

18th MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE
14-16 March 2023, Bonn, Germany

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR AEWA TO SUPPORT THE POST-2020 GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY
FRAMEWORK**

Compiled by the Technical Committee

Summary

The Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) 15th Conference of Parties (COP15) adopted the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) in December 2022¹. As for the preceding Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 (AEWA Resolutions 7.2 and 8.9; document AEWA/MOP 8.35), the objective is for the GBF to be applicable to, and implemented by, a wide range of other actors including other biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) such as AEWA.

MOP8 document AEWA/MOP 8.36 Rev.2 reflected on the then main themes within the formal first draft issued by CBD Secretariat in July 2021. Resolution 8.9 requested that the Technical Committee develop an updated version of this analysis after the adoption of the Framework by COP15, to be submitted to the Standing Committee, and following sign-off, to be made available to Parties and others. This document presents such an analysis.

There is a better direct fit of the GBF Targets with AEWA's core objectives than was the case with the Aichi Targets established under the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 ([document AEWA/MOP 8.35](#)).

The main Targets of the GBF relate closely to AEWA objectives, and, in summary and using descriptive language not presented in the GBF, are:

1) Reducing threats to biodiversity

1. Spatial planning for land- and sea-use and eliminating loss of areas of high ecological integrity;
2. Promotion of marine and terrestrial ecosystem restoration and connectivity;
3. At least 30% of global land and sea as integrated, conserved and managed protected areas;
4. Species recovery and conservation, and minimising human-wildlife conflict;
5. Wild species harvesting, trade and use that is sustainable, legal and safe for human health;
6. Invasive alien species;
7. Pollution control;
8. Climate change adaptation and mitigation;

2) Meeting people's needs through sustainable use and benefit-sharing

9. Food security through sustainable species management;
10. Agricultural, aquaculture, fisheries and forestry sustainability and use;
11. Maintaining nature's contributions to people including ecosystem-based approaches;
12. Human health and well-being from nature;
13. Genetic resource benefit sharing including traditional knowledge;

¹ Convention on Biological Diversity 2022. *Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework*. CBD/COP/15/L.25. 14 pp.
[EN: <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/e6d3/cd1d/daf663719a03902a9b116c34/cop-15-l-25-en.pdf>]
[FR: <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/0bde/b7c0/00c058bbfd77574515f170bd/cop-15-l-25-fr.pdf>]

3) Tools and solutions for implementation and mainstreaming

14. Biodiversity fully integrated into policy;
15. Promotion of sustainable production and supply chains by businesses;
16. Addressing unsustainable consumption patterns and reduction of waste;
17. Biotechnology impacts;
18. Elimination of harmful incentives;
19. Increase financial incentives;
20. Strengthen capacity-building and development;
21. Information for decision-makers including traditional knowledge;
22. Equitable and effective participation in decision making; and
23. Gender equality.

The full implementation of AEWA's own Strategic Plan 2019-2027 will significantly contribute to the delivery of the four Goals of the Framework.

For a number of issues there is a lack of AEWA-related guidance as to implementation that will best benefit migratory waterbirds. Development of such guidance would be useful. AEWA Resolution 8.9 requested that the Technical Committee monitor and contribute, as appropriate, to the development of relevant guidance on the following issues under other multilateral fora and bring such guidance to Contracting Parties' attention:

- spatial planning;
- habitat restoration;
- addressing air- and water-borne nutrient pollution;
- agricultural sustainability (including best practice agri-environment provisions, and the role of incentives);
- mainstreaming biodiversity requirements into other policies (including the positive and negative consequences of incentives); and
- provision of suitable information for decision makers.

Action requested from the Technical Committee

The Technical Committee is requested to review this updated version of document AEWA/MOP 8.36 Rev.2 and finalise it for submission to the Standing Committee.

Introduction

The Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) 15th Conference of Parties adopted a Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF). As for the preceding Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 (AEWA Resolutions 7.2 and 8.9; document AEWA/MOP 8.35), the objective is that the GBF be applicable to, and implemented by, a wide range of other actors including other biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) such as AEWA. The full implementation of AEWA's own Strategic Plan will significantly contribute to the delivery of the goals of the Framework.

This paper presents:

- a) a summary of the background, purpose, goals and targets of the Framework;
- b) a reflection on the decisions and guidance already agreed by AEWA's MOP (and other relevant MEAs) as they relate to each of 23 action-oriented Targets for 2030; and
- c) a reflection on possible ways through which the implementation activities of AEWA and its Parties could be enhanced in relation to delivery against the Targets of the Framework.

Background to the Global Biodiversity Framework

"The global biodiversity framework seeks to respond to the *Global Assessment Report of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services* issued by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) in 2019², fifth edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook*, and many other scientific documents provide ample evidence that, despite ongoing efforts, biodiversity is deteriorating worldwide at rates unprecedented in human history. As the IPBES *Global Assessment* report states:

"An average of around 25 per cent of species in assessed animal and plant groups are threatened, suggesting that around 1 million species already face extinction, many within decades, unless action is taken to reduce the intensity of drivers of biodiversity loss. Without such action, there will be a further acceleration in the global rate of species extinction, which is already at least tens to hundreds of times higher than it has averaged over the past 10 million years.³

"The biosphere, upon which humanity as a whole depends, is being altered to an unparalleled degree across all spatial scales. Biodiversity – the diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems – is declining faster than at any time in human history.⁴

"Nature can be conserved, restored and used sustainably while other global societal goals are simultaneously met through urgent and concerted efforts fostering transformative change.

"The direct drivers of change in nature with the largest global impact have been (starting with those with the most impact) changes in land and sea use, direct exploitation of organisms, climate change, pollution and invasion of alien species. Those five direct drivers result from an array of underlying causes, the indirect drivers of change, which are, in turn, underpinned by social values and behaviours (...) The rate of change in the direct and indirect drivers differs among regions and countries.⁵

"The post-2020 global biodiversity framework, building on the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, its achievements, gaps, and lessons learned, and the experience and achievements of other relevant multilateral environmental agreements, sets out an ambitious plan to implement broad-based action to bring about a transformation in our societies' relationship with biodiversity by 2030, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals, and ensure that, by 2050, the shared vision of living in harmony with nature is fulfilled."

² IPBES 2019. *Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services*. E.S. Brondizio, J. Settele, S. Díaz, & H.T. Ngo (eds). IPBES Secretariat, Bonn. 1,148 pp. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3831673>.

³ Ibid, p. XV-XVI

⁴ Ibid, p. XIV

⁵ Ibid, p. XVI

The purpose of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework⁶

“The framework aims to catalyse, enable and galvanise urgent and transformative action by Governments, subnational and local governments, and with the involvement of all of society to halt and reverse biodiversity loss, to achieve the outcomes it sets out in its vision, mission, goals and targets, and thereby to contribute to the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and to its Protocols. The purpose is the full implementation of the three objectives of the Convention in a balanced manner.”

“The framework is action- and results-oriented, and aims to guide and promote at all levels the revision, development, updating, and implementation of policies, goals, targets, national biodiversity strategies and actions plans, and to facilitate monitoring and review of progress at all levels, in a more transparent and responsible manner.

“The framework promotes coherence, complementarity and cooperation between the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Protocols, other biodiversity related conventions, other relevant multilateral agreements and international institutions, respecting their mandates, and creates opportunities for cooperation and partnerships among the diverse actors to enhance implementation of the framework.”

Relationship with 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

“The framework is a contribution to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. At the same time, progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals and the achievement of sustainable development in all its three dimensions (environmental, social and economic) is necessary to create the conditions necessary to fulfil the goals and targets of the framework. It will place biodiversity, its conservation, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources, at the heart of the sustainable development agenda, recognising the important linkages between biological and cultural diversity.”

Kunming-Montreal Goals for 2050

“The framework has four long-term goals for 2050 related to the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity.

GOAL A

The integrity, connectivity and resilience of all ecosystems are maintained, enhanced, or restored, substantially increasing the area of natural ecosystems by 2050;

Human induced extinction of known threatened species is halted, and, by 2050, extinction rate and risk of all species are reduced tenfold, and the abundance of native wild species is increased to healthy and resilient levels;

The genetic diversity within populations of wild and domesticated species, is maintained, safeguarding their adaptive potential.

