



Convention on the Conservation of
Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)



CMS Family Guidelines regarding Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) and their proper application prior to seismic surveys

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Overview of the Convention on Migratory Species

- Overall Goal of CMS:
Conservation of migratory species and their habitats throughout their entire range
- Strict protection for endangered species
- Habitat conservation



Birds



Terrestrial
Mammals



Marine Mammals



Reptiles



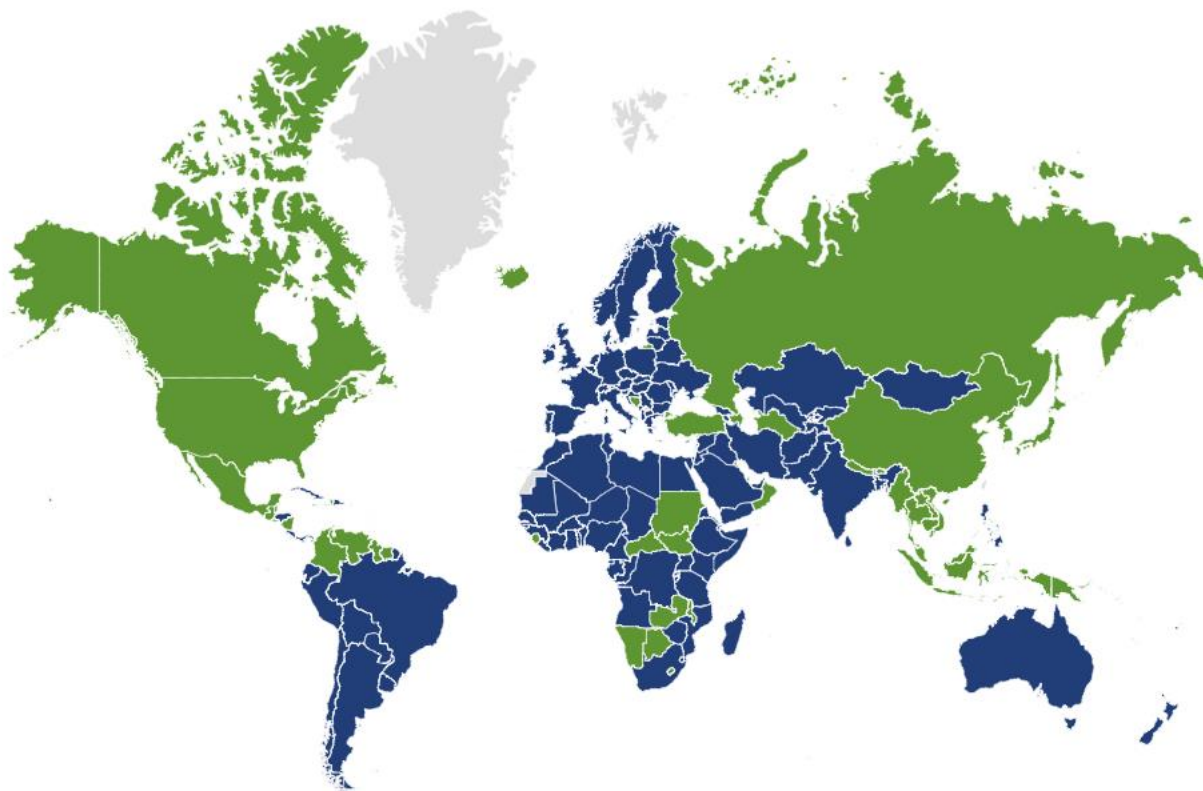
Fish



Insects

Parties to CMS

- 125
(as of 1 November 2017)



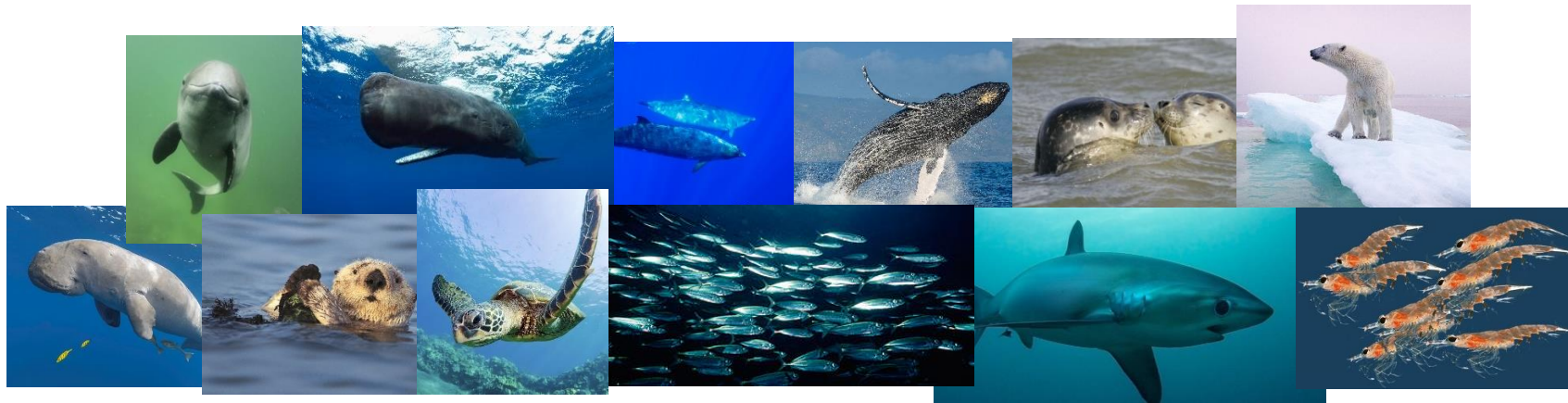
How CMS Works

- Appendix I
 - Endangered species
 - Grants highest degree of protection
- Appendix II
 - Unfavorable conservation status
 - Species that would benefit from international cooperation through agreements
- Agreements and MOUs
 - such as ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS
- Resolutions, Action Plans and Decisions



