



**CONVENTION ON
MIGRATORY
SPECIES**

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Agenda Item 26.1

**ACTION PLAN FOR MIGRATORY LANDBIRDS
IN THE AFRICAN-EURASIAN REGION (AEMLAP)**

(Prepared by the Secretariat)

Summary:

This document reports on progress to implement Resolution 11.17 (Rev.COP12) *Action Plan for Migratory Landbirds in the African-Eurasian Region (AEMLAP)* and the related Decisions 12.22 to 12.25, adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its 12th meeting (COP12, Manila, 2017). It includes proposed amendments to the Resolution and Decisions, submitted by the African Eurasian Migratory Landbirds Working Group, aimed at strengthening the implementation of the AEMLAP through increased financial resources for its coordination.

ACTION PLAN FOR MIGRATORY LANDBIRDS IN THE AFRICAN-EURASIAN REGION (AEMLAP)

Background

1. The Conference of the Parties at its 12th meeting (COP12, Manila, 2017) adopted Resolution 11.17 (Rev. COP12) *Action Plan for Migratory Landbirds in the African-Eurasian Region (AEMLAP)*, in which it:
 6. *Calls on Parties to urgently address the problems of illegal and of unsustainable taking of landbirds during migration and wintering and ensure that national conservation legislation is in place and enforced and implementation measures are taken, and requests the Secretariat to liaise with the Bern Convention and other relevant fora in order to facilitate the national and international mitigation of the problem of illegal killing of birds in line with Resolution 11.16 (Rev.COP12) on the Prevention of Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds;*
 10. *Instructs the Secretariat, in collaboration with Parties and relevant international organizations, subject to the availability of funds, to organize regional workshops to address specific issues and promote the implementation of the Action Plan and share best practice and lessons learnt in the effective conservation of migratory landbirds;*
2. COP12 also adopted Decisions 12.22 – 12.25 *Action Plan for Migratory Land Birds in the African- Eurasian Region (AEMLAP)*, which read as follows:

12.22 Directed to the Secretariat

The Secretariat shall:

- a) *subject to the availability of funds, organize in the intersessional period between the 12th and 13th meetings of the Conference of the Parties a consultation meeting of Range States to agree on whether the Action Plan should remain as a stand-alone document or whether a new CMS instrument should be developed or an existing CMS instrument should be used as institutional framework;*
- b) *in the intersessional period between the 12th and 13th meetings of the Conference of the Parties, promote the importance of sustainable land use for migratory birds, and the specific practices and approaches in the Abuja Declaration, with relevant UN agencies and other international institutions and to seek opportunities for collaborative action to encourage sustainable land use for migratory species and people;*
- c) *update the species list of the Landbirds Action Plan according to the standard taxonomic references for birds adopted at the 11th and 12th meetings of the Conference of the Parties, and changes to the IUCN Red List.*

12.23 Directed to the Scientific Council

The Scientific Council should:

- a) *continue the Working Group on African-Eurasian Migratory Landbirds until the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, extending its membership to incorporate expertise from geographical regions currently absent, to facilitate and monitor the implementation of the Action Plan, and to develop indicators to assess the implementation of the Programme of Work 2016 – 2020;*

- b) *in the intersessional period between the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties and the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, and subject to the availability of resources, work with the Migratory Landbird Study Group, relevant academic institutions, research-funders and the Working Group, in order to actively promote research that addresses key knowledge gaps relating to migratory landbird conservation in African landscapes, inter alia, to:*
- i. identify migratory pathways and strategies using tracking technologies to understand migratory connectivity so enabling field research to be targeted more effectively;*
 - ii. undertake detailed field studies in sub-Saharan Africa and at staging sites, in conjunction with existing data where appropriate, to better understand species distribution patterns, habitat use and foraging ecology, and in particular identify and enhance conservation of the stop-over sites immediately to the north and south of the Sahara (including through data collection and seeking linkages with relevant stakeholders);*
 - iii. synthesize data from European breeding grounds to explore spatial and temporal patterns in demographic parameters in relation to migratory pathways and large-scale patterns of environmental change;*
 - iv. use satellite image earth observation data to improve understanding where land cover is changing and how this impacts African-Eurasian migrant birds, and research the drivers of land use / land cover change;*
 - v. seek better understanding of how to influence the economic and social policy drivers causing land use / land cover change at different scales;*
 - vi. encourage research to determine for which declining European landbird migrant declines cannot be explained by conditions in the breeding grounds; and*
- c) *report to the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties on the extent to which progress has been made on these and other priorities, and potential opportunities to promote these research areas including dialogue with national and international research-funding agencies.*

