TWELFTH MEETING OF PARTNERS OF THE EAST ASIAN – AUSTRALASIAN FLYWAY PARTNERSHIP
Cebu, Philippines, 8-14 November 2025

Decision 18

Development of a Science Strategy for the East Asian – Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP Science Strategy)

Submitted by the EAAFP Science Unit of the Secretariat

Summary

In alignment with the EAAFP Strategic Plan 2019–2028 and building on MOP10's establishment of the Science Unit, the Secretariat's Science Unit has proposed the importance of development of a Science Strategy as a unifying framework for advancing science-based conservation and policy across the Flyway.

Based on the outcomes from the 1st EAAFP Science Symposium, held on 18–19 October 2024 in Beijing, which brought together Partners, Working Groups, Task Forces, and other stakeholders, there is a need to shape a roadmap development of a Science Strategy for coordinated research, monitoring, and knowledge exchange linked to the EAAFP Strategic Plan.

Partners are invited to support the proposal for development of EAAFP Science Strategy over the next two years in consultation with Partners, the Technical Advisory Group, Working Groups, Task Forces and experts and submission to MOP13.

Background

1. At the 1st EAAFP Science Symposium, held on 18–19 October 2024 in Beijing, China, Working Groups and Task Forces members, the Technical Sub-committee, EAAFP Secretariat, and various Partners such as the Mangrove Conservation Foundation, International Crane Foundation,

Wetlands International, as well as representatives from the Flyway University Alliance came together to discuss developing a *Roadmap for the EAAFP Science Strategy*.

2. Participants recognised that a well-defined and coordinated EAAFP Science Strategy, as a unifying framework for advancing science-based conservation and policy across the flyway, is essential for guiding research, monitoring, capacity building, and evidence-based decision-making across diverse sectors of the Flyway. Such a strategy will help ensure that conservation actions are grounded in robust scientific evidence, address critical knowledge gaps, and foster collaboration among governments, NGOs, academia, and local communities.

3. In line with the Partnership Document and the EAAFP Strategic Plan 2019–2028, the Science Unit of the Secretariat has developed a draft framework (see Information Paper 1) as a working basis for development of EAAFP Science Strategy.

4. Such a Science Strategy could be developed over the next two years in extensive consultation with Partners, the Technical Advisory Group, Working Groups and Task Forces and experts, including at a proposed Science Symposium in 2026, and consider its adoption at MOP13.

Decision:

- That Partners review and support the development of a EAAFP Science Strategy and consider its submission to MOP13.

Annex 1

Decision 18

Development of a Science Strategy for the East Asian – Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP Science Strategy)

Submitted by the EAAFP Science Unit of the Secretariat

Noting the EAAFP Strategic Plan 2019–2028, Objective 3 Enhance flyway research and monitoring activities, build knowledge, and promote exchange of information, which provides a strong foundation for the development of the EAAFP Science Strategy;

Recognising the EAAFP's strategic vision to advance science-based conservation and policy actions across the East Asian – Australasian Flyway through collaborative research, monitoring, knowledge exchange, networking, and capacity building;

Recalling Decision 5 of the 10th EAAFP Meeting of Partners (MOP10) on the establishment of the EAAFP Science Unit, submitted by the National Forestry and Grassland Administration (People's Republic of China) and the Center for East Asian–Australasian Flyway Studies (Beijing Forestry University), which outlines the Terms of Reference for the Science Unit;

Further recalling the discussions at the 1st EAAFP Science Symposium, held on 18–19 October 2024 in Beijing, China, where participants recognised that a well-defined and coordinated Science Strategy is essential to guide research, monitoring, capacity building, and evidence-based decision-making across sectors of the Flyway;

Understanding that such a strategy will ensure conservation actions are grounded in robust scientific evidence, address critical knowledge gaps, and foster collaboration among governments, NGOs, academia, and local communities; and

Expressing gratitude to the National Forestry and Grassland Administration (People's Republic of China) and Beijing Forestry University for their support and contributions in hosting the EAAFP Science Unit;

