

21st MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE 28-30 April 2026, Virtual Meeting Format

REPORT OF THE UNEP/AEWA SECRETARIAT

Introduction

The present report covers the work of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat for the period from 1 March 2025 – after the 20th Meeting of the Technical Committee (TC20) – to 20 March 2026.

The report is divided into five sections:

1. Organisation and staffing of the Secretariat.
2. General Management, which includes recruitment of Parties and cooperation with other organisations.
3. Communication, Information Management and Outreach.
4. Science, Implementation and Compliance.
5. Capacity-Building.

The day-to-day work of the Agreement Secretariat, which includes responding to incoming mail, maintaining the Secretariat's extensive network of contacts, internal meetings with the Secretariat of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and/or UN Heads of Agencies, administrative work, etc., are not specifically mentioned in this report.

It should be noted that some activities reported below are funded through voluntary contributions. Fundraising takes a substantial part of the Secretariat's staff time, since almost all staff members need to contribute to it. Moreover, in the past six months, an AEWA Trust Fund liquidity crisis has threatened the Secretariat's ability to sustain operations and fulfil its mandate. Fundraising and financial management (including, inter alia, collection of assessed contributions, calling for Trust Fund replenishment contributions, raising voluntary contributions, and optimising expenditures) have therefore been an especially strong focus of the Secretariat's work during this period.

1. Organisation and Staffing of the Secretariat

1.1 Organisation of the Secretariat

The Secretariat is organised into four units which cover four broad areas of work (as described in Annex 1 – Organisational Structure and Annex II - Staff Composition of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat). In 2025, two units were coordinated by the Chief Programmatic Officer to ensure an even better synergy between them: the Science, Implementation and Compliance Unit (SICU) and the African Initiative (AI) Unit. The Chief Programmatic Officer position is currently vacant (see next section). However, the individual staff members and units work closely as a team, interacting with each other daily on cross-cutting issues. It should be noted that the AEWA Communication Unit is part of the joint Information Management, Communication and Awareness-raising Unit (IMCA), which is co-funded and co-managed by the Executive Secretaries of AEWA and CMS.

In 2025 UNEP approved the Secretariat's application for a Junior Professional Officer (JPO), in the framework of the UNEP JPO Programme, to support the work of the Technical Committee (TC), as requested by AEWA MOP Resolution 8.11. Unfortunately, to date no Contracting Party has offered a JPO to the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat.

It is worth noting that the extent of delivery of the Secretariat's mandate as currently reported was only possible thanks to the extension of some part-time positions through voluntary contributions, the availability of some staff funded entirely through voluntary contributions and the support of interns.

1.2 Staffing situation

As at 20 March 2026, the Secretariat comprises eleven staff members: six Professional Staff members (P staff) and five General Staff members (G staff). Actual post occupancy currently amounts to 9.9 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions, with 7.15 FTE positions being financed by assessed contributions (in terms of the budget adopted by the 9th Session of the Meeting of the Parties (MOP9)) and 2.75 positions being financed by voluntary contributions. This is a reduction of human capacity compared to 2025, when actual post occupancy amounted to 11.6 FTE positions.

While the AEWA Executive Secretary retired in December 2025, MOP9 requested that the recruitment of his replacement be postponed until the AEWA Trust Fund is adequately replenished. For the interim period, the Secretariat's Chief Programmatic Officer has been appointed as Acting Executive Secretary, and his former position remains vacant. This has necessitated the redistribution of some tasks amongst P staff.

For a detailed overview of the Secretariat's current staffing, see the staffing table provided in annex 3 of document AEWA/TC21 Inf.7.

Staff partly dependent on voluntary contributions

The positions of the African Initiative Coordinator (P-2) and the African Initiative Programme Assistant (G-5) are funded at 85% and 50% respectively through the AEWA core budget 2026-2028 (having been funded at 80% and 50% respectively through the previous core budget). However, voluntary contributions from the European Union enabled the maintenance of these positions at 100% and 80% respectively during the reporting period.

The position of Species Officer is funded at 70% through the current core budget (having previously been funded at 50% through last triennium's core budget), but at P-2 level. Thanks to voluntary contributions received from the Netherlands, United Kingdom, Norway, Finland and the European Union, and partial coverage by the European Goose Management Platform (EGMP), this position could be maintained at 100% at P-3 level during the reporting period.

Staff fully dependent on voluntary contributions (Fixed-term project posts)

The EGMP is managed at the Secretariat level by one full-time P-2 Coordinator and one full-time G-5 Programme Management Assistant, under the oversight of the Species Officer. The P-2 and G-5 positions are financially secured until December 2026. The next EGMP meeting, in June 2026, will have to adopt the annual budget for 2027 to continue this work.

1.3. Secretariat's Programme of Work

In early 2026, the Secretariat compiled a draft Programme of Work (PoW) for the period 2026-2028, which indicates how the Secretariat's human resources will be allocated across a priority set of activities, setting the

blueprint and focus of the Secretariat's workstreams and deliverables until MOP10. The PoW was approved by the 28th meeting of the AEWA Standing Committee (StC28) and is available as document AEWA/TC21 Inf.7.

The PoW builds on the approach and template used for the Secretariat's PoW 2023-2025, while introducing a revised structure of mandates, a more detailed set of activities, prioritisation, and indicative timelines. The Secretariat intends to compile its future reports to the AEWA governing and subsidiary bodies (including the TC) following the template and structure of the PoW 2026-2028.

