



CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES

UNEP/CMS/Resolution 14.17

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COMMUNITIES AND LIVELIHOODS

Adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its 14th Meeting (Samarkand, February 2024)

Recalling Resolution 12.3, the Manila Declaration on Sustainable Development and Migratory Species,

Recognizing that improving the conservation status of migratory species requires action at global, regional and local levels,

Recognizing the value of traditional knowledge of lands, natural resources and the environment held by Indigenous Peoples and local communities and the vital role communities can play in effective wildlife conservation,

Further recognizing that community participation in conservation can increase awareness and drive positive attitudes towards wildlife and wildlife conservation, consequently reducing human-wildlife conflict and enhancing conservation effectiveness,

Recalling Targets 4, 5 and 9 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity, all of which highlight the interactions of communities in conservation efforts,

Aware of the diverse forms that community participation in conservation can have, including natural resource management, payments for ecosystem services, conservation enterprises and the development of alternative, sustainable livelihoods, and

Recognizing that for the purpose of this resolution, communities is intended to be understood to encompass the broader community including Indigenous Peoples and local communities,

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

1. *Urges* Parties and other stakeholders to enhance the participation of communities in the implementation of the Convention;
2. *Adopts* the Guiding Principles contained in the Annex to this Resolution, and *urges* Parties to implement and bring them to the attention of the communities and organizations that are carrying out conservation work;
3. *Requests* Parties and other stakeholders to make information available to communities about migratory species to emphasize how individuals of a species may have shared value across a migration route and to foster collaboration between communities along migration routes and other stakeholders to secure the conservation of migratory species,

the connectivity of their migration routes, and the long-term sustainability of their shared value among all relevant communities; and

4. *Requests* Parties and the Secretariat to compile information and case studies on community participation in the conservation of migratory species to support the exchange of best practice experiences among Parties.

Annex to Resolution 14.17**Key Guiding Principles on the involvement of communities in the conservation of migratory species:****Land and user rights**

- 1. Secure and equitable land and resource user rights for communities are important for migratory species conservation.** Communal conservancies and locally managed areas can form valuable corridors for migratory species outside of protected area networks. Rights to land and wildlife resources can enable communities to benefit from the presence of migratory species economically, such as through wildlife-based enterprises or payments for conservation. Communities also gain socially from empowerment to manage their own landscapes and resources, for example through land-use zoning or reinstating traditional management practices.
- 2. Communities need to be supported in their rights to manage and protect migratory species from external influences.** Capacity-building and establishing or reinforcing local institutions to sustainably manage migratory species and distribute benefits from their conservation is required to enable communities to provide effective protection and stewardship. Communities may carry out actions such as designating protected areas, self-restricting resource use, or implementing anti-poaching and monitoring efforts to protect migratory species from poaching and overexploitation. Wider governance is also important to support communities' interests from powerful external actors who may compete for resources, such as commercial resource extraction or the illegal wildlife trade.

Management responsibilities

- 3. Local management can support the long-term sustainability of conservation measures to increase coexistence with migratory species.** Community-based management is particularly important in local-scale coexistence projects between communities and large migratory species such as big cats and elephants. Through supporting local leadership, management and implementation of conservation measures, communities gain ownership of projects and are invested in their success. As such, capacity-building and community participation in all stages of a project is important, and also serves to increase the suitability of interventions to local needs.
- 4. Co-management and collaboration can integrate traditional ecological knowledge and practices into successful migratory species conservation.** For area-based management in particular, communities' involvement in management decisions can increase effectiveness through adapting measures to local needs, socioeconomic contexts and beliefs, increasing acceptance of conservation and promoting conservation of broader biocultural landscapes.
- 5. Community involvement of can facilitate sustainable use of migratory species as part of international coordinated and regulated management.** Ensuring that any use of migratory species is sustainable, is challenging, requiring range-wide information on species population status. However, involvement of local stakeholders is increasingly recognized in the successful implementation of international trade regulations, such as CITES and adaptive management strategies. This enables local cultural and livelihood considerations to be recognized and supported, preventing illegal trade and subsistence use from undermining sustainable use, and encouraging local involvement in the management of migratory species.

Spiritual values and attitudes

- 6. Understanding and integrating traditional beliefs can increase migratory species conservation effectiveness.** Positive attitudes and traditional practices can promote coexistence and management of migratory species and the habitats they rely on, and can motivate engagement in conservation. An understanding of cultural practices regarding species is vital to prevent conflict and promote involvement of cultural practices and stakeholders in conservation activities, for example through changing local perceptions of species use, or encouraging participation in sustainable management.

Cooperation among communities along migratory pathways

- 7. Bottom-up knowledge exchange between community member promotes effective cooperation in migratory species conservation and can be facilitated through top-down involvement in transboundary initiatives.** Local leadership and management are essential in spreading successful conservation measures between communities. At larger scales, bringing community representatives together for knowledge exchange can promote cooperation to target specific threats for migratory species. International NGOs and transboundary initiatives also play an important role in supporting the inclusion of communities along migratory pathways and promoting collaboration and knowledge exchange between communities.

Intersectional issues

- 8. Communities located around important migratory species aggregation sites can be a priority for engagement with conservation.** Communities around important stop-over, breeding or feeding grounds for migratory species can have a disproportional impact on migratory populations. While overexploitation or threats in these areas can be particularly damaging for species, effective conservation involving communities can provide substantial benefits, both for the migratory species and for communities through promoting sustainable development or providing a source of pride and connection to nature.
- 9. Conflict can arise between communities managing migratory species in different parts of their range, putting some communities at a disadvantage.** A key challenge in migratory species conservation occurs when benefits or costs of the presence of migratory species are localized to different parts of their ranges. Management in these locations can therefore come into conflict. An understanding of the impacts of this on communities and livelihoods, and who has authority over reconciling these differences, is important for ensuring that all communities can sustainably benefit from conservation.
- 10. Community-based conservation of migratory species can be undermined by the illegal wildlife trade.** A key feature required for long-term community commitment to conservation is for benefits to outweigh costs such as restricted access to resources or living close to potentially dangerous wildlife. For some migratory species, there is an added pressure when species are particularly high value, such as for elephants because of demand for ivory, which can undermine community conservation as individuals can make more money from poaching than protection. This can be exacerbated in remote transboundary landscapes with poor law enforcement and high levels of poverty. In such cases, strong disincentives to prevent poaching community members through strengthening law enforcement may be required.