**INDICATORS FOR GLOBAL AND NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY TARGETS –**

**EXPERIENCE AND RESOURCES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE POST-2020 GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK**

*Preliminary analysis of document CBD/SBSTTA/23/INF/4 from a CMS perspective*

Drawing on indicators for the Aichi Biodiversity Targets

1. As a starting-point, the SBSTTA paper reviews the available indicators for the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, as included in the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species, in developing the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023 (SPMS), modelled the SPMS targets to a large degree on the Aichi Targets. There is therefore close compatibility between the two, but an added specificity of focus in the SPMS on the needs of migratory species conservation. The CMS Parties have identified a suite of indicators for the SPMS targets (see Annex B to the SPMS itself, <https://www.cms.int/en/document/strategic-plan-migratory-species-2015-2023-4>*)*, which can be directly related to the Aichi Targets that correspond to them in each case.
2. The two frameworks are therefore mutually supporting. The SPMS however includes two targets which address issues that are additional to those covered by the Aichi Targets. These relate to governance processes and international cooperation; and so, in addition to the migratory species specifics mentioned above, the indicators which CMS is aiming to use to track the implementation of these two additional issues may offer an added-value contribution to any post-2020 framework that draws on indicators for the Aichi Targets.

Indicators at global, regional and national scales

1. The SBSTTA paper refers in various places to targets and indicators operating at either global or national levels, noting that the post-2020 biodiversity framework as a whole is global in nature. “Global and national” appears in sub-headings, and there is discussion on pages 4-5 of the uses of national indicators. In addition to the validity of this, however, it will be important to develop further the broader point made briefly in the introduction on page 2, namely that consideration should be given to the development of targets and indicators at multiple scales, including regional and subnational.
2. The regional scale is particularly relevant to the contribution that will be made through the Convention on Migratory Species, given that most of its “family” of daughter agreements address cooperation between countries at this scale, to encompass the migratory ranges of particular animal groups. Monitoring and reporting of the implementation of these agreements requires (and in some cases has generated) biodiversity indicators that operate at this scale.
3. Hence the principle emphasised on page 5 (that the next generation of targets should be established in close consultation with government policy and indicator experts to ensure that targets are measurable and scalable across countries) should apply also to policy and indicator experts operating at the regional scale, including in relevant bodies of the CMS daughter instruments.

Page 11 refers to translation or adaptation of global targets for use at the national level, and the need to develop indicators to match. There is probably scope for national indicators to have some relevance to most global targets, since any country (except perhaps landlocked ones in relation to marine-related targets) should be able to say something about the efforts that have been made within its territory, or the situation that applies in its territory. Some targets, however, will be seeking outcomes that can only be appraised at an international (regional or global) level - such as: the overall status of a species; the coherence of a protected area network; the functioning of an animal migration system; or the international cooperation required to support other aspects of ecological connectivity. Across the whole spectrum of indicators, therefore, not everything can be expected to translate to the national scale in the same way, and in the case of the example issues just mentioned, the most meaningful indicators will be those that are supra-national in nature.

Use of national report data and one-off studies

1. The SBSTTA paper points out that there are still major gaps in the availability of suitable indicators with global data for many of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets (page 7), but that assessments of progress towards the Targets can be supplemented by other sources where indicators are lacking (page 4). The approach taken by CMS may be of interest here, in two respects.
2. First, the indicator identified by CMS for assessing progress towards a particular target in the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species is defined in a number of cases as “National Report data”; and specific questions have been included in the format for National Reports to generate the requisite information.
3. A first summary of the results of this has recently been compiled as a mid-term review report on the implementation of the SPMS for COP13 (see document COP13/Doc.14.1/Annex.2, [www.cms.int/sites/default/files/document/cms\_cop13\_doc.14.1\_annex2\_e.pdf](http://www.cms.int/sites/default/files/document/cms_cop13_doc.14.1_annex2_e.pdf)).
4. National report information has been used by the CBD in assessing progress in implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, for example in the 2016 analysis mentioned on pages 4-5 of the paper; but the information in the CBD reports in that case was not systematically structured to correspond with the targets in that Plan, to the same extent as the CMS has done with its own reports for the SPMS. That said, the new CMS format for National Reports is being used for the reporting cycle to COP13 for the first time, and its efficacy in gathering information to assess progress towards the achievement of the SPMS targets has still to be fully evaluated.
5. Recognising the challenge noted on page 4 of the paper that there is often a lack of national institutions with responsibility for the collection, analysis and communication of data and information on biodiversity, a second approach taken in the SPMS, for targets without any other available indicators, is to anticipate using occasional “one-off” studies to fill the gap. While Annex 3 of the SBSTTA paper notes that the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership excludes one-off studies from the indicators in its list, the CMS Parties have considered this approach to be a valid and pragmatic solution, at least in principle, where capacity for continuous regular data production does not exist and where no other solution is available for the time being. Options for progressing these are expected to be explored in the coming triennium within CMS.

