



7th MEETING OF THE AEWA STANDING COMMITTEE
26 – 27 November 2011, Bergen, Norway

DRAFT RESOLUTION 5.XX

ADVERSE EFFECTS OF AGROCHEMICALS ON MIGRATORY WATERBIRDS IN AFRICA

Acknowledging the importance of fertilization and pest control for agriculture and that the ongoing rise in global population will, particularly in developing countries, be coupled with a growing demand for food, that crop loss and failure represent a real threat to well-being and physical survival in Africa, and that Africa is predicted to be especially affected by climate change,

Noting that agricultural expansion including the increased use of agrochemicals in Africa is thought to be one of the factors contributing to the decline of some migratory waterbirds populations in the AEWA region, and that the application of pesticides that have been proven to have an adverse effect on birds is rising in Africa,

Also noting that an estimated 30% of the pesticides marketed in Sub-Saharan Africa do not meet internationally accepted quality standards, have been banned in developed countries and are known to pose a particular threat to human health and the environment,

Further noting that avicides are still being used in Africa to control large populations of seed eating birds, killing target and non-target birds alike as they are inhaled or orally digested,

Acknowledging the findings outlined in the report *Adverse Effects of Agrochemicals on Migratory Waterbirds in Africa* (document AEWA/MOP 5.XX), which summarizes the many direct and indirect negative effects that agrochemicals can have on birds, *inter alia* through poisoning, by reducing breeding success, altering natural behavior, destroying habitats and by reducing or even eliminating food resources,

Recognizing that many farmers applying agrochemicals in Africa are often dependent on the illegal trade of agrochemicals, having no access to regulated pesticides, and are unaware of the correct use of agrochemicals as well as the possible risks to human health and the environment,

Recalling that, for waterbird populations listed in Table 1, Paragraphs 3.2.3 (a) and (b) of AEWA's Action Plan requires Contracting Parties *inter alia* to endeavour to ensure that, where practicable, statutory controls in accordance with international norms are in place relating to the use of agricultural chemicals and pest control procedures for the purpose of minimizing their adverse impacts on these populations as well as to prepare and distribute information materials, in appropriate languages, describing such regulations, standards and control measures in force and their benefits to people and wildlife,

Noting that all but three African countries are Contracting Parties to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants which seeks to regulate the production, use, trade, releases and storage of dangerous, long-lasting chemicals many of which have been used in agriculture.

The Meeting of the Parties:

1. *Calls upon* Contracting Parties and other Range States in Africa, to enhance the control of the sale and use of agrochemicals and to decrease the use of agrochemicals which are known to have direct or indirect adverse effects on birds, and in particular to:
 - encourage relevant government authorities to develop and implement regulations on the application of such agro-chemicals and to monitor their implementation, and in particular to ensure appropriate quality control;
 - regulate the use of such agrochemicals in the vicinity of nationally and internationally important sites for migratory waterbirds, particularly in wetlands, also taking into account run-offs from agriculture effecting aquatic ecosystems;
 - control and where feasible reduce the use of avicides in areas frequented by populations listed in Table 1 of the Agreement;
 - undertake measures to ease the access of farmers to good quality agro-chemicals while reducing their potential negative impacts on the environment and human health and to undermine the illicit trade of uncontrolled pesticides;
 - enhance education and training on the proper use of agrochemicals as well as on possible adverse effects to waterbirds involving existing agricultural extension service;
2. *Encourages* Contracting Parties to support Range States in minimizing the negative impact of agrochemicals on migratory waterbirds in Africa, *inter alia* by exchanging knowledge and best practice on identifying and mitigating adverse effects of agrochemicals and by encouraging further research on alternative and indigenous crops as well as alternative fertilization methods suitable for Africa; and
3. *Invites* relevant intergovernmental organizations, in particular the Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, as well as the European Commission to cooperate with the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat in efforts to strengthen the capacity of African countries to control/manage the use of agrochemicals so as to minimize possible negative impacts on human health and the environment.