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From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

Subject: Fifteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP15) to the
Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals
(Campo Grande, Brazil, 23-29 March 2026)
– Statements by the EU and its Member States

Delegations will find in the Annex, for information, a compilation of statements/speaking points delivered on behalf of the European Union and its Member States at the abovementioned meeting.

**Fifteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP15) to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals
(Campo Grande, Brazil, 23-29 March 2026)**

– Statements by the EU and its Member States

Opening Statement on behalf of the European Union and its Member States

Mr(s) Chairman, Your Excellencies, Ms Executive Secretary, distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, Cyprus on behalf of the EU and its Member States would like to express our sincere gratitude to the government of Brazil for hosting this important meeting in the city of Campo Grande, the gateway to the Pantanal.

The EU and its Member States are highly appreciative of the huge amount of work undertaken by the Secretariat, the Standing Committee and the Scientific Council in preparation for this COP.

We recognize the invaluable role that migratory species play in maintaining the health and balance of ecosystems across the globe. In that context, we continue to value the Samarkand Strategic Plan for Migratory Species not only as a framework that sets the course for the next decade of action, but also as a key tool in implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

We further welcome the opportunities and possibilities provided by the entry into force of the new Agreement on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction, which will play an important role for the protection of migratory species.

We thank the proponents for their science-based proposals to amend the Appendices, helping to ensure the long-term survival of these animals and the ecosystems they inhabit.

We also appreciate the continuous work of the CMS Family in bringing forward and implementing Concerted Actions, Initiatives and species-specific Action Plans, addressing the complex challenges faced by migratory species on a global scale. In this light we are pleased to contribute to the suite of CMS instruments by proposing the SSAP for the Tope Shark in the NE Atlantic and Mediterranean Sea and the Multi-species Action Plan to conserve African, Eurasian and Australian bustards and we hope that these will be supported by others.

These endeavours should be sustained, enhanced, and supplemented with additional actions necessary to improve the conservation of migratory species and their habitats, in particular through strengthened collaboration at regional and global level with sector organizations and partners, other biodiversity-related conventions, UN entities, NGOs, and other stakeholders.

Finally, we look forward to working closely with all of you, and are fully committed to make this meeting a success, showing that multilateralism can work to protect migratory species.

Agenda Item 13 Implementation of the Programme of Work 2024-2026

The EU and its MS welcome the Secretariat's detailed update on the Programme of Work 2024-2026 and stress that the Programme of Work is a vital mechanism for tracking the Convention's performance. Ensuring its implementation is essential and the reliance on voluntary contributions for key conservation outputs may pose a risk to the Convention's objectives.

The EU and its Member States will raise the issue of voluntary contributions versus core budget during the Budget discussions to address how best to reflect funding priorities across the different COP decisions.

Agenda Item 14 Budget and Administration

Agenda Item 14.3 Resource Mobilization

The EU and its MS thank the Secretariat for document UNEP/CMS/COP15/Doc 14.3 and for its efforts to mobilize additional resources to implement the PoW for the short intersessional period 2024-2026, We furthermore stress the importance of strengthening support of the GEF for the uptake of CMS related issues in its programming and activities.

The EU and its MS believe this must be done by significantly increasing efforts by the CMS Secretariat and the Parties to use the existing opportunities such as the inclusion of migratory species aspects in the NBSAP, increased national coordination as well as direct interaction between the CMS Secretariat and the GEF Secretariat and by providing the CBD COP with CMS related priorities to be added to the GEF guidance.

To fully benefit from these opportunities and increase the GEF support to CMS implementation, we strongly encourage the GEF Secretariat, the CMS Secretariat and the Parties to increase efforts to develop and apply these pathways.

For the same reason, we do not see any merits in the GEF becoming the Financial Mechanism for the CMS as we consider that this would take away already scarce resources which can better be used to address the obstacles to improving the current pathways to obtain GEF funding for migratory species.

Therefore, the EU and its MS do not agree for the CMS Secretariat nor the Standing Committee to increase efforts towards exploring the GEF becoming the Financial mechanism for the CMS.

We have prepared amendments to reflect these points and will provide them to you in writing.

Agenda Item 15 Samarkand Strategic plan for Migratory Species 2024-2032

The EU and its Member States welcome the monitoring framework for the SPMS and thank the Secretariat for coordinating its preparation.

We acknowledge the importance of the SPMS vision to 2032, the relevance of its six strategic goals for the period 2024-2032 and the alignment of the Strategic Plan with relevant resolutions, including on climate change, renewable energy, infrastructure, ecological connectivity, and conservation measures for CMS species. We also appreciate the linkages to wider global priorities, notably the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and possibilities provided by the new BBNJ Agreement to establish Marine Protected Areas, important also for migratory species in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

The EU and its MS express their will to continue the implementation of the SPMS and its monitoring in their territory and to continue to support the implementation of relevant actions in other countries that are parties of the CMS.

The EU and its MS overall support the proposed amendment to Resolution 14.1 and the Draft Decisions concerning the implementation and monitoring of the SPMS, provided the following concerns can be addressed.

Regarding Target 4.3., we question Potential Action 4.3 a) as in our view it does not support the mobilization of resources by Parties but instead directs the already limited resources of the Secretariat towards another assessment.

We also believe Potential Action 4.3.d) can be addressed by adding a question to the CMS National Report, to ensure the gathering of the relevant data. The EU and its MS therefore prefer to delete 4.3.a) and 4.3.d) from Table 4.

Furthermore, regarding the suggested indicators 4.3.4 and 4.3.5, we question the relevance of this approach within the context of the CMS since resources to implement the Convention must come from all sources and there is no specific differentiation made between developed and developing countries. Target 4.3 clearly refers to all Parties and introducing specific categories of Parties into the Convention may not be beneficial where conservation success is mainly based on the cooperation among range states. We also question the connection made with the Headline Indicator D1 of the KM GBF given that that indicator does not limit contributions from ‘developed’ countries but refers to ‘International public funding’ in general. The EU and its MS therefore cannot support indicators 4.3.4 and 4.3.5 in Table 4 nor the same reference in annex of table 1, objective 4.3.

Finally, given the importance of the Samarkand SP for the implementation of the K-M Global Biodiversity Framework, the EU and its MS stress the need for enhanced coherence between the indicators developed in CMS context and the ongoing process under the CBD. This therefore also needs to be included under Agenda Item 18.3 on the contribution to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

With the amendments just mentioned, the EU and its MS can support the amendment of Resolution 14.1 and the adoption of the draft decisions.

We will provide our amendments to the Secretariat in writing.

Agenda Item 16 Scientific Council

Agenda Item 16.2 Overview of the Working Groups and Task Forces established under the CMS Scientific Council and its Sessional Committee

The EU and its Member States take note of the document and support the approach suggested by the Scientific Council.

Agenda Item 18 Collaboration with Other Entities

Agenda Item 18.1 Synergies and Partnerships

The EU and its Member States welcome the report that details the progress on implementation of synergies and partnerships and on NGO participation in CMS processes.

We appreciate the efforts made by the CMS Secretariat in engaging with other organizations and partners and encourage the Secretariat to continue its cooperation with all these organizations, to promote further dialogue and collaboration with other key stakeholders.

The EU and its Member States support the adoption of the Draft Decisions.

Agenda Item 18.2 Cooperation with Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)

The EU and its MS strongly support the level of engagement of the Scientific Council and the Secretariat in relevant IPBES processes to ensure reflection of CMS priorities in key assessments.

We also note the resource constraints highlighted in the document, particularly for implementing Decision 14.13, and stress the need for adequate funding and capacity-building.

We have some textual amendments to the Draft Decisions that we will submit to the Secretariat.

**Agenda Item 18.3 CMS Contribution to the Kunming -Montreal Global
Biodiversity Framework**

The EU and its Member States welcome and commend the engagement of the CMS Secretariat in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

We value very positively the steps taken to contribute to the implementation of the KM-GBF and encourage the continued close collaboration between the CMS and CBD Secretariats. In particular we would like to stress the importance for the CMS to be involved in the global review of the collective progress in the implementation of the KMGBF, including in the Planning, Monitoring, Reporting and Review, given its relevance for the monitoring and implementation of the SPMS.

The EU and its MS therefore support the adoption of the draft decisions and will provide our amendments to the Secretariat in writing.

Agenda Item 19 Communications, Outreach and Information Management

The EU and its MS acknowledge the numerous activities reported by the Secretariat that contributed to improve communication and outreach during the past intersessional period.

The EU and its MS support the adoption of the draft Decisions with some amendments.

Agenda Item 20 Conservation Status of Migratory Species

Agenda Item 20.1 Development of the next Report on State of the World's Migratory Species & 20.2 State of World's Migratory Species – Interim Report (2026)

The EU and its MS acknowledge the work by the Scientific Council and support the adoption of the draft Decisions for Item 20.1.

We have some amendments, to provide more detail regarding the technical and scientific support to be provided by the Scientific Council to the Secretariat, the content of the second report on the State of the World's Migratory Species, as well as functionalities of the CMS Data Dashboard. We will provide our comments in writing to the secretariat.

We also support to delete Decisions 14.20–14.24.

Agenda Item 21 Atlas on Animal Migration

The EU and its Member States take note of the overview of the modules of the CMS Atlas on Animal Migration and acknowledge the financial contributions to the expansion and refinement of the CMS Atlas on Animal Migration, that numerous Parties and organisations have provided.

The EU and its MS support the adoption of the draft decisions as well as the deletion of Decisions 14.17–14.19 on the Atlas on Animal Migration, and 14.196 a) on Ecological Connectivity.

Agenda Item 22 National Reports

The EU and its MS welcome the Analysis of National Reports, which was undertaken by the Secretariat. We acknowledge that the provisions on reporting contained in existing Resolutions need to be removed or amended to ensure consistency with the revised National Report format, once available, and support the development of the new format for National Reports for reporting to COP16.

The EU and its MS support the draft Decision of Annex 1 and agree with the deletion of Decisions 14.25 to 14.27.

Agenda Item 23 Review Mechanism and National Legislation Programme

The EU and its Member States welcome the progress made in the enactment of Resolution 12.9 and appreciate the Secretariat's efforts to put into action both the Review Mechanism and the National Legislation Programme. We underline the importance of clarity, scientific input and cooperation in the Review Mechanism, and we underline that adequate resourcing is essential for its effectiveness.

We also confirm the central role of the National Legislation Programme in supporting Parties' implementation of Articles III.4 and III.5 of the Convention. While there is increased participation, stronger and more sustained engagement is needed. We therefore support measures to enhance cooperation and exchange of good practices, while keeping the Programme supportive and non-adversarial.

The EU and its Member States support the adoption of the proposed draft Decisions and the streamlining of existing mandates, with minor amendments, which will be submitted, and we stand ready to continue supporting the effective implementation of the Convention. We also support the deletion of Decisions 14.28–14.29.

Agenda Item 24 Review of Decisions

The EU and its Member States fully support the process to review previous decisions and for the COP to proactively decide whether to renew or delete previous decisions where these have been completed or are now obsolete.

The majority of proposals put forward by the Secretariat relate to work that has been completed and can therefore be accepted by the EU and its MS. However, three of the proposals cannot be supported as they are considered still to be relevant.

The EU and its Member States would prefer to renew decisions 14.38 and 14.39 on Maltreatment and Mutilation of Seabirds. Deleting these decisions removes the way in which further instances would be brought to the attention of the Scientific Council and effectively deprioritises the issue without any evidence to support such a deprioritisation.

Decision 14.54 encourages Parties to disseminate the Guidelines on Recreational In-Water Interactions with Marine Wildlife to relevant organisations and operators in their countries and to use them in national planning. These Guidelines have been subsumed into Technical Series No. 49 in accordance with Decision 14.56(b). Rather than deleting it, the EU and its Member States consider that decision 14.54 should be renewed to encourage Parties to disseminate and use Technical Series No. 49.

Decision 14.223(e) encourages Parties, in collaboration with relevant agencies, to develop a harmonised standard and guidance relating to the circular design of fishing gears in order to prepare for their re-use, repair or recycling and to share best practices including in relation to the collection of abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gears. No evidence has been provided to show that this work has either been completed or has been taken up by another body. The EU and its Member States would therefore prefer to renew this decision.