GOAL B

Biodiversity is sustainably used and managed and nature’s contributions to people, including ecosystem functions and services, are valued, maintained, and enhanced, with those currently in decline being restored, supporting the achievement of sustainable development within planetary boundaries, for the benefit of present and future generations.

GOAL C

The monetary and non-monetary benefits from the utilisation of genetic resources, and digital sequence information on genetic resources, and of traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources, as applicable, are shared fairly and equitably, including, as appropriate with indigenous peoples and local communities, and substantially increased by 2050, while ensuring traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources is appropriately protected, thereby contributing to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, in accordance with internationally agreed access and benefit-sharing instruments.

GOAL D

Adequate means of implementation, including financial resources, capacity-building, technical and scientific cooperation, and access to and transfer of technology to fully implement the post-2020 global biodiversity framework are secured and equitably accessible to all Parties, especially developing countries, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing States, as well as countries with economies in transition, progressively closing

⁶ From CBD/WG2020/3/3 – first draft, July 2021. {EN [here](#); FR [ici](#)}

the biodiversity finance gap of 700 billion dollars per year, and aligning financial flows with the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity.”

Kunming-Montreal 2030 Targets

“The framework has 23 action-oriented targets for urgent action over the decade to 2030. The actions set out in each target need to be initiated immediately and completed by 2030. Together, the results will enable achievement towards the outcome-oriented goals for 2050. Actions to reach these targets should be implemented consistently and in harmony with the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Protocols.”

The 23 targets (Table 1) address a wide range of broad issues, many of which have been the subject of past AEWA MOP decisions and guidance, and/or are already reflected in AEWA’s Strategic Plan for 2019-2027.

The issues addressed by each action-oriented target, are organised in three groups, and, in summary and using descriptive language not presented in the GBF, relate to:

1) Reducing threats to biodiversity

1. Spatial planning for land- and sea-use and eliminating loss of areas of high ecological integrity
2. Promotion of marine and terrestrial ecosystem restoration and connectivity
3. At least 30% of global land and sea as integrated, conserved, and managed protected areas
4. Species recovery and conservation, and minimising human-wildlife conflict
5. Wild species harvesting, trade and use that is sustainable, legal, and safe for human health
6. Invasive alien species
7. Pollution control
8. Climate change adaptation and mitigation

2) Meeting people’s needs through sustainable use and benefit-sharing

9. Food security through sustainable species management
10. Agricultural, aquaculture, fisheries and forestry sustainability and use
11. Maintaining nature’s contributions to people including ecosystem-based approaches
12. Human health and well-being from nature
13. Genetic resource benefit sharing including traditional knowledge

3) Tools and solutions for implementation and mainstreaming

14. Biodiversity fully integrated into policy
15. Promotion of sustainable production and supply chains by businesses
16. Addressing unsustainable consumption patterns and reduction of waste
17. Biotechnology impacts
18. Elimination of harmful incentives
19. Increase financial incentives
20. Strengthen capacity-building and development
21. Information for decision-makers including traditional knowledge
22. Equitable and effective participation in decision making
23. Gender equality

Many of these issues were identified by the CBD Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Targets and are given continuing attention given the failure of to achieve the Aichi Targets⁷.

Table 1 below presents a cross-matching of GBF targets against AEWA guidance and decisions on these topics together with their relevance for AEWA's implementation.

It should be noted that there is a better direct fit of the GBF targets with AEWA's core objectives than was the case with the Aichi Targets (Document AEWA/MOP 8.35).

Considerations for the implementation of the Framework

“The framework, including its Vision, Mission, Goals and Targets, is to be understood, acted upon, implemented, reported and evaluated, consistent with the following issues (summarised below)⁸:

- Contribution and rights of indigenous peoples and local communities;
- Different value systems;
- Whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach;
- National circumstances, priorities and capabilities;
- Collective effort towards targets;
- Right to development;
- Human rights-based approach;
- Gender;
- Fulfilment of the three objectives of the Convention and its Protocols and their balanced implementation;
- Consistency with international agreements or instruments;
- Principles of the Rio Declaration;
- Science and innovation;
- Ecosystem approach;
- Inter-generational equity;
- Formal and informal education;
- Access to financial resources;
- Cooperation and synergies; and
- Biodiversity and health.

Issues where full AEWA implementation will help deliver the Global Biodiversity Framework

AEWA implementation will have the greatest benefit to the Global Biodiversity Framework and the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals in relation to those actions that, in particular:

- ensure the conservation and wise use of national networks of protected areas, especially, but not restricted to, wetlands, and in both terrestrial and marine environments (Target 3);
- ensure that land-uses are fully compatible with sustaining migratory waterbird populations (Targets 1, 10, 14 & 18);

⁷ Convention on Biological Diversity 2020. *Global Biodiversity Outlook 5*. CBD, Montreal, Canada.

⁸ See GBF for full text related to each of these issues

- reduce, mitigate and compensate for habitat loss and degradation as appropriate, restore degraded habitats to reverse past losses and create new multifunctional wetlands (Targets 2, 14 & 15);
- address the causes and consequences of introductions of invasive alien species (Target 6);
- implement climate change adaptation measures, including nature-based solutions and ecosystem approaches related to the waterbird habitats (especially but not restricted to wetlands) (Targets 8 & 11);
- remove unnecessary causes of waterbird mortality and ensure that harvests, where made, are sustainable (Targets 4, 5 & 7); and
- develop strong engagement with local communities with respect to the management and wise use of waterbirds and their wetland habitats (Targets 9, 12, 21 & 22).

Missing guidance relevant to the implementation of AEWA

Cross-matching GBF targets with existing AEWA guidance (Table 1) indicates a number of issues, of high relevance both to the delivery of GBF and to AEWA objectives, but for which AEWA has not developed significant guidance for Parties. These include:

Issue	AEWA relevance	GBF target
Spatial planning	2019-2027 Strategic Plan , Action Plan; Plan of Action for Africa	Target 1
Habitat restoration	2019-2027 Strategic Plan , Action Plan; Plan of Action for Africa	Target 2
Addressing air- and water-borne nutrient pollution	2019-2027 Strategic Plan , Action Plan; Plan of Action for Africa	Target 7
Agricultural sustainability (including best practice agri-environment provisions, and the role of incentives)	2019-2027 Strategic Plan , Action Plan; Plan of Action for Africa ; multiple International Single Species Action Plans	Targets 10 and 18
Mainstreaming biodiversity requirements into other policies (including the positive and negative consequences of incentives)	2019-2027 Strategic Plan , Plan of Action for Africa , multiple International Single Species Action Plans	Target 14 and 18
Provision of suitable information for decision makers	2019-2027 Strategic Plan , Plan of Action for Africa	Target 21

AEWA Resolution 8.9 requested that the Technical Committee monitor and contribute, as appropriate, to the development of relevant guidance on the issues above under other multilateral fora and bring such guidance to Contracting Parties' attention.

Indicators

A suite of headline and other indicators⁹ have been developed as part of a monitoring framework for GBF. A number of these directly assess issues already evaluated by relevant indicators for AEWA's Strategic Plan 2019-2027 (such as coverage of protected areas; Red List Index; and extent to which harvesting is sustainable). It would be desirable for the Technical Committee to assess the extent to which AEWA indicators can contribute to GBF reporting and report this to MOP9.

