

THE CONVENTION ON WETLANDS  
64th meeting of the Standing Committee  
Gland, Switzerland, 20-24 January 2025

SC64 Doc.29.3 Rev.1

**Proposed draft resolution on strengthening national actions for the conservation and restoration of ~~the East Asian-Australasian Flyway~~waterbird flyways**

Submitted by China and Cambodia

**Action requested:**

The Standing Committee is invited to review and approve the attached draft resolution for consideration by the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties.

*Secretariat cover note*

The DR provides an overview of regional efforts to conserve and protect the East Asian-Australasian Flyway (EAAF) and calls for enhanced action by Contracting Parties and other governments in the EAAF. Paragraph 21 requests the Secretariat to review the implementation of Resolution X.22 *Promoting international cooperation for the conservation of waterbird flyways* to indicate the gap and weakness in flyway conservation and make recommendations to improve implementation.

Given that Resolution X.22 applies to all flyways globally, the DR would benefit from specifying whether the review of X.22's implementation is intended to focus solely on the EAAF or extend to all flyways worldwide.

Paragraph 24 suggests that the DR would 'extend the content of Resolution X.22 under a new situation after 17 years'. Since Resolution X.22 did not specify an effective deadline, the DR could clarify which specific aspects of the "new situation" justify extending or updating its content.

The Secretariat invited STRP to review methodologies for reviewing the implementation of Resolution X.22 across a flyway.

## Introduction

~~The East Asian Australasian Flyway is one of the most endangered of the nine global flyways. A Ramsar Regional Initiative, the East Asian Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) was adopted in 2005 and established in 2006. Achievements have been made by all partners, including 17 state partners among which are Contracting Parties of the Convention on Wetlands. Yet the declining trends of a large proportion of migratory waterbirds have not been revised. Global waterbird flyways are significant to the Convention on Wetlands and KM-GBF. Resolution X.22 on “Promoting international cooperation for the conservation of waterbird flyways” was adopted in 2008. However the implementation of Resolution X.22 has not been tracked. National actions on conservation and restoration of the East Asian Australasian Flyway (EAAF) by countries in the Flyway is of significant importance for fulfilling the initial mandates of the Convention on migratory waterbirds (waterfowl) and effective implementation of Resolution X.22 and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KM-GBF), which promoted international cooperation for flyways. Whilst national plans and actions on conservation and restoration of flyways by countries need to be strengthened for enhancing international cooperation. . The draft resolution proposes to strengthen national actions for the conservation and restoration of the EAAF global flyways with the example of the East Asian – Australasian Flyway.~~

## Financial implications of implementation

Paragraph (number and key part of text)	Action	Cost (CHF)
<del>Paragraph 17</del>	<del>Request the Secretariat to review the implementation of Resolution X.22</del>	<del>3,000</del>

**Draft Resolution XV.xx on Strengthening national actions for the conservation and restoration of ~~the East Asian Australasian Flyway~~ Waterbird Flyways**

1. RECALLING that “each Contracting Party shall consider its international responsibilities for the conservation, management and wise use of migratory stocks of waterfowl” in Article 2.6 of the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat; and that “each Contracting Party shall promote the conservation of wetlands and waterfowl by establishing nature reserves on wetlands” in Article 4.1, and “the Contracting Parties shall endeavour through management to increase waterfowl populations on appropriate wetlands” in Article 4.4; and NOTING that ~~the initial mandate of the Convention addressed~~ migratory waterfowl and habitat conservation is one of the initial mandates of the Convention;
- ~~2. RECALLING that Recommendation 6.4, Recommendation 7.3 and Resolution VIII.37 promoted conservation of migratory waterbirds in the Asian and Pacific regions and the establishment of the East Asian Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) in 2006, which was a World Summit on Sustainable Development Type II Partnership proposed by Japan [and Australia] in page 41 of document Doc.SC31-21 Additional and adopted as a Ramsar Regional Initiative (RRI) by Resolution IX.7 in 2005;~~
- 3.2. FURTHER RECALLING that Resolution X.22 on *Promoting international cooperation for the conservation of waterbird flyways* urges Contracting Parties, other governments and relevant organizations ~~to~~ urgently to enhance their individual and collective efforts to address the root causes of the continuing decline in ~~waterbird~~ the status of waterbirds;
- ~~4. ACKNOWLEDGING that the Republic of Korea has hosted the EAAFP Secretariat since 2009, providing operational support to the Partnership; ALSO ACKNOWLEDGING that the People’s Republic of China has hosted the Science Unit of the EAAFP Secretariat since 2018; NOTING that 11 Meetings of Partners (MOPs) have been held since its establishment; and ALSO EXPRESSING gratitude to the hosts of the MOPs, the Chairs of the Management Committee and their leadership in guiding EAAFP as an RRI;~~
3. AWARE that the implementation of a flyway-scale approach is necessary for the conservation and restoration of the populations and habitats of migratory waterbirds, and RECALLING that the enhancement of international cooperation is urged in Resolution X.22;
4. WELCOMING progress made under the various international and regional flyway frameworks leading the advancement of the conservation of migratory waterbirds such as the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS) and its Flyways Working Group, the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) and the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP), founded in 2006 on the basis of Ramsar Recommendation 6.4, Recommendation 7.3 and Resolution VIII.37 and adopted as a Ramsar Regional Initiative (RRI) by Resolution IX.7 in 2005;
5. ~~WELCOMES~~ WELCOMING the achievements of all ~~the partners of EAAFP, that populations~~ Ramsar Contracting Parties in implementing actions for the conservation of migratory waterbirds through the conservation, restoration and wise use of wetlands which has led to the increase of some species have been increased, including populations - such as the Siberian cranes, white-naped cranes, black Crane and Black-faced spoonbills, and others; and WELCOMES the fact that the People’s Republic of China and the Republic of Korea have nominated Spoonbill - and designation of critical flyway sites such as the World Natural Heritage Sites nominated by the People’s Republic of China and the Republic of Korea in the Yellow Sea

