

Financial and budgetary matters: Report of the meeting of the Subgroup on Finance, 20 January 2025

This Report includes the recommendations for the consideration of the Standing Committee made during the meeting of the Subgroup on Finance on 20 January 2025.

The Chair opened the meeting and asked the Subgroup to refer to the actions requested in documents on financial and budgetary matters in the following order:

- 1) Status of annual contributions (document SC64 Doc 9.2 Rev.1);
- 2) Report on financial matters for 2024 and 2025 (document SC64 Doc 9.1);
- 3) Potential financial implications of draft resolutions (document SC64 Doc 9.4 Rev.1);
- 4) Budget scenarios for 2026-2028 and draft resolution on financial and budgetary matters (document SC64 Doc 9.3 Rev.1 and SC64 Inf.1 Information document); and
- 5) Allocation of surplus funds (continuation of discussions of the intersessional meeting in December 2024).

The Secretariat clarified terms used in the documents:

- *Reserve:*
The core reserve fund represents surpluses received from core operations which are accumulated and held to meet unforeseen and unavoidable expenses. Resolution XI.2 of COP11 stipulates that the reserve fund should not be less than 6% of the annual core budget of the Convention and not greater than 15%, and the draft resolution on financial and budgetary matters in document SC64 Doc.9.3 Rev.1 reaffirms at paragraph 19 the stipulations of Resolution XI.2.
- *Carry-forward:*
Carry-forward represents the funds from the annual budget that were not used during the current year and are carried forward to the next year to be used for continuing projects. Any unused funds after completion of activities go back to surplus funds for future allocations. The Standing Committee through Decision SC57-50 decided that uncommitted/unspent balances for budget lines can be carried forward to the next year within the triennium and presented to the following meeting of the Subgroup on Finance. The draft resolution on financial and budgetary matters reaffirms this Decision at paragraph 25.
- *Surplus:*
Surplus funds result from income exceeding planned or actual expenditures for the year. These funds can be used to fund additional initiatives, upon requests from Contracting Parties to the Secretariat, as recommended by the Subgroup on Finance and decided by the Standing Committee.

1. Status of annual contributions

The Secretariat summarized the status of annual contributions at 31 December 2024, as presented in document SC64 Doc 9.2 Rev.1 and its Annex 1. Regarding the 2025 provision for outstanding contributions, the latest estimate was that CHF 133K would be required. CHF150K has been allocated, so the eventual difference would be available for future reallocation, at SC65.

Zimbabwe noted that it had just paid its outstanding balance as well as its contribution for 2025.

The Subgroup of Finance recommends that the Standing Committee:

- i. take note of the status of annual contributions as of 31 December 2024;*
- ii. acknowledge the status of assessed contributions as of 31 December 2024 as part of the audit process;*
- iii. note the actions listed in paragraphs 14, 16, 17 and 18 of document SC64 Doc.9.2 Rev.1 to continue encouraging the payment of annual contributions by the Contracting Parties; and*
- iv. note the status of the voluntary contributions received from the Contracting Parties in the Africa region outlined in paragraph 19 of document SC64 Doc.9.2. Rev.1*

2. Report on financial matters for 2024 and 2025

The Secretariat introduced document SC64 Doc.9.1 *Financial and budgetary matters: Report on financial matters for 2024 and 2025 (as of 30 September 2024)*. The final income and expenditure for 2024 would be confirmed in the upcoming audit, with the report of the auditor planned for publishing in April 2025. The audited financial statements will be included in the updated document for consideration by the Standing Committee at SC65 in July.