The PoW represents the first level of the Secretariat's programmatic planning. The Secretariat is currently at the next level of operational planning for each activity and has also commenced with implementing some activities.

2. General Management

2.1. Recruitment of Parties

No new Contracting Parties have acceded to AEWA during this reporting period. The total number of Parties therefore remains 85, with 39 in Africa and 46 in Eurasia (including the European Union). However, in April 2025, a virtual meeting was held with the Azeri Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, at which the Secretariat presented the benefits of joining AEWA. The 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP15) to the CMS, being held in Campo Grande, Brazil on 23-29 March 2026, will also be a good opportunity for the Acting Executive Secretary to meet and engage with non-Party Range State delegations.

2.2. Meetings of the AEWA Standing Committee

The Secretariat facilitated the logistical and substantive organisation and the running of three meetings of the StC, two of which were held in virtual format, as no budget was available for in-person meetings in the core budget adopted at MOP8 through Resolution 8.10. Following MOP9, the Secretariat also facilitated the hand-over between the past and new Chairs of the StC.

26th Meeting of the Standing Committee (StC26), 24-25 September 2025, virtual meeting format.

The StC26 meeting report is not yet available, but the meeting documents are available at:

<https://www.unep-aewa.org/meeting/26th-meeting-aewa-standing-committee>

27th Meeting of the Standing Committee (StC27), 14 November 2025, Bonn, Germany.

The StC27 meeting report is available at:

<https://www.unep-aewa.org/meeting/27th-meeting-aewa-standing-committee>

28th Meeting of the Standing Committee (StC28), 12 March 2026, virtual meeting format.

The StC28 meeting report is not yet available, but the meeting documents are available at:

<https://www.unep-aewa.org/meeting/28th-meeting-aewa-standing-committee>

2.3. Meetings of the AEWA Technical Committee

Following MOP9, the Secretariat has worked to constitute the new TC, update the Committee's online workspace, and facilitate the logistical and substantive organisation of TC21, which is being held in virtual meeting format on 28-30 April 2026.

2.4. Meeting of the Parties

MOP9 was originally scheduled for 10-14 November 2025 in Gaborone, Botswana, at the kind invitation of the Government of Botswana. However, due to financial constraints experienced by the Government of Botswana, MOP9 was ultimately relocated to Bonn, Germany, where it was hosted by the Secretariat on the UN Campus on 11-14 November 2025.

The slogan of AEWA MOP9 was “United for Flyways”, reflecting the core mission of AEWA to bring governments and other stakeholders together to conserve migratory waterbirds and their habitats along the African-Eurasian flyways. The 9th edition of the Conservation Status Report (CSR9) was launched on the opening day of the MOP and 11 resolutions were ultimately adopted, with [Resolution 9.8](#) being of particular interest for the Technical Committee insofar as it approved the Committee’s Work Plan for 2026-2028 and appointed several new members. A special plenary session marked the 30th Anniversary of AEWA’s adoption, and a dedicated Side Event Day included a total of 14 side events spanning a wide range of topics.

In the period since MOP9, the Secretariat has undertaken the following post-MOP activities:

- Preparing and publishing the Agreement’s [updated legal texts](#) (the updated English and French versions are both available on the AEWA website, while the Arabic and Russian versions are still being prepared).
- Publishing final versions of all [adopted resolutions](#) on the AEWA website (in English and French).
- Preparing the MOP9 report (which is currently being finalised).
- Preparing the MOP9 proceedings (which are currently in the process of being compiled).
- Publishing the [MOP9 daily coverage](#) on the AEWA website and enhancing its content.

The Secretariat is additionally working to identify a host country for MOP10.

2.5. Cooperation with UN Environment and Other Organisations

UN Environment and CMS Family

On programmatic synergies, some items such as the illegal taking of birds, lead poisoning or the energy sector are now led by the CMS following decisions by the CMS COP which broadened the mandate on these issues under the Convention. The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat is, however, still involved in all relevant Task Forces – for instance, the Chief Programmatic Officer and Species Officer participated in a joint meeting of the CMS Intergovernmental Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean and the Bern Convention Special Focal Points on Illegal Killing of Birds (held in Bonn on 13-15 May 2025), and the Species Officer participated in the 1st meeting of the South-West Asia Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds Intergovernmental Task Force (hosted by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on 20-21 May 2025).

The CMS and AEWA Secretariats created a joint unit on Communication in 2014. A new memo was signed by the two Executive Secretaries in July 2025 to improve the work and deliveries of this joint unit.

The Chief Programmatic Officer and Species Officer attended meetings of the CMS Standing Committee and Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council and participated in the latter’s Working Group on Flyways and the various sub-groups thereof.

Ramsar Convention

The cooperation with the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention has mainly focused on African topics but also on some items such as flyways conservation and partnership for waterbird monitoring, with two resolutions adopted

at COP15 in July 2025, respectively the resolution on “strengthening national actions on the conservation and restoration of waterbird flyways” (Ramsar COP 15 Doc 23.16 Rev.1) and the resolution on the establishment of the Global Waterbird Estimates Partnership (GWEP) (Ramsar COP 15 Doc 23.11 Rev.1). For more information, see:

<https://www.unep-aewa.org/en/news/wetlands-conservation-waterbird-conservation-ramsar-cop15-concludes-commitments-strengthen>

The Secretariat is an observer to the Ramsar Convention’s Scientific & Technical Review Panel. The Ramsar Secretariat is also a partner of the RESSOURCE+ project (see below) and both Secretariats cooperate in the framework of this project.

