that a “shopping list” of projects considered necessary for implementation would be developed.

69. The Chair noted that the work was in progress. The experience of the Scientific Council was extremely useful, while its disciplined approach offered very useful guidance. She hoped that the Scientific Council would be represented at the workshop to be set up on the CMS Implementation Plan discussed under the previous agenda item. It was agreed that specific comments should be sent by the members of the Committee within two weeks to the Secretariat, for consideration at the next meeting of the Standing Committee, since there was too much for consideration at short notice at the present meeting (**ACTION POINT**).

Agenda Item 8: Scientific Council matters as they relate to the work of the Standing Committee

Agenda Item 8.1: Report of the Scientific Council Chairman on the 12th meeting of the Scientific Council

70. Mr. Galbraith (Scientific Council Chairman) noted that a meeting had been held in Edinburgh in November 2003 with a view to developing the Implementation Plan for the Scientific Council. The 12th meeting of the Scientific Council had taken place in Glasgow, from 31 March to 3 April 2004, and he took the opportunity to thank the Secretariat for their support. The draft report of the 12th meeting was presented in a secretariat document (CMS/StC/27/Inf.12). At the meeting, the Scientific Council had considered the Implementation Plan for the Council and a number of other items, namely: an update on concerted actions for Appendix I species; issues relating to strategic impact assessment; issues relating to recommendations and resolutions from the previous COP, including wind turbines and electrocution; bycatch, regarding which Mr. Baker, Scientific Councillor for Australia, had agreed to lead an inter-sessional working group; a review of proposals for additions to Appendix I and II listings, for consideration at the next meeting; potential new agreements regarding bats and raptors; a review of proposals for small-scale projects submitted for consideration; the 2010 WSSD target, agreeing to incorporate it into the Implementation Plan and examining the relevance of the Millennium Assessment to CMS; issues relating to IUCN Red List Criteria at regional levels; issues relating to migratory species as vectors of disease that may infect humans, noting the recent outbreak of bird flu and the fact that Wetlands International was working in liaison with others on the issue; and consideration of reporting on the status of species to future COPs, having received a valuable overview draft report relating to the status of concerted action on Appendix I species in which it was documented that a significant number of species' population were still declining.

71. Mr. Galbraith said that the Council had also considered important issues relating to the Council's own modus operandi, in particular the need to coordinate efforts effectively between meetings. There was a need in particular to help step up the efforts of the Scientific Council in Africa and to coordinate its work there. The Council considered that the effort might be based on a

proposal for an appointed Councillor for Africa. The Council also noted the usefulness of holding its meeting immediately before the Waterbirds around the World Conference, held nearby, in Edinburgh.

72. Mr. O’Sullivan drew attention to the problems of overlapping species interests posed to delegates and expressed support for regional meetings, though those too often posed delegates with attendance problems, while pointing out the need to meet linguistic needs at such meetings; Mr. Galbraith signalled that the host association had largely met such costs and future Council meetings should provide linguistic facilities to the greatest possible extent.

73. Mr. Barbieri, with the Chair’s agreement, said that the question of the meeting’s duration needed to be addressed in time for the next meeting (**ACTION POINT**), since an extra day was needed according to the general consensus reached at the previous meeting of the Scientific Council – though that had financial implications. A decision on that was required by the Standing Committee; Mr. Galbraith agreed that it was necessary to have more time, especially in order to allow delegates to attend all the break-out meetings held and to interact, but the extra costs had to be borne in mind.

Agenda Item 8.2: Status of on-going projects

74. Mr. Barbieri presented a document prepared by the Secretariat (CMS/StC27/15) which offered an overview of the status of small-scale projects financed by CMS Trust Fund, reporting on the progress made by the projects, seeking guidance for funding in 2004–2005 and offering a general consideration of the projects in general. The first table contained in the document indicated the Secretariat’s improved efficiency in supporting projects, but the need to make substantive savings implied substantive cuts to the conservation budget. The Small Grant Programme had played a significant role in developing CMS initiatives for a number of taxa and project-oriented work was a key operational tool of the Convention. He pointed to specific initiatives mentioned in the document. The new financial situation facing CMS would obviously have repercussions for the Programme. The Committee was requested to take note of the report; to endorse the list of conservation projects approved by the Scientific Council at its 12th meeting; to provide the Secretariat with guidance as to the use of 2004–2005 budget for the funding of conservation projects during that period; to provide any guidance regarding the Programme and its funding for the triennium 2006–2008; and to decide that no project should be initiated in countries that were not Convention Parties. Among the list of projects approved in principle at the 12th meeting of the Scientific Council, he highlighted those referring to birds. The initiative on the White-headed duck had already won the support of AEW and the European Commission.

