



AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF  
AFRICAN-EURASIAN MIGRATORY WATERBIRDS

**18<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE**  
*28 July 2021, Virtual Conference Format*

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**REPORT OF THE MEETING**

**Contents**

Summary of StC18 Decisions .....	2
Agenda item 1. Opening of the Meeting .....	2
Agenda item 2. Adoption of the Agenda.....	2
Agenda item 3. Adoption of the Report of the 16 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee.....	2
Agenda item 4. Venue / Format and Date of MOP8 .....	3
Agenda item 5. Budget Scenarios 2022-2024 .....	8
Agenda item 6. Outputs of the Technical Committee Work Plan 2019-2021 .....	10
Agenda item 7. Other MOP8 Documents and DRs .....	12
Agenda item 8. AEWA Award 2021 .....	13
Agenda item 9. Any Other Business .....	14
Agenda item 10. Closure of the Meeting.....	14

## Summary of StC18 Decisions

AGENDA ITEM		DECISION
<b>Agenda item 2</b>	Adoption of the Agenda	The agenda was adopted with no changes or additions.
<b>Agenda item 3</b>	Adoption of the Report of the 16 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee	The report of the 16 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee was adopted.
<b>Agenda item 4</b>	Venue / Format and Date of MOP8	Proceed with planning for a face-to-face MOP in Hungary in October 2021.
<b>Agenda item 5</b>	Budget Scenarios for 2022-2024	The AEWA Secretariat will update the budget document by restructuring it to make some of the choices clearer and by reflecting the StC members' comments regarding strengthening some of the arguments. DR12 is approved for submission to the MOP.
<b>Agenda item 6</b>	Outputs of the Technical Committee Work Plan 2019-2021	All documents were approved for submission to the MOP.
<b>Agenda item 7</b>	Other MOP Documents and DRs	All documents were approved for submission to the MOP.

### Agenda item 1. Opening of the Meeting

1. The Standing Committee Chair, United Kingdom, and representative of Europe and Central Asia, Mr Simon Mackown, opened the 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee (StC) by warmly welcoming all participants, hoping that everyone had had the chance to review the documents to be discussed.

### Agenda item 2. Adoption of the Agenda

2. Referring to document AEWA/StC18.2, *Provisional Agenda*, Mr Mackown noted that there were no changes to it. Since the changes made to the documents to be approved at this meeting were very clear, Mr Mackown hoped it would not take the full day to get through the agenda.

#### *Decision*

*The agenda was adopted with no changes or additions.*

### Agenda item 3. Adoption of the Report of the 16<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee

3. Ms Wilmar Rimmelts, The Netherlands and StC member as representative of the Depositary, said that she had submitted a minor change to the Secretariat regarding paragraph 94 of the report.

4. Mr Jacques Trouvilliez, AEWA Executive Secretary, confirmed that the change would be made.

5. Since there were no further comments, Mr Mackown concluded that the report of the 16<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee was adopted.

**Agenda item 4. Venue / Format and Date of MOP8**a. Presentation of the Results of the Questionnaire by Region

6. In summarising the results of the questionnaire for the Europe and Central Asia region, Mr Mackown noted that he was disappointed that only 20 countries had responded, which was less than 40%. Therefore, an assumption would have to be made, since it was not evident what the other countries thought.

7. Mr Mackown said that there was lots of appetite for proceeding with an in-person meeting and that only a small number of countries were uncertain. Of those, who responded, 11 wanted to proceed with an in-person meeting, one wanted to proceed with a virtual meeting and eight were keen on postponing.

8. Mr Mackown concluded that there was a high proportion of uncertainty.

9. Ms Humbu Mafumo, StC member, South Africa, representative of Southern and Eastern Africa went on to summarise the results of the questionnaire for her region.

10. Ms Mafumo said that there had also been very few responses and that the results were similar to those of the Europe and Central Asia region. The results showed mixed feelings including uncertainties regarding vaccinations. South Africa felt it was better to postpone the meeting, while still considering the budget issues. Most other countries were in favour of an in-person meeting. One country was in favour of a hybrid meeting.

