



AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF  
AFRICAN-EURASIAN MIGRATORY WATERBIRDS



5<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES  
14 – 18 May 2012, La Rochelle, France

*“Migratory waterbirds and people - sharing wetlands”*

RESOLUTION 5.12

**ADVERSE EFFECTS OF AGROCHEMICALS ON  
MIGRATORY WATERBIRDS IN AFRICA**

*Acknowledging* the importance of fertilisation and pest control for agriculture and that the ongoing rise in global population will, particularly in developing countries, be coupled with a growing demand for food, and that crop loss and failure represent a real threat to human well-being and physical survival in Africa,

*Noting* that agricultural expansion including the increased use of agrochemicals in Africa is thought to be one of the factors contributing to the decline of some migratory waterbirds populations in the AEWA region, and that the application of pesticides that have been proven to have an adverse effect on birds is rising in Africa,

*Also noting* that an estimated 30% of the pesticides marketed in Sub-Saharan Africa do not meet internationally accepted quality standards, have been banned in developed countries and are known to pose a particular threat to human health and the environment as highlighted in the report *Adverse Effects of Agrochemicals on Migratory Waterbirds in Africa* (document AEWA/MOP Inf. 5.5),

*Further noting* that avicides are still being used in Africa to control large populations of seed eating birds, killing target and non-target birds alike as they are inhaled or orally digested,

*Acknowledging* further findings outlined in the report *Adverse Effects of Agrochemicals on Migratory Waterbirds in Africa* (document AEWA/MOP Inf. 5.5), which summarises the many direct and indirect negative effects that agrochemicals can have on birds, *inter alia* through poisoning, by reducing breeding success, altering natural behaviour, destroying habitats and by reducing or even eliminating food resources,

*Recognising* that many low-income farmers applying agrochemicals in Africa are often dependent on the illegal trade of agrochemicals, having no access to regulated pesticides, and can be unaware of the correct use of agrochemicals as well as the possible risks to human health and the environment,

*Recalling* that, for waterbird populations listed in Table 1, Paragraphs 3.2.3 (a) and (b) of AEWA's Action Plan require Contracting Parties *inter alia* to endeavour to ensure that, where practicable, statutory controls in accordance with international norms are in place relating to the use of agricultural chemicals and pest control procedures for the purpose of minimising their adverse impacts on these populations as well as to prepare and distribute information materials, in appropriate languages, describing such regulations, standards and control measures in force and their benefits to people and wildlife,

*Noting* that all but three African countries are Contracting Parties to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants which seeks to regulate the production, use, trade, releases and storage of dangerous, long-lasting chemicals many of which have been used in agriculture,

*Referring* to Resolution 10.26 on “Minimising the risk of poisoning to migratory birds” adopted by the 10<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species in November 2011.

*The Meeting of the Parties:*

1. *Invites* Contracting Parties and other Range States in Africa, to implement a regulatory system for agrochemicals in all African countries in order to ensure that illegal trade is diminished, use is controlled, and users are trained with a view to decreasing the use of agrochemicals which are known to have direct or indirect adverse effects on birds, and in particular to:
  - 1.1 encourage relevant government authorities to develop and implement regulations on the application of such agro-chemicals and to monitor their implementation, and in particular to ensure appropriate quality control;
  - 1.2 regulate the use of such agrochemicals in the vicinity of nationally and internationally important sites for migratory waterbirds, particularly in wetlands, also taking into account run-offs from agriculture effecting aquatic ecosystems;
  - 1.3 control and where feasible reduce the use of avicides in areas frequented by populations listed in Table 1 of the Agreement;
  - 1.4 undertake measures to ease the access of farmers to good quality agro-chemical products while reducing their potential negative impacts on the environment and human health and to undermine the illicit trade of uncontrolled pesticides;
  - 1.5 enhance education and training on the proper use of agrochemicals as well as on possible adverse effects to waterbirds involving existing agricultural extension services;
2. *Encourages* Contracting Parties to support Range States in minimising the negative impact of agrochemicals on migratory waterbirds in Africa, *inter alia* by exchanging knowledge and best practice on identifying and mitigating adverse effects of agrochemicals and by encouraging further research on alternative and indigenous crops as well as alternative fertilisation methods suitable for Africa;
3. *Invites* relevant intergovernmental organisations, in particular the Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, other relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements and the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation to cooperate with the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat in efforts to strengthen the capacity of African countries to control/manage the use of agrochemicals so as to minimise possible negative impacts on human health and the environment, and;
4. *Requests* the Technical Committee and the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat to collaborate with the CMS Scientific Council Working Group on poisoning of migratory birds, on issues of mutual concern.