The latest estimate of the surplus funds from the 2024 core budget to be allocated (updating Table 2 of document SC64 Doc.9.1) is summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1: 2024 core surplus to be allocated (in '000) – estimated as of 20 January 2025

(I) Fund balance at 31 December 2024 per audited statements	3,701
(II) Estimated net expenditure over income over expenditure in 2024	146
Reserve, approved and pre-committed:	
Reserve fund at 15% (Resolution XIV.1, paragraph 33)	762
COP14 approved use of savings for 2025 (Resolution XIV.1, paragraph 15)	76
COP14 approved use of savings for 2025 (Resolution XIV.1, paragraph 16)	120
Carry-forward balances (updating Table 1 of document SC64 Doc.9.1)	1,120
Estimated committed for temporary use of reserve funds as a loan to complement voluntary funding for COP15 delegate support	(up to) 486
(III) Total reserve, approved and pre-committed	2,564
(IV=I-(II+III)) estimated 2024 core surplus after approved and pre-committed	991

The Secretariat clarified that the estimate of the loan to complement voluntary funding for COP15 delegate support had been amended following receipt of voluntary funding since the publication of document SC64 Doc.9.1. For comparison, CHF 480K had been allocated to this purpose before COP14; when actual income and costs had been calculated after COP14, all but CHF 140K had been repaid (and all but CHF 75K after COP13).

The Subgroup of Finance recommends that the Standing Committee:

- i. note the interim estimates of the core budget results for 2024;*
- ii. note the interim estimates of the status of the non-core balances and voluntary contributions for 2024;*

- iii. *note the estimated carry-forward of funds from 2024 to 2025, as included in column C of the table in Annex [x] (Core Budget 2025) of the present report;*¹
- iv. *take note of the Core estimated 2025 budget, as included in column D of the table in Annex [x] of the present report;*¹
- v. *approve the temporary use of reserve funds as a loan to supplement voluntary funding for COP15 sponsored delegate support as described in paragraphs 13, 14 and 20, to a maximum amount of CHF 486,000;*
- vi. *note the estimated surplus balances at summarized in Table 1 of the present report;*

3. Potential financial implications of draft resolutions

The Secretariat introduced document SC64 Doc.9.4 Rev.1 and clarified that:

- only specific additional activities were included in calculating the “additional staff days” needed to implement a draft resolution, with tasks in line with regular Secretariat activity recorded as zero; and
- estimated costs marked for voluntary funding could be funded through allocation of surplus core budget funds, should the Standing Committee approve it.

The Subgroup of Finance recommends that the Standing Committee:

- i. *take note of the projected administrative and financial implications of draft resolutions submitted to the Standing Committee, which will be revised on the basis of the draft resolutions forwarded for consideration to COP15.*

4. Budget scenarios for 2026-2028 and draft resolution on financial and budgetary matters

The Secretariat introduced the two budget scenarios (A and B) included in Annexes 2 and 3 of document SC64 Doc.9.3 Rev.1 and further explained in information document SC64 Inf.1.

Both scenarios include funds for two new staff positions and salary increases in line with IUCN Human Resources policies, while scenario B also includes additional COP-related costs. These increases are described in SC64 Doc.9.3 Rev.1, paragraphs 4 to 6. The roles of the proposed new staff members are clarified in SC64 Inf.1.

The Secretariat recalled that the Working Group on Institutional Strengthening had acknowledged that current staff compensation presents problems of retention and recruitment, and noted that:

- the scenarios maintain the current provisions, and that the provision for outstanding contributions may have to be increased to CHF 450K in the coming triennium, necessitating an addition of CHF 360K to the budgets;
- budget section A) Secretariat Senior Management and Governance had increased due to the staff salary component; however, a proposed increase in senior management travel was significantly offset by a decrease in travel costs under other budget lines;
- the Secretariat currently has 24.5 whole-time equivalent staff, compared to 26 or 26.5 in previous triennia. Administrative posts have been replaced by a single professional position.

At the request of a number of Subgroup members, the Secretariat has prepared a third zero nominal growth scenario. Scenario C, which is included as Annex 1 to the present report, includes the following assumptions:

¹ An updated version of the proposed estimated core budget for 2025 at Annex 3 of document SC64 Doc.9.1 will be annexed to the second report of the Subgroup on Finance.