11. Mr Kouassi Firmin Kouame, StC member, Ivory Coast, representative of Western and Central Africa summarised the results of the questionnaire for his region.

12. Eight countries responded, of which the majority was in favour of an in-person meeting. One country was in favour of a hybrid meeting. None of the countries preferred a full virtual meeting or postponing it.

13. Ms Nadjiba Bendjedda, StC member, Algeria, representative of Northern Africa and the Middle East presented the results of the questionnaire for her region.

14. Only six countries responded, of which most indicated that they had either been or would be vaccinated. Some of these had doubts that the vaccines would be recognised in the EU. Five parties were in favour of an in-person meeting and one of postponing the meeting.

15. In conclusion, Mr Mackown noted that most Parties seemed to be in favour of having an in-person meeting, while there was also a high number of concerns.

16. Mr Mackown opened the floor for discussion.

b. Decision on the Venue / Format and Date

17. Ms Remmelts thought it was a difficult discussion to have, since it was not clear whether parties would actually attend, should the meeting take place in person. Furthermore, she was disappointed in the low number of responses received to the questionnaire.

18. In light of going ahead, Ms Remmelts thought it was important for Hungary to outline the precautionary measures that would be in place during the meeting. That would help many delegations in deciding on their attendance.

19. Personally, Ms Remmelts was in favour of proceeding with an in-person meeting. She explained that she would be retiring at the end of October and would like physically to be present at the MOP. She thought COVID would be there for a long time and one could not keep postponing things. A way forward needed to be found on how to deal with it.

20. Ms Remmelts thought it was important that the African Parties stated their willingness to travel, which to her opinion they had done to a certain extent through the questionnaire.

21. Dr Gábor Magyar, StC member Hungary, host country of MPO8 said that vaccinations would be offered to those who had no access to them, which would slow down or even prevent a spread of COVID.

22. With regards to precautionary measures on site, Dr Magyar emphasised that sanitation material would be available at the venue continuously. Since the venue was fairly new, he explained that it had been equipped with air filtering mechanisms.

23. Dr Magyar further stated that it was difficult to predict two months in advance of the meeting what the epidemical situation would be and what concrete action would need to be taken. But he assured that whatever measures were needed, Hungary would introduce them. For example, taking participants' body temperature or performing quick tests.

24. Like Ms Remmelts, Dr Magyar thought that COVID would be there for a few years and that the situation would not change should the meeting be postponed.

25. Mr Mackown said that it would be useful to have all the measures that would be taken in a written format so that Parties could see what the protocols and procedures would be. Regardless of that though, a decision would have to be taken.

26. Ms Mafumo thought that everyone would probably agree that it was a difficult situation. She said that she was in favour of taking a precautionary approach.

27. Looking again at the results of the questionnaire in her region as well as looking at other international meetings that had been postponed and taking into account that the situation in two months was currently unpredictable Ms Mafumo's preference was to postpone the meeting. The budget, of course, would still need to be negotiated online for the AEWA Secretariat to be functional in 2022.

28. Mr Oliver Schall, representative of Germany, explained that Germany had submitted two different responses to the questionnaire. Their first response had been rather optimistic, considering proceeding with an in-person meeting. However, a few days later there had been a significant increase in the COVID case numbers in Germany. The public discussion showed that a fourth wave was coming.

29. Mr Schall agreed with Ms Mafumo that a virtual meeting in order to negotiate the budget should take place this year and that the in-person meeting should be postponed to 2022. He added that a vaccination did not equal 100% safety from the virus.

30. Ms Bendjedda said that it was a difficult and unstable situation as the virus kept changing with different variants. She agreed that a precautionary approach should be taken.

