

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



Decision 9

Monitoring and reducing impacts of HPAI and other avian diseases on wild birds along the East Asian-Australasian Flyway

Recalling the vision of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (since 2006) and its predecessor the Flyway Reserve Networks under the Asia-Pacific Migratory Waterbird Conservation Strategy (Phase I: 1996-2000; Phase II 2001-2005/6) were derived from the Kushiro Initiative (1994) and its ultimate aim was “the current decline in the numbers of migratory waterbirds in the flyway and the degradation and loss of wetland habitats on which these species depend, should be stopped and reversed”;

Recognizing that avian diseases such as highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI), avian cholera and even non-contagious avian botulism can devastate a significant percentage of threatened birds, especially species that congregate in large numbers;

Also *recognizing* that certain groups of waterbirds are particularly at risk due to their behavioural traits and global conservation status; and

Noting that since late 2021 unprecedented HPAI outbreaks have devastated several important waterbird and seabird sites/populations in western Eurasia, the eastern seaboard of North America and since 2022 the western seaboard of South America; that HPAI is currently circulating within the EAAF and that recent strains of HPAI are now seemingly endemic in some wild bird populations year-round, posing an increased and continuous threat to many waterbird populations.

The 11th Meeting of Partners of the East Asian – Australasian Flyway Partnership

1. *Establishes* an Avian Disease Working Group to replace its Avian Influenza Working Group to develop and disseminate relevant guidance on avian influenza and other avian diseases to Partners and Flyway Network Sites and support a long-term strategy to address the impacts of HPAI and other avian diseases on migratory waterbirds in the EAAF; and
2. *Instructs* the Avian Disease Working Group to seek a membership with a wide range of relevant expertise, develop Terms of Reference and a work plan, and to report on activities at MOP 12.