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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.COP14) *Action Plan for Migratory Landbirds in the African-Eurasian Region (AEMLAP)* and related Decisions 14.130–14.133.

It proposes draft amendments to Resolution 11.17 (Rev.COP14), the deletion of Decisions 14.130–14.133 and the adoption of new draft Decisions.

The amendments and draft Decisions proposed in this document contribute specifically to achieving Targets 1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 5.3, 6.1 and 6.4 of the Samarkand Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2024–2032.

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

Background

1. The African-Eurasian Migratory Landbirds Action Plan (AEMLAP) is aimed at improving the conservation status of migratory landbird species in the African-Eurasian region through international coordination of action for these species, and by catalysing action at the national level.

2. The Conference of the Parties, at its 14th meeting, updated Resolution 11.17 (Rev.COP14) *Action Plan for Migratory Landbirds in the African-Eurasian Region (AEMLAP)*, through which the Action Plan and its Annexes were adopted. Through this Resolution, the COP acknowledged the work of the Swiss Ornithological Institute (SOI) (Vogelwarte Sempach, Switzerland) as Coordinator of the African-Eurasian Migratory Landbirds Action Plan Working Group (AEML WG) and requested the Scientific Council to work with the AEML WG in analysing long-term data sets to promote research and identify key gaps relating to migratory landbird conservation across Eurasian and African landscapes.

3. COP14 also adopted Decisions 14.130–14.133 *Action Plan for Migratory Landbirds in the African-Eurasian Region (AEMLAP)*, which read as follows:

14.130 Directed to Parties:

a) are urged to support 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 the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP14) and COP15;

b) particularly those that are also Parties or Signatories to, or Range States of species covered by, the two other relevant CMS instruments – the Agreement on the Conservation of African Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA) and the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia (Raptors MOU) – are encouraged to support, as soon as possible, 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;

c) are encouraged to promote the use of satellite imagery in conjunction with on the ground habitat and bird monitoring, to better understand the impacts of land cover and land use change on African-Eurasian migrant birds, and the drivers of those impacts and avoid land use and land use change harmful to migratory birds;

d) are encouraged to take note of relevant projects such as the Eurasian African Bird Migration Atlas and the African Bird Atlas, and incorporate their findings into their species conservation and restoration policies for migratory landbirds;

e) are encouraged to take note of the recent developments towards defining a new institutional framework under the CMS for the Central Asian Flyway (CAF), and ensure synergies are sought across Range States of both AEMLAP and CAF;

f) are encouraged to assess the status, and contribute towards the development of action plans for priority bird species using the African-Eurasian flyways;

g) are requested to 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 COP15, via their National Reports, in order to achieve CMS objectives;

h) are encouraged to significantly increase the area under biodiversity/migratory species friendly practices in agriculture and forestry; and

i) are encouraged to promote nesting site detection in relevant agricultural areas to avoid their destruction and degradation.

14.131 Directed to Parties, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations

Parties, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations:

a) and particularly Parties as well as bilateral and multilateral donors, the Global Environment Facility, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the Economic Community of West African States and other relevant international organizations, in the intersessional period between COP14 and COP15, are urged to engage in the implementation of the Programme of Work of the AEML WG, namely by facilitating the exchange of information on key species and habitats, in particular to tackle the barriers to sustainable land use and conservation of habitats in Africa, including the priorities for West Africa and Central Asia, and through the provision of technical assistance to developing countries for relevant capacity-building;

b) are urged to support and cooperate 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 socioeconomic benefits, and for land degradation neutrality and nature-based solutions, or that, at the least, can benefit birds without detriment to these other objectives; and

c) are invited to promote the enrichment of vegetation cover (including, but not limited to trees) through the use of native species and promotion of ecologically sustainable land management practices and wise use of water.

14.132 Directed to the Scientific Council

The Scientific Council is requested, subject to the availability of resources, to:

a) continue the Working Group on African-Eurasian Migratory Landbirds until COP15, extending its membership and incorporating expertise from geographical regions currently absent, to facilitate and monitor the implementation of the Action Plan, developing indicators to assess the implementation of the Programme of Work 2021-2026;

b) work with the Migratory Landbird Study Group, relevant academic institutions, research-funders and the Working Group, to actively promote research that addresses key knowledge gaps relating to migratory landbird conservation in Eurasian landscapes, as outlined in paragraph 9 of Resolution 11.17 (Rev.COP14) Action Plan for Migratory Landbirds in the African-Eurasian Region (AEMLAP); and

c) provide support to the Working Group, its Steering Group and Coordination Unit for the implementation of the Working Group Programme of Work.

