



AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF  
AFRICAN-EURASIAN MIGRATORY WATERBIRDS

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*“Making flyway conservation happen”*

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**Progress report of the Executive Director on resolution 1/12 of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme on the relationship between the United Nations Environment Programme and multilateral environmental agreements**

(Note by the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme)



## **Progress report of the Executive Director on resolution 1/12 of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme on the relationship between the United Nations Environment Programme and multilateral environmental agreements to the Meeting of the Parties to the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds at its sixth session**

### **Note by the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme**

#### **I. Background**

1. Pursuant to paragraph 29 of Governing Council decision 27/13 and bearing in mind paragraph 89 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, “The future we want”, which calls for enhancing coordination and cooperation among multilateral environmental agreements, as well as between those agreements and the United Nations system in the field, the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) presented a report on the institutional and administrative relationship between UNEP and the multilateral environmental agreements for which UNEP provided secretariat services to the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme at its first session (UNEP/EA.1/INF/8).

2. The report was prepared in consultation with the secretariats of the following multilateral environmental agreements: Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora; Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals; Convention on Biological Diversity; Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer; Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal; Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade; Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants; Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean; Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region; Amended Nairobi Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Western Indian Ocean; and Convention for Cooperation in the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Atlantic Coast of the West, Central and Southern Africa Region.

#### **II. Task team on effectiveness of administrative arrangements and programmatic cooperation**

3. By its resolution 1/12, the United Nations Environment Assembly took note of the report by the Executive Director, welcomed the step taken to establish a task team on the effectiveness of administrative arrangements and programmatic cooperation between UNEP and the multilateral environmental agreements to which UNEP provides secretariat services and requested the Executive Director to submit a final report to the open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives at its next session, with a view to putting the issue before the Environment Assembly at its second session. The secretariat was also requested to submit information on the progress made by the task team and its two working groups to the relevant conferences of the parties to be held in the period before the second session of the Environment Assembly.

4. The task team, established by the Executive Director and comprising representatives of the conventions for which UNEP provides secretariat services and the relevant offices of the UNEP secretariat, was established in February 2014 and has since held four meetings. The Deputy Executive Director chairs the task team and the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Migratory Species serves as Vice-Chair.

5. The task team established two working groups to facilitate its work: the working group on administrative arrangements, chaired by a representative of the secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, and the working group on programmatic cooperation, chaired by a representative of the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity.



6. The task team was established to fulfil two objectives. The first, on administrative arrangements, involves clarifying the administrative relationship between UNEP, the United Nations Office at Nairobi, the United Nations Office at Geneva and the convention secretariats; identifying the range of administrative services required by the convention secretariats, while assessing whether such services are currently provided; and identifying service providers for specific services and funding sources for procuring such services. The task team is also expected to identify new United Nations system-wide administrative requirements, including the adoption of the international public sector accounting standards (IP-SAS) and the new United Nations Secretariat-wide enterprise resource planning solution, Umoja, including options for and the implications of implementing those requirements for convention secretariats. The second objective, on strengthening programmatic cooperation between UNEP and the convention secretariats, involves identifying priority areas for programmatic cooperation based on directions from the relevant governing bodies and general and specific mandates, including identifying thematic and functional areas for potentially greater synergies.

7. Since the inception of the task team, a series of consultations and meetings have been held within the two working groups constituted under the task team. In addition, the full task team has met four times and provided strategic and substantive guidance to the working groups. The team has also discussed and addressed current issues of relevance, such as the modalities and contingencies for the implementation of Umoja for the conventions to which UNEP provides secretariat services.

8. The working group on programmatic cooperation finalized its work in May 2015. The working group on administrative arrangements is currently finalizing its report for the task team. The reports produced to date by the working groups highlight a very positive spirit of cooperation across the various offices and encouraging progress in the light of the directions given by Member States in resolution 1/12.

9. The programmatic working group developed a comprehensive and inclusive table of ongoing collaboration and possible future collaboration intended to inform the report to be submitted to the United Nations Environment Assembly at its second session and to enable a strategic consideration of the recommendations of the task team in ongoing planning processes within UNEP, such as the development of programmes of work and the medium-term strategy of UNEP for the period 2018–2021.

10. A number of different offices, including the UNEP Office for Operations and Corporate Services, were involved in discussions held by the administrative working group. As indicated, the work of the task team in that area has already produced concrete results in connection with the implementation of Umoja and specific contingencies put in place for multilateral environmental agreements to which UNEP provides secretariat services, particularly in the areas of training, human resources and general preparedness. The working group has also looked at recommendations for overall streamlining and for processes involved in existing service provision arrangements.

### **III. Road map towards the second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly**

11. The final reports from the two working groups were to be submitted to the task team for its consideration through the Office of the Deputy Executive Director before the end of April 2015. A full report of the task team was also to be submitted to the Executive Director of UNEP by May 2015. The Executive Director held a consultative meeting with the heads of the convention secretariats and the multilateral environmental agreements management team on 19 June 2015 in Vienna, with a view to reviewing and considering the final report and recommendations from the task team. At the meeting, the report of the working group on programmatic cooperation was approved, the working group on administrative arrangements was requested to finalize its work as soon as possible, preferably by the end of July 2015, and an agreement was reached on the way forward. In line with recommendations made at that meeting and with a view to further strengthening relations between UNEP and the secretariats, the Executive Director has appointed two staff members as multilateral environmental agreement focal points at UNEP: one in the Division of Environmental Law and Conventions as the focal point for supporting and strengthening programmatic collaboration with multilateral environmental agreements and one in the Office for Operations as the multilateral environmental agreement focal point for assistance and follow-up on operational and administrative matters.

12. A draft report, as mandated by the Environment Assembly in its resolution 1/12, will be presented to the Committee of Permanent Representatives at its third annual subcommittee meeting in October 2015, and subsequently for further review by the Committee of Permanent Representatives at its open-ended meeting in February 2016, and finally for consideration by the United Nations Environment Assembly at its second session in May 2016.



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13. In line with resolution 1/12, the secretariat will continue to provide progress updates on the task team to relevant conferences and meetings of the parties to be held in the period before the second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, including the Twenty-Seventh Session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and the sixth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds, to be held in Bonn, Germany, in November 2015. Updates have been provided to relevant conferences of the parties and other related meetings, including the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Vienna Convention and the Twenty-Sixth Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol and the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions.

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