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**BE OUR  
CHAMPION!**

## **Migratory waterbirds for strong community livelihoods in Africa**

### **Understanding the Challenge**

The vast tropical rain forest of the Congo Basin, West Africa's abundant fish stocks, the enormous freshwater supplies of Lake Victoria or the Niger River – these are just some examples of the immense natural resources that Africa is endowed with. Wildlife relies on them as much as man does, especially since two thirds of the African population still live in rural areas. For many local communities, waterbirds traditionally constitute an important source of protein and income which, in the past, tended to be used sustainably. However, the African continent is currently undergoing rapid change, caused by a major demographic expansion coupled with intensified resource extraction and deforestation, which in turn is fuelling a boom in illegal wildlife trade and poaching. All of these pressures constitute a massive threat to Africa's magnificent biodiversity and natural habitats, and are bringing many waterbird populations to the verge of extinction. Any measures to alleviate the impact of the new realities will only be sustainable and successful in the long term, if they closely involve local communities and safeguard human livelihoods.

### **Moving from Decision to Action**

When the AEWA Parties in 2012 approved the Plan of Action for Africa, which guides the Agreement's dedicated regional scheme - the AEWA African Initiative – they made sure that the Plan attaches particular importance to the crucial aspect of human livelihoods in the bigger picture of the conservation and sustainable use of migratory waterbirds. The plan emphasizes the need to minimize unsustainable practices, such as illegal trade and hunting, while improving the livelihoods of local communities.

### **Championing the Solution!**

In order to be effective, sustainable use of waterbirds and their habitats needs to closely involve local communities. As set out in the AEWA Plan of Action for Africa, significant funding is required to implement pilot projects that promote alternative livelihood activities, where resource use is becoming unsustainable for local communities which depend on waterbird populations and their habitats. These pilot projects will increase ecological and social sustainability by combining the promotion of alternative protein sources for example through domestic animal husbandry and alternative income-generating activities including beekeeping, agriculture and livestock rearing with concerted awareness-raising campaigns. A minimum of one such project will be conducted in each of the five African sub-regions, in close cooperation with key partner organizations.

More information can be found at: [www.unep-aewa.org/africaninitiative](http://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](http://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.