



AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF
AFRICAN-EURASIAN MIGRATORY WATERBIRDS

5th SESSION OF THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES
14 – 18 May 2012, La Rochelle, France

“Migratory waterbirds and people - sharing wetlands”



RESOLUTION 5.19

**ENCOURAGEMENT OF FURTHER JOINT IMPLEMENTATION OF
AEWA AND THE RAMSAR CONVENTION**

Submitted by the European Union and its Member States

Recalling that the conservation of waterbirds has always been and continues to be a key factor in wetland conservation and conversely that the rational management of wetlands is a determining factor for the conservation of waterbirds,

Noting with concern the decline of populations of waterbirds throughout the world, driven in some instances by their unsustainable exploitation, but usually being a consequence of the loss and deterioration of wetland habitats,

Noting the increase of some waterbird populations indicating that management interventions and implementation of various policy measures give successful conservation responses,

Recalling Article III.2, paragraph (c) of the Agreement according to which Parties “shall identify sites and habitats for migratory waterbirds occurring within their territory and encourage the protection, management, rehabilitation and restoration of these sites, in liaison with those bodies listed in Article IX, paragraphs (a) and (b) of this Agreement”,

Recalling also paragraph 3.2.2 of the Action Plan which states that: “Parties shall endeavour to give special protection to those wetlands which meet internationally accepted criteria of international importance”, and *noting* that the designation, conservation and wise use of such sites are the three implementation ‘pillars’ of the Ramsar Convention,

Noting that target 1.2 of AEWA’s Strategic Plan 2009-2017 states that in the intended network of sites, existing networks are to be taken into account and *noting* that the Ramsar Site network and the EU’s *Natura 2000 network* can be considered good examples of such existing networks,

Recalling the relevant decisions of the Ramsar Convention, and its Strategic Plan 2009-2015, as well as objective 5.3 of the AEWA Strategic Plan 2009-2017 regarding cooperation with other multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs),

Noting also that as part of the continuing process of developing closer linkages and cooperation between the AEWA and the Ramsar Convention and in addressing issues of common concern to both treaties, it is important that Contracting Parties that are not yet Parties to the Ramsar Convention consider joining as soon as possible,

Noting with appreciation the efforts made by Parties to preserve migratory waterbirds, including their habitats, both individually and cooperatively,

Also noting with appreciation the results of the Global Environment Facility's multi-partner project, the *Wings Over Wetlands (WOW) UNEP-GEF African-Eurasian Flyways Project* and respective follow up projects,

Further noting with appreciation the joint initiative of the Ramsar STRP, CMS, BirdLife International and Wetlands International in collaboration with the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership and AEWA established under Ramsar Resolution X.22 to bring together experiences and lessons learned from flyway initiatives worldwide; *aware* that a 2011 initiative workshop established a Global Interflyway Network (GIN); and *welcoming* that the report and recommendations for this workshop (as summarised in UNEP/CMS/Inf.10.41) will be published as a joint Ramsar/CMS/AEWA Technical Report,

Stressing the importance of the goals of the Convention on Migratory Species' (CMS) Future Shape process for the CMS and the 'CMS family', as set out in CMS COP10 resolution 10.9,

Noting that the production of thematic modules by the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP)/World Conservation Union (IUCN) *TEMATEA*¹ project assists in the consistent application of MEAs,

Also noting the ongoing UNEP information and knowledge management *InforMEA* initiative and its *InforMEA* web-portal for access to information on multilateral environmental agreements, including CMS, AEWA and the Ramsar Convention,

Stressing the need for the Ramsar Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) and the AEWA Technical Committee to cooperate closely on a continuing basis, on issues of common concern in their support for implementation of their respective Strategic Plans,

Underlining the importance of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) project "Strengthening the implementation of the biodiversity-related Conventions through strategic use of information: knowledge management among MEAs", headed by UNEP-WCMC, which with the participation of Ramsar aims to simplify and harmonise online tools for the MEAs and their Secretariats,

Further underlining the need to reduce the reporting burden of Parties by aligning formats for reporting on common issues and, where possible, avoid duplications,

Noting UNEP and UNEP-WCMC's work on options and necessary pre-conditions for harmonised national reporting, and the results of the Australian and South Pacific Regional Environmental Programme (SPREP) initiative for Pacific Island States on consolidated national reporting.

The Meeting of the Parties:

1. *Recognises* the mechanisms under the EU Birds Directive for designation of Special Protection Areas in EU member states and under the Ramsar Convention for the identification, designation and management of Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites), and its designation Criteria applicable to migratory waterbirds, which apply throughout the AEWA region, as established mechanisms for addressing paragraph 3.2.2 of the AEWA Action Plan and for achieving harmonised implementation of AEWA and the Ramsar Convention concerning internationally important sites for migratory waterbirds, and *urges* Parties to fully utilise the Critical Site Network (CSN) tool to identify and designate further such sites,
2. *Requests* the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat to liaise with the Ramsar Convention Secretariat to develop an updated Joint Work Plan under the renewed Ramsar-CMS Memorandum of Cooperation and, where appropriate, to advise Parties on developing consistent and complementary strategic plans in the future, and on ways of better harmonising AEWA and Ramsar Convention reporting;

¹ Online Database of Environmental Conventions

3. *Encourages* those Contracting Parties of AEWA which are not Parties to the Ramsar Convention to become Parties to that Convention in order to enhance the coherent conservation and wise use of wetlands;
4. *Encourages* those Contracting Parties of AEWA which are Parties to both treaties to pursue common communication strategies jointly under both treaties, and implement communication, education and public awareness (CEPA) strategies that include factors relevant to migratory waterbirds, taking current and future enhanced cooperation in the CMS family fully into account;
5. *Calls upon* Contracting Parties to include AEWA experts in their national Ramsar Committees;
6. *Encourages* Contracting Parties to ensure close coordination between their national focal points for AEWA's Technical Committee and for Ramsar's STRP where these differ;
7. *Encourages* Contracting Parties to develop common implementation indicators for AEWA and Ramsar if appropriate based for example on the *TEMATEA* tool.