



## East Asian – Australasian Flyway Partnership

7th Meeting of Partners, Alaska, USA  
10-14 June 2013

**FINAL (AS ADOPTED AT MOP8)**

### Report of the Seventh Meeting of Partners

*It will be helpful to read this Report in conjunction with the Agenda Documents (ver.3) for MoP7.  
<http://www.eaaflyway.net/documents/mop/EAAFP-MoP7-Agenda-Documents-ver3.pdf>*

*A summary table of actions arising from MoP7 starts on page 33.*

#### **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS:**

Chair = the (representative of the) Chair of the EAAFP Secretariat  
Chief = the Chief Executive of the EAAFP Secretariat  
EAAF = the East Asian – Australasian Flyway  
FSN = Flyway Site Network  
GP = Government Partner  
IMC = Incheon Metropolitan City  
INGO = International Non-Governmental Organisation  
MoE = Ministry of Environment  
MoU = Memorandum of Understanding  
TF = a Task Force of EAAFP  
WG = a Working Group of EAAFP

Acronyms of Partners' names and some other well-known acronyms have also been used.

# List of Participants

## Partners represented at the Meeting:

**Australasian Wader Studies Group (AWSG):** Alison Russell-French, Ken Gosbell, Phil Straw.  
**Australia:** Geoff Richardson, Paul O'Neill.  
**Birdlife:** Cristi Nozawa, Becky Rush, Samir Whitaker, Simba Chan, Mayumi Sato.  
**CAFF:** Denny Lassuy.  
**Cambodia:** Srey Sunleang.  
**China:** Lei Guangchun, Winnie Kwok, Carrie Ma.  
**Convention on Migratory Species Secretariat (CMS):** Douglas Hykle  
**Indonesia:** Agus Sriyadi Budi Sutito.  
**International Crane Foundation (ICF):** Jim Harris.  
**Japan:** Makiko Yanagiya.  
**Malaysia:** Danial Lee Bin Abdullah,  
**Miranda Naturalists' Trust (MNT):** David Lawrie, David Melville.  
**New Zealand:** Bruce McKinlay, Hugh Robertson.  
**Ramsar:** Lew Young.  
**Republic of Korea (ROK):** Kim Jin-han, Jung Soonhwa, Kim Hwajung.  
**Thailand:** Nirawan Pipitsombat, Kriangsak Sribuarod, Budsabong Kanchanasaka.  
**United States of America (USA):** Robyn Thorson, Pete Probasco, Richard Lanctot, Francisca Gutierrez, Paul Matusewic, Tamara Zeller, Robert Kaler.  
**Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS):** Steve Zack.  
**Wetlands International:** Doug Watkins, Taej Mundkur.  
**Wild Bird Society of Japan (WBSJ):** Minoru Kashiwagi.  
**Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT):** Baz Hughes.  
**WWF:** Bena Smith (Hong Kong), Lei Gang (China).

## Partners absent from the Meeting:

**Mongolia, Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Rio Tinto, IUCN and FAO** (Apologies were received from several Partners as advised in the Agenda Documents.)

## Potential Government Partners represented at the Meeting:

**Viet Nam:** Pham Viet Hong.  
**Myanmar:** Ye Htut.

## Technical advisors:

**Birdlife - national partners:** Nils Warnock (Audubon Alaska), Vivian Fu (Hong Kong Bird Watching Society), Yu Yat-tung (Hong Kong Bird Watching Society), Nicola Crockford (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds).  
**Consultant:** Roger Jaensch.  
**Japanese Association for Wild Goose Protection:** Masayuki Kurechi.  
**Princeton University:** Jonathan Green.  
**The Paulson Institute:** Wang Songlin.  
**University of Queensland:** Richard Fuller, Nicholas Murray, Colin Studds.  
**University of Science and Technology of China:** Cao Lei  
**Yamashina Institute for Ornithology:** Kiyooki Ozaki.

## Secretariat:

**Chief Executive:** Spike Millington.  
**Deputy Chief:** Kyoung-seog Min.

**Communication Officer:** Yuna Choi.  
**Finance Officer:** Seung-joo Hyun.  
**Program Officer:** Minseon Kim.  
**Science Officer:** Judit Szabo.

## Opening Ceremony (Monday, 10 June 2013)

### Welcome from USA, Host Country of MoP7

Regional Director (USFWS Region 7) Ms Robyn Thorson, USFWS, welcomed participants, especially those who travelled very far. The role of USA in foundation of the EAAFP and involvement in Working Groups of the Partnership was mentioned. Alaska is highly important to migratory waterbirds: 35 species in Alaska move within the EAAF. The first USA site in the FSN, the Yukon Delta Wildlife Refuge (5 million ha), is a breeding area for several million waterbirds that disperse into both EAAF and American flyways. USA realises the potential impacts of loss of habitat elsewhere in the EAAF. Concerns about climate change in the Arctic: it is happening here in Alaska and will require international cooperation. Ms Thorson encouraged Partners to nominate more sites to the FSN. USFWS is an active member of CAFF and commends the new participation of CAFF in EAAFP.

### Welcome from the Chair

Dr Srey Sunleang, Government of Cambodia, on behalf of the Chair (H.E. Dr. Yin Kim Sean, Secretary of State of the Ministry of Environment), welcomed participants and expressed thanks to the USA hosts as well as the Secretariat for its preparations. He noted the increase in number of Partners and FSN sites since 2006, but highlighted also the great challenges for biodiversity due to habitat loss from human activity and climate change. This meeting will review achievements since MoP6 and our work from here on. The Chair wished the Meeting every success.

### Signing of Resolution of Cooperation with CAFF

CAFF is an initiative for the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna within the inter-governmental Arctic Council. Chief Executive mentioned the role of USA and Russia (especially EAAFP Focal Point, Evgeny Syroechkovskaya) in CAFF and their involvement in developing the Resolution. Resolution of Cooperation (<http://www.eaaflyway.net/documents/Resolution-of-Cooperation-between-CAFF-and-EAAFP-10June2013.pdf>) and Certificate were signed by Dr. Srey (for EAAFP) and Regional Director Thorson (for CAFF). USA (Director Thorson) thanked the Russian side for its promotion of this initiative; CAFF is a strong partnership and fully committed to EAAFP.

### Presentation of Certificates to new Partners: Malaysia, WCS, CAFF

Representatives of Malaysia, Wildlife Conservation Society and CAFF received Certificates from the Chair. Chief Executive expressed appreciation for the new Partners and looked forward to their participation in EAAFP.

### Presentation of Certificates to new Network Sites: USA, Malaysia, Australia (2), Japan

Chief Executive commended the FSN and how it can assist in conservation of critical sites for migratory waterbirds. Certificates were presented by USA (Director Thorson) as host.

- Yukon Delta Wildlife Refuge, USA: accepted by USFWS. First site for USA.
- Eighty Mile Beach, Australia & Roebuck Bay, Australia: accepted by Australia Government.

- Bako Buntal Bay, Malaysia: accepted by Malaysian Government. Malaysia expressed apologies from the Director-General and site manager who were both unable to attend. First site for Malaysia since formation of EAAFP.
- Arao-higata (part of Ariake Sea): Japan: accepted by Government of Japan. Japan has the largest number of FSN sites.

Representatives gave brief comments on the importance of each site. Importance of sites to local communities was emphasised.

Chief Executive gave special thanks to former USFWS representative Doug Alcorn for his efforts in planning the Meeting and for all his work and support to EAAFP over several years (three MoPs). Chief also thanked USA and the Chair for support and encouragement in planning MoP7.

## 1. Introductory session

### 1.1. Appointment of Meeting chairperson and rapporteurs

Dr Srey Sunleang (Chair/Cambodia) agreed to act as chairperson, in line with the Rules for Meetings previously adopted by EAAFP. The Meeting appointed Roger Jaensch and Taej Mundkur as rapporteurs.

### 1.2. Approval of Minutes of the 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Partners

The minutes of MoP6, Palembang, Indonesia, were posted on the website and then shown on screen. They were endorsed by Partners without alteration.

### 1.3. Approval of the Provisional Agenda for the 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Partners

The Agenda had been circulated before MoP7 and was shown again; it was endorsed by the Partners without alteration.

### 1.4. Welcome to Partners (existing and new) and Admittance of Observers

Apologies were received from several Partners as advised in the Agenda Documents: Mongolia, Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Rio Tinto, IUCN and FAO. Observers to MoP7 were admitted by the Chair.

Partner representatives and observers introduced themselves and their role in attending MoP7.

### 1.5. Presentation of new Partners' plans and activities

Malaysia spoke about Bako Buntal Bay, its new Network site in Sarawak State. The site is internationally important for Chinese (Swinhoe's) Egret, a species that breeds in the Yellow Sea region. Consultation with local people informed them of the status of the FSN; their livelihoods would not be negatively affected by the designation. Site includes areas some distance also to the east of the Bay itself. Plans are for sustaining awareness of the site and securing resources for management and conservation.

Consultant (RJ) mentioned potential for connections between the new FSN site and breeding sites of Chinese Egret in South Korea, where the EAAFP Secretariat is located.

Wildlife Conservation Society introduced its activities. WCS core conservation effort is helping to establish and manage protected areas around the world. For example, monitoring and conservation work at Tonle Sap (Prek Toal), Cambodia. WCS is also working on breeding of Dunlin and other EAAFP species on the North Slope of Alaska; also involved in recent protection

of a large breeding area in the Alaskan tundra. Birds from Australia have been recovered (Bar-tailed Godwit, 13,000 km journey.) WCS also sampled birds in South Korea for Avian Influenza. WCS hopes EAAFP can raise the profile of species and sites in-country and WCS can build on that.

Birdlife mentioned recent cooperation between BirdLife and WCS in the Flyway and hopes for additional cooperation. Indonesia mentioned the partnership of WCS with Indonesia on projects and encouraged its involvement in the Flyway as an NGO Partner. Chair/Cambodia mentioned cooperation with WCS in his country. Malaysia congratulated WCS on its work and requested discussion with WCS especially on geo-locator work.

CAFF emphasised the importance of the Arctic a breeding area for migratory flyway birds worldwide. The Biodiversity Working Group describes the state of ecosystems and their biodiversity in the Arctic which provides baseline for assessments and conservation action (Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program, CBMP). USA and Denmark are co-leaders of CBMP. The Arctic Council has a number of observer countries in our Flyway, e.g. China, South Korea, Singapore.

Wetlands International welcomed CAFF to EAAFP and emphasised monitoring and looked forward to common and unified monitoring processes in the Flyway.

## 1.6. Presentation of potential Partners' plans and activities: Myanmar, Vietnam

Chief Executive welcomed Myanmar and Vietnam and noted their past and current interest and supported, explained progress made with these countries and hoped they would join EAAFP as full Partners by MoP8.

Myanmar introduced the river basins, wetlands and ecosystems of the country; also laws, conservation strategies and CEPA. So far, 36 wetlands are in protected areas. Myanmar's NBSAP has action plans for wetlands. Regular surveys for migratory waterbirds are conducted. Impacts on migratory birds include hunting/trapping by local people; the government conducts awareness-raising. Myanmar seeks financial assistance for priority conservation activities. Gulf of Martaban (Mottama) is in process of being designated as a Ramsar Site and is a potential FSN site; is a key site for Spoon-billed Sandpiper. Cooperative activities are ongoing at several freshwater sites important for migratory waterbirds, some in cooperation with NGOs like BANCA (an observer at earlier MoPs). The Minister has approved Myanmar joining EAAFP and is now waiting for Cabinet approval. Myanmar looks forward to collaboration with EAAFP to achieve sustainable use of wetlands for migratory waterbirds.

Birdlife (SC) hopes Partners can work with Myanmar to protect its important sites. WBSJ emphasised the importance of Myanmar for Spoon-billed Sandpiper and encouraged the joining of Ramsar and EAAFP; was impressed with Myanmar Government's cooperation among Ministries, in addition to Environment, and with NGOs.

Vietnam (Biodiversity Conservation Agency). Vietnam is a high biodiversity country and has joined major biodiversity-related conventions. Explained the protected areas and IBAs of Vietnam; also conservation strategies. Introduced important areas for birds in the Mekong and Red River deltas and mentioned the key migratory species at these sites and main threats (hunting, conversion of mudflat habitat to aquaculture). Priority actions for migratory birds will include CEPA, identify and address threats at key sites, census/monitoring, enhanced planning and regulation. Assistance has been obtained from JICA on some projects. Expressed thanks to Host and Secretariat. Consultation to join EAAFP is well advanced.