⁹ CBD/COP/15/L.26 – {EN [here](#); FR [ici](#)}

Table 1. 2030 action-oriented Targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework ordered under broad issues

	Relevance for AEWA implementation	Core existing AEWA decisions and tools ¹⁰	Future needs and knowledge gaps relevant to AEWA ¹¹
1) Reducing threats to biodiversity			
<p>Issue – spatial planning for land-and sea-use and eliminating loss of areas of high ecological integrity</p> <p>Target 1. Ensure that all areas are under participatory integrated biodiversity inclusive spatial planning and/or effective management processes addressing land and sea use change, to bring the loss of areas of high biodiversity importance, including ecosystems of high ecological integrity, close to zero by 2030, while respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities</p>	<p>Highly relevant</p> <p>Establishment of spatial planning measures is a critical means by which good decision-making relating to the use of land and sea can be made. Such decision making should follow the principles of the Ecosystem Approach.</p> <p>Such decisions can control and determine habitat suitability beyond protected areas, thus providing for the requirements of dispersed waterbirds for which protected areas in themselves are an ineffective conservation response¹².</p> <p>Marine conservation issues: A scoping survey of seabird conservation requirements, including knowledge needs was presented to MOP 6 (Tarzia <i>et al.</i> 2015). These include survey needs at sea as the</p>	<p>Target 4.3 of the 2019-2027 Strategic Plan aims to identify and integrate national habitat conservation and management priorities into relevant sectoral policies.</p> <p>The Agreement’s Action Plan (3.2.3) requires that “Parties shall endeavour to make wise and sustainable use of all of the wetlands in their territory. In particular they shall endeavour to avoid degradation and loss of habitats that support populations listed in Table 1 through the introduction of appropriate regulations or standards and control measures. ...”</p> <p>Tools include the following Ramsar Handbooks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. 2: National Wetland Policies • No 8: Water-related guidance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion and publication of national wetland inventories as a key element of developing inventories of habitats important to the AEWA populations; • Fund and implement project to assess priority waterbird habitats across the Agreement area and establish an action plan, drawing on existing surveys and knowledge. • Collate systematically data and information on habitat losses across the Agreement area¹³; but this could only be realistically undertaken by remote sensing.

¹⁰ Tools include relevant Ramsar guidance documents (especially [Handbooks](#)) as appropriate given the almost complete accession of AEWA Parties to the Convention

¹¹ Taken from AEWA/MOP 8.30. Overview of knowledge gaps and needs relevant for AEWA implementation: priority needs in 2021

¹² Action Plan para. 3.2.4 requires that “Parties shall endeavour to develop strategies, according to an ecosystem approach, for the conservation of the habitats of all populations listed in Table 1, including the habitats of those populations that are dispersed”.

¹³ This has already been undertaken for inter-tidal flats by Murray *et al.* 2019.

	Relevance for AEWA implementation	Core existing AEWA decisions and tools ¹⁰	Future needs and knowledge gaps relevant to AEWA ¹¹
	<p>basis for the identification and establishment of marine protected areas; understanding and addressing bycatch of seabirds by marine fisheries; and prioritising the eradication of non-native mammalian predators on seabird breeding islands.</p> <p>Land-use and the potential for restoration: Away from protected areas, how land is used has major implications for many waterbird species. Recent international assessments (<i>e.g.</i> UNCCD 2017; IPBES 2018) have demonstrated the profoundly unsustainable approaches to land management. There is scope to address this through restoration, of direct benefit to waterbirds as well as typically resulting in carbon sequestration benefits also.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitivity mapping with respect to new energy infrastructure development and mapping of hazardous powerlines for retrofitting is needed. • Strategic guidance on wetland restoration in the context of AEWA and other stakeholders would be valuable.
<p>Issue – promotion of marine and terrestrial ecosystem restoration and connectivity</p> <p>Target 2. Ensure that by 2030 at least 30 per cent of areas of degraded terrestrial, inland water, and coastal and marine ecosystems are under effective restoration, in order to enhance biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services,</p>	<p>Highly relevant</p> <p>Habitat restoration is crucial to restore degraded ecosystems and reverse past losses. It is an important means of creating or restoring connectivity between now separated habitats.</p> <p>Continued decline of wetlands generally, most of which sustain waterbirds, indicates that the implementation of requirements in</p>	<p>Technical guidance on wetland restoration techniques is available via:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restoration handbooks and habitat-related cases studies in AEWA’s Guidance on taking a systematic approach to responding to waterbird declines (a checklist of potential actions) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a guide to technical guidance for wetland restoration techniques relevant to restoring the good ecological condition waterbird habitats is needed. • Develop guidance on undertaking strategic approaches to planning

	Relevance for AEWA implementation	Core existing AEWA decisions and tools ¹⁰	Future needs and knowledge gaps relevant to AEWA ¹¹
ecological integrity and connectivity.	<p>the Agreement's Action Plan to sustain wetlands have been inadequate and restoration is needed. AEWA's legal text also includes requirements regarding the rehabilitation/restoration of sites important for AEWA species (Art. III.2(c) of Agreement text & para 3.3 of Action Plan); and recognises the importance of connectivity in this context (Art. III.2(d) of Agreement text).</p> <p>Marine conservation issues: A scoping survey of seabird conservation requirements, including knowledge needs was presented to MOP 6 (Tarzia <i>et al.</i> 2015). These include survey needs at sea as the basis for the identification and establishment of marine protected areas; understanding and addressing bycatch of seabirds by marine fisheries; and prioritising the eradication of non-native mammalian predators on seabird breeding islands.</p> <p>Land-use and the potential for restoration: Away from protected areas, how land is used has major implications for many waterbird</p>	<p>Tools include the following Ramsar guidance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ramsar Handbook No. 18: Managing wetlands • Ramsar Policy Brief 5 – Restoring drained peatlands: A necessary step to achieve global climate goals • Ramsar Briefing Note 4: The benefits of wetland restoration • Ramsar Briefing Note 10: Wetland restoration for climate change resilience • Ramsar Briefing Note 11: Practical peatland restoration • Ramsar Technical Report 11: Global guidelines for peatland rewetting and restoration 	<p>wetland restoration so as to maximise benefits and minimise risks of unintended negative consequences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a scoping study¹⁴ of the extent to which wetland restoration of areas which were important for AEWA populations could provide conservation benefits to threatened AEWA-listed species, as well as identify strategic priorities. • Strategic guidance on wetland restoration in the context of AEWA and other stakeholders would be valuable.

¹⁴ This will be an element of the habitat assessment and action planning project mentioned under Target 1.

	Relevance for AEWA implementation	Core existing AEWA decisions and tools ¹⁰	Future needs and knowledge gaps relevant to AEWA ¹¹
	species. Recent international assessments (<i>e.g.</i> UNCCD 2017; IPBES 2018) have demonstrated the profoundly unsustainable approaches to land management. There is scope to address this through restoration, of direct benefit to waterbirds as well as typically resulting in carbon sequestration benefits also.		
<p>Issue – at least 30% of global land and seas area as integrated, conserved, and managed protected areas</p> <p>Target 3. Ensure and enable that by 2030 at least 30 per cent of terrestrial, inland water, and of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, are effectively conserved and managed through ecologically representative, well-connected and equitably governed systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, recognising indigenous and traditional territories, where applicable, and integrated into wider landscapes, seascapes and the ocean, while ensuring that any sustainable use,</p>	<p>Highly relevant</p> <p>The need to establish and appropriately manage networks of protected areas – in both the terrestrial and marine environments – is central to AEWA’s objectives.</p> <p>Article III.2(c)-(d) of Agreement text requires protection, management and connectivity of suitable habitats, and the Action Plan specifically requires Parties (action 3.1.2) to “to identify all sites of international or national importance for populations listed in Table 1”, using these as the basis “to continue establishing protected areas to conserve habitats important for” listed populations (action 3.2.1), giving “special attention to those wetlands which meet internationally</p>	<p>Objective 3 of the 2019-2027 Strategic Plan aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To establish and sustain a coherent and comprehensive flyway network of protected areas and other sites, managed to maintain – and where necessary restore – their national and international importance for migratory waterbird populations. <p>Relevant actions include: the listing of nationally and internationally important sites (3.1); the assessment of threats and conservation measures at those sites (3.2); their effective management (3.3); their proper inclusion in national planning and decision-making processes (3.4); and the implementation of measures to avoid, mitigate and compensate for adverse impacts of development and other pressures, including the impacts of climate change (3.5).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of the current process to identify and report nationally and internationally important sites for migratory waterbirds is needed, thus compiling a publicly available Agreement-wide inventory of nationally and internationally important sites recognised by Parties for populations listed in Table 1 of the AEWA’s Action Plan. Assessment of the status of internationally important sites for migratory waterbirds in the Agreement area is needed (per para 7.4c of the Action Plan which requires a site report to be produced for