31. Mr Mackown said that from the UK perspective he would agree with what Ms Mafumo, Mr Schall and Ms Bendjedda said about taking a precautionary approach. He thought that everyone probably had a desire to proceed with an in-person meeting, but that there was currently too much uncertainty. He recognised that the virus was going to be around for several years but postponing the meeting to 2022 meant that there would be a better understanding of the situation and a larger number of people vaccinated.

32. Mr Belal Qtishat, representative of Jordan, said that it was uncertain for how long the worldwide pandemic would last. He thought that alternatives would have to be found, for example, having a hybrid meeting. The documents would also have to be looked at, i. e. were there urgent documents that would need to be discussed face-to-face or could they be discussed virtually.

33. Mr Mackown reiterated his concern regarding not having anything concrete about the procedures and measures in writing from the MOP host, so an informed decision could not be taken. He emphasised that he had too many open questions and that he was neither comfortable nor qualified to take a decision that would impact the health and safety of hundreds of people.

34. Ms Remmelts thought that it was concerning to solely rely on vaccinations as there had been many cases of people contracting the virus although they had been fully vaccinated. One of the key measures, she said, was also the testing. There had been large events in The Netherlands, during which testing was done, which prevented the spread of COVID.

35. Dr Magyar said that he did emphasise the importance of vaccination but did not want to make the impression that this was the only measure that Hungary would want to have in place. He agreed that a vaccination was not 100% effective but that it was proven that the course of the disease was a milder one when vaccinated.

36. Dr Magyar confirmed that currently the situation in Hungary was reasonably safe. As a result of recent data preventative measures were lifted in Hungary. If the cases rose again, the measures would be reintroduced, for example masks to be worn inside buildings.

37. Upon entry to Hungary, Dr Magyar explained that one would have to undergo a COVID quick or PCR test. Those who test positive would have to be quarantined.

38. Although Mr Mackown appreciated the positive development in Hungary, he was still concerned that there was nothing in writing that Parties could look at that set out the procedures based on current understanding. So far everything was being reported verbally. Essentially decisions were being made on hearsay.

39. Mr Mackown also wondered what being quarantined meant. Where would one have to go? What exactly would happen? How would it impact on one's ability to return home or on the running of the MOP?

40. Another concern he had was the fact that there would be multiple back-to-back international meetings in the same venue over a period of a month. Having people coming from all over the world would surely change the disease profile. Mr Mackown wanted to understand what thinking had been done around that.

41. Dr Magyar admitted that he could currently not respond to the issue of the quarantine. He would have to check on that.

42. Ms Mafumo asked when it was likely to receive the information sheet regarding the measures that would be taken. Bearing in mind all the other international meeting to take place in the same venue, she once again proposed to take a precautionary approach.

43. Regarding the other international meetings as well as people coming back to Hungary after their summer leave at the end of August, Dr Magyar agreed that that was a risk. He explained that MOP would take place in Hall C of the venue, which was isolated from the exhibition area and with a separate entrance. The meetings happening prior to MOP would be with up to 100 participants and they would be spread across the entire venue. He reiterated that there would be air filters as well as thorough sanitary measures.

44. Mr Mackown said that that was exactly where something in writing was needed as it just posed even more questions. What about staff working in the different halls? How do they move across the venue? It was also not only about security at the venue. It was about people mixing in the venue, in the city. He said that the difficulty for him was that he would like to see the meeting going ahead in-person, but that he did not see the information from which to make an informed decision.

45. Mr Mackown added that it was not fair on the AEWA Secretariat to go back and forth on the decision any longer also considering that the Secretariat was currently extremely stretched regarding its human capacity. A decision would have to be made.

46. Mr Schall told everyone that a colleague of his was stuck in Namibia after an official mission as all outbound flights had been cancelled. Namibia had become a high-risk area and there was no sufficient demand for the return flight. What if this happened in Hungary?

47. Ms Remmelts wanted to know from the AEWA Secretariat what they felt and whether they felt safe with going ahead with an in-person meeting.

