

MEETING DOCUMENT

Wadden Sea Board (WSB 37)

26 August 2022
Wilhelmshaven, Germany



Agenda Item:	5
Subject:	WSFI Strategic Framework 2022-2029
Document No.:	WSB 37/5.1/3
Date:	22 July 2022
Submitted by:	CWSS/WSFI Steering Group

Since its launch in 2012 the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative has formed multiple strong partnerships to implement activities along the East Atlantic Flyway for the benefit of migratory waterbirds. Guidance for setting priorities for flyway activities was provided by the WSFI Action Plan 2014-2020. With the partnerships of the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative constantly growing it was decided that a new action plan with specific activities planned for key sites would be too restrictive. Instead, the WSFI Steering Group developed an ambitious strategic framework for the WSFI for the years 2022-2029.

The document names seven main objectives and highlights key target action points under each objective, following closely the plans for the new 'Climate Resilient East Atlantic Flyway Project'. The WSFI Strategic Framework is a call for partners along the flyway, whether they are working in conservation, management, education or policies or simply have a keen interest in birds, to come together and develop and implement ideas that can ensure the network of sites which forms the East Atlantic Flyway supports healthy populations of migratory waterbirds, but that also improve the living conditions of people who rely in the same habitats as the birds. By providing priority actions and budget estimations the document provides a framework to develop future funding proposal, in collaboration with partners. It also aims for a stronger link between the trilateral bird activities in the Wadden Sea and the WSFI.

We kindly invite the members of the meeting to acknowledge the WSFI strategic framework 2022-2029.

Proposal: The WSB is invited to acknowledge the WSFI Strategic Framework 2022-2029.



Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative (WSFI)

Strategic Framework 2022-2029

Version: v1.3 (21-07-2022)

Authors: WSFI Steering Group



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Publisher

Common Wadden Sea Secretariat (CWSS), Wilhelmshaven, Germany

Author

WSFI Steering Group:

Thomas Borchers, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety, and Consumer Protection, Germany

Geoffroy Citegetse, BirdLife International, Senegal

Nicola Crockford, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, United Kingdom

Tim Dodman, Consultant WSFI, United Kingdom

Jaime Garcia Moreno, Vogelbescherming Nederland (Birdlife NL), The Netherlands

Ward Hagemeijer, Wetlands International, The Netherlands

Karst Jarsma, Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, The Netherlands

Henrik Pind Jørgensen, Danish Environmental Protection Agency, Denmark

Courtney Price, Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative, Canada

Marc van Roomen, Sovon, The Netherlands

Peter Südbeck (Chair), Lower Saxon Wadden Sea National Park, Germany

Kristine Meise (Programme Officer), Common Wadden Sea Secretariat

Editor

Kristine Meise, Common Wadden Sea Secretariat

Cover Photo

Lars Gejl, Nationalpark Vadehavet, Denmark

Layout

Creative Concern/Annika Bostelmann, Common Wadden Sea Secretariat

Published

2022

This publication should be cited as:

WSFI Steering Group. (2022) Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative – Strategic Framework 2022-2029. Common Wadden Sea Secretariat, Wilhelmshaven, Germany.

1. Introduction

The Wadden Sea is one of the most important breeding, stopover, and wintering (or nonbreeding) sites along the East Atlantic Flyway, visited by millions of migratory waterbirds each year. Trilateral monitoring and management efforts for migratory waterbirds in the Wadden Sea started in the 1990. However, flyway conservation can only be effective if the bird populations are managed over their entire migration range. Thus, upon the inscription of the Wadden Sea as a World Heritage Site, the World Heritage Committee requested the Wadden Sea countries “... to strengthen cooperation on management and research activities with States Parties on the African Eurasian Flyways, which play a significant role in conserving migratory species along these flyways.” With the establishment of the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative (WSFI) in 2012, the governments of Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands recognized their specific responsibility to contribute to conserving migratory waterbirds along the entire EAF and in the following years, successful collaborations have formed with a multitude of national and international partners.

The achievements of the past years clearly show that the three Wadden Sea countries and the WSFI partners have taken on the responsibility to strengthen cooperation along the EAF for the conservation of migratory birds. With this new **WSFI Strategic Framework 2022-2029**, they continue working towards realizing the WSFI vision that “*migratory birds find lasting refuge along the East Atlantic Flyway from northern breeding areas to their key Wadden Sea stopover and to the African coastline, and inspire and connect people for future generations*”. The aim of the framework is to ensure the sustainability of actions being undertaken, by securing the resources and commitment for continuous investments in monitoring, management, advocacy, education and awareness.

