



**8<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES**  
*26 – 30 September 2022, Budapest, Hungary*

*“Strengthening Flyway Conservation in a Changing World”*

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**REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE AGREEMENT ON  
THE CONSERVATION OF AFRICAN-EURASIAN MIGRATORY WATERBIRDS (AEWA) OVER  
THE PERIOD DECEMBER 2018 – JULY 2022**

**Introduction**

The AEWA Standing Committee was established at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Meeting of Parties (Germany, 2002) by Resolution 2.6. According to this Resolution the Standing Committee shall:

- (a) Carry out between sessions of the Meeting of the Parties, such interim activity on behalf of the Meeting as may be necessary;
- (b) Make recommendations for consideration at the next session of the Meeting of the Parties;
- (c) Oversee, on behalf of the Parties, the development and execution of the Secretariat’s budget as derived from the Trust Fund and other sources, and also all aspects of fund-raising undertaken by the Secretariat in order to carry out specific functions authorized by the Meeting of the Parties;
- (d) Oversee, as the representative of the Meeting of the Parties, the implementation of policy by the Secretariat and conduct of the Secretariat’s programmes;
- (e) Provide guidance and advice to the Secretariat on implementation of the Agreement, on the preparation of meetings, and on any other matters relating to the exercise of the Secretariat's functions brought to it by the Secretariat;
- (f) Represent the Meeting of the Parties, vis-à-vis the Government of the host country of the Secretariat’s headquarters, the United Nations Environment Programme and other international organizations for consideration of matters relating to the Agreement and its Secretariat;
- (g) Act as bureau at the sessions of the Meeting of the Parties, in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Meeting of the Parties;
- (h) Report to the Meeting of the Parties on the activities that have been carried out between ordinary sessions of the Meeting of the Parties;
- (i) Perform any other functions that may be entrusted to it by the Meeting of the Parties.

Additional responsibilities were decided by MOP4 and MOP7 through Resolutions 4.6 and 7.1, as follows:

- (j) Oversee and provide guidance on the implementation of the Strategic Plan for AEWA 2019 - 2027;
- (k) Take up the tasks defined in Resolution 4.6 regarding the *Implementation Review Process* (IRP) until a further decision of the MOP:
  - (1) Upon receiving information on adverse effects or potential adverse effects on either migratory waterbirds or on their sites and habitats as a result of human activities, the StC shall submit the information to the Party in whose territory the above activities occur who shall respond immediately, addressing the incident under question.
  - (2) In agreement with the Party concerned, the StC may request a mission to assess the impact of the activity at issue on waterbirds, or on their sites and habitats on the spot.
  - (3) Upon the conclusion of its on-site assessment, the mission shall report to the StC on its findings. Based on these findings, the StC shall make recommendations to the Party concerned as to preventing or mitigating the impact at issue on waterbirds, or on their sites and habitats.
  - (4) The Party concerned will ensure that any measures undertaken regarding the activity, site or habitat under issue will be in accordance with its obligations under the Agreement and will be based on the precautionary principle. The Party concerned will inform the StC as to the above measures at the earliest opportunity, but no later than the next meeting of the StC.
  - (5) The StC shall prepare and submit to each ordinary session of the Meetings of the Parties, a report on its operations in the framework of the IRP;

Resolutions 5.17 and 6.16 re-confirm the above-listed tasks and further request the StC to contribute where appropriate to activities identifies in Annex 1 of CMS Resolution 10.9 *Future structure and strategies of the CMS Family*.

As approved by Resolution 7.10, the Standing Committee consists of five regional representatives being: United Kingdom (*Chair, Regional Representative (RR) for Europe and Central Asia*), Ukraine (*RR for Europe and Central Asia*), South Africa (*Vice-Chair, RR for Eastern and Southern Africa*), Cote d'Ivoire (*RR for Western and Central Africa*) and Algeria (*RR for Middle East and Northern Africa*). The StC also includes a representative of the Depositary (*the Netherlands*) and a representative of the host country for the next session of the Meeting of Parties (*Hungary*) as per Resolution 7.13.

This report consists of a brief overview of the main activities of the Standing Committee since the 7<sup>th</sup> Session of the Meeting of the Parties (MOP7), 4 – 8 December 2018, Durban, South Africa. Decisions taken by the Standing Committee upon request of the Secretariat concerning budgetary day-to-day matters are kept out of this report.

## **1. Meetings of the Standing Committee**

The Standing Committee met eight times since MOP7. This unusual frequency is explained by the COVID-19 pandemic and the necessity to closely analyze the development of the situation before making a decision on the date and venue of MOP8. The last six meetings were held in a virtual conference format.

#### **14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee (StC14), 8 December 2018, Durban, South Africa**

The main purpose of this meeting was to elect Standing Committee officers for the next triennium (2019-2021). The meeting elected by acclamation the United Kingdom as Chair of the AEWA Standing Committee and South Africa as Vice-Chair. During this meeting the new members of the Standing Committee were also informed about their roles and responsibilities.

