

**7<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE**  
*29 October - 01 November 2006, Bern, Switzerland*

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**REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT**

**INTRODUCTION**

In accordance with Article VIII, Paragraph (h) of the Agreement, the Secretariat shall prepare, on an annual basis and for each ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties, reports on the work of the Secretariat and on the implementation of the Agreement. In addition to this, the Secretariat has decided to report back to each meeting of the Technical and Standing Committees. It has been agreed by both Committees that a common report will be produced for both meetings. However, it has also been agreed that, for each meeting, the report will be updated to reflect the actual situation. Depending on the intervals between these meetings, the reports could differ slightly.

The current report describes the period since MOP3, which took place from 23-27 October 2005 in Dakar, Senegal.

**OVERVIEW OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE AEWA SECRETARIAT**

The day-to-day work of the Agreement Secretariat consists of responding to incoming mail, maintaining contact with AEWA's network of Contracting and Non-Contracting Parties, IGOs and NGOs as well as dealing with financial and administrative matters. In addition, the Secretariat had to devote considerable time to more general issues, e.g. the move of the Secretariat to the new UN Bonn Campus in 2006. Several meetings of the Heads of Agencies have taken place to discuss issues of common concern regarding the UN Campus. The Executive Secretary has attended these meetings as Head of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat.

This report is divided into three sections:

1. General matters: these include administrative/financial issues, staffing, new premises, meetings etc;
2. Cooperation with other organisations;
3. Technical and/or scientific matters: these include projects that are contracted out by the Secretariat and/or projects carried out by others, but in which the Secretariat is closely involved.

The day-to-day work will not be covered in this report.

## **1. GENERAL MATTERS**

### **New Premises for the Agreement Secretariat**

On 15-16 June 2006 the CMS Family was reunited by the move to the new UN Premises in Bonn. After nearly two years of separation we are now all located in the same building called Langen Eugen. The AEWA Secretariat is located on the 19<sup>th</sup> floor and the rest of the CMS Family has its offices on the 20<sup>th</sup> up to the 23<sup>rd</sup> floor of this building.

On 11<sup>th</sup> July the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and the German Chancellor Angela Merkel inaugurated the new UN Campus. This new complex unites the offices of eleven UN organizations specialized in the areas of environment and development. In the near future it will also include the new United Nations Climate Change Secretariat building and a UN Congress Centre.

In his speech the Secretary-General praised the German support and great hospitality for the United Nations, which “has long been at the centre of Germany’s foreign policy” and “has made Bonn one of the Organization’s most attractive and rewarding duty stations”.

The AEWA Information Officer (JPO) was closely involved in the preparations for the visit of Mr. Kofi Annan, on behalf of the CMS Family in Bonn. During his tour of the building, the Secretary-General visited the 19<sup>th</sup> floor (AEWA), where he had a quick look at the building’s largest meeting room and one of the AEWA offices.

### **Staff recruitment**

#### **Fixed Term Staff**

The recruitment of the Junior Professional Information Officer (L-2) Mr Florian Keil (Germany), who entered on duty on 18 October 2005, went smoothly. The Information Officer devotes 20% of his time to CMS Family related issues, 30% to AEWA and 50% to the African-Eurasian GEF Flyways project. As agreed by MOP3 this post will become a fixed term post at P-2 level as of the end of 2008.

The Meeting of the Parties adopted at its third session Decision 3.1 to urge UNEP to finalise the recruitment process for the upgraded post of Executive Secretary. At the beginning of 2006 the interviews took place and it was decided to re-appoint Mr. Bert Lenten as of 1<sup>st</sup> May 2006. With this a long procedure has at last been finalised.

MOP3 also agreed to establish a part-time post for a Secretary and a part-time post for an Information Assistant to support the work of respectively the Technical Officer and the Information Officer. The recruitment process is in its final stage and it is expected that the selected candidates will enter on duty as early as 1<sup>st</sup> November 2006.

