

Inputs for the development of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework

Background.

The Secretariat of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), on behalf of its family of Agreements (CMS Family) and the Working Group on the CMS Family contributions to the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, is pleased to provide this submission in response to CBD Notification 2019-075, *Invitation to provide proposals on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework*.

First, we welcome the progress made by the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) at OEWG1 in Nairobi, Kenya. We were pleased to see the inclusion of the concept of “connectivity” as a cross-cutting issue in the non-paper produced by the OEWG1 on “*Possible Elements of a Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework*”, which is also referenced as annex I in the co-chairs *Conclusions of the First Meeting of the Working Group*.

Second, we were also pleased to see included in annex II of the *Conclusions* document plans for a future meeting of biodiversity-related conventions, given the importance that many governments, stakeholders and biodiversity-related conventions gave to ensuring that the future framework encompasses priorities of the different conventions, and that the opportunity of shaping a new global framework is fully leveraged to achieve more coherence and synergies among the biodiversity-related conventions in addressing common threats to biodiversity.

Some initial suggestions for how the concept of connectivity might be reflected in the new framework are offered below.

The importance of connectivity for biodiversity.

The recent IPBES global assessment recognized the importance of connectivity for the post-2020 framework. It is highly relevant for achieving the objectives of many multilateral environment agreements (MEAs), including the Convention on Migratory Species, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the UN Convention to Combat Desertification and the World Heritage Convention. Connectivity refers to landscape connectivity (physical connection of natural areas); ecological connectivity (connectedness of ecological processes across multiple scales); habitat connectivity (connectedness between areas of suitable habitats for species); and evolutionary process connectivity (including the exchange of genetic material between populations).

Connectivity is a key ingredient for the achievement of all three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD):

Conservation - Connectivity is essential for conservation. It is vital for the survival of migratory species that depend on certain habitats to which they are adapted, and provides the ecosystems and range needed for the conservation of resident species. Connectivity supports ecosystem services and functions such as water cycles, soil production, and resilience to climate change.

Sustainable use - Connectivity is a key element for sustainable use of biodiversity. For example, it supports ecosystems and species that underpin agricultural productivity, fisheries and other

natural resources that provide for food, livelihoods and economic benefits. As populations, cities and farmed landscapes expand, connectivity is an essential concept for safeguarding areas that are vital for wildlife and contribute to human well-being.

Genetic resources - Connectivity promotes genetic diversity, ensuring that populations of species are not fragmented and isolated.

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Connectivity could be effectively reflected in the new biodiversity framework through the following elements:

1. Inclusion of connectivity as part of an “apex” goal. Connectivity provides a science-based approach for establishing ecological networks, beyond a numerical target for area-based conservation measures. Ecological networks include protected areas, other effective area-based conservation areas, and areas outside of either category that are nonetheless important for ecological functions. Connectivity as part of an apex goal may be particularly relevant for countries that have few opportunities to significantly increase the total geographical coverage of protected areas.

2. A stand-alone target on connectivity or including connectivity in relevant goals and targets. Because of the importance of connectivity to the three objectives of the CBD, to many Aichi Biodiversity Targets and for the mandates of other MEAs, a stand-alone target on connectivity might be most appropriate and effective. Connectivity could alternatively be included as an element of relevant goals, targets, and indicators.

3. A commitment to international cooperation at the transboundary, regional and/or global levels. Achieving the objectives of the CBD and other biodiversity-related conventions as well as other MEAs often requires international cooperation for implementation. For example, international cooperation is essential for countries to address shared populations of migratory species and their habitats. However, the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 does not include any goal or target for international cooperation at various scales, and thus NBSAPs may not reflect commitments for international cooperation. The new framework would benefit from inclusion of a commitment to international cooperation to ensure effective implementation.

4. Inclusion in NBSAPs of commitments for all biodiversity MEAs to which countries are a party. Parties of the CBD, CMS and other biodiversity-related conventions have repeatedly called for NBSAPs to include commitments to the various conventions to which a country is a Party in order to ensure better coherence in implementation across the various agreements. The new global biodiversity framework provides a unique opportunity to do so.

5. Inclusion of connectivity as one of several top priorities. Addressing the findings of the IPBES global assessment may benefit from international consensus on a suite of top priorities in order to mobilize the level of response needed. Given the important role that connectivity plays, it could be included in any such set of key priorities.

Upcoming opportunities. A number of meetings and other activities are planned by the CMS Secretariat in connection with partners to further develop the concept of connectivity for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. For more information, see <https://www.cms.int>.

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