12.24 Directed to Parties

Parties are invited to:

- a) consider making financial voluntary contributions for the implementation of the Programme of Work 2016-2020 and to fund an AEMLAP coordinator;*
- b) with the support of the Secretariat, work together with relevant UN agencies, international organizations and other stakeholders, to organize a workshop on the integration of biodiversity requirements into the land degradation neutrality delivery at appropriate scale;*
- c) report on progress in implementing the AEMLAP and integrating it into delivery against other relevant international agreements, including monitoring and efficacy of measures taken, to the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties in 2020, via their national reports, in order to achieve CMS objectives.*

12.25 Directed to Parties, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations

Parties, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations:

- a) *and particularly Parties, bilateral and multilateral donors, Global Environment Facility, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, Economic Community of West African States and other relevant international organizations, in the intersessional period between the 12th and the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, are requested to consider voluntarily supporting financially the implementation of the Action Plan, in particular to tackle the barriers to sustainable land use in Africa, including the priorities for West Africa recommended by the Abuja workshop, and including through the provision of technical and financial assistance to developing countries for relevant capacity building;*
 - b) *are invited to make voluntary contributions to support the Working Group to organize at least one meeting within the intersessional period between the 12th and the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to among other activities, review the implementation of the Action Plan and the Programme of Work.*
3. As a critical element for the implementation of AEMLAP, Resolution 11.17 (Rev.COP12) urges Parties and encourages non-Parties to address the issue of habitat loss and degradation of migratory landbird species through the development of policies that maintain, manage and restore natural and semi-natural habitats within the wider environment, including working with local communities, and in partnership with the poverty alleviation community and the agriculture and forestry sectors in Africa.
 4. In the wider perspective, but closely interlinked with the conservation status of migratory landbirds as an indicator for the state and connectivity of natural and semi-natural habitats, the rapid land use changes across the African region and the resulting loss of woodlands, forests and wetlands are driving an associated loss of ecosystem services. These services are important for achieving land degradation neutrality and nature-based climate solutions, and their ability to support incomes and resilience. For an introduction to the general context of land use changes and the role of sustainable land use in conjunction with the conservation of migratory landbirds, as well as for activities before COP12, see the background section of document [UNEP/CMS/COP12/Doc.24.1.2/Rev.1](#).

Activities to implement Resolution 11.17 (Rev.COP12) and Decision 12.22

5. For a report on the implementation of the request to the Secretariat in operative paragraph 6. of Resolution 11.17 (Rev.COP12), see Document UNEP/CMS/COP13/Doc.26.1.1 *The Prevention of Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds*.
6. A number of efforts have taken place to raise awareness of AEMLAP and to support its implementation, including the following:
 - AEMLAP was promoted by Professor Franz Bairlein, Institute of Avian Research, Wilhelmshaven, Germany, at the International Ornithological Congress in Vancouver, Canada, in August 2018;
 - implementation of AEMLAP has been supported by bird monitoring training sessions in Western African UNESCO Biosphere Reserves (initially in Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria) through the 'AfriBiRds' project led by NABU (BirdLife Partner in Germany) and BirdLife International;

- on 12-13 March 2019, the Cambridge Conservation Initiative held a workshop on *Science and Policy to Address Threats to the Afro-Palearctic Migratory Birds: new research and future policy*;
- on 14-15 March 2019, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), UK, hosted a workshop titled *Developing a package of fundable projects that would enhance the conservation of the European migratory landbirds in Africa*.