The WSFI Strategic Framework 2022-2029 was drafted by the members of the WSFI Steering Group to guide future activities of WSFI partners along the EAF in fulfilment of the WSFI flyway vision, by identifying key conservation objectives and targets, prioritizing target actions, proposing timescales and providing a rough estimation on potential costs. The proposed objectives and targets in this framework were based on an assessment of the previous WSFI Action Plan 2014-2020, the WSFI Fundraising Strategy and the latest findings of the WSFI monitoring programme as well as an evaluation of the activities conducted as part of the WSFI capacity building and management programme. The latter highlighted the need for more long-term investment in local initiatives which, in the current framework, is expressed by the ongoing support for key objectives. The ambitious framework also reflects the development of the ‘Climate resilient East Atlantic Flyway project’ in collaboration with various local, regional and international partners along the African part of the flyway and the envisaged closer collaboration with the Arctic.

The final draft of the WSFI Strategic Framework 2022-2029 was developed in consultation with WSFI partners and signatories, submitted for acknowledgement to the

Wadden Sea Board 37 and presented at the 14th Trilateral Governmental Wadden Sea Conference in 2022, whilst a summary was also presented during a side event at AEWA MOP8 in September 2022. WSFI partners and signatories are called upon to develop collaborative project ideas and work plans for the implementation of activities under this new strategic framework, reaching out to one another to ensure that synergies are created for the sustainability of our actions along the EAF.

2. East Atlantic Flyway and the need for conservation measures

The East Atlantic Flyway (EAF) stretches from the Arctic tundra through western European coastal wetlands and intertidal habitats, including the Wadden Sea, to a wide range of coastal wetlands along the entire Atlantic coastline of Africa (Fig. 1). Every year, millions of migratory waterbirds use this flyway to move between their breeding grounds, stopover sites and the wintering (or non-breeding) areas. During migration, the birds depend on a network of sites to rest and refuel their energy reserves to be able to complete their journeys. The pattern and timing of their migration has evolved to closely match the environmental conditions they will encounter at each of these sites. However, anthropogenic pressures such as climate change have a considerable impact on environmental conditions at most sites and threaten the optimal timing, access to resources and, thus, the survival of migratory birds. Both resident and migratory birds are vulnerable to these pressures, which can lead to loss of biodiversity, productivity or other changes, with often unknown consequences for ecosystem functionality and services. The loss of ecosystem functionality in turn may accelerate climate change and vulnerability to it. This illustrates the urgent need to quantify known and potential impacts of anthropogenic pressures on migratory birds and their key habitats. The information is vital to develop strategies to mitigate their negative environmental impacts for the benefit of all species, as well as the local human populations depending on the same ecosystems.



Figure 1: Map of the East Atlantic Flyway, highlighting the important breeding areas in the Arctic for long-distance migratory waders as well as key stopover and non-breeding sites along the flyway.

According to the latest EAF assessment report (van Roomen et al. 2022) 30% of 83 monitored migratory waterbird populations along the EAF were decreasing in the long-term (20-40 years, depending on data availability for each population). The distribution of short-term trends (last 10 years) was even less favourable, with several strong declines. Waders showed less favourable trends than other taxonomic waterbird groups (Fig. 2), with particularly strong declines occurring in wader species breeding in the Siberian Arctic. But unfavourable trends were, for example, also observed for migratory waterbirds breeding in southern Africa (Fig. 2).

