



SIXTH MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE
16 – 17 June 2010, The Hague, the Netherlands

REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT

Introduction

This report presents an update on the activities of the AEWA Secretariat to implement the AEWA Strategic Plan 2009-2017 and the AEWA International Implementation Tasks 2009-2016 since MOP4 in September 2008. Issues relating to administration, finance, staffing and logistics are dealt with in document StC 6.13.

AEWA Strategic Plan 2009-2017

All objectives and targets of the Strategic Plan requiring a contribution by the Secretariat alongside other stakeholders as well as the activities that have been undertaken so far, are listed in the table below (Annex 1). The table excludes activities on the implementation of the AEWA Communication Strategy for which there is a separate report (document StC 6.7).

AEWA International Implementation Tasks (IIT) 2009-2016

The list below (Annex 2) contains all 31 IITs and provides an update on the progress made with the implementation of each of them. The abbreviation GEF-WOW after the title of IIT indicates that the task represents matching funding for the Wings Over Wetlands Project (WOW) / African-Eurasian Flyways GEF project.

Action requested from the Standing Committee

The Standing Committee is requested to take note of the progress made by the Secretariat in implementing the Strategic Plan and the IITs and give further guidance.

ANNEX 1

AEWA Strategic Plan 2009-2017

Objective	Target	Indicator	Activity of the Secretariat
Objective 1: To undertake conservation measures so as to improve or maintain conservation status of waterbird species and their populations	Target 1.4: Single Species Action Plans (SSAPs) are developed and implemented for most threatened species listed in category 1 and categories 2 and 3, marked with an asterisk on column A of Table 1	SSAPs are in place and being effectively implemented for all globally threatened species and species marked with an asterisk	See the detailed report in document StC 6.11
Objective 2: To ensure that any use of waterbirds in the Agreement area is sustainable	Target 2.5: Adaptive harvest management of quarry populations is ensured at international scale	International harvest management plans (IHMP) for two quarry populations developed and implemented	A first attempt to develop a management plan for a quarry population is being developed in cooperation with the Danish National Environmental Research Institute (Dr. Jesper Madsen). A motivated proposal was put before the Technical Committee and the Committee agreed that the Svalbard/North-west European population of the Pink-footed Goose (<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>) will be the ideal first choice for elaboration of such a management plan. Support was received from all the four Range States (Norway, Denmark, The Netherlands and Belgium). Funding for a three-year work plan has been pledged by the Norwegian Directorate for Nature Management.
Objective 3: To increase knowledge about species and their populations, flyways and threats to them, as a basis for conservation action	Target 3.1: Necessary resources are in place to support, on a long-term basis, the international processes for gathering monitoring data for status assessment	Timely production of the annual IWC summary report and the AEWA CSR and global <i>Waterbird Population Estimates</i> 50% increase of species/populations whose international status is being assessed with	The Secretariat has been taking part in the work of the Wetlands International Global Waterbird Advisory Group (WIGWAG) which was set up to assist in the further development of Wetlands International's waterbird monitoring work including ensuring regular support to the International Waterbird Census (IWC). A special workshop is being organised after the AEWA 15 th Anniversary Symposium on 15 June 2010 in The Hague, the Netherlands. The purpose of the workshop is to present the result

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		regular monitoring data	of these two reviews on stakeholders' needs and expectations and to discuss options for forming a partnership to reinvigorate waterbird monitoring activities coordinated by Wetlands International in order to produce high quality data that can provide a reliable basis for policy-relevant analyses and policy decisions by governments and others in the AEWA region.
	Target 3.3: Nationally responsible state agencies, academic and other wildlife-related research institutions are encouraged to establish research programmes to support implementation of waterbird conservation priorities	Ten new AEWA-linked research programmes are established	No progress on this target on the side of the Secretariat.
Objective 5: To improve the capacity of Range States and international cooperation and capacity towards the conservation of migratory waterbird species and their flyways	Target 5.1: The membership of the Agreement is expanded	AEWA Membership has increased to 75 Parties by MOP5, to 85 Parties by MOP6, and to 90 Parties by MOP 7, with a particular focus on Central Asia and the Middle East	To date AEWA has been ratified by 63 parties compared to 59 at MOP4 in September 2008. Several more have declared that they are working on accession: Azerbaijan, Armenia, Iceland, Morocco and Swaziland. A special AEWA promotional workshop for the Russian Federation was held in Moscow at the end of March 2010 (funded by the Netherlands and Switzerland). A similar workshop is being organised for Burkina Faso (funded by Switzerland).
	Target 5.3: Cooperation with other MEAs and key partners is enhanced	At least 5 new MoU/MoC between AEWA and other MEA's and key partners are established	A new MoC is being discussed with the organisation, Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF). A draft MoC text is with CAFF for review.
	Target 5.4: The Small Grants Fund (SGF) is activated	At least 100,000 EUR annually is disbursed to developing countries for the implementation of AEWA	The first AEWA SGF cycle was announced in January 2010. Funding available constitutes €20,000 from the AEWA core budget related to the implementation of the African Initiative and

Objective	Target	Indicator	Activity of the Secretariat
			additional €50,000 voluntary contribution from France earmarked for projects in Africa. Thus, the 2010 SGF call is limited only to applications from Africa. A total of 31 applications were received by the closing date 30 April 2010, which are now being evaluated by the Secretariat.
	Target 5.6: Capacity of national staff to implement the Agreement is increased through proper training mechanisms	At least 30 governmental staff members have been trained in at least 20 countries	No progress on this target on the side of the Secretariat. This activity will require the development of a training module in advance.