Agenda Item 25 Aquatic Species Conservation Issues

Agenda Item 25.1 Fisheries-induced Threats and Direct Take

Agenda Item 25.1.1 Bycatch and Other Fisheries-induced Mortality

The EU has set many measures to protect various sensitive species, including endangered sharks and rays, marine turtles, seabirds and marine mammals such as the Baltic Harbour Porpoise, and to mitigate and reduce their bycatch in fisheries. More generally, several such species are specifically protected, and all marine species must achieve good environmental status, which includes respecting maximum allowable bycatch levels, under the EU environmental and fisheries legislation.

For this reason, the proposal of a comprehensive CMS Resolution on bycatch is welcome, as it allows streamlining previous CMS work based on a clear set of principles which align with EU policy. Yet, the proposed Decision and Resolution give raise to comments and improvements.

Overall, the EU and its Member States welcome the amendments to Resolution 12.22 Bycatch contained in Annex 2 of this document. However, some improvements are necessary to ensure

- management decisions are based on the best available scientific advice,
- that by-catch related measures follow a comprehensive approach, and
- that decisions are taken on a case-by-case basis depending on the fishery and the sea basin.

Furthermore, we stress the need for this resolution to be clearly set within the mandate of CMS, namely protecting migratory species in the context of fisheries operations, recognizing that CMS Parties and Parties to relevant international and regional organisations have a major responsibility to give full effect to this protection.

Regarding the proposed Decision, the EU and its MS underline the fundamental role of regional fisheries management organisations (RFMOs) and their Parties in giving effect to CMS decisions and recommendations. Most, if not all, RFMOs have taken action to ensure the conservation and sustainable management of migratory species, and mitigate, minimise and eliminate where possible the bycatch of sensitive species. This role should be underlined in the proposed Decision, as also noted by the Scientific Council.

In addition, linked to agenda item 25.1.2: Bycatch of Chondrichthyan species, while supporting the streamlining of all decisions on bycatch, valuable work on national legislation to protect these species is still to be performed and should be preserved from the deletion of the related decision under agenda item 25.1.2. This can be done by incorporating these points into the present draft Decision under this agenda item.

We have amendments on both the Resolution and the Decisions that address our concerns and we will provide them to the Secretariat in writing.

The EU and its MS further note the summary contained in Annex 1 of this document and agree to delete Decisions 14.31–14.34.

Agenda Item 25.1.2 Bycatch of Chondrichthyan Species

The EU and its MS take note of the summary on Domestic Legislation contained in the Annex of this document. However, we would like to underline that the report on the EU is only partly reflecting the actual range of EU measures across fisheries and environmental policies that provide a comprehensive approach which among others includes bycatch minimization and ultimately elimination, release of non-target species, prohibition to land non-target species, obligation to report bycatch, and penalties. We stand ready to provide the Secretariat with the related information.

As stated under Agenda item 25.1.1, the EU and its Member States believe that part of Decisions 14.117 and 14.118, remain relevant and should be incorporated in the decisions under agenda item 25.1.1.

Agenda Item 25.1.3 Fish Aggregating Devices

Improving gear selectivity and reducing the impact of fisheries on sensitive species at risk of incidental catch is an EU priority. In this regard, the EU and its MS are a strong supporter of the recommendations contained in Annex 1 of UNEP/CMS/COP15/Doc.25.1.3

Regional fisheries management organisations (RFMOs) are the main bodies to advance on improving FADs use and the EU advocates for a more sustainable use of FADs for the stocks falling under their mandates.

There are elements of the recommendation which are more ambiguous and therefore difficult to implement. They include FAD retrieval in an environmentally sound manner by the fisheries concerned, and deployment, where possible, away from shipping routes or areas where they will be in conflict with other fisheries and migratory routes for CMS-listed species, deployed at times of the year and in locations where their beaching is less likely, according to relevant scientific advice.

Moreover, we can support the addition of the ScC on the latest adopted measure by the GFCM.

With the above in mind, while it is important for the CMS family to set shared principles for the use of FADs, based on the work of the Scientific Council, the EU underscores the importance of interaction with other relevant Institutions, Frameworks and Bodies such as Regional Fisheries Management Organisations. In this regard, the knowledge collected and the work undertaken by relevant fisheries bodies should be used. Moreover, overlap with and duplicating the work of RFMOs and other relevant organisations, such as the IWC and its Bycatch Mitigation Initiative, should be avoided.

Having said that, the EU can support the draft Decisions with the proposed amendments from the Scientific Council, as well as a new point 15 CC in the draft decision directed at the Secretariat to report to COP16 on implementation by obtaining information from the relevant RFMOs. Moreover, we support the deletion of Decisions 14.35-14.37. We will submit our suggestions in writing to the Secretariat.

Agenda Item 25.1.4 Aquatic Wild Meat

The EU and its MS recognise that aquatic wild meat remains a significant and under-addressed threat to migratory marine and freshwater species. We welcome the progress since COP14, including the strengthening of the Aquatic Wild Meat Working Group, the global review of direct take of seabirds, and efforts to advance the Action Plan to Address Aquatic Wild Meat Harvests in West Africa.

We support the key recommendations of the seabird review, including improving scientific knowledge on seabird take, strengthening coordination and information-sharing with relevant international instruments, and exploring co-management approaches with Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

The EU and its MS support the adoption of the draft Decisions under this agenda item, including the establishment of formal Terms of Reference for the Aquatic Wild Meat Working Group and the request to assess the migratory nature of crocodylians and freshwater chelonians.

At the same time, we believe that cooperation with other relevant multilateral fora, including CITES and the IWC, could be strengthened beyond information-sharing, in order to ensure better coordination of ongoing work. We will therefore submit amendments in writing to the Secretariat to reflect this point.

Finally, we support the draft Decisions related to the implementation of the Action Plan to Address Aquatic Wild Meat Harvests in West Africa.

Agenda Item 25.2 Marine Pollution and Other Threats

Agenda Item 25.2.1 Marine Pollution

The EU and its MS welcome the work done in the marine pollution workshop exploring a wide range of issues and opportunities associated with marine pollution. We also welcome the recommendations it developed to guide the work of CMS going forward, and thus also support the establishment of the proposed working group on marine pollution to address the identified issues. The working group seems to have a focus on science, and we therefore suggest that its scope broadens to encompass a wider range of backgrounds, including from policy circles.

Furthermore, in Annex I the ScC is asked to promote the use of standardized methodologies for fieldwork methods and sampling, archiving of samples, and the open-source publishing and sharing of results. In this regard, we note the existing joint ACCOBAMS-ASCOBANS Best practice on cetacean post mortem investigation and tissue sampling and also the guidance produced by different regional seas conventions, such as the guidance on monitoring and assessment of marine litter from OSPAR.

With regards to the use of “biodegradable products”, we would like to stress the need for caution, as these products are often not as biodegradable as intended in natural environments and are in general difficult to be reused or recycled. While biodegradability could be an option for very specific plastic product groups, the overall priority should be on circular economy principles such as reduce, reuse and recycle.

The EU and its MS also see the need for the inclusion of the IWC as a partner in the relevant paragraphs of the Decision, given their ongoing work in alignment with the contents of these Decisions, as well as the inclusion of the IPBES and the IMO. Moreover, we propose that the Secretariat seeks strengthened cooperation also with RFMOs as well as the London Convention and the London Protocol.

Therefore, we propose amendments to the draft Resolution and to draft Decisions 15.AA b) and 15.CC a) and b), which we will submit in writing to the Secretariat, and support the deletion of Decisions 14.41-14.43 and 14.225 b).

Agenda Item 25.2.2 Underwater Noise

The EU and its MS welcome the increased attention to freshwater ecosystems, recognising that existing guidance has primarily focused on marine environments and that current regulatory frameworks and guidelines fail to adequately protect CMS-listed freshwater mammals and their prey. Therefore, we appreciate the work done by the Secretariat and the JNWG and support the development of specific guidance for freshwater habitats.

We support the adoption of the draft Decisions contained in Annex 3, with some remarks.

We however do express our concern regarding the high workload of the JNWG, which remains equally high in the proposed Decisions. In particular, the comprehensive review of sources of underwater noise of concern, envisaged in draft Decision 15.BB(c), appears to constitute a very large task which is also in part happening in other fora. We have concerns about the feasibility of its effective implementation and therefore propose to delete this task.

Similarly, the peer review of the updated Technical Support Information to the CMS Family Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessment for Marine Noise-generating Activities which is requested in Draft Decision 15.BB (e) seems like a cumbersome task and we appreciate the proposal to first review the guidelines of the government of Australia before assessing whether the peer review is necessary.

Linked to this, the EU and its MS note that it remains unclear how the request directed at the Scientific Council in Decision 14.46(b) - ‘to provide advice on the future role of the Convention to ensure timely and effective guidance continues to be given to governments and other stakeholders, making use of and building upon related work in other forums’ - has been followed up. The EU and its MS therefore need clarification how this will be further implemented, in particular as the activity was financed in the meantime.

Finally, we propose additional text to draft Decision 15. AA requesting Parties to provide information related to military-generated noise, in order to help address potential impacts on migratory species and support the application of existing mitigation guidelines. This follows up from a Joint ACCOBAMS - ASCOBANS Workshop which was organized in 2024, in Toulon, with navies on Underwater Noise and Cetaceans. The workshop was very constructive and outlined the importance of leveraging scientific research and international collaboration to protect critical cetacean habitats while balancing naval operational needs.

We will submit our suggestions in writing to the Secretariat.

Agenda Item 25.3 Marine Area-based Conservation Management

Agenda Item 25.3.1 Priorities for Area-based Conservation of Marine Migratory Species

The EU and its MS welcome the development of the Important Marine Turtle Areas framework. We welcome the criteria and process for identifying IMTAs as a globally coherent and science-based framework supporting the identification of key marine turtle habitats and marine spatial planning.

We underline that the identification of IMTAs should involve competent national authorities and relevant stakeholders, including Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and regional and international organisations, through transparent and inclusive processes.

The EU and its MS note that the IMTA framework can support Parties in implementing commitments under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the BBNJ Agreement.

We therefore support the adoption of this draft Resolution.

Regarding the draft Resolution on Priorities for Area-based Conservation of Marine Migratory Species, the EU and its MS recognise the importance of area-based conservation tools such as IMMAs, ISRAs, IMTAs, EBSAs and KBAs as science-based advisory frameworks supporting spatial conservation planning for migratory species.

We support the proposed amendments by the Scientific Council aimed at broadening the scope of the draft Resolution to include EBSAs and KBAs throughout the operative paragraphs, as well as the KBA Partnership, thereby reflecting their complementary role as globally recognised scientific frameworks.

The EU and its MS therefore also support the adoption of this Resolution and the associated draft Decisions with these amendments.

Finally, we support the deletion of Decisions 14.57–14.60 and 14.61–14.64, and we will submit our suggested amendments in writing to the Secretariat.

Agenda Item 25.3.2 Vessel Strikes

The EU and its MS would like to thank the Secretariat for bringing this document forward. We recognize the threat posed by vessel strikes to marine megafauna species listed in the CMS Appendices and welcome the progress reported on the implementation of the relevant Decisions to reduce this risk. Moreover, we appreciate the important and extensive work of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) on this important issue.

We can support the proposals made by the Sessional Committee on paragraphs 15.AA and 15.BB. In addition, we propose the deletion of paragraph (a) i) of draft Decision 15. AA as it appears to constitute duplication of work. The IWC has already undertaken an extensive risk analysis, and therefore the added value for Parties to undertake another one remains unclear.

In addition, the IWC and IMO held a workshop the week of 12 January 2026 on the methodology for identifying species and areas at risk of vessel strikes, which is part of an ongoing process to develop joint guidance for risk assessments for vessel strikes. We believe it would be beneficial for the CMS to align with this process and for the Secretariat to liaise with IWC and IMO on this.

We propose some amendments in draft Decision 15.BB a) and c) to further emphasise this and will submit our amendments in writing to the Secretariat.

Agenda Item 25.3.3 Conserving Seamount Ecosystems

The EU and its Member States commend Monaco and Panama for bringing forward this important initiative and acknowledge the ecological importance of seamount ecosystems for migratory marine species, including many CMS-listed species.