7. To implement Decision 12.22 b) and the provisions of operative paragraph 10 of Resolution 11.17 (Rev.COP12), and support Parties in the implementation of Decisions 12.24 b) and 12.25 a), two meetings were held between the Secretariats of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and CMS (22 March and 9 April 2019), discussing ways to address sustainable land use and migratory species conservation in Africa, possible joint activities and a conceptual framework of a workshop on the integration of biodiversity requirements into the land degradation neutrality (LDN) delivery framework at appropriate scales. Concrete linkages between AEMLAP and LDN have been identified and a concept note for the workshop developed.
8. The Secretariat of the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA) prepared a [Draft Concept for an Assessment of the Status of Principal Bird Habitats in the African-Eurasian Flyways](#) (UNEP/AEWA/TC15.19) and the related [draft terms of reference](#) (UNEP/AEWA/TC15.20) under the AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027 for a joint CMS Family project with the AEMLAP, the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia (Raptors MOU) and the Central Asian Flyway Action Plan on the assessment of the status and development of action plans for priority principal bird habitats in the African-Eurasian flyways. The AEWA Secretariat consulted the CMS Secretariat and the chair of the Landbirds Working Group during the development of the draft concept. It was presented and approved at the 15th meeting of the AEWA Technical Committee (Bonn, April 2019).

Single-species action plans developed in conjunction with AEMLAP

9. The Action Plan for the European Turtle Dove was finalized under the EU LIFE EuroSAP process (LIFE14 PRE/UK/000002). The final draft action plan was approved at the meeting of the EU Expert Group on the Birds and Habitats Directives (NADEG), Brussels, on 22 to 23 May 2018, with the caveat of a disclaimer reflecting the reservations of some Range States within the EU on a proposed temporary hunting moratorium on the European Turtle Dove. CMS attended the recent discussions on this Action Plan at the *Eyes on the Flyways Conference* on 24 May 2018. The Action Plan was adopted by the 48th Meeting of the CMS Standing Committee, in accordance with its mandate pursuant to Decision 12.21 *Action Plans for Birds* (see also Document UNEP/CMS/COP13/26.1.5 *Action Plans for Birds*).

Update of the list of species covered by AEMLAP

10. Implementing Decision 12.22 c), the Secretariat, with support from Professor Stephen Garnett, CMS COP-appointed Councillor, updated the species list of AEMLAP according to the standard taxonomic references for birds adopted at COP12, and changes to the IUCN Red List. The new list has been approved through consultations with the Working Group, and the changes have been incorporated into AEMLAP Annex 3. AEMLAP is available in Document UNEP/CMS/COP13/26.1.2/Annex III. It is proposed to delete the completed Decision 12.22 c).

Funding

11. In response to Decision 12.22, the CMS Secretariat undertook significant and continuous efforts to raise funds for the coordination of AEMLAP, and for the organization of a workshop on sustainable land use and a meeting of the Working Group (including identification of potential donors, preparation of funding proposals and calls, e.g. see CMS Notification 2019/003). In September 2019, Switzerland pledged co-funding for implementing AEMLAP-relevant activities. However, to date (September 2019), the overall funds raised have been insufficient to implement these priority activities.
12. With reference to Decision 12.24 a), the Working Group has expressed its serious concern about the lack of funding for the implementation of its Programme of Work 2016-2020, for an AEMLAP coordinator, and for a meeting of the Working Group in the intersessional period between COP12 and COP13. In consequence, the AEML Steering Group undertook consultations via email with the Working Group on proposed inputs to Resolution 11.17 (Rev.COP12) and Decisions 12.22-12.25.
13. The Working Group estimates that for the intersessional period between COP13 and COP14, funds in the region of €200,000 are required for AEMLAP coordination and implementation as well as the organization of a meeting of the Working Group. As an outcome of the consultations via email on proposed amendments to Resolution 11.17 (Rev.COP12) and Decisions 12.22-12.25 for submission to COP13, the Working Group concluded that if by 30 June 2020 a minimum of €100,000 has not been made available for these three urgent priority actions, it will recommend to the CMS Scientific Council to declare the Working Group and its Steering Group dormant. The same procedure would be applicable if by 28 February 2021 an additional minimum of €50,000, and by 28 February 2022 another additional minimum of €50,000 have not been pledged for the coordination of the implementation of the AEMLAP.