#### **Temporary Staff**

As mentioned in previous reports the workload of the Agreement Secretariat is increasing due to the fact that AEWA is becoming more and more well-known and has taken up a number of activities. So far we have worked with individual contractors, who, in line with UN Rules and Regulations, are allowed to work for the Secretariat for a maximum of 6 months in any period of one year. In practice this means that we could only contract the same person again after a break of six months, which means that as soon as a person becomes familiar with AEWA his contract expires and we have to invest again in the next contractor. Needless to say, this situation is not very convenient for us. The problem, which has been

described in the past, was discussed with UNEP-DEC, who advised us to go for so-called “temporary assignments”. These could be for a maximum of 12 months, with the possibility to extend this assignment for a further period of 12 months. Based on this information and in close consultation with the Executive Secretary of CMS and the Chair of the Standing Committee it was decided to create a temporary assignment for the post of an Associate Programme Officer (L-2). The task of this officer would be to draft a number of international reviews and to support the work of the Information Officer. Meanwhile the selection process has been finalised and Ms. Catherine Lehmann (German/French) has been recruited, and entered on duty in this position on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2006. Funds permitting, more such temporary assignments might be created in the near future.

The following individual contractors have worked for AEWA since MOP3:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Main tasks carried out in the period<sup>1</sup></b>
Ms. Nienke Beintema	Dutch	Drafting of AEWA Articles/MOP3 Newsletter (part-time/ June-Dec. '05)
Ms. Sophie Hansen	German/ French	Logistical arrangements for MOP3 (full-time/ Sept.-Oct/ '05) Drafting Guideline on aquatic weeds (Part-time/ June-July '06)
Ms. Catherine Lehmann	German/ French	Logistical preparation of MOP3 and Information Management (Part-time until July 2005 afterward full-time/ Jan.-Dec. '05) AEWA publications (full-time/ July-September '06)
Ms. Muriel Mannert	German	Logistical preparations for Avian Influenza Seminar (full-time/ Feb.-March '06)
Mr. Ricardas Patiejunas	Lithuanian	Support with financial tasks (part-time/ Feb.-Oct. '06)
Ms. Ayhan Polat	German/ Turkish	Logistical arrangement for MOP3 (part-time/ April '05 – April '06)

### **Interns**

In addition to contracting consultants we also had the possibility to have some interns working for us free of charge. A new intern scheme for the CMS family was launched in summer 2006 to coincide with our move to our new headquarters where there is more office space available. Most of the interns who work for the CMS family are graduates with a first university degree seeking working experience. In a number of cases this has proven to be a valuable career opening experience for them. Following their internships they have been contracted as consultants by one of the Agreements or CMS. Others have meanwhile found permanent posts outside the United Nations.

The following people have worked as interns for the AEWA Secretariat:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Main tasks carried out in the period<sup>2</sup></b>
Mr Ricardas Patiejunas	Lithuanian	Support with financial tasks (Aug. '05 – Jan. '06)
Mr. Dirk Nemitz	German	Identifying International Cooperation Agencies of interest for AEWA (July- Sept. '06)

### **Finalisation of MOP2/ MOP3**

Since MOP2 and MOP3 the Secretariat has been working on the follow-up of these meetings, i.e. finalisation of documents that were adopted, etc.

<sup>1</sup> Besides these main tasks all temporary staff supported the Secretariat in its work.

<sup>2</sup> Besides these main tasks all temporary staff supported the Secretariat in its daily work.

The only issues still outstanding from MOP2 is the finalisation of the following guidelines:

- Guideline on National Legislation.

With the limited resources available the Secretariat hopes that it will be possible to finalise and publish these guidelines by early 2007.

Since MOP3 the following International Single Species Action Plans were published:

- Action Plan for the Northern Bald Ibis (*Geronticus eremita*)
- Action Plan for the Light-bellied Brent Goose – East Canadian High Arctic population (*Branta bernicla hrota*)
- Action Plan for the White-headed Duck (*Oxyura leucocephala*)<sup>3</sup>
- Action Plan for the Corncrake (*Crex crex*)<sup>4</sup>
- Action Plan for the Ferruginous Duck (*Aythya nyroca*)<sup>5</sup>

Issues outstanding from MOP3 are:

- Publishing of the Proceedings of MOP3 (Print and CD-Rom version)
- Publishing of a special Newsletter on MOP3
- Closing down of the 2003-2005 budget and establishing a second Trust Fund.

### **Meetings of the subsidiary bodies and working groups of the Agreement**

Since MOP3 no meetings of subsidiary bodies or working groups of the Agreement have taken place.