14.133 Directed to the Secretariat

The Secretariat shall, subject to the availability of resources:

a) promote the importance of sustainable land use for migratory birds, and the specific practices and approaches outlined in the Programme of Work of the Working Group of the AEMLAP, together with relevant UN agencies and other international institutions, and seek opportunities for collaborative action to encourage sustainable land use for migratory species and people;

b) work together with relevant United Nations agencies, international organizations and other stakeholders to organize a workshop on the integration of biodiversity requirements into land degradation neutrality delivery at appropriate scale;

c) support discussion within the Preventing Poisoning Working Group concerning possible action to minimize the impact of agricultural pesticides on landbirds in line with the African-Eurasian Migratory Landbirds Action Plan, as well as the delivery of the pesticide mandate under Resolution 11.15 (Rev.COP14); and

d) organize, in the intersessional period between the 14th and 15th meetings of the Conference of the Parties, a consultation meeting of Range States to discuss and agree possible options to improve implementation of the AEMLAP.

Activities to implement Resolution 11.17 (Rev.COP14) and Decisions 14.130–14.133

4. The Secretariat organized meetings of the Steering Group of the AEMLAP WG (AEML SG) to drive the update of its Programme of Work (POW) and share information among WG members. The Secretariat also held regular meetings with the Coordination Unit, established by the Swiss Ornithological Society (SOI) in 2022.

5. The Coordination Unit for the AEML WG continued to play a key role in delivering the AEML WG's POW, and was in regular communication with both the CMS Avian Team and the WG's members and stakeholders. The Secretariat also actively cooperated with CMS Parties and stakeholders to implement the activities covered by this Action Plan.

6. During this intersessional period, the Secretariat facilitated a total of three AEML SG meetings: two in 2024 (May and November) and one in June 2025. The key focus of these meetings was to a) analyse the implementation of the AEML WG's POW for the period 2021-2026, and b) produce an updated version that would align with the Samarkand Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2024–2032. Meetings were well attended, and at the time of writing this document, comments were being received and compiled by the Secretariat.

7. To support the implementation of Decision 14.133, the Secretariat and SOI held a number of bilateral meetings with the Secretariat of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). These meetings discussed the possibility of developing a joint programme of work on habitats, sustainable land use, and the use of AEMLAP species as indicators. In addition, synergies between CMS and UNCCD were identified, particularly in relation to both the AEML WG's Programme of Work and the UNCCD Land Degradation Neutrality Targets. In June 2024, the two Secretariats agreed to jointly organize a workshop entitled 'Achieving land degradation neutrality targets through habitat restoration for migratory landbirds', to be held ideally in Africa. In June 2024, a voluntary contribution provided by the Government of Switzerland was received for this purpose but more resources are needed to achieve this activity.

8. As a follow-up, the Secretariat prepared a concept note and reached out to AEML WG members and stakeholders to seek their support in hosting this workshop. While it received some positive responses, the workshop is not expected to take place until the first half of 2026.

9. Members of the AEML WG promoted the AEMLAP at various conferences and events, such as UNCCD COP16, where a side event was jointly organized between the Secretariats of UNCCD and CMS under the title 'Achieving land neutrality targets through habitat restoration for migratory landbirds' on 4 December 2024.

10. Members of the AEML WG, in coordination with the Secretariat, supported the work delivered by the 'Bustards Without Borders' (BWB) group. This is a consortium of individuals, organizations and other stakeholders with experience in sustainable bustard conservation. The group has compiled a comprehensive Multi-species Action Plan for Bustards to guide the conservation actions for all 26 bustard species worldwide in years to come. Further information on BWB and the Action Plan is available on the BWB webpage and in documents UNEP/CMS/COP15/Doc.26.4.1 and UNEP/CMS/COP15/Doc.26.4.2.

