

First Meeting of the Americas Flyways Task Force

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RESOLUTION 12.11

FLYWAYS



**CONVENTION ON
MIGRATORY
SPECIES**

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FLYWAYS

Adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its 12th Meeting (Manila, October 2017)

Recalling Recommendation 7.7, Resolution 10.10, and Resolution 11.14 relating to flyways,

Recognizing that a flyways approach is necessary to ensure adequate conservation and sustainable use of migratory birds throughout their ranges, combining species- and ecosystem-based approaches and promoting international cooperation and coordination among states, the private sector, Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), UN institutions, Non-Governmental Organizations, local communities and other stakeholders,

Also recognizing that there are specific threats of particular significance to migratory birds along flyways, as identified in *A Review of Migratory Bird Flyways and Priorities for Management* CMS Technical Series No. 27, that continue to have an impact on these species and their habitats including: inland wetland reclamation; destruction of coastal and inter-tidal habitats; loss of forests and grasslands; agricultural intensification and habitat modification through desertification and overgrazing; inappropriate wind turbine development (Resolution 11.27 on Renewable Energy and Migratory Species); collisions with power lines and electrocutions (Resolution 10.11 on Powerlines and Migratory Birds); illegal and/or unsustainable killing, taking and trade (Resolution 11.16 on the Prevention of Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds); overfishing and the bycatch of seabirds (Resolutions 6.2, 7.2, 8.14, 9.18 and 10.14); lead shot and other poisoning (Resolution 11.15 on Preventing Poisoning of Migratory Birds); invasive alien species (Resolution 11.28 on Future CMS Activities on Invasive Alien Species) and avian influenza and other disease (Resolutions 8.27, 9.8 and 10.22 on Wildlife Disease); and marine debris (Resolution 11.30 on Management of Marine Debris),

Recognizing that flyways are to be considered as ecological networks, since although there may be no direct physical links between their component parts, the populations of birds using them provide an ecological link themselves, as recognized in Resolution 10.3,

Acknowledging that the very broad and comprehensive mandate of Resolution 10.10 on Guidance on Global Flyway Conservation and Options for Policy Arrangements has been streamlined and focused into a more detailed Programme of Work (POW), via Resolution 11.14 in order to provide Parties and stakeholders with a clear road map with timelines, priorities and indicators for the conservation of flyways and migratory birds,

Recalling that Resolution 10.10 requested CMS to work in close partnership with existing flyway organizations and initiatives in the Americas, to develop an overarching conservation Action Plan for migratory birds in the Americas, recognizing especially the established programmes of work and taking into account existing instruments,

Taking note of Resolution 10.18, which includes guidelines on the integration of migratory species into National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs),

Aware that Parties have endorsed a Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023

(Resolution 11.2) with clearly defined goals and targets to promote actions to ensure the favourable conservation status of migratory species and their habitats, and that the present Flyways POW will make a significant contribution to delivering major parts of this Plan,

Recalling Target 11 of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets 2020 approved by the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2010, which states “by 2020, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water, and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes”, is especially relevant for the conservation of migratory birds,

Further recalling Target 12 of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets 2020 approved by the Convention on Biological Diversity, which states “by 2020 the extinction of known threatened species has been prevented and their conservation status, particularly of those most in decline, has been improved and sustained”,

Acknowledging the relevance of the Wings over Wetlands (WOW) project, developed under the aegis of AEWA and implemented under the lead of Wetlands International and BirdLife International, as the largest initiative to date in the African-Eurasian region for the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats, and in particular its associated Critical Site Network Tool, an open-access web portal providing information about waterbird populations and the critical sites required through their annual cycle, and designed to support conservation decision-making at site, national and international levels,

Acknowledging with satisfaction the extensive monitoring and conservation work by Partners of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) for migratory waterbirds and their habitats, including through the strengthening of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Site Network,

Acknowledging the conservation work by the partners of the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN) for migratory shorebirds and their habitats throughout the Americas,

Recognizing the development of the Atlantic Flyway Shorebird Initiative Business Plan, and the Pacific Americas Shorebird Conservation Strategy which seek to implement strategies and actions for the conservation of priority migratory shorebirds and their habitats in the West Atlantic and East Pacific flyways,

Recognizing also the vital importance of the Arctic as the location of breeding and moulting areas of the world’s major flyways and that the region is undergoing rapid change driven by climate effects, development of activities of major extractive industry, land and water transportation routes and other threats,

Acknowledging the 2013 Resolution of Cooperation signed between the Secretariats of CMS and the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna Working Group (CAFF) of the Arctic Council and tripartite CAFF/CMS/AEWA joint work plan 2013-2015 to encourage information sharing to assist in the conservation of migratory species along all the world’s flyways and to assist cooperation with non-Arctic countries on these issues, and welcoming the Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative and its associated 2015-2019 Work Plan,

