UN environment programme

Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

CMS

FIFTH MEETING OF THE FLYWAYS WORKING GROUP

(Online, 27 May 2025)

UNEP/CMS/FWG5/Doc.3

DRAFT FLYWAYS WORKING GROUP POW FOR 2026-2029

(Prepared by the FWG, New POW, Gaps and Priorities Sub-Group)

Summary:

This document presents a draft new Flyways Programme of Work (POW) for 2026-2029. It was developed by the thematic sub-group of the CMS Working Group on Flyways.

DRAFT FLYWAYS WORKING GROUP POW FOR 2026-2029

1. The Flyways Working Group (FWG) established a sub-group on *POW, Gaps and Priorities,* tasked to prepare a new draft Programme of Work for the FWG to support the implementation of Decisions 14.137 and 14.140 addressing the revision of the Flyways Programme of Work 2014-2023. The sub-group had presented a first draft to the fourth meeting of the FWG (FWG4, held on 18 February 2025, online) and received comments from participants.

2. Based on the comments and guidance received (see section 4. of the FWG4 meeting report), the FWG's *POW, Gaps and Priorities sub-group* prepared a revised draft POW, contained in the Annex of the present document. This version results from the electronic consultations of the FWG members after the FWG4 meeting, and another meeting of the sub-group held on 30 April 2025.

3. The FWG5 meeting may consider and propose next steps and timeline for producing the final version, and the recommended actions to the ScC-SC8 and COP15 meetings.

Recommended actions:

4. The Flyways Working Group is recommended to:

   a) review the revised draft POW contained in the Annex of this document;

   b) provide guidance on the next steps and timeline for the finalization of the POW and its potential inclusion into the ScC-SC8 and COP15 meeting document for consideration by and recommendations to these meetings, as appropriate.

ANNEX

Overarching Goal: ***Triennium 2026 - 2029***	**The goal of the Flyways Working Group is to increase recognition of flyways, reduce the severity of threats and identify essential activities that will contribute towards recovering populations of migratory birds by 2029. The Flyways Working Group will accomplish this goal by building synergies across CMS Family Instruments and other flyway frameworks to implement its Programme of Work. Accomplishing this goal will contribute to improving the conservation status of migratory species by raising the profile of flyways, mitigating threatening processes and demonstrating the importance of conserving migratory birds and their habitats.**				
Theme:	*Specific area of focus*				
Activity	**Deliverables** Output by stipulated timeframe	**Mandate** Res.XX Decision XX MOU Strategic Plan SSAPs/CAs	**Timeframe** Triennium: 2026-2029	**Responsible entity and supporting partners** Secretariat Party Non-Party Flyways WG Civil society Experts Business/Industry groups	**Funding needs** Core In-kind Subject to external resources
Theme 1:	*Addressing causes of additional mortality to migratory birds across all flyways*				
1.1 Support efforts to minimise the illegal taking of migratory birds	*Cooperate with established CMS task forces tackling illegal take of birds to help implement their work programmes, including through facilitating synergies between them and with other processes, for example by sharing knowledge between regions on effective actions to mitigate illegal and unregulated take.*	*Res. 11.16 (Rev.COP14) The prevention of illegal killing, taking and trade of migratory birds* *SPMS Target 3.1*	*2026 - 2029*	*Flyways WG, relevant Parties (lead)* *Non-Party, and Secretariat (supporting)*	*Subject to external resources*

	By ScC-SC10, provide advice to Scientific Council on additional priority flyways and regions to consider supporting targeted action to minimise illegal and unregulated taking of migratory birds.				
1.2 Support the Energy Task Force to reduce direct mortality and other impacts on migratory birds	*Become member/observer and participate in meetings of the Energy Task Force including to facilitate synergies with other processes and share relevant knowledge from regions not yet active in the Energy Task Force on effective actions to minimise impacts of energy infrastructure on migratory birds.* *Support implementation of the Energy Task Force's programme of work across all flyways.* *Contribute, especially in areas not covered by current Energy Task Force members, to dissemination of tools and guidance for assessing and mitigating the impacts of renewable energy and power line developments on migratory birds, including standardized approaches for post-construction monitoring of renewable energy projects, a review of existing tools, such as AVISTEP and best practice cumulative impact assessment frameworks.*	*Res 11.27 (Rev.COP13) Renewable Energy and Migratory Species* *SPMS Target 3.2*	*2026 - 2029*	*Flyways WG, relevant Parties, Birdlife International (lead)* *Non-Party, industry groups and Secretariat (supporting)*	*Subject to external resources*