<p>where appropriate in such areas, is fully consistent with conservation outcomes, recognising and respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities over their traditional territories</p>	<p>accepted criteria of international importance” (action 3.2.2).</p> <p>The issue is a major focus of the Plan of Action for Africa¹⁵ and the 2019-2027 Strategic Plan.</p> <p>Marine conservation issues: A scoping survey of seabird conservation requirements, including knowledge needs was presented to MOP 6 (Tarzia <i>et al.</i> 2015). These include survey needs at sea as the basis for the identification and establishment of marine protected areas; understanding and addressing bycatch of seabirds by marine fisheries; and prioritising the eradication of non-native mammalian predators on seabird breeding islands.</p> <p>Protected areas: Whilst much data is held nationally on protected areas and the reasons for their establishment, their significance for AEWA-listed populations is poorly synthesised. Current work is seeking to address this and should be prioritised.</p>	<p>Tools include the following AEWA Guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. 3 - Preparation of site inventories for migratory waterbirds • No. 4 - Management of key sites for migratory waterbirds • No. 11 - How to avoid, minimise or mitigate impact of infrastructural developments and related disturbance affecting waterbirds • No. 15 - National legislation for the protection of species of migratory waterbirds and their habitats <p>and the following Ramsar Handbooks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. 13: Inventory, assessment and monitoring • No. 15: Wetland inventory • No 16: Impact assessment • No. 17: Designating Ramsar Sites • No. 18: Managing wetlands • Ramsar Policy Brief 4: Implementing environmental flows with benefits for society and different wetland ecosystems in river systems • Ramsar Technical Report 9: Determination and implementation of environmental water requirements for estuaries 	<p>every second MOP although this has yet to occur).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of tracking data to identify possible areas of importance that are not currently known is needed. • Targeted surveys for areas without previous waterbird survey coverage is needed. • Enhanced monitoring is needed especially in areas with poor existing information on waterbird species status or where trend assessments are based largely on qualitative information. • With ever changing environmental conditions, there is a need to enhance the quality of monitoring and trend assessment of AEWA-listed species, and this will become more important to provide a basis for conservation actions. • Multispecies synthesis of information on migration routes is needed to identify key areas used and/or where threats may be influencing populations.
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	Relevance for AEWA implementation	Core existing AEWA decisions and tools ¹⁰	Future needs and knowledge gaps relevant to AEWA ¹¹
<p>Issue – species recovery and conservation, and minimising human-wildlife conflict</p> <p>Target 4. Ensure urgent management actions, for the recovery and conservation of species, in particular threatened species, as well as to maintain and restore the genetic diversity within and between populations of native, wild, and domesticated species to maintain their adaptive potential, including through in situ and ex situ conservation and sustainable management practices, and effectively manage human-wildlife interactions to minimise human-wildlife conflict for coexistence</p>	<p>Highly relevant</p> <p>Species recovery is central to AEWA’s objectives – Article II.1 requires that “Parties shall take co-ordinated measures to maintain migratory waterbird species in a favourable conservation status <u>or to restore them to such a status.</u>” Compared to other taxa, AEWA has a good understanding of the status of its listed waterbird species through the preparation of <i>Conservation Status Reviews</i> for each MOP (CSR 5, CSR 6, CSR 7 and CSR 8). These review knowledge of each of AEWA’s listed populations. It has a well-developed process for the development and implementation of Action Plans for threatened populations that, whilst constrained by resources from full functionality, has been shown to be effective.</p> <p>Conflict reduction: One of central themes of the Agreement (with requirements in paras 4.3.1 – 4.3.4 of the AEWA Action Plan) relates to all forms of conflict reduction. Major programmes run through the</p>	<p>Objective 1 of the 2019-2027 Strategic Plan aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To strengthen species conservation and recovery and reduce causes of unnecessary mortality. <p>Relevant actions include: the transposition of protective requirements into national legislation (1.1); the inclusion of all priority populations within effectively implemented Species Action Plans at flyway scale (1.2); the development of guidance for all other populations in unfavourable conservation status (1.3); improvement of the quality of waterbird population status assessments (1.4); and ensuring AEWA priorities relating to four causes of unnecessary additional mortality and other key threats to migratory waterbirds and their habitats are integrated into key multilateral processes (1.6).</p> <p>Tools include the following AEWA Guidelines and guidance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No 1 (revised 2022) – Preparation of National Single Species Action Plans for migratory waterbirds No. 2 – Identifying and tackling emergency situations for migratory waterbirds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National reporting of which species are strictly protected, and which are huntable by each Party is needed. Better future co-ordination is needed with equivalent action planning processes in the EU which apply also to the same Contracting Parties. Better reporting on the existence of national species action plans is needed. Responses to emergencies are most effective when they have planned in advance. Although exact timings may be unknown, many emergencies are predictable. There are benefits of Parties, individually and collectively, planning for future emergencies. Whenever an emergency has occurred, a critical review of responses should always be undertaken, with lessons

¹⁵ <https://www.unep-aewa.org/en/node/1935>

	Relevance for AEWA implementation	Core existing AEWA decisions and tools¹⁰	Future needs and knowledge gaps relevant to AEWA¹¹
	<p>European Goose Management Platform directly address conflict reduction in relation to migratory geese.</p> <p>Both issues are major themes of the 2019-2027 Strategic Plan.</p> <p>Monitoring, trends and status assessment: Accurate assessment of the conservation status of populations depends on reliable monitoring data. This issue has been repeatedly addressed by Meetings of Parties with the adoption of multiple relevant decisions and guidance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. 8 – Reducing crop damage, damage to fisheries, bird strikes and other forms of conflict between waterbirds and human activities • No. 15 – National legislation for the protection of species of migratory waterbirds and their habitats • Revised Format and Guidelines for AEWA International Single and Multi-species Action Plans • Format and Guidelines for AEWA International Single and Multi-species Management Plans • Guide to guidance to reduce the impact of fisheries on AEWA seabird species • Guidance on taking a systematic approach to responding to waterbird declines: a checklist of potential actions • Guidance on Managing waterbird disturbance – a short guide for wetland managers • Cases studies of species recovery and conservation are given in AEWA’s Guidance on taking a systematic approach to responding to waterbird declines (a checklist of potential actions) <p>and, for geese, the work of the European Goose Management Platform.</p>	<p>learned used to adapt future response planning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parties should continue to exchange national successful practice in conflict avoidance or reduction, and this should periodically be synthesised by AEWA, <i>inter alia</i> through update of the Conservation Guidelines. • Both successful and unsuccessful responses to conflict situations involving waterbirds should be documented and published as a matter of routine. • The establishment of a simple threat assessment process, compatible with existing international processes, would improve information on priority pressures and threats and is needed.

	Relevance for AEWA implementation	Core existing AEWA decisions and tools ¹⁰	Future needs and knowledge gaps relevant to AEWA ¹¹
<p>Issue – wild species harvesting, trade and use that is sustainable, legal and safe for human health</p> <p>Target 5. Ensure that the use, harvesting and trade of wild species is sustainable, safe and legal, preventing overexploitation, minimising impacts on non-target species and ecosystems, and reducing the risk of pathogen spill-over, applying the ecosystem approach, while respecting and protecting customary sustainable use by indigenous peoples and local communities.</p>	<p>Highly relevant</p> <p>The issue of harvesting of waterbirds has the potential to be highly unsustainable and ensuring the sustainable use of waterbirds is central to AEWA’s objectives. Measures to address bycatch are also very important (Action Plan para 4.3.7). The recent commencement of collection of information on harvest levels (bag size) will progressively allow assessments to be made of harvest sustainability, nationally and internationally, and as relevant adoption of adaptive harvest mechanism as already in place for some AEWA-listed species.</p> <p>The consumption of waterbirds shot with toxic lead gunshot has implications for human health.</p> <p>Para 2.1.2 of the AEWA Action Plan accommodates livelihoods use to the extent this is sustainable.</p> <p>The issue is a major theme of the 2019-2027 Strategic Plan.</p>	<p>Objective 2 of the 2019-2027 Strategic Plan aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure that any use and management of migratory waterbird populations is sustainable across their flyways <p>Relevant actions include: that harvest levels are monitored and readily available at flyway level (2.1); that provisions of AEWA’s Action Plan relating to use and management, including harvesting, are transposed into all Parties’ domestic legislation and enforced effectively (2.2); that best-practice codes and standards for waterbird hunting are in place and applied to support enforcement of hunting laws and regulation (2.3); and that adaptive harvest management regimes are in place and being effectively implemented as appropriate (2.4).</p> <p>Tools include the following AEWA Guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. 5 - Sustainable harvest of migratory waterbirds No. 6 - Regulating trade in migratory waterbirds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable harvesting has two fundamental needs: i) information that allows assessment of the favourable conservation status of a population; and ii) reporting of harvest levels and their assessment in the context of relevant population dynamics. Both remain needs for nearly all AEWA-listed populations on Column B.¹⁶ Complete reporting to Meetings of Parties of the elements of national hunting legislation is needed, allowing assessment of Parties legislation to assess whether the principle of sustainable use is implemented. A process to collate and analyse harvest data at international scale should be established by AEWA as an