Acknowledging the key role of seamounts in maintaining ecological connectivity across ocean basins, we underscore the need to prioritise their protection both within and beyond their national jurisdiction. In particular, their biological communities are highly vulnerable to disturbance given their low resilience and low recovery times, with destructive fishing practices, particularly bottom trawling, representing a major ongoing pressure.

However, other pressures, including overfishing in areas of aggregation, climate change and pollution, may also affect prey availability and ecosystem functioning. To address these, we suggest broadening the wording in the Draft Resolution operative paragraph 2 and in the draft Decision 15AA a) accordingly.

The EU and its Member States emphasise the importance of coordinated international action, including through relevant global and regional processes. We highlight that with the recent entry into force of the BBNJ Agreement, this Resolution is both timely and useful. We also welcome the recognition of seamount ecosystems as culturally significant for Indigenous People and local communities and support their active engagement alongside other stakeholders.

We support the draft Resolution and Decisions, with the amendments proposed by the Scientific Council, and we will submit our suggestions in writing to the Secretariat.

Agenda Item 25.4 Marine Mammals

Agenda Item 25.4.1 Conservation Priorities for Cetaceans

The EU and its Member States take note of the report on the implementation of COP14 Decisions and the Resolution on Conservation Priorities for Cetaceans, and acknowledge the progress reported across the various thematic areas covered by the document.

Cetaceans play a crucial role in ecosystem functioning but continue to face multiple pressures, including climate change, bycatch, pollution, underwater noise, vessel strikes, habitat degradation and contemporary take. Addressing these threats requires coordinated, science-based action.

The EU and its Member States welcome the collaboration with the International Whaling Commission and CMS daughter agreements, including ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS, and stress the importance of building on existing expertise and avoiding duplication of work.

We support the adoption of the Terms of Reference for the Aquatic Mammals Working Group and the proposed draft Decisions. We also encourage strengthening the role of CMS regarding chemical pollution affecting cetaceans, including through enhanced cooperation with the IWC Scientific Committee.

Finally, EU and its Member States support the deletion of Decisions 14.69–14.75. Some textual amendments will be submitted in writing to the Secretariat.

Agenda Item 25.4.2 Cetacean Action Plans

The EU and its MS acknowledge that cetaceans play a key role in ecosystem functioning, and the varied threats they face across species and regions, which require tailored conservation strategies involving international and local stakeholders.

We recognize the importance of regional and species-specific action plans to support cetacean conservation and contribute to protecting CMS-listed species and their habitats.

We take note of the implementation progress reported and the constraints identified, particularly related to limited resources. Finally, the EU and its MS endorse the Conservation Management Plan for Arabian Sea Humpback Whales, and support the adoption of the draft Decisions and the deletion of Decisions 14.76–14.78, 14.79–14.80 and 14.81–14.86.

Agenda Item 25.5 Marine Turtles

The EU and its MS welcome the document on the implementation of COP14 Decisions related to marine turtles and the Hawksbill Turtle Single Species Action Plan in South-East Asia and the Western Pacific.

We take note of the scientific information and the recommendations presented, including those related to threats to post-hatchling turtles and nesting beach management in the context of climate change.

We welcome the ongoing work under the CMS and IOSEA frameworks and underline the importance of continued monitoring, reporting and effective implementation of the Hawksbill Turtle SSAP.

Finally, we support ongoing efforts on bycatch mitigation and the identification of Important Marine Turtle Areas.

Therefore, the EU and its MS support the adoption of the proposed draft Decisions.

Agenda Item 25.6 Fish

Agenda Item 25.6.1 Freshwater Fish

The EU and its Member States welcome the report on the Global Assessment of Migratory Freshwater Fishes and recognise the importance of the work undertaken. We note the recommendations and the list of species identified as meeting the criteria for potential CMS listing. At the same time, we would like to submit to the Secretariat a number of comments regarding certain fish species listed for the Netherlands and Belgium in the Global Assessment.

We support the adoption of the proposed amendments to Resolution 10.12 and the associated draft Decisions. However, we suggest textual amendments to draft Decision 15 AA, paragraphs b) and c), to underline the importance of applying appropriate measures to minimise impacts on migratory freshwater fish and to emphasise the need to promote the exchange of monitoring and surveillance data, as well as information on ongoing conservation actions, particularly in transboundary river basins.

Our proposed amendments will be submitted in writing to the Secretariat.

Agenda Item 25.6.2 European Eel

The EU and its MS support the proposed draft decision and the proposed draft Single Species Action Plan. The EU and its MS would like to express gratitude to all parties, experts and stakeholders who have developed the draft SSAP over many years.

We have put in place a comprehensive action plan to protect and restore the European eel which covers a range of policy areas (fisheries, environment, infrastructure, trade etc.). For such migratory species, the cooperation of all Range States is essential. We therefore fully support the draft action plan for the European Eel under CMS.

We underline, nevertheless, that a similar comprehensive action is necessary for other migratory freshwater fish because there is growing evidence of the potential negative consequences of altered flow regimes on fluvial ecosystems and the fisheries they support, including marine fisheries. The EU water policy already includes such approach. Overall, there is still insufficient awareness of stakeholders and public authorities on migratory freshwater species, and we also emphasize the importance of this point of the Action Plan.

Overall, the SSAP has now been thoroughly developed and is ready for adoption. The EU handles the protection and restoration of the European eel within the existing EU eel regulation, which has the same aim of protecting the European eel as the SSAP. The plan will be implemented in line with the EU regulation. We therefore support the adoption of the draft Resolution and Decisions, as well as the deletion of Decisions 14.106-14.109.

We do have amendment proposals in line with the Scientific Council comments.

Agenda Item 25.6.3 Sharks and Rays

The EU appreciates the work undertaken by the CMS Secretariat under the SSAP for Angelsharks in the Mediterranean.

With regards to the Governance Structure to Support the Implementation of the SSAP Angelshark in the Mediterranean, the EU has no comments and no objection. The EU also takes note of the summary and recommendations of the implementation analysis of the SSAP.

With regard to the draft decision, the EU wishes to highlight that the invitation to implement recommendations should be aligned with and in consideration of the work of regional cooperation frameworks. In addition, while we appreciate the work undertaken in providing such recommendations, the latter should be made and reviewed in line with the most recently developed frameworks. This is the case of relevant GFCM recommendations on the subject of elasmobranchs.

The EU and its Member States support adoption of the draft decisions with the amendments proposed by the ScC and propose the addition of a new decision 15 AA b) bis.

We will submit all the amendments in writing to the Secretariat.

Agenda Item 25.6.4 Single Species Action Plan for the Northeast Atlantic and Mediterranean Sub-Population of the Tope Shark (*Galeorhinus galeus*)

Thank you for this opportunity to present this SSAP for the tope shark. At CMS COP14 an In-Depth Review of the Conservation Status of Individual CMS-listed species (UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.21.3) was presented. This review included the tope shark and concluded that this species had an elevated extinction risk and would benefit from continued international cooperation under its Appendix II listing and through the CMS Sharks MoU.

On behalf of the EU and its MS and consequently the EU CMS Working group, the government of the Netherlands led the development of the SSAP for tope shark and contracted the Dutch Elasmobranch Society to coordinate the drafting process and write the report.

The SSAP was developed through expert input, literature review, several consultations with Range States and consideration of existing conservation frameworks. It includes a threat and barrier analysis, as well as measurable recovery criteria to guide implementation.

The document presents the draft Single Species Action Plan for the Northeast Atlantic and Mediterranean Sub-Population of the Tope Shark (*Galeorhinus galeus*) and contains a proposed Resolution and Decisions for the adoption of the SSAP.

In order to implement the plan, the EU and its MS invite consulted Range States to further provide their expertise and, if possible, funding for implementing the plan going forward. The EU and its MS also encourage non-Party Range States to join this process on the implementation of activities outlined in the SSAP Tope shark NEA/Med.

We underline the need for comprehensive international conservation action to improve the conservation status of the species; CMS plays an important role in conserving the species and its habitats by promoting coordinated conservation efforts among Range States. We look forward to cooperating further on the implementation of the SSAP Tope Shark NEA/MED.

Agenda Item 25.6.5 Multi-species Action Plan for Amazonian Migratory Catfish

The EU and its MS recognize the exceptional ecological, cultural and economic importance of migratory catfish in the Amazonian Basin, including the Gilded Catfish and the Laulao Catfish. Therefore, we commend the significant work of the Government of Brazil in addressing their population decline, linked to barriers to migration, overexploitation, habitat degradation, mercury and other pollutants.

Similarly, we take note of the participatory and collaborative process that led to the development of the Multi-species Action Plan for Amazonian Migratory Catfish (2026–2036), highlighting that Colombia and Venezuela, non-Parties to the CMS, are also collaborating with the other Range States on the conservation and sustainable management of Amazonian migratory catfish.

We hope that during the 2026-2036 period the actions proposed in the Multi-species Action Plan can meet the conservation challenges that the Amazonian migratory catfish face and therefore we support the draft Resolution as well as the draft decisions.

Agenda Item 26 Avian Species Conservation Issues

Agenda Item 26.1 Prevention of Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds

The EU and its MS welcome the document presented by the Secretariat on the illegal killing of birds (IKB) and acknowledge the work done during the intersessional period by the MIKT and ITTEA. Their work should be strengthened to ensure continuation of the efforts for the eradication of IKB.

We would like to express our broad support for the implementation of the Rome Strategic Plan 2020-2030: Eradicating Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade in Wild Birds in Europe and the Mediterranean Region and the Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean Workplan, especially through the provision of information to the Scoreboard and by increasing the cooperation with other countries in sharing data and best practices.

Finally, the EU and its MS agree with the amendments to the Resolution and with the Draft Decisions proposed by the Secretariat including some of the suggestions proposed by the Scientific Council.

We will provide our comments to the Secretariat in writing.

Agenda Item 26.2 Preventing Poisoning of Migratory Birds

The EU and its MS question the deletion of the Preventing Poisoning Working Group but believe that its mandate should be narrowed by focusing on the most important poisons in the coming years, to overcome the difficulties faced by the Working Group up to now. As such we support the recommendations of the ScC for not deleting the references to PPWG from the Resolution.

Given the impact of anticoagulant rodenticides on migratory birds of prey, the EU and its MS would like to raise this issue in the Resolution in order to ensure sustainable pest control practices that prevent intoxication and poisoning of wildlife.

Furthermore, we believe it is important to address damage and conflicts between humans and migratory species, including through measures to compensate for losses and targeted awareness campaigns in association with stakeholders.

We will provide our comments to the Secretariat in writing.

Agenda Item 26.3 Flyways

Agenda Item 26.3.1 Flyways

The EU and its MS appreciate the background document from the Secretariat and can accept the suggested approach.

The EU and its MS note that the amended Resolution does not propose the adoption of a new Programme of Work following the conclusion of the previous one, but rather clarifies roles, coordination and priorities, and these amendments are supported.

The EU and its MS also support the adoption of the Draft Decisions, with the addition of a mandate for the Secretariat to support the establishment of the Central Asian Flyway initiative in Decisions 15GG.

We will submit our amendments to the Secretariat in writing.

Agenda Item 26.3.2 Seabirds and Marine Flyways

The European Union and its Member States welcome the entry into force of the Agreement on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ), a significant milestone in ocean conservation and sustainable use of Oceans. This landmark agreement provides a framework for the common governance of about half of our planet's surface and 95% of the ocean's volume, representing the largest habitat on our planet. As co-chair of the High Ambition Coalition on BBNJ, bringing together 46 countries, the EU remains strongly committed at the highest political level. The EU has also pledged support for the Treaty's implementation—particularly in developing countries—through the EU Global Ocean Programme.

Regarding the Draft Resolution, the EU and its MS would like to note that the development of offshore energy facilities and related infrastructure can affect migratory species, and the assessment of appropriate design is an essential part of the permitting process and must be conducted on a case-by-case basis. Therefore, the addition "inappropriately designed and/or sited" when referring to offshore energy infrastructure must be clarified before it can be accepted.

We also have some minor amendments on the Draft Resolution that we will provide in writing and support the adoption of the Draft Decisions.

