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**BE OUR
CHAMPION!**

**Conserving
the network of critical sites
for migratory birds and
local communities
in Africa**

Understanding the Challenge

The African continent is endowed with magnificent wetland sites of various types and sizes, such as the Sudd floodplains in South Sudan, Lake Volta in Ghana, the Lake Chad and Lake Victoria basins, the floodplains and deltas of the Congo, the Niger and Zambezi rivers or the Banc d'Arguin in Mauritania. These sites play host to hundreds of thousands of migratory waterbirds which depend on them for breeding, feeding, roosting and wintering. At the same time, they are of critical importance for many local communities, serving as a means of transportation and providing for their livelihoods through agriculture, aquaculture, fishing and pastoralism. With the intensification of these human practices as well as larger scale developmental activities such as dam construction and oil, gas and mineral extraction, the use of the wetlands is, however, becoming increasingly unsustainable. Safeguarding these precious wetlands, individually and as a network, is absolutely crucial.

Moving from Decision to Action

Major components of the Plan of Action for Africa, under the African Initiative of AEWA, target the identification, coordinated survey and monitoring, wise use and management of the network of sites of international importance for waterbird species in the AEWA Range. A Critical Site Network Tool was developed to collect information and provide the basis for informed decision-making for the sustainable use and management of species and sites.

Championing the Solution!

The network of sites brings about substantial benefits for migratory waterbirds, habitats and people. It provides a framework for internationally coordinated measures for site management, species conservation including sustainable use, and regulation of any forms of harvest. In order to effectively implement the network approach, the identification of further sites and their long-term monitoring need to be continued. Recognising key wetlands for waterbirds is a stepping stone for their designation as key sites at the national and/or international level, and their subsequent inclusion in existing international networks such as the AEWA Critical Site Network. Sustainable and enhanced support is needed to guide this process and engage local communities in all stages, increase appreciation of these natural resources and thereby help to secure their sustainable use.

More information can be found at: www.unep-aewa.org/africaninitiative



MIGRATORY SPECIES CHAMPION PROGRAMME

WE FLY, WE RUN, WE SWIM. HELP US KEEP MOVING

The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species and its associated agreements, altogether known as CMS Family, are concerned with the protection of migratory wildlife on a global or regional scale. Such work is largely subject to the voluntary financial income that the Secretariats can generate, which is by its nature neither regular nor predictable.

The *Migratory Species Champion Programme* aims to promote initiatives developed under the CMS Family and encourage their sustainable support. The Programme has been designed to raise commitments to provide medium- and long-term resources for conservation actions so as to guarantee their timely planning and implementation.

Who can be a Champion?

Champions can be Governments, companies, organizations and individuals willing to make a financial commitment of at least three years for one or more specific CMS Family initiatives. Contributions could be made annually or as one-off payments. In-kind donations also qualify provided that they comply with requirements of this programme.

Becoming a *Champion* is more than being a donor. It is rather being an advocate for migratory species delivering support for their conservation beyond funding. *Champions* become part of the solution to big problems that concern them.

What can a Champion support?

The programme offers a portfolio of initiatives. Each initiative comprises a set of activities contributing to the implementation of a large programme targeting a species, a group of species or a cross-cutting issue.

Why becoming a Champion?

The Programme and its results are promoted on the dedicated page: www.migratoryspecies.org/champion

Furthermore, *Champions* are acknowledged with certificates that testify their support to one or more initiatives.

Different categories of *Champions* are defined to recognize different levels of contributions. The scheme of categories is as follows:

Champion for annual contributions from €20,000 up to €50,000 over at least a three-year period;

Champion Plus for annual contributions of more than €50,000 over at least a three-year period;

Champion Extraordinaire for continuous support.

Engaging and awarding *Champions* are rolling processes undertaken by each Secretariat.

Ad hoc donors' events are organized in the margins of the CMS Family decision-making bodies to acknowledge existing *Champions*. The certificate and the associated publicity provide *Champions* with the opportunity to promote both nationally and internationally their commitment and support for the conservation of migratory species.