Recognizing also that climate change is already having an adverse impact on migratory birds and their habitats as reflected in Resolution 11.26,

Acknowledging the contributions of the United Nations Environmental Programme-Global

Environment Facility Siberian Crane Wetland Project implemented by the International Crane Foundation and the Governments of China, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation to the protection and management of an ecological site network in Asia,

Recalling Resolution 11.14, which reaffirmed the global open-ended Working Group on Flyways (hereinafter Flyways Working Group) within the framework of the Scientific Council to act as a think-tank on migratory bird flyways and frameworks,

Recalling further that the Flyways Working Group was given the task of reviewing scientific and technical issues concerning the conservation of migratory birds and their habitats, and relevant international instruments, initiatives and processes, as the basis for future CMS policy on flyways,

Noting with appreciation the broad participation and work undertaken by the Scientific Council, the Secretariats of the Ramsar Convention and AEWA, international NGOs (BirdLife International, Wetlands International), the Americas Waterbird Conservation Council, the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN), WHMSI, EAAFP, the Federation of Associations for Hunting & Conservation of the EU (FACE) and international experts as well as a wider consultative group contributing to the work of the Flyways Working Group,

Further noting with satisfaction that in accordance with the terms of reference of the Flyways Working Group, three global reviews have been produced and published in 2014 as *A Review of Migratory Bird Flyways and Priorities for Management* (CMS Technical Series No. 27): the first one analyzing the existing CMS and non-CMS administrative arrangements (Review 1); the second regarding scientific and technical issues and priority issues related to flyways and management of migratory species and their habitats (Review 2); and the third regarding policy options (Review 3),

Noting with gratitude the work undertaken by the Flyways Working Group at its meeting in Edinburgh on 20-21 February 2011 and during the whole intersessional period and acknowledging the generous financial contributions provided by Germany, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and Wetlands International as well as the support of Flyways Working Group members towards the preparation and organization of the meeting and the drafting of reports,

Noting with gratitude the work undertaken by the Flyways Working Group at its meetings in Jamaica (11-14 March 2014) and Germany (30 June 2014) and during the whole intersessional period and acknowledging the generous financial contributions provided by the Government of Switzerland as well as the contribution of Flyways Working Group members towards the successful completion of these meetings and their outputs,

Thanking the Government of Jamaica for hosting the Flyways Meetings held on 11-14 March 2014 in Trelawney, and the Governments of Canada and Switzerland, the Organization of American States (OAS), WHMSI and the CMS Secretariat for co-organizing and sponsoring these meetings,

Noting with appreciation the support and guidance provided by the Secretariat and the Standing Committee respectively to the operation of the Flyways Working Group throughout the intersessional periods,

Acknowledging other contributing parallel processes undertaken within CMS and *recalling* that, according to Resolution 11.12, the conclusion of instruments currently under development and the elaboration of new instruments under the aegis of CMS need to be linked to the recommendations of the Future Shape process,

Further taking note of the report of the Global Waterbirds Flyways Workshop to promote

exchange of Good Practice and Learning that took place in Seosan (Republic of Korea) on 17-20 October 2011, contained in document UNEP/CMS/Inf.10.41,

Taking note of “The Hague Action Statement” issued on the occasion of the 15th Anniversary of AEWA in June 2010,

Considering that policies that encourage environmentally-friendly economic growth and development would be highly beneficial for migratory birds, including bird-friendly agricultural practices that also improve local livelihoods, and that these practices should be promoted along all flyways,

Noting the various ongoing activities in the Central and South American Region for the protection of migratory species of waterbirds, such as WHSRN, the Neotropical Waterbird Census, as well as projects under the auspices of CMS such as those concerning Andean flamingoes and the Ruddy-headed Goose,

Noting the many ongoing activities in the Americas for the conservation of migratory birds, such as the North American Bird Conservation Initiative, Partners in Flight, Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act, Waterbird Conservation for the Americas, the US and Canadian Shorebird Conservation plans,

Noting the original initiative by the late Lic. Pablo Canevari to bring many activities together and to establish an America Pacific Flyway Agreement under CMS,

Further noting the work undertaken by the Government of the Netherlands and Wetlands International to develop the original initiative further into a programme proposal: “Wetlands and Birds of the Americas” published as a draft in June 2001, also known as “The American Pacific Flyway Programme”,

Aware of the great importance of the region for migratory waterbirds and their habitats, as cited in “Wetlands of South America: An Agenda for Biodiversity Conservation and Policies Development” (Wetlands International, 2001) and of the great need for conservation of the entire flyway, preferably within the framework of a multilateral flyway Agreement on the basis of Article IV of the Convention,

Noting the important habitat changes in non-breeding grounds in the Americas, particularly for shorebirds, and the indications of a decrease in numbers for almost all species of shorebirds,

Aware also of the strong emphasis in the programme on capacity-building, community involvement, international co-operation and the gathering of important data for the management of waterbird populations and their habitats, such as the South American Wetland Assessment and the Neotropical Waterbird Census, and

Anxious to see the programme being implemented in due time as an important contribution to the general aims of CMS and with a view towards the possible development of a more formal Americas flyway Agreement such as that developed for African-Eurasian migratory waterbirds.

