



**CONVENTION ON
MIGRATORY
SPECIES**

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**PROMOTING CONSERVATION OF CRITICAL INTERTIDAL AND OTHER COASTAL
HABITATS FOR MIGRATORY SPECIES**

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

Recalling the fundamental principles of the Convention, expressed in Article II, to take individual or co-operative actions to avoid any migratory species becoming endangered, and to pay special attention to those migratory species, whose status is unfavourable, taking appropriate and necessary steps to conserve such species and their habitats,

Recalling also the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023, which seeks to promote strategic interventions that, *inter alia*, “reduce the direct pressures on migratory species and their habitats” with a target that “[a]ll critical habitats and sites for migratory species are identified and included in area-based conservation measures so as to maintain their quality, integrity, resilience and functioning...”,

Acknowledging the critical importance of intertidal and associated coastal and estuarine habitats for multiple migratory species, including many of those listed on Appendix I (Annex to this Resolution) and Appendix II of the Convention, including but not restricted to birds, seals, cetaceans, Dugongs, turtles and fish, and that these areas can be of importance as areas for breeding, for staging during migration, moulting, or during other non-breeding periods,

Recalling Resolution 11.25 concerning the urgent need to create ecologically representative and well-connected networks of protected areas to address the needs of migratory species as far as possible throughout their life cycles and migratory ranges,

Recalling also the Programme of Work on Migratory Birds and Flyways (Resolution 11.14), which calls for establishment of a global coastal wetland restoration and management initiative promoted through the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Ramsar Convention to strengthen efforts for managing landscapes to meet requirements of migratory birds, including through integration of these requirements into land-use policies, designation of protected trans-boundary habitat corridors and ecological networks,

Aware that other multi-lateral environmental agreements and frameworks have placed special focus on the pressing need to better conserve and sustainably manage intertidal and coastal wetlands, *inter alia*, the Ramsar Convention (through Resolutions VII.21, VIII.4, VIII.32, X.22 and XII.13); the Convention on Biological Diversity (through COP VII/5 Marine and Coastal Biological Diversity Review of the Programme of Work on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity), the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement; Memoranda of Understanding on marine turtles in the Atlantic coast of West Africa, and the Indian Ocean-South-East Asia; the East Asian - Australasian Flyway Partnership; the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network; and the Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative,

Noting the recent positive experiences of both transboundary and linked World Heritage Site (WHS) designation for intertidal wetlands *inter alia* as sites of international importance for migratory species, notably the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative linking the Wadden Sea WHS (the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark), and Banc d'Arguin WHS (Mauritania) and supporting the nomination of the Bijagos (Guinea-Bissau),

Aware of the potential for similar initiatives for other major intertidal wetlands; and *welcoming* the steps of the Yellow Sea nations towards World Heritage Site nomination of their coastal wetlands,

Noting that Ramsar Resolution XII.13 on wetlands and disaster risk reduction, referring also to CBD Decision XII/19 on ecosystem conservation and restoration, “welcome[d] initiatives that support the conservation and restoration of coastal wetlands, including options to build a ‘Caring for Coasts’ initiative as part of a global movement to restore coastal wetlands, and encourage[d] Contracting Parties to consider engaging in the development and implementation of the proposed initiative”,

Yet noting that despite such international conservation attention and recognition, and national conservation programmes, intertidal habitats in most parts of the world remain subject to extreme pressures including from land-claim for development, pollution, and inappropriate and unsustainable uses, which removes or degrades the capacity of these habitats not only to support migratory and other species but also to sustain human communities dependent on the multiple ecosystem services of functioning intertidal habitats, and to degrade their capacity for carbon sequestration (‘blue carbon’),

Conscious that the conservation and wise-use of intertidal wetlands poses particular practical problems, including the fact that they can fall within the jurisdiction of multiple national and local government agencies; that many straddle either international or internal national borders; their location at the terminus of catchments which can result in significant pollution inputs as well as significant reduction and disruption to sediment flows essential for ecosystem functioning due to water regulation structures such as upstream damming and flood defences, riverine inputs of sediment to deltas and other soft coastlines being of especially critical importance; the encroachment of invasive alien species such as shellfish, mangrove and Cordgrass (*Spartina*) species, and significant human populations resulting in intense development pressures derived from both land and sea, *but noting* good examples such as in the international Wadden Sea where such impediments have been addressed successfully,