Recommended actions

14. The Conference of the Parties is recommended to:
 - a) adopt the draft amendments to Resolution 11.17 (Rev.COP12) contained in Annex 1 of this document;
 - b) adopt the draft Decisions contained in Annex 2 of this document that amend Decisions 12.22 to 12.25;
 - c) adopt the draft Decision 13.EE contained in Annex 2 of this document;
 - d) delete Decision 12.22 c);
 - e) note the changes made to the *Action Plan for Migratory Landbirds in the African-Eurasian Region (AEMLAP)* contained in UNEP/CMS/COP13/Doc.26.1.2/Annex 3.

ANNEX 1

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO RESOLUTION 11.17 (Rev.COP12)

**ACTION PLAN FOR MIGRATORY LANDBIRDS
IN THE AFRICAN-EURASIAN REGION (AEMLAP)**

NB: Proposed new text is underlined. Text to be deleted is ~~crossed out~~.

Concerned that there is compelling scientific evidence of widespread declines of African-Eurasian migratory landbirds in recent decades, and that these declines are of growing conservation concern in both scientific and political arenas as the European breeding populations of some formerly widespread species have more than halved in the last 30 years,

Aware that the status of migratory landbirds is widely used as an indicator of the overall health of the environment and other biodiversity, *inter alia* the achievement of Target 12 of the CBD Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, and when monitored with standardized methods migratory landbirds can provide an effective indicator of sustainable land use,

Aware also that the key drivers of this decline appear to be degradation of the breeding habitats, particularly within agricultural systems and woodland and forests, and in the non-breeding areas the combined factors of anthropogenic habitat degradation, unsustainable harvest and climate change,

Concerned that current trends in African land use, alongside those in Eurasia, are leading to considerable landscape changes that can have significant negative impacts on biodiversity, including migratory birds; this problem needs to be addressed because such biodiversity is valuable both in its own right and for the ecosystem services it provides; and that these services constitute the foundation of resilient livelihoods for rural people, who are some of the poorest in the region,

Noting that the African Eurasian Migratory Landbirds Working Group ('the Working Group'), at its second meeting in Abidjan, from 25 to 27 November 2015, agreed on a Programme of Work, as endorsed by the 1st Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council on 18-21 April 2016, where land use change was given top priority,

Welcoming the report of the workshop on *Sustainable Land Use in West Africa: National and International Policy Responses that Deliver for Migratory Birds and People (LUMB)* ('the workshop') that was held in Abuja, from 24 to 26 November 2016 and the *Abuja Declaration on Sustainable Land Use for People and Biodiversity including Migratory Birds in West Africa*,

Further welcoming the BirdLife International and Naturschutzbund Deutschland project: *African Biosphere Reserves as Pilot Sites for Monitoring and Conservation of Migratory Birds (AfriBiRds)*, funded by Germany, and the potential of the project to contribute to the development of national wild birds' indices and generation of information on migratory birds in general, as well as the BirdLife partnership project *Living on the Edge*,

Recalling the relevance of sustainable land use for CMS and its Strategic Plan 2015 – 2023, and for other CMS Family instruments such as the Agreement on the Conservation of African Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA) and its Strategic Plan ~~2009—2017~~2019 - 2027, and the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia (Raptors MOU),

Acknowledging the critical role that land plays both in driving and storing as well as sequestering greenhouse gas emissions, identified in the report *Climate Change and Land: an IPCC special report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems*, prepared by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, and consequently the importance of transitioning towards sustainable land use systems in order to realize the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Paris Agreement,

Acknowledging the importance of sustainable land use for implementing a wide range of international agreements relevant to migratory landbirds including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011 – 2020, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its Paris Agreement, the Ramsar Convention and its Strategic Plan 2016 – 2024 and the United Nations Convention on Combating Desertification (UNCCD) and its Strategic Plan Framework 2008 – 2018 - 2030,