1.3 Support the CMS Scientific Council Working Group on Migratory Species and Health and the Scientific Task Force on Avian Influenza and Wildlife	*Participate in meetings of the CMS Scientific Council Working Group on Migratory Species and Health and the Scientific Task Force on Avian Influenza and Wildlife.* *Provide support for implementation of the work programmes, including commissioning studies or organizing flyway or regional workshops, as appropriate.* *Disseminate the Migratory Species and Health Review and encourage the implementation of its key recommendations within flyways.* *Disseminate statements from the Scientific Task Force on Avian Influenza and Wildlife and encourage implementation of key recommendations within flyways.*	*Res 14.18 Avian influenza* *Res 12.6 (Rev.COP14) Wildlife health and migratory species* *SPMS Target 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5*	*2026 - 2029*	*Flyways WG (lead)* *Secretariat (supporting)*	*In-kind* *Subject to external resources*
1.4 Support the operationalisation of the CMS Lead Task Force and review the remit of the Preventing Poisoning of Migratory Birds Working Group with a view to potential reallocation of the work	*Support implementation of the CMS Preventing Poisoning Guidelines across all flyways.* *Support a review of the mandate of the CMS Preventing Poisoning of Migratory Birds Working Group (PPWG) and contribute to recommendations to the Scientific Council on how to take forward the work that has been mandated to do, including potentially:- recommending*	*Res. 11.15 (Rev.COP14) Preventing poisoning of migratory birds* *AEMLAP* *Decision 14.136* *SPMS Target 3.3*	*2026 - 2029*	*Flyways WG, relevant Parties (lead)* *Non-Party, Birdlife International and Secretariat (supporting)*	*Subject to external resources*

	the operationalisation of the CMS Lead Task Force. *- recommending the establishment and operationalisation of the CMS Vulture Working Group, the scope of which may include the PPWG mandate on Non-steroidal Anti-inflammatory Drugs.* *- recommending that the CMS illegal take task forces, Vulture Working Group, Central Asian Flyway Initiative and Americas Flyways Framework consider implementing the mandate of the PPWG on poison baits.* *- recommending that the Raptors MOU and Americas Flyways Framework consider implementing the PPWG mandate on rodenticides.* *Support a discussion within the African-Eurasian Migratory Landbirds Working Group concerning action on minimising the impact of agricultural pesticides on landbirds in line with the African-Eurasian Migratory Landbirds Action Plan, including by considering the PPWG mandate on pesticides.*				
Theme 2:	*Addressing threats to habitat and food availability of migratory birds across all flyways*				
2.1 Promote area-based conservation measures to support migratory birds	*By ScC-SC10, provide advice on actions to increase flyway scale cooperation to maintain and improve the connectivity of migratory routes.*	*Res. 14.16 Ecological Connectivity* *Decision 14.195 and 14.196*	*2026 - 2029*	*Flyways WG (lead)* *Secretariat, Parties, non-Parties, civil*	*Subject to external resources*

	Support the Scientific Council in a proposed project involving IUCN, BirdLife International and relevant frameworks to identify flyway ecological networks, comprising landscapes, habitats, sites and corridors between them, that are of greatest global importance for the conservation of migratory birds. *Report on actions to ScC-SC9 and ScC-SC10.*	*SPMS Target 2.1, 2.2, 2.3*		*society and experts (supporting)*	
2.2 Support the Climate Change Working Group with advice on flyways and migratory birds	*Participate in meetings of the Climate Change Working Group.* *By ScC-SC10, contribute to the development of case studies of vulnerable migratory birds to climate change and potential changes to migration routes.*	*Resolution 12.21 (Rev.COP14) Climate change and migratory species* *SPMS Target 3.4*	*2026 - 2029*	*Flyways WG (lead)* *Secretariat (supporting)*	*In-kind*
2.3 Raise awareness of insect decline and its impacts to migratory birds	*Disseminate the report on "Insect Decline and its Threat to Migratory Insectivorous Animal Populations" to relevant stakeholders and raise awareness of its findings and recommendations in appropriate forums.* *By ScC-SC10, provide advice to Scientific Council on priority flyways and regions to further investigate insect decline and its impact on migratory birds, especially ensuring synergies with the work of AEMLAP.*	*Res 13.6 Insect Decline and its Threat to Migratory Insectivorous Animal Populations*	*2026 - 2029*	*Flyways WG (lead)* *Secretariat (supporting)*	*In-kind*

