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## REPORT OF THE 7<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

26 – 27 November 2011, Bergen, Norway

### Agenda item 1. Opening of the meeting

1. In his capacity as Chair and representative of the host country, Mr Øystein Størkersen opened the meeting and welcomed the delegates to Bergen. Many of those present had been involved in the preceding CMS Conference of the Parties (CMS COP10) and associated meetings and despite the obvious benefits of convening back-to-back meetings, he felt that both the delegates and the Secretariats involved may have been overstretched and that this should be considered when future meetings are planned. Nevertheless, he looked forward to a productive Standing Committee meeting.

2. Acting Executive Secretary, Mr Marco Barbieri welcomed the participants on behalf of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat, pleased that so many had been able to attend. He explained that this would be the last Standing Committee Meeting before the 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Parties to AEWA (MOP5), scheduled to take place from 14 to 18 May 2012 in La Rochelle, France. There were many items on the agenda for discussion, the resulting decisions of which would be submitted to MOP5. He noted that Parties could still submit proposals until 14 March 2012<sup>1</sup>. As this was the first time that Mr Barbieri was representing the AEWA Secretariat in this function, he welcomed the guidance and advice of the Meeting on the issues at hand.

3. Mr Barbieri also expressed his gratitude to Mr Stein Byrkjeland from the Department of Environmental Affairs, County Governance of Hordaland, Bergen for his assistance in providing the excellent premises and facilities for the meeting.

4. On behalf of the UNEP/CMS Secretariat, Executive Secretary, Ms Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, stressed the fact that although it was difficult to arrange back-to-back meetings, there were advantages and she was happy to join this last StC meeting before the up-coming MOP5. The meeting was scheduled in good time to be able to process the outcomes and produce clear and final documents for the MOP.

5. She went on to report about the outcomes of the CMS COP10, which called for more integration and synergies within the CMS family. World Migratory Bird Day, which is a joint venture between the UNEP/AEWA and UNEP/CMS Secretariats, is a good example of a successful cooperation. The generic Online Reporting System for national reports from MEA-Contracting Parties is another, where AEWA has played a pioneering role, in close collaboration with UNEP/WCMC. A further example is reflected in fundraising activities, particularly the example of the cooperation agreement with RWE Rhein-Ruhr Netzservice GmbH, one of the largest German and European private companies for grid services, which provided the funds for the production of a review on the impact of power grids on migratory birds, and guidelines on how to mitigate those impacts.

### Agenda item 2, Adoption of the Agenda and Work Programme

6. Mr Barbieri introduced document StC 7.1 rev.1 *Provisional Agenda* and StC 7.2 *Provisional Annotated Agenda and Work Programme*.

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<sup>1</sup> For this and other MOP5-related deadlines, please visit the MOP5 website at: [http://www.unep-aewa.org/meetings/en/mop/mop5\\_docs/mop5.htm](http://www.unep-aewa.org/meetings/en/mop/mop5_docs/mop5.htm)

Mr van Dijk suggested moving agenda items 15 and 18, scheduled for the afternoon of the second day to the morning of the second day to allow all delegates to participate in and contribute to discussions.

Decision:        *The Chair declared the agenda and work programme adopted with the above-mentioned amendment.*

### **Agenda item 3. Admission of Observers**

7. Mr Dereliev went through document StC Inf. 7.2 *Provisional List of Participants*, briefly introducing the Observers present at the Meeting, particularly the Danish delegation, which was preparing for the Danish EU Presidency during the first half of 2012 and its role in MOP5 and the German delegation, representing the host of the Secretariat. A representative from Poland was also present as the Polish delegation had been in charge of the EU coordination at the CMS COP. The final list of participants is attached to this report as Annex I.

8. Referring to a suggestion by Mr Barbieri to forgo this agenda item in future as this is not formally required according to the StC Rules of Procedure, the Chair suggested keeping the agenda item but changing the name to *Welcome and Admission of Observers*.

Decision:        *The Meeting agreed to admit the Observers and keep this agenda item for future meetings under the changed name.*

### **Agenda item 4. Adoption of the draft report of the 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee**

9. Mr Barbieri introduced document StC 7.4 *Draft report of the 6th meeting of the Standing Committee*.

Decision:        *As there were no comments on the draft report of the 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee, the Chair declared the report adopted.*

10. Mr Barbieri noted that, as a consequence of the practice of adopting the report of meetings of the Standing Committee at the subsequent meeting, the StC6 draft minutes had been uploaded onto the website for adoption only at the present meeting. With a view to making the reports of the Standing Committee meetings available more promptly, Mr Barbieri suggested amending this procedure as follows: The Secretariat would produce the draft minutes within six to eight weeks after each meeting, and send them first to the Chair and then to the other meeting participants for comments so that a final draft could be produced ca. four months after the meeting and subsequently finalised for upload onto the website and used as a reference document by all stakeholders.

Decision:        *The Meeting adopted this change in procedure.*

### **Agenda item 5. Reports**

#### **5a 1. Reports by Standing Committee Members**

11. Representing Norway, the Chair reported that Norway had recently hosted the CMS COP10, whereby the lengthy organisation had involved a steering committee of 30 members. Norway continued to focus on the conservation of the Lesser White-fronted Goose and supported *inter alia* the post of the Coordinator of the Single Species Action Plan for that species, based at the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat in Bonn. The total expenditure involved in this project amounted to 800,000 Euros € per year. Norway also supports the process of the AEWA Species Management Plan for the Svalbard Population of the Pink-footed Goose, which was the first plan of this type. He reported on a reinvigoration of seabird work. The most recent initiative is the use of loggers as data storage devices (small flags attached to the foot of the bird) to monitor birds' movements for a better insight of migratory movement and wintering sites.

12. Responding to a question by Denmark on whether controlling numbers of birds rather than conserving threatened birds is really within the mandate of AEWA, Mr Middleton (FACE) expressed the view that this is also a question of terminology: EU put emphasis on control, however a reduction in the number of birds in a population can also be seen in a perspective of management of the population, and AEWA's mandate does include the management of populations at a favourable conservation status.

13. On behalf of the Netherlands, Mr van Dijk referred to The Hague Action Statement<sup>2</sup>, which touched on some future elements of the implementation of AEWA such as closer collaboration with development agencies. The Netherlands and Switzerland had funded a Workshop in the Russian Federation, promoting AEWA and accession to the Agreement. The Netherlands had also agreed to provide a part-time coordinator for the AEWA International Species Working Group for the Black-tailed Godwit SSAP, from the same Government agency that had also developed the Bewick's Swan SSAP contracting out the drafting of the plan to Wetland International. The Netherlands had been funding many wetland projects in Central and Eastern Europe and West Africa for the last 12 years, mostly carried out by Wetland International; unfortunately the funds had now largely dried up, except to some extent those from development agencies. The BirdLife Partner in the Netherlands, Vogelbescherming Nederland had received funding from the Dutch Lottery Fund for a project in the Sahelian countries except Mali with the same name as the book *Living on the Edge*. Finally, the Dutch Ministry is looking at the possibility of cooperating with Mali or South Sudan with regard to agricultural issues.

14. Ms Courouble reported that France has started a three-year programme with Tour De Valat, ONCFS and Wetlands International to support the International Waterbird Census (IWC) for the whole of the Mediterranean region with the emphasis on Northern Africa. A consultant had been hired and work had commenced. Within the project, a book in Arabic for identifying birds and a CD Rom were being produced.

15. On behalf of Western and Central Africa, Mr Kofi Adu-Nsiah reported that of the 26 Range States, 12 were Parties to AEWA and there had been no new accessions since StC6. The response to a request for feedback from the Parties before the meeting had been disappointingly low. Ghana and Senegal had reported on activities celebrating WMBD in 2010 and 2011. Benin, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire and Mauritania - all non-Contracting Parties - also reported on WMBD activities. Burkina Faso reported on the information and awareness-raising workshop on the accession of Burkina Faso to AEWA, which took place in Loumbila in October 2010. The workshop had been jointly organized by the Ministry of Environment and Livelihoods in Burkina Faso (MECV) and the AEWA Secretariat thanks to a voluntary financial contribution from the Swiss Government. There had, however, not been any indication with regard to the final ratification of the Agreement. Further efforts had been made to encourage Liberia, Cameroon and Burkina Faso to join AEWA.

16. Ghana had prepared the *National Preparedness and Response Plan for avian influenza in Ghana*, including education and the creation of public awareness, training, field surveillance and strengthened collaboration among government, civil society groups, individuals in the poultry business, and international partner organisations, particularly WHO<sup>3</sup>, USAID<sup>4</sup> and FAO<sup>5</sup>, which are represented in the *National Avian Influenza Working Group*. The Wildlife Division had put up periodic wild bird surveillance for migratory waterbirds in Ramsar sites, other wetland areas, irrigation sites and Important Bird Areas (IBAs).

17. The key challenge facing the region is the anglophone/francophone language barrier, which limits effective communication and information-sharing.

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.unep-aewa.org/meetings/symposium/docs/the\\_hague\\_action\\_statement.pdf](http://www.unep-aewa.org/meetings/symposium/docs/the_hague_action_statement.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.who.int/en/>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.usaid.gov/>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.fao.org/>

## **5a 2. Reports by Observers to the Standing Committee**

18. Denmark reported on an initiative under the Nordic Council, i.e. a new Nordic action plan addressing the increased threat posed to seabirds and their breeding by climate change and heavier pollution of the seas. More information can be found on following website:

*<http://www.norden.org/en/news-and-events/news/seabirds-under-threat/>*

Poland reported that the accession procedure to AEWA is planned to commence in January. It is expected that this procedure will take around one year, although this is as yet unofficial due to the change in Government.

## **5.b Report by the Technical Committee**

20. The Chair of the AEWA Technical Committee reported that the 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the AEWA Technical Committee had been held in Naivasha, Kenya, in September 2011. Intersessionally, the TC had worked through the AEWA TC Workspace and 11 draft resolutions had been prepared for submission to StC7 and subsequently to MOP5. She went on to mention some of the issues, which had been part of the TC work plan 2009 – 2012.