Agenda Item 26.4 Action Plans for Birds

Agenda Item 26.4.1 Action Plans for Birds

The EU and its MS acknowledge the significant and efficient progress made by all members of the CMS family in proposing, preparing, adopting and developing International Single Species Action Plans. This is one of the most relevant activity lines that has enabled the increase of global coordinated efforts for improving the conservation status of several threatened migratory birds.

Therefore, we encourage the continuation of the action plans already adopted for species, such as the White-headed Duck, the European Roller, the Asian Population of the Great Bustard and the Cinereous Vulture. The initiative for the European Turtle Dove has resulted in the start of the recovery of the species, at least on the western Flyway. Additionally, we welcome the launching of the new action plan for the Steppe Eagle and the Multi-species Action Plan for Bustards.

We agree with the text suggested in the draft amended Resolution 12.12, including the additions suggested by the Scientific Council and would like to provide some amendments. We also support the new Draft Decisions presented, however, we do not accept the amendments suggested by the Scientific Council and would like to provide some amendments.

We will provide our amendments to the Secretariat in writing.

Agenda Item 26.4.2 Multi-species Action Plan to conserve African, Eurasian and Australian Bustards (2026-2037)

The EU and its 27 MSs welcome the adoption of the Bustard Multi-species Action Plan and thank the “Bustards Without Borders” group for its development.

Bustards are among the most threatened, yet often overlooked group of birds worldwide. Their conservation presents exceptional challenges, as it requires addressing a combination of wide-ranging pressures, including large-scale habitat loss and degradation, agricultural intensification, collisions, illegal and unsustainable take, and the impacts of climate change. The Bustard MsAP represents a global milestone, providing the first coordinated, action-oriented framework covering all 26 bustard species across their global range. It offers a strategic blueprint at the transboundary flyway level, upon which national action plans and regional work programmes can be built.

It contributes to the implementation of the Samarkand Strategic Plan for Migratory Species as well as the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, particularly targets related to halting species extinctions, habitat conservation, and sustainable land use.

We recognize that the conservation of bustard species and their habitats is a complex task that can only succeed through long-term commitment and close collaboration among all relevant stakeholders, across sectors and across borders. We encourage all Party and non-Party Range States to implement the MsAP in order to halt further population declines and the degradation of habitats.

The EU and its 27 MSs are ready to contribute to global efforts under the framework of the Bustard MsAP and to share knowledge and best practices behind our achievements for the benefit of bustard species worldwide.

Agenda Item 26.4.3 Global Action Plan for the Conservation of the Steppe Eagle (*Aquila nipalensis*)

The EU and its MS acknowledge the work by the Secretariat and the experts in developing this Action Plan and support its adoption. It is time now to promote the implementation of the Action Plan and take action for the protection of this species.

For this purpose, engagement of the Range States for international cooperation is crucial for the next intersessional period.

The EU and its MS hope that during the next intersessional period a great number of the actions and objectives proposed in the Action Plan will be implemented for the benefit of this magnificent and vulnerable bird species.

Agenda Item 26.5 Action Plan for Migratory Landbirds in the African-Eurasian Region

The European Union (EU) and its Member States recall Resolution 11.17 and welcome the continued implementation of the African-Eurasian Migratory Landbirds Action Plan. We recognize the compelling scientific evidence of widespread and ongoing declines in African-Eurasian migratory landbird populations and acknowledge their importance as indicators of environmental health, sustainable land use and ecosystem resilience.

The EU and its Member States support the updated Programme of Work for 2026–2032 and the continuation of the African-Eurasian Migratory Landbirds Working Group until COP16. We also welcome the strengthened cooperation with relevant CMS instruments and international frameworks, including AEWA, the Raptors MOU, the UNCCD, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the Samarkand Strategic Plan for Migratory Species.

The EU and its MS support the adoption of the draft Resolution and Decisions, including the Scientific Council amendments, noting the importance of adequate resourcing and partnerships to ensure effective implementation of the Action Plan.

Agenda Item 26.6 Conservation of African-Eurasian Vultures

The EU and its MS welcome the progress achieved in implementing the Decisions of COP14 and the active engagement from several countries in applying the Vulture Multi-species Action Plan's measures. At the same time, we recognize the challenges specific regions face in implementing the Action Plan.

We acknowledge the efforts and progress made towards improving the status of vulture species, one of the most threatened groups of migratory species. The abundance and range of certain species of vultures in Europe have been growing steadily since the 1960s. This success is largely due to their legal protection under the Habitats and Birds Directives, as well as to long-standing reintroduction programs in several regions of the continent, such as the Alps and Pyrenees, and more recently in the Balkans.

We are optimistic after seeing the involvement and results of the different actions taken by different Parties and other organizations, but we all need to increase the intensity and range/coverage of conservation actions in all regions, to eliminate crucial threats like intentional and unintentional poisoning, belief-based use and trade or habitat loss.

The EU and its MS support the adoption of the Decisions and support engagement with related task forces, such as the Energy Task Force and regional task forces addressing illegal killing and trading of birds. We would like to call for international cooperation for strengthening the capacity and the operational activities specifically in the African region to reverse the dramatic population trends of most vulture species.

Agenda Item 26.7 Saker Falcon Global Action Plan

The EU and its MS acknowledge the significant progress made by all the CMS family in proposing, preparing, adopting and developing the Saker Falcon Global Action Plan. This is one of the most relevant activity lines that has enabled the increase of global coordinated efforts for improving the conservation status of the Saker Falcon. Therefore, we would like to support the continuation of the work of the Saker GAP and the launch of new proposals for the species' needs that require special attention.

We want to acknowledge the work made by the Saker Falcon Task Force and all the CMS family involved in the Saker GAP, as well as the work made and the support given by the International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey and the Mohamed bin Zayed Raptor Conservation Fund. Moreover, we encourage these organisations, and other stakeholders to keep on helping and working in favour of the implementation of this important Action Plan.

The EU and its MS do not support the proposed amendment of the draft Resolution 11.13, as the Adaptive Management and Monitoring Framework is not expected to be applied to other populations than the Mongolian for the foreseeable future. We consider that any further effort should focus on protecting the Saker Falcon across its entire range rather than just on the management of one single population.

We also propose to limit the request to the Secretariat in Decision 15BB to promoting the implementation of the SakerGAP without promoting the AMF.

At the same time, we encourage Parties to continue support, also with technical and financial resources, to ensure the effective delivery of the Saker GAP, to target key areas to reduce the impacts of taking and electrocution on the species.

We will provide our amendments in writing.

Agenda Item 26.8 Internationally important Raptor Areas

The EU and its MS actively participate in and strongly support the Raptors MOU, viewing it as crucial for protecting raptors along flyways through coordinated action, funding, and integrating its goals with wider EU biodiversity policies to achieve favourable conservation status for these species.

We support the proposal to establish IIRAs as areas internationally important for migratory birds of prey, as these can be instrumental in prioritizing areas for conservation that are most critical for the survival of these birds.

The EU and its MS support the adoption of the Draft Resolution including the Scientific Council comments, which aim to ensure a global remit for the IIRA's. We also support the adoption of Decisions 15AA, 15BB and 15CC as they have been amended by the Scientific Council.

Regarding Decision 15DD, we support its adoption as it has been amended by the ScC with a minor amendment. However, we do not agree with the addition by the ScC of the phrase "subject to the availability of resources" in the chapeau. We believe that the actions to be implemented by the Secretariat already fall within its mandate and should not be subject to the availability of resources.

Agenda Item 27 Terrestrial Species Conservation Issues

Agenda Item 27.1 Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative

The EU and its MS would like to thank the Secretariat for the preparation of the document. We are aware of the great challenges that the conservation of big carnivores brings, such as human- wildlife conflict, illegal killing and habitat fragmentation.

We therefore congratulate the Range States on their efforts to implement the African Carnivore Initiative (ACI) and the POW, as well as on their cooperation to tackle these challenges. The existing cooperation with non-Party Range States is highly welcomed, and the ACI Ranges States are encouraged to strengthen it further.

We would also like to thank the stakeholders for their engagement contributing to the success of the ACI and we are also pleased with the progress made so far in many areas, such as the implementation of SECAP and the completion of Red List Assessments for all four species. Particularly, we would like to thank the IUCN and its IUCN Cat Specialist Group for its scientific and technical support. The submission of the proposal regarding the inclusion of the Cheetah populations in Zimbabwe in Appendix I of CMS is also appreciated.

Finally, the EU and its MS support the adoption of the draft Decisions with some specific amendments which we will provide to the Secretariat in writing, as well as the deletion of Decisions 14.161–14.166.

Agenda Item 27.2 Sahelo Saharan Megafauna

The EU and its MS would like to thank the Secretariat for the preparation of the report on the progress to implement Resolution 9.21 (Rev.COP14) Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna Initiative. We believe that it is important to take all necessary measures and actions for the conservation of the described nine species in the report. However, in order for the Initiative to be successful, fundraising, time delays and potential organizational issues should be addressed and we would encourage the range states to discuss these issues.

To address this, we propose to expand the mandate for the Parties and the Secretariat, and, if the range states consider it appropriate we would suggest that the Secretariat prepare a report on the reasons for the delays, in order to learn from the experience and share lessons learned for future planning and initiatives under CMS.

The EU and its MS strongly support the adoption of the draft Decision with the suggested amendments, as well as the deletion of Decisions 14.171 and 14.172.

Agenda Item 27.3 Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI)

The EU and its MS would like to thank the Secretariat for the preparation of this comprehensive document and for the overview of progress made.

We congratulate all Range States to Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI), the Secretariat and all involved stakeholders on this fruitful intersessional period. We would like to highlight the new CAMI Work Programme 2026-2032: The identification of the Priority Transboundary Conservation Regions (PTCR) and the incorporation of new funding mechanisms represent important and timely milestones to CAMI.

As the number of species covered by CAMI increases, strategic planning that benefit multiple species is necessary with a clear need for coordinated efforts and sourcing funds in order to be able to carry out the new Work Programme.

We hope that during the next six years the CAMI Range States and the CMS Secretariat will successfully implement the actions outlined for the protection of all the species involved in the Initiative.

We also want to acknowledge the financial, technical, logistical and political support by many involved stakeholders and the close collaboration with the Caucasus Nature Fund, the International Nature Academy (INA) of the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) and national and international NGOs.

The EU and its MS support the continuation of the Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI) with the new work programme and the changes suggested in the Resolution.

Agenda Item 27.4 Jaguar

The EU and its MS thank the Secretariat for having supported the Range States in the intersessional period. We support the Regional Action Plan for Jaguar Conservation contained in Annex 1 of this document, the draft amendments to Resolution 14.14 contained in Annex 2 of this document and the Decisions contained in Annex 3 of the document.

As it is important to have sustainable governance and funding, the EU and its MS would appreciate if the UNEP Regional Office for Latin America and Caribbean UNEP could confirm whether sustainable future funding for hosting this initiative will be assured.

Current species range, compared to its historical range, is severely fragmented and continues to decline and we believe that the new Action Plan with its six objectives will provide the necessary cooperation format to launch conservation measures and we would like to underline the importance of an intergovernmental platform as a regional support mechanism for its implementation.

The EU and its MS support strengthening synergies between CMS and CITES and in this regard welcome the efforts of the Secretariat to work closely with the CITES Secretariat for this and other species. We look forward to a revised Joint Work Programme that is ambitious in terms of deepening practical cooperation and fully exploiting synergies between both Conventions, with a view to maximizing complementarity and impact. We hope that the new Joint Work Programme will be well-received and, if needed, guided by the CMS and CITES Standing Committees, providing strong support for its implementation.

We have some textual proposals to reflect these comments in the amended Resolution and draft decisions and will provide them to the Secretariat.

Agenda Item 28 Crosscutting Conservation Issues

Agenda Item 28.1 Illegal and Unsustainable Taking of Migratory Species

The EU and its Member States strongly support CMS efforts to address illegal and unsustainable taking of migratory species, recognizing it as a major threat to biodiversity and to the ecological and socio-economic benefits provided by these species.

We acknowledge the Secretariat's work in reviewing CMS-wide activities, the Scientific Council's scoping analysis, and the proposed CMS Global Initiative on Illegal and Unsustainable Taking of Migratory Species also as important steps towards achieving Target 5 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF), ensuring that the use, harvesting, and trade of wild species is legal, sustainable, and safe.

