



## 10<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

8-10 July 2015, Kampala, Uganda

### DRAFT RESOLUTION 6.4<sup>1</sup>

#### CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF MIGRATORY WATERBIRDS

*Recalling* Article III 2b of the Agreement requires that Parties shall “ensure that any use of migratory waterbirds is based on an assessment of the best available knowledge of their ecology and is sustainable for the species as well as for the ecological systems that support them”,

*Recalling also* that Section 2.1 of the Agreement’s Action Plan provides a regulatory framework to identify those species and populations which should be subject to legal protection as well as those which may be subject to harvest management, and that the triennial *Conservation Status Review* (AEWA/MOP 6.XX) is a review process which enables Table 1 of the Action Plan to reflect most recent information on the population status (Resolution 6.1),

*Noting* that Target 1.1 of Objective 1 of AEWA Strategic Plan 2009-2017 is that “Full legal protection is provided to all Column A species”,

*Further noting* that Objective 2 of the AEWA Strategic Plan 2009-2017 is “To ensure that any use of waterbirds in the Agreement area is sustainable” and the five associated targets relate to the phase out of lead shot, the implementation of internationally coordinated harvest data collection, the elimination of illegal taking of waterbirds, including poison baits and non-selective methods of taking, the development and promotion of best practice codes and standards for hunting, and the implementation of adaptive harvest management at international scale,

*Aware however*, that some Parties have yet to ensure that their national legislation gives full protection to those populations occurring within their territory which are listed in Column A of Table 1 of the Action Plan, in order to ensure their fulfilment of obligations under the Agreement in this regard,

*Noting* that, under the African Initiative, national lists of Column A populations have been generated for the current African Contracting Parties, and after checking by the Technical Committee, these lists will assist African Contracting Parties to analyse any gaps in their national legislation with regard to the conservation of such high priority species,

*Conscious* of the social and economic importance of waterbird harvests for local communities in many parts of the Agreement area and archaeological evidence which extends back to the earliest periods of human history, and which is a valuable ecosystem service derived from wetlands and other habitats,

*Aware* that there is little information about the nature and extent of waterbird harvests, and its legal and cultural regulation in Africa, the Middle East, and Central Asia on which assessments of sustainability can be based, and that accordingly the Technical Committee has identified the need for such data and information as being a strategic priority in order to be able to better advise Parties on this issue,

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<sup>1</sup> The numbering of draft resolutions presented to MOP6 may change.

*Noting* that the need to ensure any use of migratory waterbirds is sustainable is a central theme of the Agreement's Action Plan, and has been the focus of much consideration by the Meeting of Parties, *inter alia* in the contexts of ensuring the protection of threatened species under national legislation; phasing out the use of lead shot; reducing disturbance from hunting as well as other activities; suspending hunting during emergency situations, such as periods of extreme cold; and the need to assess and report on bags and hunting mortality,

*Welcoming* the continued collaboration with, and active support for AEWA from international organisations concerned with hunting and, through them, with their national partner organisations,

*Noting* that for quarry species with an unfavourable conservation status, the drivers of population change may be factors other than hunting, for example, as a consequence of land-use changes especially, but not restricted to, agricultural areas,

*Aware* that biological assessments of sustainability rely on population-scale measures of mortality and productivity, information about which is rarely available, and *further aware* that the need for internationally harmonised programmes to collate relevant data and information has long been an important International Implementation Task, but has yet to be fully developed,

*Noting* from the synthesis of National Reports submitted to MOP 6 (document AEWA/MOP 6.XX), that:

- Q28 – number of countries collecting harvest data
- Q29 – current progress with lead shot phase out
- Q30 – measures to eliminate illegal killing

*Recalling* that the deadline established by the Strategic Plan for the phase out of lead shot for hunting in wetlands by all Contracting Parties is 2017,

*Welcoming* also the revised AEWA Guidelines on Sustainable Harvest of Migratory Waterbirds, adopted by **Resolution 6.5**, which bring a major impetus for further development of sustainable use initiatives under AEWA,

*Welcoming* the Guidance on Measures in National Legislation for Different Populations of the Same Species, Particularly with Respect to Hunting and Trade adopted by **Resolution 6.7** and the draft Guidance on Dealing with the Accidental Shooting of Look-Alike Species in the Western Palearctic which is to be further elaborated and extended by the Technical Committee for submission to MOP7 (**AEWA/MOP 6.XX**),

*Noting* the relevance of **Resolution 6.12** on avoiding unnecessary additional mortality for migratory waterbirds in respect of measures to eliminate illegal killing,

#### *The Meeting of the Parties:*

1. *Urges* Parties as a matter of high priority and urgency to ensure their legislative lists of protected species are fully in conformity with the requirements of section 2.1 of the Agreement's Action Plan, such that where populations listed in Column A of Table 1 regularly occur within their territories they are subject to full legal protection or, when applicable, that harvesting is undertaken in conformity with the recommendations of the respective species action plans established in application of articles 2.1.1 and 2.2.2 of the AEWA Action Plan for Column A Categories 2 and 3 populations marked with an asterisk and Column A Category 4 populations;

2. *Requests* the Technical Committee and Secretariat, resources permitting, to develop national lists of Column A populations for all Parties in the Middle East, Europe and Central Asia and communicate these with the respective countries to assist any necessary process of national legislative revision for the species concerned;

3. *Requests* Parties to provide the Technical Committee with further national examples of policies and other means of reducing the risk of accidental shooting of look-alike species such that fully elaborated guidance can be brought to MOP7;
4. *Calls* on Parties to ensure that the revised AEWA Guidelines on Sustainable Harvest of Migratory Waterbirds are fully employed and followed in the course of implementation of the Agreement and that further sustainable use and adaptive harvest management initiatives are launched and implemented in the pursuit of achieving that any use of migratory waterbirds in the AEWA area is sustainable;
5. *Welcomes* the actions of [X], [Y] and [Z] in announcing national policies to phase out the use of lead shot in wetlands and *urges* those Parties that have not done so yet to publish timetables for the phasing out of lead shot use for hunting in wetlands, in accordance with paragraph 4.1.4 of the AEWA Action Plan, and to inform the Secretariat;
6. *Recognises* that for undertaking adaptive management of harvest, the minimum data required are population size and trends and amount of harvest, *urges* the Parties and other Range States to strengthen their waterbird monitoring schemes and to establish or step up harvest data collection, ideally through a coordinated international approach, as well as to reduce to a minimum the time lag between data recording and reporting;
7. *Requests* Parties, through the provision of data and information, to assist the Technical Committee in the review of nature and extent of waterbird harvests, and its legal and cultural regulation especially in, but not restricted to, Africa, the Middle East, and Central Asia, in particular information about the waterbird harvests as a wetland ecosystem service;
8. *Requests* the Technical Committee, resources permitting, to seek information from Parties and stakeholders as to which further tools and guidance would be helpful to them in the context of ensuring that hunting is sustainable, together with seeking a better understanding as to which audiences these tools should be targeted at and the most appropriate means by which this could be undertaken, and to build this information into future planning of the Committee's own work.