



Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

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REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL

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Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copy to the meeting and not to request additional copies.*

Brief report of ScC Chair activities, September 2015-September 2016

This report refers to the period September 2015-September 2016.

In general this last year has been a challenging one for me as I had to juggle my time and direct involvement in my job as well as in CMS activities with health problems I have been confronted with, which significantly limited my activities in winter 2015 and till spring 2016.

During the year I have been constantly in touch with the CMS Secretariat over different aspects related to the Scientific Council and its Sessional Committee activities. I have contacted members of the Scientific Council and Sessional Committee via the dedicated web space provided.

The main initiative this year has been the preparation and realization of the first meeting of the CMS Sessional Committee. The important changes in the *modus operandi* of the Scientific Council and the setting up and start of work of the newly established Sessional Committee have meant travelling through uncharted waters.

The first meeting of the CMS Sessional Committee took place in Bonn, between 18-21 April 2016. The meeting had a heavy agenda spanning from institutional and organizational aspects for the Scientific Council as introduced through Resolution 11.4 by COP11, to the Programme of Work (POW) for the Sessional Committee for the period 2016-17, to the input of the Scientific Council into the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species for the period 2015-2017, as well as a long list of conservation issues requiring scientific input. A detailed report of the meeting has been produced by the Secretariat.

The meeting was a positive one and saw active participation of all members present. A rich representation of observers also registered. The general feeling I had is that the Sessional Committee can be a positive instrument to guide the involvement of the Scientific Council as a whole in the activities of the Convention. It will however be important to see if and how regional representatives elected to the Sessional Committee will act in involving other Scientific Council members from their regions.

I will present more reflections on various aspects of the newly established Sessional Committee during the Standing Committee meeting.

Apart from the activities related to the meeting of the Sessional Committee I have taken part in meetings in my capacity of Chair of the CMS Scientific Council and activated contacts and made proposals aimed to promote CMS and stimulate involvement of the Convention in a series of local initiatives:

- **November 2015, Bonn:** elected chair of MOP6 of AEWA;
- **April 14-15 2016, Tirana:** invited to talk at the 3rd Meeting of the Special Focal Points for Illegal Killing of Birds organized by the Bern Convention. Made a presentation on the coordination of Bern Convention activities with the CMS Task Force on IKB;
- **May 7-9, 2016, Bonn:** World Migratory Bird Day 2016. Contributed to the organization of the fourth benefit concert with the Bologna operatic choir to raise funds for activities against Illegal killing of birds;
- **June 9-10, Rosolina Mare Po Delta Park:** first workshop on illegal killing trapping and trade of birds in Italy. Introduced CMS initiatives on IKB and Mediterranean task force on IKB;

- **June 12, Island of Ventotene:** introduced CMS as the connectivity convention to the first workshop on the future of Santo Stefano prison (where the idea of the European Union was first conceived). Proposed a direct involvement of CMS in capacity-building activities on conservation of migratory species within the larger project being discussed for the prison and the island;
- **June 23, 2016, Rome:** meeting with the Italian Ministry of the Environment on illegal killing of birds, discussing on initiatives in Italy and introducing the various activities carried out by CMS and the specific working group;
- **September 4-8 September 2016, El Jadida, Morocco:** invited as keynote speaker to the 3rd African Congress for Conservation Biology. Introduced CMS activities within the Palearctic-African bird migration system, with AEWA, Raptors MoU, Landbirds and illegal killing.

I have been in touch with the Po Delta Veneto Regional Park, which sponsored the first CMS connectivity meeting in September 2015 in Albarella, to offer support for a second meeting aimed at revising the document originating from the Albarella meeting and produce a draft resolution on connectivity for CMS COP12. The Regional Park has confirmed its willingness to support the second meeting, which is tentatively scheduled for March 2017.

In September 2017 (15-23) the Po Delta Veneto Regional Park hosted the first meeting of young people representing communities from 134 MAB UNESCO areas. As an opportunity for awareness and capacity building, I have proposed an active role of CMS from a connectivity perspective of MAB areas as components of networks of sites sharing same populations of migratory species. The Park positively agreed and will formally approach CMS to plan an active contribution to this very interesting initiative.