



Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Initiative Update

September 2007

Dear WHMSI colleagues:

The Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Initiative (WHMSI)'s Interim Steering Committee met June 5th and 6th 2007 in Washington, DC. The Organization of American States hosted the meeting. Below you will find a summary of the meeting discussions, including initial preparations for the Third WHMSI Conference, to take place in mid 2008.

Please note the call for proposals for thematic sessions to take place at that conference at the end of this update. If you have questions or comments about any of these issues, please contact me or any member of the Interim Steering Committee.

Sincerely,

Herb Raffaele

Chair of the Interim Steering Committee

Capacity Building Proposal:

Interim Steering Committee(ISC) members discussed potential sources of funding for the WHMSI capacity building proposal developed at the Second WHMSI Conference of 2006. The Global Environment Fund(GEF) is presently not funding regional projects, making it impractical to continue pursuing the GEF as a source of funding at this time. The group also discussed exploring other sources of funding such as the USFWS Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act program. Some members considered the possibility of approaching foundations such as Moore and MacArthur. In addition, the following two sources of funding will be available shortly:

- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Wildlife Without Borders Latin America and the Caribbean and Mexico programs have recently undergone strategic planning processes and will focus their future funding on capacity building in and around protected areas, addressing many of the same audiences and themes identified in the WHMSI capacity building proposal.*
- Ramsar's Wetlands for the Future program will also give priority in its review criteria to projects that address the capacity building needs identified at the Second WHMSI Conference.*

Follow-up on other priorities identified at the first WHMSI Conference:

At the Second WHMSI Conference, participants explored mechanisms for addressing all six major themes identified as important hemispheric needs from the first WHMSI Conference in Chile in 2003. Workgroups were asked to identify a general list of objectives for each topic, and develop a short list of actionable items. During the ISC meeting in June 2007, the Committee discussed this list and identified ways to facilitate most of these action items, including:

Lack of Knowledge (to be renamed "Knowledge Gaps"):

Mechanisms for exchanging information.

Proposed Action(s): 1) Create a section in WHMSI's website that includes a list of monitoring experts and monitoring protocols; and 2) Compile a list of websites relevant to migratory species, including training courses, and create a section in WHMSI's website with a list of links or searchable databases.

Follow-up: *This information will be incorporated into WHMSI's websites managed by USFWS, Eco-Index and CREHO.*

Proposed Action: Identify existing networks with an interest in migratory species and ask the Interim Steering Committee to invite them to join

organizations that relate to WHMSI as partners.
Follow-up: ISC members will consider what other networks might be appropriate for outreach.

Habitat:

Inventory and mapping of important sites. WHMSI 3 will provide an opportunity for follow up to this topic, if selected as one of the thematic sessions.

Public Awareness: Public awareness program on conservation and sustainable use and electronic information exchange.

Proposed Action(s): 1) Compile a list of existing materials that may be used for public outreach and identify gaps, and share with all WHMSI partners; and 2) Ensure that all relevant WHMSI websites (USFWS, OAS, Eco-Index, others) are linked.

Follow-up: Information will be incorporated into WHMSI's websites managed by USFWS, Eco-Index and CREHO, and managers of these websites will be instructed to make the appropriate links.

Administration: Regional associations to exchange information

among wildlife protection agencies; and establishment of a regional bird banding center.

Proposed Action: Request WHMSI focal points in each country to develop and circulate a directory of organizations that relate to WHMSI for his/her country with whom they will share information.

Follow-up: ISC government representatives will send a letter with this request to WHMSI governmental focal points in the countries within their subregions. Once this directory is compiled, it will be posted on the WHMSI websites, added to the WHMSI distribution list, and announced in an upcoming WHMSI update.

Proposed Action: Consider organizing a capacity building workshop on methodologies for monitoring different species taxa and the need to standardize methodologies for studies of migratory birds.

Follow-up: WHMSI 3 will provide an opportunity for follow up to this topic, if selected as one of the thematic sessions.

Coordination / Partnerships:

Establishment of a center for information sharing; and joint planning of activities under international conventions.

Proposed Action: Explore signing MOUs with key initiatives.

Follow-up: An MOU has been signed with the U.S. Committee of the North American Bird Conservation Initiative (U.S. NABCI). ISC members will approach other entities and programs for future MOUs.

