



In partnership
with



16th November 2015

Start

Iconic, charismatic flagships for Southern and East Africa's grasslands and wetlands, Grey Crowned Cranes have undergone a long-term large scale population decline of up to 80% over the past 45 years. Now the fastest declining crane species in the world, South Africa has the only sustainable and increasing population in Africa.

To elevate the conservation status of the Grey Crowned Crane which is globally classified as Endangered, an International Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Grey Crowned Crane has been endorsed at the 6th Session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA MOP6) which was held in Bonn, Germany from 9 – 14 November 2015.

Threats to the Grey Crowned Crane population include habitat loss, the illegal captive trade, human and livestock disturbance, poisoning, and power line collisions and electrocutions. The Plan provides a road map for what is required to stabilize and improve the current situation for the population across its distribution. This includes actions to reduce adult and juvenile mortality and loss of birds; increase breeding success and reproductive rates; reduce further loss, fragmentation and degradation of habitats; and to fill key knowledge gaps about Grey Crowned Cranes.

Said Kerry Morrison, International Crane Foundation / Endangered Wildlife Trust Partnership Manager: African Crane Conservation Programme; "To secure a future for Grey Crowned Cranes we need governments to acknowledge the current dire situation, and to commit to efforts to resolve this. The adoption of this plan provides a platform and the opportunity for a coordinated multi-disciplinary and multi-stakeholder approach that incorporates government, species experts, NGOs, research institutions and the private sector."

Although only Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe are signatories to this multilateral agreement, the Plan has incorporated all countries across the species' range. "We will be working with all countries across the range of the Grey Crowned Crane to secure the future of this magnificent species." concludes Morrison.

Background on AEWA

The Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA) is an intergovernmental treaty dedicated to the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats across Africa, Europe, the Middle East, Central Asia, Greenland and the Canadian Archipelago. AEWA is developed under the framework of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and administered by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and also brings together countries and the wider international conservation community in an effort to establish coordinated conservation and management of migratory waterbirds throughout their entire migratory range.

- The Agreement area stretches from the northern reaches of Canada and the Russian Federation to the southernmost tip of Africa, covering 119 Range States from Europe, parts of Asia and Canada, the Middle East

and Africa. Currently 74 countries and the European Union (EU) have become a Contracting Party to AEWA (as of 1 May 2015).

- The Agreement provides for coordinated and concerted action to be taken by the Range States throughout the migration system of waterbirds to which it applies.

The development of the plan

- Under the African Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA), the draft International Single Species Action Plan (ISSAP) for the Conservation of the Grey Crowned Crane (*Balearica regulorum*) was commissioned to the International Crane Foundation / Endangered Wildlife Trust Partnership and was compiled by Kerry Morrison.
- The action planning process was financially supported by the Federal Office for the Environment in Switzerland, The Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union – NABU, Dohmen Family Foundation and Kölner Zoo.
- Drafts of the plan went through rigorous consultations with experts, followed by official consultation with government officials in the range states. The draft plan was approved for submission to MOP6 by the Technical Committee at its 12th Meeting in March 2015 and the Standing Committee at its 10th Meeting in July 2015.

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Contacts: Kerry Morrison
African Crane Conservation Programme Manager
International Crane Foundation / Endangered Wildlife Trust
Tel: +27 11 372 3600 / C + 27 82 877 5126
kerrym@ewt.org.za / kerryn@savingcranes.org

and

Lillian Mlambo
Communication and Brand Manager
Endangered Wildlife Trust
Tel: +27 11 372 3600
lillianm@ewt.org.za