

5th Session of the Meeting of Parties

Ljubljana, Slovenia, 4 – 6 September 2006

2008 – International Year of the Bat

(submitted by the UNEP/CMS Secretariat)



1. Background: CMS and “The year of ...” Campaigns

The United Nations Environment Programme Convention on Migratory Species is the only UN body specifically focusing on the conservation of wild animals. In particular, its actions address wildlife ‘on the move’, migratory fauna that during their travel to different feeding, resting or breeding grounds face a number of natural and human-made threats.

CMS has developed an Outreach and Communication Plan, the main goal of which is the identification of actions and initiatives for raising the awareness of the threats those wild animals on the move face. The Plan was adopted at the last meeting of its Parties in November 2005.

As part of its different outreach initiatives, the Convention will focus its attention each year on different animal species covered by one or more of the CMS Agreements, and work in close collaboration with those Agreements and also with other partners to increase awareness and outreach on that particular species or species complex. In addition to raising awareness on conservation of selected species, this is also instrumental to strengthen the cooperation between mother convention and its daughters on outreach and communications matters.

2006 was declared the IOSEA (a CMS related agreement on the conservation of turtles in the Indian Ocean and South East Asia) Year of the Turtle, with a specific focus on the IOSEA geographical area. More information on the Year of the Turtle can be found on its website at: <http://www.ioseaturtles.org/yot2006/>. 2007 will be dedicated to dolphin species. To this end, CMS set up a partnership with non-governmental organizations and private sector in order to fund a number of Year of the Dolphin related activities. More information on this initiatives are available on the CMS website. Below is the logo of the campaign.



2. 2008 – International Year of the Bat

The previous two initiatives were developed in cooperation with IOSEA, and ASCOBANS and ACCOBAMS respectively. They have raised and are raising the profile of both the CMS and its specific agreement and, by focusing on flagship species, they are also highlighting more general problems related to habitats degradation and habitat loss. In 2008, CMS Secretariat intends to focus its outreach activities on bat species, and make 2008 the CMS **International Year of the Bat**.

This will imply an intensification of already existing EUROBATS outreach activities, but also the extension of outreach and communication initiatives on this species in other countries and continents. CMS Secretariat will again work, as for the YoD campaign, at the identification of sponsors and partners for this initiatives, in order to guarantee the widest possible dissemination of information.