FAO and FFEM and the RESSOURCE Project

"RESSOURCE" is the acronym for the French equivalent of "Strengthening expertise in Sub-Saharan Africa on birds and their rational use for communities and their environment". The ecosystems at the core of this project are based on the Senegal River Valley, the Inner Niger Delta, and Lake Chad. These are areas upon which almost one billion people depend for agriculture, rearing of livestock, fishing and hunting, and which are equally of critical importance to millions of waterbirds.

The project aims to evaluate the sustainability of exploiting the resources represented by waterbirds thanks to its integrated approach which includes: (i) assessing the resources in terms of the numbers, distribution and socio-economic importance, especially for rural communities (ii) preserving habitats and (iii) proposing conservation measures at community level.

A second phase was launched in 2024 funded by the European Union and the French Fund for Environment (FFEM). For more information, see: <https://www.fao.org/in-action/swm-programme/where-we-work/sahelian-wetlands/>

The RESSOURCE Project team launched a brand-new Massive Open Online Course MOOC-RESSOURCE – developed in collaboration with Tour du Valat and the French Office for Biodiversity (OFB) and with contributions from the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat. The first public session of the course was run from 15 September 2025. The title of this MOOC is “Identifying and Counting Waterbirds in North Africa and the Sahel – How and Why?”. This modern, comprehensive and entirely free online course offers an advanced introduction to the identification of waterbirds in the region and to waterbird counting techniques. It also provides insight into the ecological, economic and social challenges facing wetlands today. After successfully completing the course, the participant will receive a certificate signed by the organisations supporting this excellent initiative, including AEWA. A well-attended side event on MOOC-RESSOURCE was conducted at AEWA MOP9.

European Union

The Secretariat has engaged in bilateral discussions with the European Commission on issues of mutual interest.

Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative/CAFF

The Secretariat is a member of the African-Eurasian Flyway Committee of the Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative (AMBI). The Secretariat was unfortunately not able to attend meetings due to capacity and budgetary constraints.

East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP)

The Secretariat is an observer to the EAAFP’s Technical sub-Committee.

2.6. The AEWA African Initiative

The status of staff under the AEWA African Initiative Unit (one Associate Programme Officer – P2 and one Programme Assistant – G5), and related funding for the positions is covered under Section 1.2 of this report.

Coordination of the AEWA African Initiative

The coordination of activities under the AEWA AI continued to be assured by the triple coordination mechanism established by Resolution 5.9 - i.e., the African Initiative Unit within the Secretariat, the [Technical Support Unit \(TSU\)](#) sponsored by France and the [Sub-Regional Focal Point Coordinators \(SRFPCs\)](#). Activities conducted by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat are reported in the sub-sections below. Activities conducted by the TSU during the current reporting period have been related mainly to the RESSOURCE Project and are covered under the section 2.5 of this report.

Secretariat activities relating to the implementation of the African Initiative and Plan of Action for Africa (PoAA)

Process for reporting on the implementation of the PoAA

The PoAA MOP9 reporting process was launched in early January 2025, with the submission deadline initially set for 14 March 2025 and subsequently extended to 31 March 2025 and eventually to 30 April 2025, to allow for more submissions. By the extended 30 April deadline, 14 out of the 39 African Contracting Parties had submitted their PoAA National Reports to MOP9, equivalent to a 36% submission rate, which is significantly lower than the 53% submission rate for the first ever PoAA reporting cycle to MOP8. Due to the low reporting rate and the lack of funding, an analysis of the submitted MOP9 PoAA reports could unfortunately not be conducted. This also prevented the compilation of a progress report on implementation of the PoAA. In Resolution 9.2, MOP9 decided that no reports on the implementation of the PoAA should be submitted to MOP10, with the aim to allow African Parties to focus their attention, efforts and capacity on compiling and submitting in a timely manner comprehensive general national reports to MOP10.

Implementation of International Single Species Action Plans (ISSAPs)

Information on projects/activities conducted/supported by the Secretariat for some ISSAPs relevant for Africa, and made possible due to grants that the Secretariat received from the European Union, is accounted below:

Thanks to a grant provided by the European Commission's (EC's) Global Public Goods and Challenges (GPGC) Programme Cooperation Agreement (PCA) with UNEP, the Secretariat was able to provide seed grant funding to two projects in Botswana and Zambia, with a view to supporting delivery of the Slaty Egret ISSAP. The first of these projects successfully strengthened national coordination for Slaty Egret conservation through the establishment of a National Slaty Egret Working Group, drafted a national monitoring strategy for Slaty Egret breeding sites, collected and analysed baseline data from key breeding habitats in the Okavango Delta, and made recommendations for policy and legal reforms with a view to supporting improved protection for the Slaty Egret and its habitat. The second project conducted Slaty Egret monitoring in the Barotse floodplains and Kafue Flats Key Biodiversity Areas and undertook environmental education and wide scale community awareness-raising on the conservation of the Slaty Egret and its habitat.

