



**Convention on the
Conservation of Migratory
Species of Wild Animals**

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**MEASURES TO IMPROVE THE CONSERVATION STATUS
OF APPENDIX I SPECIES**

Prepared by the Secretariat

1. This document summarizes the activities undertaken within the framework of Resolutions 3.2, (Geneva, September 1991) 4.2 (Nairobi, June 1994), and 5.1. These Resolutions are aimed at increasing the conservation effort for those species identified by the Conference of the Parties as needing concerted action.
2. One of the important outcomes of both the fourth and fifth meetings of the Conference of the Parties was the decision to allocate funds from the CMS Trust Fund “to finance additional expenditure in support of the Convention in the form of block consultancies for particular tasks, including the development of agreements, particularly in developing countries and areas where the coverage was inadequate”. The advice of the Scientific Council was sought in identifying appropriate projects for funding. This was done at the Council’s intersessional meetings, both its sixth meeting (Bonn, November 1995), and its eighth meeting (Wageningen, June 1998).
3. Projects funded in the course of the 1995-1997 triennium were reported on at the fifth Conference of the Parties. A summary of those projects funded since then is included as Annex 1 to this document.
4. It is proposed that the Scientific Council review the progress made to date and make recommendations as to the continuation of certain lines of work and/or new species on which the Convention’s attention should be focussed.

Summary of CMS activities related to Concerted Action species during the 1997-2000 triennium

A. BIRDS

Budget allocated at the eighth meeting of the Scientific Council: \$83,159

1. **Title:** Transformation of Action Plans for *Falco naumanni* and *Crex crex*.

Implementation: BirdLife International
Start date: August 1999
Completion date: April 2000
Budget provided by CMS: \$10,000

Description and results:

BirdLife is preparing Action Plans for the conservation and management of the species using the CMS Siberian Crane Action Plan as a model. The terms of reference for the project are to:

- identify the key Range States of the species and prioritise the action proposed on the basis of the most recent information available;
- identify the activities which should be carried out in the respective Range States and those which should be subject to internationally coordinated and concerted action or prior harmonisation;
- identify the institutions/organisations which should or may take the lead or assist in the implementation of the respective activities;

2. **Title:** Awareness campaign for the Lesser White Fronted Goose (*Anser erythropus*)

Implementation: Norwegian Ornithological Society
Start date: November 1998
Completion date: December 1999
Budget provided by CMS: \$20,159

Description and results:

One basic need is to increase the knowledge and raise awareness of the Lesser White-fronted Goose, *Anser erythropus*, with management authorities and especially with hunters in the countries hosting staging or wintering populations of the species, i.e., Russia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria. This project will produce information material on the ecology, occurrence and identification of Lesser White-fronted Geese, including posters and stickers for distribution in villages, among groups of hunters and in local/regional administration offices. This will be conducted in close co-operation with national co-operation partners as well as regional and local management authorities in the staging and wintering areas.

The awareness campaign will be conducted during the autumns/early winters of 1998 and 1999.

3. **Title:** Status of the Syrian Serin (*Serinus syriacus*) in the Near East

Implementation: Museum Koenig, Bonn, Germany
Starting Date: January 1999
Completion date: June 1999
Status: Project completed
Budget provided by CMS: \$6,900

Description and results:

Serinus syriacus is listed in Appendix I of the CMS. It is considered to be a key species for nature conservation in Jordan. Due to its restricted range, and the fact that it is the only endemic breeding bird species within its range, the species has received a high conservation priority in the Near East.

The aim of the project was to estimate the current populations in the Middle East, to enhance awareness and improve the capacity for conservation of birds in general and this species in particular. The impact of land use on the habitats of Syrian Serin in Jordan was assessed and the first steps towards habitat management and rehabilitation were conducted in the Dana Nature Reserve, Jordan. The activities under this project included survey work in Jordan, advisory and training services to the manager and staff of the Dana Nature Reserve and, with the help of local workers, the planting of 700 sapplings of indigenous tree species in deforested areas.

The results of the survey work, and literature review indicate that approximately 2000 pairs of serins are believed to live in the wild, breeding solely in the mountains of Lebanon, W Syria, SW Jordan and NE Israel (Mt. Hermon). The breeding population in SW Jordan was estimated in 1999 at max. 500 pairs, a decrease of 20% since last surveyed in 1996. This population is resident in the highlands of SW Jordan although there is wide dispersion after the breeding season and part of the population may migrate if conditions are not suitable.