CMS & Marine Noise

- COP9 in 2008 and COP10 in 2011 adopted Resolutions on Underwater Noise, recognizing it as a serious threat to marine species
- Affects CMS-listed species, species covered by CMS Agreements and MOUs, and prey species



The Need for Guidelines for EIAs

- Resolutions of ASCOBANS, ACCOBAMS and CMS call for noise-related considerations to be taken into account as early as the planning stages of activities, especially by making effective use of Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA)



The Need for Guidelines for EIAs

But:

- National and regional operational guidelines focus mostly on the impacts to be avoided and mitigation measures to be taken during proposed operations
- Most operational guidelines focus on cetaceans, few cover other species
- Almost none cover the specific content that should be provided in (EIAs) before approvals and permits are granted



CMS COP12

- 23-28 October 2017
- Many marine and crosscutting issues, incl. **Resolution 12.14 on Adverse Impacts of Anthropogenic Noise on Cetaceans and Other Migratory Species**
- www.cms.int/en/cop12



CMS Family Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessments for Marine Noise-generating Activities

- Thanks to funding provided by Monaco, CMS in consultation with ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS developed guidelines on using EIAs to assess the impacts of anthropogenic marine noise on CMS-listed species and their prey
- Accompanied by detailed Technical Support Information, written in a policy-maker friendly way
- Recommended for adoption also by ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS Parties

CMS Family Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessments for Marine Noise-generating Activities

- Designed to provide regulators with tailored advice presenting Best Available Techniques (BAT) and Best Environmental Practice (BEP) to apply in domestic jurisdictions
- Provided in module format to enable regulators to apply specific information of relevance to their jurisdiction
- Aim: ensure that decision-makers are presented with sufficient information to make an informed decision about impacts





CMS Family Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessments for Marine Noise-generating Activities

Contain:

- Introduction and link to detailed Technical Support Information (CMS/COP12/Inf.11), which include species-specific information
- Technical Advisory Notes
- Separate modules for different industries

CMS Family Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessments for Marine Noise-generating Activities

Industries/noise sources addressed:

- Military and civil high-powered sonar
- Shipping and vessel traffic
- Seismic surveys (air gun and alternative technologies)
- Construction works
- Offshore platforms
- Playback and sound exposure experiments
- Pingers (acoustic deterrent/harassment devices, navigation)
- Other noise-generating activities (acoustic data transmission; wind, tidal and wave turbines, future technologies)



Structure of the CMS Family Guidelines

For each activity, details required for the following components are outlined:

1) Description of area

- physical characteristics and ecosystem information
- typical weather characteristics of the proposed activity period
- Details of previous and simultaneous activities



Structure of the CMS Family Guidelines

2) Description of the equipment and activity

- Available technologies and reason for choice made
- Details of technology to be used, incl. vessel, total duration, timing of operations, signal duration and sound intensity level
- Specification of the activity, incl. nautical miles to be covered, track lines, vessel speed, settings, number of devices
- Identification of other activities having an impact in the region to determine potential cumulative or synergistic impacts



Structure of the CMS Family Guidelines

3) Modelling of noise propagation loss

- Detail of independent, scientific modelling of noise propagation in the expected conditions
- Identification and mapping of proposed exclusion zones and description of how noise propagation into these zones will be minimized

Structure of the CMS Family Guidelines

4) Species impact

- Identification and density of species likely to be present and calculated extent of impact zone
- Type of impact predicted on protected species and their prey
- Behaviour of species group and effect on their detectability
- Vulnerability, habitat needs, and likely impact of expected exposure levels and duration on each species group
- Quantification of the effectiveness of proposed mitigation methods



Structure of the CMS Family Guidelines

5) Mitigation and monitoring plans

- Before activity: species distribution and behavior
- During and after activity: impact
- Regular real-time public reporting of activity progress and impacts
- Available methods for species detection, description of their advantages and limitations, practical application during activity
- Impact mitigation proposals, incl. detection methods, establishment of exclusion zones, soft start and shut-down protocols, spatio-temporal restrictions



Structure of the CMS Family Guidelines

6) Reporting plans

- Post-operation reporting plans incl. verification of the effectiveness of mitigation



Structure of the CMS Family Guidelines

7) Consultation and independent review

- Consultations prior to EIA submission, incl. stakeholders consulted and information provided, comments received, amendments and changes made in response to comments, details and reasons why any comments were not accommodated
- Independent review of draft EIA, incl. names, affiliations and qualifications of independent reviewers, comments received, amendments and changes made in response to comments, details and reasons why any comments were not accommodated



Are we asking for too much?