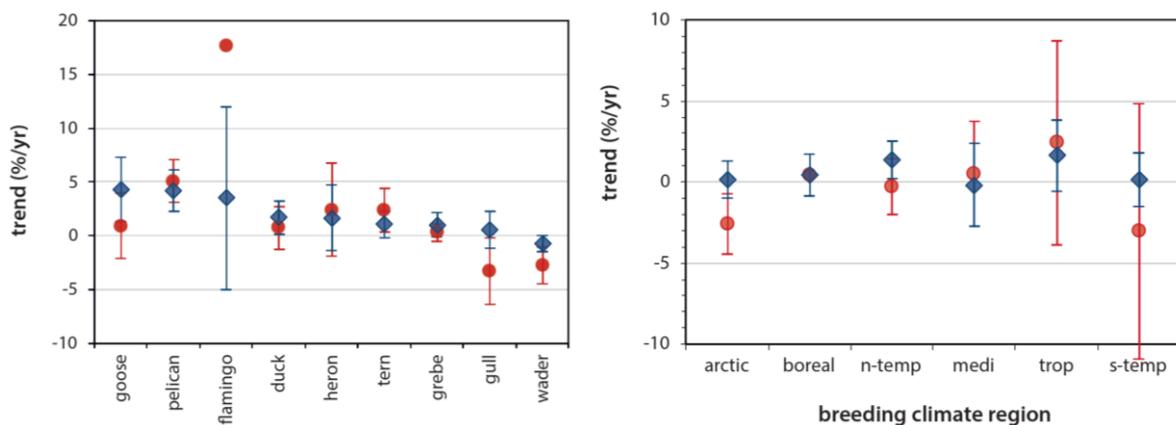


Figure 2: Results of the latest EAF assessment report (van Roomen et al. 2022). The mean annual change of the average long-term trends is shown in blue, changes in short-term trends in red. Waders showed considerable declines in long-term population trends compared to other waterbirds (left). Short-term trends for species breeding in the Arctic or Southern Africa were more negative than long-term trends, suggesting recent changes in population (right).

Numerous threats can affect the populations of migratory birds, many directly linked to the human use of coastal habitats (van Roomen et al. 2022, Fig. 3). Fishing is a key activity along the flyway, with overfishing being widespread. Agricultural activities and littering are also frequently reported as top pressures. In West Africa and the Gulf of Guinea forest logging and firewood collection are often named, while the disturbance of birds at breeding and resting grounds through recreation and tourism is an issue at many European and southern African sites. The relative impact of different threats on waterbird populations is currently unknown and needs further research. Climatic change effects are already widely felt along the whole flyway, and particularly sea level rise and extreme weather events are likely to worsen the situation for many migratory waterbird populations in the next years and decades. Due to the dependency of many local communities on the same ecosystems used by migratory birds, the wider impacts of climate change on livelihoods and ecosystem services also need to be determined and strategies developed for their mitigation. To achieve co-existence between humans and migratory birds in coastal areas, effective conservation and management measures need to be developed and applied that cater for the needs of both people and wildlife.

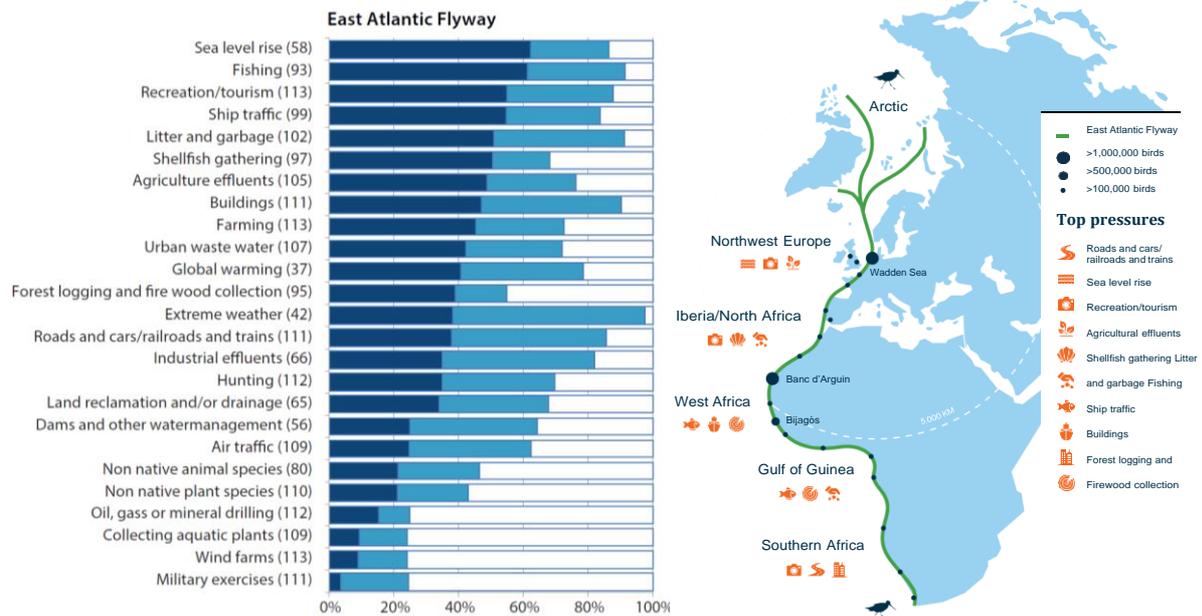


Figure 3: Reports of pressures documented by observers for a subset of sites along the East Atlantic Flyway (van Roomen et al. 2022). The left graph represents the frequencies of pressures reported along the flyway having much (dark blue), little (light blue) or no effect. The number of monitored sites that answered the specific question on the subject are given in brackets. The map on the right illustrates examples of differences in top pressures in different regions along the flyway. Note that impacts of climate change are cross-cutting and widespread along the flyway.