21. On the issue of taxonomy, all the aspects of taxonomic classifications in the case of AEWA species were considered and although there would be obvious advantages in aligning the taxonomy used by CMS and AEWA, and despite the possible disadvantage noted by the CMS Scientific Council Working Group on Bird Taxonomy that the BirdLife taxonomic list is not printed, the TC considered the BirdLife taxonomy to be more appropriate. The TC had compiled a letter to the respective CMS Working Group to this effect including a table outlining the pragmatic and financial reasons for this opinion.

22. Three Conservation Guidelines had been updated, while for two further Guidelines funding was needed; these have been added to the list of International Implementation Tasks (IIT) for the next triennium. New guidelines on re-establishment of waterbird populations were being drafted and will be reviewed and completed by the TC in early 2012.

23. The List of International Implementation Tasks (IIT) 2009-2016 was reviewed. Fulfilled tasks (mostly WOW-related) were deleted and others were updated and the list was amended accordingly. A total of 30 IIT were listed. Particular attention was paid to an alignment of tasks with the Plan of Action for Africa.

24. The TC Workspace (TCWS) had proved to be a very valuable and helpful tool with regard to the work of the Technical Committee. The point had been raised if this could be extended for the use of the National AEWA Focal Points (and Focal Points for technical matters) to enable easier communication and dissemination of information. Some former TC members had raised the question about wanting to be informed about aspects of AEWA TC work, offering their expertise even after their terms of office had expired, and that a similar question was raised during previous StC meetings. The TCWS had been produced by the AEWA Secretariat entirely in-house and had its limitations; funding was urgently required, not only for its maintenance, but also for adding additional features. The development of such systems should be recognized by the governing bodies as increasing the affectivity of the work and that financial support is needed for their up-keep. The Meeting discussed several options for the development of such systems, e.g. sharing the costs with other MEAs, which was considered to be theoretically possible.

25. The point on the connection with the TC regional representation and the European Union (EU) was raised; geographically, the EU Member States occur in the areas of four of the regional representatives but the EU itself is not noted as being a Contracting Party in the table on page 7 of the TC Modus Operandi. The question, which of the regional representatives is responsible for representing the EU should be clarified.

26. At MOP5, the terms of office will expire for four regional representatives: for Eastern Africa, South-Western Asia, Eastern Europe and Central Europe. Two representatives: for Western Africa and Southern Africa decided to step down because of other commitments, and the position for the representative for

Central Africa had been vacant since MOP4. As a consequence, only two regional representatives will continue their work, while for all the others, the recruitment process must be carried out. Unfortunately, only few nominations had been received by the Secretariat to date, with no nominations at all for some regions.

27. The issue of holding back-to-back meetings was discussed and it was felt that the best strategy would be not to combine the TC and StC meetings, where a time gap is needed in order to be able elaborate the outcomes and produce documents etc. but to try to combine with the meetings of other conventions such as Ramsar, wherever possible.

*Action: The Meeting requested the Secretariat to consider the timing and venue of meetings and try to hold these back-to-back with other conventions, if appropriate, in order to save costs.*

### **5.c Report by the Depositary**

28. Mr van Dijk referred to document StC 7.5 *Report of the Depositary*, reporting that currently 64 countries and the EU were Party to the Agreement (Ethiopia as of 01.02.2010, and Montenegro and Chad as of 01.11.2011). Morocco and Greece are signatories to the Agreement, but have not yet ratified it. He noted that the Netherlands consists of seven entities and that the whole Kingdom is a Party to CMS He will enquire if this also applies for AEWa and keep the Secretariat informed.

### **5.d Report by the Secretariat**

29. Mr Barbieri introduced document StC 7.6 *Report of the Secretariat*, which covered the period from 01.2009 to 09.2011. He requested the Meeting to comment on the adequacy of the current format for the report to the MOP and went on to highlight some issues. Activities related to the accession of new Parties had mostly been undertaken in the context of the African Initiative and the Lesser White-fronted Goose Action Plan. Those two initiatives, that had received significant support from some Parties, had in fact been instrumental in enhancing the activities of the Secretariat on a range of different issues. The *Wings Over Wetlands (WOW) UNEP-GEF African-Eurasian Flyways Project* had come to an end and the AEWa Information Officer, who had dedicated 50 per cent of his time to this project throughout its duration, had been able to concentrate on other communication activities such as the E-Newsletter, which is one of the main elements of communication with the AEWa network (3000 recipients).

30. The national online reporting system had been successfully launched and a number of websites had been developed, mainly in-house with limited support, due to the expertise available within the Secretariat. A number of these tools however, need technological upgrades, which will be dependent on resources being made available. A number of Technical Series publications had been published on the AEWa website and other information materials had been produced. The *Small Grants Fund* became operational after MOP4. The first cycle, supported by the Government of France focused on Africa and four projects were supported in 2010, an additional project could be supported in 2011 thanks to a voluntary contribution by Switzerland. The Secretariat is hoping to receive funding for the current cycle for which a number of applications have been received. Only 20,000 Euros are currently available for this fund in the AEWa core budget and a call for fundraising will go out to the donor community shortly.

31. Coordination mechanisms for SSAPs are one of the key elements for the success of their implementation and currently nine AEWa International Species Working Groups are at various stages of development and operation. Referring to previous comments on the importance of approaching development agencies for project funding, Mr Barbieri reported that the Secretariat had a promising contact with the Spanish Development Agency, which had led to initial funding for the WetCap project (capacity building in Northern Africa). Unfortunately the funding was discontinued so the project activities could not be continued. The Secretariat will carry on examining the possibilities of funding in the development agency sector.

32. The Chair concurred that outreach between the Secretariat, the StC and the Parties as well as the general public is very important. Parties must be kept up-to-date with news and current and planned activities. He realized, however, that this meant more work for the Secretariat with its overstretched human resources. The website needs to be up-dated on a permanent basis. He expressed his appreciation for the good work done by

the Secretariat staff, particularly the Information Officer. He noted that Parties could follow Norway's example and also take the lead in sponsoring individual SSAPs.

33. Responding to a request by Switzerland for a list of Focal Points on the AEWA website, Mr Keil referred to plans for a common CMS-family website, which will include a web-based database in the background which will allow for individual country profiles, including up-to-date focal point information. The current AEWA website developed in 2003 is functional but technically outdated.

#### **Agenda item 6. Outcomes of the CMS COP10 of relevance to AEWA**

34. Ms Mrema reported that the list of complementary areas between CMS and AEWA was long. One example of mutual engagement is global flyway conservation and membership of the CMS Working Group on Flyways, an open-ended working group on global bird flyways within the framework of the CMS Scientific Council, which acts as a think tank on flyways and frameworks, and is tasked with reviewing scientific and technical issues for conservation of migratory birds and their habitats. Another area of mutual interest is the threat posed to birds by power grids and the relevant COP decision, also instrumental for AEWA. The common nomenclature for birds is an issue, which the COP could not agree on and the CMS Scientific Council was requested to work with all the MEAs to explore the possibility of agreeing on this. Other areas such as the threat of poisoning and climate change are also of significance for both AEWA and CMS. She went on to report that the CMS *Future Shape* initiative was relevant to both and provided a platform for working together. The Action Plan for the Central Asian Flyway was an issue which needed to be dealt with, in particular the institutional options to support the implementation of the Action Plan had to be determined and the level of AEWA'S involvement decided on.

35. The Chair thanked Ms Mrema for her report and concurred that progress had been made towards more joint efforts and that some issues still needed to be tackled.

#### **Agenda item 7. Preparations for the 5<sup>th</sup> ordinary Session of the Meeting of the Parties**

36. The representative of the host Government for MOP5, Ms Marianne Courouble gave a short presentation of the location and the conference venue. MOP5 is to take place from 14 to 18 May 2012 in La Rochelle on the Atlantic coast of France. The MOP5 Organizing Committee, consisting of 30 people had been meeting regularly for the past two years. With regard to logistics, the Ministry was working with an agency experienced in organizing large events. Ms Courouble went on to explain that lunches would be provided for free of charge by the Government of France and that the City of La Rochelle would also be contributing by providing free local transport for delegates. The motto of MOP5 is *Migratory Waterbirds and people - Sharing wetlands*, which aims at underlining the links between people and the protection of migratory waterbirds and their habitats.

37. France will be submitting four draft resolutions on behalf of the EU on the following issues:

- promotion of twinning schemes between sites along the same flyway - on a management level,
- enhancing synergies between AEWA and the Ramsar Convention,
- legal and scientific clarification of the definition of 'disturbance', and
- support for reinforcing capacities with a view to improving laws and policies in favour of waterbirds and the participation of non-EU states party to AEWA decisions.

38. The Chair thanked Ms Courouble for the presentation and looked forward to the meeting in La Rochelle. He requested Ms Courouble to make the information and booking facilities with regard to the hotels and excursions available as soon as possible. Ms Courouble reported that this information would be available in December under the following link<sup>6</sup>. She added that France welcomed proposals for side events, particularly

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.secure-hotel-booking.com/Office-de-Tourisme-de-La-Rochelle/23P3/dateselection?invalidateEngineCache=true&sid=be4070f5-71b8-4757-8751-e6f0115973db>

encouraging jointly organised European events. All side events would take place during the lunch breaks or after the afternoon sessions. The deadline for registration of side events is **15 January 2012**.

39. Answering a question about the deadline for the submission of draft resolutions, Mr Barbieri informed the meeting that according to the Rules of Procedure this is 60 days before the commencement of the MOP, in this case, **14 March 2012**.

40. The Chair expressed his appreciation to those involved for the work done so far with regard to the preparation of MOP5 and looked forward to the meeting.

41. Mr Barbieri commented that all MOP5-related deadlines are available on the MOP5 website<sup>7</sup> together with other information, which will be regularly updated. Meeting documents will be provided on the website as well as electronically to all meeting participants on a USB stick. The number of necessary paper copies should be kept to a minimum. Any suggestions from the StC for agenda items currently not covered by the MOP5 provisional agenda were welcome.