75. In the ensuing discussion the Executive Secretary drew attention to the need to release already approved funding in the amount of US\$50,000 as a matter of urgency to fund the Sahelo-Saharan antelope project, since FFEM had already invested considerable amounts in the project, and CMS had pledged to finance the project manager, vital for the project to flourish but representing only a tiny fraction of the overall project expenditure. The Executive Secretary further recounted that the historical past practice of not recording project commitments to the CMS Trust Fund for future years was in part owing to the existence of a Trust Fund surplus and that the COP had previously given the authority for the surpluses to be drawn down for project activities. He proposed that the Committee take note of the old commitment that needed to be covered with the clarification that the money was only for 2005 and any further extension of the commitment in the new Triennium 2006-08 for this project would be subject to the Conference of Parties’ budgetary review. He won the support of various members of the Committee, who emphasised the project’s importance in terms of the Convention’s visibility and credibility, since it was a vital, high-profile

initiative. References were made to other sources of funding in addition to the French Fund, namely from Belgium and Spain. The Standing Committee took note that the Secretariat had to release funds to honour the past commitment. The Chair made it clear that in future all budget calculations should be based on existing financial commitments and that care should be taken to avoid situations where unexpected requests were made for funds to be released regarding past commitments that had to be honoured (**ACTION POINT**).

76. The Chair asked the Committee to consider the general situation of projects in relation to the financial situation; the proposals for projects in Table III; and the future of the small grants programme. Another discussion focused on the need to ensure that all regions benefited from such projects; the African representative (United Republic of Tanzania) was reassured that southern Africa was a priority region for coordination and the focus of activity, in view of the scientific interest of species in that region. The Chairman of the Scientific Council offered to engage in email dialogue to ensure that the matter was satisfactorily discussed. It was stated that, above all, however, given species were what mattered, and decisions concerning them were the responsibility of the Scientific Council. On that score importance was given to large mammals but priority was generally given to species listed in Appendix I; not all species could be a priority and therefore in recent years African species may have received less attention than was desirable. To take the specific case of the Sahelo-Saharan antelope, raised by the Vice Chairman, Mr. Barbieri demonstrated that the related project, a good example of one relating to large mammals, had been given due consideration in terms of budget allocation, suggesting that large mammals were not being neglected in any way. The Chairman of the Council explained that the Council reached its decisions by consensus, and relied on the wisdom and scientific judgment of the councillors. He emphasized the importance of continuing with the specific projects already committed to, given the value that they implied for the Convention; decisions regarding the projects had been taken by the Council without full knowledge of the CMS's financial plight. It was unhelpful for the Council not to be kept informed of the wider budgetary situation. It was also pointed out that it was necessary to make the necessary link between existing projects and any new proposals when considering the issue of projects.

77. There was no objection from the Standing Committee to the proposed list of projects set out in Table III of the relevant document. Furthermore, it was agreed that the first two projects, concerning the White-headed duck and the Corncrake, were to be regarded as being given absolute priority.

78. The Chair summed up: the Secretariat had been given a general mandate to manage the project programme according to the availability of funds and following the system of priorities that had been identified. In 2005 the situation was likely to be more difficult than in 2004. The discussion had revealed that it was important for the guidelines for the submission of projects to the Scientific Council to be made well known and promulgated effectively and fully, so that all Parties and partners were aware of how they should submit projects, to avoid situations where those in the know had an advantage. There had to be a proper audit and control of the financing of the projects specifically, in view of current budgetary disciplines. Budgetary considerations with a view to the next COP would have to take account of projects already agreed to by the Scientific Council, as priorities. The Chair of the Scientific Council would have to work closely together with the CMS Secretariat to make decisions periodically with regard to where the priorities lay and what the hierarchy of set priorities actually was. Ongoing dialogue was therefore vital. Mr. Barbieri agreed that any further decision on priorities would be made in close cooperation with the Scientific Council (**ACTION POINT**).

Agenda Item 9: Implementation of existing Agreements and development of future of Agreements

79. Mr. Müller-Helmbrecht presented the document on the issue (CMS/StC27/16), adding that at the 25th anniversary ceremony in Berlin attention had rightfully been drawn to the progress made in the development of Agreements. Mr. Glowka explained the document to the Committee; it presented the Secretariat's work over the past year and summarized the information presented in the Strategic Plan Review Report. The Committee was invited to take note of the report and provide further guidance on the development of new Agreements including MoU under CMS.

80. Reports from existing Agreement secretariats were then delivered to the Committee. First, Mr. Lenten (AEWA) delivered a progress report prepared by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat. The AEWA Standing Committee had held its first meeting in Bonn in November 2003. The 5th meeting of the AEWA Technical Committee had been held in North Berwick, United Kingdom, from 3 March to 2 April 2004, organized back-to-back with the Global Flyway Conference and at the same time as CMS Scientific Council meeting. At the previous meeting, in Uzbekistan, in May 2003, the role of the Technical Committee was raised; it was partly defined in the Agreement text and was determined by the request of the MoP. Between sessions a working group had drafted a work plan for the Committee. The 3rd session of MoP was due to take place by early 2006 at the latest, ideally after the Ramsar Convention COP9. A joint work programme had been elaborated and concluded with the Ramsar Secretariat, in close cooperation with CMS Secretariat; the signing ceremony had taken place at the Global Flyway Conference in Edinburgh, April 2004. It would lead to closer cooperation between the three Secretariats. Since the previous CMS Standing Committee meeting, good progress had been made in recruiting new Contracting Parties; France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Slovenia, the Syrian Arab Republic, Uzbekistan, Djibouti and Nigeria had joined the Agreement. On 1 July 2004, the number of Contracting Parties would stand at 47 and the Secretariat hoped that by MoP3 the number would rise to 60. The number of permanent staff, however, remained unchanged at one Professional and one General Staff member; a new Associate Technical Officer was due to take office on 1 July 2004; he supplied further information about personnel.

