



# Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

Secretariat provided by the United Nations Environment Programme



## 37th Meeting of the Standing Committee

Bonn, 23-24 November 2010

CMS/StC37/16  
Agenda Item 12

### REVIEW OF A *MODUS OPERANDI* FOR CONSERVATION EMERGENCIES

1. The present draft Resolution is submitted to the Committee for review and guidance on how CMS could contribute to improving the response to emergencies that threaten the conservation status of migratory species.
2. It is noteworthy that in the past CMS has responded to emergencies of mass mortalities within individual populations and disease outbreaks affecting the migratory species listed on CMS Appendices. Guidance from Parties and approval of such intervention are sought from CMS Parties through the draft Resolution presented.
3. The 16<sup>th</sup> Scientific Council has discussed the issue and recommended a *modus operandi* as outlined in this Resolution on the basis of document UNEP/CMS/ScC16/Doc.13.

#### **Action requested:**

The Standing Committee is invited to review the draft Resolution, and to give comments or guidance for a submission to CMS COP10, as necessary, to the Secretariat.

DRAFT RESOLUTION  
**MODUS OPERANDI FOR CONSERVATION EMERGENCIES**

*(Prepared by the UNEP/CMS Secretariat)*

*Acknowledging* that the Convention foresees in its text, Article V.5 (m), the provision for “*emergency procedures whereby conservation action would be considerably and rapidly strengthened when the conservation status of the migratory species is seriously affected*”;

*Recognizing* that CMS has in the past addressed emergencies, such as the 1997 mass mortality in the monk seal (*Monachus monachus*) colony in the Cap Blanc peninsula (Morocco/Mauretania), the 2005 outbreak of Avian Influenza (H5N1) and the 2010 die-off of 12,000 saiga antelopes (*Saiga tatarica*) in Kazakhstan;

*Noting* that in the above-mentioned cases the Convention facilitated awareness raising, fundraising and the coordination of emergency procedures;

*Recognizing* that successful emergency response is dependent on a fast and detailed assessment of the situation on the ground to guide follow-up activities;

*Noting* that CMS can play an important role in bringing together species management authorities, experts and other relevant stakeholders across national borders in order to resolve a conservation crisis affecting migratory species;

*Acknowledging* that the UNEP/CMS Secretariat is not a dedicated disaster relief agency and that it can only play a facilitation role in resolving a conservation emergency;

*Noting* that there are a number of relevant crisis management mechanisms, such as the one on wildlife disease under the FAO, which could assist in resolving certain emergencies threatening migratory species;

*Recalling* the recommendation of the 16<sup>th</sup> meeting of the CMS Scientific Council to establish a *modus operandi* for emergencies as outlined in document UNEP/CMS/ScC16/Doc.13;

*The Conference of the Parties to the  
Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals*

1. *Considers* an emergency within the context of CMS as one which is likely to result in a significant reduction in numbers or range size of one or more populations of a CMS-listed species, and *further considers* that such a reduction has been observed, projected or inferred and is irregular and/or sudden (within one generation or one year, whichever is shorter) and is likely to result in a significant deterioration of the species’ conservation status;
2. *Recognizes* an emergency when conditions have been observed, projected or inferred, which are known to lead to a considerable deterioration in the conservation status, such as natural phenomena (disease outbreaks, periods of exceptionally cold weather or prolonged droughts); or anthropogenic disasters (major poisonings, toxic pollutions or oil spills).
3. *Decides* that emergency response should not be dependent on whether a country is a CMS Party or is a Signatory of an Agreement;

4. *Requests* the UNEP/CMS Secretariat to apply the following procedures, as appropriate, in case of an emergency, as defined above:
  - a. Immediately review available information and contact focal points, Agreement contact points, scientific councillors and other stakeholders, as appropriate.
  - b. Notify appointed councillors on the specific taxonomic group, region and/or theme, the Chair of the Scientific Council, the Chair of the Standing Committee and regional representatives of the Standing Committee, as appropriate.
  - c. Establish an emergency response group composed, as appropriate, of focal points and scientific councillors in the country or countries affected, appointed councillors on the specific taxonomic group, region, and/or theme and experts in the species and/or issue, as well as other relevant stakeholders, e.g. NGOs and scientists.
  - d. Engage and notify relevant crisis management mechanisms and relief agencies, if appropriate.
  - e. Call for one or several teleconferences of the emergency response group to assess the situation and discuss next steps.
  - f. If the situation so warrants, dispatch an emergency mission team to the area upon the invitation of the Range States affected, recommendation by experts and instruction of the CMS Executive Secretary.
  - g. Maintain regular contact with the emergency mission team in order to assess the situation further and disseminate new information, if possible.
  - h. Initiate fundraising aimed at relieving the emergency by seeking support from UNEP, Parties, IGOs, NGOs and other relevant donors.
  - i. Widely disseminate the results of the emergency mission team immediately after its return from the area of emergency and follow up on resultant decisions of the emergency response group, for example by notifying Parties and relevant stakeholders (e.g. through the Standing Committee) and by assisting stakeholders in implementing mitigation measures.
5. *Establishes* a dedicated budget line to fund the above-mentioned activities, as appropriate.
6. *Further requests* CMS Parties, Parties to and Signatories of CMS Agreements, the Scientific Council and advisory bodies of Agreements to assist each other and the UNEP/CMS Secretariat in coordinating emergency responses with the aim of improving the conservation status of the populations affected as outlined above.