The EU and its MS support the amended Resolution 11.31 (Rev.COP14) and the draft Decisions. We have some minor changes which will be submitted to the secretariat.

We do not support the proposal by the ScC regarding the inclusion of multiple systems of knowledge in operational paragraph 4 as this may imply equating multiple systems of knowledge with science. We are of the opinion that they are not the same and should be more clearly separated, although we agree that both elements can be important for monitoring and management plans. We therefore suggest some language in paragraph 4 to reflect this.

Furthermore, the EU and its Members States stress the importance of keeping the footnote in the draft decisions regarding the fact that the terms 'illegal and unsustainable taking' in this document, refer to taking that may be illegal, unsustainable, or both.

Finally, we support the deletion of Decisions 14.182–14.185.

Agenda Item 28.2 Ecological Connectivity

The EU and its MS strongly support the proposed amendments to Resolution 14.16 and the adoption of the draft Decisions 15.AA and 15.BB, as they align with EU priorities under the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, the EU Nature Restoration Law, and commitments to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. We also support deleting outdated Decisions 14.194–14.196 to streamline CMS processes.

The EU and its MS welcome the emphasis on transboundary cooperation, data sharing, and integration with MEAs like CBD, Ramsar, and UNCCD. Furthermore, we endorse the Global Partnership on Ecological Connectivity (GPEC) as a vital platform for collective action and urge continued resource mobilization to address implementation gaps, such as research on climate impacts and data capabilities.

We believe more efforts are needed regarding data gaps revealed by the Ecological Connectivity and Infrastructure Survey, advising on priority taxonomic groups and regions, and providing scientific direction on assessing links between connectivity, ecosystem integrity, and climate resilience.

Additionally, we propose to emphasize the importance of aquatic connectivity for marine species, next to the already mentioned freshwater species, and to add this to the respective, for adoption proposed paragraph 15 of the Resolution 14.16.

We will submit minor amendments to the Secretariat to reflect our suggestions

Agenda Item 28.3 Transfrontier Conservation Areas

The EU and its MS strongly support the advancement of Transfrontier Conservation Areas and welcome progress on the UNEP-WCMC transboundary tool and the Cross Regional Wildlife Conservation project. However, we note the low engagement in tool testing and urge broader application, potentially extending beyond Africa to regions like Europe and Central Asia for comprehensive migratory species protection.

We endorse the outlined approach to evaluate the need for the tool, and if this need is verified, we also support to discuss and integrate additional data and to improve its overall usability, to maximize the practical use and impact of the tool. We encourage broader engagement in tool testing and uptake.

The EU and its MS support adopting the draft Decisions 15.AA and 15.BB, as well as deleting the COP14 decisions 14.197–14.199.

Agenda Item 28.4 Communities and Livelihoods

The EU and its MS agree to adopt the draft decision presented in the Annex, with an additional point directed to the Scientific Council, and delete decision 14.200. We believe that the Scientific Council should not be mandated, or, in this case, mandate itself with strategic and broad topics, especially given its limited resources.

Nevertheless, we are open to discuss with other Parties whether it is necessary to establish a dedicated working group under the Scientific Council to deal with scientific aspects of the issue. If other Parties wish to see such a working group established, the decision proposed by the Scientific Council must be amended to be more specific.

The proposed amendment therefore refers to ‘scientific’ issues to specify the topic and to make the mandate feasible for the ScC. Also, the focus should be specifically on ‘conflicts’ and ‘coexistence’, rather than on ‘interactions’ in general

We will provide this to the secretariat in writing.

Agenda Item 28.5 Wildlife Health

The EU and its MS support the draft amendments to Resolution 12.6 (Rev.COP14) contained in Annex 1 of this document and also support the adoption of the draft Decisions contained in Annex 2 of this document including the amendment from the Scientific Council.

Furthermore, we propose one addition with regard to Decision 15.AA, to recommend the collaboration of working groups to collate and report information on how to monitor, prevent and mitigate mass mortality events of populations of migrating species.

We, finally, support the deletion of Decisions 14.218–14.220.

Agenda Item 28.6 Pastoralism

The EU and its MS thank the Secretariat and the Intersessional Working Group of the Scientific Council on Pastoralism and CMS-listed Species for their work and the preparation of the document and the summary included of statements. The EU and its MS agree to adopt the draft decision provided that the suggested change by the Scientific Council is included.

The EU and its MS also recommend to seek potential synergies between CMS and UNCCD, for instance, through the UNCCD Committee on Science and Technology, so that the land-use issue is properly taken into account and given visibility.

Finally, EU and its MS agree to delete Decisions 14.179–14.181.

Agenda Item 28.7 Light Pollution

The EU and its MS congratulate the Scientific Council and the stakeholders involved on their work done to ensure the implementation of Decisions 14.221 and 14.222 and thank the experts for the contributions on light pollution during the Expert Consultation Meeting. We also welcome the work of the Secretariat in disseminating and updating the CMS Light Pollution Guidelines, through a thorough consultation process within the Sessional Committee. All this work enabled the production of a more complete version of the International Light Pollution Guidelines for Migratory Species.

The EU and its MS take note of the report of the expert consultation meeting and support the deletion of Decisions 14.221 and 14.222. Additionally, the EU and its MS support the suggestion made by the Scientific Council to continue its work on light pollution by mandating it with a respective operational paragraph 10 in Resolution 13.5 (Rev. COP14).

We have several amendments that we will submit in writing.

Agenda Item 28.8 Insect Decline

The EU and its MS support the draft amendments to Resolution 13.6, including the changes proposed by the Scientific Council, with some amendments, which will be submitted in writing. We also support the deletion of Decisions 14.216 and 14.217.

We recognize that the ongoing insect decline is most likely to affect landbird and bat CMS-listed species. Migratory freshwater CMS-listed species might also be severely affected by the lack of insect biomass. We also acknowledge that some CMS tools and measures are likely already in part mitigating the drivers of insect declines and or its impact.

We also recognize that there are gaps in the understanding of the effects of insects on the functioning of ecosystems and their role in the provision of ecosystem services, as well as on the impact of insect decline on the life and migration cycle of migratory species and the cascading effects on food webs and connectivity for migratory species. Therefore, there is a need to promote scientific research on these areas. For that reason, we suggest to retain the reference to the Rio Principle 15 in the preambular part.

Agenda Item 28.9 Cumulative Effects Assessments

The EU and its MS take note of the summary and recommendations of the report Cumulative Effects Assessment and Migratory Species, support the proposed amendments to Resolution 7.2 (Rev.COP14) and also support the adoption of relevant draft Decisions.

The EU and its MS welcome the document 30.3.1 and the proposed amendments to resolution 7.2. and support the amended text proposed by the Scientific Council and the Secretariat.

The EU and its MS also welcome and support the draft decisions laid down in this document and encourage Parties to observe and fulfil the requests made in this chapter, including those related to the Impact Assessment and Migratory Species.

The EU and its MS request Parties to take into account ecological connectivity and ecological restoration when planning new linear infrastructure and encourage Parties to ensure involvement of relevant businesses and public authorities, in order to embed biodiversity conservation into the public and private decision-making.

However, the EU and its MS suggest that we should await the outcome of the Scientific Council's work on developing a CMS definition of Cumulative Effects Assessment (CEA) before assessing its effectiveness. This will ensure a common understanding of CEA and enable effective implementation. We support the Scientific Council's efforts and look forward to contributing to the next steps.

We will submit our textual suggestions in writing to the Secretariat.

Agenda Item 28.10 Infrastructure

Firstly, the EU and its MS would like to express our sincere appreciation to the Secretariat and the Scientific Council for their outstanding work in advancing the consideration of infrastructure and its impacts on migratory species under CMS. We particularly commend the clear and thoughtful linkage to cumulative effects assessment, which significantly strengthens the overall approach and adds substantial value.

At the same time, we see some need to refine the resolution text and the draft decisions in the following manner.

The EU and its MS see clear value in a careful, science-based exploration of the potential inclusion of Social Impact Assessments (SIA) related to animal culture within Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) and Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA). However, we propose to await the results of the work foreseen under Draft Decision 15.CC (b), Agenda Item 28.9 Cumulative Effects Assessments, where the Scientific Council and the Expert Working Group on Animal Culture and Social Complexity are tasked with determining whether there is potential for including SIA for animal culture in EIA and SEA.

In light of this ongoing work, the inclusion of SIA in Resolution 7.2 (Rev.COP14) on Impact Assessment and Migratory Species, Agenda Item 28.10 Infrastructure, is also premature. Until the Scientific Council and the Working Group have concluded their assessment, we suggest deleting any references to SIA from the Resolution 7.2.

We also propose deleting references to SIA for human societies, as this exceeds the scope of CMS. However, we are happy to reconsider the inclusion of SIA in EIA and SEA once the Scientific Council's findings are available, possibly at COP16.

We would like to commend the Working Group for its substantial efforts to advance the definition of the term "critical habitat", even though this work could not be concluded in the last intersessional period. The EU and its MS see clear merits in having a common understanding of "critical habitat" under CMS and look forward to this ongoing work.

In this regard, we would like to emphasise that the focus should be on developing criteria for considering critical habitat in infrastructure projects, plans and programmes, rather than seeking an exhaustive and all-encompassing definition. For this, it is essential to include additional criteria beyond population aggregation thresholds, as well as precautionary triggers in the absence of adequate data.

The EU and its MS would like to better understand the underlying rationale of the Working Group for operational paragraph 2bis. We would therefore kindly request clarification regarding the subject of the surveys referred to, or alternatively ask for a linkage of this operational paragraph to a specific mandate for the Parties.

In the absence of such clarification, the EU and its MS would prefer the deletion of paragraph 2bis, as it could potentially impose a significant workload on all Parties, as well as make it difficult to undertake the surveys without orderly adoption by the COP and without sufficient time to plan, budget, and allocate the necessary workforce.

We propose to move operational paragraph 6bis in the draft resolution to become 5ter in order to enhance continuity, as both operational paragraphs, 5bis and 6bis, deal with monitoring and should therefore be kept together.

We will provide our textual suggestions to the Secretariat in writing.

Agenda Item 28.11 Renewable Energy

The EU and its MS recognize the work undertaken by the Secretariat and the Energy Task Force and in general support adoption of the draft amendments to Resolution 11.27 (Rev.COP13), including amendments presented by the Scientific Council.

However, we do have some amendments to the Resolution which we will submit to the Secretariat in writing.

The EU and its MS believe that the Resolution should not be limited to IMMAs and that other important areas, such as ISRAs, IMTAs, EBSAs, KBAs and PSSAs should be also considered.

Furthermore, we note that renewable energy developments can potentially entail risks for migratory species, even where projects are planned and conducted in the best way possible. The EU and its Member States therefore do not support the inclusion of the reference “nature-safe design” in operative paragraph 2 of the Resolution.

The EU and its MS support the adoption of the draft Decisions contained in Annex 2 of this document, as well as the deletion of Decisions 14.207–14.210.

Agenda Item 28.12 Climate Change

The EU and its MS support the adoption of the draft amendments to Resolution 12.21 (Rev.COP14) contained in Annex 1 of this document. We also support the draft Decisions 15.AA to 15.DD with two amendments, which we will submit. Specifically, with regard to 15.CC, we recommend the collaboration of working groups to collate and report information on how to monitor, prevent and mitigate mass mortality events of populations of migrating species. In addition, with regard to 15.DD, a simplified para inspired from Decisions 14.211–14.215 could be reiterated on the engagement and cooperation with other MEAs. We also agree to delete Decisions 14.211-14.215.

The EU and its MS take note of the Expert Workshop and Working Group findings, which underscore the need for horizon scanning, overcoming barriers, and aligning with the KMGBF. The EU and its MS highlight the recommendations for national focal point coordination and reviewing CMS internal coherence on climate issues.

Agenda Item 28.13 Conservation Implications of Animal Culture and Social Complexity

The EU and its MS appreciate the work of the Scientific Council, the Expert Working Group, and the Secretariat in addressing Decisions 14.227 and 14.230.

We endorse the Terms of Reference for the Expert Working Group on Animal Culture and Social Learning contained in Annex 1 of this document.