B. MAMMALS

Budget allocated at the eighth meeting of the Scientific Council: \$116,000

4. **Title:** Recovery Plan for the Atlantic Population of the Mediterranean Monk Seal

Implementation: Ministerio de Medio Ambiente, Spain
Start date: November 1999
Completion date: June 2000
Status: LoA with Spain for signature.
Budget provided by CMS: \$15,000

Description and results:

The project will prepare a draft recovery plan for the Atlantic populations of the Mediterranean Monk Seal (*Monachus monachus*), The recovery plan will be based on available biological information on the species, in order to co-ordinated conservation actions and its aim is confined to reversing downward trends.

Part 1 of the recovery plan will contains background material on habitat requirements, population limiting factors, and past and current distribution, biological status, significance of the species and conservation efforts. The threats to the species that have resulted in its endangered status will be addressed.

Part 2 is the Action Plan. This section will state the primary goal of the plan in biological and administrative terms, using verifiable and measurable objectives. The steps to be taken for the recovery of the species will be identified.

5. Title: Conservation of Sahelo-Saharan Antelopes

Implementation: Institut Royal des Sciences Naturelles de Belgique, Belgium
Status: Project under development
Budget provided by CMS: \$101,000

Description and results:

Over the course of the previous triennium funds had been used for the compilation of a comprehensive status report on the six species of Sahelo-Saharan ungulates concerned, including the updating and extension of the action plan, the organization and holding of a workshop and, finally, on the revision of the status reports and action plan on the basis of the findings of that workshop.

At the eighth meeting of the Scientific Council (Wageningen, November 1998), the appointed rapporteur for Mammals, Dr. Beudels, considered that, for the next two years, continuing support and funding from CMS would be critical for the conservation of those six species, and that it would also be essential to find other sources for funding. As a result, the amount of \$101,000 was identified by the Scientific Council as being available to be used as matching funds to allow Dr Beudels to seek further financial contributions to the conservation of these species. A result on the success of her efforts should be known by the end of October 1999.

C. SMALL CETACEANS

Budget allocated at the eighth meeting of the Scientific Council: 145,000

6. Title: Survey of shared small cetacean populations in the coastal and connecting oceanic region between Australia and Indonesia

Implementation: Environment Australia, Canberra, Australia
Start date: October 1999.
Completion date: June 2000
Budget provided by CMS: \$70,000

Description and results:

Baseline data is required to make initial estimates of abundance of small cetacean species and identify stocks in coastal Australian and Indonesian waters and the connecting oceanic regions of the Timor Sea. Ship-based line transect surveys employing experienced and newly trained observers will be conducted over two seasons to survey for small cetaceans (primarily) and other marine wildlife

(secondary priority) in the area. Biological data to be gathered will include information on distribution, population numbers, habitat associations, and patterns of movement and possibly information on potential and existing threats to species in different parts of the region. Environmental data and biopsy material will be collected concurrently.

It is important from a conservation and management point of view that the understanding of the biology of the shared populations of cetaceans in the region is improved. The survey will foster the development of technical expertise in the region and help produce a range of options, drawn from survey analysis and existing information, for consultation towards a potential regional agreement on small cetaceans under the auspices of CMS.

7. **Title:** Investigation of the distribution, abundance and habitat of marine mammals in the Gulf of Tonkin

Implementation: IUCN Species Survival Commission Cetacean Specialist Group
Starting Date: August 1999
Completion date: August 2000
Budget provided by CMS: \$22,620

Description and results:

This project will investigate the distribution, abundance, and habitat of marine mammals in the Gulf of Tonkin. It will train Vietnamese and Chinese researchers in marine mammal research and conservation techniques; assess threats to marine mammal survival, including direct exploitation and accidental killing; develop and promote recommended actions for conserving marine mammals in the Gulf of Tonkin and encourage transboundary approaches towards conservation action.

A three-day training course will be held at Ocean Park, Hong Kong prior to the first survey. Participants will be marine biologists from agencies in Vietnam and China. The objectives of the course will be to provide survey participants with field and analytical skills needed for surveying marine mammals. It is expected to have eight participants with roughly equal representation from China and Vietnam. Participants will be selected according to recommendations of their member institutions and based on their past experience in researching marine mammals.

Two 12-day surveys will be conducted, one in autumn 1999, from Hainan Island, People's Republic of China, and the other in spring 2000 from Haiphong, Vietnam. During the survey, a record will be kept of sightings of fishing vessels according to type. This will provide a rough gauge of fishing effort and the potential magnitude of accidental killing. While onshore, fish markets will be visited and interview fishermen conducted to investigate direct exploitation, accidental killing, and marketing of marine mammal body parts.