81. Mr. Lenten went on to present information concerning the African-Eurasian Flyway GEF Project, a full-size project worth US\$12 million, drafted by Wetlands International in close cooperation with BirdLife International. Having outlined the international implementation priorities of AEWA 2003–2007 and their current status, he gave details of the communication strategy for the Agreement. The general feeling was that there was a need to plan how to communicate more effectively the objectives and requirements of the Agreement to appropriate target groups. The United Kingdom had agreed to provide the Secretariat with a grant to enable it to begin the development of a strategy. In April 2004 the first draft had been submitted to the AEWA Technical Committee. A revised final version of the strategy would be submitted to the AEWA Standing Committee at its next meeting. He announced the production of information materials, including a new DVD, made possible thanks to a grant from the German Government.

82. Mr. Stempel (ASCOBANS) said that, for ASCOBANS, the year 2003 had been marked by the 4th Meeting of the Parties, held in Esbjerg, Denmark, at the invitation of the Danish Government, from 19 to 22 August 2003. Representatives of the eight Baltic and North Sea Parties, Estonia, and a large number of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations had met to chart the course for the conservation of small cetaceans not only of the Baltic and North Seas but also for the Eastern North Atlantic. The Meeting had adopted a resolution concerning the extension of the Agreement area to encompass parts of the North Atlantic and the incorporation of waters adjacent to Ireland, Portugal and Spain into the Agreement area. Once effective, the extension would close the geographical gap between ASCOBANS and its sister Agreement, the Agreement

on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black and Mediterranean Seas and contiguous Atlantic area (ACCOBAMS). MOP 4 had focused on issues such as bycatch, disturbance and a new large-scale abundance survey for the extended ASCOBANS Agreement area (“SCANS II”). A key point was the strong support of Parties to the ASCOBANS Recovery Plan for Baltic Harbour Porpoises (Jastarnia Plan). Moreover, the meeting agreed to begin the process of elaborating a recovery plan for harbour porpoises in the North Sea. While the conservation status and conservation problems differed between the Baltic and the North Sea, the experience gained in the elaboration of the Jastarnia plan would prove useful in developing a North Sea recovery plan. The 11th Meeting of the Advisory Committee, the first in the new triennium, held in Jastrzębia Góra, Poland, from 27 to 29 April 2004, had addressed a wide range of issues related to the decisions taken by MOP 4. Among the topics dealt with was the implementation of the Jastarnia Plan. A first meeting of the Jastarnia Group was slated for September 2004. The Advisory Committee discussed various projects related to the Jastarnia Plan and suggested providing financial support for the projects. A preliminary draft of a North Sea Recovery Plan was also discussed. The draft was considered a starting-point with considerable need for further input and the involvement of the non-Party Range States, France and Norway was considered essential. The Meeting had discussed the needs of the Agreement in the projected new Agreement area. Scientific issues such as the SCANS II survey were discussed. While bycatch remained at the centre of attention for ASCOBANS, the Agreement also continued to address other threats facing cetaceans in the Agreement Area, including acoustic disturbance and marine pollution. In close cooperation with other international organizations, ASCOBANS was working to reduce the level of hazardous substances in the marine environment. The Agreement Secretariat continued to monitor information on high-speed ferries, which may have adverse effects on whales and dolphins. Annual compilations of information submitted by ASCOBANS Parties concerning high-speed ferries were produced by the Secretariat.

83. Mr. Stempel went on to say that, as in the past, ASCOBANS made its contribution to much needed research on cetaceans in the Agreement Area. A number of research activities were being undertaken within the framework of, in cooperation with or with the support of ASCOBANS. The Secretariat continued its sensitive PR work, much of which was possible only thanks to the voluntary contributions of ASCOBANS Parties. Considerable efforts were being made to translate ASCOBANS information material into all relevant languages other than English and German, and other language versions of the ASCOBANS Fact Sheet No. 1 and brochure were either available or being prepared. A poster specifically for the Baltic region had been designed and printed. ASCOBANS currently had eight Parties, with the accession of two further Baltic Range States expected by the end of 2004. ASCOBANS continued to build, maintain and enhance links with other relevant international organizations. In response to a question, Mr. Stempel said that bycatch was a major and widespread problem but was being addressed.