## 2. Overview reporting

### 2.1. Report on Host Country MoU and Next Steps

Chief Executive expressed appreciation for the hosting of the Secretariat by Korean Government and Incheon Metropolitan City (IMC).

South Korea thanked the Meeting hosts and introduced the Hosting MoU including its automatic renewal clause. Korean Ministry of Environment met with IMC Government and they wish to prolong the MoU. Conditions for renewal include approval from Incheon Metropolitan Council which will meet in August 2013. MoE Korea will inform EAAFP of the decision by 7 November 2013 (6 months before the MoU anniversary). If not approved, MoE Korea could approach another local government in South Korea, which may be willing to host the Secretariat. Annual provision of budget is KRW 509 M and MoE Korea has also provided voluntary contributions for special projects amounting to KRW 69 M thus far.

- MoE Korea requested Partners to write to IMC via diplomatic channels to express their appreciation of IMC support so far.
- MoE Korea requested Partners to invite IMC Government as a Partner of EAAFP.
- MoE Korea requested Partners to invite IMC as an observer to the Secretariat's Management Committee and eventually to participate in financial matters of the Secretariat.

IMC mentioned the large financial contributions of Japan and Australia to the former Migratory Waterbirds Conservation Committee before EAAFP was formed but not since and welcomed restoration of such contributions. MoEK and IMC will do their best to secure ongoing funding.

Chair/Cambodia indicated its appreciation of the Hosting and encouraged Partners to write to IMC as requested by MoE Korea; may need to be via Ministry of Environment. Chief Executive indicated that these issues will be first on agenda at Management Committee meeting tomorrow from which there will be feedback to MoP/Partners. Japan expressed its thanks to Korea for its Hosting; may be difficult to send letter to MoEK from Foreign Affairs to IMC but perhaps from the Ministry of Environment; Japan has contributed funds to Secretariat budget and/or EAAFP activities of approx. 20,000 USD per year before the earthquake and now USD 10,000 per year; will be easier for Ministry to contribute regularly if a set amount is specified. Chief thanked Japan for its steadfast contributions, Indonesia hopes for stability of the Secretariat; letter would need to be at Departmental level because is not possible at diplomatic channel level (EAAFP participation is not at that level). Malaysia extended its appreciation to Korea/IMC for hosting of the Secretariat; requested Secretariat to coordinate writing of letters to IMC. ICF expressed thanks for the Hosting and for the advice from MoE Korea on how to proceed. Wetlands International expressed its appreciation to MoE Korea and IMC and for the specific recommendations and advised that it would follow up on writing. Ramsar thanked Korea/IMC for hosting the Secretariat for so long; as EAAFP is a Ramsar Regional Initiative it may be that Ramsar can write directly to IMC. Australia can write to the Ministry and thanked the Korean Government and IMC for its support of the MoU. Birdlife suggested that in addition a resolution from MoP7 expressing thanks (to MoE K and IMC) could help the process. China also expressed its thanks to the Hosts; continuity of Secretariat support is important and noted the key achievements since the hosting began; China SFA will be briefed on return; encouragement from outside will be strategic to convince IMC. AWSG recorded its thanks to the Hosts; supports Ramsar and BirdLife suggestions; letters to MoE Korea could be requesting that the letters be passed on to IMC. Chief requested very early finalisation of the letters and actions. Secretariat (YC): deadline probably is by end of June or start of July. Thailand reminded that Incheon is also the host for the Green Climate Fund initiated by the Climate Change Convention – diplomatic channels that are writing letters should be aware of this. New Zealand recognised the commitment by Korean Government and IMC and how it has helped progress EAAFP business; New Zealand will follow-up regarding letters.

## 2.2. Brief report from the Secretariat

This item was presented later in the Meeting. Chief spoke to the detailed Agenda Document and referred also to related agenda items. He acknowledged the support of MoE Korea and IMC and voluntary contributions from MoE Japan and support from others to EAAFP activities.



With arrival of the new Science Officer, the staffing level is close to being able to address the Secretariat's main tasks. Office will move within Incheon to I-Tower in July. Securing of three new Partners was a key result since MoP6 and their recent activity is appreciated. Addition of the five new FSN sites: includes some exceptional sites; Partners are encouraged to be active on new designations. We are still missing most of the Site Information Sheets and Partners were requested to assist in addressing this gap. Secretariat staff participated at international and domestic (Korean) forums to raise the profile of EAAFP; e.g. at Ramsar and CBD COPs, WCC in Jeju. Key reports on the 2011 Global Flyways Workshop and the IUCN situation analysis regarding intertidal habitats were published and presented. A Sister Site agreement (MoU) was secured between Sungei Buloh (Singapore) and Seocheon County, Korea, facilitated by Secretariat Program Officer. We are keen to have more of these. Secretariat organised a number of activities in Incheon) to raise awareness of the importance of migratory waterbirds, e.g. involving local citizens, especially youth, and encouraging international visitors to Secretariat to conduct activities in Incheon while they are visiting. Small grants provided for urgent purposes such as surveys in Russia for the declining Baer's Pochard and training on shorebirds in Mongolia. The grant for the FSN prioritisation project was the largest grant in the past period.

Next steps (Chief's personal summary):

- Promoting the FSN for effective conservation and management
- Promoting national partnerships
- Raising awareness internationally of the ecological crisis in the Flyway
- Increasing capacity at all levels for site protection and management

Great work being done by Program Officer on the website, who is currently seeking technical assistance to upgrade the website. Started an intern program; Sophie Dugast (France) was very involved with MoP7 preparations. Suggestions from Partners on potential interns, especially for support to the Science Officer, would be appreciated.

Australia: recognised the high quality of work done and progress made, especially on the website.

### Overview of activities since MoP6 including financial matters. Matters arising from 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Partners

Refer to the Agenda Document provided in advance of MoP7.

## 3. Implementation Status

### 3.1. Objective 1: Develop the Flyway Site Network

#### 3.1.1. Current status of Flyway Site Network and recent nominations

Secretariat (MK) explained the current situation: 113 sites designated (with status of several sites to be confirmed). Also gave brief overview of the 5 nominations since MoP6: Malaysia (1), USA (1), Australia (2), Japan (1). Secretariat lacks Site Information Sheets for most FSN sites.

Actions requested of Partners:

- Partners to identify a national priority list of candidates (see 3.1.4).
- Develop a strategy for new nominations
- Update info on current Network sites, including Site Information Sheets.

WWF asked why PNG and DPRK sites are in FSN but those countries are not yet Partners. Rapporteur: At formation of EAAFP, all sites in previous networks were invited to be included in

the new, single Flyway Site Network. Birdlife: it may take some time for DPRK to actually become a Partner, but it is worth persisting; DPRK keen to keep their two sites as Crane Network Sites in the FSN.

### 3.1.2. Report and Discussion on the Assessment of EAAF Flyway Network Sites

Wetlands International: An assessment of existing network sites was commissioned by the Secretariat in 2011 to Wetlands Int'l and Birdlife, who divided the task. Progress reported at MOP6. The study collected data on key sites, habitats, threats and conservation measures. Translation (2-ways) of info on some sites was required. Of the 100 sites at the time, some (ca. 24) could not be included in the assessment. Monitoring framework from IBAs was used with modification for the task. There were constraints regarding the boundaries of sites which limited the data that could be collated and the level of collaboration between site managers and people conducting counts. Difficult to know the real cause of changes in waterbird numbers - if due to local or flyway-scale impacts? Substantial increases in numbers of species for which FSN were recognised as being important. No reassessments have been made since designations occurred. Sixty percent of data were referenced. Only 24% of site (waterbird) count data have been analysed; limited amounts of data are being contributed to national and flyway databases; greater sharing of data would be beneficial. In the FSN, only 117 of 204 migratory waterbird species have been included so far. By one measure, the best represented species in the FSN at present include Greater White-fronted Goose, White-naped Crane and Australian Pratincole. Total of 271 threats identified across the sites; pollution was the commonest recognised threat. Threat assessment was not applied uniformly across the sites by the contributors, which limits interpretation. Also, it is difficult to draw flyway-wide conclusions about threats, since they are site specific. EAAFP role may be to help Government Partners to develop assessment and mitigation of threats domestically. Almost all sites are fully or partly protected and 84% have management plans; EAAFP FSN could move beyond this given that it is a voluntary initiative! Monitoring Task Force side event may give further feedback to plenary.

CMS asked who considered the site management plans to be comprehensive and/or adequate? Wetlands International: the site managers and/or data contributors. ICF: the exercise was very useful; are there any steps we can take to improve data sharing? Wetlands International: this can be done by the bird-watching groups; Government Partners could encourage sites to share data; challenges to get national databases going; lack of resources to bring info into the EAAFP forum. Chief: how can the assessment sheets from this project relate to the Site Information Sheets? Wetlands International: will discuss in the Monitoring TF meeting. CMS: would like a copy of the presentation. Chair: all presentations should be made available. Wetlands International: Secretariat could send the assessment forms back to the FSN managers and seek follow-up at national level. Malaysia: is currently developing a database including spatial info on key biodiversity sites and would like to discuss how to share info.

### 3.1.3. Report and Discussion on Monitoring in EAAF

Japan introduced a project with Birdlife to enhance monitoring activities in the EAAF. Recognising the need for standardised methodologies, the project also aimed to enhance understanding of the current status of waterbird populations. First workshop was held at Secretariat in 2012, which aimed to hold a pilot project at some EAAF sites and develop a work plan including methodologies. Second workshop held in Bangkok in Sep 2012 to share experience on the national monitoring schemes, choose pilot sites in EAAFP Flyway Site Network and test the monitoring methodology at pilot sites in China, Malaysia, Japan, Korea and Thailand. A draft form for site monitoring was developed. Thirteen sites were chosen for testing the draft methodologies. Framework uses the 'state/pressure/response' approach as implemented by Birdlife using an EAAFP Site Assessment Form based on the baseline site assessment. It is designed also for use during Asian Waterbird Census work. Timing of the assessment linked to the AWC implementation. A scoring system was developed to allow for sharing information across sites. Monthly monitoring is undertaken in Thailand. A questionnaire was sent out to assess the forms. Of 9 responses, 4 had no problems but two issues identified: (1) on how to assess the wetland habitats and impact of the threats and (2) continuity of site



surveyors. Training of volunteers is needed. Need to improve the form and methodology: add sub-site names for large sites; add field for latitude & longitude; need a map of the site to indicate distribution of waterbird habitat types and a manual for site monitoring for new surveyors; and add countermeasures against threats. Next steps: Summer monitoring to be completed by October 2013; revise the monitoring forms by December 2013; prepare a monitoring manual. March 2014 project results to be submitted. Distribute forms for all flyway sites.

AWSG: Training has been done in some countries but not standardised. Malaysia proposed that the information sheet to be user friendly for local groups for local monitoring to provide records of birds. Birdlife: assumption that the AWC network involved. For the threats and conservation measures there is an opportunity to work with the local groups. The Chair asked if the monitoring forms had been translated. BirdLife replied that the forms had been translated into Japanese and Chinese. China remarked that it is a very important step for sharing of data of the flyway network sites and requested the documents to be provided to Partners. Sought information on which sites in China are included and what level of participation of the sites. National Wildlife Inventory initiated last year including migratory species, depending on sites. Birdlife: testing of forms is underway, but have not discussed it with Partners. Hope to discuss further once the testing is completed. CMS: stressed that training is needed. Technical advisor (CL): Long term schemes can provide useful information on methodologies in China and Hong Kong. Technical advisor (RF): statisticians should be involved in the monitoring design to undertake power analysis.

### 3.1.4. Report and Discussion on Flyway Site Network Prioritisation Study

The project consultant (RJ) presented the summary and recommendations for action arising from the EAAFP project to prioritise candidate sites for nomination to the FSN. The project products were delivered to the Secretariat in late April and posted on its website in early May with notification to Partners on 8 May 2013. The consultant spoke to the report's Executive Summary, which was included in the MoP7 Agenda Documents.