### **Workshops to promote sustainable hunting**

An AEWA/BirdLife workshop on sustainable hunting of migratory birds in the Arabic Mediterranean Countries took place on 2-3 September 2006 in Hammamet, Tunis. This workshop was organized in the framework of a BirdLife-led EU Life project on sustainable hunting. More details will be reported on the last day of TC7.

### **Meeting of the International Advisory Group for the Northern Bald Ibis (IAGNBI)**

From 27 September till 1 October the 2<sup>nd</sup> IAGNBI meeting took place in Vejer, Spain. The Programme Officer represented AEWA at this meeting, where amongst other issue the status of the implementation of the Species Action Plan was discussed. No decision was taken as to how to coordinate the implementation of this Action Plan.

### **Lesser Flamingo Action Planning Workshop**

A CMS/AEWA Action Planning Workshop for the Lesser Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus minor*) took place on 25-29 September 2006 in Nairobi, Kenya. This was the first stage in the process of drafting a Single Species Action Plan for the Lesser Flamingo. More details will be reported later on the agenda of TC7.

### **Task Force on Avian Influenza and Wild Birds**

AEWA is one of the founding members of the Task Force on Avian Influenza and Wild Birds. This Task Force was established after the outbreak of AI in west Siberia in July 2005. The Task Force is led by CMS and the AEWA Secretariat is also closely involved in it. Our Information Officer (JPO) has helped to produce the Nairobi Seminar CD & AI Resource, and is currently coordinating the development of a special Website for the Task Force in conjunction with the Internet Division of UNEP/DCPI, called

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3 This is a CMS/AEWA/EU Action Plan

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5 This is a CMS/AEWA Action Plan.

AIWEb - The Avian Influenza, Wildlife and Environment Web. (A short presentation of AIWEb will be given at TC7.)

Furthermore, the Technical Officer and the Executive Secretary are involved in providing substantial input to the discussions taking place within the Task Force and regarding drafting of information material by the coordinator of the Task Force. In addition to this the Executive Secretary has given several interviews to media and participated also in several press conferences organized by CMS and UNEP/DCPI in Nairobi. Particularly the end of 2005 and the beginning of 2006 was a very busy period for the Secretariat due to Avian Influenza.

### **Seminar on Avian Influenza, Wild Birds and the Environment**

A seminar was organized by CMS, AEWA and UNEP on Avian Influenza, Wild Birds and the Environment, which was linked to the launch of the first World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) and took place at the Headquarters of UNEP in Nairobi, Kenya on 10-11 April 2006. The AEWA team took a leading role in the logistical and financial arrangements for this seminar. CMS took the lead in substantial preparations for this Seminar with support of AEWA.



The Seminar was attended by 40 representatives and experts from various organisations e.g. FAO, WHO, OIE, Wetlands International, BirdLife International, the Wildlife Conservation Society, the Zoological Society London and delegates from several countries.

The Recommendations of this Seminar were distributed widely and could be downloaded from the CMS and AEWA websites. A special AI Seminar CD-Rom, which includes all presentations, the recommendations and further resources on Avian Influenza and the International Scientific Task Force was also produced and disseminated.

### **Launch of the first World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD)**

On the weekend of 8/9 April 2006 a total of 68 (registered) activities in 48 countries took place to mark the first ever World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD). This new global commemorative event focusing on migratory birds and the phenomenon of bird migration was organized by AEWA in cooperation with the Convention on Migratory Species (UNEP/CMS) in early 2006.

The theme of this year's WMBD celebration was "Migratory birds need our support now!" It was part of a larger campaign initiated by CMS and AEWA in cooperation with a number of other organizations to try to counter the negative and unbalanced publicity migratory birds received due to Avian Influenza in the period from October 2005 – April/May 2006.

The central launching event of WMBD, also partly organized by the AEWA Secretariat, took place on the Laikipia Nature Conservancy, a 350 km<sup>2</sup> nature reserve and biodiversity oasis overlooking the Kenyan part of the 7200 km long Great Rift Valley - a bird migration route of global importance. This central event on the estate of the famous nature conservationist and author Ms Kuki Gallmann was staged one day before the CMS and AEWA-led Scientific Seminar on "Avian Influenza, the Environment and Migratory Birds" at UNEP Headquarters in Nairobi on 10/11 April 2006.