We also adopt the draft Resolution as well as the draft Decisions and agree to delete Decisions 14.227–14.230.

Agenda Item 28.14 Multiple Systems of Knowledge

The EU and its MS acknowledge the importance of valuing and incorporating multiple systems of knowledge and understanding and appreciate the work of the Scientific Council and the Working Group in accordance with Decision 14.9.

The EU and its MS noted the report contained in Annex 2 of this document and believe that it would serve as a very crucial reference base and guidance for further work in an analogous direction in the future

The EU and its MS support adoption of the draft Decisions presented in Annex 1 of the document with small clarifying amendments and provided that the edits of the Scientific Council are endorsed. The EU and its MS also agree with the deletion of Decision 14.9.

Finally, we would like to ask the Secretariat to ensure consistent use of language throughout the CMS decisions and resolutions when mentioning Indigenous and local knowledge.

We will provide our amendments in writing.

Agenda Item 29 CMS Appendices

Agenda Item 29.1 Treatment of Species included within Aggregated Families listed in Appendix II

The EU and its MS support the draft amendments to Resolution 14.19 contained in Annex 1 of this document and adopt the draft Decision as contained in Annex 2 of this document.

We also agree to delete Decisions 14.232-14.234.

Agenda Item 29.2 Maintaining Lists of Species included in CMS Appendices

The EU and its MS welcome the proposed mechanism by the Working Group for updating species names.

The EU and its MS support the adoption of the draft Decisions and consider the Report of the WG on maintaining lists of species included in CMS Appendices, take note of the Preliminary findings of the review of the taxonomy, nomenclature and Range State information and of the Assessment of migratory movements of birds for the purpose of disaggregating families under Appendix II of the CMS. The EU and its MS also support the deletion of Decision 14.30.

Agenda Item 29.3 Taxonomy and Nomenclature Updates

The EU and its MS acknowledge the work by the Secretariat and the experts on the proposal for updating the Taxonomy and Nomenclature and support its adoption, considering also the general comments made by the Scientific Council.

We acknowledge that the proposal will facilitate and contribute positively to ‘AI 18 - Collaborate with other entities’ and ‘AI 29.5 Towards Harmonization of Taxonomy and Nomenclature’.

We believe that this process of updating should be established on a regular basis so to have as practicable as possible an up-to-date Taxonomy and Nomenclature list for the Convention.

The EU and its MS adopt the draft Decision 15.AA contained in Annex 2 of this document. Furthermore, we adopt the changes to taxonomy and nomenclature of species listed in Appendix I and II as contained in Annex 3 of this document.

Agenda Item 29.4 Species that meet the Criteria for Listing on CMS Appendices

The EU and its MS support the amendments to Resolution 14.20 contained in Annex 1 with specific amendments as indicated by the Scientific Council.

We welcome the updated avian list as well as the new bat list in Resolution 14.20, the prioritization approach, and progress on other taxa, as these facilitate targeted Concerted Actions and international cooperation.

We support extending this methodology to mammals, marine fish, and invertebrates to achieve comprehensive coverage under the Samarkand Strategic Plan by 2029.

The EU and its MS adopt the draft Decision as contained in Annex 2 of this document, and support the deletion of Decisions 14.235 and 14.236.

Agenda Item 29.5 Towards Harmonization of Taxonomy and Nomenclature

The EU and its MS appreciate the effort made by the Secretariat and the Scientific Council for the preparation of the document. We acknowledge the importance of harmonization of taxonomy and nomenclature and we believe that confusion over taxonomy issues must be addressed for the better conservation of species.

In this regard, we welcome the liaison between CMS COP-appointed Councillor for Birds with taxonomists, including advisers to CITES, to develop institutional mechanisms that will provide high-quality advice on taxonomy and nomenclature to CMS, CITES and other multilateral environmental agreements, as well as the liaison with the nomenclature specialists of the Plants and Animals Committees of CITES.

The EU and its MS support the draft Decision and the deletion of Decision 14.231.

Agenda Item 30 Amendment of Appendices I and II of the Convention

Agenda Item 30.1 Guidelines for preparing and assessing Proposals for the Amendment of CMS Appendices

The EU and its MS agree to adopt the draft amendments to Resolution 13.7 as contained in Annex 1, except for additions related to multiple systems of knowledge in two places, namely operational paragraph of Resolution 13.7, 6bis and point 4.5) in Annex 2.

We agree that Multiple Knowledge Systems, including Indigenous and local knowledge can provide insights on migratory species and management approaches when conservation actions are planned and implemented. We support their application in those instances, in particular for the implementation of the Concerted Actions.

However, we do not support incorporating this concept in Resolution 13.7. and the guidelines. As already stated in the Resolution the best scientific evidence available should be used in preparing and assessing listing proposals.

Finally, the EU and its MS would kindly ask the Secretariat to ensue consistent use of the terms “indigenous and local knowledge”.

30.2 Proposals to COP15 for Amendment of Appendices I and II of the Convention

Agenda Item 30.2.1 Proposal for the inclusion of the Populations of Cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus*) of Zimbabwe, Botswana and Namibia on Appendix I and II of the Convention

The EU and its 27 Member-States thank Zimbabwe for the proposal to include the populations of Cheetah of Zimbabwe in Appendix I and II of the CMS and strongly support it.

We note the worrying 90% decline in Zimbabwe's cheetah population from the 1990's and would like to congratulate Zimbabwe for the moratorium on hunting cheetah. We hope that the listing will encourage the continuation of Cheetah conservation and strengthen multi-institutional and international cooperation, especially with Botswana and Namibia, across the Cheetah's entire range.

Agenda Item 30.2.2 Proposal for the inclusion of the Striped hyena (*Hyaena hyaena*) on Appendix I and II of the Convention

The EU and its 27 Member States thank both Republic of Tajikistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan for submitting their proposal on the inclusion of the striped hyena (*Hyaena hyaena*) on Appendix I and II of the Convention and express support for this inclusion.

Agenda Item 30.2.3 Proposal for the inclusion of the Giant otter (*Pteronura brasiliensis*) on Appendix I and II of the Convention

The giant otter is facing several emerging and growing threats, most of them linked to human encroachment, including habitat destruction, river contamination, illegal poaching and competition for prey due to overfishing, as well as climate change. Estimates point to the fact that Giant otter populations have declined by more than 50% over the past 25 years and, based on current trends, a further reduction in population size of more than 50% over the next 25 years is expected.

Including this species in Appendices I and II of the CMS would make it possible to enhance collaboration among the States within the giant otter's distribution range and implement measures to ensure ecological connectivity, as well as enabling management and protection of freshwater ecosystem habitats and species.

The EU and its MS would like to thank the Government of France for submitting this proposal and support the inclusion of the giant otter in Appendixes I and II of the Convention.

Agenda Item 30.2.4 Proposal for the removal of the Bukhara deer (*Cervus elaphus yarkandensis*) from Appendix I of the Convention

The EU and its MS would like to thank the Government of Uzbekistan for submitting this proposal.

The EU and its MS oppose the removal of the Bukhara deer from Appendix I of the Convention. This is so because the EU and its MS believe that removal from Appendix I, and opening the door to taking this species, could result in loss of sufficient protection and in the Bukhara deer becoming more endangered.

Although the population trend of the Bukhara deer is increasing or stable across most of its range, Bukhara deer numbers are still low. Moreover, the information given in the initial proposal and in the subsequent document replying to the remarks made by the Scientific Council, does not provide a clarification of taxonomy nor a satisfactory justification for the delisting of the species while still ensuring adequate protection.

We also encourage the proponents and the Range States of the Bukhara deer to continue their efforts to improve and maintain ecological connectivity, in order to mitigate ongoing riparian forest loss, Bukhara deer habitat degradation, fragmentation, and the resulting human–wildlife conflicts.

Agenda Item 30.2.5 Proposal for the inclusion of Gadfly petrels (*Pterodroma* sp.) on Appendix I and II of the Convention

The EU and its MS would like to thank the Governments of New Zealand, Australia, Brazil, Chile, the Cook Islands, the Dominican Republic and Fiji for submitting this proposal.

Many gadfly petrel taxa are presently endangered, with persistent threats contributing to their declining population trends. Inclusion of the species in Appendices I and II will improve international cooperation, strengthen protection, and help prevent further population declines and extinctions of the Gadfly Petrels.

Therefore, the EU and its MS support the inclusion of the Gadfly Petrels in Appendices I and II of the Convention.

Agenda Item 30.2.6 Proposal for the inclusion of Flesh-footed shearwater (*Ardenna carneipes*) on Appendix II of the Convention

The EU and its MS would like to thank the Governments of New Zealand, Australia and France for submitting this proposal and support the inclusion of the flesh-footed shearwater in Appendix II of the Convention.

Agenda Item 30.2.7 Proposal for the inclusion of the Hudsonian whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus hudsonicus*) on Appendix I of the Convention

The EU and its MS would like to thank the Governments of Brazil and Chile for submitting this proposal and support the inclusion of the Hudsonian whimbrel in Appendix I of the Convention.

Agenda Item 30.2.8 Proposal for the inclusion of the Hudsonian godwit (*Limosa haemastica*) on Appendix I of the Convention

The EU and its MS would like to thank the Governments of Chile and Brazil for submitting this proposal and support the inclusion of the Hudsonian godwit in Appendix I of the Convention.

Agenda Item 30.2.9 Proposal for the inclusion of the Lesser yellowlegs (*Tringa flavipes*) on Appendix I of the Convention

The EU and its MS would like to thank the Oriental Republic of Uruguay for submitting this proposal and support the inclusion of the Lesser Yellowlegs in Appendix I of the Convention.

Agenda Item 30.2.10 Proposal for the inclusion of the Snowy owl (*Bubo scandiacus*) on Appendix II of the Convention

The EU and its MS would like to thank the Government of Norway for submitting this proposal and support the inclusion of the Snowy Owl in Appendix II of the Convention.

Agenda Item 30.2.11 Proposal for the inclusion of the Ibera seedeater (*Sporophila iberaensis*) on Appendix II of the Convention

The EU and its MS would like to thank the Governments of Brazil and Argentina for submitting this joint proposal and support the inclusion of the Ibera seedeater in Appendix II of the Convention.

Agenda Item 30.2.12 Proposal for the inclusion of the Pelagic thresher (*Alopias pelagicus*), the Bigeye thresher (*Alopias superciliosus*), and the Common thresher (*Alopias vulpinus*) on Appendix I of the Convention

The EU and its MS acknowledge the need for the urgent conservation of the *Alopias pelagicus*, *Alopias superciliosus* and *Alopias vulpinus*. We note that these species are already strictly protected under EU fisheries legislation as well as regional frameworks, including the Barcelona Convention.

Therefore, given the significant population declines driven by fishing pressure, we support their inclusion in Appendix I of the Convention, which would complement existing RFMO non-retention measures and reinforce the CITES Appendix II listing.

Agenda Item 30.2.13 Proposal for the inclusion of the Patagonian narrownose smoothhound (*Mustelus schmitti*) on Appendix II of the Convention

The EU and its MS support the proposal to include the Narrownose Smoothhound in Appendix II of the Convention, to stimulate improved national and regional management and facilitate collaboration between Range States.

Additionally, we would like to suggest that COP16 consider the species' listing under Appendix I of the Convention, given its critically endangered status. Such a listing, particularly with an associated ban on take, would significantly enhance conservation efforts and provide the necessary protection for this species.

**Agenda Item 30.2.14 Proposal for the inclusion of the Scalloped hammerhead shark
(Sphyrna lewini) on Appendix I of the Convention**

The EU and its Member States recognise the severe global decline of the scalloped hammerhead shark *Sphyrna lewini* and the significant pressures resulting from targeted fisheries and bycatch.

Within the EU, this species is already protected under the Technical Measures Regulation, which prohibits the use of bottom-set gillnets, entangling nets, trammel nets and driftnets for catching species of the family Sphyrnidae.

In light of the species' current status and the Scientific Council's recommendation, the EU and its Member States support the proposal to include *Sphyrna lewini* in Appendix I of the Convention.

**Agenda Item 30.2.15 Proposal for the inclusion of the Great hammerhead shark
(Sphyrna mokarran) on Appendix I of the Convention**

The EU and its MS welcome the proposal submitted by the Government of Ecuador to include the Great hammerhead shark in Appendix I of the Convention.