The Flyway Site Network is a critical focus of the EAAFP Implementation strategy, and work was commissioned by the partners at the last MoP. RJ was appointed as a consultant with a reference group to provide guidance and feedback through the project.

Two main objectives: (1) To identify candidate sites to the network and to document the rationale; and (2) to prioritise candidate sites for nomination and make guidance available to Partners. The best available data were used, principally the highest count at a site; and site names and boundaries were used as provided without changes. Since time and resources were limited, it was not possible to make fresh queries of data sets held by international organisations, Government Partners, etc. Secondary sources of information were used including the Anatidae Atlas, Crane Atlas, Shorebird status overview, Red Data Book for Asia, and AWC 20 years' analysis report. Gaps were filled from published articles, project reports, datasets of researchers and some national agencies.

By necessity, waterbird records of up to about 30 years old were included; about half of the records were >15 years old. Changes in site condition had occurred in many sites; this was addressed at the project's last stage. A project-specific data management system was established using Excel spread-sheet for all sites included. This can be exported and used in a more sophisticated way in the future. Discussion papers on methodology were reviewed by the reference group. The project products are on the Partnership website (<http://www.eaaflyway.net/7th-mop.php#3.1.3>).

In total, 3080 waterbird records were collated from 21 countries from 540 secondary or primary sources. Fifty sites were important for 10 or more populations, with some being important for 60 populations. An integrated and updated list of 1060 existing and candidate FSN sites was produced. Only 10% of internationally important sites are in the FSN so the rest provide great potential for future nomination. In total, 179 waterbird populations are represented by at least one record and 30 of those populations are threatened; 66 of the populations have not been included in the current FSN sites. So

there is an opportunity to substantially broaden the scope of the network and make it more comprehensive.

Criteria for prioritisation were developed for the project: (1) that provides a measure of the contribution of the site to the network; (2) the number of populations at 1% level; and (3) number of threatened populations listed for the site in the project data set. Sites were sorted and ranked by score for each criterion and classes were applied country-by-country. The project has identified that inland (as well as coastal) sites are important: they comprise half of the top sites. East Dongting Lake in China was the top undesignated site against all three prioritisation criteria. Over the whole flyway, Poyang Lake complex was the site with the highest index for PC1. South-east Gulf of Carpentaria, was the highest ranked, undesignated site south of the equator.

#### Recommendations:

- Two new tools are now available to support strategic development of the FSN: a list of candidate sites and guidance on prioritisation. So, Partners are encouraged to use these tools to designate a significant number of sites to the FSN before MoP8, giving top priority to highest-ranked sites and under-represented populations. Partners are encouraged to raise awareness of the 1000 sites that have been identified as important for migratory waterbird conservation.
- There are challenges and possibilities to review and standardise site boundaries and names, improve problematic estimates for size of population and conduct fresh queries of major data sets on waterbird counts in the flyway. Other approaches may be needed to deal with particular populations that do not gather in large numbers, like rails, as the network site approach does not work well for them.
- Monitoring sites and reviewing, maintaining and updating flyway-scale databases on waterbird count data and site information and conducting further analysis requires substantial resources.
- A decision is needed by Partners on use of the draft list of populations and 1% thresholds developed for the project – based (as requested by MoP6) on the WPE5 estimates – to guide further nomination of sites to the FSN.

(See 4. Report on Key Issues from MoP7 for follow-up)

Indonesia welcomed the project results and data but advised that if candidate sites are outside currently existing protected areas it is very difficult for the Government agency to nominate them to the FSN; it depends on the local government and experience is that the process is long and there may not be local NGOs to support the process; are other ways available? Consultant reminded Partners that FSN designation is voluntary, the FSN is informal, and not legally-binding; and that whereas each Government Partner may choose how it proceeds, the FSN nevertheless is an informal network (not requiring the formality of Ramsar nominations) and offers opportunity to bring international status to sites that may never become protected areas. Ramsar agreed that the study was useful; noted that some highly ranked sites from the project results have existing status such as Ramsar site; suggested that the FSN indeed was an opportunity (as an informal network) to give profile to these vital but unprotected sites, which may in turn attract funds and NGOs that lead to site protection and suitable management – formally or informally. ICF requested that decisions be made during MoP on the three action areas arising. Chair agreed to make time later in the meeting.

Later, the Consultant presented again the three areas requiring decision on action:

1. Nominate more sites to the Network, using the project results as guidance.
2. Endorsement of the draft List of populations and estimates (updated to be consistent with latest/5<sup>th</sup> WPE) = Appendix 4 of project report (page 67): three approach options:
  - A: Partners to endorse use of the List (as in report Appendix 4) for all new site nominations.
  - B: Request the Secretariat to review and finalise the List within 2 months and obtain Partners' endorsement out-of-session.

C: Commission more substantial work on improving the List, for endorsement by Partners at MoP8 (possibly to occur in 2015).

3. Next steps on prioritisation initiative: e.g. start a process to develop a site network tool (or adapt AEWA's Critical Site Network Tool) for our Flyway.

(See 4. Report on Key Issues from MoP7 for follow-up)

ICF indicated that option C was too long and B too short; Working Groups need to look at the material and there are some oddities to discuss; need to allow 4 months and a mechanism for updates. New Zealand: it is useful to have a consistent list; but where estimates are shown as from 1 to, say, 10,000 birds, taking the lower limit of the range may be sensible but may have limited meaning if only 1 bird occurs at the site; would prefer to refine estimates and fill gaps where there are no estimates. Wetlands International: these matters will be discussed in the Monitoring Task Force meeting; we must have an agreed List in order to make further nominations to the FSN and to synchronise updates with the global updates of Waterbird Population Estimates for Ramsar, which are planned in three year cycles; this will include a role for regions to help with updates and thus allow wide input – this is being done in AEWA region with reports to their MoPs; we do not want a bits-and-pieces approach. CMS: on action (1), a reminder that we want to secure feedback from more Government Partners during this MoP on the prioritisation process (the report results). China: The project is mostly based on publications and the Asian Waterbird Census; data from China in AWC are incomplete and there is much data in Chinese language especially on inland waterbirds, thus some very important sites may not be in the project results; China would however endorse this preliminary study as a reference. Consultant clarified that the report is guidance only and that the Government Partner makes its own decisions on what sites to nominate and which data to use. Birdlife: the report is the start of a process; if there is a chance to refine it, yes; WGs or countries may advance the work if they wish and the Secretariat needs to be informed of their work. Australia: Option C is unsuitable because the next MoP will be too far in the future; suggest referring to WGs and countries for maybe 6 months; will need allocation of resources to go further. Chair: timeframe of (the next) 6 months seems good. Wetlands International: need to distinguish between two issues here: the report is a guidance document that the Government Partners are encouraged to look at and consider and they can do their own analysis; the second issue is the 1% criteria and adopting information from a global process which is updated; some technical work may be needed to enable correct interpretation for our Flyway; encourage the Partnership to stick with the principles and focus on this in the 6 month review. ICF: work is needed on (3) regarding uptake of the Critical Site Network Tool; for example, use of the highest count, which is not necessarily meaningful for cranes; do this over the next six months. USFWS: Are we looking at stopover sites as well? Consultant: yes, we use the staging criteria but care is needed in applying it meaningfully; in the project it was included for shorebird sites but need to do this for other waterbird groups. China: some ranges in WPE5 are not realistic. Wetlands International: explained the changes in presentation of data for ranges, between WPE4 and WPE5; need to focus on review and updates for WPE6, to be done in 2014; new information is coming in every year; estimates for EAAF are poorer due to inability to do comprehensive updates here. ICF: concerned that our FSN criteria do not work as well for species like cranes, nor in breeding areas, where we need better coverage of important sites. Thailand: appreciates the work of this project on site prioritisation; but reiterates Indonesia's point about not easily designating protected areas; how can the Secretariat help Government Partners designate such sites? Chief: recognises that nominations may be tough for Government Partners; happy to identify how Secretariat can provide support though it is not a funding body; could be helpful to develop materials into local languages (2-way) but Secretariat support is mainly going to be on scientific issues. Consultant: some key FSN documents already exist on EAAF website in other languages. Malaysia: shares concerns of Indonesia and Thailand; and wishes to cross-reference to other functions of wetland sites and to national priorities; will need some time to do this. Ramsar reiterated that our focus ought to be to nominate sites that have no protection, e.g. in BirdLife work to designate the Gulf of Martaban in Myanmar, that is not a protected area; NGOs can support Government Partners in this way. Thailand: as we have many NGO Partners, those with national offices please work to help Government Partners designate non-protected areas. Secretariat: consolidation of layers of types of key areas with best boundary information, will help identify sites, as in the Critical Site

Network Tool. Chief: We have both Ramsar and FSN site nomination processes and thus there are some inefficiencies; we should try to integrate efforts where sites meet criteria for both; Secretariat will collaborate with Ramsar to try to streamline the process. Birdlife: it may be good to have a process within countries to also identify the prospects to nominate sites, as an additional action by Government Partners, looking at the project report as a focus. Ramsar: we also have the CBD process, with Target 11 on increasing protected areas; look for synergies to achieve conservation. Malaysia: it is premature to endorse the list of priorities for nomination but can treat as a list for focus of attention. Wetlands International: two parallel issues here: one, the identification of priority sites, and two, challenges with the process; the recent project was a powerful process but Government Partners at formation of the EAAFP recognised they would not be able to list all key sites as Ramsar sites so the FSN gave an opportunity to recognise these other key sites (for migratory waterbirds); need to recognise the need to use innovative ways to protect sites other than Ramsar sites or protected areas; some key sites are too hard to make as protected areas; there may also be other community-based approaches to protecting waterbirds and their habitats so we can manage landscapes adequately. Cambodia: the national process varies from country to country; is very complex in Cambodia due to lots of consultation, from community up to Cabinet and Prime Minister; the mandate of the EAAFP focal point's Ministry does not cover non-protected areas. Miranda NT: we should adopt the list of populations and estimates today because there are more important issues we need to focus on next; we should adopt it in the context that it needs to be revised by next MoP. Birdlife: use the report as a shadow list Consultant: again reminded Partners to distinguish between the list of candidate sites and the List of populations and estimates. Birdlife: the guidance and list of populations are linked because one depends on the other; acknowledges there are challenges. Chair: Consultant to liaise with Partners during MoP and come back with recommendations on a way forward.

### 3.1.5. Report and Discussion on Developing “Critical Site Network Tool” for EAAF

Secretariat (JS) gave an overview of the Critical Site Network Tool (CSNT), its information sources (including data sets, species attributes, polygons of ranges). The work (steps) required to adapt the CSNT for use in the EAAF are (details are in the Agenda Document):

1. Spatially explicit definition of bird population boundaries
2. Update IWC and IBA databases
3. Obtain site coordinates and boundary info
4. Site consolidation
5. Allocation of sites to flyways
6. Incorporate the data
7. Strategic analysis

Partners were requested to:

- Approve the updating and adaptation of information into the CSNT
- Mandate the Secretariat to develop a detailed work plan and budget for the implementation of setting CSNT
- Through the species Working Groups, scientists and relevant organisations and individuals provide more precise spatial delineation or population flyways and count data
- Enhance waterbird monitoring at sites currently covered and other potentially important sites and provide the obtained data through the Asian Waterbird Census to improve the knowledge base of the Site Network
- National Partners share existing monitoring data, collect relevant site information (boundaries, threats etc.) from site managers and provide them to the Secretariat.

(See 4. Report on Key Issues from MoP7 for follow-up)

Suggestions were later brought forward from the Monitoring Task Force and are included here.

Wetlands International: The TF is working towards adapting the AEWA Critical Site Network Tool for the EAAF. There is a need to develop a medium term plan for this but is resource-dependent. Currently, we are adopting an incremental approach, taking small steps, each with multiple benefits.

Recommendation 1: A work plan to June 2014 to develop spatial information by the Secretariat (JS) including populations of breeding, staging and non-breeding (WG), Flyway Network Sites with existing data on Ramsar sites and protected areas (GP), IBAs (Birdlife) and waterbird count sites (INGO and GP).