84. Mr. Müller-Helmbrecht recalled that ASCOBANS had led the way with regard to the conservation of cetaceans and he outlined recent developments in that area at the international level. There followed a discussion about CMS’s role vis-à-vis the International Whaling Commission (IWC). A number of regional activities to protect whales were signalled. At the forthcoming IWC meeting (Sorrento, Italy), at which CMS would be represented, a number of relevant issues were on the agenda: the activities of the Commission’s newly-constituted Conservation Committee; a resolution on bycatch; and the establishment of a whale sanctuary in the South Atlantic (on the agenda for many years at the instigation of Brazil and other like-minded countries). Any IWC resolution on bycatch should make reference at least to the CMS resolution on the same issue. The German Government, as active guarantor of CMS, had been requested to take a prominent part in the international negotiations; the Swiss Government would also take a position on the Convention’s behalf and the Swiss representative asked for all the relevant information to be made available to him. Mr. Stempel pledged that all relevant information at the disposal of ASCOBANS

would be made available to the Swiss authorities, even though Switzerland was not a Party to the Agreement. A letter from the Executive Secretary to the German authorities would be released to all Committee Members, including the Swiss representative, once the required embargo had been lifted (**ACTION POINT**).

85. The role of the European Commission was also discussed; it was important that the European Union should work in favour of ASCOBANS, ensuring that all Member States participated in it and support it, rather than working towards the Agreement's elimination. The Chair recalled that the matter of European Union competence versus that of the individual Member States was always a contentious issue and a legal minefield, but everyone tried to do their best in the circumstances. An appeal was made to ensure that vulnerable countries were not subject to pressure at IWC meetings from those countries interested in diminishing or removing whale protection measures (**ACTION POINT**).

86. It was emphasized that whereas at CMS decisions were invariably reached by consensus, at IWC the clash of interests between conservationists and whale hunters among the Parties made negotiations far more confrontational. An appeal was made to the Parties to ensure that policies were harmoniously applied in synergy, rather than in competition, and that a strong joint CMS position was put forward at IWC in favour of conservation (**ACTION POINT**). The Chair pointed out that a formal CMS position could not be reached but that the Standing Committee should urge the Parties to take a very strong position in favour of the conservation of cetaceans.

87. Mr. Dia (Guinea) raised the question of small cetaceans and sirenians along the coasts of West Africa, where the numerous cases of stranded animals had been a cause for concern for his country's authorities in particular. He appealed for the matter to be considered by the Standing Committee. In reply, Mr. Barbieri (who would be attending the forthcoming IWC meeting on behalf of CMS) said that the Secretariat was well aware of the appeals received. CMS had already supported various conservation projects in the region, work that needed to be built upon, in addition to that achieved at a workshop held in Conakry, Guinea, in 2000, and at the Scientific Council. All would be done to maintain the momentum; the admittedly modest sum of US\$8000 had in fact been earmarked for work in the region from the 2004 budget. In the light of budgetary decisions taken by the Committee there was no obstacle to using those resources. Nevertheless, additional resources would, of course, have to be sought from CMS Parties or partner organizations. The Chair welcomed that news (**ACTION POINT**).

88. Mr. Streit (EUROBATS) announced that, since the previous Standing Committee meeting, Latvia and Slovenia had become Parties to EUROBATS. The accession of several other countries was expected in 2004. In September 2003, the 4th Session of MoP had been held in Sofia, Bulgaria, establishing a milestone in the existence of EUROBATS by adopting a record number of resolutions. Note had been taken of the Headquarters Agreement concluded with the German Government. A number of guidelines were adopted: for the protection and management of important underground habitats; for bat-friendly and sustainable forest management; for the use of remedial timer treatment; and for the issue of permits for the capture and study of captured wild bats. As a contribution to the implementation of CMS/CBD joint work programme, contact would be made with the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE) to develop the guidelines on forestry practices. One resolution addressed the potential contributions of EUROBATS to CMS/CBD joint work programme, while another was adopted on wind turbines and bat populations, reflecting the core contents of the respective resolution adopted by CMS COP8; in a further resolution the important role of NGOs in bat monitoring and conservation had been recognized and activities to establish a pan-European umbrella NGO, BatLife Europe, were encouraged. Another seven species were added to the Annex and the priorities for bat conservation

for the period 2004–2006 were approved. In May 2004, the 9th meeting of the Advisory Committee to EUROBATS had taken place in Vilnius, Lithuania; 13 inter-sessional working groups were established. In conjunction with the meeting, a workshop on bat rabies had been held, the first event of its kind with the participation of many of the leading European experts. In late August 2004, the 9th European Bat Night would take place in over 30 European countries, as part of the public awareness-raising exercise. He thanked Guinea for taking the initiative in establishing an African counterpart to EUROBATS.

89. The Chair brought it to the Committee's notice that reports had been prepared for the 27th Meeting of the Standing Committee by the IOSEA Marine Turtle MoU Secretariat (CMS/StC27/Inf.8.1) and by the ACCOBAMS Secretariat (CMS/StC27/Inf.8.3) and had been made available to the Committee.