ecoregion for migratory waterbirds since 2019, some of which are also Wetlands of International Importance;

- ~~6. DEEPLY CONCERNED that the first Report on Conservation Status on the East Asian Australasian Flyway (EAAF)<sup>‡</sup> done by Wetlands International indicated that of the 159 populations with a known trend, 67 (42%) are decreasing and only 43 (27%) are increasing, with 48 (30%) stable or fluctuating; NOTING that trends could not be assessed for 118 (43%) populations; and FURTHER CONCERNED that 34 (16%) of the EAAFP populations belong to species on the 2021 IUCN Red List of Threatened Species and a further 25 (12%) to Near Threatened species, and that some species are in an extreme situation, such as the spoon-billed sandpiper;~~
- ~~7. AWARE that the implementation of a flyway-scale approach is an effective solution to conserve and restore the populations and habitats of migratory waterbirds in the EAAF, and RECALLING that the enhancement of international cooperation has been urged in Resolution X.22;~~
- ~~8. NOTING that migratory bird6. ALSO WELCOMING the advancements of Contracting Parties, non-Contracting Party range states and other organisations to advance the development of national action plans, site networks and other mechanisms to provide essential support to science-based flyway scale conservation through collaboration in monitoring and research at both national and international level;~~
7. DEEPLY CONCERNED, despite these efforts, about the continued decline of migratory waterbird populations that the 2024 update to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species revealed a decline in populations of migratory shorebirds across the globe, including declines of some common global populations of species by more than a third in recent decades as well as accelerated rates of declines;
8. AWARE that national actions such as national migratory waterbird censuses and wetland habitat inventories, conservation and restoration planning and implementation, national flyway site networking, engagement of national focal points, etc., are the crucial foundation for international flyway conservation; and that efforts need to be made to strengthen national implementation of relevant mandates, particularly in relation to delivery of Resolution X.22.
9. NOTING that flyway conservation, as a large-scale biodiversity conservation action, significantly contributes to delivery of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and across various targets including delivering enhanced connectivity, as well as to synergy with the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS);) and other relevant MEAs;
- ~~9. NOTING that there has been tracking and review~~
10. WELCOMING the establishment of the implementation of Waterbird Estimates Partnership in [Resolution X.22 since 2008; ALSO NOTING that Resolution XIV.18 expresses concern that XV.xx] to facilitate the necessary and timely updates of the global waterbird population estimates have not been updated since 2012;
11. ACKNOWLEDGING the economic, social and FURTHER NOTING the proposal environmental cost of the Scientific wetland loss and Technical Review Panel on resourcing degradation, and implementing of waterbird population estimates; the opportunities to increase funding, from all sources, for wetland conservation and restoration (Global Wetland Outlook, in press);

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<sup>‡</sup>— Mundkur, T. and Langendoen, T. 2022. Report on the Conservation Status of Migratory Waterbirds of the East Asian — Australasian Flyway. First Edition. Report to the East Asian — Australasian Flyway Partnership. Wetlands International, Ede, The Netherlands. URL: <https://www.wetlands.org/eaaf-conservation-status-review1/>

~~10~~12. ACKNOWLEDGING that EAAFP MOP11, held in Australia in 2023, adopted Decision 10 on creation of a Youth Task Force, which ~~supported~~recognised the implementation of Resolution XIV.12 on *Strengthening Ramsar connections through youth*;