Acknowledging the African Union Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure (VGGT), the Strategic Objective 2 of the FAO Revised Strategic Framework, the Ministerial Declaration on food security and the agricultural sectors in a changing climate made at the 29th FAO Regional Conference for Africa, on 8 April 2016, the recommendations of the participants of the FAO Regional Meeting on Agroecology in Sub-Saharan Africa, on 6 November 2015, Resolution 2/24 of the United Nations Environment Assembly, and the United Nations Environment Programme and its *Poverty and Environment Initiative* (PEI), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and its Strategic Plan 2014 – 20172018 - 2021,

Acknowledging also the West African Regional Agricultural Investment Programme (ECOWAP 25), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Convergence Plan for the Sustainable Management and Utilization of Forest Ecosystems, Nationally Determined Contributions under the UNFCCC and the African Union Agenda 2063 to support sustainable management practices and approaches that will support birds and people in West Africa,

Noting that land use change is a key driver of continuing loss of biodiversity across Africa, and that the drivers of land use change and the solutions that can achieve sustainable land use identified at the workshop are applicable to conservation in many landscapes across Africa and beyond,

Recalling that Resolution 10.27¹ of the Tenth Conference of the Parties urged Parties and invited non-Parties and other stakeholders with the CMS Secretariat to develop an Action Plan for the conservation of African-Eurasian migrant landbirds and their habitats throughout the flyway, which was adopted at the 11th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties, on the basis of which the COP can consider the need for a new instrument or using an existing instrument as a framework,

Further recalling Resolution 11.16 (Rev.COP12) ~~on~~ The Prevention of Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds, and the Guidelines to Prevent Poisoning of Migratory Birds adopted through Resolution 11.15 (Rev.COP12) Preventing Poisoning of Migratory Birds,

¹ Superseded by Resolution 11.17 (Rev.COP12) Action Plan for Migratory Land Birds in the African- Eurasian Region (AEMLAP)

~~*Taking note* of the report of the workshop to elaborate an Action Plan on African-Eurasian Migratory Landbirds, that took place in Accra between 31 August and 2 September 2012, and *thanking* the Government of Ghana for effectively hosting this workshop,~~

Acknowledging with thanks the contributions of the members of the Working Group on African-Eurasian Migratory Landbirds (the Working Group) and its coordination by BirdLife International established under the CMS Scientific Council,

~~*Further acknowledging* the essential role of the financial donors of this project, which made it possible to develop the Action Plan, in particular the Government of Switzerland and BirdLife International and its national partners,~~

Welcoming the establishment of the Migrant Landbirds Study Group (MLSG) as an international network of specialists and organizations working on research, monitoring and conservation of migratory landbird species,

Taking note of the results of its inaugural Meeting in Wilhelmshaven, Germany, 26-28 March 2014 and of the Friends of the Landbirds Action Plan (FLAP) as a forum for interested stakeholders, individuals and organizations to follow and support the CMS Action Plan and migrant landbird conservation in general, and subsequent successful development and operationalization of FLAP by BirdLife International as an online networking platform,

Further welcoming the initiative of EURING (European Union for Bird Ringing) and the Scientific Council to produce a *European Atlas of Bird Migration*, based on recoveries of ringed birds, with the support of the CMS Secretariat and the Italian Government,

Taking note of the conclusion of the Cambridge Conservation Initiative workshop, 12-13 March 2019, on *Science and Policy to Address Threats to the Afro-Palaeartic Migratory Birds: new research and future policy* that for many declining African-Eurasian landbirds the single most beneficial 'generic action' in the non-breeding grounds is likely to be retaining and enhancing tree cover in the landscape, specifically through measures in the wider landscape beyond traditional forest protection, and that international approaches to retain and enhance tree cover such as the Bonn Challenge, Trillion Trees and the Great Green Wall and local aid and development initiatives around agriculture and forestry provide potential experiments to determine, through careful monitoring, both what works in habitat creation (enabling comparison of biodiversity between sites and across years) and socio-economic benefits for local communities, so as to provide insights on beneficial interventions,