The 12th Meeting of Partners
of the East Asian – Australasian Flyway Partnership

1. *Supports* the development of an EAAFP Science Strategy for the East Asian – Australasian Flyway Partnership; and

2. *Requests* the Secretariat to prioritise development of an EAAFP Science Strategy in consultation with Partners, the Technical Advisory Group, Working Groups, Task Forces and experts, including through organisation of a consultation meeting at a proposed Science Symposium in 2026,

3. Further Request the Secretariat to submit an EAAFP Science Strategy for consideration at MOP13.

Information Paper 1

Framework for Development of a Science Strategy for the East Asian – Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP Science Strategy)

VISION: To advance science-based conservation across the East Asian–Australasian Flyway through collaborative research, monitoring, knowledge exchange, network, and capacity building to achieve the objectives of the EAAFP Strategic Plan.

OBJECTIVES:

Derived from the Strategic Plan and Partnership Document:

- Identify fundamental and priority areas of work cross linked to the Strategic Plan and with identified leads for all actions.
- Inform decision-making through robust scientific data and evidence.
- Promote coordinated monitoring of migratory waterbirds and their habitats.
- Foster collaborative research among Partners and experts.
- Build a network of research laboratories, field observatories, and banding stations.
- Strengthen capacity for science and conservation in all Flyway countries.
- Support international obligations and synergies.

PRIORITY AREAS OF WORK:

1. Flyway-scale Monitoring and Assessment
    - Harmonise and strengthen long-term monitoring, as well as large-scale monitoring.
    - Identify and address key data gaps.
    - Support site-level assessments for the Flyway Site Network.
2. Species and Habitat Research
    - Prioritise joint research on threatened and declining species.
    - Improve ecological understanding of critical habitats.
    - Promote integrative approaches to migratory connectivity.
3. Emerging Threats and Drivers of Change
    - Assess impacts of climate change, habitat loss, pollution, disease and invasive species.
    - Provide guidance on mitigation and adaptation strategies.
    - Collaborate on modelling future scenarios for population trends and habitat availability.
4. Conservation Effectiveness and Policy Support
    - Evaluate the effectiveness of current conservation actions including area-based conservation measures.
    - Provide scientific input into policy and planning.
    - Contribute to reporting on international targets (e.g. Global Biodiversity Framework).
5. Knowledge Sharing and Capacity Building
    - Facilitate science-policy dialogues and knowledge exchange platforms.

- Develop regional training programmes, toolkits, and databases.
- Promote participation of local researchers, Indigenous Peoples, and local communities.

GOVERNANCE & DELIVERY

1. Coordination

The strategy is led by MOP and implemented by Partners, supported by the EAAFP Technical Advisory Group, Working Groups and Task Forces, and coordinated by the Secretariat through its Science Unit.

2. Partner Roles

- Governments: Provide national data and facilitate site-level actions.
- Academia: Lead research, monitoring, and scientific networking.
- NGOs and relevant stakeholders: Provide support and participate in research, monitoring, networking and capacity building.
- International Organizations: Align with global science agendas.

3. Integration with EAAFP Strategic Plan Goals

EAAFP Strategic Goal	**Science Contribution**
1. Flyway Network Sites	Identify the critical sites
2. CEPA	Training and interpret science into public-friendly outputs
3. Research, monitoring, knowledge exchange	Monitoring and research of critical site and priority speices status, threats and trends of change, providing information on priority species and critical habitats,
4. People Participation	Citizen science and community engagement
5. Flyway-wide approaches	Flyway-scale research partnerships and network

IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

- Flyway-wide Database
- Coordinated monitoring and colour-marking
- The Flyway Science Symposium
- Flyway University Alliance as a joint network of laboratories, field observatories and banding stations for education and research
- Small Grant projects for Research

FUNDING & RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

- Leverage contributions from Partners, donors, university and institutes, and corporate champions.
- Seek co-financing with multilateral instruments
- Build science–business linkages.