The African Perspective on AEWA

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Dakar - Sénégal
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Making Flyway Conservation Happen

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Way Forward/Conclusion

Challenges/problems

What do AEWA and “Flyway conservation” mean in Africa?

What role does Africa have/play in the agreement?

What is needed to make the AEWA Plan of Action for Africa work in future?

How we can conserve and manage migratory birds?

Brief history/Background

Way Forward/Conclusion
Brief history/Background

- 1995 the negotiations to adopt the Agreement were concluded
- AEWA & IWC (AfWC) - important relationship due to a common goal on waterbird populations

119 Range
75 Parties*
35 African
What do AEWA and “flyway conservation” mean in Africa?

- Flyways?
- Probably, in reality, they don’t mean very much:
  - A taxi driver in Lagos,
  - An athlete in Kenya
  - A lady selling fish in Zambia

Ask them: ‘what does flyway conservation mean?’

Surely they will have no good answer for you!

- A lady on the market selling waterbirds in Mopti (Mali);
- A tour guide in Saint-Louis (Senegal)

They will know very well that migratory birds means:

- They come and go, and – they have a value?
What do AEWA and “flyway conservation” mean in Africa?

- Government level, AEWA and flyway conservation are gaining relevance.
- AEWA level, it also means getting together to find solutions for managing our shared resources?
- 17 globally threatened sp. in Europe Vs 59 in Africa
- 98 decreasing populations in Europe Vs 181 in Africa

The need for shared effort leans much more towards African side

- More than half of the globally threatened waterbirds in in Europe are truly shared with Africa but only 15% of African world-threatened waterbirds are shared with Europe.

Europe depends much more on Africa for the conservation of its own globally threatened waterbirds than the other way round.

Shared resources = shared responsibilities to manage it, exploit it sustainably and conserve it
What role does Africa have/play in the Agreement?

- **Political support**: Fashionable to be CP but not fulfilling the obligations,

- **Size of the region (Africa) BIG**, and encompasses a large chunk of the Agreement area, and supports the highest biodiversity,

- Africa is the ‘powerhouse’ of the agreement, with the key filling stations etc.,

- Africa is therefore critical to the success of the agreement objectives.
AEWA FOCAL AREAS FOR AFRICA

- Breeding colonies
- Habitat restoration
- Transboundary negotiation
- Public awareness
- Gap filling
- Livelihood
- Capacity building "practical one"
What role does Africa have/play in the agreement – Priority issues?

- **Monitoring**: Africa has become almost as concerned as Europe with mid-winter IWC
  - Thanks to organisations which have covered most of the flyways.
  - Thanks to the AEWA Sub-Regional Focal Point Coordinators and National Focal Points/ IWC Coordinators on the ground;
  - Libya, who still pushes ahead with IWC, even in the complicate political situation.
What role does Africa have/play in the agreement – Priority issues?

- Conserving a network of critical sites,
- Engaging a wide range of partners at local level,
- Linking improvement of local livelihoods & conservation,
- Protected areas as engines of economic growth,
- Socio- economic to uplift the local economy;

A framework: the African Initiative!
What is needed to make the AEWA Plan of Action for Africa work in future?

- **Implementation**: This is where Africa needs to focus its energy now.

- There is no point signing an agreement and coming to meetings without feedback/Results.

- **African focal points have to work in teams** back home to make the agreement come to life,

- **High competition due to other demands**: like elephants, forests, marine turtles and poaching...
What is needed to make the AEWA Plan of Action for Africa work in future?

- Focusing on the issues relating to *livelihoods*, *ecotourism*, *capacity-building* etc. ...
- Key event is the **African Pre-MOP**: it has to continue,
- Key activities on the ground: *Wetlands management and waterbird monitoring* (support by the IPOs),
- Bringing the networks to work together (focal points and AfWC coordinators) in a close cooperation,
- Field projects and other programmes could be integrated under the African initiative.
What is needed to make the AEWA Plan of action for Africa work in future?

- Different context and issues: volunteering not an option, huge wetlands not yet totally destroyed thus inaccessible whereas all remaining wetlands in Europe are all small, and accessible thus easily surveyed,

- Focus on surveying important wetlands: Niger Inner Delta, Chad Lake, Sudd marshes, Okawango delta..

- Fund-raising is a key,

- Be sure the African contracting parties pay their dues,

- Make national reporting more simple, more focused, feasible so that information provided are reliable and thus useful,

- Partnership development.
What is needed to make the AEWA Plan of Action for Africa work?

An example: the TSU

- Projects for continuation of the activities of the Plan of action for Africa
- Technical and scientific support,
- Importance of capacity building,
- Improvement of data,
- Synergies to be developed between ongoing programmes and projects within the region.
What is needed to make the AEWA Plan of Action for Africa work
Latest developments and future prospects

- Pan African ornithological Congress (PAOC14)
- Young generation of experts and Master degree
- The Madagascar Pond-heron Action Plan implementation in Madagascar since September 2002
- Capacity building by Africans for Africans:
  MoU 3 wildlife colleges: CAWM (Tanzania) – Ecole de Faune de Garoua (Cameroon)- KWSTI (Kenya)
How we can conserve and manage migratory birds?

- **Goal:** Maintaining well-managed sites of high quality, along the entire flyway,

- **Capacity building:** Institutional and technical capacity,

- Training for **site managers of the region** (at site level) and recognizing the importance of these people as guardians of migratory waterbirds,

- **Network of sites and people:** mainly the critical sites both in wintering and breeding areas;
Main Challenges for consideration

"Decision makers"

Awareness!!!

Scientists !!!

Local hunters “harvesting”
Wetlands conservation: An urgent issue

- Over a quarter of Europe is now cultivated,
- In Africa, we are catching up with a 17% increase of arable land surface between 2002 and 2012.

-sized text: We need to find solutions to conserve African wetlands!
- Ecotourism will obviously help but for only very few wetlands,

Let African local communities use their wetlands in a sustainable way

-sized text: Climate Change may increase threats globally for people and ecosystems.
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Way forward & Solutions

Exchange information & linking

- Demonstrate best practices available across the flyway,
- Site management planning,
- Strengthen mechanisms to communicate in a flyway context,
- Increase direct contact and exchange between practitioners,
- Capacity building,
- Promote accession & implementation AEWA and other MEAs,
- Partnership-working together,
- Monitoring to check if the management is keeping track,
Conclusion

Projects come and go…..

- The AEWA African Initiative should be seen as a long-term programme;
- Africa looks forward to working together for our shared resources under the African Initiative for generations – of birds and people – to come …

Let us think together on the upcoming initiatives:
- Ressource project
- Flyway Destination
  - Migratory Bird for People
  - Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative
- Conservation of Migratory Birds
  - Others

Implementation on the ground is a key.
The TSU has been very instrumental for the last triennium thanks France and Senegal for their support.
I am sure others will join for the upcoming triennium.
Let us try beyond MOP6 again !!!
Thanks for your attention