Through the grant provided by the EC's GPGC, the Secretariat also continued efforts towards supporting two projects implementing the Northern Bald Ibis ISSAP. For the first project in Morocco, which aimed at improving breeding conditions in the colony in Souss Massa National Park (PNSM), activities during the current reporting period focused on monitoring and assessing the impact of cleaning/newly created breeding ledges, further enhancing the material capacity of the PNSM staff through provision of more optical equipment for monitoring of species, and conducting a clean-up campaign at the PNSM and Tamri areas to reduce the negative impact of various types of waste materials on the species, which occurs in significant numbers at these locations. The second

project supported the Government of Algeria in undertaking a justification and feasibility assessment for the planned reintroduction of the species in the country. Completed in 2025, the assessment evaluated all potential release sites and provided recommendations for three shortlisted options, along with technical requirements and an outline of the main phases of a future reintroduction programme – providing useful guidance for national decision-making. The project conclusions were positive regarding proceeding with the translocation, reflecting the strong commitment of the Algerian authorities. However, the assessment also highlighted the need for additional investigations and preparatory actions, which were incorporated into the final recommendations.

Further, funding secured under the EC Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) Programme Cooperation Agreement (PCA III) with UNEP is being used to support implementation of the Grey Crowned Crane ISSAP. This project, which is being led by the International Crane Foundation (coordinating organisation of the AEWA Grey Crowned Crane International Working Group) is planned to run up to the end of 2027 and aims to assess the incidence and dynamics of crop damage by, and resulting poisoning of, Grey Crowned Cranes in Kenya and Uganda, and to identify cost-effective methods to prevent crop damage by cranes.

Training / capacity enhancement

The Secretariat organised an [African regional preparatory meeting for MOP9](#), which took place in a virtual format on 16-17 September 2025. The meeting provided an opportunity for representatives from African Contracting Parties to become familiarised with and deliberate on migratory waterbird conservation issues that would be addressed at MOP9, review relevant MOP documents and draft resolutions and provide African-relevant inputs – with input provided to the draft of Resolution 9.2 on developing a targeted, simplified and direct implementation support mechanism or approach based on the Strategic Plan 2029-2037 to support implementation of AEWA in Africa (in place of the PoAA) as well as encouraging further training on national reporting to AEWA. It also focused on enhancing participants' knowledge and understanding of AEWA and relevant MOP procedures (this being especially important for the high proportion of new National Focal Points) and enabled them to discuss issues of common regional interest ahead of the MOP, strengthen collaboration among Parties and improve skills on issues such as participation at meetings of Multilateral Environmental Agreements. The AEWA African Pre-MOP9 was made possible thanks to a generous financial contribution from the Government of the United Kingdom through its Department of Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

Operation of the AEWA Small Grants Fund (SGF):

With no funding earmarked in the AEWA Core Budget towards SGF projects since 2016 and no voluntary contributions received to this end, no additional SGF project cycle has been operated by the Secretariat since the 2015 project cycle. Resolution 9.2 envisages the development of a modified or alternative/supplementary mechanism for funding AEWA relevant projects for eligible Parties (see task 8.9 of the TC Work Plan).

3. Communications, Information Management and Outreach

Over the reporting period, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has continued to strengthen its communication, outreach, and information management activities to support the implementation of the Agreement and raise awareness of migratory waterbird conservation within the AEWA Agreement Area. This section provides an overview of some of the key activities carried out since TC20, including AEWA's 30th Anniversary celebrations, the communication work around AEWA MOP9, the World Migratory Bird Day campaigns, and the development of Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) activities under the Agreement.

AEWA's communication and information management-related work is managed under the leadership and guidance of the AEWA Acting Executive Secretary and carried out by the Joint CMS and AEWA IMCA Unit that was established in 2014 as a pilot in joint services between the CMS and AEWA Secretariats.

3.1 AEWA's 30th Anniversary

In 2025, AEWA marked its 30th Anniversary, celebrating three decades of international cooperation for the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats along their flyways in Africa and western Eurasia. To commemorate this milestone, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat launched a [dedicated anniversary webpage](#) featuring a range of special products and activities, including the official [30th Anniversary logo](#), a [new general brochure](#), and three new animations on AEWA. The [first animation](#) helps introduce and explain AEWA in simple language, while the [second animation](#) focuses on the importance of AEWA's International Species Action Plans. The [third animation](#) shows how supporting AEWA can help countries implement other globally agreed priorities, including the Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The animations were made possible thanks to the voluntary contributions from Germany and the Republic of Croatia and are available on [AEWA's YouTube Channel](#) in both English and French.

To mark the 30th Anniversary of the Agreement, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat received supporting statements from many partner organisations and key people who have helped shape the Agreement into what it is today. All the statements received can be found on the [dedicated anniversary webpage](#).

Additional highlights of the 30th Anniversary, accessible from the dedicated anniversary webpage, included a new [staff tribute page](#), a [pledge campaign](#), [social media pack](#) and a [UN Stamp collection featuring three AEWA species](#) (see below).

3.2 UN Stamps Feature AEWA Species

To celebrate the 30th Anniversary of AEWA, the United Nations Postal Administration featured three AEWA-listed species in its annual Endangered Species stamp series: the African Penguin (*Spheniscus demersus*), Grey Crowned Crane (*Balearica regulorum*), and White-headed Duck (*Oxyura leucocephala*). [These commemorative UN stamps](#) celebrate AEWA's 30 years of conserving migratory waterbirds and highlight the importance of global cooperation, showcasing how multilateral agreements like AEWA and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) work together under the umbrella of the United Nations to protect biodiversity and threatened species.