8. **Title:** Assessment of the conservation status of the humpback dolphin (*Sousa teuszii*) and other cetaceans in Senegalese and Gambian waters.

Implementation: Marine Education and Research, Bristol, UK
Start date: August 1999
Completion date: July 2000
Budget provided by CMS: \$25,300

Description and results:

Marine Education and Research will conduct a comprehensive assessment of the conservation status of the Atlantic humpbacked dolphin and other cetaceans in Senegalese and Gambian waters. In order to achieve this goal it will establish local expertise in cetacean science, assist in establishing a permanent cetacean data collection and will heighten awareness of threats to west African cetaceans. Activities planned include small boat surveys, assisting the competent national agencies in data collection on cetacean bycatches, strandings and sightings, insitutional building and basic cetacean population identification research.

D. MARINE TURTLES

Budget allocated at the eighth meeting of the Scientific Council: \$147,900

9. Title: GIS Database on turtle nesting sites

Implementation: WCMC
Status: Completed
Budget provided by CMS: \$28 980

Description and results:

All marine turtle species are globally threatened and all are listed in the CMS Appendices. Information on the geographic location of nesting beaches is vital to research and management planning, but at global level is difficult to access and use. This project developed and delivered to Internet users a digital GIS database of nesting sites around the Indian Ocean, with an interface allowing new or revised information to be contributed. The Internet Map Server will allow users to zoom in to areas of interest and to overlay nest sites with other environmental data. The project will use data on the Indian Ocean to test this method of information exchange and identify the demand for moving to complete global coverage in support of improved species and habitat conservation.

10. Title: Migration and genetics of Indo-Pacific marine turtles

Implementation: The University of Queensland, Australia
Status: LoA under development. Project will run from Jan 2000-Jan 2001
Budget provided by CMS: \$40,000

Description and results:

The emerging pattern is that each major turtle breeding assemblage for each species is a separate stock or management unit with limited exchange of individuals between stocks. Once the genetic profile of each stock has been determined, mixed stock analysis can be used to investigate the migratory range of each stock at different life history stages. In particular, the proportion of different breeding populations in various harvests, by catch and feeding grounds can be estimated.

The objectives of this project include:

- To sample major rookeries of marine turtles not yet characterised (either by our group or by international collaborators);
- To identify the number and distribution of separate management units (breeding populations or “stocks”) of marine turtles in the Indo-Pacific;
- To identify genetic markers, or combinations thereof, that can be used to estimate the migratory range of different management units;
- To apply these markers to major harvests, by-catch and feeding grounds in the region allowing, in combination with available tagging evidence, estimation of which stocks may be adversely affected by human activities.

11. **Title:** TCP National marine turtle by-catch survey and Olive Ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea*) tagging program

Implementation: Turtle Conservation Project, Sri-Lanka
Start date: July 1999
Completion date: October 2000
Budget provided by CMS: \$24 000

Description and results:

This project will train assistants to conduct introductory workshops with the objective being to introduce local fishers to the issues regarding marine turtle conservation in order to facilitate their co-operation with the data collection and minimise any suspicion that fishermen may have regarding the submission of information about illegal by-catch of marine turtles. It also aims to inform fishermen of the TCP olive ridley tagging programme (see below) and to ask them to report any entanglements/ sightings of tagged turtles.

Olive ridley tagging programme in Gulf of Mannar: Will develop a comprehensive action plan to minimise marine turtle by-catch in Sri Lanka. To gather the data, fishing vessels will be chartered from the fish landing sites within the programme boundaries for a period of three months. The fishermen will be expected to fish as normal during the charter period. However, during the fishing trips, any live adult female olive ridley turtle entangled in fishing nets will be brought aboard, measured, tagged and released. The tagging programme will be terminated when 1000 adult female olive ridley turtles have been tagged and released. It has been estimated that within three months of chartered fishing trips, at least 1000 adult female olive ridley turtles will have been tagged. The TCP will maintain communication with these relevant organisations and individuals and establish a database of records of sightings of tagged turtles.

E. NEOTROPICAL SPECIES

Budget allocated at the eighth meeting of the Scientific Council: \$152,000

12. **Title:** Ruddy-headed Goose (*Chloephaga rubidiceps*) Conservation in the Austral Region of Chile and Argentina.

