



# Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

Secretariat provided by the United Nations Environment Programme



## 40th Meeting of the Standing Committee

Bonn, Germany, 7-8 November 2012

UNEP/CMS/StC40/11.2.1

### COP ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES

*(Prepared by the UNEP/CMS Secretariat)*

#### Background

1. The 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the CMS Conference of the Parties (COP11) will be held in late 2014, and there have been suggestions from Parties and the Secretariat for changes, as outlined in this document. Initial views from Standing Committee members on these suggested changes were obtained in responses to an email from the Chair earlier in the year, and are included in this document. The Secretariat also referred to the survey responses received from delegates at the end of COP10 for relevant comments.
2. There are also a number of simple efficiency improvements that will be implemented as a matter of course, and are not discussed further in this document, such as:
  - a) Uploading final papers and draft resolutions onto the website six weeks before the COP (in all three languages). This will allow Parties enough time to conduct consultations nationally, regionally and with other Parties. It will also allow the Secretariat to commence a first round of comments on draft resolutions, if required, prior to COP.
  - b) Encouraging regional discussions, by email or teleconferencing, in advance of COP.
  - c) Contracting higher-quality translators (already done).
  - d) Preparing a clearer agenda, with document numbers linked to agenda items.
  - e) Providing documents on a memory stick, to reduce printing and paper.
  - f) Generally avoiding holding back-to-back meetings with COP11 (e.g. species agreements meetings). The delegates to such meetings are often not the National Focal Points that attend COP, thus not resulting in travel savings as intended, and the workload on the Secretariat at the same time as organizing COP is extreme.

#### Parties to Develop Resolutions

3. Parties could play a greater role in proposing and drafting more of the resolutions. The majority of the COP10 business was Secretariat-led, the exceptions being (out of 29 resolutions) the draft resolutions on marine noise (Australia), bird poisoning (Switzerland), land birds in Africa (Ghana) and recruitment procedures for the CMS Executive Secretary (EU).
4. Additional aspects and issues on which Parties could choose to lead include existing issues which require further technical development (such as invasive alien species and ecological networks), new issues as they emerge, and gaps. Parties could also present their resolutions to the plenary.

*For reasons of economy, this document is printed in a limited number, and will not be distributed at the meeting. Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copy to the meeting and not to request additional copies.*

5. The pros and cons are:

<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• More direct involvement of Parties in the core work of the Convention and consequent buy-in.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Risk that Parties may not be able to meet agreed deadlines.</li><li>• Increased coordination required by Secretariat to set and monitor timelines (perhaps offset by less time being required to lead the work).</li></ul>

6. The Standing Committee is invited to consider issues on which Parties could lead the development of resolutions at COP11, and their background documents, where needed or expected, and to encourage Parties to consider doing so.

### **Special Meeting of Standing Committee to Clear Documents**

7. For COP10, there was a Standing Committee working group which reviewed COP10 documents by email. This process resulted in some degree of Party buy-in. However, few comments had been made by the working group. There could be an additional meeting, teleconference or on-line forum of the Standing Committee (or of its COP documents working group) to clear documents. This meeting would be in addition to and earlier than the pre-COP meeting, which occurs the day before COP and deals mostly with logistics and procedure.

8. The pros and cons are:

<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• More opportunity and incentive for Parties to make comments on draft documents.</li><li>• More Party involvement and buy-in (assumes Parties will submit comments within time limits given).</li><li>• If undertaken as a teleconference or on-line forum, there would be minimal additional meeting expenses.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increased workload for the Secretariat to convene such a session, and Parties to take part.</li><li>• Potentially more comments/amendments needing to be translated into three languages, thus an increased translation time and cost.</li><li>• If undertaken as a physical meeting, expenses arise (a two-day Standing Committee meeting in Bonn, funding eligible delegates and interpreters could cost approximately €28,000).</li></ul>

9. The Standing Committee is invited to consider an additional teleconference or on-line forum of the Standing Committee (or of a documents working group) to comment on and clear documents.

### **Heads of Delegations Meeting**

10. The Heads of Delegations meeting prior to COP10 was initiated by the Secretariat to brief delegation heads about the COP issues to be discussed and any controversial issues. However, it was not interpreted into other languages, which limited the participation of delegates. The meeting could be more formal, with an agenda prepared in advance and interpretation provided for. Held the evening before the COP, Parties would be better prepared in advance of COP.

11. The pros and cons are:

<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Parties better prepared in advance, including encouragement of timely nominations for elected positions.</li><li>• Interpretation would allow all delegates to participate in the session.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Additional interpretation expense (approximately €2,400 per day).</li></ul>

12. The Standing Committee is invited to provide views on the convening of a more formal Heads of Delegations meeting, on the eve of COP11, with interpretation provided.

### **Shorter and Rationalized Opening Sessions**

13. COP10 opening commenced on Sunday afternoon with a three-hour High Level Opening Ceremony with ten speakers, and was followed on Monday with a two-hour opening with three speakers.

14. The High Level segment could be combined with the opening of the COP into one single ceremony, for about two hours in total, with fewer speeches. As with COP10, the administrative matters (such as adopting rules of procedure, election of chairs) could occur as part of the combined ceremony, so that those procedural matters are dealt with quickly. The Heads of Delegations meeting would still occur during the evening before the COP.