3.3 AEWA's new website

The IMCA Unit continues to provide uninterrupted operational support for the CMS Family's critical digital infrastructure, including the AEWA corporate website, the meeting registration tool, and multiple project microsites, including the TC Workspace. This includes quality control, bug fixing, functionality adjustments, and refinement of the information architecture to better meet user needs.

A major milestone in this area is the technological upgrade and redesign of the CMS Family websites, including the AEWA main website.

Directly following AEWA MOP9, the IMCA Unit launched the new AEWA corporate website. As part of the redesign and technological upgrade of the CMS Family websites, all databases, content types and files linked to the AEWA website have been migrated to Drupal 11. The new AEWA website has improved user experience, is more mobile-friendly, and aligns with accessibility standards. It also offers a more intuitive, engaging, and inclusive online environment to better serve AEWA as its main information hub. Since MOP9, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat and IMCA have begun the process of systematically checking the content of the new website to identify content issues that have occurred during the migration and to improve its presentation.

3.4 AEWA MOP9 Communications

In addition to activities marking AEWA's 30th Anniversary, a substantial portion of the Secretariat's communications work since TC20 has focused on preparations for AEWA MOP9. In close collaboration with the Joint Communications Unit, the Secretariat developed and delivered a wide range of communication products and activities to support the meeting.

These outputs included the design of the [MOP9 logo and overall event branding](#), the production of a [new general AEWA brochure](#), and the creation of several banners used to enhance the visual identity of the venue. Media-focused materials were also prepared, including a media advisory and both [opening](#) and [closing press releases](#) of MOP9. In addition, a suite of social media assets, comprising a designated [MOP9 Social Media Pack](#) (Trello board) and custom-designed graphics, were developed to strengthen social media outreach and engagement around MOP9. Furthermore, the Secretariat and the Joint Communications Unit jointly produced and published the [AEWA MOP9 Daily Coverage](#) feature, which documents the highlights of each day of the meeting through short summaries, photos, videos and audio recordings. This product was developed in-house and provides a lasting audiovisual record of the meeting, including the celebration of [AEWA's 30th Anniversary during the opening day of MOP9](#). During the session, tribute was paid to the first AEWA-listed species to be officially declared extinct, the Slender-billed Curlew. The tribute included the unveiling of a taxidermy specimen during the plenary, generously loaned by the Museum Koenig Bonn. A dedicated feature "[Remembering the Slender-billed Curlew](#)", was also published on the AEWA website in advance of MOP9 to commemorate the species.

3.5 World Migratory Bird Day

World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) is a global campaign that educates and promotes conservation efforts for migratory birds and their journeys across borders. It raises awareness about the challenges birds face and encourages conservation actions worldwide. WMBD triggers hundreds of educational events around the world that are united by their common goal of raising awareness and advocating for international bird protection. Each year the campaign features a central theme, prompts action, and coordinates global efforts to safeguard migratory birds and their habitats.

This global campaign is organised by the CMS, AEWA, Environment for the Americas (EFTA), and the EAAFP.

The theme for the 2025 WMBD campaign was dedicated to creating bird-friendly cities and communities. It focused on creating and adapting environments that support migratory bird populations across all communities, from bustling cities to smaller towns and communities.

WMBD 2026 is dedicated to highlighting the importance of citizen science in advancing international bird conservation. With the theme "[Every Bird Counts – Your Observations Matter!](#)", it will be used to shine a spotlight on the thousands of volunteers, birdwatchers, and many dedicated individuals around the world who play a vital role in monitoring migratory birds and collecting the essential data that helps inform global conservation policy. The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat and IMCA have worked closely with the other campaign partners (CMS, EAAFP and EFTA) to prepare the materials for this year's campaign. The 2026 poster, which will be available in all UN languages features artwork from a Brazilian artist who has used a special embroidery technique to create the migratory birds featured on the global poster. For more information see the WMBD campaign website: www.worldmigratorybirdday.org

3.6 Social Media

AEWA's official LinkedIn page was launched shortly before the current reporting period, in January 2025, to strengthen the Agreement's social media presence and address a professional audience. The number of followers

has already risen to above 1000 with active engagement from the page's followers. IMCA will focus on further developing the LinkedIn community of AEWA, as the platform is better suited to cater the social media audience than the Agreement's other channel (Facebook).

3.7 Communication, Education and Public Awareness

Resolution 9.6, on CEPA, aims to strengthen AEWA's outreach and engagement efforts across the Agreement Area. Developed by the Technical Committee, with support from the Secretariat, the Committee's invited expert on CEPA, and an informal CEPA Advisory Group, the resolution builds on AEWA's existing communication initiatives, including WMBD, and seeks closer collaboration with other CEPA-related programmes such as those being conducted by the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, EAAFP and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

A key objective is to develop a more focused and structured CEPA approach for AEWA over the next three years, paving the way for a comprehensive programme that will align with AEWA's next Strategic Plan to be adopted in 2028. Once developed and sufficiently funded, the new CEPA approach will help raise awareness, mobilise stakeholders, and strengthen capacity for CEPA that will support the implementation of AEWA and help to highlight the importance of international cooperation for the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats across the African-Eurasian flyways.