- a. Existing staff costs have been increased as proposed for scenarios A and B (see paragraphs 4a, 4c and 4d of SC64 Doc.9.3 Rev.1), but the two new positions described in paragraph 4b have not been included.
- b. Total salary and related costs represent 76% of the total core budget, an increase of CHF 796K comparing to staff costs in the 2023-2025 triennium, when total salary and related costs were 71% of the total core budget.
- c. In scenario C as in scenarios A and B, other budget lines have been adjusted (both reduced and increased) to reflect the overall zero nominal change which is described fully in doc 9.3 Rev1, paragraph 4.f.
- d. The amounts of further budget lines adjustments are disclosed in Annex 1.
- e. Scenario C, as scenarios A and B, assumes approval of the use of 2024 surplus for provisions for outstanding contributions, as indicated in paragraph 5 of document SC64 Doc 9.3 Rev 1.
- f. Additionally, should scenario C be proposed, the surplus may be used to complement the reduction in some budget lines, such as Support to Regional Initiatives.

Members of the Subgroup also indicated interest in a scenario with an increase between those of A and C, in further details on the tasks to be undertaken by the new staff members proposed in scenarios A and B, and on the salary scale calculations used. Members of the Subgroup also requested further discussion on the actual provisions in the zero nominal growth scenario (scenario C) presented by the Secretariat.

The Subgroup of Finance recommends that the Standing Committee:

- i. take note of the contents of document SC64 Doc 9.3 Rev.1;*
- ii. [instruct the Secretariat to present scenarios to the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties;]*
- iii. approve the draft resolution on the financial and budgetary matters to be considered at COP15, as presented in Annex 2 of the present document.²*

5) Allocation of surplus funds

The Subgroup agreed to discuss the allocation of surplus funds at its meeting later in the week, following plenary discussion of related items. The STRP Chair offered to share information on two requested allocations of surplus funds:

- a. CHF 40K for activities related to Earth observation – see Annex 2 to the present report for details.
- b. Funds up to CHF 465K for activities proposed in document SC64 Doc.20 *Draft resolution on the establishment of the Waterbird Estimates Partnership (WEP) and the delivery of the 2027 edition of Waterbird Population Estimates (WPE2027)*, to an amount summarized in Table 2 below, and depending on the decision of the Standing Committee – see Annex 3 for details.

² An updated version of the text of the proposed draft resolution will be annexed to the second report of the Subgroup on Finance.

Table 2: Cost options (in CHF) of establishment of the WEP and delivery of WPE2027

Priority actions	Comprehensive (all actions)	Intermediate* (75%)	Minimum* (50%)
1. Establishment of Waterbird Estimates Partnership	38,000	38,000	38,000
2. Delivery of WPE2027 through review and updates of priority populations	366,000 (1,600 populations)	287,000 (1,255 populations)	170,000 (743 populations)
3. Maintain the Waterbird Populations Portal to deliver WPE information	61,000	25,000	25,000
Total indicative costs (early estimate)	465,000	350,000	233,000
Convention on Wetlands – core reserve fund allocation			
Voluntary or other contributions needed to achieve full WPE2027	0	115,000	232,000

6) Other business

A Party indicated that it would share with the Subgroup Chair proposed amendments to the text of the draft resolution in document SC64 Doc.9.3 Rev.1.³

The Subgroup decided to meet again at 13:15 on Wednesday 22 January.

³ An updated version of the text of the proposed draft resolution will be annexed to the second report of the Subgroup on Finance.