42. Mr Barbieri went on to report on the logistical arrangements already made by the Secretariat. With regard to the costs involved and taking into account those costs already covered by France, a total of 350,000 Euros were estimated to be needed to cover the basic costs of the organisation of MOP5 by the Secretariat. After considering the available resources in the AEWA core budget and a contribution by Germany amounting to 50,000 Euros, a shortfall of ca. 35,000 Euros still remained for coverage of basic travel costs for delegates and for translation costs. As all the documents will be made available in both English and French, the total translation costs will amount to more than is currently allocated for that purpose in the core budget. Mr Barbieri thus requested the StC to approve going beyond the amount allocated for this purpose in the core budget and use savings, should it prove difficult to cover this difference with voluntary contributions. With regard to the translation of the Single Species Action Plans (SSAPs) submitted to MOP5 for adoption, he explained that the policy regarding translation of this type of documents, had, in the past, been to decide on a case-by-case basis. In the case of the current five new and revised SSAPs there were no francophone range states involved and the StC was requested to endorse the decision to forego translation into French.

43. Ms Mrema referred to the lessons learnt at the recent CMS COP10, one of which was with regard to credentials, where some Parties had opted not to use the template provided by the Secretariat, which had led to problems; another issue was the submission of funding conditions forms and credentials by funded delegates. This must be done as early as possible so that the Secretariat can ascertain any funding shortfall early enough to be able to approach Parties for support. Visa application posed a very big problem, particularly among the funded delegates, who despite several reminders left this task to the very last minute. It must be stressed that the Secretariat cannot deal with the application process but the countries must deal with this themselves.

44. The Chair fully concurred that countries should be reminded in good time, by telephone if necessary. Ms Courouble confirmed that the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs would contact all the French Embassies in order to facilitate the procedure for MOP5 visas.

45. Answering a question raised by Germany with regard to any other MOP5-related issues where funds were lacking, Mr Barbieri answered that the shortfall previously indicated aimed at covering what were considered minimal requirements. Any additional support for the participation of developing countries would also contribute to the success of the meeting.

46. With regard to sponsoring of delegates, the Chair suggested that the Secretariat should liaise with donor countries and provide them with concrete requests by the end of January 2012 at the latest. This could also apply to particular requests such as translations of SSAPS into Russian or Arabic and the related printing costs so that they could be fully used by all the relevant Range States.

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<sup>7</sup> [http://www.unep-awea.org/meetings/en/mop/mop5\\_docs/mop5.htm](http://www.unep-awea.org/meetings/en/mop/mop5_docs/mop5.htm)

47. Mr Barbieri reported that requests had already been made in the context of the MOP5 announcements. Specific fundraising requests would however be considered and drafted, if necessary.

*Decisions:*

- 1. The Meeting agreed to the use of savings from the core budget for travel costs for delegates and translation costs related to MOP5 organisation, if these could not be covered by voluntary contributions.*
- 2. The Meeting approved the proposal of the Secretariat not to have the five new and revised SSAPs for submission to MOP5, translated into French.*

*Action: The Secretariat should endeavour to keep in close contact with the Parties regarding funding shortfalls for MOP5 and other activities and inform them in good time about specific funding shortfalls and funding priorities so that these can be considered.*

### **Agenda item 8. National reports and online reporting process**

48. Mr Keil presented document StC 7.7 *Progress Report on the National Reporting and Online Reporting System* and the related draft resolution StC 7 DR1 *National Reporting and Online Reporting System*. He reported that the development of an Online Reporting System (ORS) for the CMS Family had been part of a substantial UNEP/DELIC funded project, whereby the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat had been working closely with the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Center (UNEP-WCMC) for some time. The Secretariat, in close collaboration with the AEWA Technical Committee, had designed a national reporting format for AEWA, which was used as a basis for developing the online reporting template. After some initial difficulties in the development process of the online reporting system, a breakthrough had finally been made and the online reporting system had been launched for the first time for the MOP5 reporting cycle. The system can be adapted for use by the rest of the CMS Family and other MEAs. An important aspect of the system, an analytical tool, still has to be developed and funds are urgently required for this purpose so that the potential of the system can be used to the fullest extent possible. The credentials for accessing the national report templates, which had been pre-filled as far as possible by the Secretariat, had already been sent out to the Contracting Parties and the deadline for submission of AEWA national reports using the new online reporting system was 14 January 2012. The related draft resolution StC 7 DR1 d requests UNEP and the donor community to support the development of analytical and synthesis tools and recommends that the use of the ORS be considered for adoption by the Secretariats of CMS, its other instruments and potentially other MEAs.

49. Mr Dereliev went on to explain the technicalities of the ORS, explaining that the Secretariat now functions as administrator and can create and amend questions independently. Each country respondent receives the credentials for accessing the report and can delegate parts of the report to others so that it becomes very much a collaborative task. Countries were strongly urged to begin their reports as soon as possible as the deadline for submission of national reports is **14. January 2012**. Feedback from the users was very welcome as is the reporting cycle to MOP5 is the first test run of the ORS and any problems encountered should be communicated to the Secretariat immediately so that they can be dealt with. Reports which have already been submitted could be unlocked in case of any last-minute amendments; however the deadline cannot be extended because of the time needed for the analysis of these comprehensive reports.

50. Mr Keil reported on the InforMEA side-event at the CMS COP10. InforMEA is a new online portal which harvests COP/MOP decisions, news, events, membership, national focal points and reports from MEAs. It is a project under the MEA Information and Knowledge Management (IKM) Initiative, supported by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). During the CMS COP10 side event on InforMEA, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat was invited to present the new AEWA online national report system. The AEWA report is the first real demonstration of the Online National Reporting System (ORS) developed by UNEP-WCMC in the context of the UNEP-funded Knowledge Management Project as a flexible generator of online reporting templates. If the ORS proves to be successful, it could theoretically be expanded to include other MEAs such as the Ramsar and Stockholm Conventions, which in turn can provide opportunities for harmonization of national reporting across MEAs.

51. The Chair and other delegates very much concurred with the concept of harmonizing and aligning national reporting in order to be able to measure the success of the many conservation measures being carried out and welcomed this initiative by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat. Mr Mundkur mentioned the Conservation Status Report (CSR), which AEWA regularly contracted out to Wetlands International and that also depends very much on national reports. Synergies between the ORS and the CSR and potential links to the Site Network Report and the Critical site Network (CSN) Tool<sup>8</sup> should be explored.

52. Mr Dereliev went on to give a demonstration on aspects of the use of the ORS, explaining, among other things, the importance of the questions on non-native species and their relevance.

53. In the section regarding non-native species, Mr Mundkur suggested adding a note which refers to the definition of the term 'non-native' in the AEWA Conservation Guidelines No. 12 *Guidelines on measures needed to help water birds to adapt to climate change*<sup>9</sup>.

*Decision: The Meeting adopted draft resolution StC7 DR1 National Reporting and Online Reporting System for submission to MOP5.*

*Action: The Secretariat will add a reference to the definition of the term 'non-native', as specified in the AEWA CG 12 to the relevant question in the AEWA online reporting format.*

#### **Agenda item 9. International reviews**

54. Mr Dereliev introduced document StC Inf. 7.4 *Report on the Conservation Status of Migratory Waterbirds in the Agreement Area – 5<sup>th</sup> Edition (CSR5)*. There were seven reviews specified in the AEWA Action Plan, which should be prepared at different frequencies. The CSR5 is prepared for each MOP. It is commissioned to Wetlands International and reviewed and approved by the TC. The main change in the current report compared to previous reports is that the analyses are based on flyways and not on regions. The annexes of the current report are still being formatted. The final version will be circulated to the Parties prior to MOP5. Wetlands International, the TC and the Secretariat had put a great deal of effort into the production of this report.

55. The second report to be submitted to MOP5 is the Site Network Report (StC 7.23 *Assessing the sufficiency of the international network of sites for the protection of migratory waterbirds*). The production of this report was delayed due to the lack of funds. Switzerland kindly helped out with funds and the TC approved two methodologies on the work related to this review, which will be submitted to the Secretariat ca. two months before MOP5.

*Action: The Secretariat will draft a resolution on the basis of the Site Network Report.*

#### **Agenda item 10. Implementation Review Process (IRP)**

56. Mr Dereliev reminded the meeting that MOP4 had adopted the Implementation Review Process under the main responsibility the StC. The procedure for the implementation of the IRP had been established and its first application had been in Syria for the conservation of the Sociable Lapwing. Syria was represented at the meeting by the CMS Focal Point, who had not been briefed on this issue. The plan for this agenda item had been to present a report by Syria on the implementation of the recommendations, which had resulted from an expert mission<sup>10</sup>. The Syrian Government should report after each migration season (twice annually); however no reports had been submitted by the Government of Syria to date.

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<sup>8</sup> <http://wow.wetlands.org/INFORMATIONFLYWAY/CRITICALSITENETWORKTOOL/tabid/1349/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.unep-aewa.org/news/news\\_elements/2011/in\\_focus\\_cg12.htm](http://www.unep-aewa.org/news/news_elements/2011/in_focus_cg12.htm)

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.unep-aewa.org/activities/irp/index.htm>

57. On behalf of BirdLife International, Ms Crockford congratulated the Secretariat on this first mission, which had every chance of making a real difference on the ground; she very much hoped further missions of this type could be carried out in future. This was reiterated by other delegates.

The Chair encouraged those present to look out for potential cases where the IRP could be of help.

*Decision/Action:*        *The Chair of the StC will approach the Government of Syria by letter, requesting a detailed report by the end of April (after the field season in February/March) so that Parties could be up-dated on the issue at MOP5.*

*Action:*                *The Secretariat would prepare a draft letter for this purpose as soon as possible.*

### **Agenda item 11. Report on the implementation and revision of the AEWA International Implementation Tasks 2009-2016**

58. Mr Dereliev introduced document StC 7 DR2 *AEWA International Implementation Tasks for 2012-2015*. He reported that the International Implementation Tasks (IIT) are a list of priority activities (in no particular order) which had been approved by the MOP for funding through voluntary contributions. The list is ordered under the headings of the AEWA Action Plan and is not exhaustive. Many of the projects in the last quadrennium had represented matching funding for the *Wings Over Wetlands (WOW) UNEP-GEF African-Eurasian Flyways Project*. The development of the CSN Tool had been generously supported by a grant amounting to 200,000 Euros by the EU. All the WOW-related projects (apart from one still linked to the CSN Tool) had been successfully carried out.

