



9th MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE
18 – 19 September 2013, Trondheim, Norway

MIGRATORY SPECIES CHAMPION PROGRAMME

(Prepared by the UNEP/CMS Secretariat on behalf of and in consultation with the CMS Family Secretariats and Coordinating Units)

Introduction

As instructed by Resolution 10.9 on the Future Structure and Strategies of the CMS Family, the CMS Secretariat has explored opportunities to expand and enhance fundraising activities and has devised, in collaboration with the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat, a programme that aims at identifying new funding prospects, coordinating efforts within the Family; and developing synergies with partners.

Following internal consultations, the Secretariats and Coordinating Units of the CMS Family agreed to join forces and collaborate in further developing and implementing the “*Migratory Species Champion Programme*”.

The Secretariats and Coordinating Units of the CMS Family aim to seek, through this document, guidance and endorsement on the programme from their Standing Committees or equivalent bodies.

Each Standing Committee or equivalent body was therefore invited to consider this proposal and provide comments by 19 August.

The CMS Secretariat has compiled the limited comments received and produced a revised version enclosed below.

This revised and final version is submitted by each Secretariat and Coordinating Unit of the CMS Family to their respective Standing Committee or equivalent body for endorsement.

The CMS and AEWA Standing Committees and the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee have the opportunity to discuss the proposal and endorse at their forthcoming sessions (CMS StC, 27-28 November; AEWA StC, 18-20 September; ASCOBANS AC, 27-29 August).

All other CMS Family Standing Committees and equivalent bodies are asked to do so by electronic means by the end of 2013.

While the endorsement from all instruments is not a pre-requisite for the development of the programme, only with the participation of all CMS instruments could the achievement of a streamlined fundraising approach across the Family be assured.

Action requested from the Standing Committee

The Standing Committee is invited to consider this proposal and authorize the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat to further develop and implement the programme either in cooperation with other Secretariats and Coordinating Units of the CMS Family, if approved by their respective governing bodies, or individually.

MIGRATORY SPECIES CHAMPION PROGRAMME

Background – from Motivation to Realization

Motivation

The work of the Convention and its daughter agreements is guided by decisions of their respective governing bodies. The implementation of these decisions is dependent on funding from the Member States coupled with voluntary contributions from various sources. The approved core budgets of the Convention and its legally binding agreements are largely dedicated to staffing and operational costs, while voluntary contributions are sought for activities, such as conservation projects, meetings or publications. In the case of Memoranda of Understanding, donations are the sole source of funding for their coordination and implementation.

The operation of all CMS instruments is therefore subject to the voluntary financial income that the Secretariats and Coordinating Units can generate. Unfortunately in most cases, past and current fundraising efforts have resulted in only small and/or ad hoc grants being obtained.

The CMS Family Secretariats and Coordinating Units have recognized that the lack of predictable and substantial donations might be the result of the following factors:

- Insufficient visibility of the work of CMS instruments and its relevance to the wider political agenda of Member States;
- Insufficient awareness on the part of current or potential donors regarding the mandate and funding needs of the CMS Family instruments;
- Funding efforts on the part of Secretariats and Coordinating Units based on immediate and specific needs and mostly targeting traditional donors;
- Limited promotion of the impact of donors' support.

Furthermore, it has been experienced, both on the part of donors and Secretariats and Coordinating Units, that the investment of staff time for securing, processing and reporting on grants is disproportionate to the outcome - small-scale funding for short-term activities.

Aspiration

CMS and its instruments aim to ensure financial support for their implementation in a more sustainable manner by:

- Broadening the array of donors including promoting the engagement of private sector as well as the general public;
- Encouraging donors to commit to mid- and long-term voluntary funding;
- Ensuring greater flexibility in the use of funds, in the context of programmes of work adopted, and simplifying payment processing and reporting burdens.

Realization

The following elements have been identified as necessary means to realize the above-mentioned aspirations:

- Developing initiatives as packages of activities to be implemented over the middle to long term in line with the given mandates (programmes of work and strategies) rather than as single, one-off actions;

- Branding and marketing initiatives to make them more attractive to donors;
- Providing donors with formal recognition of their commitment and publicizing results as an incentive for the same donors to renew their pledges and for new donors to become engaged;
- Making donors “owners” of the initiatives they support which may result in having powerful advocates for the CMS Family’s cause and delivering support and benefits for conservation beyond funding.

Objective

The programme does not aim to create a new fundraising scheme or an additional burden to the current operations but rather to streamline current efforts; and to increase the incoming flow of voluntary contributions and make it more sustainable and predictable. The programme is not meant to fulfil all funding needs but will be a key element of each CMS instrument’s resource mobilization plan or strategy.