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

1. *Adopts* the *African-Eurasian Migratory Landbirds Action Plan (AEMLAP)* (the Action Plan), and its Annexes, contained in Annex II of document UNEP/CMS/COP11/Doc.23.1.4/Rev.1 and updated in document UNEP/CMS/COP13/26.1.2/Annex 3 and *urges* Parties and *encourages* non-Parties and stakeholders to implement the Action Plan as a matter of priority, especially in line with the AEMLAP Programme of Work 2016-2020;
2. *Urges* Parties and *encourages* non-Parties to address the issue of habitat loss and degradation of migratory landbird species through the development of policies that maintain, manage and restore natural and semi-natural habitats within the wider environment, including working with local communities, and in partnership with the poverty alleviation community and the agriculture and forestry sectors in Africa;

3. *Urges Parties and encourages non-Parties to work together with agencies, organizations and local communities to address harmful land use changes in the African-Eurasian flyway region, notably West Africa in the first instance, by promoting sustainable land use through practices and approaches set out in the CMS workshop of November 2016 (Abuja Declaration);*
4. *Calls on Parties and non-Parties to recognize and support joint action by relevant Conventions and international processes on sustainable land use of benefit to migratory birds that can deliver CMS objectives, especially in respect to Article II.1 and the Strategic Plan 2015-2023 and to assist delivery the Sustainable Development Goals;*
5. *Requests Parties and invites Range States to implement existing measures under CMS, AEWAs, the Raptors MOU and other relevant international environmental treaties, especially where these contribute to the objectives of the Landbirds Action Plan, in order to increase the resilience of migratory landbird populations and their potential to adapt to environmental change;*
6. *Calls on Parties to urgently address the problems of illegal and of unsustainable taking of landbirds during migration and wintering and ensure that national conservation legislation is in place and enforced and implementation measures are taken, and requests the Secretariat to liaise with the Bern Convention and other relevant fora in order to facilitate the national and international mitigation of the problem of illegal killing of birds in line with Resolution 11.16 (Rev.COP12) on The Prevention of Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds;*
7. *Urges Parties and invites non-Parties to implement the Guidelines to Prevent Poisoning of Migratory Birds as adopted through Resolution 11.15 (Rev.COP12) Preventing Poisoning of Migratory Birds; in particular those referring to agricultural pesticides which have a special significance for migratory landbirds as a major source of mortality;*
8. *Requests the Scientific Council and the Working Group, in liaison with the MLSG to promote work to address key gaps in knowledge and future research directions, in particular through the analysis of existing long-term and large-scale datasets, the European Atlas of Bird Migration, the use of new and emerging tracking technologies, field studies of migrant birds in Africa, use of survey and demographic data from the Eurasian breeding grounds and use of remote sensing earth observation data of land cover change in Africa;*
9. *Further requests the Scientific Council and the Working Group, in liaison with ~~the Friends of the Landbirds Action Plan (FLAP)~~ FLAP to promote and encourage increased public awareness of, and support for, migratory landbird conservation along the flyway among the general public and stakeholders, including about how individual birds are shared across countries and act as indicators of the overall health of the environment, of people and all biodiversity;*
10. *Instructs the Secretariat, in collaboration with Parties and relevant international organizations, subject to the availability of funds, to organize regional workshops to address specific issues and promote the implementation of the Action Plan and share best practice and lessons learnt in the effective conservation of migratory landbirds;*