Recommendation 2: Take first step by June 2014; low cost:

- Develop spatial info (Secretariat) on staging, breeding and non-breeding areas of waterbirds
  - Include taxonomic WGs
  - produce a geo-referenced of the boundaries of this
  - make use of BirdLife maps and fine tune them
- FSN site boundaries needed from Government Partners (Secretariat)
  - Also for protected areas and Ramsar sites
- IBA polygons: potentially can be accessed
- Waterbird count sites:
  - From international NGO Partners and Government Partners

(See 4. Report on Key Issues from MoP7 for follow-up)

Japan : Critical Site Network Tool seems a fine tool but as reported at MoP6, Japan is not sure if this is best for EAAFP. Seeks comparison with other existing tools to show it may be the best tool for us and wishes to know the cost for developing CSNT. Wetlands International: CSNT is being used in AEWA region; this has been reported before. We can use the time to MoP8 to outline costs involved versus a work plan. The CSNT really is unique – unless Partners can inform us of other systems. Birdlife: because it is a database, there are concerns. For example, the various regional databases governments are being ‘dragged’ into. Getting official information on boundaries is difficult. Ramsar: how much will this cost – order of magnitude. Wetlands International: for AEWA it cost USD 1M for the CSNT component. WWF: there are cost savings though. Wetlands International: in the WG we did not address the medium term; trying to devise a low cost plan of immediate work, to reach a more informed position without making any commitment to anything bigger.

Wetlands International: WPE6 update was discussed. Feedback sought from WGs and experts, to feed into WPE6, which allows review of trends. Work to do by Secretariat and Wetlands International.

- Recommendation 3: that EAAFP continues to use the WPE process to provide updates and for deriving the FSN thresholds. Partners to engage in WPE updates.

(See 4. Report on Key Issues from MoP7 for follow-up)

Consultant: Encouraged use by EAAFP of the most recent versions of Waterbird Population Estimates. USFWS: recommends we adopt WPE5 version, recognising that we are updating for WPE6. ICF: yes, OK, but want process to start in near future; set up small group to advise Secretariat on this. Seabird WG used a very different process.

See also recommendations under Section 3.1.4: matters arising

<b>3.2. Objective 2: Enhance communication, education and public awareness</b>
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### 3.2.1. Implementation of CEPA Strategy and Action Plan

Ramsar reported on activity of the CEPA Working Group. The purpose of the WG is to provide a flyway-wide framework to promote dialogue, cooperation and collaboration, with a range of

stakeholders and partners. The message of the flyway should be getting out to the full range of stakeholders. CEPA WG has been working to develop case studies and guidelines to enhance the conservation of migratory birds and their habitats. A template for case studies has been produced for MoP7 and for Partners, Working Groups and Task Forces to test the case studies to be produced by the end of the MoP.

The CEPA WG was required to review the EAAFP information paper for site managers regarding the benefits of a site joining the FSN – benefits from networking, capacity building opportunities, assistance to site managers, raised national and international recognition of site importance, and potential support for conservation activities. The paper promised a lot, so partners need to address this. A separate discussion on this topic was held later in MoP7 and is reported below.

It was recognised that the EAAFP website should provide building blocks (e.g. powerpoints, photos) for site managers who can use them to develop their own CEPA materials; Partners are again encouraged to supply such materials. WG and Secretariat worked to expand the website info including the species profile pages. Partnership should try to explain migratory waterbird issues in the EAAF to wider audiences, e.g. at the World Parks Conference, 2014. Partners are encouraged to incorporate migratory waterbird issues in NBSAPs. There is a key need to develop national partnerships to support the EAAFP agenda. CEPA WG also considered how to engage with local communities on management of FSN sites: Partners can focus on this domestically – so as to help/resource site managers. A workshop will be held in Philippines later in 2013 involving both Ramsar and FSN site managers to address some of these challenges. Overall challenge is to reach the many stakeholder groups.

China agreed these are good questions; site managers need money and capacity; China has developed a new policy through its National Development Reform Program – to get FSN sites into the 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan. If managers get their sites into the FSN they will get monetary incentive payments from the central government. Capacity building also is a major need; Beijing Forestry University has been conducting a training program since 2011 and this includes FSN managers. A three week international training course for the site managers was initiated in 2013. China could provide case study on these incentives and actions. It is proposed that such a training course could be undertaken each year. Through such a training programme, it will be possible to communicate the importance of the Partnership and their sites. Birdlife advised that Singapore is planning training activities for South East Asian FNS in January 2014. Chief: the Secretariat is regularly asked about the value of being part of the Partnership or a network site by governments and others. This is a key issue and an informal meeting during MoP7 is planned which should be the basis for further discussion. WWT asked for clarification on the concept. ICF said the more we expand the FSN the greater the challenges become for showing the benefits. Wetlands International reminded Partners of the Flyway Training Kit developed under the Wings over Wetlands project, which has a comprehensive section on communicating awareness raising issues for site managers. Malaysia: needs to set priorities for CEPA to approach local communities, site managers and gain political will to support conservation activities.

### 3.2.2. E-newsletter and publications

Secretariat (MK) overviewed the considerable work accomplished since MoP6 including e-newsletters (4) and other publications. All are downloadable from EAAFP website. It includes report of the Global Flyways Workshop, World Migratory Bird Day poster; IUCN Situation Analysis posted to website, species posters on key species (Black-faced Spoonbill and Bar-tailed Godwit) and links to reports and other references published by others. Partners are requested to give greater feedback on their activities for World Migratory Bird Day. Secretariat can provide design files to Partners if they wish to produce posters in local languages. New website pages set up for task forces (e.g. Scaly-sided Merganser) and other threatened species – Saunders' Gull, Baer's Pochard and Black-faced Spoonbill. Challenges: profile of EAAFP remains low; lack of communication between site managers; translation into other languages. Partners encouraged to raise profile of EAAFP (e.g. as a Ramsar Regional Initiative); to translate documents into local languages. Secretariat welcomes other ideas on CEPA work. A comprehensive agenda document was provided on this item.



WWF congratulated EAAFP on improvements to the website and that the posted info is useful and this work should continue.

### 3.3. Objective 3: Enhance flyway research and monitoring activities, knowledge and promote exchange of information

WBSJ requested speakers to keep in mind the non-English-speakers in the audience.

#### 3.3.3. Science Workshop: Putting science to work in the East Asian – Australasian Flyway

University of Queensland: We are seeking an agreed list of priorities for science to support EAAFP for coming years. Other aspects are important too; science is one small part of the overall picture. What science do we need and how do we put into useful format to make better decisions? Much is going on: 188 different scientists from 17 countries are working on relevant issues. From this Meeting we hope to achieve:

- Output 1 = agreed list of priority science questions.
- Output 2 = how to make best use of existing science, to communicate it to all who need it.
- Output 3 = where to go from here? Do we need a forming guiding network.

Science is any systematic activity to acquire knowledge. Discover how ecological systems work; impact of people; effectiveness of tools for managing ecosystems; working at various scales. Science could do the following for the EAAF:

- Test the quality of data, peer review
- Information about ecological networks
- Measure impacts of management strategies
- Summarise large amounts of info.

Survey of Partners before MoP7 secured 62 suggestions for questions to answer and 48 ways to address existing info.

#### Short presentations on knowledge/information relevant for decision-makers

Secretariat: Provision of scientific articles: many are hidden behind copyright walls. Refer to previous synopsis done by previous Science Officer every six months; since MoP6 the Secretariat has collated 600 articles. Can we establish access to articles via password protection on the EAAFP website? Open to suggestions for how best to do this. Dropbox has low limits (only 8 GB). Request Partners and experts to email Secretariat if they have articles/references they think are worth sharing.

Wetlands International: someone in the university system must know how to address copyright issues for sharing.

University of Queensland (CS). Role is to analyse data to identify trends in waterbird populations. Presentation on population collapse in Australia's shorebirds based on AWSG/BirdLife Australia count data. Repeated surveys used to calculate detection probability. Twenty year decline detected of 75% in Curlew Sandpiper numbers nationally: a true collapse! But this does not tell us where we need to take action! Collapse rates vary geographically and are greatest in eastern Australia. Goal is to use groupings to inform site prioritisation and predict result of future habitat loss for population trends.

Wetlands International is great to see this analysis happening and counters will appreciate this.

AWSG (KG). Non academics are also conducting science. AWSG uses geo-locators to learn about migration strategies of small shorebirds. These tools have limitations in accuracy, in high

latitudes, around the spring/autumn equinox and require recapture. Three years' experience using geo-locators on 7 species. Have learnt much about migration pathways and (new) stopover locations (e.g. in SE Asia), breeding areas for some species, multi-year strategies and incubation characteristics. Conservation outcomes are increased knowledge, inform satellite tracking programs and new projects such as ICARUS.

University of Queensland (NM). Mapping tidal flats with remote sensing. Using satellite imagery, as old as possible; method exists for detection of tidal flats in imagery. Applied through most of China and Korea; used 28,000 images; 2 years of work. Even for remote areas; back to the 1950s. Losses tend to be incremental but substantial over time. In Yellow Sea region, 65% loss of tidal flats overall. Some increase, e.g. Yellow River delta. Plan to expand study to whole Flyway, using 290,000 images and a longer time frame.

University of Princeton (JG). Who are the winners and losers of land use change? Seeking to identify data sources. Loss of mudflat habitats: what are the economic gains/losses? Economics is about allocation of scarce resources. Links between mudflats and human wellbeing are not being made. Who benefits most and who is losing out? Do the negative effects outweigh the benefits? Project wants to identify the anthropogenic values before and after change and to quantify values. Looking at pollution and impacts on food security (as well as waterbirds); and conversion of salt ponds to shrimp ponds; potentially also to look at Arctic breeding grounds.

ICF: only working on coastal systems now? Yes.

### Discussion of priority information availability, sharing and needs

University of Queensland (RF). Results of questionnaire within EAAFP: 62 responses.

- Focus by respondents on threats and monitoring; also actions to take, and ecology.
- Much of the science underway in the Flyway is on ecology, which was the lowest rated issue by Partners.

Wetlands International: the answers to the questions relate to the role of the respondent, e.g. decision maker; otherwise.

Top ten scientific questions:

#### 1. How are numbers of waterbirds in EAAF changing over time?

University of Queensland (RF): how can we develop an integrated data base? RSPB/BirdLife: difficult but necessary to quantify numbers and trends; our defence of biodiversity is weak because our info is inadequate; to address this is one of the most important roles the EAAFP can play. We need inventory of where data resides, who owns it, how to bring it together and get robust answers to questions. Thailand interested in the policy-maker perspective; science often cannot answer our questions, so have to work hard to convince of the importance of habitat conservation, at all levels of administration. Need this to defend budget allocations for conservation agencies. The key issue is to communicate science effectively. Australia: data limitations should not hold back the communication to policy makers. University of Queensland: thus we need to make better use of the info we have. Wetlands International we must link the investments in communicating to investments in monitoring. Birdlife: better approach may be to look at this matter the opposite way around (questions were not fully objective); some assumptions made. University of Queensland: we did consider this but wanted to keep focus narrowly on science, recognising that science is but one part of the process. Malaysia: how can data assist in the sustainable development process?

#### 2. How do migratory waterbirds react to habitat loss? Can they find alternative habitats?

AWSG: Many engineers think birds will move somewhere else but key sites are being lost incrementally, with great impact overall. ICF: losses as shown in the whole region in the UQ presentation are what we need; we need this also for inland regions such as the Yangtze Valley. Need to scale up our research scale; need the whole picture, not just at single site scale. Audubon: we have considered that all habitat is equal whereas not so; there are key sites based on food resources; we need to know this. Knots for example require bivalve food whereas other species are more versatile; Spoon-billed Sandpiper has a feeding specialisation. AWSG: policy makers need to be educated on specialised needs of various species. WWF: site managers frequently ask this question.

University of Queensland: these two questions clearly are very important.

### 3. What wetland restoration techniques work in the EAAF?

University of Queensland (RF): science can provide case studies and reviews of what works well. RSPB/BirdLife: agree we need also to restore sites; may be more feasible than stopping further loss, sometimes. ICF: but many functions are impossible to replace and decision makers need to realise this. Unknown: useful to tell us about the relative costs of different restoration methods. WBSJ: restoration can also lead to habitat destruction. WWF China: we need to know how we can sustainably use coastal wetlands. Wetlands International: ecosystem services approach is increasingly important. Australia: info needed to determine offsets that will counter development proposals. CMS: a key question is what are the important drivers of habitat loss? University of Queensland: this did not come up in the consultation but comments are still welcome.

