



CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES

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GUIDANCE ON GLOBAL FLYWAY CONSERVATION AND OPTIONS FOR POLICY ARRANGEMENTS

Adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its Tenth Meeting
(Bergen, 20-25 November 2011)

Recalling Resolution 9.2, which set up a global open-ended Working Group on Flyways within the framework of the Scientific Council to act as a think-tank on migratory bird flyways and frameworks;

Recalling further that the 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 and contributing to work on the Future Shape of CMS;

Noting with appreciation the broad participation and work undertaken by the Scientific Council, the Secretariats of the Ramsar Convention and African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA), international NGOs (BirdLife International, Wetlands International), the Americas Waterbird Conservation Council, the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network, the Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Initiative, the East Asian–Australasian Flyway Partnership, the Federation of Associations for Hunting & Conservation of the EU and international experts as well as a wider consultative group contributing to the work of the Working Group;

Further noting with satisfaction that in accordance with the terms of reference of the Working Group, three global reviews have been produced: 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 Working Group on Flyways 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 Working Group members towards the preparation and organization of the meeting and the drafting of reports;

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

Acknowledging other contributing parallel processes undertaken within CMS such as the Working Group on the Future Shape of CMS and *recalling* that, according to Resolution

9.2, the conclusion of instruments currently under development and the elaboration of new instruments under the aegis of CMS need to be linked to the outcome of the Future Shape process;

Recognizing specific threats that are of particular significance to migratory birds along flyways as identified in document UNEP/CMS/ScC17/Inf.4.3b (CMS Review 3), which may include: 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 (as recognized in Resolution 7.5); collisions with power lines and electrocutions (as recognized in Resolutions 7.4 and 10.11); illegal and/or unsustainable trapping and shooting; overfishing and the bycatch of seabirds (as recognized in Resolutions 6.2, 7.2, 8.14, 9.18 and 10.14); lead shot and other poisoning (as recognized in Resolution 10.26); invasive alien species and avian influenza and other disease (as recognized in Resolutions 8.27, 9.8 and 10.22); marine debris (as recognized in Resolution 10.4) and other relevant resolutions;

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

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 UNEP/CMS/Resolution 10.3;

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 contributions of the UNEP-GEF 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 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 AEW 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;

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;

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

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;

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

1. *Requests* the Secretariat, Parties and all others involved with the CMS, to seek actively closer cooperation among those instruments, initiatives and partnerships within and outside the UN 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;
2. *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, Multilateral Environmental Agreements, 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;
3. *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), 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;
4. *Invites* Parties to 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);
5. *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;

6. *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;
7. *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 Critical Site Network Tool for the African-Eurasian region;
8. *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;
9. *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;
10. *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, 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;
11. *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;
12. *Calls upon* the Secretariat, in collaboration with Parties and relevant international organizations (subject to the availability of funds) to organize regional workshops aimed at sharing best practice and lessons learnt, and to promote flyway conservation and policy options, including for American Flyways, the East-Asian-Australasian Flyway, the Central Asian Flyway, seabird flyways and birds of prey of the Americas and land birds in the African-Eurasian region;
13. *Requests* Parties, the GEF, UN 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;
14. *Proposes* the continuation of the open-ended Flyways Working Group to review relevant scientific and technical issues, international initiatives and processes, and to provide

guidance and input to the conservation and management of flyways at global and flyway level during the intersessional period until COP11, as a basis for CMS policy on flyways, and *requests* Parties to provide the resources to ensure the timely implementation of this work;

15. *Requests* the Scientific Council to produce guidelines and/or case studies on mechanisms to enhance the conservation of migratory birds through site networks;

16. *Requests* Parties and *invites* Range States and all others involved with the CMS to support implementation of the following priorities:

16.1. African-Eurasian Flyway:

16.1.1. Explore the possibilities for AEWA to play the role of a framework for the African Eurasian Region and stress the need to strengthen the implementation of AEWA on the ground, building on the set of guidelines, Action Plans and other tools developed within the Agreement, and in the context of the development of the CMS Strategic Plan 2015-2023;

16.1.2. Make rapid progress on the Action Plan already included in the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia as a priority;

16.1.3. Ensure the continued activity of the single species MoUs in the region; and

16.1.4. Develop provisions for long-distance migrant land birds, especially those that spend the non-breeding season in Sub-Saharan Africa, starting with the development of an Action Plan;

16.2. American Flyways:

16.2.1. Work in close partnership with existing flyway organizations and initiatives in the Americas, and in particular the Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Initiative (WHMSI), 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;

16.2.2. Organize a workshop (resources permitting) to consider specific needs and possible mechanisms, involving all the appropriate CMS Parties and other interested countries and organisations in the region;

16.2.3. Consider the potential for an instrument covering migrants within the Neo-tropics, in particular austral migrants; and

16.2.4. Consider the potential for an instrument covering western hemisphere birds of prey;

16.3. Central Asian Flyway:

16.3.1. Build on existing achievements, in particular the Central Asian Flyway Action Plan for waterbirds and the recently approved Western/Central Asian Site Network for the Siberian Crane and Other Migratory Waterbirds, and

consider the potential to align with existing agreements, building on earlier discussions and considering synergies with AEWA in particular; and

16.3.2. Consider the potential for new Action Plans, in order to address the key conservation priorities for passerines, and the organization of a regional-level workshop (resources permitting);

16.4. East Asian - Australasian Flyway:

16.4.1. Build on existing achievements of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) for migratory waterbirds; and further suggest the development of an overarching framework agreement as an essential step in the coordination of conservation action for all migratory birds;

16.4.2. Develop Action Plans to address particular conservation issues in the region, in relation to migratory bird species using coastal and other threatened habitats such as forest areas and build on the effective groundwork already established by others; and

16.4.3. Organize a workshop (resources permitting) to consider specific needs and possible mechanisms to prioritize conservation efforts, involving all the appropriate CMS Parties and other interested countries and organizations in the region;

16.5. Pacific Flyway:

16.5.1. Organize a workshop (resources permitting) to consider specific needs and possible mechanisms to prioritize conservation efforts, involving all the appropriate CMS Parties and other interested countries and organizations in the region;

16.6. Seabird Flyways:

16.6.1. Support the enhanced implementation of the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels and the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement, and the development, strengthening and implementation of bycatch mitigation and monitoring measures by relevant Regional Fisheries Management Organizations;

16.6.2. Request the Secretariat to organize an initial workshop (resources permitting) to scope out options and to define the conservation needs of seabirds not covered under the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels or the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement; and

16.6.3. Promote actions to conserve Antarctic seabirds, including through the Antarctic Treaty system and other relevant agreements; and

17. *Calls upon* Parties to report progress on implementation of this Resolution through their national reports to the Conference of the Parties.