



# Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals



Secretariat provided by the United Nations Environment Programme



## Progress Report on Activities relating to Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea undertaken within the Framework of CMS and ASCOBANS

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

1. The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), the Secretariat of which is provided by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), continues not only to be actively engaged in many global and regional species-specific activities, but also in a large range of broader environmental ocean matters such as unsustainable fishing, including by-catch, vessel collisions, ocean noise and marine debris.
2. The 10th Meeting of the Conference of Parties to CMS (COP10), November 2011, Bergen, Norway, passed a range of relevant decisions on topics such as ecological networks, climate change, by-catch in gillnet fisheries, ocean noise and marine debris and adopted a Global Programme of Work for Cetaceans. The report of COP10 can be downloaded from the CMS website ([www.cms.int](http://www.cms.int)).
3. The Scientific Council held its 17th Meeting (ScC17) in November 2011 in Norway. It has three thematic working groups concerned with Climate Change, Wildlife Diseases and By-catch, as well as five taxonomic working groups focusing on Marine Turtles, Fish, Birds, Aquatic Mammals and Terrestrial Mammals. The report of ScC17 can be downloaded from the CMS website. The ScC18 Meeting will be held in early 2014.
4. Currently there are twelve individual agreements under CMS which are explicitly aimed at marine taxonomic groups, such as albatrosses and petrels, dolphins, dugongs, sharks, turtles, and whales. Each has been adapted to the requirements of its particular regional and taxonomic focus. An overview of the progress made with each of these instruments can be accessed as UNEP/CMS/StC40/Doc.21.
5. The 3rd Meeting of Signatories to the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Cetaceans and their Habitats in the Pacific Islands Region was held in New Caledonia in September 2012. The report is available on the CMS website.
6. At the 1st Meeting of the Signatories to the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Sharks, which was held in Germany in September 2012, Signatories adopted a Conservation Plan for the seven shark species listed. Main objectives of the Plan are:
  - to improve understanding of migratory shark populations through research, monitoring and information exchange
  - to ensure that directed and non-directed fisheries for sharks are sustainable
  - to ensure the protection of critical habitats and migratory corridors and critical life stages of sharks
  - to increase public awareness of threats to sharks and their habitats, and enhance public

participation in conservation activities

- to enhance national, regional and international cooperation

More information including the meeting report can be accessed on the MOU website ([www.sharksmou.org](http://www.sharksmou.org)).

### **Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans in the Baltic, North East Atlantic Irish and North Seas (ASCOBANS)**

7. The Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans in the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas (ASCOBANS) is a legally-binding regional instrument concluded under CMS. The UNEP/CMS Secretariat provides its secretariat services. The Secretary-General of the UN acts as Depository for the Agreement.

8. The 7th Meeting of the Parties to ASCOBANS was held in the United Kingdom in October 2012 (MOP7) and passed resolutions on a new Conservation Plan for Harbour Porpoises in the Western Baltic, the Belt Sea and the Kattegat, the impact of chemical pollution on small cetaceans, research and conservation priorities in the western part of the Agreement Area, as well as a comprehensive work plan for the Agreement. This includes continuing the specialized work on cetacean by-catch, pollution, marine debris, underwater noise, other forms of disturbance, population changes, and management of marine protected areas for cetaceans. New work areas include the effects of underwater unexploded ordnance and its removal, as well as appropriate responses to small cetaceans at risk in dangerous circumstances. The report of MOP7 is available on the ASCOBANS website ([www.ascobans.org](http://www.ascobans.org)).

9. The 20th Meeting of the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee (AC) will be held in Warsaw, Poland, from 27-29 August 2013. The AC has established numerous intersessional working groups in order to address all matters in the Agreement's work plan.