11. *Calls on Parties and invites* non-Parties and stakeholders, with the support of the Secretariat, to strengthen national and local capacity for the implementation of the Action Plan including, *inter alia*, by developing partnerships with the constituencies dealing with poverty alleviation, land degradation neutrality and nature-based climate change solutions community and developing training courses, translating and disseminating examples of best practice, sharing protocols and regulations, transferring technology, and promoting the use of online tools to address specific issues that are relevant to the Action Plan;
12. *Encourages* Parties and non-Parties to maintain or develop, as necessary, national common bird monitoring schemes with a view to the establishment of national wild bird indices as indicators of sustainable land use and ecosystem health, which can eventually form the basis of a global wild bird indicator that can be utilized by the different MEAs and international processes that deal with sustainable land management;
13. *Further encourages* Parties and non-Parties to actively support and use the FLAP platform in promoting landbirds and sustainable land use and what works to deliver these, including by exchange of ideas and information, education, and awareness raising;
14. *Requests* the Working Group and the CMS Scientific Council, in liaison with the MLSG and ~~the Friends of the Landbirds Action Plan~~ FLAP, with the support of the CMS Secretariat, to support implementation of Action Plans for a first set of species including the European Roller *Coracias garrulus* adopted through Resolution 12.12 Action Plans for Birds, the European Turtle-Dove *Streptopelia turtur*, adopted by the 48th Meeting of the Standing Committee in line with Decision 12.21 Action Plans for Birds, and to continue to develop Action Plans for ~~the European Turtle-Dove *Streptopelia turtur* and declining migratory buntings, including~~ the Yellow-breasted Bunting *Emberiza aureola*;
15. *Urges* Parties and *invites* the United Nations Environment Programme and other relevant international organizations, bilateral and multilateral donors, including from the constituencies dealing with poverty alleviation, land degradation neutrality and nature-based climate solutions community, to support financially the implementation of the Action Plan including through the provision of financial assistance to developing countries for relevant capacity-building;
16. *Calls* on Parties and the Scientific Council to report progress in implementing the Action Plan, including monitoring and efficacy of measures taken, to future meetings of the Conference of the Parties COP13 in 2020.

DRAFT DECISIONS

**ACTION PLAN FOR MIGRATORY LAND BIRDS IN THE
AFRICAN-EURASIAN REGION (AEMLAP)**

NB: Proposed new text to Decisions originating from COP12 is underlined. Text to be deleted is ~~crossed-out~~.

Directed to the Secretariat

13.AA (12.22) The Secretariat shall:

- a) subject to the availability of funds, organize in the intersessional period between the ~~12~~13th and ~~13~~14th meetings of the Conference of the Parties a consultation meeting of Range States to agree on whether the Action Plan should remain as a stand-alone document or whether a new CMS instrument should be developed, or an existing CMS instrument should be used as institutional framework;
- b) in the intersessional period between the ~~12~~13th and ~~13~~14th meetings of the Conference of the Parties, promote the importance of sustainable land use for migratory birds, and the specific practices and approaches in the Abuja Declaration, with relevant UN agencies and other international institutions and to seek opportunities for collaborative action to encourage sustainable land use for migratory species and people.
- c) ~~Update the species list of the Landbirds Action Plan according to the standard taxonomic references for birds adopted at the 11th and 12th meetings of the Conference of the Parties, and changes to the IUCN Red List~~

Directed to the Scientific Council

13.BB (12.23) The Scientific Council should:

- a) continue the Working Group on African-Eurasian Migratory Landbirds until the ~~13~~14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, extending its membership to incorporate expertise from geographical regions currently absent, to facilitate and monitor the implementation of the Action Plan, and to develop indicators to assess the implementation of the Programme of Work 2016 – 2020;
- b) in the intersessional period between the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties and the ~~13~~14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, and subject to the availability of resources, work with the Migratory Landbird Study Group, relevant academic institutions, research-funders and the Working Group, in order to actively promote research that addresses key knowledge gaps relating to migratory landbird conservation in African landscapes, inter alia, to:
 - i. identify migratory pathways and strategies using tracking technologies to understand migratory connectivity so enabling field research to be targeted more effectively;