48. Mr Trouvilliez responded that according to his knowledge all AEWA Secretariat staff were already or were going to be fully vaccinated. He felt quite safe traveling to Hungary. However, time was running, and he urged the StC members to decide. If the decision was to proceed with an in-person meeting things would have to happen very quickly. People would have to get vaccinated; flights would need to be booked etc. If the meeting was postponed a host country would need to be found. Otherwise, the meeting would have to take place in Bonn which meant a need for additional funding. Also, implementation of AEWA would be delayed.

49. Mr Mackown said that his personal view from a UK perspective was to hold an interim MOP in order to agree on an interim budget for 2022 and then look to hold an in-person MOP in 2022. His main reason was that he did not have anything in writing to take away for experts to look at the procedures and say that they were happy for a UK delegation to attend the meeting.

50. Ms Remmelts noted that if UNEP thought the meeting could take place, she was happy to follow that.

51. Mr Trouvilliez explained that meetings abroad always need to be approved by UNDSS (United Nations Department for Security and Safety) on a case-to-case basis. UNDSS could ask the AEWA Secretariat to cancel a meeting even two weeks in advance. That meant that even if they gave their approval to proceed with an in-person meeting now, they could cancel it at short notice should the situation evolve negatively.

52. Another solution could be to have the meeting in a hybrid mode, which was, however, not the preferred option. But perhaps some countries may not be allowed to travel, and they could then at least follow the negotiations online.

53. Dr Magyar pointed out article 5 of the HCA regarding medical facilities and arrangements in view of the COVID-19 pandemic situation. Although it was not detailed, it said in view of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic the parties shall ensure that adequate sanitation standards and hygiene protocols are in place for the meeting. Parties in this case meant the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat and the Host Government. Dr Magyar emphasised that Hungary was ready to implement any measures recommended by UNEP and assured that Hungary would do its best to protect all participants.

54. Ms Bendjedda said that considering the responses to the questionnaire the region was in favour of an in-person meeting. The Host Country should assure the participants that everything was done for their security and should respond to all open questions, for example regarding the quarantine. She also thought that a hybrid meeting may be a good solution.

55. Given all the uncertainties, Mr Volodymyr Domashlinets, StC member and representative of the Europe and Central Asia region, said he would prefer having an online meeting this year to approve an interim budget and to postpone the actual MOP to 2022.

56. Mr Kouame said that considering the responses to the questionnaire the meeting should take place in-person. The Host Country should highlight the security and safety measures. Since the situation could evolve until October, the possibility of having a hybrid meeting should be explored.

57. Mr Trouvilliez made everyone aware of the fact that it could be very difficult especially for African participants to obtain their credentials and visas within the next two months.

58. Mr Mackown noticed that there had been discussion about having a hybrid meeting although the StC had concluded quite firmly at their last meeting that that would not be an option. It would not be appropriate as it would create an unequalness among the Parties.

59. Dr Magyar agreed that it would be difficult for the African delegates to obtain their credentials and visas within such a short period of time but said that he was notified by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that a Hungarian visa would be issued for those where the Schengen Agreement was in question. In that case the Schengen procedure would not be needed and that would shorten the procedure.

60. Furthermore, in the meantime Dr Magyar was able to confirm that whoever needed to be hospitalised would have to personally cover the costs. He urged Parties to obtain an insurance that would cover such costs.

61. With regards to the issue of the hybrid meeting, Mr Trouvilliez refreshed everyone's memories in that it would create an unfair process as Mr Mackown had already mentioned. From a technical point of view the AEWA Secretariat got permission to use the Zoom software. If some of the sponsored delegates were not able to attend the meeting in-person, the AEWA Secretariat would generate some savings.

62. Since there were no further comments on how to proceed in terms of taking a decision, Mr Mackown concluded that it would have to come down to a vote, since a consensus could not be reached through the discussions as opinions were divided.

63. The question posed to the StC members was the following:

***Do we proceed with planning for a face-to-face MOP in Hungary in October?***

Four StC members voted yes, three StC members voted no.