Annex 1

Scenario C, 0% increase compared to 2023-2025 triennium

0% increase, Convention on Wetlands Proposed Budget 2026-2028 CHF 000's	Budget 2026	Budget 2027	Budget 2028	Total Budget 2026-2028	Changes vs. 2023-2025 Budget
INCOME					
Parties' Contributions	3,779	3,779	3,779	11,337	0
Voluntary Contributions	1,065	1,065	1,065	3,195	0
Income Tax	225	225	225	675	0
Income Interest	12	12	12	36	0
TOTAL INCOME	5,081	5,081	5,081	15,243	0
EXPENDITURES					
A. Secretariat Senior Management & Governance	1,227	1,229	1,249	3,705	536
Salaries, Social Costs and other Benefits	1,170	1,172	1,192	3,534	485
Travel	57	57	57	171	51
B. Resource Mobilization and Outreach	489	491	487	1,467	(57)
Salaries, Social Costs and other Benefits	394	396	402	1,192	136
CEPA Programme	10	10	10	30	(60)
Comms, Translations, Publications and Reporting Implementation	40	40	40	120	(60)
Web/IT Support and Development	40	40	30	110	(58)
Travel	5	5	5	15	(15)
C. Regional Advice and Support	1,243	1,264	1,266	3,773	(170)
Salaries, Social Costs and other Benefits	1,188	1,209	1,211	3,608	(134)
Travel	55	55	55	165	(36)
D. Support to Regional Initiatives	0	0	0	0	(300)
Regional Networks and Centres	0	0	0	0	(300)
E. Science and Policy	851	848	854	2,553	76
Salaries, Social Costs and other Benefits	703	710	716	2,129	176
STRP Implementation	35	35	35	105	0
Travel STRP Chair	5	5	5	15	0
STRP Meetings	50	50	50	150	0
Ramsar Sites Information Service and National Reports Data System (Maintenance and Development)	40	30	30	100	(100)
Travel	18	18	18	54	0
F. Administration	467	445	421	1,333	(97)
Salaries, Social Costs and other Benefits	372	375	379	1,126	133
Staff Hiring and Departure Costs	55	30	16	101	(51)
Equipment/Office Supplies	40	40	26	106	(179)
Planning and Capacity Building	0	0	0	0	0
G. Standing Committee Services	175	175	175	525	75
Standing Committee Delegates' Support	45	45	45	135	0
Standing Committee Meetings	35	35	35	105	75
Standing Committee Translation	60	60	60	180	0
Rapporteur and interpretation at SC meetings	35	35	35	105	0
H. IUCN Administrative Service Charges (maximum)	550	550	550	1,650	27
Administration, Human Resources, Finance and IT Services	550	550	550	1,650	27
I. Miscellaneous - Reserve Fund	79	79	79	237	(90)
Staff Provisions	20	20	20	60	0
Provisions for Outstanding Contributions	30	30	30	90	0
Legal Services	29	29	29	87	(90)
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	5,081	5,081	5,081	15,243	0

Annex 2

Request for surplus funds related to Earth observation

Made by the Chair of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) and the Secretariat

Resolution XIII.10, in paragraph 23, requests the Secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, to investigate the options and associated costs for working with earth observation organizations, including the Group on Earth Observations (GEO), to put earth observation (EO) data and monitoring tools at the disposal of Contracting Parties for national wetland inventories (NWI) or monitoring of changes to Wetlands of International Importance. SC57 identified the development of national wetland inventories as an urgent challenge.

Subsequently, the Secretariat has provided reports to the Standing Committee on progress made in development of national wetland inventories, best practices, and efforts made by Secretariat in supporting Contracting Parties in development and use of national wetland inventories, including the use of Earth Observation in this context. This is presented in SC57.8, SC58 Doc.9, SC59.9, SC62 Doc.9, SC63 Doc.10 and SC64 Doc. 10.

A support mechanism for Contracting Parties on development of national wetland inventories was initially presented by the Secretariat in SC62 Doc.9 and further elaborated in SC63 Doc.10. The five areas of focus of this support mechanism encompass, inter alia, implementation support including institutional partnerships, and resource mobilization. It identifies the possibility to develop an initiative for implementation support drawing on models provided by existing GEO Flagships (e.g. the GEO Land Degradation Neutrality Flagship).

Pursuant to Standing Committee Decision SC63-30, the STRP and the Secretariat organised a consultation on development of an initiative for earth observation in support of wetland inventory, assessment, monitoring and conservation. The consultation built on needs identified through in-depth interviews with Contracting Parties (presented in SC63 Inf.2) and implementation of activities under the NWI support mechanism, as well as semi-structured interviews conducted with Earth Observation experts. The consultation included organization of an Earth Observation Day held on 6 December 2024 in association with STRP27, bringing together Earth Observation experts, STRP members, observers and National Focal Points. The findings and recommendations of the consultation are made available to SC64 as an information document ([SC64 Inf.2](#)).

