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

Decision 14

International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper (*Calidris pygmaea*)

Submitted by the Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force

Summary

This paper seeks endorsement of an updated International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper (*Calidris pygmaea*) under the auspices of the East Asian – Australasian Flyway Partnership.

The Plan has been completed with input from [Range States, EAAFP Partners, non-government organisations, researchers and relevant individuals].

Pursuant to Paragraph 7 of the Partnership Document, the Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force requests the adoption of the Plan and seeks all relevant Range States, Partners, and stakeholders to urgently implement the Plan's actions.

1. The Spoon-billed Sandpiper (*Calidris pygmaea*) is distributed entirely within the East Asian – Australasian Flyway, from Northeast Russia, where it breeds, along the eastern coasts of Asia and the coasts of Southeast Asia and eastern parts of South Asia, where it winters.

2. The Spoon-billed Sandpiper was listed as Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List in 2008, due to the rapid rate of decline of its population. In the same year, the first International Single Species Action Plan for Conservation of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper was adopted by the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and BirdLife International https://www.cms.int/en/publication/international-single-species-action-plan-conservation-spoon-billed-sandpiper. It is an Appendix I species of the CMS.

3. Following the adoption of the International Single Species Action Plan (ISSAP), the Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force was formally established as the first species task force within the East Asian – Australasian Flyway Partnership by Partners at MOP 4 in the Republic of Korea in February 2010. The Spoon-billed Sandpiper remains a key species of the East Asian – Australasian Flyway Partnership https://eaaflyway.net/key-species-of-eaafp/.

4. The first ISSAP recognised a rapid species population decline of about 80% during the previous 40 years and a faster decline in the previous decade as indicating the need for urgent coordinated action. In 2010, the decline was estimated to be about 26% per year. Following years of conservation action, in 2024 the rate of population decline of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper was estimated to have reduced to be about 5% per year, and the global population to be 330 to 550 mature individuals.

5. Recognising the ongoing declining population of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper, it is necessary to update the ISSAP to account for the decade and a half of experience and latest understanding of migration patterns, demography, conservation breeding and threat mitigation strategies and needs. While a lot has been achieved, the species remains threatened by indiscriminate waterbird hunting in parts of the range, loss of habitat (especially intertidal mudflats on passage and wintering grounds) and risks associated with a small global population, among other threats.

6. The development of an updated International Single Species Action Plan was initiated in 2022, coordinated by the Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force, namely Christoph Zöckler (the Chair of the Task Force) and Sayam U. Chowdhury (Task Force Coordinator). Over 40 people with experiences in the conservation of this species including nationals from nearly all range states were actively involved in preparing this action plan. Funding support was kindly provided by the Mangrove Conservation Fund (MCF), Manfred-Hermsen Stiftung, and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB). The Paulson Institute provided further support later in the process of developing the action plan.

7. The final draft of the updated International Single Species Action Plan was circulated for comment with the EAAFP in June 2025. All comments received were considered and the final action plan was amended accordingly.

8. A revised version of the Action Plan, which takes into account all comments received to date, is included at Attachment A to this document.

Decision:

- Adopt the draft decision annexed to this document, which refers to the draft updated International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper.

Annex 1

Decision 14

International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper (*Calidris pygmaea*)

Submitted by the Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force

Alarmed that the Spoon-billed Sandpiper (*Calidris pygmaea)* remains listed as Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List and that its small population is still in decline;

Noting that great advances have already been made in addressing the threats to the Spoon-billed Sandpiper, both in terms of implementing conservation solutions and scientific knowledge, that have led to a marked reduction in the rate of population decline;

Noting further that there are existing instruments and mechanisms that address migratory waterbirds in the East Asian – Australasian Flyway, including the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), and the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat;

Noting further that an updated International Single Species Action Plan has been developed for the Spoon-billed Sandpiper covering its entire geographic range (which lies entirely within the East Asian – Australasian Flyway) in preparation for adoption by the EAAFP as an opportunity for conservation of this highly threatened species;

Recalling Objective 5 in conjunction with Paragraph 7 of the Partnership Document, the Plan has been prepared by the Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force in order to provide Range States, Partners and stakeholders with a clear and concise, flyway-wide conservation framework with timelines and priorities for conservation action in the East Asian – Australasian Flyway;

Noting further that the Plan has been developed in accordance with the EAAFP Single Species Task Force guidelines, as adopted by the 5th Meeting of Partners, Siem Reap, Cambodia, December 2010;

Noting further that the development of the Plan has involved consultation within and outside the Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force of non-government organisations, researchers and individuals from within nearly all Range States and that the Secretariat has provided comments and supported a process of feedback from Partners;

Observing the Action Plan sets out relevant biological information, known threats and necessary conservation actions to secure the Spoon-billed Sandpiper from extinction; and

Recognising the urgency to adopt the updated International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of Spoon-billed Sandpiper under the auspices of the East Asian – Australasian Flyway

Partnership and to develop an Implementation Plan in consultation with Partners and experts in 2026;

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

1. *Adopts* the updated International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper (*Calidris pygmaea*) as submitted to MOP12 at Attachment A;

2. *[Requests* the Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force, subject to available resources, host a workshop to assist the Range States, Partners, and other stakeholders to develop an Implementation Plan for actions in 2026;]

3. *Urges* Range States, Partners, and other stakeholders to implement relevant provisions of the Action Plan (and Implementation Plan once produced) as a matter of priority;

4. *Encourages* Partners to provide technical and/or financial assistance to support activities outlined in the Plans;

5. *Instructs* the Secretariat to make the Plan available on the EAAFP website;

6. *Further instructs* the Secretariat to bring the Plan to the attention of all Range States and relevant stakeholders; and

7. *Requests* the Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force to monitor the implementation of the Plan and to report on progress at MOP12.