



12th MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE
31 January – 01 February 2017, Paris, France

**PROPOSAL CONCERNING ARREARS IN THE PAYMENT OF ANNUAL
CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE AEWA GENERAL TRUST FUND**

Introduction

This document provides information on the status of Parties' outstanding contributions to the AEWA General Trust Fund. It also describes measures currently employed by the AEWA Meeting of Parties (MOP) and the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat to encourage the payment of contribution arrears, as well as a proposal for additional future action.

Actions requested from the Standing Committee:

1. Note the current status of Parties' outstanding annual contributions.
2. Note the measures already taken by the AEWA MOP and the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat to encourage the payment of arrears.
3. Approve the additional actions proposed by the Secretariat to encourage the payment of contribution arrears.

Background

According to Article V 2. of the Agreement “each Party shall contribute to the budget of the Agreement in accordance with the United Nations scale of assessment. [...] Decisions relating to the budget and any changes to the scale of assessment that may be found necessary shall be adopted by the Meeting of the Parties by consensus.”

At each session of the MOP, the AEWA Parties adopt the budget for the next triennium as well as a scale for the contributions of the Parties, in accordance with Article V 2. AEWA. The current AEWA budget 2016-2018 and related scale of contributions was adopted through Resolution 6.18 on Financial and Administrative Matters at the 6th Session of the Meeting of the Parties in November 2015.

Measures currently taken to encourage the payment of annual contributions by the AEWA Parties

AEWA Resolution 6.18 requests Parties to pay their annual contributions promptly as far as possible, but in any case not later than the end of June of the year to which they relate. It also requests Parties, in particular those that are required to pay the minimum contribution, to consider paying for the whole triennium in one instalment.

AEWA Resolution 6.21 on resource mobilization for the implementation of AEWA, moreover,” requests all AEWA Contracting Parties, especially those which are consistently in arrears with the payment of their assessed contributions to the AEWA General Trust Fund, to ensure the payment of the outstanding contributions as soon as possible, and to liaise with the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat for any support or guidance needed to facilitate the payment process”.

The AEWA General Trust Fund is administered by the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Every year (generally in February) UNEP sends an invoice to each AEWA Party for its contribution, either to its Permanent Representative to the UN or to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or responsible ministry (e.g. Ministry of Environment), which also lists all contributions in arrears for previous years, if applicable. In addition to the original invoices sent by UNEP, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat forwards copies of these invoices directly to the AEWA National Focal Points, with a request for follow up. It also sends out a reminder to the AEWA Focal Points, as applicable, in the second half of each year. The Secretariat, moreover, offers support and advice to Parties in arrears with payments of their annual contributions.

Payment of contributions in arrears

More than half of the AEWA Parties pay their assessed contribution by the specified deadline, i.e. the end of June of the year to which it relates. However, many Parties do not pay their contributions by the specified deadline, and sometimes not in the year in which they are due. Annex 1 summarises the status of payments of annual contributions from Contracting Parties as at 5 December 2016. Unpaid pledges amount to a total of EUR 222,275 for 2015 and previous years and EUR 98,234 for 2016. The total of the unpaid pledges comes close to a third of the average annual AEWA budget.

Actions already taken to encourage timely payments:

1. The Secretariat provides AEWA National Focal Points with copies of the original invoice sent to their government (usually to the UN Permanent Representative or Ministry of Foreign Affairs or other Ministry in charge) by UNEP with a request for follow up. It also sends out a reminder, as applicable, in the second half of each year.
2. The Secretariat offers and provides its support to Parties to solve any country-specific issues in this context on a regular basis.

3. Through Resolution 6.18, the Meeting of Parties excludes countries that have payments in arrears of more than three years from sponsorship of their delegates to attend AEWA meetings.
4. Countries with payments in arrears of more than three years are not eligible for receiving assistance under the AEWA Small Grants Fund (SGF), in accordance with the guidelines for the operation of the fund.

Moreover, AEWA Contracting Parties which provide voluntary financial contributions to support the implementation of the Agreement tend more and more to restrict financial support to Parties that have payments in arrears of more than three years, in accordance with AEWA Resolution 6.18.

Proposal

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat proposes the following additional actions to be taken:

1. To make publicly available on the AEWA website, and to regularly update, an overview of the status of contribution payments to the General Trust Fund, in line with the practice of other MEAs and UN agencies (e.g. CBD¹, the Ramsar Convention², UNFCCC³, UNCCD⁴). It is proposed to publish a table which shows all contributions in arrears including the running year, as soon as the deadline of end of June has passed (compare Annex 1);
2. To include the following suggested paragraphs in the next draft Resolution to the AEWA MOP⁷ on Financial and Administrative matters:

The Meeting of the Parties:

Urges all Contracting Parties with arrears in assessed contributions to the General Trust Fund to settle them as soon as possible, *requests* the Secretariat to work with Parties with outstanding contributions of more than three years in order to identify appropriate actions for facilitating the payment of these contributions and to report back to each meeting of the AEWA Standing Committee and session of the AEWA MOP on activities taken in this regard and results achieved, and *requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to address the settlement of contributions from countries which are unable to transfer money internationally as a result of the current political and security instability in these countries.

