

# **43<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention**

## **5.2. Amphibians and Reptiles: Group of Experts meeting & Conservation of Marine Turtles**

### **11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Group of Experts on the Conservation of Amphibians and Reptiles**



## 5.2. Amphibians and Reptiles: 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Group of Experts

- Tuesday 26 September 2023, Strasbourg / online
- Report of the 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Group of Experts – [T-PVS\(2023\)27](#)
- Former Chair: Ms Annemarieke Spitzen-van der Sluijs (The Netherlands):  
Thank you!

## 5.2. Amphibians and Reptiles: 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Group of Experts: national activities and initiatives

- **Activities and initiatives implemented on herpetofauna conservation in Contracting Parties to the Bern Convention (Bosnia and Herzegovina, France, Hungary, the Netherlands, Switzerland, United Kingdom, + Societas Europaea Herpetologica)**

## 5.2. Amphibians and Reptiles: 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Group of Experts: *Batrachochytrium salamandrivorans*

- Impact and management of the *Batrachochytrium salamandrivorans* chytrid fungus:
  - Main outbreak of Bsal in Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium and Northern Spain – could lead to the local extinction of the salamanders in these areas
  - Importance of rapid detection of Bsal cases and rapid response – proper implementation and enforcement of the Animal Health Law, structural funding for disease control, development of sustainable disease mitigation measures
- Reports by parties on national measures (Czech Republic, France, Hungary, The Netherlands, United Kingdom)
- Conclusion: importance of an increased fight and international pressure against Bsal – essential role of the Bern Convention

## 5.2. Amphibians and Reptiles: 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Group of Experts: Important Herpetofauna Areas

- Interim report on the Important herpetofauna area (IHA) project: no recognised map of the most important areas for reptiles and amphibians in Europe while defining such IHAs is of great importance, in particular for directing conservation action, ensuring sufficient site safeguards, raising stakeholders' awareness of biodiversity and ascertaining whether sufficient conservation attention is being given to key biodiversity hot spots
- Conclusion: call for further development in the identification of IHAs in Europe

## 5.2. Amphibians and Reptiles: 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Group of Experts: Important Herpetofauna Areas

**Invitation to Contracting Parties to provide their views (in writing):**

- a) Would it help your country in respect of biodiversity conservation to know what the Important Herpetofauna Areas are in your country? (on Global/European/National level)**
- b) If so, would it help if first a general analyses will be done on European level? (preferably on 10x 10km scale)**
- c) or do you need more information first to come to an answer?**

## 5.2. Amphibians and Reptiles: 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Group of Experts: Invasive Alien Species

- Presentation of the relevant recommendations on alien pathogens and pathogens spread by IAS and e-commerce and IAS → suggestions for possible follow-up and cooperation with the Group of Experts on Invasive Alien Species, as issues are closely interlinked
- Conclusion: proposals to the Standing Committee for a collaboration with the Group of Experts on IAS: online meeting of a small group, to report to the Bureau prior June 2024

## 5.2. Amphibians and Reptiles: 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Group of Experts: Invasive Alien Species

- Creation of a horizontal working group on wildlife pathogens under the umbrella of the Bern Convention, to identify and engage with relevant stakeholders, networks and organisations; connect research initiatives across countries and fields of expertise; analyse current policy and legislation gaps which prevent an effective management of the problem; formulate priority research topics;
- Circulation of a questionnaire to Contracting Parties and the chairs of the main working groups to ask for relevant information, and assess needs and expectancies in relation to future activities on wildlife pathogens and alien species;
- Organisation of one or more dedicated workshops (including a preparatory meeting of a selected group of experts to plan the details of the agenda and scope of such workshops);
- Development of an action plan for wildlife pathogens, including the identification and discussion of key management tool;
- Development of a communication plan for the dissemination of material in multiple languages
- Raise awareness on biological invasion risks associated with e-commerce, among all relevant subjects and institutions;
- Adopt and enforce national legislation regulating invasive alien species, and make the lists of regulated species easily accessible to all subjects (sellers, buyers, platforms, custom organisations, environmental protection agencies, etc.);
- Collaborate with the main platforms and actors of e-trade of plants and animals to prevent the e-commerce of invasive alien species;
- Ensure that sellers and buyers are provided with key information and warnings on the species they sell or buy, including on their potential invasiveness;
- Monitor e-commerce of invasive alien species at all scales.



## 5.2. Amphibians and Reptiles: 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Group of Experts

**DECISION: The Standing Committee is invited to:**

- take note of the report of the 11th meeting of the Group of Experts on the Conservation of Amphibians and Reptiles which took place on 26th September 2023;
- take note of the information provided by Parties on national activities and initiatives on the conservation of amphibians and reptiles;
- take note of the information provided by Parties on national measures to control the spread of *Batrachochytrium salamandrivorans* chytrid fungus (Bsal) and the need to strengthen international pressure against Bsal as well as communication, and that all Parties to the Bern Convention should be made aware of the EU Animal Health Law and how it is implemented in practice;
- take note of the proposals by the Group to reinforce its collaboration with the Group of Experts on Invasive Alien Species for a better fight against alien pathogens and pathogens spread by IAS and ecommerce and IAS.