Partnership Governance Harmonisation

Narelle Montgomery, Chair of Management Committee

MOP12

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Background

- Governance is the backbone of any successful organisation
- Defines how decisions are made, how responsibilities are shared and how we remain accountable
- MOP11 recognised that Partnership governance had become inconsistent and outdated
- Management Committee undertook a review of nine foundational documents
- Extensive consultation process that included three webinars and invitations to provide written feedback.
- Management Committee endorsed all draft decisions (DD.01-08)
- Revised documents reflect a more mature, transparent and accountable governance framework:
  - Clarify roles and responsibilities
  - Modernise expectations
  - Align Partnership structures with best practice

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Partnership Document

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Key Amendments

The Partnership document was adopted in 2006 and has not been substantively updated in nearly 20 years. It contained outdated references, lapsed Resolutions and structural inconsistencies.

- **Modernised Introduction**: Removed outdated references and streamlined the narrative
- **Governance Clarity:** Defined roles and reporting lines for Management Committee, Finance Sub-Committee and Technical Sub-Committee
- **Structural Proposal**: Suggested elevating the Technical Sub-Committee to a full Committee
- **Appendix Updates:** Deleted obsolete appendices and revised criteria for Flyway Site Network inclusion
- **Editorial Improvements**: Enhanced clarity and consistency throughout the document

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Terms of Reference of the Management Committee

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Key Amendments

The Management Committee plays a central role in providing policy, operational, and financial direction to the Secretariat between MOPs. The Terms of Reference had not been reviewed since 2017. The review aimed to clarify roles, improve efficiency, and align governance structures.

- **Clarified Functions**: Defined the Committee's role in overseeing Secretariat operations, budget and intersessional activities
- **Improved Structure:** Clarified reporting lines between MC, Sub-Committees and MOPs
- **Membership Structure:** Expanded to 8, including the Host City as a permanent member
- **Conflict of Interest:** Introduced declaration requirements for Committee members
- **Meeting Efficiency:** Reduce meeting notice periods (from 60 to 30 days) and increased minimum meeting frequency to three times per year
- **Communication Procedure:** Streamlined out-of-session decision-making via email

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Terms of Reference of the Finance Sub-Committee

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Key Amendments

The Finance Sub-Committee provides advice to Management Committee on finance and fundraising matters. The Terms of Reference had not been reviewed since 2017. The review aimed to align the Finance Sub-Committee's governance with that of the Management Committee and Technical Sub-Committee. The goal was to improve clarity, accountability and operational efficiency.

- **Renaming:** The Sub-Committee is now referred to as the **Budget and Finance Sub-Committee** to better reflect its scope
- **Clarified Functions:** Emphasis on supporting Secretariat budget, prioritising activities and advising on financial sustainability
- **Defined Reporting Lines:** Clearer accountability to the Management Committee and MOPs
- **Membership Structure:** Up to 6 members, including government, non-government, intergovernmental Partners and the Host City
- **Conflict of Interest:** New provisions requiring declarations from members
- **Meeting Protocols:** Reduced notice periods (from 60 to 30 days), increased meeting frequency to 3 times per year, and streamlined decision-making

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Terms of Reference of the Technical Sub-Committee

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Key Amendments

The Technical Sub-Committee provides scientific and technical support to the Partnership. The review aligned the Sub-Committee's governance with that of Management Committee and Finance Sub-Committee. The review clarified roles, improved reporting lines and enhanced operational efficiency.

- **Elevation Option:** Provides the option to elevate the Sub-Committee to a full Committee
- **Clarified Functions:** Expanded and clarified responsibilities, including advising on site nominations, species listings, conservation priorities, and emerging issues
- **Defined Reporting Lines:** Clearer accountability to MOPs and coordination with Management Committee
- **Membership Structure:** 10 expert members with balanced regional, thematic, and species expertise, plus observers from the Science Unit, Management Committee and other flyway initiatives
- **Conflict of Interest:** New provisions requiring declarations from members
- **Meeting Protocols:** Reduced notice periods, streamlined decision-making and improved communication procedures

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Terms of Reference of the EAAFP Secretariat

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Key Amendments

The EAAFP Secretariat plays a central role in coordinating the activities of the Partnership. Its Terms of Reference, originally adopted in 2010, had not been reviewed for 15 years. The Terms of Reference were outdated and not aligned with current governance structures and operational needs. The review aimed to align with the Hosting MOU.

- **Governance Clarity:** Define the Secretariat's establishment under the Partnership document and its reporting relationship with Management Committee during intersessional periods
- **Terminology Updates:** Replaced "Implementation Strategy" with "Strategic Plan"
- **Structural Improvements:** Reordered content for clarity and removed outdated references to Chief Executive Notes
- **Functions:** Strengthened provisions for CEPA, clarified responsibilities in supporting Partner nominations to the Flyway Site Network
- **Funding Role:** Clarified the Secretariat's role in seeking and managing funding for Partnership-wide activities

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Delegation of Authority between the Chair of the Partnership and Chief Executive

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Key Amendments

The Delegation of Authority document defines the administrative responsibilities shared between the Chair of the Partnership and the Chief Executive. Adopted in 2010, the document had not been reviewed for 15 years. The review aimed to clarify responsibilities and align with current governance practices.

- **Minor but Meaningful Updates:** Clarified language and updated terminology to reflect current governance structures. Improved clarity around financial delegation, project approvals and correspondence responsibilities
- **Defined Roles:** The Chair retains authority over Partnership-level matters such as new Partner approvals and Flyway Site Network certifications. The Chief Executive oversees Secretariat-level operations, including staffing, financial management, and general correspondence
- **Intersessional Governance:** Reinforced the Chief Executive's role in maintaining operations and communication between MOPs, under the guidance of the Management Committee

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Rules of Procedure for the Sessions of the Meeting of Partners

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Key Amendments

The Rules of Procedure govern how the Partnership conducts its Meetings of Partners. Adopted in 2017, these rules provide a framework for meeting logistics, decision-making, participation, and governance. The review aimed to ensure the Rules support efficient, transparent, and inclusive meetings. Only minor amendments are proposed.

- **Terminology Updates:** Replaced outdated terms (e.g. “Resolutions” with “Decisions”) and aligned references to Committees and governance bodies
- **Clarified Provisions:** Improved language around meeting notifications, agenda setting, voting procedures, and observer participation
- **Harmonisation:** Incorporated references to the updated Terms of Reference for the Management Committee, Technical Sub-Committee and Secretariat
- **No Structural Changes:** The core structure and function of the Rules remain unchanged

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Guidelines for Establishing Single Species Task Forces and Developing Single Species Action Plans

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Key Amendments

The Guidelines for Establishing Single Species Task Forces and Developing Action Plans were originally adopted in 2010 to support species specific conservation efforts in the EAAFP. The guidelines had not been updated since adoption 15 years ago. The review aimed to modernise the framework and align it with CMS/AEWA standards.

- **Terminology Updates:** Expanded references to include both Single Species Action Plans (SSAPs) and Multi-Species Action Plans (MSAPs)
- **Process Clarification:** Strengthened alignment with CMS/AEWA processes, including options for workshops, range-wide planning and endorsement procedures
- **Governance Improvements:** Updated template for Terms of Reference for Task Forces, clearer guidance on membership, roles, and reporting, defined endorsement pathways for action plans
- **Flexibility:** Recognised the value of multi-species approaches where appropriate especially for shared habitats or overlapping threats

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