### 4. How viable are endangered and critically endangered populations in EAAF? (Which species may soon be extinct?)

RSPB/BirdLife: clarified the issue. University of Queensland: maybe we need new FSN criteria to address the situation with declining sites.

5. What are the migration routes and stopover sites for lesser known EAAF species?
6. Why it is important to conserve migratory waterbirds (to convince others)
7. What are the important sites and how is their condition changing
8. Priority actions to conserve
9. Effect of contaminants and pollution
10. Artificial habitat: what methods work?

Observer (D. Melville): what happens when birds double their weight over short period feeding in heavily polluted areas such as Bohai Wan? Secretariat: there is info about this from the USA. ICF: this is where human and bird health intersect. Wetlands International: clarification sought on (8). University of Queensland: a general shift to broader questions than just site and species based focus. Audubon: it is important for policy makers to understand the hotspot areas and key sites, where populations will suffer the most if habitat is lost, or where there is an emergency with limited time. WWF: why was climate change not in the top 10 given its importance globally? University of Queensland: it is in the longer list. Australia: different approaches are needed for each country; a lot of work is being done in Australia on environmental accounting; need to include migratory waterbirds in this. Birdlife: can the responses to the questionnaire be sorted by source of responses because this may give greater clarity to the key questions; Government Partners rarely respond (and they did not) to questionnaires; the top 10 questions shown here would not be the top 10 from Government Partners. University of Queensland: yes this could be done.

### Ideas for making use of science

Secretariat : Key issue is that the info is there but is not reaching the right people. Biggest issue was info-sharing; then communications and networks; collate and distribute

information about species; provide better access to the scientific literature; share data from scientific studies conducted in the Flyway; improve the credibility of EAAFP science; form national partnerships to link science to national and local-level decision-makers; and bring wider sectoral interests to the EAAFP meetings.

CMS: was the new knowledge on (for example) recoveries of geo-locators (new stopover site in Vietnam) communicated to Vietnam Government? This is a common problem. USFWS: a good way to communicate is to tell a story, this helps people to cue in; there is a standard way of doing this effectively and scientists could be doing this as well. Secretariat: translations are important but the work is un-fundable; could work with university students. Australia: the UQ project group is helpful to the policy makers because knowledge is shared between academics and policy makers. Consultant: development of national partnerships would really assist this. Birdlife: problems with most results coming out in English language; studies have been duplicated without knowing. Wetlands International: information at the Flyway level needs to be duplicated/filtered to national level and below (through national partnerships). University of Queensland: it is vital that scientists communicate results among themselves, to set priorities for their work. In conclusion, University of Queensland will prepare a short report on this agenda item; there seems no need to set up anything by way of formal structures.

### 3.4. Objective 4: Build capacity to manage waterbirds and their habitats

#### 3.4.1. Report on Work and Recommendations of Seabird Working Group

Australia: (PO'N, Chair of WG). Has been successful work done on some seabirds in the Flyway, e.g. Chinese Crested Tern, and much work worldwide on seabirds, e.g. on fisheries. We needed to know which species the WG would work on and thus require the most conservation effort. Report on past 12 months of work by the WG. There are 6 critically endangered seabirds in the flyway; three centrally occurring, three southerly. Recognised there were differences in lists of species identified as seabirds under EAAFP. Presented list of species in the Seabird WG's proposal for consideration as being under EAAFP; 35 are low priority because they are not migratory and 20 that are endangered and covered under other work; so some discrimination, leaving 131 species. Used IUCN conservation status to prioritise and that narrowed down to 40 species. These further prioritised according to trends and threats. The WG would like to get the report to final version and upload on EAAFP website over next 6 months. Also there is no central repository for breeding information on these seabirds. USFWS is building a global register of breeding colonies and this might be a focus for the WG too (over next year); makes the info available to other initiatives. Also, hope to nominate some sites to the FSN during next year and Chair of this WG happy to assist Government Partners to nominate such sites. Encouraged conservation planning in the Flyway to consider the high priority species that the WG has identified. Also requests Partners to report sightings/recoveries of marked seabirds.

USFWS (RK) Seabird Information Network (SIN) database is a global project: [www.seabirds.net](http://www.seabirds.net) Provides storage, sharing and online visualisation of seabird data; includes information on population trends and mapping. Population estimate is the current best estimate and may rely on historical information; many colonies have not been surveyed for 10-20 years. Interactive database was demonstrated. SIN also provides guidance to its partners on data collection and management. It can assist seabird research and management. Australia: for EAAFP we would start simply and assess if this initiative is workable for EAAFP. Birdlife (SS) introduced the Marine IBAs program of BLI which started in 2010 with a workshop; WBSJ and Russia were active early; involved some modelling work led by Japan; USA also involved through Audubon; how to use for EAAFP work by Seabird WG? Need to review the IBAs and could put info into the SIN.

Audubon (NW): endorsed the value of the IBA info for assembling the SIN. China (Hong Kong Govt): the Seabird WG also considered other species, not just the priority ones. Australia: the WG wishes to work on the complete list of seabird species. Wetlands International: has the WG

generated population estimates for species as these would be needed for using the 1% criterion (for FSN nominations). Australia: a next step would be to introduce such information, starting with those priority species; counts are lacking for some species; don't have comprehensive information available, it is scattered and held by individuals and agencies.

No objections were raised to the list of seabird Families and migratory seabird species included in the seabird prioritisation project, and these Families and species are now included within the scope of the Seabird Working Group.

New Zealand supports the rationale for the priority of the seabird species that included in the Seabird WG report with the exception of the New Zealand Storm petrel. In conversation with the Chair (PO'N), New Zealand was able to provide updated information on the breeding of the species, the current conservation management that is under way and the increasing evidence to question its migratory status consequently the priority accorded to the NZ storm petrel is not appropriate to be included to the WG report.

### 3.4.2. Discussion on Yellow Sea Initiatives, including IUCN Resolution 28

Wetlands International (DW) and RSPB/BirdLife (NC). Reporting back on the Yellow Sea Task Force meeting in this MoP and also the IUCN resolution, as that applies to EAAFP. Challenge in developing a work plan for the task force. This is the first time EAAFP has tried to have a specific workplan in two specific countries. The challenge is to integrate with the work of the Government Partners – must have harmony on this. In the Task Force meeting both China and Korea agreed on the value of the collaboration but highlighted the complexity of administration/jurisdiction over tidal flat areas. They agreed that high level approaches from other Partners were valuable and that a bilateral program for the Yellow Sea was desirable. Both China and Korea undertook to develop the mechanisms within the countries to facilitate a supportive arrangement domestically. Other Government Partners (USA, Australia, NZ) expressed interest in sharing expertise and in engaging in Yellow Sea issues. NZ and Australia undertook to promote the importance of Yellow Sea (migratory waterbird) issues in forums they hold with China and South Korea. Other Partners expressed strong interest in Yellow Sea collaboration. Further work is needed to develop national workshops that would move along the domestic partnership of support and will require international funding. China and South Korea agreed to progress inter-governmental discussions to formalise a process for collaboration in a Yellow Sea partnership program. Much depends on having clearer understanding of Governments of China and Korea on this subject.

WWF (China) plans field work in coming years and CEPA work in its own program in this ecoregion and wishes to be involved. New Zealand: acknowledged the hard work of the Chair of the Task Force (DW). Ramsar also wishes to be involved. Wetlands International: first communication will be to all interested stakeholders.

Wetlands International and RSPB/BirdLife): showed the text of the IUCN resolution adopted at the recent IUCN Congress, Jeju. There is close alignment of EAAFP and IUCN objectives. More study of the ecosystem services of coastal wetlands is needed. There is recognition that processes are underway at the national level. Need to develop international and national plans of action including: focus on key sites; strengthening Ramsar; strengthening domestic policy and legislation; (as a domestic matter) addressing land-use issues; enhanced coastal zone planning; habitat restoration; CEPA work; and improving the understanding of bird conservation needs. EAAFP work matches well with the IUCN-endorsed foci of effort. Upcoming meetings relevant to this matter, where Partners could promote the subject, include: CBD SBSTTA (Oct 2013); Asia Parks Congress (Nov 2013); IPBES (Dec 2013); IOC (Aug 2014); CBD COP12 (Oct 2014); EAAFP MoP8 (Jan 2015). Task Force did not identify any action for the EAAFP plenary but it has a clearer knowledge of the steps needed to move forward including by the key Government Partners.

Chief: when will we get a work plan for the Task Force? Wetlands International: it is conditional on the key Government Partners as their mandate (leading to approval of planned activities) is essential to any work plan development; such plan unlikely before early 2014, with presentation



at MoP8. The TF can develop some things while that mandate is being developed. Ramsar: next COP of Ramsar will be in 2015 so any resolution for that COP needs work-up in 2014.

### Participatory Workshop to Report on Partners' Contribution to Implementation Strategy

Chief: National Reports so far have been the only way to measure progress against the Implementation Strategy, applicable to all parts of EAAFP. We need to be able to see what individual Partners have done to be able to report effectively. Process of reporting via National Reports has been weakly followed - only 6 reports were received at MoP6. This time we will try an interactive process in the coming session. Secretariat will seek input from absent Partners and analyse subsequently and circulate for comment. Reporting Period is from MoP6 to MoP7. The reporting chart attached to the wall has Partners (all) on one axis and the Strategy outcomes on the other axis. Partners were notified about this in advance and some Partners have done preparation and that is acknowledged. Partners need to write their outcomes on cards in the chart and then we can analyse the combined response. Ultimately, it would be good to have an annual (glossy) report that has a page for each Partner and actions undertaken during the year, but this may be difficult at this stage – perhaps in the future. Birdlife: the process enables writing at a comfortable speed; Partners should stick to one colour, each.

Partners made many entries on the chart. Chief asked Partners to provide some verbal feedback.

Australia: there was earlier discussion on duplicated Outcomes but we were constrained by the Partnership document. CMS: perhaps so, but we really need to go deeper to the lower/detailed levels of the Strategy to fully understand and appreciate the differences between the Outcomes. Partners will benefit from reading the detail in the Strategy, in filling out these report-back cards. For example, threats do appear under one of the detailed levels but are not obvious at the level of just the 11 Outcomes. Miranda: needed a place to fit work on Sister Sites. Chief: yes it is in the Strategy. USFWS: would be useful to allow feedback on work being done on other issues such as work on other contaminants. Chief: the Strategy is comprehensive but our exercise today necessarily has to be a simplification. China: this exercise is interesting but can we design an online form with choices/ options and then can export the results easily to all Partners? Chief: forms sent out in advance had led to few responses; the template was perhaps a little daunting. Thailand: if Partners are informed early enough they can use the National Report template more readily; electronic form is OK. And could Ramsar and EAAFP national reports be combined? Chair: the format provided for Ramsar reporting is easier for them. Chief: the issue seems to be getting it done; Thailand did a great job this time. Wetlands International: it takes some time to do the electronic forms; often the questions are black and white whereas work is ongoing/incomplete; we could learn from Ramsar and others on how they have fine-tuned this process. It should not be only the responsibility of the Government Partner focal point to fill in these forms; national partnerships and consultation could greatly support this reporting work. CMS: this reporting does allow incorporation of a lot more info from NGOs than is possible under the formal inter-governmental agreements. Early action on this would allow Secretariat to do analysis before MoP. The CMS Turtle program has an online reporting system and feedback is provided to every meeting of the Turtle MoU. MoP7 should request earlier reporting to enable synthesis and reporting before MoPs. China: need an implementation plan as well as a strategy. Chief: the Secretariat has its work plan for implementation, its own responsibilities; but it depends also on cooperation from others, so is not totally clear-cut so suggestions for improvement would be welcome.

Chief: if anyone has objections to their PowerPoints being circulated/copied, please advise. On Friday people can get copies from the Secretariat.