59. The list of projects had been thoroughly revised by the 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Technical Committee; a number considered to be of low priority had been deleted. The list is still in development as some of the projects were linked to the Plan of Action for Africa still under development, so these will be re-shaped at a later date. Most of the projects have been up-dated and the budgets for all of them were only indicative. The final list, indicating top priority projects, will be circulated to the StC in time for submission to MOP5.

60. Mr Keil noted that communication projects had not been a priority in the past and he encouraged the TC and StC to consider communication-related projects in the IIT in future.

61. Mr Dereliev commented that the TC currently lacked an expert on Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA), which is why communication-related projects are lacking on this IIT list. A CEPA expert would be a valuable addition to the TC and could provide advice on communication-related issues, which are a central element for implementing the Agreement.

*Action:*                *The Secretariat will go through the IIT and align some projects with certain outcomes of the CMS COP10 and subsequently produce a revised draft list for submission to MOP5.*

### **Agenda item 12. Report on the implementation of the Wings Over Wetlands (WOW) UNEP-GEF African-Eurasian Flyways Project and post-WOW prospects.**

62. Mr Keil, who had been the Communications Officer for the project, reported that it was probably the largest flyway-scale project ever undertaken in the African-Eurasian region. The WOW Project website<sup>11</sup> is still active and all the materials relating to the project's implementation can be found there. More than 200 people had been employed within this 12 million USD Project, supported by the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) and coordinated by UNEP-GEF. The project had recently been assessed as one of the top 20 UNEP/GEF projects in its 20 year history. It is in the interest of all stakeholders, that the outputs of the project are used. The main products were the Critical Site Network (CSN) Tool<sup>12</sup> and the Flyway Training

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<sup>11</sup> <http://www.wingsoverwetlands.org/>

<sup>12</sup> <http://csntool.wingsoverwetlands.org/csn/default.html>

Kit (now available as both hardcopy and PDF in English and French and in Arabic and Russian in electronic form only). The CSN Tool received the ESRI award for the best inter-active map<sup>13</sup>. The CSN Tool was launched in June 2010 at the AEWA 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event in Hague in 2010, where the WOW Partnership MoU was also officially signed by the Ramsar and AEWA Secretariats, Wetlands International and BirdLife International. Recently UNEP-WCMC has been approached to join the partnership due to their strong involvement in the CSN Tool.

63. Mr Mundkur went on to demonstrate the CSN Tool, which was developed by Wetlands International, BirdLife International and UNEP-WCMC; the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat will be funding the basic maintenance and hosting of this tool, whereby funds will be needed for thorough data updates and further improvements to the system in the long-run. He stressed that the partnership should stimulate a wide usage of the outcomes of WOW and disseminate the information to all sorts of stakeholders.

64. The Chair thanked all the contributors to this successful initiative, particularly Germany as a major donor. He recommended organizing a side event at MOP5 on WOW giving all participants an opportunity to see this in more depth.

65. Mr Paixão thanked Mr Keil and Mr Mundkur for their excellent presentation and requested a copy of it. The EU was happy to have been able to support this project. He requested clarification on how recent data can be properly incorporated into this tool and whether it is possible to combine various electronic tools. He stressed the importance of E-learning and that this should be workable throughout the whole region. He also enquired about the possibility of offering the tools in further languages and perhaps widening the scope to other species of migratory birds.

66. Mr Adams added that the Wadden Sea had been nominated as a World Heritage Site and in that context Parties had been asked to strengthen their efforts with regard to the conservation of migratory waterbirds. The Common Wadden Sea Secretariat<sup>14</sup> is embarking on a follow-up project to WOW and would, together with Germany and the Netherlands be happy to join Wetlands International in organizing a side event at MOP5.

67. Mr Mundkur reported that the four main databases feeding into the CSN Tool have to be maintained in order to be able to reflect this properly in the CSN Tool. Data quality control is also vital.

*Decision: The Meeting approved draft resolution StC 7 DR3 Implementation of the Wings Over Wetlands (WOW) UNEP-GEF African Eurasian Flyways Project and post-WOW prospects for submission to MOP5.*

### **Agenda item 13. Report on the implementation and revision of the Communication Strategy.**

68. Mr Keil introduced documents StC 7.8 *Progress report on the implementation of the Communication Strategy* and the related draft resolution StC 7 DR4 *Implementation and revision of the Communication Strategy*. He explained that the Communication Strategy was a good guide for the communication work of the Secretariat. The Communication Strategy included a Communication Action Plan for the Secretariat and the Parties, for the period 2006 to 2009 with a total budget of 500,000 Euros. However, since the adoption of the Communication Strategy by MOP3 in 2005 only 10 per cent of the funds foreseen could be raised *inter alia* because the fundraising activities of the Secretariat were focused on other issues, such as raising matching funds for the WOW Project. Since the Communication Strategy and its associated Action Plan were developed seven years ago, the Secretariat would like to propose an update and revision process for the existing document. The Communication Strategy should be revised in alignment with the objectives of the AEWA Strategic Plan 2009 - 2017. The revision should also consider newer developments such as the outcomes of the WOW project, the Plan of Action for Africa and World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) as

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<sup>13</sup> [http://www.unep-aewa.org/news/news\\_elements/2011/wow\\_news.htm](http://www.unep-aewa.org/news/news_elements/2011/wow_news.htm)

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.waddensea-secretariat.org/>

well as the need for a CEPA expert in the Technical Committee. Ms Kralj, current Chair of the Technical Committee strongly supported the addition of a CEPA Expert to the TC.

69. Referring to the operative part of draft resolution StC 7 DR4, Mr van Dijk suggested considering cooperating with the Ramsar Convention with regard to CEPA focal points. He also suggested that WMBD (which regularly takes place during the second weekend in May) could be moved to a time when migration is more visible.

70. Mr Mundkur mentioned that this had already been discussed with the Secretariat and the conclusion is that there is no best time for WMBD and events should be registered as WMBD events throughout the given year and could be celebrated whenever they are most suitable for a specific region.

*Decision: The Meeting approved draft resolution StC 7 DR4 Implementation and revision of the Communication Strategy for submission to MOP5, with only one small amendment, i.e. the Secretariat will amend operational paragraph 7 to cooperate with the Ramsar Convention and CBD with regard to national CEPA focal points.*

#### **Agenda item 14. World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD)**

71. Mr Keil reported on WMBD<sup>15</sup>, which was initiated in 2006 and is an annual, global awareness-raising campaign highlighting the need for the protection of migratory birds and their habitats. On the second weekend each May, people around the world take action and organize public events such as bird festivals, education programmes and birdwatching excursions to celebrate World Migratory Bird Day. Each year a new topic is chosen. The number and variety of activities has grown year by year. This is a joint venture with CMS and the AEW partners have also become involved, disseminating the information throughout their networks. This has been a very low-budget campaign. *Facebook* and *Twitter* had also become outreach tools for the campaign.

72. The Chair recognized the importance of tools such as *Twitter* and *Facebook* for outreach and awareness-raising. He encouraged their use, also to attract commercial advertisers.

#### **Agenda item 15. Proposals for amendments to the Agreement and/ or its Annexes**

73. Mr Dereliev introduced documents StC 7 DR16 rev.1 *Adoption of amendments to the AEW Action Plan* and the background documents StC Inf. 7.5 *Justifications for amendments to the AEW Action Plan* and StC Inf. 7.6 *Literature Review on the effects of the use of lead fishing weights on waterbirds and wetlands*. These amendments were the result of the work of the TC over the last quadrennium, based on requests from MOP4. According to Article X<sup>16</sup> of the AEW, proposals for amendments to the Agreement must be submitted by a Party and the Government of Kenya has agreed to act as proponent in this case. As soon as they have been submitted to the Secretariat, they will be circulated to the Parties who will be invited to comment. After the deadline for the submission of comments, the Secretariat will draft a resolution for submission to MOP5. He explained that amendments to the Annexes of the Agreement do not require re-ratification by the Parties but any country can make a reservation.

74. The Meeting took note of the proposals for amendments.

#### **Agenda item 16. New Arabic translation of the Agreement text**

75. Mr Barbieri introduced this item by reminding the Standing Committee that an official Arabic version of the Agreement text is available since AEW was concluded in 1995. However over the years complaints had

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<sup>15</sup> <http://www.worldmigratorybirdday.org/>

<sup>16</sup> [http://www.unep-awa.org/documents/agreement\\_text/agree\\_main.htm](http://www.unep-awa.org/documents/agreement_text/agree_main.htm)

been made by countries that the Arabic version does not fully correspond to other language versions. The AEWA Secretariat therefore decided to commission a new translation in the frame of the AEWA project on “Strengthening waterbird and wetland conservation capacities in North Africa (WetCap). The new translation (document StC 7.9) is based on the current version of the Agreement text and Action Plan as adopted at MOP4 in 2008. It had recently been circulated among Arabic speaking Parties to AEWA for comments. On the basis of this consultation process, it was planned to submit the final draft to MOP5, which will be requested to adopt the text as the new official version, replacing the current official text.

*Decision: The Meeting approved the submission of the new Arabic version of the AEWA text to MOP5.*

### **Agenda item 17. Draft International Single Species Action Plans and Management Plans**

76. Mr Dereliev presented document StC 7.10 *Summary of the current state of Single Species Action Plan (SSAP) and Species Management Plan (SMP) production and coordination*. He explained that the development of SSAPs was an established AEWA activity and that, in the past, 15 had been adopted by the MOP and that the following four new SSAPs as well as one revised SSAP and one SMP would be submitted to MOP5.