¹⁶ Two current TC tasks will fill important knowledge or guidance gaps: (1) the rapid assessment of sustainability of harvest; (2) the guidance on tools and methods for harvest data collection.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. 15 - National legislation for the protection of species of migratory waterbirds and their habitats 	<p>essential step to enable sustainable hunting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National reporting of which species are strictly protected and which are huntable by each Party is needed. • Information on timing of reproduction and rearing and its relation to periods in which species may be taken is largely unknown outside Europe. However, timing of reproduction and rearing is also highly variable in Africa and many species occurring in tropical Africa do not have seasonal reproduction as in temperate regions. • Develop regional guidance for sustainable use of species which are particularly affected by [fisheries] bycatch and also exploited by humans (<i>e.g.</i> harvesting).
<p>Issue – invasive alien species</p> <p>Target 6. Eliminate, minimise, reduce and or mitigate the impacts of invasive alien species on biodiversity and ecosystem services by identifying and managing</p>	<p>Highly relevant</p> <p>The need to control and eliminate established invasive alien species, and prevent the establishment of others, is central to AEWA’s objectives. Section 2.5 of AEWA’s</p>	<p>Invasive alien species (IAS) are a central element of AEWA’s Action Plan. AEWA has previously reviewed the status of non-native waterbirds in the Agreement area, and has adopted Guidelines for avoiding</p>	<p>Resolution 6.4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encouraged Parties to align species lists established under their regional or

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<p>pathways of the introduction of alien species, preventing the introduction and establishment of priority invasive alien species, reducing the rates of introduction and establishment of other known or potential invasive alien species by at least 50 per cent, by 2030, eradicating or controlling invasive alien species especially in priority sites, such as islands.</p>	<p>Action Plan <i>inter alia</i> prohibits Parties from introducing non-native plant or animal species than might be detrimental to migratory waterbirds listed by the Agreement. It further requires the taking of appropriate precautions to prevent the accidental escape of captive non-native animals than may be detrimental to listed waterbirds.</p> <p>This issue is especially significant in the context of introduced mammalian predators on seabird breeding islands. Action Plan para. 4.3.10 requires that “Parties shall establish appropriate measures, ideally to eliminate or otherwise to mitigate the threat from non-native terrestrial predators to breeding migratory waterbirds on islands and islets. Measures should refer to contingency planning to prevent invasion, emergency responses to remove introduced predators, and restoration programmes for islands where predator populations are already established.”</p> <p>As for Ruddy Duck <i>Oxyura jamaicensis</i>, hybridisation with non-native species can be a major threat</p>	<p>introduction of non-native birds. Most recently, MOP 7 adopted Guidance on AEWA’s provisions on non-native species which presents a legal analysis of AEWA’s provisions. Invasive alien species are addressed also by the 2019-2027 Strategic Plan and Plan of Action for Africa, and have been addressed by Resolutions 4.5 and 7.6.</p> <p>Tools include the following AEWA Guidelines and guidance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. 10 - Avoidance of introductions of non-native waterbird species • Guidance on AEWA’s provisions on non-native species • Cases studies of IAS control are given in AEWA’s Guidance on taking a systematic approach to responding to waterbird declines (a checklist of potential actions) 	<p>national frameworks for the prevention of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species so as to provide effective means of coordinated action within the AEWA area;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encouraged Parties to align action plans to address priority pathways for the prevention of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species with the AEWA Action Plan, the AEWA International and National Single Species Action Plans and other relevant national, regional and international plans, as necessary; • urged Parties to support research on risks posed by non-native waterbirds and further detailed analysis of the population status of the non-native waterbird species identified within the AEWA area, including the adverse impacts they have on AEWA native species and their habitats; and

	Relevance for AEWA implementation	Core existing AEWA decisions and tools¹⁰	Future needs and knowledge gaps relevant to AEWA¹¹
	to the genetic integrity of native waterbird species.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • requested the Technical Committee to contribute to the development of internationally-agreed standards and guidance for risk assessment with respect to non-native waterbirds in order to facilitate the implementation of the Agreement and related legal instruments. • Better information on the presence of non-native predators on offshore seabird islands is a precondition to establishing strategic approaches for their elimination. AEWA could assist in developing such an approach with Parties and other stakeholder organisations.
<p>Issue – pollution control</p> <p>Target 7. Reduce pollution risks and the negative impact of pollution from all sources, by 2030, to levels that are not harmful to biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, considering cumulative effects, including: reducing excess nutrients lost to the environment by</p>	<p>Highly relevant</p> <p>The lethal and sub-lethal effects of direct and indirect pollution are a significant issue for many waterbirds. Pollution control (notably through the discharge of wastes and industrial effluents into the environment) needs attention in many developing countries, whilst the ecological</p>	<p>AEWA has given significant attention to the need to eliminate the use of lead gunshot from wetlands, with the issue specifically addressed by the Action Plan, 2019-2027 Strategic Plan and Plan of Action for Africa, and with the Resolutions (1.14, 2.2, 3.4, 4.1, 6.4) by multiple MOPs. Slow progress is being made.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a series of regional oil spill response plans specifically designed for seabird conservation- identifying the key coastal and at sea areas where

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<p>at least half including through more efficient nutrient cycling and use; reducing the overall risk from pesticides and highly hazardous chemicals by at least half including through integrated pest management, taking into account food security and livelihoods; and also preventing, reducing, and working towards eliminating plastic pollution.</p>	<p>effects of air-borne nutrient pollution are significant factors altering habitats across much of north-west Europe.</p> <p>Nutrient pollution arising from excess use of agricultural fertilizers can also have major ecological consequences for wetland habitats.</p> <p>Lead shot discharged into wetlands still poisons millions of waterbirds annually within the Agreement area.</p> <p>Pollution from oil spills and discharges can have devastating local impacts on waterbirds and other wildlife.</p> <p>The need to address causes of pollution from plastic debris and micro plastics in the marine environment is being taken forward by a range of international processes.</p> <p>Extractive industries have the potential to cause significant loss of, and pollution to, wetlands as a result of their activities.</p> <p>Action Plan para. 3.2.3(a), which requires Parties to “ensure, where practicable, that adequate statutory controls are in place, relating to the use of agricultural chemicals, pest control procedures and the disposal</p>	<p>Tools include the following AEWA Guidelines and guidance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. 2 - Identifying and tackling emergency situations for migratory waterbirds • Phasing out the use of lead shot for hunting in wetlands: experiences made and lessons learned by AEWA Range States <p>Relevant actions include provisions of the Action Plan (4.3.9) that require Parties to “establish and effectively enforce adequate statutory pollution controls in accordance with international norms and legal agreements, particularly as related to oil spills, discharge and dumping of solid wastes, for the purpose of minimising their impacts on the populations listed in Table 1.”</p> <p>Resolution 5.14 addressed the impacts of extractive industries on wetlands and waterbirds outlines important actions Parties should take to mitigate these impacts.</p> <p>The issue of air- and water-borne nutrient pollution has not previously been addressed by AEWA despite its significance.</p>	<p>response would be most urgently required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission a study identifying the main potential oil pollution hotspots in the Agreement Area and work with the Parties and other Range States in those areas. • Parties should continue to report instances of lead poisoning in their national reports.