### 3.5. Objective 5: Develop flyway-wide approaches to enhance the conservation status of migratory waterbirds



### 3.5.1. Report by Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force

WBSJ reported on behalf of TF Chair. Implementation Plan was advanced at MoP6. National action plan developed for Thailand. This is the second year of successful cooperation with BirdLife Species Champion Heritage Expeditions, supporting ongoing efforts in the breeding area in Russia. Also captive breeding program resulting in some birds being released for 'headstarting'. Awareness program has been conducted. Myanmar announced it would designate Gulf of Mottama (Martaban), a key non-breeding site, as a Ramsar site. CEPA work is being carried out in Bangladesh to stop shorebird hunting. Mist-netting and threat of habitat loss in southern China; surveys and CEPA work by bird-watching groups. An animation project has been developed by the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society. Appeal to Partners to continue support to TF, to monitor the species and its threats, to help reduce/stop threats including reclamation of mudflats.

### 3.5.2. Report on Black-faced Spoonbill (conservation activity since MoP6)

BirdLife/HKBWS: ongoing survey work; latest census was 2725 birds. Found an important post-breeding site (292 birds, incomplete count) in west of North Korea. Species is popular and CEPA work is important. We are hoping to have a focal point for better coordination of efforts. Korea: even though winter counts show recent slight increase in population, the species is still truly endangered and needs collaborative conservation activities between Korea (N/S), Japan, China, Vietnam and Cambodia. Korean Government would like to direct some its voluntary contribution to EAAFP to support some of the BFS work. KRW 50 million donated last year and will increase to KRW 70 M donated to EAAFP next year; please use this to set up a working group, or for specific activities.

### 3.5.3. Report on Scaly-sided Merganser (conservation activity since MoP6)

WWT: the Scaly-sided Merganser is listed as endangered in various range countries. Map of breeding distribution recently redefined by Russian researchers. Main population breeds in Primorye, Russia (1563 pairs) and Changbai, China (177 pairs), with possibly 200 pairs in DPRK, and a few minor outliers. Geo-locator work has helped define wintering area in southern China and South Korea and migration pathways. Total population about 5000 birds; declining but probably stable in Russia. Nest box program is helping to bolster the breeding population, but there is concern over impacts of heavy metals in rivers. Wish to complete the Action Plan and officially sign off on the ToR and appoint members and chair for the Task Force.

China: clarification on surveys of winter surveys? WWT: only at planning stage.

### 3.5.4. Report on Chinese Crested Tern (conservation activity since MoP6)

Birdlife: Known population not more than 30 birds, breeding only on two islands. Found to usually nest with Great Crested Tern. Possibly some still winter in Indonesia. Action Plan (2010) focuses on egg poaching by fishermen. Education program draws on greater impact the opinions of children have on their parents these days (due to the one child policy). Since MoP6: education programs in Xiangshan County, Zhejiang; participation in fishery festival; advocacy with Fishery Department; visits to colony sites; training workshop; sharing expertise on reintroductions with Japan (YIO) and USA; colony restoration. Several Greater Crested Terns stayed on the restoration site for about one week in early June 2013.

### 3.5.5. Potential Single Species Action Plan for Baer's Pochard

WWT: Wide historical range of Baer's Pochard in breeding and wintering areas; listed as Critically Endangered in 2012 (less than 1000 birds, could be as few as 100 and thus on brink of extinction) with very recent drastic decline. Causes of decline unknown but probably multiple; ideas on causes are welcome. Significant flocks (up to 760) found at some sites only two winters ago. There has rarely been a widespread continental species go to extinction. We could accept that the species cannot be saved: we don't know the decline cause; not likely to attract funds;

and there are practical difficulties of conserving a dispersed breeding population. We could form an EAAFP Task Force and find a lead organisation; conduct surveys and monitoring; awareness raising; captive breeding; and/or reintroduction.

BirdLife (HKBWS): has a fund to support bird surveys in China. Happy to collaborate on this species and has supported Scaly-sided

Merganser surveys in the past and ongoing. Wetlands International: Bird Conservation Society of Thailand has recently sent data for AWC and numbers have crashed there in the last two years.

Birdlife (SC): what about present numbers in Myanmar? This species is probably still wintering in central Myanmar Wetlands International: Baer's Pochard is a very serious issue, perhaps some of us can bring back a recommendation on Friday? Myanmar: Baer's Pochard name is familiar, bird census occurs, but Department is weak on transferring data to NGOs in other countries; will check survey data on Baer's Pochard on return to Myanmar and will inform EAAFP. Cao Lei: recommends a meeting to discuss protection of the suite of highly threatened species in Yangtze Valley including Baer's Pochard – knowledge is very poor but decline may be linked to loss of submerged macrophytes. Birdlife (SC): a recent breeding report from Hebei Province near Beijing.

### Proposal for a Baer's Pochard Task Force (moved up from AOB, for continuity)

WWT: seeking endorsement of Partners for the draft Terms of Reference for the Baer's Pochard Task Force (Agenda Doc. 3.5.5) and an immediate action plan for development over the next few months; the ToR is based on the standard model for Task Forces adopted at a previous MoP. Australia: some names of members are missing. WWT: we have progressed this but are not asking for those names to be confirmed. Birdlife supports the formation of the Task Force. Wetlands International: welcomes this action and the rapid response; can the action plan be circulated to Partners as soon as possible and also circulate at meetings in the region. CMS: should bring to attention of CMS Scientific Council given their past role in this type of thing; some resolutions adopted by CMS in similar situations; for species in dire straits a separate immediate action is necessary; CMS will assist raising attention to this. WWT: there is no mechanism for bringing forward any emergency action plans and this initiative by EAAFP now may precipitate similar action by the conventions and others. AWSG: did we adopt this? WWT: the EAAFP endorses the draft ToR of the Baer's Pochard Task Force and requests the Secretariat to establish the TF and appoint the lead organisation, chair and coordinator and produce an action plan, as soon as possible and at latest by end of August 2013. The proposal was endorsed by the Partners.

### 3.5.6. Potential Single Species Action Plan for Saunders's Gull

Yamashina Institute: Cooperative research between Japan, Korea and China regarding Saunders's Gull is ongoing. Colour flagging and related research on migration; needs more reporting of marked bird sightings from China; explained findings of migration paths and changes in breeding sites. Populations have risen until recent declines as saltmarsh is being lost and reclaimed areas used for breeding are built on. Collaborators have developed an action plan. Observer (D Melville): future of Saunders's Gull is uncertain; reclaimed areas become unsuitable as vegetation grows; threat from expansion of *Spartina* grass in parts of China. Is there scope for habitat restoration? *Spartina* has affected former breeding areas in Yancheng. Can we get projects in China to address *Spartina* (since actively planted by local governments to assist reclamation). Future for Saunders's Gull may depend on man-made and managed habitats.

## 3.6. Brief update from EAAFP Working Groups and other special purpose groups

Note: Order of notes and the numbering may vary from the adopted agenda.

### Shorebird WG

Chair, AWSG (KG). Role of the WG has been discussed a lot over the past year. During MoP7, David Melville reported on his recent survey around the Yellow Sea: led to much discussion which fed into Yellow Sea Task Force discussions. In response to Chair's request for three priority issues for shorebird conservation in the EAAF: synthesis showed that they may be:

- map coastal reclamation and development plans for next 10 years and likely impact on shorebirds.
- use technologies (geo-locators, transmitters, stable isotope work) to better understand the important stopover, breeding and non-breeding areas and change in use of sites after habitat alteration
- better understand population trends from analysis of count data and survival analysis.

AWSG (KG): In the WG meetings, Bena Smith (WWF HK) introduced the draft of Part 1 of WWF's shorebird conservation plan. It will be distributed more widely to people in the EAAFP. Next step is to develop a conservation plan. Partnership can input to the plan so it reflects EAAFP's desired outcomes.

AWSG (KG). Still require nominees as formal representatives to the WG from some Partners. Need a wider consultative network. And it needs to be recognised that resources are required – WGs quite often have no resources – in order to meet Partner requests. WGs are a centre of expertise and can help the EAAFP but they need resources to do substantial work.

WWT: need to produce the shorebird conservation plan as a Flyway document in order to demonstrate ownership.

## Crane WG

Birdlife (SC): WG meetings are held separately from MoPs and over two days: at two locations in China: Beijing on 30 November 2012 and Yueyang on 7 December 2012. Recognise need for a workshop for sharing of experience on public education and involvement. Need to have coordinated counts to confirm birds have relocated wintering areas to Korean Peninsula and currently exploring new ways to track migration using public communication via mobile phones. Workshop held at Beijing Forestry University on crane protection and sustainable agriculture; it involved DPRK colleagues. Meeting on cranes and powerline had also held. Mentioned that the Crane Working Group noticed some crane populations have been taking out of the EAAFP without notification to the Working Group and it has caused some problems in designating sites for some crane species. Has recalled at MoP2 both BirdLife and the Wild Bird Society of Japan had volunteered in reviewing the list of waterbird under the EAAFP but not consulted afterwards. Therefore would like to join the discussion on the waterbird/seabird population estimation list.

Korea: endorsed the use of roaming on mobile phones as a cost effective tool to track migration. Also supported reviewing the EAAFP waterbird population list of some crane populations Japan: MoE Japan tried to restore migration of the Hokkaido population of Red-crowned Crane. But restoration of agriculture would perhaps lead to conflict with agriculture and increased bird collisions. (I think Yanagiya-san's comment was that the Red-crowned Crane was so important that the JR (Japan Rail) reduced the train speed to prevent collision of trains and cranes.)

## Anatidae WG

Chair of WG (MK). Increase in clear knowledge of Anatidae populations and their wintering grounds involving Russia, Japan and Korea but still many unknowns especially in China. There was a task force for Swan Goose but its leader died; Baikal Teal task force has not worked well. Need to decide how to address these two species as well as Baer's Pochard and others, in the future. Plan to set up a database.

## CEPA WG

Ramsar, as Chair of WG. Has been a request for a template for the case studies and he will email it. Government representatives find it very difficult to designate new protected areas; so, it

is important to make local decision makers as well as local communities understand value of protection of wetlands. "Bottom up" approaches have worked best, so there's a role for CEPA in this. A site managers' workshop will be held in Manila in 2013 to identify best practices for wetland conservation and flyway site conservation. Need to fully understand whole range of ecosystem services in order to promote protection locally. Need to raise the profile of the Partnership; key role for Secretariat to attend all high level meetings coming up.

AWSG (PS): if people would like copies of CEPA documents they should approach the Secretariat. CMS: which countries invited to Manila workshop? Ramsar: most flyway countries have been invited.

### Avian Influenza WG

Wetlands International, Chair (TM): this WG focuses on EAAFP Implementation Strategy's Outcome 9. FAO sends apologies for inability to attend MoP7. Funding from MoE Japan for the coordination work by this WG is acknowledged. Since MoP6, continued communication through the AI network. There has been a low incidence of virus in the reporting period. Type H7N9 has occurred in China in humans and poultry but seems to have been contained. Ramsar and WWT produced a helpful manual. Surveillance is ongoing but no current regional project and thus not optimal sharing of results of surveillance at national level. Partners requested to:

- continue AI surveillance at FSN sites and link to marking work
- provide annual updates on numbers of birds tested and results of surveillance for an annual update to EAAFP
- share on an ongoing and timely basis (formal and informal) information/ reports of AI (or suspected AI) in wild birds to WG to enable collation and sharing of results
- continue to use the WG to support this work
- provide updates of details of contacts for existing representatives in each country
- contribute resources towards costs of WG coordination any additional actions that may arise and for meetings of this AI WG.

### Monitoring Task Force

The discussion of the Monitoring TF was included earlier, following 3.1.5, for continuity

### Colour-Marking Task Force

Australia, Chair. The Colour Marking Task Force was established in 2009 to: 1) Establish a web based system of colour marking protocols for waterbird groups, and; 2) Continue the coordination role that had been maintained by David Drynan from the Australian Bird Banding Office, with assistance from Doug Watkins. These two tasks were achieved, and the additional efforts of Dr Choi, Minseon Kim and Dr Judit Szabo from the Secretariat were acknowledged. As the protocols are now established on the Partnership website and all possible colour combinations for migratory shorebirds have been allocated, requirements for coordination are much reduced. The coordination role has been transferred to the Science Officer (Dr Szabo), and the original goals have been achieved. In line with the prescribed life span and role of task forces, this task force has now been disbanded. Partners are reminded, however, that national or regional banding offices must remain the first point of contact when new colour marking projects are being considered. Secretariat: please check that the latest uploads on the website are the most current. There is also a recent notice on the website in 5 languages for alerting the public.