77. The levels of implementation of the SSAPs already in use varied according to whether coordination mechanisms are in place or not and the best-functioning was that of the Lesser White-fronted Goose, the coordination of which is based at the Secretariat and funded by Norway. Regular sponsorship remains one of the key issues for success. He hoped that the position for the SSAP Coordinator would be approved by MOP5 in order to strengthen the implementation of the individual SSAPs and to be able to provide the necessary supervision and guidance to the coordination mechanisms.

**a) Draft International Single Species Action Plan for the Slaty Egret (document StC 7.11)**

The development of the SSAP for the Slaty Egret is being supported by Switzerland, Germany and France which had provided funds for an action-planning workshop in Botswana in March 2011.

**b) Draft International Single Species Action Plan for the Bewick’s Swan (document StC 7.12)**

This SSAP represents a typical stakeholder-driven process sponsored by the Netherlands. and the SSAP had been compiled by Wetlands International. This is a very high-quality plan and Mr Dereliev congratulated Wetlands International on this excellent work.

**c) Draft International Single Species Action Plan for the Greenland White-fronted Goose (document StC 7.13)**

The compilation of this SSAP was fully funded by the UK. It is also a very high-quality paper and Mr Dereliev expressed his thanks to the UK and to the main compiler, Dr David Stroud.

**d) Draft International Single Species Action Plan for the Red-breasted Goose (document StC 7.14)**

This SSAP is a revision of a plan sponsored primarily by the EU. It was changed into flyway-oriented process for AEWA. The plan had already been approved for the EU Range States involved under the ORNIS Committee.

**e) Draft International Single Species Action Plan for the Sociable Lapwing (document. StC 7.15)**

Due to its extension to the Indian sub-continent, which is covered by the Central Asian Flyway, this became a joint CMS/AEWA SSAP. The Secretariat is closely involved because an AEWA International Working Group has already been convened and is coordinated by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB). Knowledge on this species had been greatly improved thanks to the excellent work done by the RSPB and other partners in two consecutive Darwin Initiative-funded projects.

**f) Draft International Species Management Plan (SMP) for the Svalbard Population of the Pink-footed Goose (document StC 7.16)**

The development of this SMP had been funded by Norway. It represents a pioneering process for the Agreement as its goal is not the recovery of a population but to keep it at a certain level in order to keep damage to agriculture to a minimum. It has been contracted out to the expert on the species, Dr. Jesper Madsen based at the Aarhus University, Denmark.

78. Draft resolution StC 7 DR5 is a standard one suggesting the adoption of these draft plans and calling for sponsorship for coordination mechanisms and the provision of a mandate to the TC after every MOP to revise the priorities for action planning based on the revision of Table 1 of the Agreement. Mr Dereliev noted that the StC had the mandate given by MOP3 to approve these draft plans - which had been thoroughly revised by the TC and the Range States - on a temporary basis pending final adoption at MOP5, so that work could begin on establishing coordination mechanisms.

79. On behalf of the Netherlands, Mr van Dijk requested more time for consultation within the Ministry and the relevant stakeholders with regard to the Pink-footed Goose SMP and the Bewick's Swan SSAP.

80. On behalf of Denmark, Mr Krabbe reported that in the case of the Species Management Plan for the Svalbard population of the Pink-footed Goose, although the idea was accepted, Denmark still had certain reservations so implementation could still not be promised at this stage. In the case of the Greenland White-footed Goose, Denmark would approach Greenland with regard to joining AEWA, particularly as this is where this bird actually breeds.

81. This initiative was very much welcomed by the Chair. He confirmed that the StC was pleased to see the plans and looked forward to seeing their implementation.

*Decisions:*     1. *The Meeting took note of the five International Single Species Action plans and the Species Management Plan and agreed that they will be presented to MOP5 in May for adoption to enable the Parties to conclude their positions.*

                  2. *The Meeting approved draft resolution StC 7 DR5 Adoption and Implementation of International Single Species Action Plans and Species Management plans for submission to MOP5.*

#### **Agenda item 18. Plan of Action for the implementation of the African Initiative**

82. Mr Barbieri introduced document StC Inf. 7.7 *Draft Plan of Action for Africa 2012-2017*, explaining that this issue had been discussed at length by the TC. It was the result of the African Initiative adopted by MOP4, which had instructed the Secretariat to draft a Plan of Action for Africa through its resolution 4.9<sup>17</sup>. A Bonn-based Coordinator for the African Initiative had been recruited, thanks to funding provided by the French Government. In compiling the draft Plan of Action, the Secretariat had adopted a basic approach of following the objectives and targets of the AEWA Strategic Plan, resulting in a series of activities tailored to the Africa region. The outcome of discussions at the TC meeting in Naivasha in September 2011 were not conclusive and a questionnaire was developed and sent out to the African Parties, donor Parties and stakeholder groups. A new draft will be compiled on the basis of the comments received. The Coordinator of the African Initiative has been in continual close contact with the African Focal Points, particularly in the framework of the recently held pre-COP/MOP meeting in Entebbe, Uganda. The approach taken in drafting the plan was to take full advantage of synergies with NGOs and existing programmes and activities.

83. Ms Courouble added that the French Ministry of the Environment is developing a new project to support the implementation of the Ramsar Convention and AEWA. This is a substantial initiative, which will provide very good support for the African Initiative.

84. Mr Mundkur reported that Wetlands International had provided initial input to the draft Plan of Action at the TC meeting and was looking forward at contributing to its further development particularly in relation to

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<sup>17</sup> [http://www.unep-aewa.org/meetings/en/mop/mop4\\_docs/final\\_res\\_pdf/res4\\_9\\_conservation\\_in\\_africa\\_final.pdf](http://www.unep-aewa.org/meetings/en/mop/mop4_docs/final_res_pdf/res4_9_conservation_in_africa_final.pdf)

the identification of future priorities. Wetlands International and BirdLife International, working under the WOW Partnership would like the plan to focus on key issues such as capacity building, strengthening monitoring and management of key sites.

85. In this context, Mr Biber, in his capacity as Swiss Focal Point for AEWA, the Ramsar Convention and Wetlands International, was very happy with the progress made in collaboration between these bodies on various issues, particularly as a result of the WOW project and he felt that the way had been paved for future synergies on all levels.

86. The Meeting took note of this document and the importance of trying to increase output through synergies and collaboration with existing initiatives. Funding continued to be a vital factor.

### **Agenda item 19. Conservation Guidelines**

87. Ms Kralj introduced the following revised conservation guidelines:

- a) Draft Revised Conservation Guideline no 2:  
*Guidelines on identifying and tackling emergency situations for migratory waterbirds* (document StC 7.17)
- b) Draft Revised Conservation Guideline no 6:  
*Guidelines on regulating trade in migratory waterbirds* (document StC 7.18)
- c) Draft Revised Conservation Guideline no 10:  
*Guidelines on avoidance of introductions of non-native waterbird species* (document StC 7.19)

88. Conservation Guidelines 2 and 10 had been revised by the TC, whereas Conservation Guideline 6 on regulating trade had undergone a comprehensive revision by Ms Catherine Lehmann, Programme Officer at the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat.

89. She went on to explain that the guidance document on *Defining periods of breeding and pre-nuptial migration for migratory African-Eurasian waterbirds* (document StC Inf. 7.11), which had been produced by the TC, was based on a request by MOP4. This is a scientifically complicated area; the tables attached to this document provide definitions for the start and end of breeding periods as defined by the EU. Table 2 reflects these for the African and Eurasian waterbirds in the form of references giving the best possible knowledge. Countries are requested to check these tables and to use this as guidance for national legislation.

90. Responding to a discussion on how to deal with this guidance, Mr Dereliev suggested either having it adopted on a temporary basis as guidance on the implementation of the AEWA Action Plan or waiting until there is sufficient material to be able to revise the AEWA Conservation Guidelines no. 5 on the sustainable harvest of migratory waterbirds (which is on the IIT list) and incorporate this guidance in that context.

91. Mr Dereliev reported on document StC 7.20 *Draft Guidelines for mitigating /avoiding the conflict between migratory birds and electricity power grids in the African-Eurasian region*. This document had already been submitted to and welcomed by the CMS COP10.

92. He went on to report on progress in the development of Guidelines for the re-establishment of AEWA species populations. This is a task that the TC had decided to outsource and WWT had been contracted thanks to a voluntary contribution from Switzerland.

*Decision:* 1. *The Meeting approved the draft revised Conservation Guidelines no. 2, no.6 and no.10 (documents StC 7.17, 7.18 and 7.19 respectively) and the new draft guidelines for mitigating/avoiding the conflict between migratory waterbirds and electricity power grids in the African-Eurasian region (document StC 7.20) as well as the relevant draft resolution StC 7 DR6 Rev 1 for submission to MOP5.*

*Decision/*

*Action* 2. The Meeting adopted the guidance on defining periods of breeding and pre-nuptial migration for migratory African-Eurasian waterbirds (document StC Inf. 7.11) as non-obligatory guidance and requested the Secretariat to add it as an annex to the respective draft resolution for submission to MOP5 and to add an appropriate paragraph to StC 7 DR6 rev.1.

*Action:* 1. The Secretariat will circulate the Guidelines on re-establishment of AEWA waterbird species to the TC and StC as soon as possible for approval and subsequent submission to MOP5.  
2. The Secretariat will draft a resolution on power lines and migratory waterbirds and circulate it to the TC and StC as soon as possible for approval and subsequent submission to MOP5.

## **Agenda item 20. Issues affecting the conservation status of migratory waterbirds in the AEWA region**

93. Mr Dereliev introduced the following proposals:

- a) Proposal for guidance on interpretation of the term “*extreme fluctuations in population size or trend*” applicable to Table 1 of the AEWA Action Plan (document StC 7.21)
- b) Proposal for amendment of the definition and the guidance on interpretation of the term “*significant long-term decline*” used in the context of Table 1 of the AEWA Action Plan as approved by Resolution 3.3 (document StC 7.22)

and a related draft resolution concerning the adoption of amendments and new guidance for interpretation of criteria used in Table 1 of the AEWA Action Plan (StC 7 DR8).