Recalling that IUCN World Conservation Congress (WCC) 2016 Resolution 26 *Conservation of intertidal habitats and migratory waterbirds of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway, especially the Yellow Sea, in a global context*, “Requests the Director General, Commissions and Members to consider, in conjunction with the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, as appropriate, to develop national/regional management plans for migratory birds within ‘working coastal wetlands’ (*i.e.* those used for shellfisheries, aquaculture, mariculture, fish ponds and salt pans) to benefit migratory bird populations and their habitats, which support numerous other species”,

Recognizing that actions to conserve and sustainably use intertidal flats and other coastal wetlands can also contribute to achieving multiple Aichi Targets under the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, UN Sustainable Development Goals, and the Paris Agreement (UNFCCC 2016),

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

1. *Calls on* Parties, as a matter of urgency, to enhance significantly their efforts to conserve and promote the sustainable use of intertidal wetlands and other coastal habitats of importance for migratory species worldwide;

Coastal Forum

2. *Requests* the Secretariat to explore actively with other relevant multilateral environmental agreements¹, funding permitting, the possibility to set up a global 'Coastal Forum', to raise the profile of intertidal wetland and associated coastal habitats conservation and wise-use within relevant programmes of work, share experience and knowledge on solutions related to the conservation and management of these ecosystems, and to encourage stakeholders to support such an initiative;
3. *Requests* the Scientific Council, funding permitting, to seek input from the scientific subsidiary bodies of other multi-lateral environment agreements, to establish a multi-stakeholder working group, under the proposed Coastal Forum, to develop global guidance on the conservation, wise use and management of sustainable 'Working Coastal Habitats', in particular elaborating strategies and models for economic development, that maintain the ecological character and functionality of such habitats to the benefit of local communities and migratory species, and to submit this draft guidance for consideration at COP13;
4. *Urges* Parties and the Scientific Council, funding permitting, to support and engage in the establishment, under the Coastal Forum, of a "Caring for Coasts" initiative to promote restoration of coastal wetlands and other relevant habitats;

Protected areas

5. *Urges* Parties, in line with Target 10 of the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023, to give urgent protection to remaining intertidal wetlands and associated coastal habitats of international importance, especially but not exclusively, in coastal regions that are suffering high rates of intertidal wetland loss, notably in Asia, paying particular attention to those sites that form part of the critical site networks of migratory species, such as the EAAFP Flyway Site Network and the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network;
6. *Urges also* Parties with appropriately qualifying intertidal sites to consider them for nomination as World Heritage Sites as well as Ramsar Sites, including as serial transboundary sites as appropriate, and thus for waterbirds and other migratory species potentially forming ecological site networks with other key sites, in line with Resolution 11.25, and building on the approach of the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative;
7. *Encourages* Parties to ensure that intertidal protected area boundaries include the entire ecosystem of importance to migratory waterbirds and other dependent migratory species, including inland roost sites; and *urges* Parties to review and modify boundaries of relevant protected areas to this end and create new protected areas as appropriate;

Solutions to loss of intertidal flats

8. *Encourages* Parties to recognize fully the international importance of their intertidal wetlands for migratory species and ecosystem services halting further approval of intertidal flat conversion (land claim) at priority sites for migratory species and other biodiversity, irrespective of protection status, until a full assessment of the economics of ecological services and identification needs for migratory species and other biodiversity can be completed;

¹ potentially including but not restricted to the Ramsar Convention, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the CMS Family, the East Asian - Australasian Flyway Partnership, the Arctic Council's Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative, governments, the private sector, relevant international and national non-governmental organizations, experts and stakeholders

