



20th MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE
24-28 February 2025, Mikulov, Czech Republic

**Outcomes from the 14th Session of the
Conference of the Parties to the
Convention on Migratory Species in
Relation to Highly Pathogenic Avian
Influenza and Wider Wildlife
Health Issues**

Outcomes from the 14th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species in relation to Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza and wider wildlife health issues

An information note for the AEWA Contracting Parties

Compiled by the AEWA Technical Committee invited expert Dr Ruth Cromie, May 2024

The CMS COP14, held in Uzbekistan, February 2024, had a number of important outcomes related to health of waterbirds. This note provides a summary of outcomes for these three areas:

1. Broader health (human, livestock, and wildlife)
2. Specifically, highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI)
3. Poisoning

1. Broader Wildlife Health

[Resolution 12.6\(Rev.COP14\) on Wildlife Health and Migratory Species](#) was adopted which reflects on the drivers of ill health not only for wildlife but also the health of humans and livestock.

Parties are requested to both address drivers of biodiversity loss (climate change, pollution, habitat loss, over-exploitation etc.), which are typically driver of disease emergence, but also take specific steps to prevent, prepare and respond to diseases of wildlife.

A substantive [Migratory Species and Health Review](#) was provided to the COP. A global consultation on disease threats to migratory species was undertaken which highlighted the conservation importance of both infectious and toxic causes of ill health. The review explores the pros and cons of migration in relation to disease dynamics. Pointers to guidance are provided within the Review and Appendix 1 below gives links to some key sources of guidance/information which were presented during a COP side event entitled 'Disrupted Planet, Disrupted Health'.

2. Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI)

A specific resolution on [Avian Influenza \(Resolution 14.18\)](#) was adopted with a range of operative paragraphs (reproduced in the Appendix 2 below) to ensure the current HPAI crisis is managed and responded to as effectively as possible. The aforementioned [Migratory Species and Health Review](#) has numerous references to HPAI, including the disease being highlighted during the expert consultation as a significant global conservation concern.

3. Poisoning

An updated resolution on [Preventing Poisoning of Migratory Birds \(Resolution 11.15\(Rev.COP14\)\)](#) was adopted with specific welcoming of the EU REACH process aimed at regulating lead ammunition and fishing weights - of direct importance to waterbirds across the AEWA region.

The original operative paragraphs remain, and the following new decisions were adopted:

Directed to Parties

14.AA Parties are encouraged to:

- a) review their legislation with regard to: policies and processes that regulate the use of lead ammunition and lead fishing weights, and consider them in light of the global scientific

consensus and growing evidence of the harms caused by lead ammunition to people, domestic animals, wildlife and the wider environment; the developments and expanded product ranges of effective non-toxic alternative to lead ammunition and fishing weights; and the increase in policy initiatives to restrict use of lead in ammunition and fishing weights;

- b) collate national information on shooting activities, ammunition use across different areas and over time, and compliance; and map this information against at-risk migratory bird habitats to determine likely affected areas and scale of impacts;
- c) share this information with the Secretariat and the Intergovernmental Task Force on Phasing Out the Use of Lead Ammunition and Lead Fishing Weights (Lead Task Force); and
- d) implement the recommendations set out in UNEP/CMS/COP11/Doc.23.1.2 Annex 2 to substitute lead ammunition and fishing weights for non-toxic alternatives.

Directed to Parties, intergovernmental organisations, non-governmental organisations, donors and others

14.BB Parties, intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations and donors are encouraged to:

- a) nominate representatives to the Preventing Poisoning Working Group (PPWG) and provide financial support to the Secretariat for the organisation of meetings of the PPWG and for the production of communication outputs linked to priority areas/flyways within the triennium 2023-2026.

Appendix 1: Guidance on health and HPAI for Parties

A side event entitled ‘Disrupted Planet, Disrupted Health’ focussing on the drivers of disease emergence and providing global case studies of HPAI was held. The final slide, reproduced here, contains QR codes to key guidance.

Further guidance for Parties is provided in the [Migratory Species and Health Review](#), in particular Chapter 10.