The consultation, inter alia, recommended establishing a ‘GEO Wetlands’ initiative, complementing and supporting the Convention’s ongoing national wetland inventory support mechanism. This initiative would be developed and implemented in partnership with space agencies, earth observation organizations, International Organization Partners of the Convention, and the Group on Earth Observations (GEO). The report of the consultation identifies priority areas of work under the proposed initiative. The consultation further identified a need for start-up financial resources for development of the initiative, including to identify requirements and modalities for its longer-term operation.

To this end, allocation of CHF 40,000 of surplus funds is requested (in line with the funding requirement identified in SC63 Doc.10 and SC64 Doc.10, Table 1), in order to:

- develop a funding proposal including detailed descriptions of products and services of the initiative, institutional and governance arrangements and envisaged operating costs; and a

- resource mobilization strategy including identification of and engagement with potential donors (bilateral, multilateral as well as philanthropies and other donors);
- consult with and seek endorsement of and confirmation of participation in the initiative by space agencies, Earth Observation organizations and other relevant entities (note: ESA, JAXA and Wetlands International have already expressed interest based on their long-standing work in the Convention).

The requested funds would be used towards:

- expert consultant(s);
- organisation of workshops/meetings for consultation with donors and partners; and
- associated travel expenses.

Implementation would be led by the Secretariat, working closely with the STRP. The requested funds would be administered by the Secretariat, subcontracted as relevant.

The Secretariat will report on progress through reports on 'Urgent challenges to the wise use of wetlands to receive enhanced attention: Update on wetland inventories' provided to the Standing Committee, with expenditure reporting provided to the Subgroup on Finance.

Annex 2 Request for surplus funds related to document SC64 Doc.20



Submission from the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) to the Subgroup on Finance

Dear Members of the Subgroup on Finance,

On behalf of the STRP, I am pleased to submit the proposal for establishing the Waterbird Estimates Partnership (WEP) and producing the 2027 edition of Waterbird Population Estimates (WPE2027).

This submission responds directly to Decision SC63-31, which requested the STRP to submit recommendations for resourcing the WEP and WPE2027 in consultation with the Subgroup on Finance.

The establishment of the WEP and the development of WPE2027 are essential steps to provide adequate global data on waterbird populations, a resource critical for all Contracting Parties. Such data directly support wetland conservation, inform policy, underpin the designation of Ramsar Sites based on Criterion 6, and ensure the sustainable management of waterbird habitats. Given the scale and importance of this project, core reserve funding is necessary to ensure timely delivery of WPE2027 and to establish a Partnership to provide leadership and support. While voluntary contributions and other resources have supported similar initiatives, they are insufficient for a project of this scope and cannot guarantee the comprehensive coverage required. As it stands, information on the world's waterbird populations is between 12 and 35 years old.

The WEP will coordinate and manage data collection efforts across regions, benefiting all Parties by making up-to-date population information accessible and facilitating effective conservation planning at national and international levels. This proposal includes three funding scenarios, with STRP recommending the Comprehensive option to fully realize the project's objectives. Securing these resources by early 2025 will enable a coordinated, scientifically robust, and widely beneficial approach to waterbird population assessments.

The following submission provides details on the financing of the WEP and delivery of the WPE2027, as set out in the Chairs report to the Standing Committee ([SC64 Doc.18](#)). Further details on the WEP are also available in the draft resolution on the establishment of the WEP and the delivery of the WPE2027 ([SC64 Doc.20](#)).

We appreciate the ongoing work of the Subgroup on Finance and look forward to your feedback on this proposal, which represents a significant step toward ensuring the long-term conservation of global waterbird populations and sustainable management of wetland habitats.

Sincerely yours,

Dr Hugh Robertson

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Hugh Robertson".

Chair of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP).

Financing the establishment of the Waterbirds Estimates Partnership and delivery of the 2027 edition of Waterbird Population Estimates (WPE2027)

1. Background information

Pursuant to Decision SC63-31, the STRP, in collaboration with relevant partners, has submitted a draft resolution on the establishment of the Waterbird Estimates Partnership (WEP) and the delivery of the 2027 edition of Waterbird Population Estimates (WPE2027). This annex outlines recommendations for financing the WEP and WPE2027 before a consultation with the Subgroup on Finance in December 2024.

