



8th SESSION OF THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES

5 - 9 October 2021, Budapest, Hungary

DRAFT RESOLUTION 8.5

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT AND STRENGTHENING OF MONITORING OF MIGRATORY WATERBIRDS

Recalling Resolution 5.2 “Addressing gaps in knowledge of and conservation action for waterbird populations and sites important for them”, which, *inter alia*, requested the Technical Committee to identify priorities for the systematic development of waterbird monitoring taking into account the conservation status of the populations, their geographic representativeness and other factors,

Further recalling Resolution 5.22 “Establishing a long-term basic structural funding regime for the International Waterbird Census in the African-Eurasian region”, Resolution 6.3 “Strengthening Monitoring of Migratory Waterbirds” and Resolution 7.7 with the same title, which, *inter alia*, invited the Technical Committee and the Secretariat to work with the Ramsar Convention and its regional initiatives, the European Commission as well as CAFF-AMBI, Common Wadden Sea Secretariat (Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative), OSPAR, HELCOM and other relevant regional MEAs to identify possible synergies with respect to waterbird population estimates and to waterbird monitoring and reporting,

Referring to Target 1.4 of the AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027 which aims at improving the quality of waterbird population status assessments, including information on drivers of population trends, so that at least two-thirds of all AEWA populations are being assessed on the basis of the most complete and up-to-date monitoring information available,

Further referring to document AEWA/MOP 8.19 “Report on the Conservation Status of Migratory Waterbirds in the Agreement Area - 8th edition” (aka CSR8) and *noting* that for 69% of the AEWA populations the estimate of their sizes is based on good to reasonable monitoring data and so is the short-term trend estimate for 71% of the populations, but that there is a strong geographical bias in the quality of monitoring data with the best data available in the Atlantic, East Atlantic, Black Sea and Mediterranean flyways while the three Intra-African, West Asia–East African and Central and Southwest Asian flyways having less sufficient data,

Noting that only 43 Contracting Parties (14 from Africa and 29 from Eurasia) submitted in 2020 national reports on the population status of AEWA-listed (native) and non-native waterbird species in the Agreement area for the period 2013-2018 (54% of all expected submissions, 37% from Africa and 71% from Eurasia) and that comprehensiveness and quality of reports in certain instances would require improvement,

Thanking the Governments of Germany, Switzerland and Norway for providing funds to support the collation of breeding waterbird population estimates from Western Siberia and Central Asia,

Acknowledging the EU Birds Directive Article 12 reporting for the period 2013-2018, with which the AEWA national population status reporting was aligned, and the collection of complementary data under the European Red List of Birds, and *thanking* the European Commission and BirdLife International for making the data from these two processes available for the needs of CSR8,

Taking note of the *Report on the Development of Waterbird Monitoring along the African-Eurasian Flyways* which states that through a partnership approach the provision of technical and financial support to the development of waterbird monitoring schemes in a large number of the AEWA Parties and non-Party Range States and maintenance

of the network and regular data flow were enabled, but funding for waterbird monitoring is still highly uncertain and insufficient in large parts of the Agreement area, while the draft AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027 has increased the requirements concerning monitoring (document AEWA/MOP 8.26),

Gratefully acknowledging the contributions to development of monitoring of AEWA waterbird populations, made by Contracting Parties, international donors, national and international non-governmental organisations, particularly the Governments of Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland and the UK, the European Commission, the French Agency for Biodiversity, the Environment and Protected Areas Agency of Sharjah (UAE), FAO, Wetlands International, BirdLife International, the European Bird Census Council, SOVON (Dutch Centre for Field Ornithology), Tour du Valat, EuroNatur, and MAVA Foundation,

Congratulating the European Bird Census Council on the publication of the *European Breeding Bird Atlas 2: Distribution, Abundance and Change* and *recognising* its value in assessing the status of AEWA populations in Europe,

Concerned that for three of the six purpose-level indicators of the Strategic Plan 2019-2027 the trend is negative in comparison to the 2018 baseline, while one remained constant, one is not assessed and only one shows a slight positive increase in the direction of the target (document AEWA/MOP 8.19),