Implementation: Wetlands International-Americas
Start date: April 1999

Completion date: May 2000
Status: Progress report received.
Budget provided by CMS: \$30,000

Description and results:

The mainland population of the Ruddy-headed goose (*Ch. rubidiceps*) is very rare, and is included in CMS Appendix I. For unknown reasons, the population has declined from being the most abundant species in the north of Tierra del Fuego, to an estimated population of around 300 birds today. The entire population winters in Argentina. A separate population numbering tens of thousands is resident on the Falkland (Malvinas) Islands.

This project aims to obtain additional information about the species distribution and migration routes, as well as about its breeding habits and threats (to implement useful conservation measures); and to increase public awareness about the conservation status of this goose, and 3) to improve the cooperation between Argentina and Chile, for the joint management of this shared species.

13. Title: Huemel (*Hippocamelus bisulcus*) Observatory

Implementation: Fundación Vida Silvestre Argentina (FVSA)
Start date: November 1999
Completion date: April 2000
Budget provided by CMS: \$17 930

Description and results:

Fundacion Vida Silvestre Argentina will design and build an observatory for the study and observation of the CMS Appendix I, and Concerted Actions species Huemul Deer (*Hippocamelus bisulcus*).

The aim of this observatory is to raise awareness of this secretive, slow-moving and very rare cervid, distributed in south Argentina and Chile by constructing an observatory where these deers are normally present. This will ensure as little disturbance to the animals as possible, and provide a educational facility for the Huemul, other members of the region's fauna and flora and about CMS.

The observatory will be constructed inside Los Glaciares National Park (717,800 ha.). The National Park rangers would provide presentations to the visitors. Scientific information about the life history of the deer's local population will be also gathered through direct observations from the observatory by the Park staff.

14. Title: Priority actions for the conservation of the high Andean flamingoes

Implementation: Fundación Pachamama, Salta, Argentina
Start date: July 1999
Completion date: December 2000
Budget provided by CMS: \$50 000

Description and results:

High-Andean flamingos (*Phoenicoparrus jamesi* and *P. andinus*) are the rarest of the six flamingo

species of the world. Because of their low population numbers, high concentrations in a few places and other characteristics of their life history they are considered vulnerable by IUCN and have been included in Appendix I of the Bonn Convention.

This project will undertake a complete winter census, including data analysis and a short workshop to discuss the results. It will also prepare a Conservation and Management Proposal (C&MP). The draft will be prepared before winter census to be used as a document in the internal negotiation of each country. A draft memorandum of understanding under Bonn Convention has been prepared and is under discussion. It will be further improved and discussed with the country government agencies with the hope to have it implemented by the end of this project.

15. Title: Workshop on conservation of neotropical species - South America

Implementation: Dirección General de Recursos Naturales Renovables,
Uruguay
Status: Project completed
Budget provided by CMS: \$16,000

Description and results:

The Southern South America's waterfowl workshop (Valdivia, 1997) brought together all the Parties of the region (Argentina, Chile, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay) and representatives from non Parties (Brazil, Bolivia, Costa Rica and Ecuador) for the purpose of discussing activities for the conservation of the following concerted action species: Andean Flamingos, Huemul, Ruddy-headed Goose and Franciscana Dolphin and the Appendix II species, the Black-necked Swan.

Another idea discussed during the meeting was the creation of CMS Sites. This idea, which was proposed during the previous meeting in Valdivia, was further discussed. The concept involves identifying sites of critical importance for the long term conservation of migratory species (marine turtle nesting beaches, bat caves, critical stopovers for birds, etc.) and providing them with special CMS recognition. The recognition of these areas aims to maintain migratory phenomenon according to the definition provided during the CMS Symposium in Geneva. There was consensus that the idea has potential to improve the conservation of species and to increase the visibility of CMS at least in the Latin America and Caribbean region. A group was formed to develop this proposal further (AIM-Areas de Importancia Migratoria).

There was agreement to continue with these meetings and the next one is planed in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia in the year 2000.

16. Title: Investigation of the biology and ecology of the Franciscana Dolphin (*Pontoporia blainvillei*) in waters off Argentina.

Implementation: Fundación Vida Silvestre Argentina (FVSA)
Status: Start and completion dates yet to be determined. LoA under development
Budget provided by CMS: \$32 000

Description and results:

The franciscana, *Pontoporia blainvillei*, is a small cetacean endemic to the western South Atlantic

Ocean. The coastal distribution of this species, restricted to waters within the 30 m isobath, making it vulnerable to many anthropogenic activities. This project aims to gather basic abundance estimates, via aerial survey and boat based survey; to investigate stock discreteness through genetic analysis of material obtained via strandings or entanglements; and it will investigate the ecology and behaviour of individuals in the wild.