Migratory birds are exceptional ambassadors for the need to tackle environmental issues at the global scale, due to their high dependency on networks of suitable sites. Changes at one site along their migratory route, regardless of whether it is a breeding, stopover or non-breeding destination, can impact the flyway population as a whole, with consequences for other parts of the flyway. Thus, all sites with ecological importance for a species need to be in good enough condition to fulfil their ecological role. Close collaboration between countries along the flyway is necessary for the successful implementation of conservation management strategies.

3. WSFI partners and signatories

In its conservation efforts, the WSFI focuses predominantly on sites used by Wadden Sea relevant waterbird populations, i.e. bird populations for which at least 1% of the population uses the Wadden Sea at a specific point during their annual cycle, regardless of the stage (breeding, stopover, wintering). The focal area includes breeding sites in the Arctic, stopover sites along the European coastline and especially the coastal wintering sites in Western, Central and Southern Africa.

Due to its wide geographical range and the scale of issues migratory birds are facing, there is a large overlap between the WSFI and other international initiatives and projects. As flyway conservation often focuses on improving the local conditions for migratory birds on the ground, this means the activities of the WSFI contribute to other ongoing programmes and

initiatives, and vice versa. Over time, synergies have been created to promote sustainable results in flyway conservation, and to contribute to the implementation of several international environmental agreements, notably the World Heritage Convention, the Convention of Migratory Species (CMS), the Convention on Wetlands, the EU Birds Directive, the Abidjan Convention and the Bern Convention (WSFI vision - Annex 2).

The implementation of future activities under this WSFI strategic framework 2022-2029 relies on close collaboration between many international, regional, national and local partners from Africa, Europe and the Arctic. While the focus currently lies on collaboration with nature organizations, future work under this framework shall also be conducted in collaboration with development organizations, with the goal that landscapes along the EAF support good living conditions for people and migratory birds. The following list of global and regional programmes and initiatives along the EAF provides an overview of the scale of existing WSFI collaborations, but it is by no means a complete reflection of the many local, national or international collaborations that are ongoing and necessary for the effective implementation of flyway activities on the ground (www.wsflyway.com/project-partners):

- BirdLife International established the East Atlantic Flyway Initiative (EAFI) to facilitate the monitoring of bird populations and sites, identify conservation priorities and increase local capacity to address these priorities. The EAFI targets all migratory birds and works in coastal and inland habitats, focusing on countries with active Birdlife partners. Through the Flyway and the Important Bird Areas and Key Biodiversity Areas (IBA/KBA) programmes, BirdLife aims to identify and protect a network of sites critical for the long-term viability of wild bird populations. Worldwide more than 11,000 IBA/KBAs have been identified, and tools are in place for monitoring IBAs in relation to state, pressures and conservation responses. A selection of site along the EAF is participating in this programme but improvements in coverage are desirable. The WSFI and EAFI are collaborating closely in implementing successful conservation initiatives along the EAF coastline to address the critical threats facing migratory waterbirds.
- Wetlands International is dedicated to the conservation and restoration of wetlands and thus a key partner of the WSFI for the conservation of migratory waterbirds. The International Waterbird Census (IWC) is a global monitoring programme coordinated by Wetlands International. It covers over 25,000 sites in more than 100 countries, including most countries along the EAF. Annually, more than 15,000 people submit their data, making this one of the largest monitoring schemes largely based on citizen science. The WSFI closely collaborates with Wetlands International and with the IWC in its monitoring efforts and in estimating population sizes and trends of migratory waterbirds.
- The Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA) is an international policy agreement under the CMS, focused on migratory waterbirds, and thus serves as a crucial element for flyway-level activities in Africa and Eurasia. The

AEWA Strategic Plan for Africa sets out a range of targets and actions for the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats in Africa. The AEWA Plan of Action for Africa 2019-2027 is an important guiding document with high relevance for the WSFI Strategic Framework 2022-2029.