94. Mr Dereliev reported on the work of the TC with regard to guidance of interpretation of terminology. The definition of the term “*extreme fluctuation in size and trend*”, which is used in two categories in Table 1 had been lacking in the last triennium. The bottleneck had been the discussion based on the IUCN definition, which was not really applicable for the purpose of assessing bird populations.

95. The issue with the other definition “*significant long-term decline*” had emerged during the work on the 5<sup>th</sup> AEWA Conservation Status Report (CSR5), whereby it was clear that this definition will need some minor amendments in order to make it applicable.

*Decision:* The Meeting approved Draft resolution StC 7 DR8 Adoption of amendments and new guidance for interpretation of criteria used in Table 1 of the AEWA Action Plan for submission to MOP5.

96. Mr Dereliev presented document StC 7 DR7 *Adverse effects of agrochemicals on migratory waterbirds in Africa* and background document StC Inf. 7.8 *Report on the adverse effects of agrochemicals on migratory waterbirds in Africa*. He explained that this had been on the TC work plan for some time; it followed on from an old project, which could not be finished. The report is a Master Thesis, which had been compiled by a student, which the Secretariat had hosted in cooperation with the University of Bonn. The draft resolution based on this overview calls upon Parties to work with farmers and to put regulatory mechanisms in place. This is of course dependent on national legislations and market forces. The Secretariat will work closely with the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants<sup>18</sup> on this issue. The issue is a complex one, beyond the mandate of AEWA alone, so various bodies will have to be involved as there are also many impacts on humans.

97. Mr Mundkur suggested adding cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) to operative paragraph 3.

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<sup>18</sup> <http://chm.pops.int/default.aspx>

*Decision: Draft resolution StC 7 DR7 Adverse effects of agrochemicals on migratory waterbirds in Africa was approved for submission to MOP5 with the inclusion of the FAO in operational paragraph 3 and of cross-reference to the outcomes of the CMS COP10.*

98. Mr Dereliev presented document StC 7 DR9 *Climate change adaptation measures for waterbirds* and background document StC 7.23 *Assessing the sufficiency of the international network of sites for the protection of migratory waterbirds*.

The Technical Committee does not have funds for outsourcing work on this issue so this resolution very much builds on recycling information from other resolutions and sources. The CMS COP10 recently adopted a resolution on this subject so elements from that resolution would be included and draft resolution StC7 DR9 will be revised in the light of the CMS resolution.

*Decision: The Meeting approved StC 7 DR9 Climate Change and migratory waterbirds for submission to MOP5 after revision in the light of the UNEP/CMS/Res.10.19<sup>19</sup>. StC Members will provide their feedback to the Secretariat by 14 January 2012.*

*Action: The final draft resolution will then be circulated to the StC for clearance by the Secretariat.*

99. Mr Dereliev introduced document StC 7 DR10 *Waterbirds, wetlands and the impacts of extractive industries*. This was a joint project carried out in cooperation with the Ramsar Convention Secretariat. It is about the impact of extractive industries on wetlands. The draft resolution deals with the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the individual projects and makes cross-references to CMS resolutions.

*Decision: The Meeting approved draft resolution StC 7 DR10 Waterbirds and wetlands and the impacts of extractive industries for submission to MOP5. StC Members will provide their feedback to the Secretariat by 14 January 2012.*

*Action: The Secretariat will endeavour to synchronise the final resolution with that of the Ramsar Convention. The final revised draft resolution will then be circulated to the StC for clearance and subsequently submitted to MOP5.*

100. Mr Dereliev introduced document StC 7 DR11 *Impact of invasive alien aquatic weeds on waterbird habitats in Africa* and background document StC Inf. 7.10 *Summary, Synthesis and Report of Project Coordination: Rehabilitation of Important Migratory Waterbird Sites which have been Degraded by Invasive Aquatic Weeds*. This is based on a report which had been put on ice for some time by the TC. This is another issue focusing on Africa. The draft resolution calls upon Contracting Parties to strengthen legislation and also to involve local communities in control measures. There is a strong plea for increasing capacity in African countries and a request for extensive implementation.

*Decision: The Meeting adopted StC 7 DR11 Impact of invasive alien aquatic weeds on waterbird habitats in Africa for submission to MOP5 with the incorporation of the following points: A link to the work of the Bern Convention; Travel and trade should be mentioned as an important cause; Restoration to avoid secondary invasions; Alien species currently not defined as being invasive may become so due to climate change.*

*Action: The Secretariat will circulate the final revised draft resolution to the StC for approval for submission to MOP5.*

101. Mr Dereliev introduced document StC 7 DR12 *Renewable energy and migratory waterbirds* explaining that this is a sensitive issue for all countries. This draft resolution was thoroughly debated and subsequently revised by the TC. It is a reminder as to what needs to be done with regard to impact assessment and to stress that guidance already available should be followed (international environmental guidelines,

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<sup>19</sup> [http://www.cms.int/bodies/COP/cop10/resolutions\\_adopted/resolutions.htm](http://www.cms.int/bodies/COP/cop10/resolutions_adopted/resolutions.htm)

recommendations and criteria for the development and utilization of renewable energy sources (non-exhaustive) are listed in Annex 1 of DR12).

102. Mr Biber reported that Switzerland is preparing a handbook to deal with wind turbines and has developed a map of sensitive areas for birds and bats in Switzerland. Moreover, Switzerland has new strict legislation on biofuels to ensure that they are not damaging natural habitats and are not in competition with food production in the countries where they are produced. He felt it was important to have a strong position on this issue.

103. Mr Dereliev suggested that Switzerland organizes a side event at MOP5 in order to inspire other countries to follow Switzerland's example.

104. Mr Krabbe added that wind turbines had been a subject of research in Denmark for many years and maybe this could also be shared with other countries.

*Decision: The Meeting adopted StC 7 DR12 with the inclusion of comments by StC Members, which will be submitted to the Secretariat by 14 January 2012.*

*Action: The final revised draft resolution will then be circulated to the StC Members for final approval for submission to MOP5 by the Secretariat.*

105. Mr Dereliev introduced document StC Inf. 7.9 *Review of the conflict between migratory birds and electricity power grids in the African-Eurasian region*. This review had already been submitted to the CMS COP10. It had been developed with funding from the German electricity company, RWE Rhein-Ruhr Netzservice GmbH and the process had been driven by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat. The report will be submitted to MOP5.

106. The Meeting took note of the *Review of the conflict between migratory birds and electricity power grids in the African-Eurasian region*.

## **Agenda item 21. Institutional arrangements**

### **a. Standing Committee**

107. Mr Barbieri presented documents StC 7.24 *Draft Terms of Reference for AEWA Standing Committee Regional Members* and StC 7 DR13 *Institutional arrangements: Standing Committee*. The first document is based on a request by StC6 to clearly define the tasks of the StC Regional Representatives, which was based on the Terms of Reference for members of the CMS Standing Committee. Should the meeting adopt the Terms of Reference, the current Rules of Procedure will need some revision to reflect the Terms of Reference and also the additional functions of the Standing Committee established by Resolution 4.17 and 4.6. The revised version of the Rules of Procedures will have to be approved at StC8.

108. The draft resolution StC 7 DR13 is a simple resolution to determine the composition of the Standing Committee for the next period.

109. No proposals for the amendment of draft Terms of Reference were made. Within the examination of DR13, after a short discussion on the schedule of the meetings of the Standing Committee in the period between MOP5 and MOP6, it was decided to have a very short meeting directly after MOP5 in May 2012, in order to re-confirm the composition of the committee and elect the officers.

*Decision: 1. The ToR for Standing Committee Regional Representatives were adopted*  
*2. Draft resolution StC 7 DR 13 was approved for submission to MOP5 with the following addition to operative paragraph 3: "Agrees that the Standing Committee will meet **at least** twice between the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Sessions of the Meeting of the Parties."*

## **b. Technical Committee**

110. Mr Dereliev introduced StC 7 DR14 *Institutional arrangements: Technical Committee*. The purpose of the resolution is to confirm the new composition of the Technical Committee. The Secretariat has requested the Contracting Parties from the respective regions to nominate representatives; however nominations had not been submitted for all the seven regions. The nominations are assessed by an Advisory Group made up of the TC and StC Chairs and Vice-chairs and the AEWA Executive Secretary and Technical Officer. This will be done by correspondence.

111. Slight amendments have to be made to the Modus Operandi, which have to be adopted by the MOP. Rule 3 includes a deadline for issues submitted in addition to the agenda, specified as 30 days prior to the TC meeting to allow delegates sufficient time to study documents. The Annexes had also been amended to include the new Contacting Parties and changed country names.

112. Ms Kralj referred to the resolution on the Communication Strategy, which included the addition of a new thematic expert on CEPA and that this should also be foreseen in this resolution. The Chair of the TC may appoint an appropriate candidate intersessionally for a vacant position so the TC will try to identify a suitable expert, dependent on the approval of MOP5.

*Decision: The Meeting adopted StC 7 DR14 for submission to MOP5 with the amendment of including and additional expert for CEPA to the composition of the Technical Committee.*

## **c. Cooperation with other bodies and processes**

113. Mr Barbieri briefly reported on the progress made with respect to cooperation with some other bodies and processes. He reported on the collaboration with the Secretariat for the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF)<sup>20</sup>, with which a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) was being developed to establish a frame for future collaboration. A draft MoC prepared by the AEWA Secretariat was being reviewed by the CAFF Secretariat in consultation with the CAFF Board. A meeting of the CAFF board took place in October and the Secretariat is hoping to get feedback soon. A revision of the Joint Work Programme (JWP) between the Ramsar, CMS and AEWA Secretariats was also being undertaken. The new approach provided for the development of bilateral JWPs between the Ramsar Secretariat and individual secretariats of CMS instruments, including AEWA. Based on lessons learnt from the previous JWP, which had turned out to be overambitious and therefore difficult to implement, a more realistic plan will be developed. The Wings Over Wetlands Partnership was signed by the WOW Partners in the Hague in June 2010 in order to build on the outcomes of the project.