4. Science, Implementation and Compliance

4.1. Facilitation of the Technical Committee

The Science, Implementation and Compliance Unit (SICU) is responsible, amongst other things, for the facilitation of the TC. The Secretariat supported the leads of TC Working Groups in the reporting period and has also been moderating (and, at the start of this triennium, updating) the TC Workspace, which is the online communication and work platform of the Committee. The Secretariat led on or contributed to the implementation of several tasks on the TC Work Plan 2023-2025. The facilitation of the TC's work is one of the most human capacity demanding tasks of SICU and is undertaken in the absence of dedicated capacity for this purpose.

4.2. Development and coordination of AEWA International Species Action and Management Plans and AEWA International Species Working Groups

Proposed amendments to the format and guidelines for International Species Action and Management Plans, as well as the decision-making process for retirement, revision, update and extension of such Plans, were drafted based on the recommendations of CSR9 and were adopted by MOP9 (see Resolution 9.3).

Support for national-level implementation of several International Species Action Plans is outlined in section 2.5 above.

Notable international activities in respect of specific Plans include the following:

Dalmatian Pelican (*Pelecanus crispus*)

The Dalmatian Pelican International Working Group was convened, and an ad hoc meeting of this Group was held online in October 2025.

Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*) and Eurasian Curlew (*Numenius arquata*)

The coordinators of the International Working Groups for these two species continue to collaborate and are currently planning an in-person joint meeting for September 2026. Although the Secretariat does not have the capacity to participate in this meeting, it has provided broad guidance regarding its preparation.

Northern Bald Ibis (*Geronticus eremita*)

In March 2025, the Species Officer attended an International Northern Bald Ibis Symposium in Spain, where she delivered an invited presentation on species action planning and implementation under AEWA.

The 4th meeting of the Northern Bald Ibis International Working Group was held as a virtual event in October 2025.

Greenland White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons flavirostris*)

The conservation brief for the Greenland White-fronted Goose (which was approved by the Technical Committee at its 20th meeting) concluded that three of the four alert thresholds identified by the ISSAP for this species have been reached, thereby triggering the need for an emergency review meeting. In June 2025, the Secretariat facilitated a preparatory meeting amongst Range States and experts to begin formulating the key elements of, and information needs for, the emergency review meeting.

Taiga Bean Goose (*Anser fabalis fabalis*)

Following the conclusion of an evaluation of the Taiga Bean Goose ISSAP, a revision workshop was hosted and facilitated by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat in hybrid format on 1-3 April 2025 with representatives from nine Range States and four observer organisations. Thereafter, the Secretariat coordinated the compilation of drafts of the revised Plan and the associated consultations. The compilation team for the revised Plan was led by the Finnish Wildlife Agency, and both the Finnish Wildlife Agency and the Danish Agency for Green Transition and Aquatic Environment provided funding to support the drafting process. The revised Plan was adopted by MOP9.

Svalbard breeding population of Pink-footed Goose (*Anser brachyrhynchus*)

In collaboration with Aarhus University/the AEWA European Goose Management Platform Data Centre, the Secretariat continued to oversee and contribute to the compilation of drafts of the revised International Single Species Management Plan (ISSMP) for the Svalbard-breeding population of Pink-footed Goose (this revision process having commenced in 2024) and coordinated the associated consultations. The Danish Agency for Green Transition and Aquatic Environment provided funding to support the drafting process, and the revised Plan was adopted by MOP9.

Further meetings were organised, and implementation work has been coordinated, under the EGMP (see next section). Additional information on the current status of, and progress under, AEWA's International Species Action and Management Plans is provided in [CSR9](#).

The Secretariat recently secured a grant from the European Union which will be used to provide more structured support to International Working and Expert Group Coordinators from 2026-2028. However, the Secretariat's involvement in individual meetings of International Species Working Groups and the processes to evaluate, update, and/or revise expiring International Species Action Plans, or to develop new Plans, will be reduced

considerably this triennium due to capacity constraints and the allocation of staff time to other priorities under the approved Secretariat PoW 2026-2028.

4.3. AEWA European Goose Management Platform (EGMP)

The EGMP has 16 participating Range States, 15 national governments and the European Commission: Belarus, Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, EU, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Ukraine and United Kingdom. Ireland was the latest country joining the European Goose Management International Working Group (EGM IWG), in June 2021. Spain is participating in the Greylag Goose implementation process through data provision. Poland has designated a national expert to participate in the Taiga Bean Goose Task Force. Spain, Lithuania, Poland and Russia officially remain non-participating Range States of the EGMP.

The coordination of the EGMP continues to be facilitated by the EGMP Coordinator and Programme Management Assistant based at the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat under the oversight of the Species Officer and in close collaboration with Aarhus University, which functions as the EGMP Data Centre. Under the coordination of the EGMP Data Centre, the International Modelling Consortium, consisting of an international partnership of scientific institutions, collaborates on the development of population models.

Currently, there are seven Task Forces operating under the EGMP, five population-based and two crosscutting Task Forces:

Population-based Task Forces:

- Pink-footed Goose Task Force for Svalbard (br) population
- Taiga Bean Goose Task Force
- Barnacle Goose Task Force for Russia (br) population
- Barnacle Goose Task Force for E. Greenland (br) and Svalbard (br) populations
- Greylag Goose Task Force for NW (br) population

Crosscutting Task Forces:

- Agriculture Task Force
- Flight Safety Task Force

The Task Forces are aimed at supporting the EGM IWG in coordinating and facilitating implementation of the ISSAP and ISSMPs falling within the EGMP's remit. During the reporting period, there have been a total of 22 meetings of EGMP Task Forces. Meetings were held online, as well as in person during the annual EGMP Task Force Day (held back-to-back with the 11th meeting of the EGM IWG), and involved the Task Force Coordinators and members, together with the EGMP Secretariat and Data Centre.

