

ELEVENTH MEETING OF PARTNERS OF THE EAST ASIAN – AUSTRALASIAN FLYWAY PARTNERSHIP
Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, 12-17 March 2023



Draft Decision 6

Guidelines for the EAAFP National and Site Partnerships

Submitted by the EAAFP Secretariat

Summary

EAAFP MOP10 adopted Decision 10.8 “Developing the National and Site Partnerships” so as to develop an overarching framework for establishing and operating effective National and Site Partnerships within the East Asian – Australasian Flyway countries.

The Secretariat has prepared three draft guidelines for the Guidelines Overview, National Partnerships and Site Partnerships [Appendix 1, 2, 3 to this Draft Decision] in consultation with Partners and other necessary stakeholders via webinars, bilateral meetings, and surveys. The proposed structure of the National and Site Partnerships including roles, responsibilities, and relationships based on the analysis of the existing mechanisms are inclusive. The draft documents have been circulated to Partners as a part of the Guideline development process. In order to explain the co-linkage of each new Partnership mechanism, the overall Guidelines Overview paper including the Guidelines of the new Sister Site Program has been produced [Appendix 1] with reference to the Organizational Structure of the EAAFP [Decision 10.03]

Background

1. In accordance with Paragraph 3 and Paragraph 8 (6) of the Partnership document, Partners are encouraged to support the development of an East Asian – Australasian Flyway Site Network (Flyway Site Network) to ensure a chain of internationally important sites are managed to support the populations of migratory waterbirds on the flyway and to recognize the role of different levels of governments in the implementation of the Partnership and encourage National and Site level partnerships to support activities.
2. As per Decision 10.8, the Partnership acknowledged the importance of the development of mechanisms for the establishment of the EAAFP National and Site Partnerships to provide context and background to promote a consistent approach across the Flyway Partnership on what

National and Site Partnerships are and how they might operate. The guidelines provided as Appendices to this Draft Decision will assist Partners to consider the design and operation of their National and Site Partnerships.

3. The guidelines will support delivery of KRA 1. 2 [Indicator 1.2.1: Guidelines for the establishment and operation of national and site partnerships have been developed and agreed, 1.2.2: At least 50% of Government Partners have an active National Partnership and site partnerships have been developed for at least 50% of the Flyway Network sites] of the Partnership Objective 1 of the Decision 10.1. The following components were requested:
 - a. What a National and Site Partnership is and when it is needed to aid in the coordination and management of EAAFP activities;
 - b. Responsibilities of a National and Site Partnership;
 - c. Case studies of existing National and Site Partnerships and recommendations for establishing National and Site Partnerships including membership and structure;
 - d. A guide for developing terms of reference, and;
 - e. Recommended monitoring, evaluation, and reporting requirements.
4. Following the requested components, each of the Guidelines [Appendices 2 & 3] is an in-depth self-contained publication that provides definitions, roles, principals, ideas, templates, and case studies, and operation mechanisms, which are analyzed in the existing partnerships in some countries in EAAF and other flyways.
5. The Secretariat conducted a survey in early 2019 with Partners to understand their existing National Partnership mechanisms, including their development procedure under the EAAFP and/or Ramsar Convention and/or Convention on Biological Diversity. Fourteen Partners responded, and the outcomes of these surveys helped to develop the underpinning guidance as a reference (e.g. best practices) of the new Partnerships mechanism. All responding Partners supported that the National and Site Partnerships should be founded upon mutual trust and understanding and that engagement from all stakeholders is crucial. It is important that while establishing the National and Site Partnerships that communications are maintained among stakeholders and that the mechanism can be used as an efficient facilitator by having regular liaison meetings, MOUs signing, and the appointment of a Partnership coordinator.
6. To implement these decisions, the Secretariat hired a consultant, Ms. Jennifer George on 9 April 2021 for a period of five months to develop guidelines and recommendations of the EAAFP Sister Site Program (Ref. DD.11.07) and National and Site Partnership with the following original timeline:
 - April 2021: Review of all the documents provided by the Secretariat, including all contacts and advice on the best approaches; Develop a detailed plan to undertake the work working closely in discussion with the Secretariat; Identify the best platform to work with the Secretariat
 - May 2021: Gather all contacts and begin to connect with them to identify where the challenges will be; Set up surveys; Set up interviews; Set up systems to record information.