Proposed Action: Establish a WHMSI website independent of USFWS.

Follow-up: The Ramsar Regional Center for Training and Research on Wetlands in the Western Hemisphere (CREHO) is building a WHMSI website. A preliminary version will be shared as soon as it is available.

Threats:

WHMSI 3 will provide an opportunity for follow up to this topic, if selected as one of the thematic sessions.

Eco-Index WHMSI Pathway

We would like to remind all WHMSI partners that the Eco-Index WHMSI Pathway (<http://www.eco-index.org/migratory/>) is a great bilingual resource on migratory species programs. The Pathway aims to create a cohesive, international community of non-governmental and government entities working to conserve migratory species, by providing a bilingual space where you can easily learn from one another, promote your advances, and share your lessons learned. The WHMSI Pathway now includes more than 250 project listings in its "Projects & Tools" section, listed according to the needs that WHMSI conference participants have identified. To share information about your projects, newsletters, upcoming events, and/or any relevant reports about migratory species conservation with your colleagues in the WHMSI Pathway, please send your information to Melissa Krenke (mkrenke@ra.org).

Draft WHMSI Terms of Reference

ISC members discussed the draft Terms of Reference. It was agreed that given the unofficial nature of the document, it should be renamed "Purpose and Organization". Members discussed comments and issues raised by WHMSI participants, and agreed on a process to address them.

The Third WHMSI Conference will dedicate time during the plenary to discuss this draft document, followed by further work to finalize the language. Members also agreed to include a sentence on "facilitation" within the guiding principles section.

Third Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Initiative (WHMSI) Conference

The final item of the ISC meeting was discussion of the agenda, date, location and funding for WHMSI 3.

Proposed Date: April-May 2008

Location: Trinidad & Tobago, Panama, Paraguay, or Ecuador

Participants: WHMSI focal points from all countries in the Western Hemisphere, ISC members, all interested Convention and NGO partners, and interested individuals. ISC members will reach out to selected indigenous groups and encourage them to participate as well.

Draft AGENDA

Note: WHMSI 3 will seek to facilitate coordination among related migratory species initiatives (WH-SRN, PIF, Birdlife, Sea Turtles, Waterbird Council, others) by helping to organize side meetings before and after the official conference. The goal is to foster synergies for better collaboration and more efficient use of resources and to maximize Latin American participation in these initiatives.

Day 1:

1. Keynote address to plenary
2. Purpose and Organization Document (formerly named Terms of Reference)
3. Capacity building: GEF update and follow-up, new focus of USFWS' Wildlife Without Borders-Latin America/Caribbean and Mexico programs, other resources
4. Presentations by key donors on their migratory species interests
5. Partnerships: Signed MOUs, outreach to other migratory species networks
6. Items relating to other priorities identified at the first WHMSI Conference

Day 2: Field Trip

Days 3 and 4: Thematic sessions with up to two themes per day (see the Call for Proposals for Thematic Sessions below). Thematic sessions will address particular themes, and should consider including background presentations/case studies, group discussions and recommendations, incorporation of input and buy-in of governments and NGOs, and proposed follow-up for potentially joint projects.

Afternoon of Day 4:

Closing of Conference

Call for Proposals for Thematic Sessions at the Third WHMSI Conference

All WHMSI partners and organizations interested in migratory species, conservation and management are invited to submit proposals for thematic sessions to be included at the Third WHMSI Conference.

Some potential themes include:

- *Adaptation to climate change*
- *Interaction among conservationists*
- *Monitoring*
- *Capacity strengthening in project development and management for grass roots NGOs*
- *Invasive species*
- *Avian influenza*
- *Guidance to relevant funding programs (e.g. Neotropical Migratory Birds Conservation Act) from LAC*
- *Others as proposed*

PLEASE SEND A BRIEF PAPER (1-2 PAGES) DESCRIBING THE PROPOSED THEMATIC SESSION(S) BY DECEMBER 10TH 2007.

These papers should include:

- *Justification/Importance of Theme*
- *Targeted Audience*
- *Structure/Methodology of Session*
- *Expected Outcomes and Followup*
- *Main Organizer and Collaborators and Contact Information*

Please send proposals to Marina Ratchford at marina_ratchford@fws.gov.

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