~~11. WELCOMING ALSO ACKNOWLEDGING that fact that the People's Republic of China adopted the National Action Plan on Conservation and Restoration of Migratory Bird Flyways (2024-2030) covering four flyways across the country, initiated a Flyway University Alliance for Science and Education for flyway conservation and restoration calling for a joint science programme, and hosted the first EAAFP Flyway Science Symposium in 2024; and NOTING such a national action plan, alliance and symposium provide essential supports to science-based flyway scale conservation through collaboration in monitoring and research at both national and international level; and (China invites more partners of EAAFP to add their national practices.)~~  
;NOTING such initiatives contribute to youth engagement in flyway conservation and restoration;

~~12. CONCERNED that national actions, such as national migratory waterbird census and wetland-habitat inventory, conservation and restoration planning, national flyway site networking, engagement of national focal points, etc., are the foundation for international conservation of the Flyway; and that it still need to be strengthened to implement Resolution X.22 and the EAAFP Strategic Plan;~~

#### THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

13. ~~AFFIRMS~~REAFFIRMS that ~~conservation and restoration of the East Asian Australasian Flyway (EAAF), the most endangered~~urgent need for national action for migratory birdwaterbirds through implementation of Resolution X.22 in synergy with relevant flyway, are urgent and frameworks as significant for implementation of the Convention and reversing the trend of global biodiversity loss and degradation, as well as for human wellbeing around migratory waterbird habitat wetlands;

14. ~~INVITES non-partner Contracting Parties in the EAAF to join the East Asian Australasian Flyway Prtnership (EAAFP);~~INVITES non-member Contracting Parties join membership and engage with initiatives in their flyway at national level, including the EAAFP; ALSO INVITES Contracting Parties of the Convention on Wetlands to build connection with the Convention on Migratory Species, especially its Flyways Working Group, and take synchronized and complementary actions to conserve migratory waterbirds;

~~15~~14. ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties and other governments ~~in the EAAF~~ to conduct migratory waterbird census and/or waterbird population estimates, ~~to conduct~~with wetland habitat ~~inventory~~assessment when capable, ensuring this data is incorporated into the data collated by the Waterbird Estimate Partnership to inform the management of critical flyway sites and ~~to~~ review of flyway conservation status at national level;

~~16. STRONGLY ENCOURAGES~~15. INVITES Contracting Parties and other governments ~~in the EAAF~~ to develop a National Action/Implementation Plan on Conservation and Restoration of Migratory ~~Birds~~ Flyway, ~~with Single Endangered Species Conservation Plans for each endangered species, and policy on wise use of associated resources~~Waterbird Flyways, particularly critical wetland flyway sites;

~~1716.~~ CALLING ON Contracting Parties to establish and strengthen a National Flyway Partnership including with participative and inclusive national stakeholder coordination mechanisms and a national flyway site network, ~~including partnership of multi-site complex that are adjacent to each other as well as sistership of sites that are used as different life cycle habitats by waterbirds;~~

~~1817.~~ ALSO ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties and other governments ~~in the EAAF~~ to support future flyway Conservation Status Reports;

~~1918.~~ INVITES Contracting Parties and other governments ~~in the EAAF~~ to support ~~the EAAFP~~ their flyway initiatives and the implementation of ~~its~~ their Flyway Strategic Plan through volunteering funding, personnel, data Plans and information, technology consider provisions for technical and equipment financial support, and other in-kind resources; capacity building to least developed countries on voluntary basis and mutually agreed terms;

~~20. ALSO~~

~~19.~~ INVITES Contracting Parties and other governments in the EAAF to join the Youth Task Force; and INVITES global universities and institutes that are relevant to migratory bird flyway science and technology to join the EAAFP Flyway University Alliance and promote joint scientific research, shared education and training for youth, and networking of field observatories and laboratories;

~~21.~~ REQUESTS the Secretariat to review the implementation of Resolution X.22 on *Promoting international cooperation for the conservation of waterbird flyways* to indicate the gaps and weaknesses in flyway conservation and make recommendations to improve implementation;

~~221.~~ CALLS ON the International Organization Partners of the Convention, other NGOs and private sectors to support Contracting Parties and other governments in ~~EAAF in~~ the process of development and implementation of ~~National Actions~~ national plans and actions on flyway conservation and restoration;

~~23. CALLS ON other~~ ~~22.~~ INVITES Contracting Parties engaged with international bodies and initiatives such as the Convention on Migratory Species, the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement, ~~(AEWA)~~, the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, the Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Initiative, and the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network to ~~share~~ exchange best practices and experiences in enhancing national actions on to foster inclusive global flyway conservation; ~~and efforts.~~

~~24.~~ CONFIRMS that the present Resolution extends the content of Resolution X.22 under a new situation after 17 years.