This annex provides detailed information regarding the financial requirements for addressing the lack of up-to-date data for priority waterbird populations through the production of WPE2027 and the establishment of the Waterbird Estimates Partnership. The WEP will oversee, coordinate, and secure resources for future updates of waterbird population estimates.

2. Resource implications for delivering WPE2027 and the WEP

The anticipated resource implications for the establishment of the Waterbird Estimates Partnership and the delivery of WPE2027 are as follows:

- **Establishment of the Partnership:** Costs associated with consultations, partner engagement, and documentation are estimated at CHF 38,000.
- **WPE2027 Updates:** The estimated cost of updating 1,600 waterbird populations across multiple regions is CHF 366,000. This includes data collation, analysis, and expert consultation.
- **Waterbird Populations Portal Maintenance:** CHF 61,000 is estimated for enhancements and bug fixes to improve the Portal's usability for Contracting Parties.

These cost estimates are based on prior experiences, including AEWA Conservation Status Reviews and similar efforts undertaken in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership. The costs reflect the comprehensive scope of the Waterbird Population Estimates updates and the long-term maintenance required for the Waterbird Populations Portal.

3. Costs Summary and Details

Below Table 1 shows the total costs necessary for delivering WPE2027 and WEP. Table 2 shows the detailed information for priority action item b) development of WPE27 for 1600 priority populations. Finally, Table 3 shows the alternative costs options in case where the core fund allocation may be complemented by the voluntary contributions.

Table 1. SUMMARY - The overall Costs for delivering WPE2027 and the WEP.

Priority actions	All populations 1600 (in CHF)
a. Establishment of a long-term global Waterbird Estimates Partnership based on consultations with potential partners (2025-2026)	38,000
b. Development of WPE27 through a review and update of 1,600 selected priority populations, not covered on latest AEWA and EAAFP CSRs	366,000

c. Waterbird Populations Portal maintenance/enhancement (including ensuring additional functionality of the WPP for enhanced ease of use by Parties)	61,000
Total CHF	465,000

Table 2 outlines the priority waterbird populations and review mechanisms for WPE2027 updates based on regional assessments.

Table 2. DETAILED - Waterbird population priorities and review mechanism for WPE2027.

Populations (no. of populations as per region / flyway in WPP)	Current review process / mechanism and resourcing assessment	Priority for a proposed WPE 2027 update	Activities with Resource implications
Resident or locally dispersing			
Africa (226)	Outdated information with no process in place	High priority	Collate, review and update to Portal
Nearctic (North America) (91)	National processes in North America exist	High priority	Assess the compatibility of available information and update the Portal
Neotropics (Central and South America and Caribbean) (200)	Outdated information with no process in place	High priority	Collate, review and update to Portal
Asia (Indo-Malay & Eastern Palearctic) (132)	Outdated information with no process in place	High priority	Collate, review and update to Portal
Oceania (incl. Australasia) (337)	National updates in Australia, New Zealand	High priority	Assess the compatibility of available information and update the Portal
Europe (35)	EU Art 12 process, linked with ERLoB, collation funded by EC/EEA	High priority	Assess the compatibility of available information and update the Portal
Migratory			
Central Asian Flyway (264)	Included in the CAF Waterbird Action Plan ¹ (264 populations, of which >140 populations are covered by AEWA CSRs) Outdated information for >124 populations with no funding or process in place is a priority	High priority	Collate, review and update to Portal
Central Pacific Flyway (& Antarctica) ² , (60)	Outdated information with no process in place	High priority	Collate, review and update to Portal

¹ See <https://www.cms.int/en/document/central-asian-flyway-action-plan-conservation-migratory-waterbirds-and-their-habitats>.

² For the Central Pacific Flyway (& Antarctica), numbers of residents and migratory populations are combined.

