

Brief on the Participation of the World Coastal Forum Coordination Group in the 14th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

From February 12th to 17th, 2024, the 14th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS COP14) was held in Samarkand, Uzbekistan. Facilitators, advisors and Partners of the World Coastal Forum Coordination Group (WCF CG) participated in the conference.



The CMS has been closely involved with the development and implementation of the WCF. The first to call for the establishment of a global coastal forum was made at CMS COP12. Since 2022, the CMS Secretariat has been an observer of the WCF CG. In September 2023, Ms. Amy Fraenkel, Executive Secretary of the CMS Secretariat, delivered a speech at the opening ceremony of the 2023 World Coastal Forum Conference held in Yancheng, China.



The WCF CG achieved three main outcomes at the Conference :

I. Reference to the WCF in preambular and operative paragraphs of CMS [Resolution 18.1](#) on Synergies and Partnerships

The operative paragraph encouraging broad engagement of Parties and others in the WCF, as proposed by the Philippines, was adopted by the COP and welcomed by Ms. Nicola Crockford, WCF facilitator and representative of BirdLife International, calling for the use of the WCF to facilitate synergistic delivery on the ground of coastal ecosystem conservation mandates from multiple multilateral agreements, highlighting the development of the WCF's flagship knowledge products, the State of the World's Coastal Ecosystem Report and the World Coastal Ecosystem Conservation Toolkit.



This marks a further affirmation of WCF's relevance and importance by the three major international biodiversity-related conventions, following [Resolution 18.8 of the Convention on Wetlands](#) in November 2022, and [Decision 15.8 of the Convention on Biological Diversity](#) in December 2022.

II. Promoting the WCF through a special side event

On 15 February, a side event entitled "The World Coastal Forum: An Update" was successfully held, ably chaired by Dr. Rob Clay (Director of the Executive Office of the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network and the CMS COP-Appointed Co-councillor for birds). Dr Ivan Ramirez (Head of the Avian Unit, on behalf of Ms Amy Fraenkel, Executive Secretary of the CMS Secretariat and Mr Zebedee Njisuh (Senior Advisor for Africa, on behalf of Dr Mumba Musonda, Secretary General of the Convention on Wetlands Secretariat) (both WCF observers), two WCF advisors, Dr Zhanhai Zhang (Former Chief Engineer of Ministry Natural Resource of China, Special Envoy of China of UN OCEAN Conference) and Dr Mundita Teresa Lim (Executive Director of the ASEAN Biodiversity Centre), and Mr. Boris Erg (Director of European Regional Office, representative of the Director-General of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), a WCF partner), delivered opening speeches. Five CMS national delegates, Mr Florent Merle (Deputy Director, European and International Relations, French Office for Biodiversity), Ms Senivasa Waqairamas (Department of Environment, Fiji), Ms Lisama Sabry (Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Technology, Maldives), Mr Enrique Michaud (Director, Wildlife, National Forestry & Wildlife Service, Peru), and Dr Joseph Daniel Onoja (Director General, Nigerian Conservation Foundation, Nigeria) participated in the lively panel discussion.



Over 60 participants including additional CMS Parties, Seychelles and Saudi Arabia, as well as representatives from BirdLife International, the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP), the Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI), the Regional Partnership for Coastal and Marine Conservation (PRCM), the Asian Development Bank, international and national NGOs, and technical experts from around the world attended our event. The WCF Facilitators introduced the World Coastal Forum Partnership, the 2023 WCF Conference, knowledge products, 2024 events and plans. There was an enthusiastic response and active engagement from participants, expressing support for this innovative international platform and the desire to strengthen coordinated protection, conservation management and restoration of coastal areas. Representatives from the governments of Fiji, Maldives, Western Samoa and Nigeria expressed their interest to participate in the WCF Partnership. Applications from three international organizations from the Netherlands and Nigeria to join the WCF Partnership have been received.



On the evening of the side event, a dinner was held for WCF Partners, Observers, Advisors, and guest speakers, facilitating further friendly exchanges to enhance coastal ecosystem conservation and express support for the World Coastal Forum.



III. Further expanding the international coastal ecosystem conservation network

During the conference, the WCF Facilitators met with Ms. Inger Andersen, Deputy Secretary-

General of the United Nations and Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to introduce WCF.



A meeting was also held with Dr. Grethel Aguilar, Director-General of the IUCN to discuss the compilation of the State of the World's Coastal Ecosystems Report, the 2024 IUCN Asia Regional Conservation Forum, potential IUCN resolutions and side events for the 2025 IUCN World Conservation Congress, and other matters.



The Conference also provided the ideal opportunity to discuss with WCF Partners and other interested countries and organizations strengthening collaboration through encouraging additional participation in the WCF Partnership, its task teams, 2024 WCF events, and the 2025 WCF Conference.

Discussions highlighted the urgency to collaborate and to find ways to deal with coastal ecosystem management, restoration and protection, including for migratory species and human livelihoods, and to share experiences. These discussions reinforce the importance of the World Coastal Forum in providing a global platform to support these priorities.