64. The vote concluded to be a decision for planning a face-to-face MOP in Hungary in October. Mr Mackown emphasised, however, that there would be no hybrid facilities made available during the meeting.

65. Mr Trouvilliez outlined the next steps to be taken by the AEWA Secretariat. UNDSS would have to be contacted to obtain an approval and the AEWA Secretariat would have to assess the feasibility of organising the meeting within only two months. Depending on that outcome the AEWA Secretariat would inform the StC accordingly.

<i>Decision</i>	<i>Proceed with planning for a face-to-face MOP in Hungary in October 2021.</i>
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#### **Agenda item 5. Budget Scenarios 2022-2024**

66. Introducing this agenda item, Mr Mackown noted that the StC had a discussion around the budget scenarios at its last meeting. He reminded everyone that the agreement was to strengthen the document and make clear what would not happen and what would happen in each of the scenarios. Parties needed to be aware of the pressure the AEWA Secretariat was under.

67. Referring to document AEWA/STC18.4 *Draft Budget Proposal 2022-2024* Mr Trouvilliez said that the AEWA Secretariat had revised the document according to the StC members' comments. However, the accuracy of the document in terms of each unit's tasks could still be increased. He also thought that the document could be slightly reshaped. Mr Trouvilliez furthermore asked the StC members to prioritise the requested new positions.

68. Ms Remmelts explained that The Netherlands had made comments because the present draft was built on the previous drafts, whereas there was now a completely new situation. She thought a lot of rethinking was needed regarding the core work of the AEWA Secretariat, which had so far been paid by voluntary contributions and that was no longer the case. So that needed to be included in the draft in such a way that Parties become aware with what they get or not get depending on the choice they made. She thought that it was still not clear enough yet.

69. Ms Nicola Crockford, representative of BirdLife International, noted that it should be considered that governments would be adopting a post 2020 biodiversity framework with specific targets. It had been shown through various documents that AEWA was a useful tool in helping to deliver those targets. It was important that governments signalled their agreement to delivering the targets. Ms Crockford thought that the AEWA Secretariat's budget should be compared to that of equivalent treaties. Comparing the budgets of similar treaties showed that if scenario one was chosen it was 88% of CMS budget, scenario four was 99% of CMS budget. The AEWA Secretariat should have parity with CMS budget. There is no reason why the AEWA Secretariat should have less. Comparing scenario four with Ramsar, it was only 85% and only 13% of the CBD budget. This should illustrate



the importance of bringing the budget to the level of other treaties. It should be brought at least to parity with the CMS budget.

70. Mr Mackown agreed that something should be added to the budget document making clear that the AEWa Secretariat was no on parity with other similar treaties.

71. Ms Rimmelts thanked Ms Crockford for sharing the interesting perspective. She remembered that Dr Cromie mentioned at the last StC meeting considering a higher budget for the TC. Ms Rimmelts wondered whether that would create more capacity for the AEWa Secretariat.

72. Mr Sergey Dereliev, Head of the Science, Implementation and Compliance Unit at the AEWa Secretariat, that a higher budget for the TC meant more work for the AEWa Secretariat, not less. He explained that the funds needed to be administered, which takes up a lot of staff time.

73. However, Mr Dereliev also clarified that Dr Cromie's request was for a second in-person meeting and not for covering substantive tasks of the TC.

74. Mr Mackown reiterated that there would be some reformatting of the document, which would make some of the budget scenarios clearer and some of the arguments for adequate funding stronger. He asked Mr Trouvilliez what the process would be going forward in terms of finally approving the document.

75. Mr Trouvilliez explained that there were two steps. One was to create the budget and the other to allocate the budget to the contribution of each Party. The AEWa Secretariat would probably be able to do that by the end of the following week. He said that it was up to the StC whether it wanted to see the final document or not.

76. Mr Trouvilliez added that there had been a notification from UNEP informing the AEWa Secretariat that it now had to pay for the use of Umoja. That not only created an increase in the staff's workload but also an additional expenditure on top of the 13% PSC.