We underline the wide distribution of the species across areas beyond national jurisdiction, and its biological vulnerability, which require coordinated international action.

The EU and its MS note that the species is already listed on CMS Appendix II, under the CMS Sharks MOU and CITES Appendix II, yet population declines continue, highlighting the need for strengthened protection.

We also recall that *Sphyrna mokarran* is strictly protected under EU fisheries rules and covered under regional measures in the Mediterranean.

Therefore, the EU and its MS support the proposal to include *Sphyrna mokarran* in Appendix I of the Convention.

Agenda Item 30.2.16 Proposal for the inclusion of the Angular angelshark (*Squatina guggenheim*) on Appendix II of the Convention

The EU and its Member States note that the Angular angelshark is in an unfavourable conservation status across its range, with severe declines driven mainly by fisheries bycatch and habitat degradation.

To this effect, we support the proposal to add the Angular angelshark to Annex II of the Convention as a means to foster coordinated regional conservation efforts among the Range States.

Agenda Item 30.2.17 Proposal for the inclusion of the Spotted sorubim (*Pseudoplatystoma corruscans*) on Appendix II of the Convention

The EU and its Member States take note of the proposal submitted by Brazil to include the spotted sorubim in Appendix II of the Convention.

We note the documented pressures affecting the species, in particular habitat fragmentation caused by dams, altered hydrological regimes and habitat degradation. In this context, we consider that listing the species in Appendix II would provide an appropriate framework to strengthen international cooperation among Range States and support coordinated efforts to conserve migratory routes and river connectivity.

Therefore, the EU and its Member States support the proposal.

Agenda Item 31 Concerted Actions

Agenda Item 31.2 Progress in the Implementation of Concerted Actions

Agenda Item 31.2.1 Report on the implementation of the Concerted Action for Chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*) behavioural diversity and cultures

The EU and its 27 MS acknowledge the work carried out by the IUCN Species Survival Commission's Primate Specialist Group Section on Great Apes Working Group and the CMS Expert Working Group on Culture and Social Complexity and support the continuation of the work for the completion of the Concerted Action 14.1. in the next triennium.

We are pleased to see the progress made so far, including the appointment of the CMS Expert Working Group as the Steering Committee of the Concerted Action.

Chimpanzees are endangered and threatened across their range, and we welcome the continuation of the activities of the Concerted Action based on the remarks presented in the report.

The EU and its 27 Member States sincerely hope that the continuation and completion of the Concerted Action will help improve the conservation status of chimpanzees and involve as many interest groups as possible.

Agenda Item 31.2.2 Report on the implementation of the Concerted Action for the Straw-colored fruit bat (*Eidolon helvum*)

The EU and its MS acknowledge the work carried out by Bat Conservation International and the Max Planck Institute of Animal Behavior, but would like to stress concern for the lack of detailed follow-up on implementation of the Concerted Action on the Straw-colored Fruit Bat.

We support the continuation of the Concerted action and hope that the next intersessional period will see more progress in its implementation, particularly given that the Straw-colored Fruit Bat is listed as "Near Threatened" on the IUCN Red List.

Agenda Item 31.2.3 Report on the implementation of the Concerted Action for the Pallas's cat (*Felis manul*)

The EU and its MS acknowledge the work carried out for the conservation of the Pallas's cat by the Pallas's cat International Conservation Alliance, Manul Working Group and IUCN SSC Cat Specialist Group and congratulate them on the completion of the Concerted Action on this species.

We also welcome the nomination of the Pallas's cat as one of the target species of CAMI Programme of Work 2026-2032 and thank the Range States of CAMI and the CMS Secretariat for their successful inclusion of the Pallas's cat. This will ensure that efforts to improve the conservation status of the Pallas's cat continue and the Concerted Action is implemented.

The EU and its MS believe that the Pallas's cat, which constitutes an iconic species, can be a paradigm for successful Concerted Actions aiming to promote species conservation.

Agenda Item 31.2.4 Report on the implementation of the Concerted Action for the Eurasian lynx (*Lynx lynx*)

The EU and its MS acknowledge the actions taken under the Concerted Action for addressing the conservation needs of the Eurasian Lynx.

We recognise that challenges in the process have led to delays, preventing the completion of the Concerted Action.

Having in mind the importance of the Concerted Action, the EU and its MS accept the report and will support the continuation of the Concerted Action. However, we urge the Range States and the relevant stakeholders to resolve any complications in order to achieve the required results. As Range States ourselves, the EU and its Member States commit to fulfilling our responsibilities to ensure the timely completion of these actions.

The EU and its MS would like to thank the other Range States and the relevant stakeholders for the continuing cooperation in order to ensure the success of the Concerted Action.

Agenda Item 31.2.5 Report on the implementation of the Concerted Action for the Giraffe (*Giraffa camelopardalis*)

The EU and its MS acknowledge the actions taken under the Concerted Action for addressing the conservation needs of the giraffe, especially in revising the taxonomy.

We recognise the need to continue the Concerted Action with the updated taxonomy in order to achieve the desired results and implement targeted actions for the different giraffe species.

The EU and its MS would like to thank the Range States for their ongoing cooperation, which is essential to ensure the success of the Concerted Action.

Agenda Item 31.2.6 Report on the implementation of the Concerted Action for Humpback whales (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) of the Arabian Sea

The EU and its Member States welcome the report on the implementation of the Concerted Action for the humpback whales of the Arabian Sea and acknowledge the progress reported since its adoption.

We take note of the work carried out under the Concerted Action, including activities addressing knowledge gaps, information and awareness raising, and capacity building and mitigation efforts, as implemented by range country organisations and coordinated through the Arabian Sea Whale Network.

We welcome the emphasis on stakeholder engagement and on developing a regional Conservation Management under the joint auspices of CMS and the International Whaling Commission, which has been submitted for consideration to COP15.

In this context, the EU and its MS agree that the Concerted Action can be considered completed following endorsement of the Conservation Management Plan by CMS and the IWC, after which the Concerted Action should thus be closed.

Agenda Item 31.2.7 Report on the implementation of the Concerted Action for the Sperm whales (*Physeter macrocephalus*) of the Eastern Tropical Pacific

The EU and its MS acknowledge the work carried out by Red Cachalotes del Pasifico. the research network established to promote collaborative research and conservation of sperm whales throughout the Eastern Tropical Pacific.

Notable efforts have been made through the activities undertaken, including a review on the interplay between culture and the conservation of the sperm whale clans, steps towards transnational photo-ID monitoring, and establishment of a network of researchers to progress the understanding of male sperm whales.

However, further action is needed in the future for the effective conservation and monitoring of the species through strengthening the collaborative network.

Therefore, the EU and its MS support the proposed continuation of the Concerted Action.

Agenda Item 31.2.8 Report on the implementation of the Concerted Action for the Franciscana dolphin (*Pontoporia blainvillei*)

The EU and its Member States welcome the report on the implementation of Concerted Action 14.5 for the Franciscana dolphin and commend Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay for the progress achieved since its adoption, across all three range States.

At the same time, we note the difficulties and delays identified in the report, notably funding and logistical constraints, significant data gaps, particularly for Franciscana Management Areas in Argentina, and limitations related to bycatch mortality and mitigation measures.

In this context, and noting that the species remains classified as Vulnerable, the EU and its Member States support the continuation of the Franciscana Dolphin Concerted Action as a necessary framework for coordinated international conservation efforts.

Agenda Item 31.2.9 Report on the implementation of the Concerted Action for the Antipodean albatross (*Diomedea antipodensis*)

The EU and its MS acknowledge the work done by Australia, Chile and New Zealand and support the continuation of the Concerted Action for the Antipodean Albatross for the next triennium.

Nevertheless, further urgent action is needed in the future to improve the status of the species and for reducing the impacts of oceanic longline fishing operations in the Range States. For this purpose, an update of the Concerted Action to address the issues of high seas fishery bycatch is eminent.

It is worth highlighting that action taken for this species will also have a positive impact on other seabirds of the South Pacific Ocean.

The EU and its MS hope that during the 2026-2029 period actions on research, conservation and cooperation with fisheries, fishers and fisheries organisations can continue and meet the conservation challenges that this species faces.

Agenda Item 31.2.10 Report on the implementation of the Concerted Action for the Blue shark (*Prionace glauca*)

The EU and its MS acknowledge the work carried out by the Marine Research and Conservation Foundation (MARECO). Good efforts have been made among the activities planned for this Concerted Action.

Nevertheless, further action is needed in the future for the delivery of the ongoing activities, in order to ensure the implementation of new conservation outcomes.

Therefore, the EU and its MS support the continuation of the Concerted Action for the Blue Shark.

Agenda Item 31.2.11 Report on the implementation of the Concerted Action for the Common guitarfish (*Rhinobatos rhinobatos*) and the Bottlenose wedgefish (*Rhynchobatus australiae*)

The EU and its Member States thank the IUCN SSC Shark Specialist Group for the comprehensive report on the implementation of Concerted Action 13.9 and acknowledge the significant progress achieved in strengthening coordination, research and awareness for the conservation of rhino rays.

We note that remaining activities, including regional conservation planning, are now being taken forward under the CMS Sharks MOU Programme of Work, ensuring continuity and coherence within the CMS framework.

In this light, the EU and its MS take note of the progress achieved and consider the closure of Concerted Action 13.9 appropriate.

Agenda Item 31.3 Proposals for Concerted Actions for the Triennium 2026-2029

Agenda Item 31.3.1 Proposal for a Concerted Action for Chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*) behavioural diversity and cultures already listed on Appendix I and II of the Convention

The EU and its MS recognise the importance of the proposed Concerted Action for the Chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*) Behavioural Diversity and Cultures.

The EU and its MS would like to thank the IUCN Species Survival Commission's Primate Specialist Group Section on Great Apes Working Group on Chimpanzee Cultures and the CMS Expert Working Group on Animal Culture and Social Complexity for the proposal of the Concerted Action.

We acknowledge that this proposal can contribute to the essential long-term protection and conservation of the chimpanzees. The paradigm shift in the formulation of the Concerted Action with the inclusion of all four subspecies is also welcome.

Agenda Item 31.3.2 Proposal for a Concerted Action for the Straw- colored fruit bat (Eidolon helvum)

The EU and its MS acknowledge the importance of the proposed Concerted Action for addressing the conservation needs of the straw-colored fruit bat. We recognize the start made in shifting the perception of bats by humans and the ecological significance of this species as a keystone species.

The EU and its MS would like to thank the bodies providing financial and scientific support to this Concerted Action for the implementation of the various proposed activities.

We welcome the efforts of the involved parties in awareness-raising activities to address the negative perceptions surrounding bats in general, and we wonder why these efforts are not planned to continue.

We would also welcome more information from the proponents on their innovative approach to link the conservation of bats with ecotourism at suitable sites. In regard to the potential establishment of ecotourism, we would like to emphasize the importance of adopting a cautious and responsible approach, taking into account the potential impacts on the already impaired conservation status of the straw-colored fruit bat and the need to prevent any adverse effects on the species.

The EU and its MS strongly support the approval of this Concerted Action proposal so that the planned activities can be implemented in the triennium 2026-2029. We have however one concern which we would like to see addressed in this Concerted Action.

Given the apparent added-value of the awareness-raising measures to the conservation efforts for the species, we would strongly encourage the involved parties to reconsider their discontinuation and instead strengthen these efforts in the Concerted Action.

Agenda Item 31.3.3 Proposal for a Concerted Action for the Eurasian lynx (*Lynx lynx*)

The EU and its MS support the approval of the Concerted Action for the Eurasian Lynx (*Lynx lynx*). We acknowledge the importance of the Concerted Action, since the Eurasian Lynx is both a keystone and flagship species and we believe that transboundary cooperation is crucial for its conservation.

The EU and its MS also congratulate the involved NGOs and institutions and appreciate the work and efforts undertaken so far by them and the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention for the conservation of this species.