	Relevance for AEWA implementation	Core existing AEWA decisions and tools ¹⁰	Future needs and knowledge gaps relevant to AEWA ¹¹
	of waste water, which are in accordance with international norms, for the purpose of minimising their adverse impacts on the populations listed in Table 1”.		
<p>Issue – climate change adaptation and mitigation</p> <p>Target 8. Minimise the impact of climate change and ocean acidification on biodiversity and increase its resilience through mitigation, adaptation, and disaster risk reduction actions, including through nature-based solution and ecosystem-based approaches, while minimising negative and fostering positive impacts on biodiversity.</p>	<p>Highly relevant</p> <p>The need to put in place climate change adaption measures related to the waterbird habitats (especially but not restricted to wetlands) is central to AEWA’s objectives.</p>	<p>Multiple decisions of the MOP (Resolutions 3.17, 5.13, 6.6 and 7.9), as well as Conservation Guidance 12, have addressed climate change adaptation and mitigation measures in the context of migratory waterbird conservation, and through Resolution 6.6, AEWA adopted a climate change adaptation framework and through Resolution 8.8, Complementary guidelines on climate change adaptation measures for waterbirds.</p> <p>Target 3.5 of the 2019-2027 Strategic Plan aims inter alia, that national legal or administrative measures are in place and being implemented effectively to avoid, mitigate and compensate for adverse impacts of ... climate change, on sites of national and international importance in all Contracting Parties.</p> <p>Climate change is also identified as one of the Strategic Plan’s Overarching and Cross-cutting Issues: “The impacts of climate change, which are already having demonstrable effects on migratory waterbirds and their habitats across the</p>	<p>There is a need for CPs to implement systematic planning and climate adaptation measures following AEWA-adopted framework and guidance, in particular the latest complementary guidelines adopted by MOP8.</p>

	Relevance for AEWA implementation	Core existing AEWA decisions and tools ¹⁰	Future needs and knowledge gaps relevant to AEWA ¹¹
		<p>Agreement Area, together with appropriate mitigation and adaptation measures, <u>are integrated into the planning and implementation of all species and habitat conservation measures under the AEWA Strategic Plan</u>, in line with Targets 13.1 and 13.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals and Targets 10 and 15 of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.”</p> <p>Tools and guidance include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ramsar Technical Report 5: A Framework for assessing the vulnerability of wetlands to climate change • Ramsar Briefing Note 12: The contribution of blue carbon ecosystems to climate change mitigation 	
2) Meeting people’s needs through sustainable use and benefit-sharing			
<p>Issue – food security through sustainable species management</p> <p>Target 9. Ensure that the management and use of wild species are sustainable, thereby providing social, economic and environmental benefits for people, especially those in vulnerable situations and those most dependent on biodiversity, including through sustainable biodiversity-based</p>	<p>Relevant as a consequence of AEWA implementation</p> <p>The Preamble to the Agreement specifically recognises the “economic, social, cultural and recreational benefits accruing from the taking of certain species of migratory waterbirds and of the environmental, ecological, genetic, scientific, aesthetic, recreational, cultural, educational, social and economic values of waterbirds in</p>	<p>Resolution 7.2 recognises that “the full implementation of the Agreement, at all scales and by both Contracting Parties and other actors, has the potential to directly contribute to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals <i>inter alia</i> through actions related to ... contributing to food security and poverty reduction through the sustainable harvesting of waterbirds and the wise-use use of wetlands; ...,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need to better understand the socio-economic implications of different modes of hunting and the significance of this activity to the local and national economies. The Technical Committee commenced work on this issue in 2021 and, funding

	Relevance for AEWA implementation	Core existing AEWA decisions and tools ¹⁰	Future needs and knowledge gaps relevant to AEWA ¹¹
activities, products and services that enhance biodiversity, and protecting and encouraging customary sustainable use by indigenous peoples and local communities.	<p>general” whilst stressing also that “that any taking of migratory waterbirds must be conducted on a sustainable basis...”. Also reflected in the Action Plan’s allowance of certain exemptions for livelihood purposes “where sustainable” (para. 2.1.2(b)).</p> <p>The use of waterbirds as a sustainable source of food presupposes that the impact of the harvest regime on the population must be sustainable.</p>	<p>Target 2.6 of the 2019-2027 Strategic Plan aims to ensure that “consideration of the ecosystem services derived from migratory waterbirds is integrated into policy and decision-making processes that affect waterbird habitats.”</p> <p>No targeted guidance to this end has been developed however, although AEWA’s Guidance on Sustainable harvest of migratory waterbirds is highly relevant.</p>	<p>dependent, should be ideally delivered to MOP9.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research on assessing the contributions of recreational hunting areas to waterbird conservation objectives, and the quality of management and its impact on conservation in these areas is needed.
<p>Issue – agricultural, aquacultural, fisheries and forestry sustainability and use</p> <p>Target 10. Ensure that areas under agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries and forestry are managed sustainably, in particular through the sustainable use of biodiversity, including through a substantial increase of the application of biodiversity friendly practices, such as sustainable intensification, agroecological and other innovative approaches contributing to the resilience and long-term efficiency and productivity of these production systems and to food security, conserving and restoring biodiversity and maintaining</p>	<p>Highly relevant</p> <p>The need to ensure that agricultural and other wider habitats (outside protected areas) are managed sustainably for waterbirds is central to AEWA’s objectives.</p> <p>A large number of waterbirds listed by AEWA are dependent on agricultural landscapes either for breeding (for example many wader species) or in the non-breeding season (many ducks, geese and swans). The appropriate management of these areas is critical to their continued suitability for these species.</p> <p>Action Plan para. 4.3.11 urges measures to address the threats to</p>	<p>AEWA’s direct and strategic treatment of agricultural sustainability has been limited despite the crucial dependence of many migratory waterbirds on these areas, and despite the high awareness of the significance of agricultural intensification as a driver of declines of multiple species (as reflected in many International Single Species Action Plans).</p> <p>Tools include the following Ramsar Handbook:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. 18: Managing wetlands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the extent and scale of seabird bycatch in gillnets, including the collection of data on gillnet fishing effort. • Collect seabird bycatch records from national governments, through AEWA’s national report and through promotion of existing regional MEAs (<i>e.g.</i> Regional Fisheries Management Organisations). • Develop regional guidance for sustainable use of species which are particularly affected by [fisheries]

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nature's contributions to people, including ecosystem services and functions.	migratory waterbirds from aquaculture, whilst paras 4.3.7-4.3.8 urge that actions be taken to address both fisheries bycatch and unsustainable fishing that causes depletion of food resources for migratory waterbirds. Further, Action Plan para 3.2.3(a) deals with, <i>inter alia</i> , agriculture chemicals ¹⁷ .		bycatch and are also exploited by humans (<i>e.g.</i> harvesting).
Issue – maintaining nature's contributions to people including ecosystem-based approaches Target 11. Restore, maintain and enhance nature's contributions to people, including ecosystem functions and services, such as regulation of air, water, and climate, soil health, pollination and reduction of disease risk, as well as protection from natural hazards and disasters, through nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based approaches for the benefit of all people and nature.	Highly relevant It has become increasingly recognised that successful conservation outcomes depend on integrated approaches – as exemplified by CBD's Ecosystem Approach which is a strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way.	The broad-ranging scope of AEWA's Action Plan means implementation of the Agreement is well-placed to support ecosystem approaches. Of particular relevance will be the full implementation of the 2019-2027 Strategic Plan and the Plan of Action for Africa . MOP 8 adopted Initial guidance on ecosystem services in relation to migratory waterbirds in recognition of the multiple services provided by waterbirds and their habitats.	The Strategic Plan indicates that Parties will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • by MOP 9, implement national pilot projects and/or collate and make available examples/case studies of decision-making which takes into consideration waterbird values and their habitats; and • by MOP 10 produce AEWA guidelines on valuation of ecosystem services derived from migratory waterbirds and their habitats and communicate to relevant stakeholders at all levels.

