

## OceanCare Statement to the 45<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the CMS Standing Committee

4 November 2016

OceanCare is honoured to sign a Partnership Agreement with the CMS Secretariat at this 45<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the CMS Standing Committee. As the Partnership is still new, there is no agreed work between us to report on, so we take this opportunity of a report to introduce OceanCare to CMS and to highlight our work on three focus areas we plan to contribute to.

### Ocean Noise

Mitigating and reducing anthropogenic ocean noise has been a decade long issue for OceanCare. We have taken this issue to Convention on Biological Diversity, the International Whaling Commission, Food and Agricultural Organisation, the Committee on Fisheries and the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean, the United Nations General Assembly, the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea Preparatory Committee Negotiations for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biodiversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction, and of course the CMS daughter Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans in the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area. OceanCare's President, Sigrid Lüber, serves as the Co-Chair of the Joint CMS/ACCOBAMS/ASCOBANS Noise Working Group.

We are pleased to have financially supported the development of the draft *CMS Family Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessments for Marine Noise-generating Activities* (UNEP/CMS/StC45/Doc 16.1, Activity 2.6) and commit ourselves to continuing our organisational support towards CMS COP12.

### Marine debris

Another longstanding CMS-related issue for OceanCare is marine debris. Marine plastic pollution extends to every ocean and coast and already causes enormous economic cost, ecological damage and social impact. It is estimated that around 8.8 million tons of plastics enter the oceans every year. There could be a ten-fold increase by 2025 if urgent steps are not taken.

We believe that mitigating the impact of marine debris, plastics and microplastics necessitates the global community advancing effective legal frameworks and regulation at the global and national levels. OceanCare is a Partner to the United Nations Environment Programme Global Partnership on Marine Litter and at the 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea on 'Marine debris, plastics and microplastics' OceanCare urged governments to:

- phase in comprehensive national waste management legislation, adequate structures for waste treatment, and preventive measures;
- promote a progressive plastic economy and the phase out of disposable plastic waste;
- develop baseline references to allow the measurement of plastic pollution extents and trends;
- immediately phase out and ban future use of the most hazardous toxic plastics;
- the immediate ban of microplastics and nanoplastics in cosmetic products;

- ensure research to reduce floating marine litter does not exacerbate harm;
- develop research and guidelines to prevent resin pellets contaminating the environment during transport;
- give focus to capacity building workshops for disentanglement and marine animals rescue programmes; and
- establish a professional global animal rescue network.

We are pleased to recognise CMS's existing commitment to this issue and hope that CMS might consider the points we have outlined in the lead up to CMS COP12 (UNEP/CMS/StC45/Doc 16.1, Activity 2.8).

### **Aquatic bushmeat**

OceanCare has been glad to support the Aquatic Mammals Working Group discussions on bushmeat and will continue to do in the lead up to the CMS ScC19 meeting (UNEP/CMS/StC45/Doc 16.1, Activity 2.2).

We are circulating an information document, *Aquatic Bushmeat: A local issue with global responsibility*, to the Standing Committee delegates. This document draws attention to the scope of the aquatic bushmeat problem.

For many years bushmeat has been considered an issue for local management. Work to support governments in Africa, Asia, Central and South America with regulation, capacity building and alternative livelihood generation remains crucial, but will not solve the bushmeat problem in isolation. One significant driver for increasing aquatic bushmeat demand is the loss of local fisheries resources to distant water industrialised fishing. This is a shared responsibility that must be equally addressed.

CMS has a key role to play in moving this issue forward by presenting the aquatic bushmeat case to the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management and in advocating for distant water fisheries management to consider the impact of overharvest in driving up aquatic bushmeat demand.

Within the pages of *Aquatic Bushmeat* we have circulated a CMS specific briefing with recommendations for the CMS Family to consider. Specifically, OceanCare recommends that CMS:

- recognise the cause and effect of distant water industrialised fishing, mining, palm oil and forestry on local communities and bushmeat demand.
- advocate for broadening the definition and discussion of bushmeat to formally encompass aquatic bushmeat and the impact of distant water industrialised fishing fleets in the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management and with the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Food and Agricultural Organisation.
- establish a terrestrial and aquatic bushmeat working group within the CMS Scientific Council to provide CMS specific advice to CMS Parties and the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management.

With the Chairman's permission, we would welcome an opportunity to speak to this issue at an appropriate point in the agenda of this meeting.

Obviously, there is more to OceanCare's work than has been presented here, and we will enthusiastically engage in discussions across the CMS suite of issues when they overlap with our competencies. At the next formal opportunity we will furnish a compressive report of our CMS related work for CMS Party consideration.

We thank you for the welcome and we look forward to a long and productive relationship.