Table: Overview of populations and Management Units (MUs) covered by the EGMP and relevant documents:

Overview of populations and Management Units (MUs) covered under the EGMP and relevant management documents						
Population	Management/Action Plan (ISSMP/ISSAP)			Adaptive Flyway Management Programme (AFMP) / Implementation Plan		
	Link	Adopted	Expires	Link	Adopted	Expires
Svalbard (br) population of Pink-footed Goose	ISSMP	2025	2037	Currently being developed	-	-

Scandinavia (br) population of Taiga Bean Goose	ISSAP	2025	2037	Not developed	-	-
Finland & NW Russia (br) population of Taiga Bean Goose	ISSAP	2025	2037	Not developed	-	-
Germany & Poland (nbr) population of Taiga Bean Goose	ISSAP	2025	2037	Not developed	-	-
C Asia (nbr) population of Taiga Bean Goose	ISSAP	2025	2037	Not developed		
NW Europe (br) population of Greylag Goose consisting of 2 MUs; MU1 (migratory) and MU2 (sedentary)	ISSMP	2018	2031	AFMP	2020	2026
Russia (br) population of Barnacle Goose consisting of 3 MUs; MU1 (Arctic), MU2 (Baltic) and MU3 (North Sea)	ISSMP	2018	2031	AFMP	2020	2026
E. Greenland (br) population of Barnacle Goose	ISSMP	2018	2031	AFMP	2020	2026
Svalbard (br) population of Barnacle Goose	ISSMP	2018	2031	Not developed	-	-

All ISSAPs, ISSMPs and their corresponding AFMPs are currently in the implementation phase.

The EGMP runs its own [website](#) and social media channels. All documents, information sheets, meeting reports, resources and data can be accessed via the website.

Funding towards the functioning the EGMP, including the staffing costs as well as the implementation of projects has been jointly provided by the EGMP Range States.

The International Working Group's 10th meeting (EGM IWG10) took place on 17-19 June 2025 in Brussels, Belgium at the kind invitation of the Research Institute for Nature and Forest (INBO) and the Flemish Agency for Nature and Forests (ANB). The joint in-person meetings of the EGMP Task Forces were held on 16 June 2025.

Please see:

<https://egmp.aewa.info/meetings/iwg/detail/10th-meeting-aewa-european-goose-management-international-working-group-egm>

Planning for EGM IWG11 is currently underway. This meeting will take place from 16-18 June 2026 in Skövde, Sweden, at the kind invitation of the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA), the Wildlife Damage Center at the University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) and the Nordic Board for Wildlife Research (NKV). The EGMP Task Force Day will be held on 15 June 2026, back-to-back with EGM IWG11.

4.4. Implementation Review Process (IRP)

The Secretariat also supports the Standing Committee in undertaking the Implementation Review Process. However, due to the limited staffing at the Secretariat and the lack of dedicated capacity to attend to compliance matters, there has been limited support towards IRP proceedings over the reporting period. Resolution 9.2

provides for the production of a *modus operandi* for the IRP and conceptualising a broader AEWA compliance framework while taking into account the limited human resources and budgetary constraints (see task 8.8 in the TC Work Plan).

4.5. National Reporting

The Secretariat facilitates the process of national reporting by the Contracting Parties on the implementation of the Agreement, as per Article V.(c) of AEWA. Two reporting modules were run in the 2023-2025 triennium with different reporting deadlines. The first module on waterbird harvest data reporting for the period 2019-2023 was launched by the Secretariat through the Online Reporting System (ORS) in July 2024 with a submission deadline of 31 December 2024. The other module, containing the rest of the reporting format, was launched in January 2025 with reporting deadline of 180 days prior to the opening of MOP9, as per the decision of MOP8, i.e. 13 May 2025. Subsequently, due to the low reporting rate on the first module on harvest data, the deadline was extended from the end of 2024 to 13 May 2025 to match the deadline of the main reporting module.

By the deadline for submission of national reports to MOP9, 23 Parties submitted the main module of the report on the implementation of AEWA for the period 2021-2024 (27% reporting rate) and 29 Parties submitted the second reporting module on waterbird harvest data for the period 2019-2023 (35% reporting rate), while only 19 Parties submitted both reporting modules (23% reporting rate), which is the lowest reporting rate in the history of the Agreement to date. After the deadline the Secretariat issued another reminder to encourage Parties to submit both modules of the report in advance of the opening of MOP9. By the opening date of MOP9, 38 Parties had submitted the main module of the report (45% reporting rate), 36 Parties and one non-Party Range State submitted the second reporting module on waterbird harvest data (43% reporting rate), and 31 Parties submitted both reporting modules (37% reporting rate).

4.6. Waterbird Monitoring

The Secretariat remains involved in the Strategic Group of the African-Eurasian Waterbird Monitoring Partnership, which guides the development of waterbird monitoring within the AEWA area. The partnership is coordinated by Wetlands International.