11. With regards to Decision 14.133 (c), in 2024 and 2025 the Secretariat and AEML SG decided to propose amendments to Resolution 11.15 (Rev.COP14), as the Preventing Poisoning Working Group remained inactive in the intersessional period and no funds for its coordination could be raised (see UNEP/CMS/COP15/Doc.26.2).

12. The coordination unit of the AEML WG also supported the following projects:

    a) The African Bird Atlas Project (ABAP), a continent-wide citizen science bird monitoring programme that provides insights into the distribution of African birds and their conservation status. New national projects were launched in Senegal and the Côte d'Ivoire through workshops with members of the AEML WG, expanding the scope of the project.

    b) The EUFLYNET COST Action initiative, which aims to understand the dynamics of migratory landbird populations, with support from members of the AEMLAP WG in developing key instruments for their protection.

Single-species Action Plans developed in conjunction with AEMLAP

13. Activities relating to the yellow-breasted bunting (*Emberiza aureola*), the European turtle dove (*Streptopelia turtur*) and the European roller (*Coracias garrulus*) are reported in Document UNEP/CMS/COP15/Doc.26.4.1 *Action Plans for Birds*.

Challenges in the implementation of AEMLAP and the AEML WG POW

14. Although the Steering Group for the AEML WG is very active, the ambition, geographical scope and large number of activities to be delivered means the POW continues to require additional resources to be fully implemented and monitored. To date, the coordination of the AEML SG is done voluntarily by SOI, as there have been no financial resources provided to secure a full-time coordinator role for this instrument.

15. Despite the very fruitful cooperation and interest in developing joint initiatives across both CMS and UNCCD Secretariats, the joint workshop planned for 2026 has not yet been confirmed due to insufficient financial support.

Discussion and analysis

16. The proposed Decisions call for Parties to support concrete collaborative action among relevant UN agencies, in particular a renewed proposal for a workshop on the integration of biodiversity requirements into land degradation neutrality delivery (Decision 14.DD b)).

17. Furthermore, the proposed Decisions highlight the need for technological awareness, further advancing the use of modern technologies such as satellite imaging, and making active use of existing programmes such as the above-mentioned bird monitoring tools,

for prioritizing and implementing actions for species and habitats across the AEMLAP range.

Recommended actions

18. The Conference of the Parties is recommended to:

a) adopt the draft amendments to Resolution 11.17 (Rev.COP14) as contained in Annex 1 of this document;

b) adopt the draft Decisions as contained in Annex 2 of this document;

c) delete Decisions 14.130–14.133.

ANNEX 1

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO RESOLUTION 11.17 (Rev.COP14)

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 2 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) related to the effective restoration of degraded areas, 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, woodland and forests, and the combined factors of anthropogenic habitat degradation, unsustainable harvest and climate change are driving declines in the non-breeding areas,

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 to migratory birds; and this problem needs to be addressed because such biodiversity is valuable both in its own right and for the ecosystem services it provides; which constitute the foundation of resilient livelihoods for rural people,

Noting that an updated Programme of Work for 2026-~~2021~~2032 for the Working Group was coordinated by the AEML Steering Group ~~and the Secretariat~~, ~~supported by~~ with support from the Secretariat and the Coordination Unit established by the Swiss Ornithological Institute (SOI), ~~as the Coordination Unit, and the Secretariat~~ and approved by the Working Group in November 2025,

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 completion of 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*,

Further welcoming the work of BirdLife International partners funded by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds to set up and operate national Common Bird Monitoring projects (derived from and compatible with the Pan-European Common Bird Monitoring Scheme established in 2002 and supported by the European Union and RSPB) in Uganda and

Botswana using local volunteer citizen scientists, that have successfully been able to produce scientifically robust wild bird indicators and additional environmental information for their nations,

Recalling the relevance of sustainable land use for CMS and ~~its~~ the Samarkand Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 20~~15~~24 – 20~~23~~32, and for other CMS Family instruments such as the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA) and its Strategic Plan 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 ~~Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (~~ KMGBF~~)~~, the 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 Framework 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~~ Programme Priority Area on a Better Environment of the ~~Revised~~ FAO Strategic Framework 2022 - 2031, the Ministerial Declarations of the FAO Regional Conferences for Africa, 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 20~~18~~22 - 20~~21~~25,

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 10.27[1] 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,

[1] The resolution was repealed and consolidated into Resolution 11.17, which was amended at COP12, COP13 and COP14.