77. Ms Rimmelts noted that the AEWa Secretariat should emphasise in the document the struggles it had regarding the ISSAP position and reflect on the work it could not do. Since a high standard had been set by Ms Mikander and should it not be possible to maintain that it should also be highlighted in the document. Ms Rimmelts proposed a lighter version to accommodate the work on the action plans without putting them on hold.

78. Mr Trouvilliez thanked the StC for its advice and understanding. As Parties would like to see the draft budget proposal not only including the different scenarios but also what it meant for their contributions, he recommended that the StC members stated their priorities regarding the three new proposed positions. From the discussions Mr Trouvilliez noted that the ISSAP position seemed to be their first priority, but there were still the Compliance Officer and the Technical Committee Support Officer.

79. Mr Mackown thought it was difficult to differentiate between the positions, since they were all equally important. To be simplistic, Mr Mackown would put them in the order of ISSAP Coordinator, TC Support Officer and Compliance Officer. But he was open to decisions being taken should for example only one position be approved which could be split.

80. Ms Rimmelts agreed to Mr Mackown's proposed approach. On the other hand, she did not see the value in the StC members indicating a prioritisation. The Parties should make that choice.

81. Mr Mackown said that ultimately it needed to be negotiated, but that people needed to see something in front of them that they could react to. It just needed to be made clear that it was open for discussion.

82. Mr Mackown concluded that Mr Trouvilliez would update the document by restructuring it to make some of the choices clearer and by reflecting the StC members' comments regarding strengthening some of the arguments. He said that the document did not need to be reviewed again by the StC members. Furthermore, there was an agreement on a rough prioritisation with regards to the new positions recognising that that was a decision for the MOP to take.

83. Mr Mackown suggested to look at document AEWA/StC18 DR12 *Draft Resolution on Financial and Administrative Matters*. Since there were no comments, Mr Mackown concluded that the resolution was approved for submission to MOP.

<i>Decision</i>	<i>The AEWA Secretariat will update the budget document by restructuring it to make some of the choices clearer and by reflecting the StC members' comments regarding strengthening some of the arguments. DR12 is approved for submission to the MOP.</i>
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#### **Agenda item 6. Outputs of the Technical Committee Work Plan 2019-2021**

84. Introducing this agenda item, Mr Dereliev explained that most documents had an indication either in track change mode or through colour highlighting of changes that had been made according to the discussions of the previous StC meeting. Only one document was new to the StC. All others were revisions.

85. Mr Dereliev went on to introduce the first document, which was document AEWA/StC18.5 *Draft AEWA International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Common Eider*, explaining that there had been comments from Germany, which led to a whole new round of consultations. This version was the final agreed version by the EU. No comments were received from the non-EU Range States by the deadline.

86. Mr Cy Griffin, representative of FACE, noted that there were references to the governance of the NADEG committee and to compliance with the EU Birds Directive (BD). He wanted to understand more about the necessity of the additions. He thought that the AEWA action plan was already well aligned and compatible with the BD. In some cases of huntable species it was probably even more strict than the BD, particularly with reference to the Eider duck. If Parties were more comfortable with the additional reference to the need for compliance with the BD that was fine, but Mr Griffin understood that the NADEG committee wished to be consulted ahead to ensure compliance. Mr Griffin was concerned about the wording regarding the governance it said in the document that NADEG wished to be consulted ahead of any decision-making. He wondered how that would fit with the timing of the Seaducks working group.

87. Mr Schall said that he was not able to answer Mr Griffin's question, as that was not part of the German text that had been submitted. He did, however, say that there had been discussions being aware that the species in some Member States of the EU were protected and others were huntable. Mr Schall assumed that this particular point was discussed between Finland and the Commission.

88. Mr Joseph van der Stegen, representative of the European Commission, said that the Commission had made the additions regarding the review by NADEG to ensure full alignment with the BD.