9. *Urges* Parties, in line with Target 4 of the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023, to withdraw or modify any perverse incentives to convert intertidal or other coastal wetland habitats, and additionally, to implement sustainable coastal engineered measures for climate adaptation, coastal defense and risk reduction, in line with innovative nature-based solutions including “Building with Nature” principles, that ensure maintenance and restoration of mudflats, sand banks, barrier islands and other critical habitat such as mangroves, saltmarshes and seagrass beds;
10. *Encourages* Parties to develop pilot schemes to demonstrate flyway-scale Net Positive Impact of critically important areas including offsetting approaches that involve corporations and governments;
11. *Urges* Parties and *invites* non-Party Range States to ensure that coastal sediment needs from riverine inputs are maintained through the appropriate regulation of outflows from dams or other water regulation structures through the implementation of the Ramsar Convention’s guidance on environmental flows (Resolutions VIII.1 and X.19);
12. *Encourages* Parties and *invites* Range States along the East Asian - Australasian Flyway, in line with Document WCC-2012-Res-028 on *Conservation of the East Asian - Australasian Flyway and its threatened waterbirds, with particular reference to the Yellow Sea* (International Union for Conservation of Nature, IUCN), and the West Asian-East African Flyway, in view of the importance of cooperation between countries for achieving effective management, to develop international and national action plans and coastal zone plans by 2020 to secure the future of this fundamentally important resource, and for new Parties, particularly those with important intertidal areas, to join up to this Convention;
13. *Encourages* Parties and *invites* Range States in the Americas to implement the strategies and actions to protect, maintain, manage and restore intertidal habitats as identified in the Atlantic Flyway Shorebird Initiative Business Plan, and the Pacific Americas Shorebird Conservation Strategy.

Public awareness

14. *Strongly encourages* the development of programmes and initiatives including, for example, festivals associated with the arrival of migratory species, eco-tourism initiatives including those linked to gastronomic appreciation of sustainable seafood, and encouragement of responsible public access to tidal flats that communicate the importance of intertidal wetlands and associated habitats to the public, policy-makers and other stakeholders (including relevant sectors of the business community), and *urges* the sharing of such experience, for example through any Coastal Forum established under paragraph 2 above;
15. *Requests* the Secretariat to consider the issues contained in this Resolution as a theme for a future World Migratory Bird Day and other awareness raising linked-activities and initiatives, including World Fish Migration Day.

Reporting

16. *Calls on* Parties and the Scientific Council to report progress in implementing this Resolution, including assessments of the efficacy of measures taken, to each meeting of the Conference of the Parties including through their National Reports.

Annex to Resolution 12.25

Species listed on Appendix I of the Convention that are significantly dependent on inter-tidal and other associated coastal habitats.

Order	Family	Species	CMS Region						Migratory Bird Flyway						
			Africa	Asia	South & Central America and the Caribbean	North America	Europe	Oceania	Americas Flyways	East Atlantic Flyway	Black Sea-Mediterranean Flyway	West Asian – East Africa Flyway	Central Asian Flyway	East Asia – Australasian Flyway	Pacific flyway
Sirenia	Trichechidae	Manatee <i>Trichechus manatus</i> (populations between Honduras and Panama)													
Sirenia	Trichechidae	West African Manatee <i>Trichechus senegalensis</i>													
Carnivora	Mustelidae	Marine Otter <i>Lontra felina</i>													
Carnivora	Mustelidae	Southern River Otter <i>Lontra provocax</i>													
Carnivora	Phocidae	Mediterranean Monk Seal <i>Monachus monachus</i>													
Cetacea	Delphinidae	Atlantic Humpback Dolphin <i>Sousa teuszii</i>													
Cetacea	Pontoporiidae	Franciscana <i>Pontoporia blainvillei</i>													
Anseriformes	Anatidae	Lesser White-fronted Goose <i>Anser erythropus</i>													
Anseriformes	Anatidae	Steller's Eider <i>Polysticta stelleri</i>													
Anseriformes	Anatidae	Baer's Pochard <i>Aythya baeri</i>													
Anseriformes	Anatidae	Ferruginous Duck <i>Aythya nyroca</i>													
Gruiformes	Gruidae	Red-crowned Crane <i>Grus japonensis</i>													
Gruiformes	Gruidae	Hooded Crane <i>Grus monacha</i>													

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Sphenisciformes	Spheniscidae	Humboldt Penguin <i>Spheniscus humboldti</i>													
Procellariiformes	Procellariidae	Bermuda Petrel <i>Pterodroma cahow</i>													
Procellariiformes	Procellariidae	Balearic Shearwater <i>Puffinus mauretanicus</i>													
Procellariiformes	Procellariidae	Peruvian Diving-petrel <i>Pelecanoides garnotii</i>													
Ciconiiformes	Ciconiidae	Oriental Stork <i>Ciconia boyciana</i>													
Pelecaniformes	Threskiornithidae	Black-faced Spoonbill <i>Platalea minor</i>													
Pelecaniformes	Ardeidae	Madagascar Pond-heron <i>Ardeola idae</i>													
Pelecaniformes	Ardeidae	Chinese Egret <i>Egretta eulophotes</i>													
Pelecaniformes	Pelecanidae	Dalmatian Pelican <i>Pelecanus crispus</i>													
Pelecaniformes	Pelecanidae	Great White Pelican <i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i> (only Palearctic populations)													
Charadriiformes	Scolopacidae	Bristle-thighed Curlew <i>Numenius tahitiensis</i>													
Charadriiformes	Scolopacidae	Eskimo Curlew <i>Numenius borealis</i>													
Charadriiformes	Scolopacidae	Slender-billed Curlew <i>Numenius tenuirostris</i>													
Charadriiformes	Scolopacidae	Eastern Curlew <i>Numenius madagascariensis</i>													
Charadriiformes	Scolopacidae	Great Knot <i>Calidris tenuirostris</i>													
Charadriiformes	Scolopacidae	Red Knot <i>Calidris canutus rufa</i>													