Further recalling Resolution 11.16 (Rev.COP14) *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.COP14) *Preventing Poisoning of Migratory Birds*,

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,

Acknowledging with thanks the contributions of the members of the Working Group established under the CMS Scientific Council and its coordination by BirdLife International from 2015 to 2017,

Further acknowledging with thanks the coordination of the Working Group by the Swiss Ornithological Institute (SOI – Vogelwarte Sempach) from 2022,

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 publication of the *Eurasian African Bird Migration Atlas*, based on recoveries of ringed birds and tracking studies by the European Union for Bird Ringing (EURING), 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-Palaearctic 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 socioeconomic benefits for local communities, so as to provide insights on beneficial interventions, and

Further noting the conclusion of the PAOC symposium and round table, 'Integrating science, policy and sustainable development to address African-Eurasian migrant landbird declines: African perspectives on a flyway-wide issue', that there are many opportunities for positive outcomes for migratory landbirds, wider biodiversity and local communities if biodiversity and human development-focused communities work together on ecosystem restoration based approaches to sustainable development, including on selection of tree species to maximize benefits to both local communities and biodiversity, framing interventions to deliver on both socioeconomic and biodiversity indicators, and using monitoring of outcomes of interventions in the landscape to build a better understanding of effectiveness of different approaches,

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 the Annex to this Resolution and *urges* Parties and *encourages* non-Parties and stakeholders to implement the Action Plan as a matter of priority, especially in line with the Working Group's Programme of Work 202~~1~~26 - 202~~6~~32;

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 avoid harmful land use and land use changes harmful to biodiversity 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 CMS Samarkand Strategic Plan for Migratory Species (SPMS), and assist delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals;

5. *Requests* Parties and *invites* Range States to implement existing measures under CMS, AEWA, 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 continue to urgently address the problems of illegal and of unsustainable killing, taking and trade[2] 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 continue 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, taking and trade of birds in line with Resolution 11.16 (Rev.COP14) *The Prevention of Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds;*

7. *Further calls on* Parties to urgently take practical measures to address threats to migratory bustards, a highly threatened and declining group of migratory landbird species under particular pressure from illegal killing, unsustainable taking, collision with energy infrastructure and habitat loss and degradation including as outlined in relevant Species Action Plans;

8. *Urges* Parties and *invites* non-Parties to implement the *Guidelines to Prevent Poisoning of Migratory Birds* as adopted through Resolution 11.15 (Rev.COP14) *Preventing*

[2] There are regional differences in the agreed terminology, in English, for the problem of the illegal removal of birds from the wild; in Europe and the Mediterranean, the agreed term is "illegal killing and taking" to avoid confusion with legitimate hunting practices whereas in Asia-Australasia, the agreed term is "illegal hunting and taking" due to cultural sensitivities.

Poisoning of Migratory Birds; in particular those referring to agricultural pesticides and veterinary pharmaceutical treatments which have a special significance for migratory landbirds as a major source of mortality;

9. *Requests* the Scientific Council, subject to the availability of resources, in partnership with the Working Group, in liaison with the MLSG, relevant academic institutions and research-funders, to evaluate: existing long-term and large-scale datasets, (such as the European Atlas of Bird Migration, the African Bird Atlas Project (ABAP) and the Eurasian African Bird Migration Atlas); the use of new and emerging tracking technologies, field studies of migrant birds in Africa, Europe and Asia; the use of survey and demographic data from the Eurasian breeding grounds and the use of remote sensing earth observation data of land cover change in Africa and Asia, and use the outcomes of this evaluation to actively promote research that addresses key knowledge gaps relating to migratory landbird conservation in African-Eurasian region, inter alia, to:

   a) Using multi-species analyses and tracking technologies to identify migratory pathways and strategies, and better understand movement patterns, geographic areas of particular importance to multiple landbird species and migratory connectivity, enabling field research, monitoring and conservation action to be targeted more effectively;

   b) undertaking detailed field studies in sub-Saharan Africa and at staging sites, using 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);

   c) synthesizing data from Eurasian breeding grounds to explore spatial and temporal patterns in demographic parameters in relation to migratory pathways and large-scale patterns of environmental change;

