



IUCN Statement to CMS COP9

Thank you Mr. Chair for giving us the opportunity to make some comments.

IUCN engagement in CMS work started early on with the drafting of the text of the Convention. The collaboration has continued ever since. In 2003, a Memorandum of Cooperation was signed between IUCN and CMS. IUCN aims at providing the best possible scientific advice to Multilateral Environmental Agreements and, mainly through the expert network of the Species Survival Commission and the Species Programme, it intends to continue in this role within CMS and specifically its Scientific Council.

Our ongoing active involvement in the development or implementation of action plans, MoU's or agreements for a range of species is testimony to our commitment. In particular the African Elephant Specialist Group has been coordinating the implementation of the African Elephant MoU until last July. For this meeting, IUCN is represented by experts from the Shark, Primate and African Elephant Specialist Groups as well as the Secretariat. Dr Simon Stuart was elected Chair of the IUCN Species Survival Commission at the recent IUCN Congress in Barcelona. Dr Stuart regrets that he is unable to attend this meeting. However, he has asked to convey his best wishes to all of you for a successful meeting, and wishes to underline the importance that he attaches to continued close collaboration between IUCN and CMS.

Regarding future collaboration, in addition to our traditional species-specific work, I would like to mention two pieces of work that IUCN has completed over the last months that could be of direct relevance to the Convention. We recently completed the assessment of all mammal species of the world and are currently developing a Red List Index for this group which includes a number of migratory species. We have many other assessments underway in particular covering fishes. We also assessed the susceptibility to climate change of 17,000 species including all birds; we shall be happy to share some of this information with CMS.

We would like to congratulate the CMS family for much progress over the last years and to make a few comments in relation to the future work of the Convention:

- As recently demonstrated in the case of the Avian Influenza outbreak, CMS has a clear niche in some very specific areas. We encourage CMS to focus in areas where it can provide unique expertise and added value; we believe diseases involving or affecting migratory species is one such area
- As recognized by the Scientific Council in the past, despite increasing coverage, there is still a notable gap in coverage of aquatic migratory species. We think that CMS has a special role to play in particular for the conservation of fishes as well as addressing their main threats such as bycatch but also overexploitation
- A number of Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding are currently being developed and negotiated. Still others will be discussed at this meeting. While we recognize the general value of these tools, we see a risk of spreading the limited resources too far. Consolidation and implementation of previously agreed actions should be considered to be of equal, if not greater, importance.

Finally, I'll take this opportunity to mention that IUCN has the status of International Governmental Organization and that, at the beginning of the year, IUCN has reverted to its old name "International Union for the Conservation of Nature" so I would be grateful if this can be reflected in the list of observers.

Thank you Mr. Chair