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Charadriiformes	Scolopacidae	Spoon-billed Sandpiper <i>Calidris pygmaea</i>													
Charadriiformes	Scolopacidae	Buff-breasted Sandpiper <i>Calidris subruficollis</i>													
Charadriiformes	Scolopacidae	Semipalmated Sandpiper <i>Calidris pusilla</i>													
Charadriiformes	Scolopacidae	Spotted Greenshank <i>Tringa guttifer</i>													
Charadriiformes	Laridae	Saunders's Gull <i>Saundersilarus saundersi</i>													
Charadriiformes	Laridae	Relict Gull <i>Larus relictus</i>													
Charadriiformes	Laridae	White-eyed Gull <i>Larus leucophthalmus</i>													
Charadriiformes	Laridae	Audouin's Gull <i>Larus audouinii</i>													
Charadriiformes	Laridae	Olrog's Gull <i>Larus atlanticus</i>													
Charadriiformes	Laridae	Peruvian Tern <i>Sternula lorata</i>													
Charadriiformes	Laridae	Chinese Crested Tern <i>Thalasseus bernsteini</i>													
Charadriiformes	Alcidae	Japanese Murrelet <i>Synthliboramphus wumizusume</i>													
Accipitriformes	Accipitridae	White-tailed Sea-eagle <i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>													
Accipitriformes	Accipitridae	Steller's Sea-eagle <i>Haliaeetus pelagicus</i>													
Falconiformes	Falconidae	Saker Falcon <i>Falco cherrug</i> (except Mongolian populations)													

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Passeriformes	Acrocephalidae	Basra Reed Warbler <i>Acrocephalus griseldis</i>													
Passeriformes	Acrocephalidae	Aquatic Warbler <i>Acrocephalus paludicola</i>													
Passeriformes	Parulidae	Kirtland's Warbler <i>Dendroica kirtlandii</i>													
Testudinata	Cheloniidae	Green Turtle <i>Chelonia mydas</i>													
Testudinata	Cheloniidae	Loggerhead Turtle <i>Caretta caretta</i>													
Testudinata	Cheloniidae	Hawksbill Turtle <i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i>													
Testudinata	Cheloniidae	Kemp's Ridley <i>Lepidochelys kempii</i>													
Testudinata	Cheloniidae	Olive Ridley <i>Lepidochelys olivacea</i>													
Testudinata	Dermochelyidae	Leatherback <i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>													
Lamniformes	Lamnidae	Great White Shark <i>Carcharodon carcharias</i>													
Pristiformes	Pristidae	Narrow Sawfish <i>Anoxypristis cuspidata</i>													
Pristiformes	Pristidae	Dwarf Sawfish <i>Pristis clavata</i>													
Pristiformes	Pristidae	Smalltooth Sawfish <i>Pristis pectinata</i>													
Pristiformes	Pristidae	Green Sawfish <i>Pristis zijsron</i>													
Pristiformes	Pristidae	Largetooth Sawfish <i>Pristis pristis</i>													
Myliobatiformes	Myliobatidae	Reef Manta Ray <i>Manta alfredi</i>													

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Myliobatiformes	Myliobatidae	Longhorned Pygmy Devil Ray <i>Mobula eregoodootenkee</i>													
Myliobatiformes	Myliobatidae	Shortfin Devil Ray <i>Mobula kuhlii</i>													
Myliobatiformes	Myliobatidae	Smoothtail Mobula <i>Mobula munkiana</i>													
Acipenseriformes	Acipenseridae	Atlantic Sturgeon <i>Acipenser sturio</i>													