Ensuring use of indicators in future

1. The SBSTTA paper notes (page 2) that the status of a list of indicators for the new framework will significantly affect how the indicators are developed and used, and (on page 8) that clarity of purpose, especially through identifying audiences and global policy applications, greatly facilitates the identification and development of relevant indicators. This is likely to be enhanced all the more if biodiversity indicators are seen not only as the province of the CBD, but as “owned” and operated by the global biodiversity community as a whole, particularly all the biodiversity-related MEAs.
2. Designing the indicators for maximum “inter-operability” of this kind at the outset will help to ensure this. It would be possible to map some very clear routes to uptake and utility for CMS purposes, if the post-2020 framework were to include targets that link well with CMS objectives and mandates. This will therefore be the case particularly if the framework explicitly covers issues concerning ecological connectivity, migration systems and international cooperation.
3. Capacity to operate indicators may clearly be an issue in some cases. The paper notes (page 5) that countries with institutions that have capacity and a mandate to produce and/or compile biodiversity data have stronger capabilities; but in the case of some indicators of relevant drivers and pressures, it will not necessarily be only “biodiversity” data that is required; and it will be important in such circumstances to consider institutions in other sectors as part of the capacity picture too.
4. There is a reference on page 8 of the paper to options for more transparent and frequently accessible updates of indicator assessment information, through mechanisms such as the concept of a “Target Tracker” website. The CMS constituency would probably favour collaborating in any joint efforts to make this possible. One component of such a vision could be to factor in the reporting processes for all the biodiversity-related MEAs, since the meetings of their respective COPs or equivalent governing bodies would spread an array of already-existing milestones across the annual calendar. The CMS could help to enhance this still further, by factoring in also the reporting processes, MOPs and MOSs for the CMS Family instruments.

Identifying, selecting and (where necessary) developing indicators for the post-2020 framework

1. Two of the principles noted on page 11 of the SBSTTA paper for the future indicator regime are particularly important. The CMS constituency would particularly support the comment made there that development of indicators *in parallel with* the development of the framework and its targets will help to ensure that the necessary indicators and data-generating mechanisms are in place at the moment when targets are adopted. Similarly, the emphasis on the importance of using wording for targets in ways that make them *feasible to measure* is borne out by CMS experience with the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species (mentioned above); and this has been taken strongly into account in the proposals which CMS itself has made for potential targets for the post-2020 framework.
2. Table 1 in the paper presents some possible advantages and disadvantages of a limited set of future indicators compared with a more flexible framework of “indicative” indicators. One additional disadvantage of the “limited set” which may be important to consider is that, if the “limited set” is chosen as those measures that are simplest and most universal, this may miss the opportunity to use measures that speak specifically to the contribution being made to achievement of the framework’s targets by particular biodiversity-related MEAs, and which may already in any event be being reported/assessed by those MEAs for their own purposes.
3. The preceding comment may relate also to the concept of assessing various individual *elements* of the adopted targets (as done for the Aichi Biodiversity Targets for example by the IPBES analysis referenced on page 4 of the SBSTTA paper), as opposed to trying to construct indicators that attempt to measure progress towards a given multi-element target as a whole. This would be important for those potential future targets in which CMS (through the previous submissions referenced above) has proposed inclusion of specific elements concerning ecological connectivity.
4. Incidentally the same IPBES analysis is described as incorporating information about “countries’ stated intentions” to implement certain actions; but we would counsel against using any component of that kind in the future indicator regime, which should instead be based as far as possible only on evidence of real outcomes.
5. Annex 2 of the SBSTTA paper gives an extensive list of indicators that are currently available for use and are relevant to the themes of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets; and these are each related also to the 25 possible target topics identified in the separate SBSTTA document “*Observations on Potential Elements for the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework*” (CBD/SBSTTA/23/2/Add.4). Additional comments from a CMS perspective can be made on several of these, as follows:
* Protected Area Connectedness Index (“PARC-Connectedness”) (linked to possible target topics “Habitats” and “Land-use change”). This addresses an aspect of habitat connectedness, but it does not go far into “ecological connectivity” as the latter has now been defined (see previous CMS submission referred to above); and it will in particular not address the migratory species connectivity context where non-contiguous areas are concerned.
* Protected Area Coverage of Key Biodiversity Areas (linked to possible target topics “Habitats” and “Land-use change”). It should in principle be possible to develop a disaggregated module of this indicator to focus specifically on areas of importance for migratory species, thus making it particularly useful for the Convention on Migratory Species. (Analogous approaches have been adopted in the past for example in relation to Important Bird Areas and wetlands, for use in the context of the Ramsar Convention).
* Protected Connected (“ProtConn”) (linked to possible target topics “Habitats” and “Land-use change”). Same comments as for “PARC-Connectedness” above.
* Living Planet Index (linked to possible target topic “Species”). Specific disaggregation of the LPI can be particularly useful and important; for example wetland species for the Ramsar Convention context and migratory species for the CMS context.
* Red List Index (linked to possible target topic “Species”). Same comments as for Living Planet Index above.
* Coverage by protected areas of important sites for mountain biodiversity (linked to several possible ecosystem services-related target topics). It should in principle be possible to develop an indicator of this kind relating to sites of importance for migratory species (and their associated/presumed ecosystem services, if appropriate).
1. According to page 2 of the SBSTTA paper, the intention would be to update it in future to incorporate more on potentially available indicators relating to the possible target topics of the post-2020 framework itself, i.e. not just those indicators that currently relate to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. The CMS would therefore hope to see it addressing the indicators that would be needed for target elements that we have proposed on ecological connectivity; including a potential new standalone target on the subject, as well as elements in other targets on:
* Habitats
* Species
* Land-use change
* Climate change
* Direct drivers
* Use and value of nature
* Enabling conditions (including national and local planning processes, NBSAPs, and international cooperation).
1. The CMS stands ready to work with others on developing further thinking about indicators for these aspects in particular.

3 February 2020