- The Wadden Sea Plan (WSP 2010) of the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation constitutes the common framework for the protection and sustainable management of the Wadden Sea as an ecological entity. The bird targets are in line with the Natura 2000 conservation objectives and with the World Heritage ‘Criterion X – Biodiversity’ and aim for stable and increasing numbers of birds, undisturbed and suitable sites and living conditions determined by natural processes. The Trilateral Monitoring and Assessment Programme (TMAP) delivers the necessary data to assess the targets, thus contributing to the WSFI monitoring programme and the development of adequate management measures for the protection of staging, wintering and breeding birds in the Wadden Sea.
- The Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative (AMBI) aims to improve the status and secure the long-term sustainability of declining Arctic breeding migratory bird populations. With many migratory waterbird species of the EAF breeding in the Arctic, there is a high overlap in key objectives of the two initiatives, and ongoing efforts exist to increase collaboration with the Arctic breeding grounds in terms of monitoring and management as well as awareness raising.
- The Regional Marine and Coastal Conservation Partnership for West Africa (PRCM) was initiated by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, the World Wide Fund for Nature, Wetlands International, the International Foundation of the Banc d’Arguin, and the Sub-regional Fisheries Commission to coordinate efforts made by institutions and private individuals to preserve the littoral of the coastal West African countries of Cabo Verde, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Senegal and Sierra Leone. The activities cover a range of significant coastal zone actions, including the establishment of Marine Protected Areas, capacity building and policy and advocacy for migratory and breeding birds and thus have a considerable overlap with WSFI objectives.
- The Migratory Birds for People (MBP) programme, hosted by the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT) alongside many regional and local partners, aims to develop an effective network of visitor centres across the EAF connecting people to birds and promoting the conservation of migratory birds and their habitats. The WSFI contributes to the development of the MBP network by supporting local wetland centres and providing networking opportunities, e.g. through the East Atlantic Flyway Youth Forum.

For the development of new project ideas and the implementation of project activities, WSFI relies on the close collaboration with partners on the ground, especially local NGOs, and people living within and around important sites along the flyway, who together have the relevant expertise and local knowledge, as well as the governmental institutions relevant to flyway

conservation. As part of the monitoring programme, the WSFI has been directly or indirectly collaborating with more than 50 organisations from northern Europe to southern Africa. Direct support for local projects and training sessions, especially in Africa, has been provided to 27 organisations as part of the WSFI capacity building and management programme.

Besides their support in collaborative efforts in the implementation of the WSFI Action Plan 2014-2020, many WSFI signatories provided financial support for the implementation of activities to the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat as a coordinating unit of the WSFI. The monitoring programme has been funded to a large extent by the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs / the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality. The German Federal Ministry for the Environment has provided annual funds for the development of the capacity building and management programme. The Danish Environmental Agency has supported both the monitoring and the capacity building programme. Additional funds have been provided by the German National Parks in the Wadden Sea, either directly or through bilateral collaborations with specific flyway countries. By communicating the vision and achievements of the WSFI other signatories have raised awareness for the threats to and needs of migratory birds along the flyway, thus contributing to the implementation of the WSFI Action Plan.

Close collaborations with a multitude of stakeholders are essential to achieve the WSFI vision that migratory birds find lasting refuge along the EAF and inspire and connect people for future generations. Thus, the WSFI as a partnership initiative is calling upon new partners to reach out, sign the vision and take part in the conservation of migratory birds along the EAF.

4. WSFI Strategic Objectives

Considering the top flyway issues, the current results of the flyway monitoring and the capacity building and management programmes, the following WSFI objectives were proposed within the WSFI Fundraising Strategy, building on the WSFI Action Plan 2014-2020:

1. Strengthen cooperation among WSFI partners.
2. Strengthen the integrated flyway monitoring programme to assess the status of waterbirds and their sites along the East Atlantic Flyway, signal pressures and evaluate impacts and conservation measures.
3. Establish an integrated flyway research programme to identify causes or mechanisms behind changes in the status of waterbirds and their sites along the East Atlantic Flyway and recommend evidence-based management solutions to alleviate them.
4. Promote wise use of coastal resources and conservation of migratory waterbirds of the East Atlantic Flyway, especially measures to improve their conservation status.
5. Strengthen capacity along the East Atlantic Flyway for conservation, management and monitoring of migratory waterbirds and their critical sites.
6. Strengthen policies and legislations for migratory waterbirds and coastal wetlands in countries along the East Atlantic Flyway.
7. Build awareness of the East Atlantic Flyway, the values and connections of migratory waterbirds, and the importance of the flyway approach for nature conservation.