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

1. *Reaffirms* the “Programme of Work on Migratory Birds and Flyways 2014-2023” (the POW) included as Annex 1 to this Resolution and *urges* Parties and signatories to CMS instruments, and *encourages* non-Parties, organizations and stakeholders to implement the POW as a matter of priority;

2. *Reaffirms* the “Americas Flyways Framework” included as Annex 2 to this Resolution and *urges* CMS Parties and signatories to CMS avian instruments in the Americas, and invites non-Parties, organizations and stakeholders to implement the Framework to protect migratory birds and their habitats throughout the Western Hemisphere;
3. *Welcomes* the establishment of an Americas Flyways Task Force, to coordinate the development and implementation of an Americas Action Plan to achieve the global Programme of Work and Americas Flyways Framework including provisions for concerted conservation action for priority species, and to report to COP13 onwards;
4. *Adopts* the Action Plan for the Americas Flyways attached as Annex 3 to this Resolution, and developed under the Americas Flyways Framework, and *urges* Parties and Signatories to CMS avian instruments, and *encourages* non-Parties, organizations and stakeholders to implement the Action Plan and support efforts of the Americas Flyways Task Force to coordinate its implementation;
5. *Instructs* the Secretariat, in collaboration with Parties and relevant stakeholders and subject to the availability of resources, to implement those activities assigned to it in the POW;
6. *Calls* on Parties to effectively implement the POW as applicable and in accordance with the circumstances of each Party and *invites* non-Parties and other stakeholders, with the support of the Secretariat, to strengthen national and local capacity for flyway conservation including, *inter alia*, by developing partnerships with key stakeholders and organizing training courses; translating and disseminating documents, sharing protocols and regulations; transferring technology; designating and improving management of critically and internationally important sites; understanding the ecological functionality of flyways through research of migratory birds and their habitats; strengthening monitoring programmes; and promoting the conservation of migratory birds and ensuring any use of migratory birds is sustainable;
7. *Requests* Parties, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), United Nations Environment Programme and other United Nations organizations, bilateral and multilateral donors, the private sector and others to provide financial assistance for the implementation of this Resolution, the POW and the Americas Flyways Framework including to developing countries for relevant capacity-building and conservation action;
8. *Welcomes* the kind offer of the Government of India to develop, in consultation with the CMS and AEWA Secretariats and Central Asian Flyway (CAF) Range States, a mid-term plan for further development and operations of the Central Asian Flyway Action Plan for Waterbirds; as well as to support such a plan with resources, to submit a proposal to the 7th AEWA Meeting of the Parties to incorporate the CAF Action Plan into AEWA, in response to the decision on the preferred legal and institutional framework for CAF and the request to the AEWA Contracting Parties to consider such an incorporation, both of which were agreed by the CAF Range States at the Meeting to Negotiate the Legal and Institutional Framework for the Central Asian Flyway for Migratory Waterbirds (Abu Dhabi, 12 December 2012);
9. *Further requests* the continuation of the open-ended Flyways Working Group extending membership to incorporate expertise from geographical regions and relevant CMS bodies currently absent;
10. *Encourages* Parties to promote the POW and the Americas Flyways Framework as global tools to contribute to achieving the Aichi Targets in relation to conservation of migratory species and their habitats and to ensure a strong level of support for its implementation

by working closely with the Convention on Biological Diversity;