   d) using satellite image Earth observation data and, where possible, in conjunction with on the ground habitat and bird monitoring data (including through synergies with and expansion of common bird monitoring schemes) to improve understanding of where land cover is changing and how this impacts African-Eurasian migrant birds, and research the drivers of land use/land cover change;

   e) seeking better understanding of how to influence the economic and social policy drivers causing land use/land cover change at different scales;

   f) encouraging research to determine which traits of migratory populations are associated with population declines and for which declining African-Eurasian migrant landbird populations declines cannot be explained by conditions in the breeding grounds;

   g) working in collaboration with relevant initiatives to monitor the effect on migrant landbirds of land-use and habitat-based interventions including those with a poverty alleviation or climate change focus and to mainstream knowledge of tree species of particular importance for migrant landbirds into planning processes of tree planting initiatives; and

   h) encouraging detection of nesting sites to avoid their destruction by agricultural practices;

10. *Further requests* the Scientific Council and the Working Group, subject to the availability of resources, in liaison with 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;

11. *Further requests* the Scientific Council and the Working Group, subject to the availability of resources, in liaison with FLAP, to disseminate evidence and information to decision makers and those formulating prescriptions for action;

12. *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;

13. *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 solutions 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;

14. *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 for example, in the context of development of a 'Landbird Monitoring Programme for the East Atlantic Flyway', building on the experiences gained from the successful operation of Common Bird Monitoring projects in Africa and the Pan-European Common Bird Monitoring Scheme in Europe, involving the establishment of a set of terrestrial bird monitoring sites across several countries, which can eventually form the basis of a global wild bird indicator that can be utilized by the different multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and international processes that deal with sustainable land management;

15. *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;

16. *Requests* the Working Group and the CMS Scientific Council, subject to the availability of resources in liaison with the MLSG and FLAP, with the support of the CMS Secretariat, to support implementation of Action Plans for a set of species including the European Roller *(Coracias garrulus)* originally 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 the Yellow-breasted Bunting (*Emberiza aureola*), ~~once~~ endorsed in 2023; and to continue to develop Action Plans for declining migratory landbirds, particularly buntings;

17. *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, to support financially the implementation of the Action Plan including through the provision of financial assistance to developing countries for relevant capacity-building; and

18. *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.

ANNEX 2

DRAFT DECISIONS

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

15.AA ***Directed to Parties***

Parties are encouraged to:

a) engage in the design, implementation and monitoring of the AEMLAP Programme of Work, promoting the use of satellite imagery in conjunction with ground habitat and bird monitoring.

b) ensure synergies are sought across Range States of both AEMLAP and the Initiative for the Central Asian Flyway (CAF);

15.BB ***Directed to Parties, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations***

Parties, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations:

a) are requested to engage in the implementation of the Programme of Work of the AEML WG, namely by facilitating the exchange of information on key species and habitats, in particular to tackle the barriers to sustainable land use and conservation of habitats in Africa, including the priorities for West Africa and Central Asia, and through the provision of technical assistance to developing countries for relevant capacity-building;

b) are requested to support and cooperate 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 socioeconomic benefits, and for land degradation neutrality and nature-based climate solutions, or that, at the least, can benefit birds without detriment to these other objectives;

c) are invited to promote the enrichment of vegetation cover (including but not limited to trees) through the use of native species and promotion of ecologically sustainable land management practices and wise use of water.

15.CC ***Directed to the Scientific Council***

The Scientific Council is requested, subject to the availability of resources, to:

a) continue the Working Group on African-Eurasian Migratory Landbirds until COP16, extending its membership and incorporating expertise from regions currently absent, to facilitate and monitor the implementation of the Action Plan, developing indicators to assess the implementation of the Programme of Work 2026-2032;

b) provide support to the Working Group, its Steering Group and Coordination Unit for the implementation of the Working Group Programme of Work.

15.DD ***Directed to the Secretariat***

The Secretariat shall, subject to the availability of resources:

a) support the Working Group to organize at least one meeting within the intersessional period between COP15 and COP16 to, among other activities, review the implementation of the Action Plan and the Programme of Work;

b) organize a workshop on the integration of biodiversity requirements into land degradation neutrality delivery at appropriate scale in cooperation with UNCCD;