We would like to ask whether the proponents and the Range States intend to ensure that the outcomes of Activity 4 on the *Lynx lynx isabellinus* and Activity 5 and Objective 2 on the *Lynx lynx dinniki* are translated into concrete conservation action following their completion in 2026. We would suggest that consideration be given to using the survey results and first IUCN assessments as a basis for targeted conservation measures, including, where appropriate, the development of spatially explicit action plans or strategies, or their integration into National Action Plans for these two subspecies.

We would note this is particularly important for *L. l. dinniki*, which is not reflected in the Programme of Work 2026–2032 of the Central Asian Mammals Initiative. Timely follow-up within the next triennium would be very welcome as this would help avoid a gap between assessment and implementation and enable tangible progress well before COP16 in 2029.

Agenda Item 31.3.4 Proposal for a Concerted Action for the Striped hyena (*Hyaena hyaena*) proposed for listing on Appendix I and II of the Convention

The EU and its MS acknowledge the importance of the proposed Concerted Action for addressing the conservation needs of the Striped hyena and support its adoption.

We recognise the need to take action, having in mind the data deficiency, the conservation status of the species, as well as the low population numbers.

The EU and its MS would like to thank the proponents of this proposal for taking the lead in the protection of this species and support the approval of this Concerted Action proposal.

Agenda Item 31.3.5 Proposal for a Concerted Action for the Masai giraffe (*Giraffa tippelskirchi*), Northern giraffe (*Giraffa camelopardalis*), Reticulated giraffe (*Giraffa reticulata*) and Southern giraffe (*Giraffa giraffa*)

The EU and its MS acknowledge the importance of the proposed Concerted Action for addressing the conservation needs of the Giraffe species.

We encourage the Range States to continue their efforts in the conservation of the species in the collaborative manner that they have already established.

The EU and its MS would like to thank the proponent of this proposal for taking the lead in the protection of this species and support the approval of this Concerted Action proposal with the updated taxonomy.

Agenda Item 31.3.6 Proposal for a Concerted Action for the Sperm whales (*Physeter macrocephalus*) of the Eastern Tropical Pacific already listed on Appendix I and II of the Convention

The EU and its MS welcome the proposal for the continuation of the Concerted Action for Eastern Tropical Pacific sperm whales and acknowledge the progress already achieved since this Concerted Action was first endorsed by in COP12.

We recognize the importance of long-term, cross-national cooperation for the conservation of this highly migratory and transboundary species through addressing knowledge gaps, and highlight that the Concerted Action prioritizes activities to address the limited financial support among Range States.

Moreover, we welcome its contribution to the implementation of relevant CMS resolutions and the Samarkand Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2024-2032, and recognize its potential to serve as an ideal flagship for international collaboration towards the conservation of migratory oceanic species and the expansion of CMS membership.

The EU and its MS would like to thank the proponent of this proposal and support the approval of this Concerted Action proposal.

Agenda Item 31.3.7 Proposal for a Concerted Action for the Franciscana dolphin (*Pontoporia blainvillei*)

The EU and its MS acknowledge the importance of renewing the Concerted Action for the conservation of the Franciscana dolphin.

We recognize the need to address bycatch and other cumulative pressures affecting this vulnerable species through coordinated regional action, building on existing CMS and IWC frameworks.

The proposed renewal, including the development of a coordinated Plan of Action for 2026–2029, provides a sound basis for strengthening cooperation among the range States and supporting effective conservation measures.

The EU and its MS thank the proponents for their continued commitment and support the renewal of the Concerted Action for the Franciscana dolphin.

Agenda Item 31.3.8 Proposal for a Concerted Action for the Lahille bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus gephyreus*) already listed on Appendix I and II of the Convention

The EU and its MS acknowledge the importance of the proposed Concerted Action for the conservation of Lahille’s bottlenose dolphin.

We recognise the urgent conservation challenges facing this subspecies and the need for coordinated and cooperative action among the Range States to address cumulative threats across its distribution range.

The proposed development of a joint Action Plan, building on existing CMS and IWC frameworks, provides a sound basis for strengthening conservation efforts, improving coordination and supporting the long-term viability of the subspecies.

The EU and its MS would like to thank the proponents of this proposal for taking the lead in the protection of this species and supports the approval of this Concerted Action proposal.

Agenda Item 31.3.9 Proposal for a Concerted Action for the Antipodean albatross (*Diomedea antipodensis*) already listed on Appendix I of the Convention

The EU and its MS acknowledge the work carried out by Australia, Chile and New Zealand and support the continuation of the Concerted Action for the Antipodean Albatross for the next triennium.

Further urgent action is needed in the future to improve the status of the species and for reducing the impacts of oceanic longline fishing operations in the Range States, especially in the high seas.

The EU and its MS hope that during the 2026-2029 period actions on research, conservation and cooperation with fisheries, fishers and fisheries organisations and local communities can continue and meet the conservation challenges that this species faces.

Agenda Item 31.3.10 Proposal for a Concerted Action for the Flesh-footed shearwater (*Ardenna carneipes*) proposed for listing on Appendix II of the Convention

The EU and its MS acknowledge the importance of the proposed Concerted Action for addressing the conservation needs of the flesh-footed shearwater.

We recognise the need to take action on this threatened species and the value of coordinated actions among the range states.

The proposed Concerted Action includes a wide range of activities that can address fisheries bycatch and also increase conservation actions and improve data for the species. The implementation of the Concerted Action will also benefit other seabirds and can act as an example to improve seabird bycatch management in similar fisheries operating in other regions.

The EU and its MS would like to thank Australia and New Zealand for this proposal and for taking action in the protection of this species and express our support for this Concerted Action.

Agenda Item 31.3.11 Proposal for a Concerted Action for the Peruvian or Humboldt pelican (*Pelecanus thagus*) already listed on Appendix I and II of the Convention

The EU and its MS acknowledge the importance of the proposed Concerted Action for addressing the conservation needs of the Humboldt pelican.

We recognise the need to take action on this highly threatened species and to the value of coordinated actions among the range states.

Developing and implementing a Management Plan for the species will allow for coordinated and meaningful efforts, including awareness raising and working towards protection and restoration of breeding sites across the migratory range. These seem to be crucial actions to address the decline of the species and improve its conservation status.

The EU and its MS would like to thank the Governments of Chile, Ecuador and Peru for this proposal and for taking the lead in the protection of this species and express our support for this Concerted Action proposal.

Agenda Item 31.3.12 Proposal for a Concerted Action for the Magellanic plover (*Pluvianellus socialis*) already listed on Appendix I of the Convention

The EU and its MS acknowledge the importance of the proposed Concerted Action for addressing the conservation needs of the Magellanic plover and would like to thank the Governments of Chile and Argentina for this proposal.

Developing and implementing the outlined activities for the species will allow for coordinated and meaningful efforts, including awareness raising and working towards protection and restoration of breeding sites across the migratory range.

The EU and its MS support the approval of this Concerted Action.

**Agenda Item 31.3.13 Proposal for a Concerted Action for the Sand tiger shark
(*Carcharias taurus*) already listed on Appendix I and II of the
Convention**

The EU and its MS acknowledge the work carried out by Brazil, and the importance of the proposed Concerted Action for the protection and conservation of the Sand Tiger Shark in the Southwest Atlantic Ocean.

We recognise the urgent need to implement new conservation actions across the three Range States in order to address the significant population declines of this species, and underscore the added value of the collaboration and coordination among Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay to strengthen management at regional level. The incorporation of elements such as Important Shark and Ray Areas (ISRAs), bycatch concerns, and habitat identification, the alignment with measures already in place at national level, as well as the development of monitoring frameworks, are particularly important.

Further refinement of the Proposal of the Concerted Action in accordance with the suggestions of the COP Appointed Councillor for Marine Fish can enhance the effective implementation of the activities planned, and therefore the greater conservation of the Sand Tiger Shark in the region.

Therefore, the EU and its MS would like to thank the proponent of this proposal for taking the lead in the protection of this species and support the approval of this Concerted Action proposal.

Agenda Item 31.3.14 Proposal for a Concerted Action for the Basking shark (*Cetorhinus maximus*) already listed on Appendix I and II of the Convention

The EU and its MS acknowledge the proposal for a Concerted Action for the basking shark and take note of the Scientific Council's recommendations.

We underline the importance of coordinated international action under the CMS framework, while ensuring prioritisation of actions, coherence with existing processes and appropriate consultation with Range States.

The EU and its Member States would like to thank the proponents of this proposal for taking the lead in the protection of this species and support the approval of the proposed Concerted Action, which would benefit from further refinement based on the recommendations of the Sessional Committee and the COP-appointed Councillor for Marine Fish.

Agenda Item 31.3.15 Proposal for a Concerted Action for the Blue shark (*Prionace glauca*) already listed on Appendix II of the Convention

The EU and its MS acknowledge the importance of the proposed Concerted Action for addressing the conservation needs of the Blue Shark.

We recognise the need to continue the activities of the COP14 Concerted Action and underline the value of further coordinated recovery actions to strengthen management at regional and global scales of this highly threatened species.

Additionally, we acknowledge that the Concerted Action will further contribute to capacity building and raising awareness among CMS Parties and non-Party Range States, fostering best practices in management and sustainable tourism.

The EU and its MS would like to thank the proponent of this proposal for taking the lead in the protection of this species and support the approval of this Concerted Action proposal, while underlining that some of the tasks are RFMOs prerogatives or covered also by a regional sea convention like the Barcelona Convention. We call on strong cooperation with RFMOs, and using their scientific assessment as much as possible, and avoiding duplicating their work (eg, assessment of impacts of fisheries).

Moreover, we support the suggestion of the COP-appointed Councillor for Marine Fish, regarding the development of new tourism guidelines based on existing guidelines.

Agenda Item 31.3.16 Proposal for a Concerted Action for all species of Devil and Manta rays (Mobulidae) already listed on Appendix I and II of the Convention

The EU and its MS acknowledge the importance of the proposed Concerted Action in addressing the conservation needs of manta and devil rays, which have experienced severe population declines across their global range.

We recognise the need to take action on these highly threatened species and the value of coordinated actions among the range states. Such cooperation is essential to effectively address fisheries-related mortality, implementation gaps and data limitations identified for this species group.

The EU and its MS note that the proposed Concerted Action provides a structured framework for implementation that aims at reducing mortality in high-risk areas, better enforcement, improving decision-making, and closing data gaps, while catalysing broader cooperation under CMS and CITES for the benefit of manta and devil rays and other threatened marine and CMS-listed species.

As some of the tasks are RFMOs prerogatives or covered also by regional sea conventions we call on strong cooperation with RFMOs and RSCs using their scientific assessment as much as possible, and avoiding duplicating their work (e.g. assessment of impacts of fisheries).

The EU and its MS would like to thank the proponents of this proposal for taking the lead in the protection of these species and support the approval of this Concerted Action proposal.

Closing Statement of the EU and its Member States

The EU and its Member States are more than pleased with the outcomes of the 15th COP of CMS.

We have adopted a range of important decisions at this COP which bring real, tangible benefits to migratory species and their habitats. We have seen – again – science-driven, multilateral decision making at work.

It is also thanks to the dedication and the flexibility of the Parties and the stakeholders that we have achieved so many good outcomes. We are happy that proposals like the European eel, tope shark and bustard action plans, or France’s listing proposal for the Giant otter were supported. We welcome all other additions to the CMS appendices. They enhance protection, fostering international cooperation for their conservation, and help raise awareness around these truly magnificent animals.

Here in the gateway to the Pantanal, our hosts fittingly highlighted the importance of wetlands and connectivity for migratory species. It was an absolute privilege that the President of Brazil honoured us with his presence, demonstrating how important these aspects are to this country.

We want to thank the Government of Brazil, the State of Mato Grosso do Sul and the city of Campo Grande for hosting this COP, for their hospitality and for sharing with us, for these few days, their inspiring nature.

Finally, a warm thanks to everyone who made this possible: the staff of the conference centre, the interpreters and translators, the chairs of the working groups, the COP appointed counsellors, the COP and COW chairs; and of course thanks to Amy and her team in the Secretariat.

Thanks for all the hard work on the 100+ documents.

To Amy personally, thanks for your hard work and dedication as Executive Secretary and we wish you all the best for the future. Welcome to your successor Andrew as the new ES.

We are happy to welcome you all in Europe for COP 16, for the 50th anniversary of the Bonn Convention.

See you in Germany in 2029!