15. The pros and cons are:

<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fewer and shorter speeches.</li><li>• The Sunday afternoon time could be used for more productive purposes (e.g. regional group meetings) and perhaps some side events.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Risk of reduced sense of importance and ceremony.</li></ul>

16. The Standing Committee is invited to provide views on opening the COP with one High Level opening ceremony on day one, for up to two hours in total, with fewer and shorter speeches, and including administrative matters.

### **COP One or Two Days Longer**

17. The COP could be extended to include a full day for the Secretariat to finalize resolutions before they are adopted in the last Plenary session, whilst delegates have an excursion and/or a social event. A further additional day could also be considered, to provide more time for Committee of the Whole (COW) or Plenary discussions and working group meetings.

18. The pros and cons are:

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes some pressure off working groups having to meet in daytimes during COP, in parallel with COW meetings and also missing lunchtime side events.</li> <li>• Avoids the absence of delegates from discussion on substantive issues at COW because they are away attending working groups.</li> <li>• Reduces pressure on small delegations, as well as on the Secretariat.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is difficult to decide in advance of knowing the length and complexity of the agenda and issues for COP11. A decision would have to be made in time for delegates to arrange their travel and accommodation reservations in advance.</li> <li>• May discourage efficiency in the management of the COP.</li> <li>• COP being one or two days longer would incur expenses which would depend on the host country agreement, but would include funding staff, eligible delegates and interpreters, costing approximately an additional €32,000 per day.</li> <li>• Expense and organizational demands of an excursion and/or social event.</li> <li>• Working Groups still have to meet earlier during the week, but could do so in evenings when COW is not in session.</li> <li>• Too many delegates might join the excursion and thus not be available to take part in discussing and finalizing resolutions, if required.</li> </ul>

19. The Standing Committee is invited to consider extending the COP by one or two full days. When the provisional agenda is compiled, it will be clear how extra many days are warranted.

### Side Events and Working Group Meetings

20. It is desired to avoid side events overlapping with working group meetings, and with too many other side events. Options to address this include:

- a) Hold fewer side events at lunchtimes, to avoid having so many clashes of excellent events, and allow enough time for delegates to have lunch before attending an event. On this basis, COP timings could be 09:00–12:30 sessions, 12:30–13:30 lunch break, 13:30–15:00 side events, and 15:00–18:00 sessions.
- b) Have a half day set aside for side events, early in the COP (perhaps Tuesday afternoon) (note: this would necessitate an extension of the meeting by a half day).
- c) Alternatively, use this half day for working group meetings, so that they can make significant progress early in the COP.
- d) Hold less strategically important side events later in the COP, with any overflow occurring on the resolution-finalizing (excursion) day (if there is one).

21. The pros and cons are:

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoids COW making decisions with financial implications while the Budget Working Group members are absent due</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk of delaying working group meetings to evenings or later in the week, which may delay resolution of their issues.</li> </ul>

<p>to meeting in parallel with COW.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enables more delegates to attend side events which are so valuable for showcasing how the convention and its agreements work on the ground, what resources are needed, and who is engaged (e.g. scientists, NGOs and civil society).</li> <li>• Enlightens new delegates for their COP decision-making.</li> <li>• Avoids or reduces clashing with lunch.</li> <li>• Avoids presenters' efforts receiving only a handful of attendees.</li> <li>• Small delegations can attend more events.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk of working groups not having adequate space allocated for the duration of the COP (as it is taken up with side events).</li> </ul>
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22. The Standing Committee is invited to contribute ideas about how to make side events available to as many delegates as possible, in advance of decision-making, whilst working groups also require time to meet.

**Timing for Provision of Credentials**

23. The COP10 Credentials Committee was inundated by the time-consuming task of dealing with delegates not providing proper or timely Credentials, which occupied much of the members' time during the first four days of the COP. It is proposed to seek copies of Credentials in advance of COP from both funded and non-funded delegates, and where possible before issuing tickets to funded delegates.

24. The pros and cons are:

<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduces the workload for the Credentials Committee at COP.</li> <li>• Improves the operational efficiency of the COP.</li> <li>• Avoids delegates attending COP that have no Credentials to participate.</li> <li>• Reduces pressure on small delegations (less committee workload).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increases the workload for the Secretariat in advance of COP.</li> <li>• Some delegates cannot get Credentials in advance of ticket-issue deadlines or even in advance of COP, through no fault of their own.</li> <li>• Difficult for delegations that have last-minute changes of delegates.</li> </ul>

25. The Standing Committee is invited to contribute ideas to address this issue, and to comment on a requirement for copies of Credentials to be provided before issuing tickets to funded delegates (but with flexibility for those who simply cannot comply). Non-funded delegates could also be required to provide copies of Credentials in advance of COP, if possible.

**Action requested:**

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a. Consider issues on which Parties could lead the development of resolutions at COP11, and to encourage Parties to do so;

- b. Consider holding an additional teleconference or on-line forum of the Standing Committee (or of a documents working group) to comment on and clear COP documents;
- c. Comment on the convening of a more formal Heads of Delegations meeting, on the eve of COP11, with interpretation provided;
- d. Comment on opening COP11 with one High Level opening ceremony on day one, for up to two hours in total, with fewer and shorter speeches, and including administrative matters;
- e. Consider extending the COP by one or two full days, with the provisional agenda to be used to determine how many extra days are warranted;
- f. Contribute ideas about how to make side events available to as many delegates as possible, in advance of decision-making, whilst working groups also require time to meet; and
- g. Contribute ideas and comment on a requirement for copies of Credentials to be provided by all delegates in advance of COP, and in advance of issuing tickets to funded delegates (but with flexibility for those who simply cannot comply).