89. Mr Dereliev said that the AEWA Secretariat's understanding from the previous revised version for internal EU negotiation was that it was going in the direction of establishing a double governance of the implementation of plan. Thus, the AEWA plan implementation governance process was made co-dependant on a parallel decision-making by the NADEG.

90. He further said that in the current version that seemed not to be the case. The AEWA Secretariat's understanding of the proposal was that the consultation within NADEG was part of the internal EU consultations. In that case the governance of the action plan implementation and the adaptive harvest management programmes were with the Agreement and its established processes and bodies, but the EU would be undertaking internal consultations on the decisions to be taken within its internal governance process in the NADEG.

91. If that interpretation was confirmed, then Mr Dereliev saw no difference to what had been happening in the past.

92. Mr van der Stegen confirmed that the AEWA Secretariat's interpretation was correct.

93. Since there were no further comments, the document was approved for submission to the MOP.

94. Mr Dereliev proceeded to introduce documents AEWA/StC18.6 *Draft Monitoring Priorities for Waterbird Species and Populations of AEWA*, which was the new document Mr Dereliev had mentioned before, and AEWA/StC18.7 *Draft Waterbird Monitoring Synergies with other Frameworks*.

95. Since there were no comments on either of the documents, they were both approved for submission to the MOP.

96. Mr Dereliev explained that the next document was only for the StC to note. That was document AEWA/StC18.13 *Report on the Development of Waterbird Monitoring Along the African-Eurasian Flyways*, which the MOP had requested the AEWA Secretariat and Wetlands International to compile.

97. Referring to the table on page 8, Ms Rimmelts noted that some of the references to the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative were incorrect. She said that she would send the details in an email to the AEWA Secretariat.

98. There were no further comments and the StC took note of the document.

99. Moving on to documents AEWA/StC18 DR5 *Draft Resolution on Further Development and Strengthening of Monitoring of Migratory Waterbirds* and AEWA/StC18.8 *Draft Monitoring Framework for the AEWA Flyway Site Network*, both documents were approved for submission to the MOP, as there were no comments on either of them.

100. Mr Dereliev moved on to introduce document AEWA/StC18 DR6 *Draft Resolution on the Inventory and Monitoring of the AEWA Flyway Site Network*,

101. Ms Crockford noted that she would also be speaking on behalf of WWT. She said that there were concerns about some of the changes that had been made to the draft resolution. The concerns were about the change of approving to noting in paragraph 4, asking for more work to be done on the monitoring framework in paragraph 5 as well as postponing implementation of the monitoring work in paragraph 6. Ms Crockford wanted to reopen the discussion on these points.

102. Mr Mackown said that the StC recognised the issues, but that there was a consensus view of Parties at the last meeting of the StC to inject a level of realism. He thought that there was no point pushing ahead with something just because it looked good on paper, but Parties in practice could not deliver. Mr Mackown also pointed out that it was not the final text, but open for negotiation by the MOP.

103. Following further discussions Mr Mackown suggested the following for paragraph 4: *Approves, for use by parties where appropriate, the framework for monitoring and reporting on the status of, threats to, and the effectiveness of conservation measures at sites of the AEWA flyway network.*

104. As there were no further comments and the amendments discussed were agreed upon, the draft resolution was approved for submission to the MOP.

105. The next two documents, introduced by Mr Dereliev, AEWA StC18.9 *Overview of Knowledge Gaps and Needs Relevant for AEWA Implementation: Priority Needs in 2021* and AEWA StC18 DR7 *Draft Resolution on Improving the Base of Knowledge for Effective Waterbird Conservation and Management* were approved for submission to the MOP, as there were no comments.

106. Ms Evelyn Moloko, Head of the African Initiative Unit at the AEWA Secretariat, went on to introduce AEWA/StC18.10 *Draft Format for the National Reporting Module on the Implementation of the AEWA Plan of Action for Africa*. She explained that there were no changes to the document other than two minor tweaks for better understanding of some of the questions.