90. Mr. Glowka was invited by the Chair to open the discussion up to the broader issues of relevance to the question of Agreements, in particular the development of future Agreements. Agreements had been recognized as key tools of CMS's operations and it was important to note that Agreements not only helped with the conservation of specific species but also raised awareness of the Convention as a whole in the regions or countries concerned; membership development was a beneficiary. The next COP would need to look very closely at the question of servicing and funding MoUs (including the possible outsourcing of coordination and servicing of MoUs), which were seen as flexible operational tools of CMS; yet MoUs had been funded in the past mostly through draw-downs from the surplus of the CMS trust fund which was no longer in such a healthy situation as it had been in the past (as discussed earlier). Furthermore the CMS Secretariat acted as secretariat for MoUs, and the growth in the number of MoU's (which was likely to continue) could pose financial problems in that regard. Efforts were being made towards the establishment of further MoUs, in the light of the importance attached to the existing agreements. In view of limited funds – despite the flexibility already agreed to by the Committee – priorities would have to be given to certain agreements over others, often posing dilemmas. He sought the Committee's guidance on the funding and staffing aspects of servicing existing MoUs, focusing on the role of the CMS Secretariat in servicing existing MoUs.

91. The Chair suggested that CMS was the victim of its own success in having worked so actively to develop emanations of the Convention, which had their own financial implications. The Secretariat had actively and imaginatively acted to create partnerships in order to cope with the implications. The Committee was aware of the budgetary constraints for 2004-2005, and needed to look at how to move into the following triennium with regard to developing Agreements. While finances were the main constraint and priorities had to be set, it was regarded, especially at the Scientific Council, that there was a need for further Agreements to be instigated, but only when that was the best instrument to be implemented. Fears were expressed that the proliferation of poorly serviced - and therefore often inactive – agreements might undermine the Convention's reputation. Historically Parties had been encouraged to agree to new MoUs without concern for the financial consequences, a policy that had to be changed. Appeals were issued to ensure that the Secretariat was properly funded and staffed (at present only one staff member was responsible for a number of Agreements) to consolidate and promote existing agreements and, above all, work to the establishment of new ones, in view of the fact that CMS was a framework convention. Agreements lay at the heart of the CMS's activities and should be seen as a priority when the Convention's future budget proposals were being drawn up and considered.

92. Calls were made for a more international dimension to be given Agreements, which at present were biased in favour of Europe (reflecting the fact that European countries had played a leading role in the Convention, owing to their financial situation), possibly extended to Africa in

some cases. The rest of the world should be targeted in the future wherever possible. The importance of partnerships and cooperation with NGOs with regard to Agreements was stressed. If they were the best tool, careful consideration also should be given to MoUs; Mr. Müller-Helmbrecht singled out Sahelo-Saharan ungulates as a priority for an MoU, the appropriate instrument in view of the financial situation of the African countries concerned and he launched an appeal to the Committee to support the project vis-à-vis decisions to be taken at the next COP.

93. The Chair, summing up, suggested that the Convention's current financial situation – in that it no longer had a reserve – could be employed to make the Parties face up to their responsibilities and provide the necessary funds to enable CMS to function properly, including with regard to the Agreements. The moribund state of certain MoUs needed to be addressed and MoUs should not be looked at as economical forms of Agreement. The Committee saw the strong conservation benefit of continuing to develop Agreements, including MoUs, which lay at the core of the Convention's purpose. The notion of consolidation over development was not generally supported, since (new) Agreements were one way in which the developed Parties to the Convention could lend their support to conservation projects in the developing Parties, and in general outside Europe. Each proposal for new MoUs required careful consideration. The financial and resource consequences of each proposal had to be considered, which would have implications when future budgets were examined. Partnership and cooperation with NGOs were key factors (**ACTION POINT**).

Agenda Item 10: Implementation of CMS Information Management Plan and GROMS

94. Mr. Glowka presented the document (CMS/StC27/17) prepared by UNEP-WCMC in consultation with the Secretariat, which he said was self-explanatory. He reminded the Committee that Resolution 6.5 had established the priority actions to be carried out to implement CMS Information Management Plan (IMP). That resolution had been adopted at the 6th COP in 1999; five years on, it was time for stock-taking since a turning point was being reached. He referred to information management as a cornerstone issue for the Convention, especially with regard to the discussions held during the present meeting about the Strategic Plan, the needs of the Scientific Council and achievement of the 2010 target. There were some surplus funds, the use of which would however be considerably reduced in 2005, but there had so far been no overt soliciting of voluntary funds and any additional activities were being hampered by staff shortages at the Secretariat.

95. Invited to give an overview, Mr. Fragoso explained that the CMS Information Management System did not accumulate information, since the various specialist agencies already shared their information electronically, and that information was tapped. Instead the System was intended to manage CMS's vast amount of information, analysing information primarily contained in the Parties' reports in preparation for the COP. The main requirements were information tools to handle knowledge since that was something the Scientific Council lacked; tools to manage information concerning CMS-sponsored or CMS-related projects; and management of information concerning the CMS Agreements and MoUs, plus information relevant to CMS from other MEAs (especially CBD and Ramsar). Hi-tech tools were not needed and the tools could be introduced gradually, above all for the purpose of assessing the Strategic Action Plan and the work of the Scientific Council. He pointed out that national agencies increasingly shared information about species. Essentially, the System provided the basis for assessing the impact of the Convention.