Theme 3:	*Species Action Plans*				
3.1 Support the implementation of adopted action plans and Concerted Actions including in the framework of avian CMS MOUs.	*Review the existing suite of CMS and non-CMS avian species action plans and Concerted Actions to identify elements that are common to successful implementation of such plans to encourage future action plans can be designed to facilitate effective implementation.* *Encourage the engagement of coordinators for those existing action plans that currently lack such coordination.* *Coordinate with Range States, intergovernmental organisations and other stakeholders to facilitate implementation of high priority actions in adopted action plans and Concerted Actions.* *At ScC-SC10 provide advice to Scientific Council on the review and continuation of relevant Concerted Actions and Avian Species Action Plans.*	*Res 12.12 (Rev.COP14) Action Plans for Birds* *Res 05.09 (Rev.COP12) Endorsement of Action Plans for selected Appendix I and II Migratory Birds* *Res 12.28 (Rev.COP14) Concerted Actions* *Decision 14.147* *SPMS Target 1.1, 1.2, 1.3*	*On-going*	*Flyways WG, Parties, non-Parties, civil society and experts (lead)* *Secretariat (supporting)*	*In-kind*
3.2 Identify high priority candidate species for the development of single or multi-species action plans	*By ScC-SC10, review Appendix I and II listed bird species and make recommendations on which species would benefit from the development of actions plans (taking into account existing processes for prioritising the development of species action plans*	*Res 12.12 (Rev.COP14) Action Plans for Birds* *SPMS Target 1.1, 1.2, 1.3*	*2026 - 2029*	*Flyways WG, Parties, non-Parties, civil society and experts (lead)* *Secretariat (supporting)*	*In-kind*

	under CMS family instruments such as AEWA). *By COP16, support Parties in the development of new action plans and Concerted Actions, where required.*				
3.3 Undertake a stocktake of action plans for birds adopted by the Convention	*By ScC-SC9, compile a list of adopted actions plans, their status and if warranted, need to update with contemporary information (taking into account existing processes for evaluating and updating/revising existing species action plans under CMS family instruments such as AEWA).* *By COP16, support Parties in the development of revised action plans and Concerted Actions for priority species.*	*Res 12.12 (Rev.COP14) Action Plans for Birds* *Res 05.09 (Rev.COP12) Endorsement of Action Plans for selected Appendix I and II Migratory Birds* *Decision 14.147* *SPMS Target 1.1, 1.2, 1.3*	*2026 - 2029*	*Flyways WG, Secretariat (lead)* *Parties, non-Parties, civil society and experts (supporting)*	*In-kind*
Theme 4:	*Priority knowledge gaps*				
4.1 Identify and prioritise knowledge gaps across flyways	*Convene a workshop to identify and prioritise knowledge gaps, including horizon scans, across all flyways to encompass conservation status of migratory birds, identification of and connectivity of key areas, key causes of population decline, the evidence base for effective interventions to minimise threats, manage and restore the species and their habitats, spatial planning, governance and policy arrangements.*	*SPMS Target 4.1, 4.2, 5.3*	*2026 - 2029*	*Flyways WG, Secretariat (lead)* *Parties, non-Parties, civil society and experts (supporting)*	*Subject to external resources (and In-kind contributions)*

