



10th MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE
8-10 July 2015, Kampala, Uganda

**AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF AFRICAN-EURASIAN
MIGRATORY WATERBIRDS**

REPORT OF THE EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA REGION

This report provides an update of the activities undertaken in the Eastern and Southern Africa region of the AEWA since the last AEWA Standing Committee in September 2013. The information provided in this report reflects the situation known to the Standing Committee member reporting and a selection of countries that reported. Reporting by members in the region is still very low.

Recruitment of Members

The region received two new members to the Agreement as below

1. Rwanda 01-09-2014
2. Burundi 01-10-2014

Implementation Activities

The region hosted a central 2014 WMBD event for Africa. This took place on 28 August 2014 at Ngare Sero Village, at the shores of Lake Natron, Tanzanian, under the global WMBD theme “Destination Flyways: Migratory Birds and Tourism”, in connection with the Destination Flyways Initiative coordinated by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

A 2014 WMBD event was also hosted in the region in Queen Elizabeth Conservation Area and adjacent buffer zones, in Uganda. The national awareness-raising event was hosted on 10 May 2014 in the Katwe-Kabatooro town council in Uganda to commemorate the 2014 WMBD campaign.

Sub-regional Workshop on Wetlands Management Plans for Eastern and Southern Africa contracting parties was hosted by Kenya from 25th to 29th May 2015 at Kenya Wildlife Service Training Institute (Naivasha), Kenya. Thanks to the French Government and Technical Support Unit. The training was attended by focal points and site managers of key wetland sites in the Eastern and Southern Region.

Uganda is in advanced stages of finalizing the National Action Plan for the Grey Crowned Crane largely drawing on the draft Single Species Action Plan for the Grey Crowned Plan.

A meeting to develop a multi-species action plan for seabirds in the Benguela upwelling system was held in Namibia in 2014, under the auspices of AEWA. South Africa participated in this meeting and through BirdLife South Africa, will be coordinating the development of this document.

South Africa hosted a Fluff-tail Festival

The objective of the Flufftail Festival is to raise awareness for the need to conserve, not only the White-winged Flufftail, but other wetland birds, their threatened habitat and our country's scarcest natural resource i.e. water.

Launched in February 2013 in conjunction with Bird Life South Africa's 2013 Bird of the Year. The annual Flufftail Festival is held at Sandton City, Nelson Mandela Square in Johannesburg for a week. This is aimed at reaching thousands of business owners and residents of Johannesburg through displays and interactive activities with the aim of creating awareness about flufftails and other birds and their important wetland habitat, and it's an opportunity to reach thousands of residents of Johannesburg. Activities include but not limited to:

- A fashion show themed around Birds. Public figures grace this event;
- Orchestra/musical Event which feature a prominent figure;
- Bands for Birds featuring a popular music band e.g the Parletones;
- Comedy for Conservation;
- Series of evening lectures with drinks and snacks;
- Proximity to important wetland areas;
- Breeding centre for flufftails at Johannesburg Zoo;
- Photographic competition on wetlands/terrestrial birds. The winning photographs are displayed in the Square for the duration of the festival;
- Finding wetland-related species. Laminated cards that are assembled to spell a word or make a sentence;
- Assembling a jigsaw to 'restore a habitat';
- Eating wetland-themed foods. Use chopsticks to eat gummy fish hidden in chocolate 'mud' pudding;
- Identify bird calls of five common wetland bird species;
- Offering a family event by creating an activities suitable for all ages; encouraging families, groups of friends or workmates to work together to solve puzzles; inviting teams to come up with a creative team name and offering prizes for various challenges;

- Learn about wetland features with a number of wetland-related activities; and
- Get your feet wet. Create a 'wetland' for educational purposes.

Flufftails are used as ambassadors to raise awareness for other birds living in our threatened wetland and grasslands habitat.

The second Southern African Bird Atlas Project progressed.

The field work for this project is done by more than one thousand five hundred volunteers, known as citizen scientists - they are making a huge contribution to the conservation of birds and their habitats. The unit of data collection is the pentad, five minutes of latitude by five minutes of longitude, squares with sides of roughly 9 km. There are 17339 pentads in the original atlas area of South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland, and a further 10600 in Namibia and 4900 in Zimbabwe.

The African Penguin Biodiversity Management Plan was adopted in 2013 in terms of the National Environmental Management Biodiversity Act and being implemented in South Africa.

South Africa participated in the International Single Species Action Plan process for the Conservation of the White-winged Flufftail (*Sarothrura ayresi*) and the Lesser Flamingo (*Phoeniconaias minor*).

The region conducted annual water bird monitoring counts at selected sites.