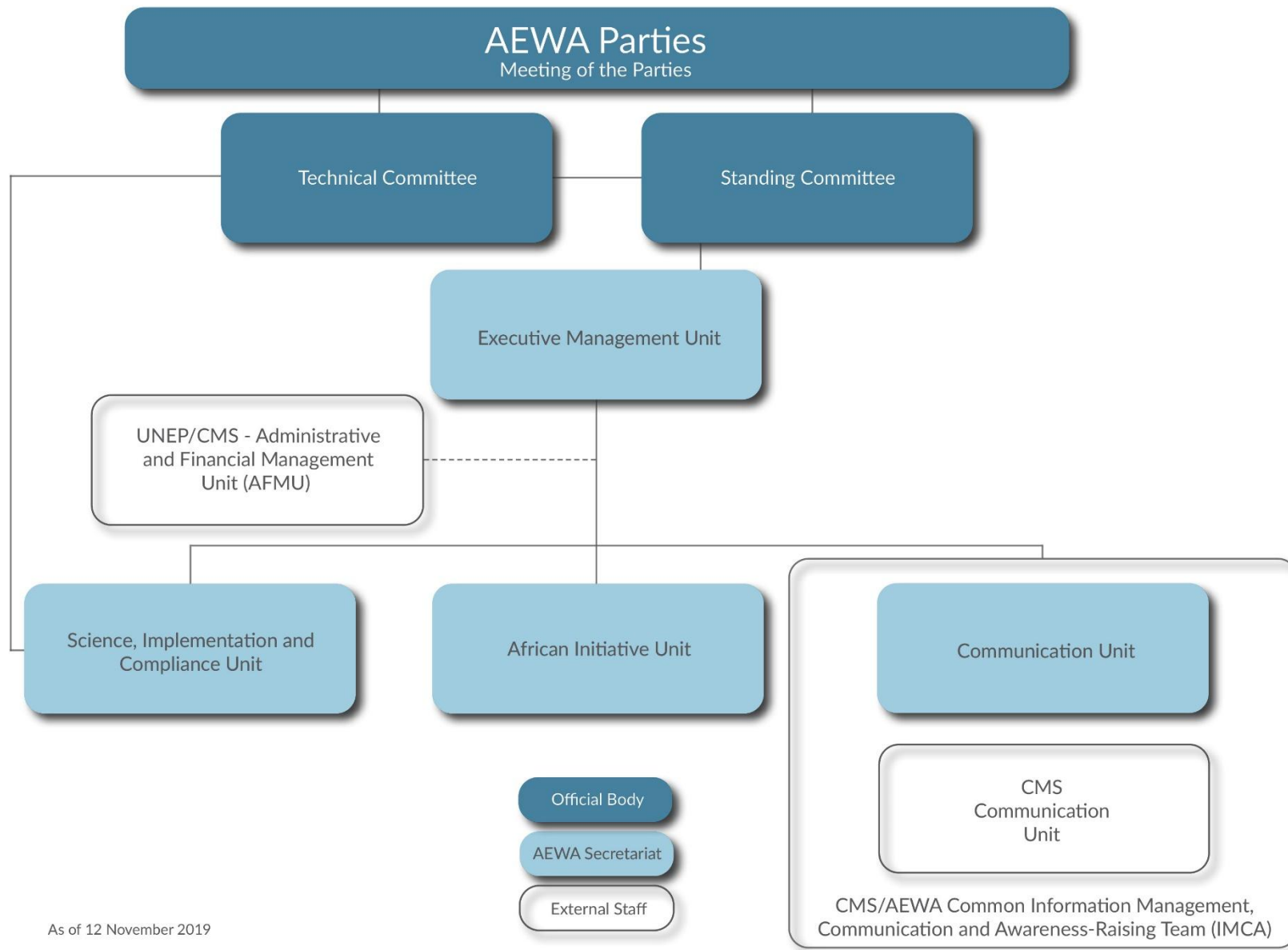
A 3-year partnership since 2023 with Leica Camera AG has allowed the Secretariat to support the waterbird monitoring network by distributing 10 pairs of Leica Trinovid 10x42 binoculars annually as well as 20,000 EUR per year for covering monitoring work expenses.

Ramsar COP15 adopted a resolution (Resolution XV.11) on the establishment of the Global Waterbird Estimates Partnership (GWEP) in which AEWA will be involved.

5. Capacity Building

Capacity Building activities for the reporting period mainly focused on the African region (see section 2.6 above).

ANNEX I – Organisational Structure of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat



As of 12 November 2019

ANNEX II - Staff Composition of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat



UNEP/AEWA Secretariat: Staff composition

Executive Management Unit
 P4, Acting Executive Secretary (Sergey Dereliev)
 P2, Executive Management Support Officer (Catherine Lehmann)
 G5, Administrative Assistant (Marie-Therese Kämper)

Chief Programmatic Officer
 P3 (Vacant)

Science, Implementation and Compliance Unit
 P3, Species Officer (Melissa Lewis)
 P2, EGMP Coordinator (Bruno Leles)
 G5, Programme Management Assistant - EGMP (Shanay Huseynova)
 G5, Programme Management Assistant (Jeannine Dicken)

African Initiative Unit
 P2, African Initiative Coordinator (Evelyn Moloko)
 G5, Programme Management Assistant (Birgit Drerup)

Communication Unit
 P2, Information Officer (Florian Keil)
 G5, Information Assistant (Dunia Sforzin)

P – Professional Staff Category
 G – General Staff Category