

**6th Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the
CMS Scientific Council (ScC-SC6)**

Bonn, Germany, 18 – 21 July 2023

UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Doc.12.4.3

MIGRATORY SPECIES AND HEALTH

(Prepared by the COP-appointed Councillor for Wildlife Health and the Secretariat)

Summary:

This document contains a draft review of migration and wildlife disease dynamics and the health of migratory species within the context of One Health and ecosystem approaches to health.

The document aims to contribute to the work of the Working Group on migratory species and health under the Scientific Council. The Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council is recommended to provide feedback to inform the further development and finalization of the review and make recommendation to COP14 on how to further address the issue of wildlife health in the context of the Convention.

MIGRATORY SPECIES AND HEALTH

Background

1. The COVID-19 pandemic has focused attention on wildlife diseases raising awareness of the risks they pose to human health.. It has also raised awareness of the potential spread of infectious diseases from humans to wildlife.
2. It is important to better understand the linkages between zoonotic diseases, exploitation of wildlife and habitat destruction and fragmentation. The same human activities that are causing increased risk of both infectious and non-infectious wildlife diseases are also major factors in the decline of wild species of animals, including migratory species. These include the exploitation of wild species as a source of food or income, use of animal parts for other commercial purposes, recreational hunting, and belief-based practices, and the destruction of natural habitat and encroachment of activities that bring humans and their livestock in close proximity to wild species.
3. The Fifth Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council (ScC-SC5) held in 2021, decided to establish a Working Group on Migratory Species and Health under the Scientific Council. The aim of the Group is to provide a focus for CMS work and involvement in issues related to migratory species and health (Terms of reference of the Working Group can be found in [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC5/Outcome 11](#)).
4. A review of migration and wildlife disease dynamics and the health of migratory species was included in the Programme of Work for the Sessional Committee for the intersessional period between COP13 and COP14. The review is expected to assist the Working Group in their development and prioritization of a work programme and contribution to initiatives such as the One Health High-Level Expert Group (involving UNEP, WHO, FAO and OIE) and other relevant initiatives.

Development of the review of migration and wildlife disease dynamics

5. In response to Secretariat's efforts to raise funds to support the production of the review, voluntary contributions were provided by the Government of Germany and the Government of United Kingdom. In April 2023 the Secretariat, in close consultation with the COP-appointed Councillor for Wildlife Health, Dr. Ruth Cromie, commissioned the University of Edinburgh to produce the review.
6. The report comprises the following main sections:
 - A '**One Health and ecosystem health**' section summarising the context of health in relation to conservation; the interdependence of health across the sectors; and the need for One Health and ecosystem approaches to health and its management.
 - A '**migration and disease dynamics**' section, which discusses disease in relation to migration and the potential impacts of migration and its disruption on the health of wildlife, domestic animals and humans (i.e. zoonotic risks).
 - A '**key health issues for migratory species**' section reviewing key health issues affecting migratory species, at a high level, with an emphasis on known issues for CMS-listed species.

7. A summary of the review is provided in Annex to this document, while an advanced draft of the full report is submitted to ScC-SC6 as [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Inf.12.4.3](#). Following the ScC-SC6 meeting, the review will be finalized and presented to COP14 for consideration.
8. The meeting is also expected to discuss how to further address the issue of wildlife health in the context of the Convention and make recommendation to COP14 as appropriate, including a possible revision of [Resolution 12.06 Wildlife Disease and Migratory Species](#).

Recommended actions

9. The Scientific Council is recommended to:
 - a) review the summary review contained in Annex of this document and the full draft of the review included in [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Inf.12.4.3](#);
 - b) provide feedback to inform the further development and finalization of the review;
 - c) discuss how to further address the issue of wildlife health in the context of the Convention and make recommendation to COP14 as appropriate.