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**REPORT ON THE JOINT CMS/AEWA INFORMATION MANAGEMENT,
COMMUNICATION AND AWARENESS-RAISING (IMCA) UNIT**

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Introduction

This document provides an overview of the activities undertaken by the Joint CMS/AEWA Information Management, Communication and Awareness-Raising (IMCA) Unit during the period since the 9th Session of the Meeting of the Parties to AEWA (MOP9) in November 2025.

The report highlights progress in information management, communication and awareness-raising activities undertaken in support of the implementation of AEWA.

1. Governance of the Joint IMCA Unit

The Joint CMS/AEWA Information Management, Communication and Awareness-raising (IMCA) Unit continues to operate under a common service arrangement between the CMS and AEWA Secretariats, and its work is guided by an annual Programme of Work developed by the Unit Coordinator and agreed by the Executive Secretaries. In July 2025, the Executive Secretaries of CMS and AEWA adopted revised administrative arrangements intended to continue to support and strengthen the results-based work of the Joint IMCA Unit, while improving the approaches used based on lessons learned and past experiences.

The arrangements are being implemented on a trial basis until the end of July 2026 and will be reviewed jointly by the CMS and AEWA Secretariats to identify any adjustments required for the future operation of the Unit.

2. Information Management

An important undertaking during the reporting period was the launch of the new AEWA website on 4 December 2025 as part of the wider CMS Family website renewal project. The initiative formed part of a comprehensive modernisation programme implemented jointly across CMS Family instruments.

Between September and December 2025, a total of 25 CMS Family websites were launched under a common platform and governance framework. The collaborative approach saved considerable cost, generated efficiencies, enabled the sharing of technical expertise and facilitated the development of common functionalities for Parties and stakeholders across the CMS Family.

The new AEWA website provides a secure, modern and user-oriented platform with enhanced visual presentation, improved meeting and document functionalities, mobile responsiveness, content scheduling capability, improved search and filtering functions and a streamlined navigation structure.

The IMCA Unit also initiated the migration of project websites and microsites from legacy Drupal 7 infrastructure to ensure continued compliance with security and performance requirements.

Content migration and optimisation work remains ongoing and is expected to continue throughout 2026, subject to available resources.

3. Communication and Outreach

3.1 Strategic communications

Communication activities during the reporting period were guided by the AEWA Communication Strategy and the AEWA MOP9 Communication Plan. Efforts focused on demonstrating the effectiveness of AEWA as a flyway-scale conservation instrument, communicating the value of migratory waterbirds, highlighting key conservation challenges, expanding outreach and strengthening strategic partnerships.

3.2 Support to the 9th Session of the Meeting of the Parties to AEWA (MOP9)

The implementation of communication activities for AEWA MOP9 represented the principal communication priority of the reporting period. A dedicated communication plan was developed to support media outreach, stakeholder engagement and visibility of the meeting and its outcomes.

Major communication outputs delivered in support of MOP9 included the development of the meeting logo and slogan, production of key messages, preparation of social media packages and campaigns, media advisories, press materials, venue branding, daily meeting reports and communication products such as a brochure, a webpage and three explainer animations that had been prepared in relation to AEWA's 30th Anniversary.

The Unit also supported communication activities related to the launch of the 9th Conservation Status Report (CSR9), the dissemination of information concerning the extinction of the Slender-billed Curlew and associated conservation lessons, opening and closing press releases and post-meeting dissemination activities.

Throughout the process, the IMCA Unit worked closely with UNEP, CMS, Wetlands International and other partners to maximise visibility and outreach.

Media monitoring conducted following MOP9 demonstrated substantial international visibility for AEWA and its conservation messages. Between 10 October and 1 December 2025, AEWA was mentioned 133 times across media outlets with a potential audience reach of approximately 416.9 million people. Coverage was geographically diverse, spanning Africa, Europe, Asia and even Latin America, and was driven primarily by communication related to the extinction of the Slender-billed Curlew, the conservation status of migratory waterbirds and the outcomes of MOP9.

3.3 Digital communication and outreach

The IMCA Unit continued to strengthen AEWA's digital communication presence through website content development, social media engagement and the production of visual communication materials. AEWA's social media continues to experience sustained growth due to regular and audience-driven content. The AEWA LinkedIn page, for instance, has registered a 67% increase in followers in the reporting period. Thanks to the common service arrangement, and in order to support AEWA's social media growth, the joint Unit regularly features AEWA content on the CMS social media platforms, which have considerably larger followership.

3.4 Support to other AEWA activities

Communication and design support was provided to a range of AEWA activities during the reporting period. This included support to the European Goose Management Platform (EGMP), including activities marking the Platform's 10th anniversary and the 11th meeting of the International Working Group in Sweden in June 2026.

3.5 Monitoring and evaluation

The IMCA Unit continues to monitor communication performance through indicators including website traffic, social media engagement, media coverage, search visibility and geographic reach across the African-Eurasian flyways. These indicators support the ongoing evaluation and improvement of communication activities.

4. Awareness-Raising and CEPA Support

The IMCA Unit continued to coordinate and support awareness-raising activities under World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD), one of the principal global campaigns promoting migratory bird conservation, jointly led by the four partner organisations: the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), AEWA, the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) and Environment for the Americas (EFTA). Activities included campaign coordination, development and dissemination of toolkits, social media outreach, media engagement and continued development of the campaign's digital presence. The current campaign (2026)

runs under the theme “Every Bird Counts - Your Observations Matter!”, highlighting the important role of community science (also referred to as citizen science) for the conservation of migratory birds.

Through these efforts, the Unit contributed to raising awareness of migratory bird conservation and the objectives of AEWA among a broad international audience.

The IMCA Unit also continued to support Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) objectives under AEWA. During the reporting period, IMCA supported the establishment and operation of an informal CEPA Advisory Group to the AEWA Technical Committee, which contributed to the development of the AEWA CEPA Action Plan (2025-2029) and supports the implementation of CEPA-related tasks under the Technical Committee Work Plan 2026-2028.

5. Challenges and Resource Considerations

While significant progress has been achieved during the reporting period, continued enhancement of digital platforms, multilingual content production and communication outreach activities will require sustained financial and staff resources.

6. Priorities for the Next Reporting Period

Subject to the availability of resources, priorities for the next reporting period include the development of a communication plan for the remainder of the triennium, completion of remaining website enhancement work, continued strengthening of digital information management systems, expansion of visual and multimedia communication products, implementation of future CEPA priorities, continued support to World Migratory Bird Day, support to preparations for MOP10 and strengthened engagement with partners across the African-Eurasian flyways.