107. As there were no further comments, the document was approved for submission to the MOP.

108. The next two documents were again approved for submission to the MOP, since there were no comments on them. These were documents AEWA/StC18.11 *AEWA's Contribution to the Aichi Targets 2011-2020 (draft)* and AEWA/StC18.12 *Opportunities for AEWA to Support the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (draft)*.

<i>Decision</i>	<i>All documents were approved for submission to the MOP.</i>
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### **Agenda item 7. Other MOP8 Documents and DRs**

109. Mr Dereliev went on to introduce document AEWA/StC18.14 *Analysis of the AEWA National Reports for the Triennium 2018-2020*, explaining that the AEWA Secretariat had only received the document a few days in advance of the meeting, which did not give the AEWA Secretariat much time to review the document.

110. Mr Dereliev requested the StC members to in principle agree to submitting the document to the MOP, subject to a final check by the AEWA Secretariat of how initial comments to the first draft would be addressed by WCMC.

111. Noting that the AEWA Secretariat would update and further review some sections of the document, the StC approved the document for submission to the MOP.

112. Ms Moloko introduced document AEWA/StC18.15 *Analysis of the Reports on the Implementation of the AEWA Plan of Action for Africa for the Period of 2019-2020*.

113. Similarly to document AEWA/StC18.14, the StC approved the document for submission to the MOP, pending final amendments and tweaks by the AEWA Secretariat.

114. Mr Dereliev proceeded to introduce documents AEWA/StC18.16 *Progress of Implementation of the AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027 (draft report)*, AEWA/StC18.17 *Progress of Implementation of the AEWA Plan of Action for Africa 2019-2027 (draft report)* as well as AEWA/StC18 DR3 *Draft Resolution in the State of Implementation of AEWA and its Strategic Plan 2019-2027*.

115. Mr Dereliev explained that the two progress reports were not available yet. Realistically, he said, the documents would be available for the StC to review sometime in September. One of the reasons for that was that the documents depended on the National Report Analysis and the Plan of Action for Africa National Report Analysis which were yet to be finalised. The same applied to the draft resolution.

116. The StC was content with the AEWA Secretariat’s approach and was happy to review the documents whenever they were ready.

117. The following document AEWA/StC18.18 *Implementation Review Process - Draft Report to MOP8* was again introduced by Mr Dereliev. Since the document was submitted quite late, Mr Dereliev proposed that the StC could take a bit more time to review it and then submit comments to the AEWA Secretariat via email.

118. The StC agreed to review the document and submitting comments to the AEWA Secretariat by 4 July.

119. Mr Dereliev proceeded to introduce documents AEWA/StC18 DR1 *Draft Resolution on the Procedure for Submission of Proposals for Amendments to the Agreement* and AEWA/StC DR2 *Draft Resolution on the Adoption of Amendments to the AEWA Annexes*, which were both approved for submission to the MOP, as there were no comments on either of them.

120. Document AEWA/StC18 DR11 *Draft Resolution on Institutional Arrangements of the Technical Committee* may need to be updated slightly based on decisions taken today, Mr Dereliev said. Particularly with respect to DR6.

121. The document was approved for submission to the MOP.

122. The final two documents AEWA/StC18 DR13 *Draft Resolution on the Date, Venue and Funding of MOP9* and AEWA/StC DR14 *Draft Resolution on Tribute to the Organisers* were introduced by Mr Trouvilliez. Both documents were approved for submission to the MOP, as there were no comments on either of them.

<i>Decision</i>	<i>All documents were approved for submission to the MOP.</i>
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**Agenda item 8. AEWA Award 2021**

-CLOSED SESSION-

**Agenda item 9. Any Other Business**

123. There were no items to be discussed under any other business.

**Agenda item 10. Closure of the Meeting**

124. Mr Mackown thanked everyone for their active participation, for going through the documents and considering all the changes that had been made.

125. With that the Chair declared the meeting closed.