Disrupted planet, disrupted health

Panel discussion
Lessons learned and key needs

Katie Beckmann, University of Edinburgh, UK
Ruth Cromie, Councillor for Wildlife Health
Doris Rodriguez Guzmán, SERFOR, Peru
Dao Nguyen, IUCN
Spike Millington, International Crane Foundation

Guidance

QR codes linking to guidance documents:

- Migratory Species and Health
- Ramcar Wetland Usage Manual
- Scientific Task Force on Avian Influenza and Wild Birds
- Healthy people and wildlife through nature protection
- PANORAMA SOLUTIONS IN FOCUS
- One Health principles for sustainable tourism in protected and conserved areas

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Appendix 2: Operative paragraphs of [CMS Resolution 14.18 on Avian Influenza](#)

The Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

1. *Calls on Parties* to note the key messages, use the guidance and implement the recommendations from the 2023 statement of the CMS-FAO Co-Convened Scientific Task Force on Avian Influenza and Wild Birds, specifically relating to the need for:
 - cross-sectoral, multi-stakeholder planning and preparedness, and the development and implementation of national wildlife contingency plans for HPAI to enable effective prevention, responses, and minimisation of losses;
 - an appreciation among environment sections of government of their responsibility for wildlife aspects of HPAI and enhancing coordination and collaboration with veterinary and wildlife health authorities;
 - robust outbreak investigation following a One Health approach with virological and epidemiological analyses, and
 - integrated population monitoring to measure impacts of the disease,
2. *Requests Parties* to ensure that responses to HPAI in wildlife do not include lethal responses such as culling of wildlife, nor use of disinfectants or other measures in wild settings that may affect habitat quality, nor destruction or substantive modification of wetland and other habitats with the objective of reducing contact between domesticated and wild birds,
3. *Further requests Parties* to adopt measures to reduce the risk of transmission of avian influenza between wildlife and poultry by:
 - preventing spillover of HPAI viruses from poultry to wildlife and reducing risks to both sectors by, inter alia, enhancing biosecurity measures, implementing adequate farming and aquaculture standards, vaccinating domestic birds and better planning as well as reforming and reassessing intensive production where risks have been identified;
 - further mitigating activities that are high risk in terms of viral transfer between livestock, wildlife, and people by, inter alia, restricting the grazing of domestic ducks in natural wetlands, addressing risks associated with high-risk markets, and trade of wild birds, and
 - strictly applying internationally agreed quarantine and health standards for the cross-border transport of birds and their products and measures for the prevention of the illegal transportation of birds and their products, both nationally and internationally, and
 - maintain ecosystem integrity to reduce wild and domestic interfaces,
4. *Calls on Parties, non-Parties, and relevant international and national organisations* to further enable effective prevention, preparedness, and response to avian influenza outbreaks, in particular by supporting and building capacity for:
 - research into HPAI in wild birds and mammals including determination of impacts of HPAI outbreaks;
 - long-term monitoring of migratory bird populations and movements, with focus on enhanced assessment for those species affected by HPAI;
 - robust surveillance programmes with conservation objectives for HPAI in populations of wild birds while additionally preventing delays in diagnosis and research caused by regulatory limits on transporting specimens across national boundaries;

- integrating and analysing existing data sets across different flyways to determine precise migratory routes, fluxes and species' population dynamics, and sharing data with other sectors to enhance multisectoral risk assessment;
 - early warning systems;
 - international cooperation in surveillance and risk assessments across flyways, and
 - improving rapid wildlife reporting systems with collaboration and information-sharing with WOA national delegates and wildlife focal points, WOA WOHIS, the joint FAO–WOAH–WHO GLEWS and existing regional information systems,
5. *Urges* Parties and international donor organisations to support the activities of the Scientific Task Force on Avian Influenza and Wild Birds, through both financial and in-kind support, in particular for the funding of the implementation of Task Force recommendations,
6. *Further urges* Parties to actively support the work of the CMS Flyways Working Group given its role in providing information relevant to disease issues,
7. *Requests* the Secretariat to:
- explore possibilities for establishing partnerships so as to support the development of long-term funding for monitoring schemes, such as the International Waterbird Census and its derived outputs, that are relevant to the Convention's objectives;
 - provide support for the Scientific Task Force on Avian Influenza and Wild Birds;
 - include information on implementation of this Resolution in the format of the National Reports and to report progress on the implementation of this Resolution to each meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Plus, these Decisions:

Directed to the Secretariat

14.CC The Secretariat is requested, subject to the availability of resources, to:

- a) engage with WHO regarding the development of an instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response;
- b) organise an online meeting of the CMS Scientific Council Working Group on Migratory Species and Health and the Scientific Task Force on Avian Influenza and Wild Birds to set up their work programmes;
- c) provide support for implementation of the work programmes of the CMS Scientific Council Working Group on Migratory Species and Health and the Scientific Task Force on Avian Influenza and Wild Birds, including commissioning studies or organising workshops, as appropriate.