

Concept Note

Technical Review Meeting on the Draft Revised International Single Species Action Plan for the Black-faced Spoonbill

8-9 September 2025

6th Floor, G-Tower, ESCAP East and North-East Asia Office
Incheon, Republic of Korea

Background

The Black-faced Spoonbill (*Platalea minor*), listed as Endangered on the IUCN Red List and included in Appendix I of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), serves as a flagship species for international and regional conservation cooperation.

Following its recognition as a priority species at the 1994 BirdLife International World Conference, the first **International Single Species Action Plan (ISSAP)** was launched in 1995, laying the groundwork for robust international cooperation. In 2007, at the 12th Senior Officials Meeting (SOM-12), NEASPEC adopted the species as one of six flagship species under its Nature Conservation Strategy. CMS and BirdLife International published an updated ISSAP in 2010 to expand stakeholder engagement and enhance legal protections for the species and its habitats. Subsequently, in 2013, the East Asian–Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) established the Black-faced Spoonbill Working Group to promote more effective subregional coordination.

Thanks to sustained conservation efforts, the global population of the Black-faced Spoonbill has increased from fewer than 300 individuals in 1989 to nearly 7,000 in 2024. However, emerging threats such as habitat loss, urban expansion, renewable energy development, avian diseases, and climate change continue to pose significant risks to its continued survival. These challenges underscore the urgent need to revise the ISSAP to guide conservation actions for the coming decade.

To this end, the Black-faced Spoonbill Working Group has proposed a revision of the ISSAP for the period 2026-2036. This process aligns with NEASPEC's Nature Conservation Strategy in promoting coordinated and strategic conservation across North-East Asia.

In this context, the **Technical Review Meeting on the Draft Revised International Single Species Action Plan for the Black-faced Spoonbill**, under NEASPEC coordination, will bring together key contributors and experts involved in the development of the revised Action Plan. The meeting will serve as a platform for detailed, chapter-by-chapter review, collaborative refinement, and exchange of technical expertise, paving the way for an updated and impactful ISSAP.

Objectives

The meeting will bring together key contributors involved in the revision of the Black-faced Spoonbill ISSAP for 2026-2036 with the following objectives:

1. Assess Population Status and Habitat Conditions

- Update population trends and status across breeding and non-breeding grounds.
- Review the status of all breeding, staging, and wintering sites across range countries.

2. Evaluate Existing Conservation Measures

- Assess the outcomes and achievements under the Second ISSAP.
- Analyze the effectiveness of conservation efforts, including those not covered in the previous plan.

3. Identify Emerging Threats and Knowledge Gaps for conservation measures

- Conduct a gap analysis to identify priority areas for conservation.
- Assess emerging threats and their potential impacts on the species.

4. Develop the Third Black-faced Spoonbill International Single Species Action Plan (2026-2036)

- Formulate a comprehensive list of actions to support a sustainable conservation strategy.
- Develop a CEPA (Communication, Capacity Building, Education, Participation, and Awareness) strategy to enhance international collaboration and stakeholder engagement.
- Strengthen the mainstreaming of conservation actions at site, national, regional, and international levels.
- Ensure alignment of proposed actions with relevant international conservation frameworks.

Expected outcomes

As a concrete outcome, the meeting is expected to produce a draft Third Black-faced Spoonbill ISSAP for 2026–2036 with the following outcomes:

- Key breeding, staging, and wintering sites are effectively protected or sustainably managed to support the species' life cycle.
- Enhanced knowledge and adaptive strategies are developed to address emerging threats, ensuring the species' resilience.
- Regional collaboration is strengthened through CEPA initiatives, fostering cooperation at site, national, and regional levels, both within and beyond the Black-faced Spoonbill Working Group.
- Conservation actions are coordinated across range countries in a harmonized manner and supported by international frameworks such as CMS, ESCAP/NEASPEC, and EAAFP.
- Conservation actions are aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals and the targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, maximizing synergies with global biodiversity commitments.

Programme

Day 1 (8 September, Monday)	
08:30 - 09:00	Registration
09:00 - 09:20	Opening session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opening remarks: Mr. Ganbold Baasanjav, Head of ESCAP East and North-East Asia office Welcoming remarks: Ms. Yoon Kyung Lee, Deputy Chief Executive of the EAAFP secretariat Group photo
09:20 – 10:40	Session 1. Introduction and Status of Black-faced Spoonbill (Chapters 1 & 2) <i>Moderated by Mr. Simba Chan, Senior Conservation Officer, Japan Bird Research Association</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction Status of Black-faced Spoonbill Q&A and Discussion
10:40 – 11:00	Break
11:00 – 12:30	Session 2. Collation of BFS Important Site List <i>Moderated by Mr. Yu Yat-tung, Director, Hong Kong Bird Watching Society</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BFS site list Q&A and Discussion
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:20	Session 3. Implementation of the First Two Action Plans (Chapter 3) <i>Moderated by Mr. Simba Chan, Senior Conservation Officer, Japan Bird Research Association</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcome and Achievement of First Two Action Plans Assessment of First Two Action Plans Q&A and Discussion
15:20 – 15:40	Break
15:40 – 17:00	Session 4. Threat Analysis (Chapter 4) <i>Moderated by Mr. Yu Yat-tung, Director, Hong Kong Bird Watching Society</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present and emerging threats Assessment of threats Q&A and Discussion

18:00 – 19:30	Dinner
DAY 2 (9 September, Tuesday)	
09:00 – 10:30	<p>Session 5. Recommendations (Chapters 5-7)</p> <p><i>Moderated by Mr. Simba Chan, Senior Conservation Officer, Japan Bird Research Association & Mr. Yu Yat-tung, Director, Hong Kong Bird Watching Society & Ms. Vivian Fu, Senior Manager of Wetlands for Asian Flyways Initiative, WWF Hong Kong</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confronting present threats • Gap-filling • Long-term sustainability of Black-faced Spoonbills and other wetland birds in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway • Scheduling for finalization of the report • Other matters <p>Q&A and Discussion</p>
10:30 – 10:50	Break
10:50 – 12:20	Session 5. Recommendations (Chapters 5-7) - continued
12:20 – 12:30	Closing
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 16:00	Field Visit