¹⁷ Action Plan para 3.2.3(a) “ensure, where practicable, that adequate statutory controls are in place, relating to the use of agricultural chemicals, pest control procedures and the disposal of waste water, which are in accordance with international norms, for the purpose of minimising their adverse impacts on the populations listed in Table 1”

	Relevance for AEWA implementation	Core existing AEWA decisions and tools ¹⁰	Future needs and knowledge gaps relevant to AEWA ¹¹
<p>Issue – human health and well-being from nature</p> <p>Target 12. Significantly increase the area and quality and connectivity of, access to, and benefits from green and blue spaces in urban and densely populated areas sustainably, by mainstreaming the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and ensure biodiversity-inclusive urban planning, enhancing native biodiversity, ecological connectivity and integrity, and improving human health and well-being and connection to nature and contributing to inclusive and sustainable urbanisation and the provision of ecosystem functions and services.</p>	<p>Relevant as a consequence of AEWA implementation</p> <p>The Preamble to the Agreement specifically recognises the “economic, social, cultural and recreational benefits accruing from the taking of certain species of migratory waterbirds and of the environmental, ecological, genetic, scientific, aesthetic, recreational, cultural, educational, social and economic values of waterbirds in general.”</p>	<p>Tools for reducing and managing human disturbance at urban and other wetlands so enabling close, non-damaging access to waterbirds, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AEWA’s guidance to Managing waterbird disturbance – a short guide for wetland managers • Ramsar Briefing Note 6: Towards the wise use of urban and peri-urban wetlands • Ramsar Technical Report 6: Healthy wetlands, healthy people 	
<p>Issue – genetic resource benefit sharing including traditional knowledge</p> <p>Target 13. Take effective legal, policy, administrative and capacity-building measures at all levels, as appropriate, to ensure the fair and equitable sharing of benefits that arise from the utilisation of genetic resources and from digital sequence information on genetic resources, as</p>	<p>Less directly relevant</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>None identified</p>

	Relevance for AEWA implementation	Core existing AEWA decisions and tools ¹⁰	Future needs and knowledge gaps relevant to AEWA ¹¹
well as traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources, and facilitating appropriate access to genetic resources, and by 2030 facilitating a significant increase of the benefits shared, in accordance with applicable international access and benefit-sharing instruments.			
3) Tools and solutions for implementation and mainstreaming			
<p>Issue – Biodiversity fully integrated into policy</p> <p>Target 14. Ensure the full integration of biodiversity and its multiple values into policies, regulations, planning and development processes, poverty eradication strategies, strategic environmental assessments, environmental impact assessments and, as appropriate, national accounting, within and across all levels of government and across all sectors, in particular those with significant impacts on biodiversity, progressively aligning all relevant public and private activities, fiscal and financial flows with the goals and targets of this framework.</p>	<p>Highly relevant</p> <p>The full of integration of the needs of migratory waterbirds into sectoral and other policies is critical both for the conservation of species and their habitats. This is directly relevant, <i>inter alia</i>, for policies in relation to spatial planning, agriculture, fisheries, infrastructure development, energy, poverty reduction, and transportation networks.</p>	<p>The 2019-2027 Strategic Plan aims to promote integrating of waterbird conservation needs into relevant national and international laws, policies, and frameworks, with Targets with respect to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrating needs to address unnecessary additional mortality from energy infrastructure (especially powerlines, wind turbines); illegal taking and killing; fisheries bycatch; and invasive alien species, and other key threats to migratory waterbirds and their habitats into key multilateral processes (1.6); • sustainable use and harvesting (2.2); • ecosystem services derived from migratory waterbirds (2.6); • conservation and wise use of flyway network sites (3.4); • policies to avoid, mitigate and compensate for adverse impacts of 	

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		<p>development activities and other pressures, including climate change, on sites of national and international importance for migratory waterbirds (3.5);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • priorities for habitat conservation and management in the wider environment (4.1 & 4.2); • national habitat conservation and management priorities (4.3); and • conservation of migratory waterbirds is integrated into national implementation policies and plans related to the SDGs, Aichi Targets/Post-2020 biodiversity framework, Strategic Plan for Migratory Species and Ramsar Strategic Plan (5.4), as well as integrated into the new generation of NBSAPs and/or similar national plans/policies (5.5). 	
<p>Issue – promotion of sustainable production and supply chains by businesses</p> <p>Target 15. Take legal, administrative or policy measures to encourage and enable business, and in particular to ensure that large and transnational companies and financial institutions:</p> <p>(a) Regularly monitor, assess, and transparently disclose their risks,</p>	<p>Relevant through land-use change and pollution in particular</p> <p>For waterbirds this issue is relevant largely in the contexts of agricultural sustainability and pollution respectively highlighted by Targets 10 and 7 above.</p> <p>The impacts of extractive industries such as in relation to coal, oil and gas, precious and base minerals, sand and gravel, industrial minerals, peat,</p>	<p>Resolution 5.14 specifically address the impacts of extractive industries, important for economic production and yet potentially highly damaging to the wetland habitats of migratory waterbirds, and outlines important actions Parties should take to mitigate the impacts of such industries.</p>	

	Relevance for AEWA implementation	Core existing AEWA decisions and tools¹⁰	Future needs and knowledge gaps relevant to AEWA¹¹
<p>dependencies and impacts on biodiversity including with requirements for all large as well as transnational companies and financial institutions along their operations, supply and value chains and portfolios;</p> <p>(b) Provide information needed to consumers to promote sustainable consumption patterns;</p> <p>(c) Report on compliance with access and benefit-sharing regulations and measures, as applicable;</p> <p>in order to progressively reduce negative impacts on biodiversity, increase positive impacts, reduce biodiversity-related risks to business and financial institutions, and promote actions to ensure sustainable patterns of production.</p>	<p>salt and soda ash, have the potential, if not appropriately managed and regulated, to have direct and indirect negative impacts on waterbirds through changes to the ecological character of their wetland habitats.</p> <p>Some wetlands are particular vulnerable to the consequences of extractive industries with the potential for impacts to be transferred both upstream and downstream within a river basin.</p>		
<p>Issue – addressing unsustainable consumption patterns and reduction of waste</p> <p>Target 16. Ensure that people are encouraged and enabled to make sustainable consumption choices including by establishing supportive policy, legislative or regulatory frameworks, improving education</p>	<p>Less directly relevant</p>	<p>None</p>	

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and access to relevant and accurate information and alternatives, and by 2030, reduce the global footprint of consumption in an equitable manner, halve global food waste, significantly reduce overconsumption and substantially reduce waste generation, in order for all people to live well in harmony with Mother Earth.			
<p>Issue – biotechnology impacts</p> <p>Target 17. Establish, strengthen capacity for, and implement in all countries in biosafety measures as set out in Article 8(g) of the Convention on Biological Diversity and measures for the handling of biotechnology and distribution of its benefits as set out in Article 19 of the Convention.</p>	Less directly relevant	None	
<p>Issue – elimination of harmful incentives</p> <p>Target 18. Identify by 2025, and eliminate, phase out or reform incentives, including subsidies harmful for biodiversity, in a proportionate, just, fair, effective and equitable way, while substantially and progressively reducing them by at least 500</p>	<p>Highly relevant</p> <p>Sectoral policies for agriculture and fisheries with associated provision of incentives have been directly linked to decline of AEWA-listed species and are the main frameworks providing subsidies harmful to habitats (for example inappropriate management of wet grasslands), or</p>	<p>AEWA’s direct and strategic treatment of this issue has been limited despite the significance of incentivised sectoral policies as drivers of declines of multiple species (reflected in many International Single Species Action Plans).</p>	

	Relevance for AEWA implementation	Core existing AEWA decisions and tools ¹⁰	Future needs and knowledge gaps relevant to AEWA ¹¹
billion United States dollars per year by 2030, starting with the most harmful incentives, and scale up positive incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.	directly harmful to species (for example through fisheries by-catch).		
<p>Issue – increase financial resources</p> <p>Target 19. Substantially and progressively increase the level of financial resources from all sources, in an effective, timely and easily accessible manner, including domestic, international, public and private resources, in accordance with Article 20 of the Convention, to implement national biodiversity strategies and action plans, by 2030 mobilising at least 200 billion United States dollars per year, including by:</p> <p>(a) Increasing total biodiversity related international financial flows from developed countries, and from countries that voluntarily assume obligations of developed country Parties, to developing countries, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing States, as well as</p>	<p>Highly relevant</p> <p>Adequate financing is critical for to ensure its ultimate effectiveness of waterbird conservation, yet financial limitations have constrained the implementation of the Agreement and associated programmes both nationally and internationally.</p> <p>There is still no sustainable long-term financial support for monitoring programmes such as the International Waterbird Census, nor for assessment programmes such as for the triennial production of the <i>Conservation Status Review</i> critical to the Review of AEWA’s population status listings.</p> <p>AEWA’s Small Grants Fund has not been operational since 2015 owing to lack of funding.</p>	<p>A number of past AEWA Resolutions have addressed the need for funding for the Small Grants Fund, whilst others have highlighted funding needs with respect to national and international monitoring processes.</p> <p>Multiple other Resolutions have called on donors to financially support their implementation, but such support has rarely been forthcoming.</p> <p>Resolution 6.21 addresses resource mobilisation, whilst Document AEWA/MOP 8.43 delivers an assessment for the international level.</p> <p>Target 5.6 of the 2019-2027 Strategic Plan aims to ensure that “the resources required for coordination and delivery of the Strategic Plan at international and national levels have been assessed as realistically as possible and corresponding resource mobilisation plans implemented.”</p>	<p>Parties have yet to undertake a national-level assessment of resource requirements for the delivery of the 2019-2027 AEWA Strategic Plan and draw up appropriate national resource mobilisation plans (as per Strategic Plan target 5.6).</p>

