



## ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES

### EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT FOR INTEGRAL DEVELOPMENT (SEDI)

#### REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFPs)

Capacity Building for the Cooperation in Conservation: Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Initiative (WHMSI)

#### WHMSI BACKGROUND

This hemispheric project encompassing 35 nations addresses issues from several mandates, endorsements and resolutions by the countries in the Western Hemisphere, including the 1940 Western Hemisphere Convention, the 1996 Santa Cruz Sustainable Development Summit and Santa Cruz +10 Ministerial, and the 2001 Summit of the Americas. In response to a call from the Heads of State of the Western Hemisphere countries to "*advance hemispheric conservation of plants, animals and ecosystems through...the development of a hemispheric strategy to support the conservation of migratory wildlife throughout the Americas*", wildlife directors responsible for the management of flora and fauna and other senior officials have developed the Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Initiative. WHMSI is building country capacity to conserve and manage migratory wildlife. It improves hemispheric communication on conservation issues of common interest, provides training in priority areas, strengthens the exchange of information needed for informed decision-making, and provides a forum to address emerging issues such as new threats to migratory species, or the connections between wildlife disease and human diseases. Through the proposed project, all countries in the Western Hemisphere will benefit from strengthened cooperation among nations and other stakeholders on migratory species conservation – the animals in question range throughout the Americas.

At the ministerial level, the agencies designated to protect wildlife have stated that the need to work collaboratively on a regional basis has escalated in the last century as threats to wildlife populations in the Western Hemisphere become more complex, with greater impacts on biodiversity operating across broader geographic scales. Modern threats to marine and terrestrial wildlife in the Western Hemisphere present challenges that can only be addressed effectively by the strategic alignment of stakeholders in wildlife conservation throughout North America, Latin America and the Caribbean.

As a result of this growing need for regional cooperation, in October 2003, representatives from 25 government wildlife agencies in the Western Hemisphere and over 40 international conservation groups and stakeholders came together in Termas de Puyehue, Chile, to participate in the Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Conference. With a visionary disregard of traditional geographical and political borders, and an expanding mandate to look at conservation of all migratory species and common wildlife conservation issues, government wildlife agency representatives and non-government organization participants of the Conference created a forum for collaboration and cooperation to conserve the valuable wildlife of the Western Hemisphere.

The purpose of this conference was to develop cooperative strategies for conservation of migratory species and collaboration more broadly on a wide array of wildlife conservation issues among the countries of the Western Hemisphere. The representatives created an Interim Steering Committee to augment implementation of the key priorities identified at the Conference, one of the most important ones being to increase wildlife management capacity building to countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. All priorities are within the specific context of international or regional conservation needs for migratory species.

The Second Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Conference entitled "Hands across the Hemisphere: Helping People to Help Wildlife" was attended by over 100 participants, representing 30 countries of the hemisphere and more than 60 NGOs and Conventions. Hosted by the Minister of Environment and

Energy of Costa Rica, the Conference reviewed the priority needs identified in Chile, with a focus on capacity building. The event was devoted to the review and finalization of this FEMCIDI proposal. Participants were asked to identify and prioritize “Capacity Building Needs for Transboundary Migratory Species”.

This proposal has been prepared and endorsed by the Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Initiative (WHMSI)’s Interim Steering Committee, including:

Government representatives from the following countries: United States (Chair), Colombia, Costa Rica, Saint Lucia, and Uruguay; International Conventions: Wetlands (Ramsar), Migratory Species (CMS), Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles, and the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife of the Wider Caribbean (SPAW); and International NGOs: Birdlife International, American Bird Conservancy, Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network, and World Wildlife Fund. In addition, the proposal has been shared with and received support from contributor countries such as Canada, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Paraguay, Saint Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago. Ecuador and Panama have sent additional letters of support for WHMSI. The Environment Minister of Costa Rica is one of the leading advocates of this initiative and has reached out to other countries to solicit their support of WHMSI. The WHMSI concept and the need for capacity building were approved in 2003 and 2005 by wildlife directors of all countries in the hemisphere.