5. WSFI Strategic Framework 2022-2029

Explanation of symbols

Cost estimate	Estimated costs based on previous experiences, and information provided on focal areas in the WSFI Fundraising Strategy
€	<50,000€
€€	50,000€ - 500,000€
€€€	>500,000€

WSFI priorities	Key priorities of the WSFI considering its two focal areas: Monitoring and Capacity Building & Management
*	Medium
**	High
***	Essential

No.	Strategic objectives and target actions	When	Cost estimate	WSFI priorities
1	Strengthen cooperation among WSFI partners			
1.1	<i>Strengthen and maintain effective cooperation with WSFI partners</i>			
	Continue strategic fundraising efforts and regularly review the factors impacting fundraising success	2022-2029	€	**
	Develop and implement a communication plan to support further collaborative fundraising efforts	2023-2029	€	*
	Stakeholder mapping to identify key partners for the implementation of specific strategic objectives	2022-2023	€	**
	Strengthen partnerships with organisations, governments and conventions actively engaged in conservation of the East Atlantic Flyway	2022-2026	€	***
2	Strengthen the integrated flyway monitoring programme along the East Atlantic Flyway			
2.1	<i>Monitor the status of waterbirds and their sites and habitats along the East Atlantic Flyway</i>			
	Build upon and strengthen the waterbird monitoring along the East Atlantic Flyway, focusing on population sizes and trends, for the non-breeding counts in January (in collaboration with the International Waterbird Census, IWC) and breeding counts at other times of the year (in collaboration with breeding bird monitoring programmes)	ongoing	€€€	***
	Improve waterbird monitoring across seasons, to better understand the importance of stopover sites in Africa, Europe and the Arctic for African and Palearctic populations	2024-2029	€€	**

No.	Strategic objectives and target actions	When	Cost estimate	WSFI priorities
	Build upon and strengthen environmental monitoring in coastal sites and their habitats along the East Atlantic Flyway to acquire information on changes in habitat quality	2022-2029	€€	***
	Support ongoing and promote new initiatives to monitor demographic parameters (reproduction and survival), to be able to link changes in population sizes to potential drivers	2022-2029	€€€	***
	Collaborate with local / indigenous communities to gather information on traditional ecological knowledge	2024-2028	€	**
	Trial new technologies for species and site monitoring, including apps, drones, remote sensing, and Earth observation techniques	2022-2026	€€	***
	Work with local and international partners to build technical capacity in important bird areas for planning and implementing surveys, including the use of remote technologies	ongoing	€€	***
2.2	<i>Determine the (changing) status of waterbirds and their sites and habitats along the East Atlantic Flyway</i>			
	Strengthen capacity for the collection and analyses of data, managing of national programmes and the use of data for site management and conservation policies, especially in coastal Africa and the Arctic	2024-2029	€€	**
	Provide guidance in data management at national/regional/flyway level	2024-2026	€	**
	Ensure timely integration of data into IWC and WBDB (World Bird/Biodiversity Database) databases and support their further development and utilisation	2023+2026 +2029	€	**
	Provide support for in-depth analysis of monitoring data, including the impact of unsustainable practices/policies of different sectors and infrastructure developments on waterbirds, sites and habitats	2023-2029	€€	**
	Support governmental partners to produce reports and assessments of monitoring results to fulfil requirements of MEAs, especially AEWA and Ramsar	2024+2027	€€	*
	Carry out an East Atlantic Flyway assessment and consider the importance of the monitoring results for regional status reports (e.g. Wadden Sea Quality Status Report)	2024+2027	€€	**
3	Establish an integrated flyway research programme			
3.1	<i>Investigate the causes and mechanisms behind changes in status of waterbirds and impacts on their habitats along the EAF, in particular considering the impact of climate change</i>			
	Support integrated research on migratory waterbirds to better understand their movements, annual cycles, population dynamics, considering changes as a result of climatic changes or other anthropogenic pressures	2024-2029	€€€	**
	Better understand the pressures at key sites for migratory waterbirds, especially in relation to changing climatic conditions and existing and emerging threats (e.g. industry, agriculture) and their consequences at the population level	2023-2029	€€€	***
	Determine the vulnerability of coastal sites by investigating climate change impacts on site attributes and habitats along the East Atlantic Flyway	2023-2029	€€€	**