Decides to exclude delegates from countries that have payments in arrears of more than three years from being elected as representatives to the governing bodies⁵ of the Agreement.

¹ <https://www.cbd.int/convention/parties/contributions.shtml#tab=2>

² http://www.google.de/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwjsw_6VtN7MAhUH1BoKHWzqCdIQFggcMAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ramsar.org%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fdocuments%2Flibrary%2Fsc48-10_contributions_e.pdf&usg=AFQjCNEtbGF18IX9m9KV2H5qYe33pLUn2Q

³ http://unfccc.int/documentation/documents/advanced_search/items/6911.php?preref=600008989

⁴ <http://www.unccd.int/en/Pages/SearchResult.aspx?k=contributions>

⁵ This would exclude delegates from being elected as member to the Standing Committee or any committee established by the Meeting of the Parties (e.g. the Credentials Committee).

**ANNEX 1: STATUS OF CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE GENERAL TRUST FUND FOR THE
AFRICAN-EURASIAN MIGRATORY WATERBIRD AGREEMENT**

as at 15 December 2016

	Number of years in arrears	Total arrears 2000 - 2015	Arrears for 2016	Total arrears 2000 - 2016
CONTRACTING PARTIES	YEARS	EUR	EUR	EUR
Albania		-	-	-
Algeria		-	-	-
Belarus		-	-	-
Belgium		-	-	-
Benin	4	5,991.00	2,000.00	7,991.00
Bulgaria		-	-	-
Burkina Faso	4*	4,500.00	2,000.00	6,500.00
Burundi	1	-	2,000.00	2,000.00
Chad	6*	8,333.00	2,000.00	10,333.00
Congo Brazzaville	12	14,361.83	2,000.00	16,361.83
Cote d'Ivoire		-	-	-
Croatia		-	-	-
Cyprus	1	-	2,000.00	2,000.00
Czech Republic		-	-	-
Denmark		-	-	-
Djibouti	13*	14,470.00	2,000.00	16,470.00
Egypt	2	3,833.00	3,833.00	7,666.00
Equatorial Guinea	1	-	2,000.00	2,000.00
Estonia		-	-	-
Ethiopia	2	2,000.00	2,000.00	4,000.00
European Commission		-	-	-
Finland		-	-	-
France		-	-	-
Gabon	5*	6,167.00	2,000.00	8,167.00
Gambia	1	-	2,000.00	2,000.00
Georgia		-	-	-
Germany, F.R.		-	-	-
Ghana		-	-	-
Guinea	1	-	2,000.00	2,000.00
Guinea - Bissau	11*	14,300.00	2,000.00	16,300.00
Hungary		-	-	-
Iceland	1	-	2,000.00	2,000.00
Ireland		-	-	-
Israel		-	-	-
Italy		-	-	-
Jordan	2	2,000.00	2,000.00	4,000.00
Kenya	1	-	2,000.00	2,000.00
Latvia		-	-	-
Lebanon	4	5,051.63	2,000.00	7,051.63
Libya	12*	32,619.30	3,203.00	35,822.30
Lithuania		-	-	-

*No payment since accession to the Agreement

	Number of years in arrears	Total arrears 2000 - 2015	Arrears for 2016	Total arrears 2000 - 2016
CONTRACTING PARTIES	YEARS	EUR	EUR	EUR
Luxembourg		-	-	-
Macedonia	7	12,000.00	2,000.00	14,000.00
Madagascar			-	-
Mali	4	5,999.00	2,000.00	7,999.00
Mauritania	1		2,000.00	2,000.00
Mauritius		-	-	-
Moldova		-	-	-
Monaco		-	-	-
Montenegro	1	-	2,000.00	2,000.00
Morocco		-	-	-
Netherlands		-	-	-
Niger	17*	14,703.75	2,000.00	16,703.75
Nigeria	1	-	2,000.00	2,000.00
Norway	1	-	16,288.00	16,288.00
Portugal	3	23,676.00	11,838.00	35,514.00
Romania		-	-	-
Rwanda	1		2,000.00	2,000.00
Senegal	6	10,000.00	2,000.00	12,000.00
Slovakia		-	-	-
Slovenia		-	-	-
South Africa		-	-	-
Spain		-	-	-
Sudan	14	15,174.20	2,000.00	17,174.20
Swaziland	1	-	2,000.00	2,000.00
Sweden		-	-	-
Switzerland		-	-	-
Syria	6	9,885.45	2,000.00	11,885.45
Togo	1	-	2,000.00	2,000.00
Tunisia	7	11,600.05	2,000.00	13,600.05
U.K.		-	-	-
Uganda	1	-	1,071.56	1,071.56
Ukraine		-	-	-
United Rep. of Tanzania	3	4,000.00	2,000.00	6,000.00
Uzbekistan	1	1,610.00	-	1,610.00
Zimbabwe		-	-	-
Total		222,275.21	98,233.56	320,508.77

*No payment since accession to the Agreement