National support and participation may also be measured by the hundreds of hours of staff time contributed toward the start-up and project development efforts and by the demonstrated willingness of agencies and organizations in-country to share migratory species information.

The intended beneficiaries are government personnel, industry and communities, as relevant to the conservation of migratory species in the countries of the Americas Hemisphere. An investment in WHMSI will result in global benefits considerably exceeding those that would likely accrue over the next decade through national efforts alone. All the countries in the Americas will benefit directly and/or indirectly from this project, especially communities whose development depends on biodiversity resources, people who are vulnerable to natural disasters, students and scientific community, and policy makers.

Strengthening and replication of successful training programs (past and ongoing) on wildlife management and conservation will be a major objective of this project. Such programs include those offered by the following institutions and countries, among many others:

- Graduate degree programs: Universidad Catolica and Universidad Mayor (Chile); Federal University of Minas Gerais, Belo Horizonte (Brazil); National Autonomous University (Costa Rica); National University of Cordoba (Argentina); UNELLEZ (Venezuela); Postgraduate College, Salinas de Hidalgo (Mexico); St. Louis Zoo/University of Missouri, St. Louis at Guatuzos Wildlife Refuge (Nicaragua)
- Reserve Manager Training: Ducks Unlimited of Mexico; Organization for Tropical Studies (Costa Rica); PRONATURA (Mexico); State Forestry Institute of Minas Gerais, Belo Horizonte, Brazil
- Park Warden Training: Instituto de Historia Natural (Mexico); State Forestry Institute of Minas Gerais, Belo Horizonte (Brazil)
- Decision-Maker Training: Organization for Tropical Studies (Costa Rica)
- In-Service Training for Government Personnel: Instituto Nacional de Ecologia (Mexico); National Council for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity (Mexico)
- Community Education: Bat Conservation International (Mexico); Neotropical Center for Training on Wetlands (Chile); San Diego Natural History Museum-PROBEA (Mexico); ARCAS (Guatemala); APECO (Peru); WWF Marine Turtle Program (Costa Rica, Panama, Guyana, Suriname, Colombia, Mexico); West Indian whistling duck and wetlands conservation and community outreach project in the Caribbean.
- Costa Rican training institutions, with support from WWF and the Swiss Government, have formed a loose coalition, including CATIE, UNA, OTS, TSC, University for Peace, and UCI’s Latin American PA School.

As stated above, a key element of this capacity building project is coordination with other relevant actors such as the international conventions, treaties, accords and initiatives. Of note, WHMSI is working closely with and has received full support from the Secretariat of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) the Ramsar Convention, the Cartagena Convention and its SPAW Protocol and the InterAmerican Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (IAC).

CMS aims to conserve terrestrial, marine and avian migratory species throughout their range. CMS Parties strive to protect the most endangered of these animals, conserving or restoring the places where they live, mitigating obstacles to migration and controlling other factors that might endanger them. Besides establishing obligations for each State joining the Convention, CMS promotes concerted action among the Range States of many of these species. In Decision VI/20, the CBD Conference of the Parties declared CMS as the CBD lead partner on migratory species conservation while recognizing that migratory species are “unique global components of biological diversity” whose conservation requires international cooperation. As this is a complex process, the WHMSI initiative will work towards bringing the countries of the Western Hemisphere to a level of understanding and capacity that they will be able to accede to or ratify the Convention and will serve as a hemispheric forum to solve problems and identify solutions. Regional collaboration is forged under CMS through specialized international instruments (both binding and legally non-binding) with accompanying action plans. WHMSI will provide a strong basis for growing CMS membership in the Western Hemisphere, the elaboration of CMS Agreements and action plans as well as greater participation in the CMS Small Grants Program.

While CMS acts as a framework Convention, WHMSI will prove strategic in clarifying agreements and forging less formal instruments, such as Memoranda of Cooperation with the 4 conventions that are already WHMSI partners. WHMSI additionally can break down specific needs of sub regions that share unique conditions such as the English-speaking Caribbean, or the countries that share the Amazon Basin. The development of models tailored to the requirements of the Western Hemisphere is a unique capacity of WHMSI and may prove to be fruitful in getting additional country ratification for CMS.

The Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas (SPAW) Protocol, born out of the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment for the Wider Caribbean Region (Cartagena Convention, 1983), came into force in 2000 and is still today the only regional biodiversity agreement for the advancement of the conservation and protection of the coastal and marine environment in the Wider Caribbean. The objectives of the SPAW Protocol are to protect important and fragile ecosystems in the Wider Caribbean, conserve threatened and endangered species of the region and protect important species to prevent them to become threatened or endangered. The Protocol establishes the national and regional protection measures for protected areas and species, including the development of guidelines, places emphasis on capacity building, training and awareness and on the need to involve local communities and other stakeholders in all stages of the conservation and management processes. The Protocol also establishes a Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee which meets annually and includes representatives from the Contracting Parties, other governments and the scientific and NGO community. The Annexes to the SPAW Protocol containing the species requiring special protection include several migratory species. SPAW programs and partnerships within the Caribbean region, ranging from well-established multilateral initiatives such as WIDECAST to more recent programs – e.g. the regional network of Caribbean Marine Protected Areas Managers (CaMPAM) and the Action Plan for Conservation of Marine Mammals in the Wider Caribbean – also stand to benefit significantly from the convergence offered by WHMSI with regard to issue exposure, institution strengthening, intergovernmental commitments, and cross-sectoral coalition-building, training and outreach.

With regard to the Convention on Biological Diversity, WHMSI can make a particularly useful contribution to the extent that CBD is unlikely to provide the sort of protection to migratory species that it offers to endemic species, since their travels take them outside the borders of areas considered priority by CBD. In particular, the training courses and curriculum materials supported by the capacity building plan

of this project will contribute towards effective decision-making for migratory species management in the hemisphere. WHMSI can also help governments implement their National Plans of Action that they developed as a response to CBD.

Last but not least, key stakeholders benefiting from this capacity building project include funding entities that provide support for capacity building activities and migratory species/ biodiversity conservation. In addition to those listed as official contributors in the following section on Co-financing, potential funding partners that will be approached during the course of the project include established programs like DAAD; WWF's Russell Train scholarships; USAID and other cooperation agencies' capacity building programs; training opportunities supported by the private sector; Fulbright Programs for scholars and international visitors; UNESCO scholarships for young scientists; Joint Ventures; as well as CMS small grants programs.

<b>Beneficiaries / Target Group</b>	<b>Description</b>
Government personnel, industry and communities, as relevant to the conservation of migratory species in the countries of the Americas Hemisphere.	An investment in WHMSI will result in benefits to the Hemisphere considerably exceeding those that would likely accrue over the next decade through national efforts alone. All the countries in the Americas will benefit directly and/or indirectly from this project, especially communities whose development depends on biodiversity resources, people who are vulnerable to natural disasters, students and scientific community, and policy makers.
At the ministerial level, the agencies designated to protect wildlife have stated that the need to work collaboratively on a regional basis has escalated in the last century as threats to wildlife populations in the Western Hemisphere become more complex, with greater impacts on biodiversity operating across broader geographic scales.	As a result of this growing need for regional cooperation, in October 2003 in Chile and in January 2006 in Costa Rica representatives from 28 government wildlife agencies in the Western Hemisphere and over 40 international conservation groups and stakeholders came together to participate in the Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Conference. With a visionary disregard of traditional geographical and political borders, and an expanding mandate to look at conservation of all migratory species and common wildlife conservation issues, government wildlife agency representatives and non-government organization participants of the Conference created a forum for collaboration and cooperation to conserve the valuable wildlife of the Western Hemisphere.
Conventions, NGOs, and academic institutions.	Modern threats to marine and terrestrial wildlife in the Western Hemisphere present challenges that can only be addressed effectively by the strategic alignment of stakeholders in wildlife conservation throughout North America, Latin America and the Caribbean.