## **Agenda item 22. Financial and administrative matters**

### **a. Execution of the 2009-2012 budget**

114. Mr Barbieri introduced document StC 7.25 *Report of the Secretariat on Finance and Administrative issues 2009-2011*. Section 1 referred to staffing issues, while sections 2 and 3 of the report and associated annexes referred to the overview of the collected compulsory and voluntary contributions from 2010 to 2011. The core budget showed a generally healthy balance. The amount of unpaid pledges was relatively modest, and had also been compensated by some contributions having been paid in advance. Countries with contributions in arrears are sent reminders every six months. The total expenditure was lower than the actual budget so the balance was positive. Savings had been made mainly in the personnel section because of the Executive Secretary, Bert Lenten's double function during the period, as Acting Executive Secretary for CMS and unpaid maternity leave in the case of two staff members. Savings in 2010 had been in the range of 150,000 Euros, and a similar amount was estimated as balance of leftover funds by the end of 2011.

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<sup>20</sup> <http://www.caff.is/about-caff>

115. One possible re-allocation of the leftover funds could be to cover the shortfall for the organisation of MOP5 (already mentioned in agenda item 7 on the preparations for MOP5). The AEWA Waterbird Conservation Award<sup>21</sup> (amounting to USD 10,000) was another issue and Mr Barbieri suggested using the income generated from new Parties for this purpose.

116. The Chair welcomed the good budget prognosis and considered both the AEWA Waterbird Conservation Award and part of the organisation of MOP5 to be good ways of investing the surplus. He also indicated the need that some funds be kept as a reserve for unforeseen expenditure, as it was the practice in other treaties. He also asked the Secretariat for possible additional suggestions on how to use at least part of the savings.

117. Mr Barbieri referred to a proposal to be discussed in detail under agenda item 22.c to use some of the savings to cover a possible shortfall of resources to cover the salary of the African Coordinator. He went on to refer to the budget proposal for the next triennium (2013 to 2016) and that the current surplus could be at least partly used to reduce the Parties' contributions, thus allowing some additional margins for the development of personnel in the next triennium.

118. Following up on an issue raised by Mr van Dijk, i.e. the need for additional funding for the International Waterbird Census (IWC) which was providing critically important data for AEWA and other MEAs, Mr Dereliev agreed that a good scientific basis was required for deciding on conservation actions. The IWC is part of the Global Waterbird Monitoring Programme, which involved an incalculable amount of volunteers for an estimated value of tens of millions of Euros per year. However, the minimum cost of the coordination of IWC amounts to 60,000 Euros per annum and the database for this purpose, which has been lacking for many years is currently being developed. This is a priority activity under the AEWA Strategic Plan. At the moment there is no clear concept as to where the funding can come from, how it can flow into Wetlands International and whether the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat should administer that fund. In Mr Dereliev's view, a crucial point was whether a possible contribution of AEWA to the IWC should be in the core budget or separate from it - something which needed to be further discussed.

119. Mr Mundkur added that structured funding had never been available for this purpose and that Wetlands International had been struggling to be able to provide the service needed by AEWA on a regular basis. Wetlands International is able to contribute 100,000 Euros from its core budget towards the IWC; however, this is only half of the amount actually necessary. There are many regions where information is missing. The database has been newly structured, making the system more efficient for users. Mr Barbieri noted that AEWA contributed through the production of the CSR report for the consideration of the MOP, which is based on the data collected by the IWC.

120. The Chair confirmed that a more permanent solution was needed for this issue. He suggested that the Standing Committee could recommend a draft resolution for submission to the MOP specifying the need for regular resources and instructing the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat to liaise with the Ramsar Convention and others.

121. Mr Dereliev confirmed that the Secretariat would liaise with Wetlands International regarding the drafting of an appropriate resolution for submission to MOP5, also taking stock on progress in the implementation of two previous resolutions on the subject of the IWC. This would first be circulated to the members of the StC for approval.

*Decision: The Meeting approved the report and the Secretariat's proposal for re-allocation of funds.*

*Action: The Secretariat will liaise with Wetlands International with regard to a draft resolution for submission to MOP5 on the subject of the IWC, which will first be circulated to the members of the StC for approval.*

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<sup>21</sup> [http://www.unep-aewa.org/aewa\\_award/index.htm](http://www.unep-aewa.org/aewa_award/index.htm)

## **b. Draft Budget Proposal 2013-2016**

122. Mr Barbieri presented document StC 7.26 *Preparation of the draft budget for 2013 – 2016*. The Secretariat sought guidance on the type of format of the proposal and the elements it should include. Any possible adjustments or changes could be suggested at this stage.

Responding to a query regarding the 16,2 per cent increase mentioned with regard to Annex 1, Mr Barbieri explained that this referred to the total increase calculated with respect of a baseline represented by the budget approved by MOP4 corrected by a 2 per cent inflation rate per year.

123. Mr van Dijk noted the information regarding the impact of inflation on the country contributions and the impact on the length of the next cycle. i.e. three or four years.

124. Mr Barbieri noted that from the perspective of the Secretariat, a four-year cycle gave more time to implement the recommendations of the MOP and achieve results intersessionally. However, the Secretariat was ready to prepare scenarios reflecting both three and four-year cycles. He went on to explain that Annex 1 was based on the MOP4-approved budget, however including some changes. These changes included three staff positions, i.e. 1105-Associate Programme Officer (SSAP Support – a growing and important area) (P2), 1106-Associate Programme Officer/African Coordinator (P2) and 1304- Programme Assistant (G4). These three positions already existed in the current staff set-up of the Secretariat but were financed entirely through voluntary contributions. In order to maintain the current capacity and to consolidate these positions so that they are not dependent on voluntary contributions, it would be desirable if they could be covered, at least in part, by the core budget. Also included in this proposal is an increase in the two G4 positions, already covered by the core budget from 50 per cent to 100 per cent.

125. With regard to meetings, the Technical Committee was expected to have its first meeting in 2012 and not in 2013 as formerly foreseen, which represented a saving in the budget for 2013-2016. Another significant change is the increased amount for French translations of the 2<sup>nd</sup> StC meeting in preparation for MOP6. Other costs related to the functioning of the Secretariat had also been adjusted on the basis of expenditure recorded in the period 2009-2011. Finally, Annex 1 provided for a withdrawal of savings from the current budget amounting to 300,000 Euros for the purpose of reducing the contributions by Parties. The cost of staff positions in Annex 1 were calculated on the basis of the current grading, however a proposal would be made for an upgrade in the case of the two G4 positions, where the incumbents were clearly performing well beyond the responsibilities of the initial job descriptions in both cases, unless a very clear indication was given by the Meeting, that this would not be feasible at the moment.

126. Ms Kralj commented that, in the proposed scenario, the time between the two subsequent meetings of the TC might be of about three years, which would be problematic with regard to the work of the TC.

127. Reflecting Denmark's position, Mr Pouplier referred to the discussions at COP10 and indicated that it would be unrealistic to count on a significant increase with respect to the budget approved by MOP4. He suggested foreseeing scenarios providing for zero growth and an increase allowing for inflation only, and possibly a third scenario. He wondered whether there was a possibility of estimating income, e.g. in relation to the accession of new Parties. He advised the Secretariat to be very moderate in order to save discussions in La Rochelle. Germany concurred with this position and confirmed that a four-year cycle would be acceptable.

128. Mr van Dijk advised splitting the scenarios for the three and four-year cycles to get a better overview of the pros and cons of these two options and proposing realistic levels of increase such as 0 per cent, 2 per cent and 3 per cent for each of the two options. The decision regarding the three and four-year cycles could be dealt with separately. Attention should be placed on not getting out of step with the Ramsar Convention, for example. He also suggested considering the Ramsar Convention resolution on that subject. He welcomed the position for SSAP support and expressed the wish that the mandate of that position, currently focusing on the Lesser White-fronted Goose SSAP, could be broadened. He also mentioned the visibility of AEWAs and the importance of improving this, in competition with bigger MEAs; a move towards a 4-year cycle might

hamper efforts with regard to that. He suggested that AEWA should work more closely with CMS towards this goal.

129. The Chair supported the suggestion of a separate draft resolution on the question of the cycle including a list of the pros and cons respectively, the question of the frequency of TC meetings should also be considered. He summarized that budget scenarios could be proposed with increases ranging from 0 – 10 per cent. He considered that the suggestion by the Secretariat to propose a withdrawal from the Trust Fund (savings from 2009-2012 budget) to compensate a possible increase in the contributions of the Parties was acceptable. He also expected that the MOP-approved budget should include both costs covered by the core budget and others to be covered by voluntary contributions. The budget proposal to be submitted to the Parties should take that into account. He expressed thanks to Germany for the great support by offering the office premises and in many other ways, this could be encouragement for other Parties to increase their support either in-kind or by offering JPO positions (Junior Professional Officers). He reported that Norway, for example, has committed to covering the costs of the salary of the LWfG Coordinator until 2014, and was ready to accept a broader mandate to support other SSAPs for this officer.

### **c. Administrative and personnel matters**

130. The Chair invited the Executive Secretary of CMS, Ms Elizabeth Maruma Mrema to report on the UNEP procedures related to the advertisement of the post of the permanent AEWA Executive Secretary.

131. Ms Mrema explained the background of the current situation. The CMS COP9 had adopted a decision calling for all the positions of the CMS family to be re-classified in order to be able to feed this information and outcome into the *Future Shape* process. However, due to the potential expense of such a huge task, this had to be postponed and the interim procedure and arrangement undertaken by UNEP was to re-classify each position as it becomes vacant in order to make sure that the functions are correctly graded. The position of AEWA Executive Secretary had last been assessed in 2003. The job description of the AEWA Executive Secretary had to be revised to clearly reflect the current responsibilities and functions to enable UNEP to re-assess the position (Annex1 of document StC 7.25). While waiting for the result of this process and with a view to ensuring that there was no *lacunae* in the management of the Secretariat, Ms Mrema took an internal management decision and advertised the position internally. Mr Barbieri was the selected candidate for the position of Acting Executive Secretary until the post is permanently filled. In the meantime the position had been re-classified as being equivalent to a P5 rather than a P4 due to the expansion of the responsibilities within the growing Secretariat and also the increasing number of Contracting Parties to the Agreement, among other factors. The final decision, however, on whether the position is up-graded to P5 level or remains at P4 level is to be made by the Parties either through the Standing Committee or later at the MOP in May 2012.

