

Notification 2020/001

27 March 2020

NOTIFICATION TO THE PARTIES

OPERATIONS OF THE AEWA SECRETARIAT IN LIGHT OF THE CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

With the rapid spread of COVID-19, the AEWA Secretariat is undertaking the following steps, in conformity with instructions received from the United Nations administration, and consistent with Host Government policies:

First, alternative working arrangements are in place for all AEWA Secretariat staff, with staff working remotely until further notice. Staff can be reached on their e-mail accounts, and through other virtual platforms that are in place or being established.

Second, because access to the UN Bonn campus is restricted, we ask that all communications with the Secretariat be done electronically.

Third, at least through 31 May 2020, no in-person meetings of AEWA will be organized, and no staff will be able to travel for official meetings or missions. After consulting with respective host countries, all AEWA meetings between March and May 2020 have been postponed. We are looking at promoting alternative ways to celebrate World Migratory Bird Day and will soon have a separate announcement on this topic. We are also encouraging event organizers to consider re-scheduling their planned events and to move them from the second weekend of May to the second weekend in October. The most important criteria at the moment is to stay safe by limiting physical contact with others.

The situation is still very dynamic and under constant review, and updates will be provided.

Despite these challenging circumstances, the AEWA Secretariat is committed to providing the best possible level of service to our Parties and partners. To that end, we have put in place new systems for our internal meetings and coordination and are exploring innovative means to deliver on our mandate. This may include the

use of virtual platforms for external meetings of AEWA Parties and partners. More information will be forthcoming soon.

Your understanding, flexibility and support are greatly appreciated as we work together to tackle the challenge of the pandemic, while we also continue to work towards fulfilling our important mandate with regard to fostering international migratory waterbird conservation.

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World Health Organization technical guidance and more:
<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>