### Amur-Heilong Task Force

ICF, as interim chair: see Agenda Document. Initiative is on hold for the time being.

### Rio Tinto – Birdlife Flyway initiative

Birdlife: initiative involves Rio Tinto, Birdlife and Wetlands International. Rio Tinto involvement is in the context of its goal of net positive impact and its operational links through the flyway; details were provided. A methodology has been developed for measuring net positive impact in relation to the Flyway; involves segmentation of the Flyway for each of the 7 relevant species - will seek feedback from EAAFP on this. Wetlands International explained the Rio Tinto funded project that aims to develop a wetland centre and protect the North Bohai Wan site, which is exceptionally important. Concept and endorsement have been developed and access obtained to 350 ha of land. Protection of Nanpu/Luannan coast is underway. Endorsement from PetroChina is needed; co-funding from other corporates is needed too. Map of the proposed nature reserve was shown. An update meeting was held in Australia in May 2013: Hebei Forestry is very keen to progress a Wetland Centre/Nature Reserve concept involving Rio Tinto; evaluation of new coastal Nature Reserve (20 km of coast) is underway; potential to engage Hebei steel producers; Rio Tinto has congratulated Hebei Forestry on progress; but the speed of engagement has been slowed by economic factors. Wetlands International remains keen to develop the concept and seek co-funders.

### Report back on points raised in the informal discussion on benefits of joining the FSN:

Ramsar reported back on benefits to the local community and site managers from nominating their sites to the FSN. Non-protected sites present many challenges to getting them designated; local economic and development issues. We should advise them how they can use the EAAFP branding and site status to their advantage; communication is critical; under-promise and over-deliver is better; need to raise profile of the EAAFP; positive messages on the story of migration, on waterbirds as flagship for a healthy environment, ecotourism. But note the message of urgency for critical sites and species. Message to use depends on the country, the audience/stakeholder. Need to show people how biodiversity relates to people's daily lives and the indirect as well as direct benefits to local community; produce a holistic story. Tools: newsletter every three months; reminders to Partners to collect stories of successes; how can we translate the newsletter into other languages – Secretariat cannot translate but can Partners help do that? Need more case studies of successes and regular updates. A template for case studies was illustrated. Get one case study from each WG Chair, Task Force leader and presenter during MoP. Use international media agencies such as Reuters, CNN, BBC in Seoul and elsewhere to raise the profile of EAAFP and the critical issues in the Flyway. Need to tell the story in an interesting and accessible way; sensitisation visit to a key site, for key media people; a possible intern with experience in media/communication skills to work on this. Secretariat: EAAFP has a Facebook page; limited use so far; more photos and stories will be added to it; Partners please use this.

## 4. Report on Key Issues from MoP7

### Agenda 3.1.4

Wetlands International proposed a series of recommendations, based on discussions with ICF and others, to draw item 3.1.4 to conclusion:

1. National Government Partners use the guidance in “New tools for development of the Flyway Site Network” to inform their planning for FSN nominations.
2. The Partnership use the guidance in “New tools for development of the Flyway Site Network” to promote the conservation of key sites for migratory waterbirds.
3. Partners recognize that additional work is needed to update the draft population list (Report, Appendix 4).

Japan: Japan has already conducted a review of candidate sites for Japan; wishes to add “as appropriate” at end of Point 1. Wetlands International: clarified that “to inform” is not prescriptive.



Chief: Japan not obliged to use it; is up to the user, no obligation intended. Australia: seeking clarification whether the report as it stands is completed. Consultant (RJ): yes.

Wetlands International: introduced further recommendations, based on discussions with ICF and others

4. EAAFP should continue to use the "Waterbird Population Estimates" (WPE) process (also used to inform the Ramsar Convention and other multinational Agreements) to:
  - Provide updated information on population sizes, and trends and
  - Provide the basis for deriving the FSN thresholds
5. Review and provide updates to the population estimates through the WPE6 process (Site Network Criterion a6).

Wetlands International: (4) and (5) relate to where minor issues occur that do not impact the Partnership Document.

6. The Secretariat will take on the following tasks (A) and (B):

(A) Update the FSN thresholds by 31 October 2013 (Appendix 4 in the Report).

(B) For MoP8, make recommendations by end of 2014 on:

- Potential additions of populations to the Partnership list that go beyond previous guiding principles
- The scope of the activities of taxonomic Working Groups through consultation with these Groups
- Establishment of an ongoing mechanism for dealing with such technical issues.

Wetlands International: (6B) relates to matters where principles may conflict with the Partnership Document .

ICF: the issue of the [Hokkaido] Red-crowned Crane on the list of populations; important to consider before MoP8 in Kushiro! Crane WG needs to work on this. But the WG could broaden its scope [to include non-migratory populations], as could other WGs such as Seabird WGs. Birdlife: the existing WGs could handle it; do we need another technical group? ICF: the Secretariat could assist on this; adding more layers in EAAFP is a matter for caution. Partnership has agreed only to work on migratory populations; this is a previous decision. Can't leave this to just the WGs to decide; they don't have the mandate. The idea was to have several people to work with the Science Officer on this before MoP. Consultant (RJ): Need to find a way to embrace the many other waterbird families under EAAFP but not included in the scope of existing WGs. Australia: just suggesting the Secretariat coordinate; individual WGs could bring forward proposals to MoP8? Wetlands International: unless we also deal with other families we won't have an adequate way forward; there are gaps to be addressed; we will need to keep on top of such issues in the future, in a similar way to how the Management Committee works to help the Secretariat. Form an ad hoc group now and can decide at MoP8 on a longer term arrangement. Chief: there is work to do but should minimise bureaucracy; Science Officer could play a role in coordinating this; and an ad hoc tech group could be appropriate; Science Officer to ensure sufficient communication with WGs etc.; thus the recommendation seems suitable. Birdlife: the first two statements require caveats that they will be updated. AWSG: we should recognise and accept the completed work [FSN consultancy report] that was commissioned by the Secretariat, without caveats. Chief/Chair: we have adopted recommendations (1), (2) and (3).

Wetlands International: drew attention to recommendations (4) and (5). Birdlife: we also have seabirds as well as Ramsar-listed seabirds. Wetlands International: need work to address this; we can add a clarification. Birdlife: the Criteria used in the report were not based on WPE. Wetlands International: the reference here is to estimates from which the 1% threshold is calculated. Chair: recommendations (4) and (5) are adopted.



ICF: Chief please clarify the nature of the ad hoc group. Chief: Science Officer to coordinate with a small group of unpaid volunteers, WGs and experts. Wetlands International: (and ICF) is happy for Secretariat to lead on this; recirculate the List of populations and thresholds by 31 October 2013. Secretariat: yes we can deal with it. CMS: need to redefine the timing in this recommendation. Chair: with changes, recommendation (6) also is adopted (including A and B).

WCS: impressed by the FSN project and keen to work with EAAFP on protection of key sites; will work carefully with Partner Governments and other Partners.

## 5. Flyway Partnership Administration

### 1.1. Secretariat's Work Plan for 2013

Chief: referred to details in the detailed Agenda Document. An 18 month plan was devised to the end of 2013 based on the Implementation Strategy adopted at MoP6. From 2014, hope to have an annual plan. Focus on some points:

- Outcome 1: the FSN prioritisation project was undertaken and presented earlier; need new sites but also need updated info on existing sites from Partners.
- Outcomes 2 & 3: disseminate guidance on best management using case studies that Partners/experts can supply.
- Outcome 3: can Partners share their NBSAPs and how migratory waterbird conservation has been integrated therein.
- Outcome 4: need to be better at using social media; please supply good stories; Secretariat wishes to recruit a webmaster.
- Outcome 5: continue representation at international forums to raise profile of EAAFP.
- Outcome 6: now have a Science Officer and work will be guided by MoP7 decisions.
- Outcome 7: quality and timeliness of data are a key factor; need to access data on sites that are residing elsewhere (not in public domain).
- Outcome 8: how can we facilitate the WGs to be better at communication and networking, feeding back in to Secretariat? Resources are needed: through volunteers or part-time people?
- Outcome 9: ongoing work on avian influenza.
- Outcome 10: planning further site manager workshops; collaborate with Ramsar on this; fluency in English is limited so better to go to national-level workshops.
- Outcome 11: national partnerships can be modeled on the existing ones, e.g. Japan.
- Outcome 12: relates to Secretariat administration: recruiting for webmaster and communication interns; participation by staff in international meetings; working on New Partners; working with citizens of the Host City, Incheon. Role of Secretariat as a fund-raising body not clear: see Management Committee report-back. Translation is a key issue; Partners please advise/assist on getting materials translated into their languages (volunteers to assist?). Staff policy is now in place and will have ongoing development.

The Implementation Strategy requires input from all Partners and WG/TFs, not just the Secretariat. The success of what we do will depend on effective cooperation.

Australia: Australia will seek to engage more closely and provide more material such as case studies. The need for additional resources is recognised.

### 1.2. Secretariat's Budget for 2013

Secretariat: Reported on statement for 2012, provided in agenda documents. Balance at end of FY was USD 243 K. There is increasing budget demand but move to new office will save costs due to office ownership by IMC and thus cost saving for tenants. Proposed budget for 2013; contributions in 2013 from MoE Korea of KRW 65 M and by MoE Japan of JPY 1.0 M; expect closing balance in 2013 to be around 197,000 USD. For the 2014 budget we assume same level

of IMC support and balance of USD 146,000 (the Korea and Japan contributions are factored into these balances).

### 1.3. Secretariat's Management Committee – report to plenary

Note that this item was not assigned an item number in the approved agenda.

Chair reported on three meetings of the Secretariat's Management Committee (MC) held during MoP7.

#### **New Chair, Vice-Chair, MC members**

Next appointees will serve from today until MoP9 (i.e. for two MOPs).

- Cambodia wishes to propose **China** as new Chair (and ongoing member): Partners endorsed this.
- Chair asked for any nominations of Vice-Chair. Japan suggested **USA** be Vice-Chair: Partners endorsed this. Australia supported both nominations.
- Indonesia retired; MC nominated **Thailand** to fill one role: New Zealand endorsed this.
- NGO nominees: ICF retired; **Birdlife** ongoing; **AWSG** was nominated by the MC.
- IGO nominee: CMS retired; **Ramsar** nominated by the MC.
- Host country: **South Korea**, ongoing.

All appointees were endorsed by the Partners.

Australia: expressed appreciation for the work done by outgoing members.

#### **Hosting Agreement**

The Hosting MoU is due to expire in May 2014. The MC presented a draft decision to come from MoP7 to Incheon Metropolitan City (IMC) for Partners' consideration. This includes proposing IMC as a Special EAAFP Partner and encouraging contributions from Partners to EAAFP operations and activities. (See the decision text below.)

Wetlands International: we should not rewrite history: there was strong competition between China and Korea to host the Secretariat. It is a commercial arrangement between IMC/MoEK and EAAFP whereas we have tended to portray this as a donor situation. Malaysia: in preamble add the role that EAAFP plays in supporting other general work on biodiversity conservation e.g. via CBD. AWSG: please clarify the sending of letters by Partners. Chair: we also encourage Partners to send individual letters of appreciation if possible. Chief: sense of urgency because IMC will meet very soon; Partners please write letters directly to IMC and also via diplomatic channels if possible as well Ministry to Ministry. Korea: yes, to Government of Incheon Metropolitan City (not the Council) Australia: we support intent of the resolution. ICF: made an intervention regarding fund-raising. Chair: requested clarification from Wetlands International. Wetlands International: we should use words indicating IMC being the "successful bidder to host the Secretariat". Ramsar: question about IMC being a Special Partner: what if IMC decides not to renew the Hosting? Chair: constitution does not allow IMC to become a Partner; hence a special category, inviting them to every MoP. CMS: we are inviting IMC, so if MoU is not continued then we would assume it does not have an ongoing role. Chief: clarify that we invite them in role as Host City. CMS: need to have specific words now. Chair: Adjustments have been made and the resolution has now been adopted. Chief: address for letters by Partners will be circulated. CMS: requested the Secretariat to produce and circulate the resolution as soon as possible; it could then be attached to the letters.

