

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

*Submitted by China*

**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. 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). The draft resolution proposes to strengthen national actions for the conservation and restoration of the EAAF.*

## Financial implications of implementation

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

## Draft Resolution XV.xx on Strengthening national actions for the conservation and restoration of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway

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 conservation;
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. FURTHER RECALLING that Resolution X.22 on *Promoting international cooperation for the conservation of waterbird flyways* urges Contracting Parties, other governments and relevant organizations urgently to enhance their individual and collective efforts to address the root causes of the continuing decline in waterbird status;
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;
5. WELCOMES the achievements of all the partners of EAAFP, that populations of some species have been increased, including Siberian cranes, white-naped cranes, black-faced spoonbills, and others; and WELCOMES the fact that the People’s Republic of China and the Republic of Korea have nominated World Natural Heritage Sites 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>1</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;

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<sup>1</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/>

8. NOTING that migratory bird flyway conservation, as a large-scale biodiversity conservation action, significantly contributes to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and to synergy with the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS);
9. NOTING that there has been tracking and review of the implementation of Resolution X.22 since 2008; ALSO NOTING that Resolution XIV.18 expresses concern that waterbird population estimates have not been updated since 2012; and FURTHER NOTING the proposal of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel on resourcing and implementing of waterbird population estimates;
10. ACKNOWLEDGING that EAAFP MOP11, held in Australia in 2023, adopted Decision 10 on creation of a Youth Task Force, which supported the implementation of Resolution XIV.12 on *Strengthening Ramsar connections through youth*;
11. WELCOMING 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.*)
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 that conservation and restoration of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway (EAAF), the most endangered migratory bird flyway, are urgent and significant for implementation of the Convention and revising 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);
15. ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties and other governments in the EAAF to conduct migratory waterbird census and/or waterbird population estimates, to conduct wetland habitat inventory when capable, and to review flyway conservation status at national level;
16. STRONGLY ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties and other governments in the EAAF to develop a National Action 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;
17. CALLING ON Contracting Parties to establish 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;

18. ALSO ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties and other governments in the EAAF to support future flyway Conservation Status Reports;
19. INVITES Contracting Parties and other governments in the EAAF to support the EAAFP and the implementation of its Strategic Plan through volunteering funding, personnel, data and information, technology and equipment, and other in-kind resources;
20. ALSO 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;
22. 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;
23. CALLS ON other international bodies and initiatives such as the Convention on Migratory Species, the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement, the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, the Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Initiative, and the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network to share practices and experiences in enhancing national actions on flyway conservation; and
24. CONFIRMS that the present Resolution extends the content of Resolution X.22 under a new situation after 17 years.