

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL ON OCEANS AND THE LAW OF THE SEA
CONTRIBUTION FROM THE CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES

June 2024

1. The 14th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals ([CMS COP14](#)) was held from 12-17 February 2024 in Samarkand, Uzbekistan. Resolutions, [Decisions](#) and Concerted Actions were adopted on over 100 distinct topics by representatives of the 133 Parties globally. Despite COP14 being held in a doucliable-landlocked country, many of the outcomes address conservation priorities for aquatic species, including marine turtles.
2. The final Resolutions and Decisions of COP14 can be found at the following pages:
 - [Resolutions in Effect](#)
 - [Decisions in Effect](#)

They can also be found on the [COP14 meeting page](#).

Overexploitation

3. Among the drivers of biodiversity loss, overexploitation of natural resources is one of the

overexploitation for many migratory species and adopted new Decision 187-189 on Aquatic Wild Meat in general and Decisions 190-193 on the Action Plan to address Aquatic Wild Meat Harvest in West Africa alongside the Action Plan itself.

11. Parties agreed to support the implementation of the Action Plan to Address Aquatic Wild Meat Harvests in West Africa by providing technical and capacity-building assistance. Additionally, they are encouraged to develop action plans to reduce aquatic wild meat hunting and consumption in regions such as East, South-East, and South Asia, Latin America, and the Pacific Islands. This initiative aims to curb unsustainable practices and promote conservation efforts across multiple regions.
12. The Scientific Council, through its Aquatic Wild Meat Working Group, is tasked with several key actions. These include developing criteria for including certain sharks and rays, collecting information on seabird harvests, and assessing the migratory nature and conservation relevance of crocodylians and freshwater chelonians. They are also responsible for supporting studies on the socio-cultural, nutritional, and legal aspects of aquatic wild meat use and trade, promoting environmental education, and evaluating the effectiveness of existing legislation.
- 13.

25. The Guidelines present considerations and guidelines to assist countries in adopting appropriate measures to regulate in-water recreational interactions with marine mammals, marine turtles, large fish and seabirds in their area of jurisdiction. They aim to avoid and mitigate disturbance and adverse effects from in-water interactions on the target species and associated habitats, including both long-term detrimental effects on population demographics (e.g., survival, reproduction) and shorter-term impacts on individual behaviour and welfare. The Guidelines provide examples, considerations and suggestions to develop, adjust or validate decisions and regulations governing recreational in-water interactions, helping governments to identify how to manage these activities effectively in the specific local contexts.

Marine Mammals

26. Resolution 14.9 [Conservation priorities for cetaceans](#) was adopted (repealing Res.10.15 (Rev.COP12) Global Programme of Work for Cetaceans). Decisions 14.69 – 14.73 requests Parties to prioritize the conservation of cetaceans by reviewing regional priorities and detailed recommendations outlined in Resolution 14.9, focusing on urgent threats and coordinating regionally where possible. Additionally, Parties are urged to engage in negotiations for an international legally binding instrument to address plastic pollution, support the BBNJ Agreement for robust Environmental Impact Assessments, and integrate cetacean conservation into National Biodiversity Strategies aligned with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. The Scientific Council, with support from the Aquatic Mammals Working Group, is tasked with quantifying contemporary takes of CMS Appendix I-listed cetaceans globally, assessing climate-induced migration impacts on cetacean welfare and conservation, recommending standard protocols for mortality investigations, reporting on 'Out of Habitat' cetaceans,

information on marine turtles in a region-specific and species-specific context, focusing on their vulnerability to climate change, the impacts of plastic and light pollution on post-hatchlings, and the identification of resilient habitats. Based on this assessment, the Scientific Council will develop new recommendations for all CMS-listed marine turtle species included in Appendices I or II, emphasizing the preservation of current nesting sites and identification of new ones, and proposing management strategies like beach cooling and restoration projects to mitigate climate change impacts on nesting beaches.

Fish

32. Decisions 14.106 – 14.109 on **European Eels requests** Parties that are Range States to the European Eel to provide support for the development of an Action Plan.
33. Further Decisions were adopted to assess the status of **Implementation of the CMS Appendix I-Listing for the Oceanic Whitetip Shark (Carcharhinus longimanus)** (Decisions 14.114 – 14.116) and to prepare legislative guidance materials and model laws to support the implementation of Article III (5) of the Convention regarding the prohibition of the taking of Appendix I-listed chondrichthyan species (Decisions 14.117 – 14.118).

Amendment of Appendices

34. COP14 listed the following new species in its Appendices
 - *Tursiops truncatus gephyreus* (Appendix I & II)
 - *Phocoena phocoena* - Baltic Proper population (Appendix I)
 - *Carcharias taurus* (Appendix I & II)
 - *Glaucostegus cemiculus* (Appendix II) // Mediterranean Sea population (Appendix I & II)
 - *Aetomylaeus bovinus* (Appendix II) // Mediterranean Sea population (Appendix I & II)
 - *Rhinoptera marginata* (Appendix II) // Mediterranean Sea population (Appendix I & II)