Populations (no. of populations as per region / flyway in WPP)	Current review process / mechanism and resourcing assessment	Priority for a proposed WPE 2027 update	Activities with Resource implications
Americas Flyways (379)	Review processes exist for waterbirds in North America (to Central America) and 79 migratory shorebird populations across the Americas	High priority	Assess the compatibility of available information and update the Portal
East Asian - Australasian Flyway (276)	EAAFP CSRs process funded by EAAFP (276 populations)	Medium priority, to address pop gaps for many families and species not included in CSR1	None
African-Eurasian Flyways (332)	AEWA CSRs process funded by AEWA (CSRs - 360 waterbird and seabird populations)	Low priority, plan in place for 2029 update	None
Total indicative costs:			366,000 CHF ²

4. Timing and implementation priorities

The timeline for setting up the Waterbird Estimates Partnership (by COP13) and producing WPE2027 by 2027 is ambitious. To meet this timeline, work on the WEP needs to commence by early January 2025, while preparations for WPE2027 should begin by mid-2025. Financial resources for initiating these key tasks is detailed in Table 1.

² A preliminary cost estimate is based on the tasks foreseen for each region/flyway depending on expected available information and anticipated work. The estimated cost of a unit population is based on the AEWA CSR8 and EAAFP CSR1 costs. The main tasks anticipated for population size assessments include: reviewing of current definition of populations and revising them based on the latest taxonomy (as per BirdLife International/Handbook of the Birds of the World); collating and reviewing existing literature for population size estimate data (for some regions, review of literature in different languages requires additional effort); aligning information with WPE definition of population estimates and boundaries; updating of population size estimates and finalizing them in consultation with experts; and generating updated derived 1% thresholds. Proposed actions for population trend assessments include reviewing literature for new population trend estimates, proposing updated population trend estimates based on a review of the latest trends and trend analysis and finalizing population trends in consultation with experts. Trend analyses using International Waterbird Census data for the limited number of Central Asian Flyway populations not currently covered by the AEWA CSR8 will be undertaken.

5. Resourcing options

Three primary resourcing options are proposed:

- **Comprehensive funding (100% allocation):** Full funding from the Convention on Wetlands, potentially through surplus funds.
- **Intermediate funding (75% allocation):** Partial funding from the Convention, supplemented by additional resource mobilization sought from Contracting Parties and other organizations.
- **Minimum funding (30% allocation):** Basic funding from the Convention, with additional resources sought from Contracting Parties and other organizations.

Engaging in additional resource mobilization activities will be critical if partial funding is available. Full delivery of results is contingent upon securing these additional resources. Table 3 outlines the costs and possible reductions in deliverables under the Intermediate and Minimum funding options.

Table 3. Alternative cost options (in CHF).

Priority actions	Comprehensive (all actions)	Intermediate* (75%)	Minimum* (50%)
1. Establishment of Waterbird Estimates Partnership	38,000	38,000	38,000
2. Delivery of WPE2027 through review and updates of priority populations	366,000 (1,600 populations)	287,000 (1,253 populations)	170,000 (743 populations)
3. Maintain the Waterbird Populations Portal to deliver WPE information	61,000	25,000	25,000
Total indicative costs (early estimate)	465,000	350,000	233,000
Convention on Wetlands – core reserve fund allocation			
Voluntary or other contributions needed to achieve full WPE2027	0	115,000	232,000

** In instances where partial funding (Intermediate/Establishment) is provided, additional resource mobilization activities will be critical to seek non-core contributions from Contracting Parties and supporting organizations; delivery of the full results will be subject to the availability of such additional resources.*

The Intermediate and Minimum funding options would significantly reduce deliverables, particularly for the WPE2027 updates. Key reductions include:

- **Waterbird Populations Portal:** Maintenance is limited to bug fixes only.

- **WPE2027 Updates:** Fewer populations updated, with 1,600 populations in the Comprehensive option, 1,233 populations in the Intermediate option, and 743 populations in the Minimum option. Prioritization will be based on factors such as conservation status, data completeness, and regional importance.

Adequate resourcing is essential to the success of the Waterbird Estimates Partnership and the production of WPE2027.

The Comprehensive funding option is recommended to ensure the full scope of updates and improvements are achieved. Should partial funding be provided, additional resource mobilization efforts will be necessary.

6. Draft Resolution

This request is part of the draft resolution on the establishment of the Waterbird Estimates Partnership (WEP) and the delivery of the 2027 edition of Waterbird Population Estimates (WPE2027) ([SC64 Doc.20](#)).