132. Ms Mrema proposed four options for consideration by the StC:

1. The StC confirms the re-classification (subject to the approval of MOP5) and the position is advertised at P5 level immediately after the StC7;
2. The StC confirms the re-classification (subject to approval by MOP5) and the position is advertised at P5 level with a caveat meaning that should MOP5 not approve the up-grade then the person would be appointed at P4 level but the job description would not need to be revised;
3. The position is advertised at the P4 level with an appropriately revised job description (*note: according to UNEP rules: if the up-grade to P5 level should be approved by MOP, then the incumbent of the P4 position would not be able to re-apply for the P5 position*); or
4. The Standing Committee could advise to defer the entire decision to MOP5 and advertise the position thereafter.

133. She went on to underline that the Executive Director of UNEP ensured transparency throughout the recruiting procedure and that the StC would be welcome to be involved in the process and represented on the review panel.

134. The Chair welcomed the choice of options and requested the Standing Committee to appoint a member of the review panel when the time comes, to help select a suitable applicant for the position. He stressed how important it was to have a long-term solution at last.

135. The meeting broke up and the StC Members discussed the issue further in a closed session.

136. After the closed session, the Chair reported that the StC Members had agreed to move forward to advertise the position in UN INSPIRA as soon as possible after the meeting. He thought that, with reference to the four options indicated by the Secretariat, the StC should restrict its choice to two: (i) advertising the position at P5 level with a caveat that the appointment could be at the P4 level should the MOP not approve the up-grade (option 2 above); (ii) advertising the position at the P4 level (option 3 above). He recommended posting the position at P5 level with a caveat of P4 to avoid having to re-advertise it, which would be the case if it was posted at P4 level and then up-graded to P5 level. He explained that the difference in the budget between the P4 and the P5 positions amounted to roughly 15,000 Euros per year. He asked those present for their views, particularly those of the Standing Committee Members present.

137. Ms Courouble (MOP5 Host Government) felt that she could not make a decision without conferring with her Government.

138. Mr Van Dijk (Depositary) felt that there was general agreement on the fact that the final decision on the grade was the competence of the MOP. What was to be agreed by the StC was the best way to proceed until such a decision was made. He did not feel in a position to make a decision at that moment.

139. Mr Kofi Adu-Nsiah (Ghana) recommended advertising the position at P5 level.

140. Ms Roba Al Serhan (Syria) was not able to decide on this issue.

141. Germany felt that in the light of the CMS COP, it would be unlikely that the MOP would up-grade the position and would tend towards maintaining the position at the P4 level.

142. Ms Courouble commented on the terms of reference for the position (Section B 3.3) regarding language proficiency requirements. As AEWA has two official languages, English and French, fluency should be required in both languages. This would later save a lot of money with regard to the translation of documents and improve communication with francophone Parties. She underlined that she had been approached by francophone countries on this issue and was also speaking on their behalf.

143. The Chair requested Ms Mrema to confirm whether this was acceptable. She confirmed that as English and French are both official languages, the advertisement could indicate that.

144. The Chair cautioned the person chosen to represent the StC on the review panel to first consider the primary qualifications of the candidates, i.e. ability, skills and experience and in the case of equally assessed candidates, to consider language skills as an additional asset. He strongly advocated this.

145. It became clear that the final decision regarding the level at which the position should be posted would have to be deferred. The Chair requested the Members to inform him of their decision within the next two weeks and he would inform those present which recommendation had been decided on. He would approach all the Members (also those absent) by email informing them again of the relevant UNEP procedures and options by email and requesting their response.

146. Mr Barbieri went on to report about other personnel matters. The position of the Coordinator of the African Initiative had previously been covered by voluntary contributions from France; however France could not continue to fund this position. The Secretariat considered it crucial to retain this position as many

of the elements of the African Initiative were being worked on for presentation to MOP5. The Secretariat is currently fundraising for that purpose and several potential donors had been approached by the Secretariat recently. He proposed using a part of the leftover funds to cover the costs of this position at least until June 2012 (roughly 17,500 Euros), should fundraising efforts be unsuccessful.

147. The delegates felt that as much had been invested in this programme, the progress made so far should be built on and the efforts and resources invested not wasted. They also felt that the position should be financed at least for three months after MOP5 to allow sufficient time for the handover of the activities and also for the current incumbent to look for another position.

148. Ms Mrema urged the StC to send a strong message to the Parties because if this position is no longer funded then the entire programme would have to be dropped as the other members of the Secretariat already had a heavy workload and could not take on additional tasks. Should this happen, it would also mean that all the financial and human resources already invested into this programme would have been wasted, which may not be the best way to have used the limited resources available.

- Decisions/Actions:*
- 1. Regarding the position of the permanent Executive Secretary to AEWA, the Chair of the Standing Committee will contact the StC Members by email explaining the UNEP procedures involved and requesting their recommendations so that the position can be advertised as soon as possible<sup>22</sup>.*
  - 2. Regarding the position of the Coordinator of the African Initiative, the position should be extended until three months after MOP5 (i.e. August 2012) while fundraising for the future programme continues.*

### **Agenda item 23. Other draft resolutions**

*a) AEWA's contribution to delivering the Aichi 2020 biodiversity targets (StC 7 DR 15)*

149. Ms Kralj introduced draft resolution StC 7 DR15, explaining that the AICHI targets were 20 targets set down in the Convention on Biological Diversity<sup>23</sup> in its last COP. The table annexed to this resolution outlines these targets, showing the past and future contributions by AEWA, which rely on the full implementation of the AEWA Strategic Plan and the AEWA Plan of Action for Africa.

*b) Date, venue and funding of the 6<sup>th</sup> session of the MOP (StC 7 DR17)*

*c) Tribute to the organizers (StC 7 DR18)*

150. Mr Barbieri introduced these two standard resolutions explaining that in the case of StC 7 DR17, the decision will have to be made on a three or four-year cycle between MOP5 and MOP6.

*Decision:* *The Meeting approved the following draft resolutions for submission to MOP5:*

- *StC 7 DR15 AEWA's contribution to delivering the AICHI 2020 biodiversity targets*
- *StC 7 DR17 Date, venue and funding of the 6<sup>th</sup> Session of the MOP*
- *StC 7 DR18 Tribute to the organizers*

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<sup>22</sup> Through the subsequent email consultation coordinated by the Chair, the Standing Committee decided that the position of Permanent Executive Secretary of AEWA should be advertised as soon as possible at the P5 level. Concerning language proficiency requirements, the Standing Committee agreed on the following wording to be included in the Vacancy Announcement: "Fluency in French or English and working knowledge of the other language are required".

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.cbd.int/cop9/>

#### **Agenda item 24. Selection of the AEWA Waterbird Conservation Award winners**

151. The Members of the Standing Committee met in a closed session to discuss the nominations for the AEWA Waterbird Conservation Award.

152. After the closed session, the Chair announced that the Members had selected the following winners of the 2012 AEWA AWARD:

In the individual category: the late **Dr. Brooks Childress**

In the institutional category: **the International Wader Study Group**

153. The winners will be notified directly after the StC7 meeting and asked if they would like to accept their awards (in the case of the late Dr. Brooks Childress, his wife will be contacted). After they have confirmed, they will be invited to attend MOP5 in La Rochelle to accept their awards.

#### **Agenda item 25. Date and venue of the 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee**

154. Mr Barbieri reported that next meeting would probably be convened immediately after MOP5 and the subsequent one would be in spring 2013.

155. The Chair reported that Norway is contemplating hosting the meeting in Trondheim, which was very much welcomed by the Meeting.

#### **Agenda item 26. Any other business**

156. The Chair informed the Meeting of the discussion concerning the Central Asian Flyway (CAF) Action plan at the CMS COP. A meeting of the CAF Range States is planned to take place immediately before MOP5 in La Rochelle; CMS is taking the lead on the CAF process and will have to raise the funds in order to organize this meeting. The outcome of this meeting could have an impact on the Agreement with regard to a proposal for expansion of the geographical scope of AEWA. The consequences of this would have to be analysed with regard to the list of species involved. A new arrangement would, of course, have many implications, also with regard to resources. The Parties would be informed at MOP5 of the outcomes of the CAF Meeting, if it does take place and the issue would have to be taken to MOP6.

157. Mr Mundkur welcomed the news that this process was being picked up by the AEWA MOP because of all the issues involved. The species are at great risk due to loss of habitats and he hoped for a timely decision. India has been interested in facilitating this process, which has been on hold for too long already.

158. He went on to raise the issue of the concern about European sea ducks in the North Sea, where a number of species were declining without obvious causes. A meeting of the Duck Specialist Group could be convened with experts on whether a multi-species Action Plan could be developed to respond to the threats at hand. A meeting could take place in 2012 (funds permitting) with representatives of AEWA and the outcome could be presented to MOP5.

159. Mr Dereliev agreed that this was a strong case and the Secretariat and TC were looking at possible approaches. It should be brought to MOP5 in one way or another.

160. Mr Mundkur suggested that the StC could play a more proactive role and perhaps identify funds for the meeting and the Secretariat could perhaps approach the Nordic Council.

*Action: The Chair requested the Secretariat to keep an active eye on this issue and report back to the MOP.*

### **Agenda item 27. Closure of the meeting**

161. Mr Barbieri thanked the participants for their contributions to the Meeting, particularly as many had previously attended one or more meetings related to the CMS COP10. He also thanked the host and Chairman for leading through the meeting. Finally he wished all the participants a safe journey home

162. The Chairman was tired but happy to have managed the agenda and thanked the hard-working Secretariat Team for all the excellent preparation. He looked forward to meeting the AEWA Team again in La Rochelle. He also thanked the participants for all their efforts. Finally he declared the meeting closed.

## ANNEX 1

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