96. In response to a question, Mr. Glowka stated that the new national reporting format adopted in 2003 would be implemented for the synthesis of national reports in time for COP8; the new format had still been in the prototype, optional phase at COP7. As for the financial implications,

they still had to be discussed but the model was a previous accord with WCMC. It was suggested that reporting should be directed to outcome-oriented rather than process-oriented activity. The focal points needed to be encouraged to be more explicit, so that the system could produce more specific information, such as predominant regional threats to certain species; the Scientific Council might be consulted about which regions should be considered in each case. It would be useful for the COP to consider the situation facing species at a strategic level, rather than individually. Reassurance was given that, while the reporting format had already been decided, it would still be possible to put additional specific questions to the parties to ascertain such information, since the report format provided for questioning of that kind. In reply to another question, it was stated that all manner of links were made in the CMS system to the databases of specialized agencies, such as bird species fact sheets; the process worked on different levels, depending on the type of information, but the agencies concerned were always given credit for providing the information.

97. Summing up the discussion thus far, the Chair said that the cooperation between WCMC and the Secretariat with regard to the Information Management Plan was invaluable and would be particularly useful in the run up to COP8. She noted the financial and staffing constraints on such activities, in particular the absence of an Information Officer in the CMS Secretariat. Information was an area that could be funded by voluntary contributions and it would be useful if information management could be subdivided into "projects" so that specific contributions by Parties could be more easily sought (**ACTION POINT**).

98. The meeting then considered the matter of the Global Register of Migratory Species (GROMS), the subject of a Secretariat document (CMS/StC27/18), presented by the Executive Secretary. The Committee was invited to take note of the development of GROMS to date, to discuss the proposed annual budget for its maintenance and to advise the Secretariat on its future management. Mr. Müller-Helmbrecht drew attention to the Secretariat's dilemma caused by the absence of an Information Officer, whose task would be to organize the relevant work as requested by COP7, and the absence of other regular staff. GROMS could not be a priority for the small number of staff in the Secretariat. His attempt to procure voluntary contributions from various sources had not succeeded. He noted that Germany had made a huge investment in the project, and that Monaco had made a contribution too, and it would be an abominable result if such a useful tool for scientists and all manner of bodies were not fully exploited owing to staffing problems. He therefore appealed to Parties and UNEP, through the Standing Committee, to ensure that GROMS survived and thrived.

99. In the discussions that followed, a comment was made that there were a limited number of financial options for maintaining GROMS in some capacity past 2004. It was noted further that priority should be given to formation of the consultation group to consider the future development of GROMS mentioned in COP7 Resolution 7.8. An AEWA sub-group had discussed GROMS and assessed its added value for AEWA, and a lead was expected of CMS with regard to how GROMS could be developed as one of the major information sources; AEWA would be willing to participate in the CMS consultation group. It was pointed out that the absence of an Information Officer had directly affected the process of setting up the consultation group; the cost of doing so had not been established since no specific plan for setting it up had been refined. Attention was drawn to the suggestion in the document that any future meeting of the consultation group might be combined with a future meeting of the Scientific Council; that would minimize the costs.

100. Mr. Pommeranz (Representative of the Depositary) drew attention to the fact that the system was already up and running, both on CD-ROM and the Internet. Obviously, it was for CMS to decide how to exploit the register, which might require the setting up of a consultation group. It was

suggested that since the initial steps had been taken, CMS Secretariat and German authorities could maintain email contact to consider further steps.

101. Following breakout discussions, the Secretariat drew attention to the document (CMS/StC27/18) where it requested the Secretariat to take the lead in the process to evaluate information needs, in consultation with different stakeholders. That consultation should guide the Secretariat over the future of GROMS and how it might be integrated into the Information Management Plan. The possibility of hiring a consultant was mooted in view of the Secretariat's limited capacity. Discussion of the issue might be held on the margins of the next meeting of the Scientific Council, the likely key stakeholder/user, in order to determine the next steps to be taken. Financial resources might come from the existing budget, voluntary contributions, possibly by Germany, and external sources, since GROMS would soon run out of money. Further consultations would be held with Germany and the Scientific Council in order to establish how best to set up the consultation (**ACTION POINT**). The Chair welcomed those developments.

Agenda Item 11: Matters arising from CMS COP7 not addressed by other agenda items

102. No such matters arose.

Agenda Item 12: Date and venue of the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties

103. The Chair said that the agenda item was being examined jointly with Agenda Item 5.4 (Financial issues of the Eighth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties), since the two items were inextricably linked.

104. Mr. Müller-Helmbrecht presented the relevant document (CMS/StC27/20), emphasizing that Parties with an interest in hosting the Eighth Meeting had been given a 31 December 2003 deadline to inform the Secretariat. Burkina Faso, Gambia, Guinea, Israel, Niger and Uganda had responded that they were willing to host COP 8, without making any reservations; Jordan and Tunisia had done so but with reservations; and Ireland and Sri Lanka had indicated their interest. The Focal Point of Sri Lanka had since indicated that an Asia region meeting to be held in 2005 in that country would rule out holding COP 8 there. The Secretariat had approached Australia because it believed that a meeting in Oceania would be advantageous for CMS and Australia itself; however the Australian Government had indicated that it would not be willing to host the Meeting.