- ii. undertake detailed field studies in sub-Saharan Africa and at staging sites, in conjunction with existing data where appropriate, to better understand species distribution patterns, habitat use and foraging ecology, and in particular identify and enhance conservation of the stop-over sites immediately to the north and south of the Sahara (including through data collection and seeking linkages with relevant stakeholders);
 - iii. synthesize data from European breeding grounds to explore spatial and temporal patterns in demographic parameters in relation to migratory pathways and large-scale patterns of environmental change;
 - iv. use satellite image earth observation data to improve understanding where land cover is changing and how this impacts African-Eurasian migrant birds, and research the drivers of land use / land cover change;
 - v. seek better understanding of how to influence the economic and social policy drivers causing land use / land cover change at different scales; and
 - vi. encourage research to determine for which declining European landbird migrants declines cannot be explained by conditions in the breeding grounds.; ~~and Report to the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties on the extent to which progress has been made on these and other priorities, and potential opportunities to promote these research areas including dialogue with national and international research-funding agencies.~~
- c) consider the viability the Working Group and its Steering Group in the absence of sufficient funds required for the implementation and coordination of the Working Group's Programme of Work, as outlined in Decision 13.CC b), and to propose an alternative mechanism for the implementation of these activities, as needed;

Directed to Parties

13.CC (12.24) Parties are invited to:

- a) are urged to Consider making make voluntary financial contributions for the implementation of the Programme of Work 2016-2020 and to fund an AEMLAP coordinator; to ensure the coordination of the activities needed for the implementation of the AEMLAP and the Working Group's Programme of Work, and for the organization of at least one meeting of the Working Group, during the intersessional period between COP13 and COP14;

- b) are further urged to take note of the request of the Working Group regarding the requirement of an estimated €200,000 for the implementation of the Working Group's Programme of Work and an AEMLAP Coordinator for the intersessional period between COP13 and COP14, on the understanding that in the absence of a substantial proportion of the total amount (at least €100,000 by 30 June 2020, and an additional minimum of €50,000 each by 28 February 2021 and 28 February 2022), the Working Group could become dormant;
- c) are invited, Wwith the support of the Secretariat, to work together with relevant United Nations agencies, international organizations and other stakeholders, to organize a workshop on the integration of biodiversity requirements into the land degradation neutrality delivery at appropriate scale;
- d) particularly those that are Parties, Signatories or Range States, respectively, also to other CMS instruments – the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA), the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia (Raptors MOU) and the Central Asian Flyway Action Plan – to provide financial support as soon as possible for the timely implementation of the joint project on the assessment of the status of and the development of action plans for priority principal bird habitats along the African-Eurasian flyways;
- e) are requested to Rreport on progress in implementing the AEMLAP and integrating it into delivery against other relevant international agreements, including monitoring and efficacy of measures taken, to the ~~13~~¹⁴ meeting of the Conference of the Parties in 2023~~0~~, via their national reports, in order to achieve CMS objectives;

Directed to Parties, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations

13.DD (12.25) Parties, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations:

- a) and particularly Parties, bilateral and multilateral donors, Global Environment Facility, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, Economic Community of West African States and other relevant international organizations, in the intersessional period between the ~~12~~¹³ and the ~~13~~¹⁴ meeting of the Conference of the Parties, are requested to consider voluntarily supporting financially the implementation of the Action Plan, in particular to tackle the barriers to sustainable land use in Africa, including the priorities for West Africa recommended by the Abuja workshop, and including through the provision of technical and financial assistance to developing countries for relevant capacity building;
- b) are ~~invited~~ urged to make voluntary contributions to support the Working Group to organize at least one meeting within the intersessional period between the ~~12~~¹³ and the ~~13~~¹⁴ meeting of the Conference of the Parties to among other activities, review the implementation of the Action Plan and the Programme of Work;

- c) are requested to support and cooperate on new initiatives to capitalize on existing international approaches to retain and enhance tree cover (e.g. Bonn Challenge, Trillion Trees, Great Green Wall) and local aid and development projects around agriculture and forestry, through monitoring outcomes, enabling comparisons between sites and across years, where possible in properly designed experiments, to provide insights on interventions that can create win-win scenarios for birds as a proxy for biodiversity, for local communities in terms of socio-economic benefits and for land degradation neutrality and nature-based climate solutions, or at least can benefit birds without detriment to these other objectives.

Directed to the Working Group

- 13.EE Subject to the availability of resources as outlined in Decision 13.CC b), the Working Group, with support from the Scientific Council and the Secretariat, should update its Programme of Work by the end of 2020, including an associated budget to capture the existing financial requirements and conservation priorities and in line with Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015 – 2023.