



CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES

UNEP/CMS/Resolution 14.8

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CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF SEAGRASS ECOSYSTEMS

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

Highlighting the importance of seagrass ecosystems as important habitats for migratory marine species, including sirenians, cetaceans, marine turtles and elasmobranchs,

Recalling UN General Assembly Resolution 76/265 proclaiming 1 March as World Seagrass Day,

Taking note of the 2020 report of the United Nations Environment Programme entitled 'Out of the Blue: The Value of Seagrasses to the Environment and to People' and the recommendations for seagrass conservation contained therein,

Recognizing the vital ecosystem services that seagrass ecosystems provide, such as carbon sequestration, nutrient cycling, food security, fisheries productivity, water quality enhancement and coastal protection,

Noting the carbon sequestration and storage potential of seagrass ecosystems and that adopting measures to protect and restore seagrasses can contribute to the achievement of the goals and objectives of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement,

Acknowledging the significant threats to seagrass ecosystems, including habitat degradation, pollution, including noise pollution, climate change, overfishing, bottom trawling, dredging and coastal development, which have resulted in the global decline of seagrass habitats and their associated biodiversity,

Noting the urgent need to raise awareness at all levels and to promote and facilitate actions for the conservation and restoration of seagrasses, bearing in mind that enhancing ecosystem services and functions is important for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals,

Recognizing the transboundary nature of many seagrass ecosystems around the world,

Emphasizing the need for collaborative and coordinated efforts among countries, regional organizations, international bodies and stakeholders to conserve and sustainably manage seagrass ecosystems,

Recalling the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030) and the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021–2030),

Highlighting the work under the CMS Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Dugongs (*Dugong dugon*) and their Habitats throughout their Range in addressing seagrass ecosystems,

Recalling relevant international obligations, including those in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, especially Targets 1, 2 and 3, the Paris Agreement, and the Sustainable Development Goals, and

Welcoming the ambition of the global initiative, 2030 Seagrass Breakthrough, announced at UNFCCC COP28 and aimed at establishing a collective framework of action by State and non-State actors for the sustainable financing of seagrass ecosystem protection, conservation, and restoration globally by 2030,

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

1. *Urges* Parties to recognize the importance of seagrass ecosystems as important habitats for migratory marine species such as sirenians, cetaceans, marine turtles and elasmobranchs;
2. *Urges* Parties to recognize the contribution of migratory species to the maintenance and functioning of seagrass ecosystems and as such enhance the ability of these ecosystems to provide nature-based solutions to climate change;
3. *Urges* Parties to strengthen conservation and restoration measures for seagrass ecosystems and associated migratory species, including implementing and enforcing effective legal and regulatory measures to conserve and manage seagrass ecosystems such as including seagrass ecosystems in marine protected areas, locally managed marine areas, or other effective area-based conservation measures, integrating seagrass and associated migratory species conservation into relevant coastal and marine spatial planning processes and in strategies to address climate change;
4. *Calls on* Parties to collaborate on the international conservation of seagrass ecosystems, engaging in bilateral, regional and global efforts;
5. *Encourages* Parties to conduct regular monitoring, research and data-collection on seagrass ecosystems to better understand their status, trends, economic value and ecological functions as well as their role in supporting migratory species and how those migratory species support healthy seagrass ecosystems, and to use this knowledge to inform decision-making and management actions for seagrass conservation and restoration;
6. *Recommends* Parties to provide financial support and resources for the conservation and restoration of seagrass ecosystems and the role they play in supporting migratory species;
7. *Calls upon* Parties to leverage funding from relevant international and regional mechanisms, such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Green Climate Fund (GCF), and other sources, to support seagrass conservation and management activities;
8. *Urges* Parties to raise public awareness of the importance of seagrass ecosystems and their role in supporting migratory species, and to engage stakeholders, including local communities, indigenous peoples, academia, industry and civil society, in seagrass conservation and management efforts through participatory processes and partnerships;

9. *Encourages* Parties to recognize the importance of seagrass ecosystems, including the associated migratory species, as carbon sinks and to include them in national climate change mitigation strategies, including Nationally Determined Contributions to the Paris Agreement; and
10. *Requests* the Secretariat to promote international cooperation and coordination on the conservation and sustainable management of seagrass ecosystems that have been identified as important habitats for marine migratory species, and to collaborate with other relevant international instruments and processes, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.