ANNEX 2

AEWA International Implementation Tasks 2009-2016

No.	IIT	Activity of the Secretariat
1	Implement existing international single species action plans	See a detailed report in document StC 6.11
2	Develop new international single species action plans	See a detailed report in document StC 6.11
3	Identify all sites of international importance for AEWA species (GEF-WOW)	This activity is being addressed by the Wings Over Wetlands project in the framework of the development of the Critical Site Network Tool. This activity will be completed in June 2010 once the portal is launched to the public.
4	Creating an interactive tool that presents information on important sites for migratory waterbirds (GEF-WOW)	See a detailed report in document StC 6.9
5	Publish priority areas for better protection (GEF-WOW)	This activity is on schedule and being addressed by the Wings Over Wetlands project in the framework of the development of the Critical Site Network Tool. It is anticipated that the top 100 priority sites will be highlighted in a final publication anticipated to be released at the end of 2010.
6	Habitat Priorities for waterbirds, particularly in Africa and South-west Asia	No funding available.
7	Restoration and rehabilitation techniques for waterbird habitats, particularly in Africa	No funding available.
8	Conservation programme of migratory bird roosting sites located in the Albertine Rift region (Eastern Africa)	No funding available.
9	Evaluation of waterbird harvests in the Agreement area	No funding available.
10	Evaluation of socio-economic impacts of waterbird hunting	No funding available.
11	Evaluation of waterbirds as agricultural pests in Africa	No funding available.

No.	IIT	Activity of the Secretariat
12	Developing guidance to avoid or mitigate the impacts of extractive industries on habitats of importance for waterbirds	This task is being funded by UK jointly for Ramsar and AEWA to produce a common document. Funding was provided to the Ramsar Secretariat and work is being coordinated by them and the Ramsar Scientific and Technical review Panel in conjunction with the AEWA Technical Committee
13	Developing guidance to avoid or mitigate the impacts of wind energy developments on waterbirds and their habitats	No funding available.
14	Evaluation of threats to waterbirds and their habitats emerging from the development of renewable energy sources	No funding available.
15	Survey work in poorly-known areas (GEF-WOW)	<p>While survey work was not conducted to the full extent as outlined in the WOW project document, extensive survey work was conducted in all 4 project sub-regions. Specifically, in the winter 2009-2010, surveys took place in Zimbabwe, Rwanda, north of Somalia, Senegal, Benin, and Guinea- Bissau. Survey work was conducted in tandem with training on monitoring in conjunction with IIT 24.</p> <p>Training surveys are also planned for Iraq and Syria in the near-term.</p>
16	International Waterbird Census – special gap-filling survey (GEF-WOW)	<p>While gap-filling work was not conducted to the full extent as outlined in the WOW project document due to inadequate funding, the WOW Regional Waterbird Officers have followed up the implementation of the Gap filling strategy outlined at http://wow.wetlands.org/DOCUMENTS/tabid/153/language/en-US/Default.aspx (see the Technical Report entitled "<i>Consolidated Report on the Subregional Gap Identification Workshops</i>"). Gap-filling efforts were finished in 2009 but Waterbird Officers continue to seek best ways to fill remaining gaps, whether through expanding existing monitoring or through special surveys.</p>
17	Publication of flyway atlases for different groups of species	No funding available.
18	Ringed recoveries in atlases	No funding available.

No.	IIT	Activity of the Secretariat
19	Coordination of waterbird ringing schemes, particularly in Africa	The third phase of the AFRING project funded again by the European Commission was closed in December 2008. Amongst other things, the third phase delivered a training course for Southern Africa, which took place in Zambia and a website for AFRING (www.afring.org). The project was reported to the EC in mid-2009 and no further funding has been secured for the next project phase as yet.
20	Actions for the conservation of colonial waterbirds	No funding available.
21	Causes of population changes in migratory waterbirds	No funding available.
22	Migratory waterbirds as indicators	No funding available.
23	Bioclimatic modelling of changes in distribution of species and populations critically and highly threatened by climate change under the different climatic scenarios	No funding available.
24	Improving survey and monitoring capacity for migratory waterbirds (GEF-WOW)	<p>This activity was completed in conjunction with IIT 15 above.</p> <p>Specifically, training courses on waterbird and wetland monitoring were conducted in the Central African Republic (Dec 2009). Surveys with strong training components were undertaken this past winter (between Jan-Feb 2010) in the Central Africa Republic, Benin, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, and Senegal. In East Africa a training course was held in Mozambique (Nov 2009).</p> <p>A training course in South Sudan that was originally scheduled for March 2010 is on hold due to security concerns.</p>

No.	IIT	Activity of the Secretariat
25	Regional training programmes in Africa for the implementation of the Agreement (GEF-WOW)	While AEWA is an important facet of WOW's work and always plays a role within ongoing training workshops, as well as within training materials, no specific regional training was held in Africa for the implementation of the Agreement.
26	Training programme for National Implementation Agencies for AEWA in the Contracting Parties	No funding available.
27	Field guide for Central Asia and adjacent countries (GEF-WOW)	This activity was dropped altogether from the WOW workplan due to inadequate funding.
28	Training course on migratory waterfowl conservation and waterfowl habitat management	No funding available.
29	Establish a clearing house for training materials for the Agreement	No funding available.
30	Regional workshops for the promotion of the Agreement (GEF-WOW)	This activity is planned for Central Asia as a partly existing Training of Trainer (ToT) workshop scheduled in mid-2010.
31	Communicating the importance of a network of critical sites for migratory waterbirds (GEF-WOW)	See IIT 5 above.