105. The Committee examined whether it was preferable to hold the Meeting in an African country or again in a European country, such as Ireland.

106. Responding to questions as to exactly when a decision had to be made and by whom, Mr. Müller-Helmbrecht said that the end of September 2004 was the latest realistic date, bearing in mind the organizational, administrative and budget-related constraints on the potential host authorities, the summer holidays, and the fact that the Meeting was scheduled for September 2005; the decision was for the Standing Committee to take, but could be taken by correspondence since no final decision could be reached at the present meeting. The Secretariat needed guidance about the Committee's preferences.

107. Mr. Müller-Helmbrecht stressed that developing countries obviously found it harder to bear the financial burden of such an event; specific projects could, however, be promoted in those countries thanks to the holding of the Meeting. He went on to urge the Parties to look seriously into

ways of forming partnerships either between developing countries (such as the countries of the Maghreb with regard to the Tunisian candidature, which was one of the most viable) or between developing and developed countries (if an African country such as Guinea or Uganda were to host the COP Meeting). The Secretariat was unable, owing to the previously discussed staffing shortages, to embark on such an exercise.

108. The Committee recalled that the idea of holding the Meeting in a different part of the world was that it could help to promote the Convention in regions where it was less known.

109. Mr. Dia asked for a specific calculation of the costs that the Guinean authorities would incur if the Meeting took place in his country. He wanted to be able to submit a detailed estimate of the costs to the Minister in Conakry, so that a decision could be made promptly by the Council of Ministers.

110. Mr. Müller-Helmbrecht replied that the Secretariat could only provide, as it had already done, a list of the services required; it was up to the host country to calculate the specific costs, since those costs obviously varied from country to country.

111. It was pointed out that developing countries, such as certain African countries, faced not only financial but also organizational difficulties for staging meetings such as the COP, and that had to be borne in mind.

112. The Chair said that the Committee appeared to have a preference for an African country; failing that, countries in another region might be acceptable, such as Ireland; as a last resort, the Meeting might be held at the UNEP/UNON headquarters, which were of course in Africa. She recalled, however, that the Ramsar Convention would be meeting in Uganda in 2005, and suggested that COP 8 might be held there as a joint event.

113. Mr. Müller-Helmbrecht agreed to look into the possibility of a joint meeting in Uganda with Ramsar. He would also make the necessary contact with the services in Nairobi to ensure that the meeting could be held there in September 2005 as a contingency plan, should another venue not prove possible.

114. In response to a request from the Chair, Ms. Kanza explained that the only financial savings that would result from holding the Meeting in Nairobi rather than elsewhere concerned the conference services, and amounted to an estimated US\$100,000.

115. The Chair commented that the saving was marginal, in relative terms, and did not tip the balance in Nairobi's favour, agreeing with a comment that travel expenses to other possible destinations, including those in other African countries, might be lower, thus offsetting the conference services saving.

116. The Chair summed up: the Secretariat would make contingency preparations to hold the meeting in Nairobi; the Secretariat would ensure that those African countries that had offered to host the meeting were fully aware of the financial implications (a conference document was distributed detailing the costs of holding the COP, theoretically, in Sydney, Australia); with a deadline of mid-August, the Committee Members representing developed countries would take steps to bring about cooperation between developed countries, on one hand, and the developing countries that might host the Meeting, on the other, with a view to assisting with travel expenses and other costs; the Committee would explore the possibility of a joint meeting with Ramsar in Uganda; if soundings with African countries came to nothing, Ireland's candidature would be

considered; as a last resort the Meeting would take place in Nairobi; the final decision would be taken by the end of September 2004. It was so agreed (**ACTION POINT**).

Agenda Item 13: Date and venue of the next meeting of the Standing Committee

117. The Chair said that it would be useful to hold another meeting of the Standing Committee before the COP, the date of which would influence the date of such a meeting. It was pointed out that it was normal practice for the Scientific Council meeting to take place immediately before the COP wherever the latter took place; its date would not therefore be a deciding factor. If the COP took place in September 2005, as currently scheduled, the Standing Committee would need to meet by the end of February 2005 at the latest. It was questioned whether the COP date had been fixed and whether it might not be held later, in October – but no later than that. Other COPs also had to be taken into account, along with other criteria. It would be difficult for the Standing Committee to meet as early as February, making (late) March the preferable timing.

118. It was decided that the 28th meeting of the Standing Committee should be held in Bonn, in acceptance of the kind invitation of the German authorities, and that the exact date, probably in March, should be decided in liaison with the German authorities. The Executive Secretary reminded the Committee of CMS's current financial difficulties which would require economies with regard to the meeting (**ACTION POINT**).

Agenda Item 14: Any other business

119. There was no other business.

Agenda Item 15: Closure of the Meeting

120. Mr. Flasbarth (Director of the Nature Conservation Department, at the German Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety) attended the closure of the meeting on behalf of the German Government and welcomed the excellent results achieved by the Standing Committee, of which he had been kept informed by his colleagues. He highlighted the importance of the document on the Strategy Implementation Plan 2006–2011 and the endeavours towards the 2010 Target. He said that the 25th anniversary of CMS had been celebrated successfully and suggested that prominent public relations work would be necessary in the future to ensure that the Convention was noticed. He added that the German authorities and City of Bonn would be happy to host the 28th meeting of the Standing Committee, pledging that Germany would always be a reliable host country for CMS.