The text as endorsed by the Partners:

## **Statement of Appreciation from the 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Partners of the East Asian – Australasian Flyway Partnership**

*Whereas* the East Asian – Australasian Flyway Partnership aims to conserve migratory waterbirds across the East Asian – Australasian Flyway for the benefit of humans and other biodiversity;

*Whereas* the EAAFP was established to provide a flyway-wide framework to promote dialogue, cooperation and collaboration among a range of stakeholders to conserve migratory waterbirds and their habitats;

*Whereas* the EAAFP has grown to include a total of 15 Government Partners, namely Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Mongolia, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Singapore, New Zealand, Thailand, and United States;

*Whereas* the EAAFP includes four inter-governmental organisations, namely the Convention on Migratory Species Secretariat; the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Ramsar Convention Secretariat; and most recently the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF);

*Whereas* the EAAFP includes partners from ten international non-governmental organisations, namely the Australasian Wader Studies Group, Birdlife, International Crane Foundation, International Union for Conservation of Nature, Miranda Naturalists' Trust, Wetlands International, Wildlife Conservation Society, Wild Bird Society of Japan, Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, and World Wide Fund for Nature and one private sector Partner, namely Rio Tinto;

*Acknowledging* the important roles the Partnership plays in supporting the Convention of Biological Diversity, Convention on Migratory Species and Ramsar Convention on Wetlands and their goals in reducing global diversity loss and protection of critical habitat;

*Noting* that, in 2008 Incheon Metropolitan City Government was the successful bidder to host the Secretariat of the EAAFP;

*Appreciating* that Incheon Metropolitan City has graciously provided the physical office of the Secretariat of the EAAFP since 2009, and has contributed highly significant funding towards its operational and substantive activities;

*Recognising* that the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Korea and Incheon Metropolitan City have facilitated the hiring of the internationally and domestically recruited staff and have provided other relevant administrative staff to support the work of the EAAFP Secretariat;

*The Seventh Meeting of the Partners of the EAAFP, hosted by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, held in Alaska from 10 to 14 June 2013,*

*Expresses* its great appreciation and deepest gratitude to Incheon Metropolitan City for its vital role in the establishment and ongoing operation of the EAAFP Secretariat;

*Formally invites* Incheon Metropolitan City to participate, in its capacity as host city, as a Special Partner in the EAAFP and its Meetings of Partners, in recognition of its unique contribution to the work of the Partnership; and

*Expresses* the intent of the Partnership, and calls upon all Partners, to supplement the important contributions of Incheon Metropolitan City with additional financial or in-kind support for EAAFP activities; and

*Requests* the Secretariat to convey this message of appreciation to the Government of Incheon Metropolitan City in the most appropriate manner.

## **Hosting of MoP8**

Japan has offered to hold MoP8 in Kushiro, Japan, around January 2015, dependent on budget allocation; confirmation will be provided by Japan later in 2013.

AWSG: key meetings were held at Kushiro in 1994 to lay foundations for flyway cooperation that eventually led to formation of EAAFP; in this context, the year 2015 will be the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the EAAFP.

## **Secretariat staffing and functions**

The MC gave agreement in principle to Secretariat staff members moving from contract to non-fixed term positions. Review of options for staff status under the Korean legal system to be undertaken by IMC, MoE Korea and EAAFP. Staff Policy final endorsement to wait until the Hosting MoU renewal is approved, hopefully in August 2013.

## **Performance of Chief Executive**

Waiting for a format to be provided by the Host, MoE Korea - this should be done in July 2013.

# **6. Other Business**

## **Yellow Sea (proposed Luannan protected area)**

Wetlands International: it has been proposed by Australia and New Zealand and agreed by China, that a message of congratulation be sent by EAAFP to the Government of China regarding protection of the Luannan coast (North Bohai Wan). New Zealand: this has arisen from the Yellow Sea TF and other discussions during MoP7; the words are attempting to take account of all stakeholders; the site is very important for shorebirds reaching NZ; NZ is keen to help China on protection of this area. Australia: impressed by the Government of China's initiative with other Partners on protecting this site and commends the statement. AWSG: extends firm congratulations to China.

*The EAAFP would like to congratulate the China National Government Partner on its initiative to evaluate the establishment of a protected area along the Luannan coast in Hebei.*

*In recent years the Luannan coast has been found to be a critical feeding site for shorebirds on migration from Australia and New Zealand to their breeding grounds in Far East Russia. The site supports over 60% of the Flyway population of the Red Knot during this staging period.*

*The Partnership recognises the significant challenge of securing this staging site in the rapidly developing coastal area of Bohai Bay.*

*The Partnership will be interested to hear of progress with this exciting initiative.*

## Other matters

Wetlands International: were all the recommendations of the WG report-backs to plenary accepted by the Partners? Chair: no objections were raised, so they are all endorsed.

Secretariat : would like to know if Government Partners are willing to work with the Secretariat on defining boundaries of existing FSN sites and of populations at different stages of the life cycle; as a start to building information layers. Australia is happy to provide data to Secretariat on shorebirds and (via Seabird WG) on seabirds too. Birdlife: Government Partners should respond now. New Zealand will define site boundaries and update Site Information Sheets. USA: already done for the USA site so we can supply this. Ramsar: do Government Partners need support on this? Thailand: Bangladesh and others may need help on this. Wetlands International: Secretariat could write to Partners with a specific request for help.

Anatidae WG Chair and Cao Lei: A Goose Specialist Group Meeting is to be held in China, Yangtze Valley, and we invite Partners to attend. There are important conservation issues here and international collaboration is needed.

## 7. Next Meeting: Announcement of MoP8

See above: Secretariat's Management Committee – report to plenary.

## 8. Appointments: Next Chair and Vice-Chair of Partnership (from 15 June 2013)

See above: Secretariat's Management Committee – report to plenary.

## 9. Meeting Close

New Zealand: extended thanks to the outgoing Chair, Cambodia,

The Meeting was closed at 12:05 pm on Friday 14 June by the outgoing Chair. The Chair extended thanks once again for arrangements, the field trip, transport and everything done for MoP7 by the USA hosting team.

# Summary of Decisions from MoP7

Covered under Item 4

1. National Government Partners use the guidance in “New tools for development of the Flyway Site Network” to inform their planning for FSN nominations.
2. The Partnership use the guidance in “New tools for development of the Flyway Site Network” to promote the conservation of key sites for migratory waterbirds.
3. Partners recognize that additional work is needed to update the draft population list (Report, Appendix 4).
4. EAAFP should continue to use the “Waterbird Population Estimates” (WPE) process (also used to inform the Ramsar Convention and other multinational Agreements) to:
  - Provide updated information on population sizes, and trends and
  - Provide the basis for deriving the FSN thresholds
5. Review and provide updates to the population estimates through the WPE6 process (Site Network Criterion a6).
6. The Secretariat will take on the following tasks (A) and (B):
  - (A) Update the FSN thresholds by 31 October 2013 (Appendix 4 in the Report).
  - (B) For MoP8, make recommendations by end of 2014 on:
    - Potential additions of populations to the Partnership list that go beyond previous guiding principles
    - The scope of the activities of taxonomic Working Groups through consultation with these Groups
    - Establishment of an ongoing mechanism for dealing with such technical issues.
7. Establishment of a Baer’s Pochard Task Force and preparation of an action plan.

Covered under 5. Flyway Partnership Administration

8. Appointment of the New Chair, Vice-Chair and Management Committee members for the next two years.

Covered under 6. Other business

9. A message of congratulations should be sent by EAAFP to the Government of China regarding protection of the Luannan coast (North Bohai Wan).



# Summary of Actions Arising from MoP7

<b>Action No.</b>	<b>Agenda Reference</b>	<b>Description of action required</b>	<b>Lead responsibility</b>	<b>Helpers</b>
<b>Hosting MOU</b>				
1	2.1, 5.3	Partners to write to IMC and/or Korea Ministry of Environment to express appreciation for hosting of the Secretariat. Secretariat will collect and forward letters	All Partners	Secretariat
2	2.1, 5.3	Statement (resolution) of appreciation and offer of Special Partner status, as adopted by MoP7, to be conveyed to IMC by Secretariat.	Secretariat	
3	2.1, 5.3	Partners to propose voluntary contributions to the Secretariat operating budget and/or EAAFP flyway activities.	All Partners	
<b>Flyway Network Sites</b>				
4	2.2	By June 2014, provide Site Information Sheets for all existing Flyway Site Network sites, with up-to-date site boundaries.	Government Partners	Secretariat, Other Partners
5	3.6, 3.1.5	By June 2014, develop spatial information on staging, breeding and non-breeding areas of migratory waterbirds in the EAAF.	Secretariat	Monitoring TF
6	3.6, 3.1.5	By June 2014, obtain boundary polygons of Important Bird Areas relevant to migratory waterbirds in the EAAF.	Birdlife	Secretariat
7	3.6, 3.1.5	By June 2014, obtain boundary maps of waterbird count sites.	International NGO Partners	Secretariat
8	3.1.1	Each Government Partner to identify a national priority list of candidate sites for the Flyway Site Network and develop a process for new nominations.	Government Partners	Secretariat, other Partners
<b>Flyway Population Information</b>				
9	3.1.4	Coordinate the additional work needed to update the draft population list and review and provide updates to the population estimates through the WPE6 process	Secretariat	Wetlands International Experts
10	3.1.4	Provide updated information on population sizes, and trends and provide the basis for deriving the FSN thresholds and update FSN thresholds by Oct 2013.	Secretariat	Wetlands International, Experts
<b>Working Groups and Task Forces</b>				
11	3.1.4	For MoP8, make recommendations by end of 2014 on; the scope of the activities of taxonomic Working Groups through consultation with these Groups; and establishment of an ongoing mechanism for dealing with such technical issues.	Secretariat	Experts, WGs
12	3.5.3	Complete the Action Plan for the Scaly-sided Merganser and appoint members and chair for the Task Force.	Scaly-sided Merganser Task Force	Secretariat, Anatidae WG
13	3.5.5	Establish the Baer's Pochard Task Force by appointing the lead organisation, chair and coordinator and produce an action plan by	Secretariat	WWT, Anatidae WG

		end of August 2013.		
14	3.6	Provide updates of details of avian influenza contacts for existing representatives in each country.	Government Partners	Avian Influenza WG
15	3.6	Check that the EAAFP website documents on colour-marking protocols in the Flyway are the most recent versions.	All Partners	Secretariat
16	3.4.1	Finalise the Seabird Working Group's report presented at MoP7 and upload to website.	Seabird WG	Secretariat
17	3.4.2	Progress intra- and inter-governmental discussions to develop a Yellow Sea partnership program.	China, South Korea	Yellow Sea Task Force
18	3.4.2, 6	Send message of congratulations regarding proposed protection of the Luannan coast (North Bohai Wan), as endorsed by MoP7, to the Government of China.	Secretariat	Yellow Sea TF
19	3.3.3	Prepare a short report on the MoP7 Science Forum and preceding questionnaire.	University of Queensland	Secretariat
<b>Secretariat Support</b>				
20	3.2.1	Partners to trial the template (on EAAFP website) for case studies and report back to the Secretariat.	All Partners	Secretariat
21	3.2.1	Supply powerpoints, photos and other materials that can be used by FSN site managers to develop their own CEPA materials, to the Secretariat.	All Partners	Secretariat
22	3.2.2	Partners encouraged to provide recommendations and actions to translate key documents into local languages.	All Partners	
23	3.3.3	Partners and experts to email Secretariat with scientific articles or references worth sharing.	All Partners	Secretariat
24	unspecified	Provide national and Partner reports to the Secretariat sufficiently ahead of MoPs to enable analysis and reporting by the Secretariat.	All Partners	Secretariat
25	unspecified	Prepare a synthesis report on the contributions of Partners to implementing the Implementation Strategy, since MoP6 (using cards pasted to the wall chart during MoP7).	Secretariat	
26	3.1.4	By Nov 2014, make recommendations on establishment of an ongoing mechanism for dealing with technical issues to support implementation of the Partnership.	Secretariat	All Partners
<b>Other</b>				
27	3.4.2	Promote the importance of migratory waterbird conservation, particularly in Yellow Sea in bilateral inter-governmental forums.	All Partners	Secretariat
28	5.3	Confirm the proposed host, location and date of MoP8 (possibly before end of 2013).	Japan	Secretariat