	Report on gaps and priorities to ScC-SC10 with associated recommendations to address knowledge gaps and then widely disseminate findings to relevant organizations including universities and other research institutions, emphasising the identified information gaps.				
4.2 Support research on and monitoring of priority species	*Encourage collaboration amongst research institutes to undertake research on priority bird species, including population monitoring, tracking studies to understand their ecological connectivity and causes of population decreases and to develop the evidence base on effective conservation interventions.* *Foster exchange on new developments in flyway monitoring to ensure the effective implementation of new technologies in all flyways.*	*SPMS Target 4.1, 4.2, 5.3*	*2026 - 2029*	*Flyways WG, experts, civil society (lead)*	*Subject to external resources*
4.3 Support research on migratory pathways and key habitats	*Encourage collaboration amongst research institutes to undertake research to identify flyway ecological networks including key landscapes, habitats, sites and bottlenecks.*	*SPMS Target 4.1, 4.2, 5.3*	*2026 - 2029*	*Flyways WG, experts, civil society (lead)*	*Subject to external resources*
Theme 5:	*Communications and engagement*				
5.1 Develop communications and engagement products to promote flyway	*Work with the CMS Secretariat, CMS Family Instruments and other frameworks to develop materials to promote the importance of flyways, migratory birds, threats and solutions*	*Res.12.11(Rev.COP14) Flyways*	*On-going*	*Flyways WG, Secretariat (lead)* *Parties, non-Parties, civil*	*Subject to external resources*

conservation and migratory birds	*to a wide audience, ensuring from the outset that a robust dissemination plan is in place with the products readily customised for different languages, not only official CMS languages.*	*Res. 11.09 (Rev.COP13) World Migratory Bird Day* *SPMS Target 6.1, 6.2*		*society and experts (supporting)*	
5.2 Support World Migratory Bird Day	*Provide advice to the Secretariat on potential themes for World Migratory Bird Day.* *Actively promote World Migratory Bird Day each year.*	*Res.12.11(Rev.COP14) Flyways* *Res. 11.09 (Rev.COP13) World Migratory Bird Day* *SPMS Target 6.1, 6.2*	*On-going*	*Flyways WG, Secretariat (lead)* *Parties, non-Parties, civil society and experts (supporting)*	*In-kind*
5.3 Support the establishment of a Flyways Youth Forum	*Support the formation of Flyway Youth Forums for each flyway, under a joint umbrella, by convening a workshop to discuss the potential scope of activities that would support the conservation and management of migratory birds and assisting in establishing relevant networks.* *Support existing youth groups within established flyway mechanisms.*	*Res. 11.10 (Rev.COP14), Synergies and Partnerships*	*On-going*	*Flyways WG, Secretariat (lead) Parties, non-Parties, civil society and experts (supporting)*	*Subject to external resources*
Theme 6:	*Flyway specific approaches*				
Sub theme 6.1:	*Americas Flyway*				
6.1.1 Support the Americas Flyway Task Force	*Support the Task Force in updating and implementing the Action Plan for the Americas including by sharing information on what has and has not worked in other flyways.*	*Res.12.11(Rev.COP14) Flyways* *Decision 14.142* *SPMS Target 1.1*	*On-going*	*Flyways WG, relevant Parties (lead)*	*Subject to external resources*

6.1.2 Promote existing instruments in the Americas Flyways	*Encourage Parties and non-Parties to implement ACAP and MOUs for High Andean Flamingos, Ruddy-headed Goose and Southern South American Grassland Birds, including encouraging all range states to become signatories and/or Parties.*	*MOUs* *SPMS Target 1.1*	*On-going*	*Flyways WG, relevant Parties (lead)* *Secretariat (supporting)*	*In-kind*
Sub theme 6.2:	*East Asian – Australasian Flyway*				
6.2.1 Review options to further develop conservation frameworks for all migratory birds in the EAAF	*By ScC-SC10, undertake a situation analysis of the East Asian – Australasian Flyway.* *Submit recommendations to COP16 that seeks to enhance migratory bird conservation in the EAAF.*	*Res.12.11(Rev.COP14) Flyways* *Decision 14.137, 14.138, 14.140, 14.142* *Raptors MOU* *Siberian Crane MOU* *SPMS Target 1.1*	*2026-2029*	*Flyways WG, relevant Parties (lead)* *Non-Party, Birdlife International and Secretariat (supporting)*	*Subject to external resources*
6.2.2 Promote existing instruments in the East Asian – Australasian Flyway	*Encourage Parties and non-Parties to implement ACAP and MOUs for Birds of Prey (Raptors) and Siberian Crane, AEMLAP and the Vulture MsAP (where relevant) including encouraging all range states to become signatories and/or Parties.*	*Res.12.11(Rev.COP14) Flyways* *ACAP* *Raptors MOU* *Siberian Crane MOU* *AEMLAP* *SPMS Target 1.1*	*On-going*	*Flyways WG, relevant Parties (lead)* *Secretariat (supporting)*	*In-kind*
Sub Theme 6.3:	*African – Eurasian Flyway*				
6.3.1 Promote existing instruments in the African – Eurasian Flyway	*Encourage Parties, non-Parties and intergovernmental organisations to implement Agreements, MOUs and other mechanisms in the African – Eurasian Flyway, including*	*Res.12.11(Rev.COP14) Flyways* *AEWA, ACAP*	*2026-2029*	*Flyways WG, relevant Parties (lead)* *Non-Party, Birdlife*	*Subject to external resources*