Although the organization of WMBD, the production of special information materials (poster, WMBD web site etc.) put quite a heavy burden on the Secretariat staff, the entire event was made possible through funds received from external donors, most notably Vogelbescherming Nederland. Although quite limited

in terms of time, money and capacity, the creation and launch of World Migratory Bird Day in 2006 was one of the most successful, wide-reaching information campaigns AEWA has ever conducted. WMBD and the AI Seminar received widespread attention in both specialized and mainstream media and directly and indirectly gave AEWA, CMS and UNEP very positive publicity. Furthermore, through WMBD many new opportunities for cooperation have crystallized for AEWA, with other UN bodies, leading NGOs and with potential partners in and beyond the AEWA region.

A short presentation on World Migratory Bird Day will be given by the Secretariat during TC7.

## **2. COOPERATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS**

### **OMPO (Oiseaux Migrateurs du Paléarctique Occidental)**

As approved by the Standing Committee during its first meeting, the Secretariat may strengthen cooperation with OMPO. Due to lack of human resources, no progress could be made regarding drafting a Memorandum of Cooperation between both organisations.

### **CAFF (Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna)**

AEWA was represented at the Eleventh Biennial Meeting of CAFF, which took place from 5-9 June 2006 in Ylläs, Finland. During his presentation the Executive Secretary of AEWA offered possibilities for strengthening the cooperation between CAFF and AEWA. Particularly the work of the so-called CBIRD working group (Circumpolar Seabird Group) might be of interest for AEWA. The first step will be to inform each other on ongoing and planned activities.

## **3. PROJECTS**

### **African-Eurasian Flyway GEF project**

After many years of drafting preparations, the African-Eurasian Flyways GEF project has reached the implementation stage. UNOPS (United Nations Offices for Project Support), being the executing agency, established a Project Coordination Unit (PCU), based at the office of Wetlands International in Wageningen, the Netherlands. In July 2006 two staff members for this PCU entered on duty and started to work on the implementation of this full-size GEF project. The official name of the project changed from African-Eurasian GEF Flyways Project to *Wings Over Wetlands* (WOW). In early December 2006 the first Steering Committee meeting will take place, probably at our Secretariat in Bonn. It is also foreseen that the official launch of the project will take place around this time. A presentation on the project will be given by the PCU Technical Advisor at TC7.

### **International Single Species Action Plans**

#### **Dark-bellied Brent Goose Action Plan**

Since the third meeting of the Brent Goose Working Group, which took place on 14 January 2004 in Wageningen, Netherlands, little progress has been made in finalising the Action Plan. The problem is that not all key countries have submitted their comments on the fifth draft. The Secretariat has reminded them several times, but so far without any result.

#### **Maccoa Duck**

Drafting of an action plan for the species was contracted out by the Secretariat to the African Gamebird Research Education and Development Trust. The final draft, reflecting all comments received by the Technical Committee and the Range States, is appended as document TC Inf 7.1, and will be submitted

for approval by the Standing Committee in November 2006.

Lesser White-fronted Goose

An update of the Action Plan for this species was contracted out by the Secretariat to BirdLife International. A workshop was hosted by Finland at the beginning of April 2005. The procedure is now at the stage of official consultations with the Range States and we expect that the plan will be ready for submission to the Standing Committee in 2007.

**International Implementation Priorities 2006-2008**

MOP3 adopted Resolution 3.11 regarding the AEWA International Implementation Priorities 2006-2008 (IIP 2006-08). According to this Resolution the Meeting of Parties urges Contracting Parties and specialised international organisations to support ongoing projects and, where appropriate, to develop new international co-operation projects for the implementation of the Agreement, according to the priorities outlined in AEWA/MOP 3.18, to keep the Agreement Secretariat fully informed of progress, and to report conclusions at future Meetings of the Parties. Unfortunately, 2006 seems to be not the best year for fundraising. The Agreement Secretariat is willing to play an active role in the implementation of the IIP 2006-08 and will continue to try to raise funds for this. However, it should be noted that at MOP3 it was also decided to remove from the Core Budget support to funded delegates and several other activities. This means that more funds have to be raised by the Secretariat, and this can only be done if Parties take responsibility and provide generous voluntary contributions to the Secretariat.

A donor-friendly version of the IIP 2006-08 has been published and was distributed at the first CMS Family donor meeting, which took place on 27<sup>th</sup> of September 2006 in Bonn.

For an overview on progress made in the implementation of the IIP 2006-2008, see document TC 7.7.