121. The Chair expressed thanks to the German Government for the excellent facilities provided for the meeting of the Standing Committee and, joined by other members of the Committee, thanked the Executive Secretary for his indefatigable devotion to CMS and wished him all the best in his retirement. Mr. Müller-Helmbrecht thanked the Chair for her excellent work. Agreeing with Mr. Flasbarth that CMS needed to make itself heard more loudly, he appealed to the Parties to assist with the recruitment of new Parties, and urged the developed countries to help the developing countries in every possible way, while providing CMS with an adequate personnel and financial capacity.

122. The Chair declared the meeting closed at 4 p.m. on Friday, 25 June 2004.

27th Meeting of the Standing Committee
Bonn, 22-25 June 2004

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Chair:

United Kingdom (Europe) Ms Hilary Neal

Vice-Chair:

Morocco (Africa) Mr. Abdellah El Mastour

Members:

Germany (Depositary)	Dr. Tilman Pommeranz
	Mr. Joachim Schmitz
	Mr. Dirk Schwenzfeier
United Republic of Tanzania (Africa)	Ms. Miriam Zacharia
	Mr. Adreherm J. Nziku
Peru (Americas/Caribbean)	Ms. Rosario Acero Villanes
Sri Lanka (Asia)	Mr. Gajadeera A.T. Prasad
Ukraine (Europe)	Dr. Volodymyr Domashlinets
United Kingdom (Europe)	Mr. Andrew Williams
Australia (Oceania)	(not represented)

Observers:

Belgium	Dr. Ir. Koenraad De Smet
Guinea	Mr. Mamadou Dia
Netherlands	Mr. Peter H.C. Lina
Saudi Arabia	Prof. Abdulaziz H. Abuzinada
Switzerland	Dr. Olivier Biber
CMS Scientific Council, Chair	Prof. Dr. Colin Galbraith
UNEP/UNON - Nairobi	Mr. Robert Hepworth
UNEP-WCMC	Mr. Gerardo Frago
BirdLife International	Mr. John O'Sullivan
Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences	Dr. Pierre Devillers
	Dr. Roseline C. Beudels
Wetlands International	Mr. E.J.M. Hagemeyer

Secretariats of CMS Agreements:

AEWA	Mr. Bert Lenten
ASCOBANS	Mr. Rüdiger Stempel
EUROBATS	Mr. Andreas Streit
EUROBATS Advisory Committee	Mr. Peter H.C. Lina

UNEP/CMS Secretariat:

Executive Secretary	Mr. Arnulf Müller-Helmbrecht
Agreements Officer	Mr. Lyle Glowka
Scientific and Technical Support Officer	Dr. Marco Barbieri
Administrative/Fund Management Officer	Ms. Jasmin Kanza
Junior Professional Officer	Ms. Sandra Rucker

Report Writer:

Mr. Andrew Benson

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Mr. Liam Addis
Ms Linette Eitz Lamare
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Ms Enkhtuya Sereenen
Mr Nalanda Wijeratne

Interpreters:

Ms Hatice Demircan
Ms Mechthilde Föhr
Ms Simone Irsfeld
Ms Gabriele Lorenz
Ms Ines Riecken
Ms Edith Völker

27th Meeting of the Standing Committee
Bonn, 22-25 June 2004

AGENDA

1. Opening remarks
2. Adoption of the agenda, work schedule and rules of procedure
3. Secretariat report on inter-sessional activities since Standing Committee 26
4. Reports from Standing Committee members and observers
5. Administrative and financial matters
 - 5.1. Personnel matters
 - 5.2. Status of CMS budget (2003 and 2004) and 2005 projections
 - 5.2.1. Funding CMS delegates at meetings
 - 5.3. Development of Budget (2006-2008)
 - 5.4. Financial issues of the Eighth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties
6. Institutional matters
 - 6.1. CMS 25th Anniversary
 - 6.2. Cooperation with other bodies and processes
 - 6.3. 2010 Target
 - 6.4. Location of Secretariat and co-located Agreements
 - 6.5. Delegation of Authority
 - 6.6. Any other institutional matters
7. Strategic planning
 - 7.1. Implementation of the CMS Strategic Plan (2000-2005)
 - 7.2. Development of the CMS Strategic Plan (2006-2011)
 - 7.3. Development of the Scientific Council Implementation Plan (2006-2011)
8. Scientific Council matters as they relate to the work of the Standing Committee
 - 8.1. Report of the Scientific Council Chairman on the 12th Meeting of the Scientific Council
 - 8.2. Status of on-going projects
9. Implementation of existing Agreements and development of future Agreements
10. Implementation of the CMS Information Management Plan and GROMS
11. Matters arising from CMS COP7 not addressed by other agenda items

12. Date and venue of the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties
13. Date and venue of the next meeting of the Standing Committee
14. Any other business
15. Closure of the meeting

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