No.	Strategic objectives and target actions	When	Cost estimate	WSFI priorities
3.2	<i>Improve recommendations for evidence-based solutions for adaptive management of migratory waterbirds and their habitats</i>			
	Support the development of management solutions to alleviate the negative impacts of anthropogenic pressures on migratory waterbirds and their coastal habitats	2024-2029	€€	***
	Determine the effectiveness of management interventions in addressing key threats in relation to different local (environmental) conditions, for the development of management guidelines at other critical sites	2027-2029	€€	**
3.3	<i>Exchange of knowledge and expertise that benefit flyway conservation and thus the connectivity between sites along the East Atlantic Flyway</i>			
	Encourage, support and coordinate the exchange of information and experience along the flyway through multi-partner/ multi-disciplinary initiatives	ongoing	€€	**
	Work with universities/ research institutes to provide training opportunities and actively support research programmes for young enthusiastic scientists, especially from Africa	2024-2029	€€	*
	Work with partners to ensure that research efforts yield peer-reviewed publications, recommendations and management guidelines through consolidated time for analyses and presentation at conferences	2022-2029	€€	**
4	<i>Promote wise use of coastal resources and conservation of migratory waterbirds along the East Atlantic Flyway</i>			
4.1	<i>Improved management of key coastal sites for migratory waterbirds along the flyway</i>			
	Support important sites to integrate the conservation needs of migratory waterbirds into site management plans and develop roadmaps for their implementation.	ongoing	€€€	***
	Strengthen cross-sectoral partnerships for building biodiversity conservation, in particular flyway conservation, into sectoral management policies and plans (e.g. agriculture, hunting, industrial development, shipping, tourism)	2024-2029	€€	**
	Support efforts to identify and implement measures to mitigate climate change impacts along the EAF, including nature-based solutions, Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) and landscape approaches that are compatible with migratory birds' needs	2024-2029	€€€	**
	Support infrastructural developments at key sites for improved protection and/or awareness of waterbirds	ongoing	€€	*
	Collaborate with AEWA and other partners in developing an East Atlantic Flyway Multispecies Action Plan (MSAP) for migratory shorebirds of the East Atlantic Flyway dependant on wetlands along the African Atlantic coastline	2024-2029	€	***
	Promote implementation of existing Single Species Action Plans along the East Atlantic Flyway and support conservation management interventions, linked to implementation of the East Atlantic Flyway MSAP	2022-2029	€€	**
4.2	<i>Improved management of breeding sites for migratory waders in the Arctic</i>			
	Investigate priorities and opportunities for improving management of Arctic breeding sites for migratory waders	2023-2029	€€	***
4.3	<i>Identify and support sustainable community-led initiatives, especially for livelihood improvements, at important sites along the flyway</i>			

No.	Strategic objectives and target actions	When	Cost estimate	WSFI priorities
	Support community-based projects which contribute to the conservation of sites and habitats needed by waterbirds, and include elements of community engagement, leadership and awareness raising	2022-2029	€€	***
	Work with local partners to identify a selection of sites where a livelihoods component is needed for conservation impact, and integrate principles of cooperation for improving livelihoods	2022-2025	€€	**
	Support the implementation of projects that aim to improve livelihoods at important bird sites impacted by climate change, through nature-based solutions, mitigation measures and sustainable economic activities, considering specific sectoral bodies (agriculture, water, industry, tourism, etc.)	2024-2029	€€€	**
	At the site level, support liaison between local communities, nature protection agencies and other sectoral bodies (agriculture, water, industry etc.)	2025-2029	€€	*
4.4	<i>Intensify collaborations among World Heritage sites</i>			
	Provide strategic support to the World Heritage nomination process for the Bijagós Archipelago, Guinea-Bissau	2022-2025	€€	**
	Establish and implement practical twinning arrangements, like the one between the Wadden Sea and the Banc d'Arguin, for site exchange and management with the Bijagós, Doñana and others	2022-2024	€€	**
	Support developments regarding the recognition of flyways as essential ecological networks, with specific protection needs beyond key migratory bird sites	2022-2025	€	**
	Strengthen links between World Heritage sites, as well as UNESCO biosphere reserves, along the East Atlantic Flyway through shared communications, mutual support and capacity development	ongoing	€€	*
5	<i>Strengthen capacity along the East Atlantic Flyway, especially in Africa and the Arctic</i>			
5.1	<i>Develop an integrated capacity building programme for the East Atlantic Flyway</i>			
	Develop a strategic capacity building programme that aims to fill capacity gaps in addressing key issues related to the conservation of migratory waterbirds and the management of the sites they depend on (including management, policy & advocacy, communications, report writing and fundraising)	2023-2024	€€	***
	Build on existing tools (e.g. Flyway Training Kit, OFB training modules) to develop an EAF training kit covering different modules and relevant topics, considering climate change mitigation measures	2023-2025	€€	**
	Schedule assessments of capacity needs as part of follow-ups on capacity building initiatives to promote the sustainability and long-term success of capacity building activities	2023-2029	€€	**
	Review and refine the capacity building programme at a regular basis, and build in flexibility to cater for new findings, opportunities, emerging partnerships and lessons learned	2026+2029	€	**
5.2	<i>Implement an integrated capacity building programme for the East Atlantic Flyway</i>			
	Strengthen capacity building partnerships to better direct and coordinate capacity building initiatives along the flyway	ongoing	€	**