- June – July: Continue with surveys and interviews; Collating information; Identify and follow up conversations needed.
 - August 2021: Preparing report; Recommendations; Framework.
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7. However there were some delays in compiling the necessary information and data, and the Secretariat, with the consultant, presented the first draft document for briefing via a webinar on 2 July 2021. The participants included 5 National Governments, 2 INGOS, 2 IGOS, and 2 Site Managers (Summary - [link](#)). The comments and introductions from speakers were reflected in a second draft. The overall concept of the guidelines was presented secondly in a Partners Workshop on 3 August 2022, and circulated to Partners on 22 August on 24 October 2022 via email. The final documents were submitted to the Secretariat [Appendices 1 - 3].
 8. In the process, the need for efficient monitoring of migratory waterbirds by utilizing the Asian Waterbird Census was raised as a key element in the new Partnerships mechanism. Data collection's ultimate purpose should not be seen as only to provide reports to the National Focal Point in the guidelines but also to guide what should be prioritized sub-nationally, provide ideas about opportunities for collaboration and develop workplans at both the national and site level.
 9. The bilateral interviews were also conducted to have their feedback on the drafts and learn perspectives on the existing international/domestic cooperation mechanisms from the Flyway stakeholders beyond the EAAF:
 - Government Partners: Japan, Australia, Singapore, United States, RO Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, DPR Korea (written responses only),
 - INGOS Partners: Pukorokoro Miranda Trust, Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, Birdlife International, Paulson Institute,
 - IGOS: ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity,
 - Site Managers: Shinan-RO Korea, Incheon-RO Korea, Boondall Wetlands, Pukorokoro Miranda Trust,
 - Other stakeholders: Ramsar Regional Center-East Asia, Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network, Audubon, Snow Leopard Trust, Birding Beijing.
 10. In order to explain the co-linkage of each new Partnership mechanism from MOP10 Decisions, the overall Summary paper including the guidelines of the new Sister Site Program have been produced [Appendix 1] with reference to the Organizational Structure of the EAAFP (Ref. DD.10.03).
 11. Following the adoption of these Guidelines on Partnerships, the documents will be uploaded to the EAAFP website.

Decisions:

Partners at the 11th Meeting of the Partners are requested to approve and implement the proposed new Guidelines for EAAFP National and Site Partnerships [Appendices 1-3] for implementation and to adopt the recommendations to the existing National and Site Partnerships in some EAAF countries.

Annex 1

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Recalling that, In accordance with Paragraph 3 and Paragraph 8 (6) of the Partnership document, Partners are encouraged to support the development of an East Asian – Australasian Flyway Site Network (Flyway Site Network) to ensure a chain of internationally important sites are managed to support the populations of migratory waterbirds in the flyway and to recognize the role of different levels of governments in the implementation of the Partnership and encourage National and Site level partnerships to support activities;

Recognizing that the National and Site partnerships can provide a mechanism to set national and sub-national priorities and develop work plans; and that these should address the engagement of the local community (CEPA); monitoring of waterbirds; the condition of Network sites; implementation of priority on-ground activities; build the capacity of Flyway Site Managers to communicate flyway information to a larger group; and identify new potential Flyway sites; and *Noting* that, for example, National Partnerships can help support the national coordination of the Asian Waterbird Census and activities supporting World Migratory Bird Day;

Further recognizing that the new guidelines for the EAAFP National and Site Partnerships are in accordance with Decision 10.08 (Developing Guidelines for National and Site Partnerships), but *Also recognizing* that the guidelines provide guidance and recommendations but are not as rules for Partners and that a number of countries have already developed their National Partnership linked to the EAAFP; and

Acknowledging that the definition of the National Partnership is a national network of stakeholders who cooperate at the national level to support the implementation of the EAAFP Strategic Plan within their country; that stakeholders include Local Governments, Site Managers, NGOs, academia, experts and other relevant stakeholders working on common activities and issues concerning the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats; and that the Site Partnerships are a mechanism to support and mobilize people and relationships within a local area to enable on the ground activities to conserve migratory waterbirds and their habitats;

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1. *Recognises* that the National and Site Partnership mechanisms will engage a range of stakeholders; that the Site Partnership will generate additional local community engagement while the National Partnership will provide a valuable forum for planning and reporting on the implementation of the EAAFP Strategic Plan; and that the two mechanisms provide the opportunity for planning at the site, regional and national levels for the implementation of the EAAFP CEPA Action Plan and the monitoring of wetland health and migratory waterbirds;
2. *Endorses* the new Guidelines of the EAAFP National and Site Partnerships [Appendices 2 & 3];
3. *Requests* Partners to establish Partnerships and/or to adapt it to the existing mechanisms and reporting on the process of the establishment or the implementation through the Reporting Template for Partners to each MOP;
4. *Further instructs* the Secretariat to bring the National Partnership and Site Partnership Guidelines to the attention of all Partners countries of the EAAFP and relevant stakeholders or/and between each MOP; and
5. *Welcomes* the new Secretariat budget for 2023 – 2024 (Doc.11.10) support for the establishment and operation of the arrangements under the new Guidelines by providing briefing documents and guidance materials translated into EAAF languages, making them available on the EAAFP Website, and hosting workshops, and capacity-building training sessions.