	encouraging all range states to become signatories and/or Parties. *Identify opportunities to collaborate on cross-cutting issues to enhance implementation of high priority actions, develop joint projects and mitigate threats to migratory birds e.g. the AEWA-led Habitats Project "Identifying priorities for the conservation and management of migratory bird habitats in Africa, Europe and Asia".*	*MOUs (Raptors, Aquatic Warbler, Middle-European Great Bustard)* *AEMLAP* *SPMS Target 1.1*		*International, CWSS and Secretariat (supporting)*	
Sub Theme 6.4:	*Central Asian Flyway*				
6.4.1 Support the implementation of the Initiative for Central Asian Flyway	*Support the establishment of the Initiative for the Central Asian Flyway and the development of its programme of work including by sharing information on what has and has not worked in other flyways.*	*Res 14.13 Initiative for Central Asian Flyway* *Res.12.11(Rev.COP14) Flyways* *Decision 14.143* *SPMS Target 1.1*	*2026 - 2029*	*Flyways WG, Parties and non-Parties (lead)*	*Subject to external resources*
Sub Theme 6.5:	*Marine Flyways*				
6.5.1 Further develop the concept of Marine Flyways under the Convention and integrate with existing mechanisms	*Undertake a full situation analysis of the 6 recognised Marine Flyways, including a policy gap analysis.* *Develop recommendations that seek to enhance migratory seabird conservation through the identification, recognition, threat analysis of Marine Flyways with*	*Res.12.11(Rev.COP14) Flyways* *SPMS Target 1.1*	*2026 - 2029*	*Flyways WG, relevant Parties (lead)* *Non-Party, Birdlife International and Secretariat (supporting)*	*Subject to external resources*

	recommendations on key actions and institutional structures to support their implementation.				
Theme 7:	*Strengthen synergies between CMS Family Instruments and other flyway mechanisms*				
7.1 Facilitate synergies between CMS Family flyway related instruments and othe flyway mechanisms for enhanced delivery of complementary objectives	*Organise meetings of the "Global Interflyway Network (GIN)" involving CMS and non-CMS frameworks for migratory bird conservation to share best practice and lessons learnt regarding flyway conservation and to promote synergies and reduce duplication of effort.* *Promote outreach and communication for flyways, including critical site networks, to strengthen visibility of the available instruments as useful tools and stakeholder engagement at individual sites.* *Actively promote options to develop and integrate new and existing CMS Family Instruments to Parties and non-Parties to support migratory birds, particularly in flyways with taxonomic gaps.*	*Res.12.11(Rev.COP14) Flyways* *SPMS Target 1.1, 5.5, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4*	*2026 - 2029*	*Flyways WG, Parties and non-Parties (lead)*	*Subject to external resources*
Theme 8:	*Flyway Working Group operations*				
8.1 Hold regular meetings of the Flyways Working Group to share information and report on	*Convene annual meetings of the Flyways working group between COP15 and COP16.*	*Res.12.11(Rev.COP14) Flyways* *SPMS Target 6.1, 6.2, 6.4*	*2026 - 2029*	*Flyways WG (lead)* *Secretariat (supporting)*	*In-kind and/or subject to external resources*

implementation of the programme of work	*Regularly report implementation of the programme of work through the Scientific Council to the Conference of the Parties.*				*(inter alia depending on formats of meetings)*