11. *Encourages* the Secretariat to liaise with the secretariats of CMS instruments, relevant MEAs, international organizations, international conservation initiatives, NGOs and the private sector to promote synergies and coordinate activities related to the conservation of flyways and migratory birds including, where appropriate, the organization of back-to-back meetings and joint activities;
12. *Requests* the Secretariat, Parties and all others involved with CMS, to seek actively closer cooperation among those instruments, initiatives and partnerships, within and outside the United Nations, relating to migratory birds and the habitats upon which they depend, and as a priority to focus on and address specific threats to halt the decline in the populations of these birds;
13. *Calls upon* Parties and the CMS Secretariat to promote the collaborative conservation of migratory birds by working with other bodies whose prime objective is not wildlife conservation (governmental institutions, MEAs, UN institutions, Non-Governmental Organizations and other organizations, including from the private sector), to ensure that the requirements of habitats of migratory birds are integrated into land-use policies, including protected areas but also especially outside protected areas;
14. *Urges Parties, invites* Range States and *calls upon* other partners and stakeholders, including the private sector, through formal designations and voluntary measures as appropriate, to afford high priority to the conservation of sites and habitats identified as being of importance to migratory birds (based on sound scientific information) expanding and strengthening existing flyway site networks (including *inter alia* the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Site Network, African-Eurasian Waterbirds Agreement Site Network, Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network, West/Central Asian Site Network, Emerald Network, Ramsar Sites and World Heritage Sites, BirdLife International's Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas), and to carry out work to determine how best to manage landscapes, including the designation of protected trans-boundary habitat corridors and ecological networks with suitable and sufficient habitat in which to breed, forage and rest;
15. *Invites* Parties to implement Resolution 11.26 on climate change and continue taking action to mitigate the impacts of climate change on migratory bird species, including addressing immediate threats that might reduce adaptive potential, ensuring adequate environmental safeguards for renewable energy projects, monitoring the status of migratory birds and their habitats, developing indicators to identify the effects of climate change, promoting adaptive management, seeking new partnerships with other international bodies and considering how to assist species to adapt to climate change (e.g. through securing critical site networks);
16. *Requests* Parties to review the coverage and protection status of current site networks noting the need to make due allowance for any exploitation and degradation of sites, and to consider the resilience of sites to climate change, taking account of the potential for shifts in the range of species due to climate change, as well as other factors;
17. *Requests* Parties to ensure that known key migratory stop-over sites are all protected and managed and additional sites identified to form part of coherent site networks for migratory species and to continue to support the development of flyway-scale site networks, especially where they are least developed, to include the widest possible range of available habitat for migratory birds, giving particular attention to tidal flats (see Resolution 12.25 on conservation of critical intertidal and other coastal habitats);

18. *Urges* Parties to foster trans-boundary collaboration within flyway networks and to implement existing site management plans and develop new ones where needed at key sites, supporting the development of a Global Critical Site Network Tool modelled on the redeveloped Critical Site Network Tool for the African-Eurasian region;
19. *Recommends* that Parties enhance and strengthen monitoring of migratory bird populations and the important sites they rely upon (including surveying new sites to fill information gaps), and to increase capacity for and sustainability of such monitoring in the long term, where appropriate by institutionalizing it as an ongoing activity within government, in partnership with other organizations, including through provision of support initiatives such as the Global Waterbird Fund (established in response to the invitation of AEWA and the Ramsar Convention and managed by Wetlands International) in order to present to key stakeholders with up-to-date information on the distribution, status and trends of migratory birds and the sites and habitats that they need;
20. *Requests* Parties to support analyses of existing datasets on individual bird movements and to support the development and use of new tools and techniques, including geo-locators, radio and satellite tracking, remote sensing, and genetic and connectivity analyses, in order to help identify migration strategies, covering the entire life cycle of species, and including the routes taken via sites ranging from those used most regularly to those of occasional importance;
21. *Calls upon* the Secretariat, in collaboration with Parties and relevant international organizations, to strengthen cooperation with the Arctic Council and other bodies focused on the Arctic in order to improve understanding of the ongoing and predicted changes to the environment and impacts on breeding and moulting distributions of species, and to ensure designation and management of all critically important areas;
22. *Requests* the Secretariat to strengthen links with the Secretariat of the Arctic Council's Working Group on the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF), in the framework of the existing Resolution of Cooperation, especially to ensure that the CAFF Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative (AMBI) has maximum synergies with the POW to capitalize on the flyway approach in gaining global support for the conservation of the arctic environment;
23. *Calls upon* the Secretariat, in collaboration with Parties and relevant international organizations, to strengthen cooperation with the private sector to promote development and inclusion of flyway considerations into their operational guidance, to take up stewardship of areas directly linked to or associated with their footprint and beyond, to consider compensation for residual impacts along flyways, to strive for Net Positive Impact, and to be pro-active in using international best practice;
24. *Requests* Parties, GEF, the United Nations and other international organizations, bilateral and multilateral donors, the private sector and others to provide financial assistance to developing and the least developed countries, countries with economies in transition, the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and NGO partners for the implementation of this Resolution;
25. *Requests* the Scientific Council to produce guidelines and/or case studies on mechanisms to enhance the conservation of migratory birds through site networks;
26. *Repeals*
 - a) Recommendation 7.7, *American Pacific Flyway Programme*
 - b) Resolution 10.10, *Guidance on Global Flyway Conservation and Options for Policy*

Arrangements, and

- c) Resolution 11.14, *Programme of Work on Migratory Birds and Flyways.*