No.	Strategic objectives and target actions	When	Cost estimate	WSFI priorities
	In collaboration with AEWA and other partners, determine the resources needs for the successful regional and local implementation of a Training of Trainers programme	2023-2024	€€	*
	Support the implementation of training programmes for institutes and organisations that play key roles in the conservation of migratory waterbirds and wetlands, considering priority countries, specific issues or target groups	2024-2029	€€€	**
5.3	<i>Strengthen the East Atlantic Flyway Coastal Waterbird Conservation Network</i>			
	Work with partners to promote and encourage a network of shorebird experts to identify key issues and priorities for coastal waterbird conservation	ongoing	€€	**
	Support site-based and national case studies to contribute to exchange and the development of shorebird conservation guidelines	ongoing	€€	*
	Extend the expert network along the flyway (including the Arctic) and/or build it into other suitable networks/ groups, with potential flyway tasks	2023-2026	€	**
6	Strengthen policies and legislation for migratory waterbirds and coastal wetlands of the East Atlantic Flyway			
6.1	<i>Improved status of migratory waterbirds and their sites through advocacy interventions</i>			
	At selected sites of ecological importance, work with partners to support governmental organisations to develop and where possible adopt legislation that protects the habitats and migratory birds	2023-2029	€€	**
	Establish and maintain close cooperation with relevant Multinational Environmental Agreements, notably AEWA, Ramsar, Arctic Council and the Abidjan Convention	partly ongoing	€	**
	Work with MEAs and government partners to bring greater political recognition to migratory birds, site networks and the flyway approach to conservation	2023-2029	€€	**
6.2	<i>Climate and biodiversity policies are streamlined, especially relating to the East Atlantic Flyway network of sites</i>			
	Negotiate at convention and government level for improved international and national flyway policies, advocating its relevance and potential in mitigating impacts of climate change	2025-2029	€€	**
	Support national partners to consider important sites for migratory birds in climate mitigation plans	2024-2029	€€	**
6.3	<i>Advocacy of the private sector and development institution</i>			
	With flyway partners, lobby and negotiate with the private sector to minimise their environmental impacts, especially the oil and gas industry, agriculture and fisheries	2024-2029	€€	***
7	Build awareness of the East Atlantic Flyway, and the values and connections of migratory waterbirds			
7.1	<i>Enhanced awareness of the East Atlantic Flyway and the key threats for flyway conservation</i>			

No.	Strategic objectives and target actions	When	Cost estimate	WSFI priorities
	Develop and implement a multi-partner communication strategy, which includes initial plans for communication, monitoring and evaluation	2022-2023	€	**
	Establish a new WSFI website, providing information on the WSFI vision and action plans, its partners as well as overviews of achievements	2022-2023	€	***
	Build awareness of the status and trends of East Atlantic Flyway migratory waterbirds locally and at the flyway level and their link to the climate and biodiversity crises	ongoing	€€€	**
	Develop with partners a range of East Atlantic Flyway awareness tools for different target groups such as Civil Society Organisations, journalists and the private sector at local, regional and flyway level, to communicate flyway issues and news, such as monitoring and research results, climate change impacts and key threats accelerating biodiversity loss, and effective management solutions along the flyway, through different media and in appropriate languages.	2022-2028	€€	**
	Organise / support activities linked to annual events, e.g. World Migratory Bird Day and relevant conferences	ongoing	€	**
	Organise a WSFI conference to review and evaluation achievements of the WSFI Strategic Plan 2022-2029 and to establish future plans.	2029	€€	**
7.2	<i>Enhanced engagement of children and youth through a targeted education programme</i>			
	Develop a flyway education programme in appropriate languages and identify areas for implementation	2024-2026	€	**
	Support educational institutes to roll out flyway education initiatives and build flyway tools into curricula at different levels	ongoing	€€	**
	Establish the EAF Youth Forum as a platform for engagement of young people along the flyway	2022-2029	€€	**
7.3	<i>Enhanced engagement of communities through local level actions and wetland centres</i>			
	Support existing and identify new wetland and visitor centres in Africa to strengthen flyway education activities, and work with partners to build capacity for and promote exchange between wetland centres	ongoing	€	**
	Support local community education initiatives at local sites	2022-2029	€	**