Thanking the Technical Committee for its work and delivery against the mandates set out in the Resolutions 5.2 and 7.7 with the support of Wetlands International, BirdLife International and SOVON (Dutch Centre for Field Ornithology) and welcoming documents AEWA/MOP 8.27 “*Monitoring Priorities for Waterbird Species and Populations of AEWA*” and AEWA/MOP 8.28 “*Waterbird Monitoring Synergies with Other Frameworks*” and *thanking* the Governments of Switzerland and the Netherlands for providing funding, as well as Wetlands International for providing in-kind support through a grant provided by the European Commission, for compiling these documents,

Recalling the revised AEWA Conservation Guidelines No. 9 on Waterbird Monitoring which was adopted by MOP7,

Further recalling the Waterbird Fund¹ which was established in response to the call of the AEWA Meeting of the Parties in Resolution 6.3,

The Meeting of the Parties:

1. *Adopts* the priorities and recommendations outlined in document AEWA/MOP 8.26 to guide the further development and strengthening of the monitoring of AEWA waterbird populations and drivers of their trends;
2. *Urges* Contracting Parties and relevant organisations and *invites* non-Party Range States to systematically develop further and strengthen waterbird monitoring following the outlined priorities and recommendations and the AEWA Conservation Guidelines No. 9 on Waterbird Monitoring and where necessary, develop and implement bilateral or multilateral initiatives or other suitable mechanisms to support Parties requiring assistance and support;
3. *Encourages* those Contracting Parties which are already supporting international monitoring initiatives to continue and strengthen their support and *invites* other Contracting Parties to contribute to the development and maintenance of waterbird monitoring and particularly to establish and support further initiatives in those geographic regions and flyways where monitoring is lacking or is insufficient;

¹ <https://waterbird.fund>

4. *Urges* Contracting Parties, in the course of 2022, to undertake a brief assessment of their existing monitoring activities against the priorities set out in document AEWA/MOP 8.26 in order to help identify ways in which they can best implement the recommendations outlined in the same document, also noting that the review "*Baseline assessment of African avian monitoring schemes*"² will support this assessment for many African Parties, and establish costed national plans and timetables for the implementation of the recommendations;
5. *Urges* Contracting Parties and relevant organisations and *invites* non-Party Range States to participate in the international surveys listed in document AEWA/MOP 8.26 and consider the proposed timetables in their financial planning;
6. *Urges* Contracting Parties to support the development of an electronic system to document and facilitate consultation on drivers of population change as well as a pilot monitoring initiative on drivers of population change in Africa;
7. *Urges* Contracting Parties and other donors to provide financial contributions through the Waterbird Fund or other existing international flyway monitoring funding mechanisms;
8. *Instructs* the Secretariat to update the first revision of AEWA Conservation Guidelines No. 9 on Waterbird Monitoring adopted at MOP7 by replacing its Appendix 2 (Recommended monitoring methods and season for each population in the Agreement Area) with Appendix 1 (Recommended monitoring methods for AEWA populations) in document AEWA/MOP 8.26;
9. *Endorses* the possible synergies on waterbird monitoring with other frameworks and processes identified and *adopts* the recommendations for strengthening those synergies as outlined in document AEWA/MOP 8.27 in areas such as timing of international surveys, data flow from national to international level and timing of analyses;
10. *Requests* the Secretariat and *invites* the Secretariats of the other frameworks and processes as well as the European Commission to cooperate on advancing possible synergies on waterbird monitoring;
11. *Further requests* the Secretariat, resources permitting, to provide training and mentoring, in collaboration with the African-Eurasian Waterbird Monitoring Partnership and the monitoring capacity building initiatives, to designated national respondents of Contracting Parties in preparation for the next reporting cycle on population status scheduled for 2025-2026 as part of the broader request for training on reporting obligations in the framework of the Agreement contained in operative [paragraph 8] of Resolution 8.3;
12. *Reiterates* operative paragraphs 4-8 of Resolution 6.3 and operative paragraphs 4-7 of Resolution 7.7.

² The review "Baseline assessment of African avian monitoring schemes" is being developed by the British Trust for Ornithology and the UK Joint Nature Conservation Committee and will be published and disseminated in the near future.