	Relevance for AEWA implementation	Core existing AEWA decisions and tools ¹⁰	Future needs and knowledge gaps relevant to AEWA ¹¹
<p>countries with economies in transition, to at least US\$ 20 billion per year by 2025, and to at least US\$ 30 billion per year by 2030;</p> <p>(b) Significantly increasing domestic resource mobilisation, facilitated by the preparation and implementation of national biodiversity finance plans or similar instruments;</p> <p>(c) Leveraging private finance, promoting blended finance, implementing strategies for raising new and additional resources, and encouraging the private sector to invest in biodiversity, including through impact funds and other instruments;</p> <p>(d) Stimulating innovative schemes such as payment for ecosystem services, green bonds, biodiversity offsets and credits, benefit-sharing mechanisms;</p> <p>(e) Optimising co-benefits and synergies of finance targeting the biodiversity and climate crises;</p> <p>(f) Enhancing the role of collective actions, including by indigenous peoples and local communities,</p>			

	Relevance for AEWA implementation	Core existing AEWA decisions and tools ¹⁰	Future needs and knowledge gaps relevant to AEWA ¹¹
<p>Mother Earth centric actions and non-market-based approaches including community based natural resource management and civil society cooperation and solidarity aimed at the conservation of biodiversity;</p> <p>(g) Enhancing the effectiveness, efficiency and transparency of resource provision and use;</p>			
<p>Issue – strengthen capacity building and development</p> <p>Target 20. Strengthen capacity-building and development, access to and transfer of technology, and promote development of and access to innovation and technical and scientific cooperation, including through South-South, North-South and triangular cooperation, to meet the needs for effective implementation, particularly in developing countries, fostering joint technology development and joint scientific research programmes for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and strengthening scientific research and monitoring capacities, commensurate with the ambition of the goals and targets of the framework.</p>	<p>Highly relevant</p> <p>Recognised as a key issue for multiple aspects of AEWA implementation. In particular, Strategic Plan target 5.3 and its associated actions are relevant: “Initiatives are in place to address at least two-thirds of the priority capacity gaps restricting implementation of AEWA”.</p>	<p>Multiple AEWA and Ramsar guidances (listed above and elsewhere) are relevant, in particular Resolution 8.3 State of Implementation of AEWA and its Strategic Plan 2019-2027.</p> <p>Document AEWA/MOP 8.44 related to capacity for implementing the Agreement identifies next priorities at the international level.</p>	

	Relevance for AEWA implementation	Core existing AEWA decisions and tools ¹⁰	Future needs and knowledge gaps relevant to AEWA ¹¹
<p>Issue – information for decision makers including traditional knowledge</p> <p>Target 21. Ensure that the best available data, information and knowledge, are accessible to decision makers, practitioners and the public to guide effective and equitable governance, integrated and participatory management of biodiversity, and to strengthen communication, awareness-raising, education, monitoring, research and knowledge management and, also in this context, traditional knowledge, innovations, practices and technologies of indigenous peoples and local communities should only be accessed with their free, prior and informed consent¹⁸, in accordance with national legislation.</p>	<p>Highly relevant</p> <p>Good conservation outcomes depend critically on understanding of issues involved and the consequences of different possible decisions.</p> <p>Making more of existing data: Much ringing recovery and tracking data have been collated in past years. There is scope to undertake innovation multispecies analysis of such datasets to better understand what declining or increasing populations might have in common either in terms of ecological traits or range/route overlap that might help point to key geographic areas of importance for multiple waterbird species, or perhaps specific areas where threats might be having an impact on multiple populations.</p> <p>More complete national reporting: The current national report format seeks to collate much data and information relevant to Agreement implementation, but reports are not submitted by all Parties¹⁹ and many are incomplete. More complete reporting of existing information held</p>	<p>Target 1.5 of the 2019-2027 Strategic Plan aims to ensure that “decision-making for national and flyway-level conservation and management of waterbird populations is based on the best-available monitoring data.”</p> <p>More strategically, AEWA has not yet provided guidance on good practices in summarising relevant data and information for decision making, although MOP 7 adopted Guidance on taking a systematic approach to responding to waterbird declines: a checklist of potential actions which stressed the need for evidence-based and adaptive approaches.</p> <p>MOP 8 adopted an Overview of knowledge gaps and needs relevant for the implementation of AEWA: priority needs in 2021 which identified core issues relevant to AEWA implementation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Given climate change driven distributional changes that have not only been predicted (Huntley <i>et al.</i> 2007; Johnston <i>et al.</i> 2103) but are now occurring for some waterbird species (Lehikoinen <i>et al.</i> 2013; Fox <i>et al.</i> 2016; Pavón-Jordán <i>et al.</i> 2015) there is thus a need to review contemporary data and information on the movements and population limits of Anatidae and waders as well as to better document flyway population of other waterbird species. This could be informed by the planned CMS Eurasian-African Bird Migration Atlas.

¹⁸ Free, prior and informed consent refers to the tripartite terminology of “prior and informed consent” or “free, prior and informed consent” or “approval and involvement.

¹⁹ 53 national reports to MOP 8 were submitted by the cut-off date, a 67% response rate

	Relevance for AEWA implementation	Core existing AEWA decisions and tools¹⁰	Future needs and knowledge gaps relevant to AEWA¹¹
	nationally would materially assist the Agreement’s international implementation.		
<p>Issue – equitable and effective participation in decision-making</p> <p>Target 22. Ensure the full, equitable, inclusive, effective and gender-responsive representation and participation in decision-making, and access to justice and information related to biodiversity by indigenous peoples and local communities, respecting their cultures and their rights over lands, territories, resources, and traditional knowledge, as well as by women and girls, children and youth, and persons with disabilities and ensure the full protection of environmental human rights defenders.</p>	<p>Highly relevant</p> <p>Good governance, which includes participation in decision-making, has been identified as a critical determinant of successful waterbird conservation²⁰.</p>	<p>None, although a number of Ramsar Handbooks provide relevant guidance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. 5. Partnerships • No. 6. Wetland CEPA • No. 7. Participatory skills 	
<p>Issue – gender equality</p> <p>Target 23. Ensure gender equality in the implementation of the framework through a gender-responsive approach where all women and girls have equal</p>	<p>Relevant</p> <p>Gender equality is identified as an Overarching and Cross-cutting Issue in the Strategic Plan: “projects, programmes and activities developed</p>	<p>Guidance on mainstreaming gender under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands is also relevant to AEWA.</p>	

²⁰ Amano, T., Székely, T., Sandel, B., Nagy, S., Mundkur, T, Langendoen, Blanco, D., Soykan, C.U. & Sutherland, W.J. 2018. Successful conservation of global waterbird populations depends on effective governance. *Nature* 553: 199–202.

	Relevance for AEWA implementation	Core existing AEWA decisions and tools¹⁰	Future needs and knowledge gaps relevant to AEWA¹¹
<p>opportunity and capacity to contribute to the three objectives of the Convention, including by recognising their equal rights and access to land and natural resources and their full, equitable, meaningful and informed participation and leadership at all levels of action, engagement, policy and decision-making related to biodiversity.</p>	<p>and implemented in the framework of this Strategic Plan are reviewed and, where necessary and feasible, adapted to ensure that they contribute to furthering ... <u>gender equality</u>".</p>		

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