<https://www.unep-aewa.org/en/meeting/14th-meeting-aewa-standing-committee>

#### **15<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee (StC15), 11 - 13 December 2019, Bristol, UK**

<https://www.unep-aewa.org/en/meeting/15th-meeting-aewa-standing-committee>

#### **16<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee (StC16), 4 - 6 May 2021, virtual conference format**

<https://www.unep-aewa.org/en/meeting/16th-meeting-aewa-standing-committee>

#### **17<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee (StC17), 30 June 2021, virtual conference format**

<https://www.unep-aewa.org/en/meeting/17th-meeting-aewa-standing-committee>

#### **18<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee (StC18), 28 July 2021, virtual conference format**

<https://www.unep-aewa.org/en/meeting/18th-meeting-aewa-standing-committee>

#### **19<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee (StC19), 27 September 2021, virtual conference format**

<https://www.unep-aewa.org/en/meeting/19th-meeting-aewa-standing-committee>

#### **20<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee (StC20), 2 March 2022, virtual conference format**

<https://www.unep-aewa.org/en/meeting/20th-meeting-aewa-standing-committee>

#### **21<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee (StC21), 1 June 2022, virtual conference format**

<https://www.unep-aewa.org/en/meeting/21st-meeting-aewa-standing-committee>

Here is a summary of the major discussions and decisions taken at StC15 – StC21:

#### **Regional reports**

At the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> meetings, regional reports were presented by the regional representatives. These reports are published on the AEWA website at [Standing Committee | AEWA \(unep-aewa.org\)](#). The Standing Committee would like to emphasize the need for national focal points to follow up on information requests from their regional representatives to enable the delivery of complete and informative regional reports.

#### **Date, venue, format and preparations of MOP8**

- At the 15<sup>th</sup> meeting, the StC members decided that MOP8 should be held on 5 - 9 October 2021 in Budapest in the framework of the international exhibition “One with Nature”.
- During the 16<sup>th</sup> meeting, taking into account the developments of the COVID-19 pandemic, the StC discussed four different possible scenarios of holding MOP8 and their implications. A hybrid scenario was rejected for not being inclusive. Following options were further considered: a) in-person meeting, b) fully virtual meeting, c) postponing MOP8 and closely monitoring the development of the pandemic.
- At the 17<sup>th</sup> meeting, the StC decided to send a letter and questionnaire to all Parties to receive their views on the different options and to make a final decision on the date and format of MOP8 by the end of July 2022.
- Meanwhile the StC examined and approved the documents and draft resolutions for MOP8 at its 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> meeting.

- At the 18<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Standing Committee considered the outcomes of the Parties' responses to the questionnaire decided by vote that MOP8 would be organized as in-person meeting in Hungary in October 2021, as initially planned.
- At the 19<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Standing Committee reconsidered its decision in light of the developments of the pandemic and decided to submit to Parties a draft Resolution establishing a silence procedure for Parties to postpone MOP8 to the next year and adopt a budget for 2022 until a new triennial budget would then be adopted for 2023-2025 at MOP8 in 2022.
- The Chair of the Standing Committee sent a letter to all Contracting Parties inviting them to adopt Draft Resolution Ex.1 on the *Adoption of Resolutions on organizational, administrative and financial matters during the COVID-19 pandemic and between regular sessions of the Meeting of the Parties to AEWA via a silence procedure* on 1 October 2021, which was considered as adopted by the Contracting Parties with effect as of 16 October 2021. No objection by a National Focal Point had been received by the Chair of the Committee or the Secretariat within the set deadline.
- By correspondence of 18 October the Chair of the Standing Committee then submitted Draft Resolution Ex. 2 on the *Postponement of MOP8* and Draft Resolution Ex. 3 on *Financial and Administrative matters* (budget for 2022) for adoption; the adopted Resolution Ex. 1 was enclosed for information. Both draft Resolutions had been approved by the Standing Committee at StC19 meeting and were considered adopted by the Contracting Parties with effect as of 1 December 2021. No objection by a National Focal Point had been received by the Chair of the Committee or the Secretariat within the set deadline. For all background documentation see: [2021/12: Two Resolutions Adopted via Silence Procedure | AEWA \(unep-awea.org\)](#)
- At the 20<sup>th</sup> meeting it was decided that an in-person MOP would be prepared in 2022.
- The Standing Committee approved by correspondence the dates and venue of MOP8 on 26 – 30 September 2022, Budapest, Hungary.
- At the 21<sup>st</sup> meeting, the Standing Committee reviewed and approved the Budget proposal and Secretariat Programme of Work 2023-2025 for MOP8 and further decided to approve all documents and draft Resolutions that were not yet ready by correspondence.
- All new or revised MOP8 documents and draft resolutions were approved in the course of June/ July 2022 in view of the document deadline of 28 July 2022.

#### Secretariat Programme of Work 2023 – 2025

The Standing Committee requested the Secretariat between its 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> meeting to develop a Programme of Work related to the budget. A draft template for a Programme of Work was then introduced by the Secretariat at the 20<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee and a populated version of the Programme of Work was approved at its 21<sup>st</sup> meeting. The Standing Committee agreed that a consolidated version of the Programme of Work would be annexed to the budget document for submission to MOP8 (see [Doc.AEWA/MOP 8.39](#)). It is the first time that a Secretariat Programme of Work for a triennial period was developed and linked to the proposed budget.

#### AEWA Waterbird Conservation Award in the individual and institutional category

The Standing Committee considered all nominations received for the AEWA Waterbird Conservation Award 2021/2022 and decided on the winners in the individual and institutional category at its 21<sup>st</sup> meeting.

## **2. Other intersessional activities**

#### Implementation Review Process

In the frame of its responsibilities defined under Resolution 4.6 the Standing Committee was involved in the treatment of ten open cases under the Implementation review process. For all details please read [the Report on](#)

[the Implementation Review Process to the 8<sup>th</sup> Session of the Meeting of the Parties, compiled by the AEWA Standing Committee \(Doc. AEWA/MOP 8.20\).](#)