The programme also provides the opportunity to establish a more coherent fundraising approach across the Family as well as to synergize efforts to mobilize resources with partners that have developed similar schemes in order to avoid competition and guarantee more successful results.

Though providing a corporate identity for the Family and the framework for coordinated fundraising activities, the programme still allows each CMS instrument to address its own funding needs independently.

Outline

Who can be a Champion?

Governments, companies, organizations and individuals that are willing to support efforts to conserve migratory species and their habitats. *Champions* are intended to provide mid- and long-term funding to one or more specific CMS Family initiatives.

What is a Champion asked to do?

Champions would be asked for a three-year commitment (renewable), to give an amount starting from €20,000 per year. Contributions could be made annually or as one-off payments.

In-kind donations, which are equivalent to the above-indicated amount, can also qualify for this programme. Criteria to evaluate these non-monetary contributions will be developed.

What can a Champion support?

The programme aims to offer a portfolio of branded initiatives (i.e. packages as opposed to single activities). This would allow the Secretariats and Coordinating Units to have more flexibility in implementing their mandate as different elements of these packages can be progressed within a longer-term timeframe and accordingly to the given priority.

The branding of these initiatives draws on species as powerful icons for their own conservation or on cross-cutting issues that are widely known and understood.

Examples of initiatives are listed below:

NAME OF INITIATIVE	ACTIVITIES INCLUDED IN THE INITIATIVE
SHARKS	Servicing and implementation of the MOU as mandated by its Signatories. Activities would range from the implementation of selected conservation projects and the coordination of the MOU to the development of technical reviews and organization of meetings.
GLOBAL FLYWAYS	Coordination of the Working Group and implementation of priority activities as determined by the specific resolution including the organization of workshops; development of Action Plans and promotion of conservation measures.
BY-CATCH	Development of studies assessing the risk of by-catch as well as identifying the most effective mitigation techniques.
CAPACITY BUILDING	Implementation of any capacity building-related activity ranging from the development of learning tools to the organization of training workshops on specific issues.

(The names of these initiatives are preliminary. They are only meant to give an idea of what an initiative would entail.)

Donors that are not in a position to commit to the programme, will still be able to provide voluntary contributions in the traditional manner. The “Champion” status is however only granted for those donations meeting the criteria of this programme.

What is the appeal of being a Champion?

In addition to promoting the results of the programme on the dedicated webpage, *Champions* will be acknowledged with certificates that testify their support to one or more initiatives. Different categories of *Champions* could be defined to acknowledge contributions exceeding the minimum amount required by the programme. (A possible scheme of categories could be as follows: silver, gold and platinum).

Ad hoc donors’ meetings will be organized in the margins of the CMS Family decision-making bodies to acknowledge *Champions* as well as engage new ones. The certificate and the associated publicity are important and useful tools for donors for promoting their commitment both at national and international levels.

Partners

In 2007 [BirdLife International](#) (BLI) developed a similar scheme for Critically Endangered species of birds (Preventing Extinctions Programme). The BLI programme has proven to be successful for a number of targeted species and it has gained significant visibility and trust among *Champions* (being mainly companies and individuals).

Contacts have been made with BLI to learn from its experience. BLI agreed to join forces to raise funds through this tool for the conservation of bird species of joint interest such as the **Siberian Crane** and the **Spoon-billed Sandpiper**. Collaborating with the BLI scheme would mean streamlining fundraising for species of common interest on which we cooperate. If successful, this experience would be used as model for similar cooperation with other relevant partner organizations.

Way forward

Developing the programme

The next steps in the development of the programme foresee the elaboration of a portfolio of initiatives and associated outreach material in parallel to the creation of a webpage in the CMS Family website. The CMS Secretariat would coordinate the development and maintenance of the programme. No additional staff is required.

Funding for the programme

Funds for the development and launch of the programme are currently available in the CMS core budget (as per the Res. 10.9 on Future Structure and Strategies of the CMS Family - activity 14.1 “*CMS [to] coordinate fundraising activities work with partners and stakeholders to expand fundraising activities*”). The maintenance and future promotion of the programme might require some limited additional resources, in the range of €2,000 per year, which would be drawn from the revenues of the programme itself.

Promoting the programme

The programme would be promoted through the dedicated webpage and potential *Champions* would be approached jointly or separately by Secretariats and Coordinating Units of the CMS Family. CMS Ambassadors would be asked to play an important role in the promotion of the programme particularly in reaching out to new potential donors.