



12th MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

31 January – 01 February 2017, Paris, France

REVISED FORMAT FOR AEWA INTERNATIONAL ACTION, MANAGEMENT AND MULTI-SPECIES PLANS

Introduction

As identified in the [Overview on the Status of Preparation and Implementation of AEWA International Single Species Action and Management Plans as well as Multi-Species Action Plans](#) presented to the 6th Session of the Meeting of the Parties to AEWA in November 2015 (Doc. AEWA MOP6.16 rev.1), there is a need for further improvement of the AEWA action- and management planning process, which, in turn, will hopefully lead to better implementation of Plans adopted under the Agreement.

One of the recommendations identified in particular, is the need for a revision of the current [AEWA International Single Species Action Plan format](#), which was adopted at MOP4 in 2008 (Doc. AEWA MOP4.36 Corr. 1), in order to make future Action and Management Plans more streamlined and to accommodate for multi-species Action and Management plans as well as to make AEWA Plans more implementable, accessible and practical for policy-makers and implementing agencies.

As such and following the subsequent request of the 6th Session of the Meeting of the Parties to AEWA in November 2015 ([Resolution 6.8](#)), the AEWA Technical Committee has undertaken a revision of the format for AEWA Action Plans – including improved guidance for the preparation and consultation of such Plans - so that the same format now caters for all species Plans envisaged to be developed and adopted under the Agreement (International Single Species as well as Multi-Species Action and Management Plans). It should be noted that the suggested format in section A of the document is final, however, the guidance included in section B of the document will still be further developed and completed by the Technical Committee before submission to the Meeting of the Parties in 2018.

It is foreseen that the new and revised AEWA International Single Species Action and Management Plans which are being developed during this triennium (2016-2018) to be submitted for approval by the 7th Session of the Meeting of the AEWA Parties in 2018, will all follow this revised format.

Action Requested from the Standing Committee

The Standing Committee is requested to review the revised format for AEWA International Action, Management and Multi-Species Plans as proposed by the Technical Committee and to approve it for further use, on an interim basis subject to final approval by Meeting of the Parties.

**REVISED FORMAT AND GUIDELINES FOR
AEWA INTERNATIONAL SPECIES ACTION AND
MANAGEMENT PLANS**

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For the Secretariat of the
Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds

January 2017

Introduction to the Revised AEWA International Action and Management Plan Format

AEWA International Species Action and Management Plans remain one of most vital and practical tools under the Agreement for the coordinated international conservation and sustainable use of migratory waterbirds. These Plans represent the quintessence of AEWA: cooperation across flyways for a common defined goal.

Although good progress has been made with regard to the development of the AEWA action- and management planning process as well as with regard to establishing international coordinating mechanisms for adopted Action and Management Plans, there is still much room for improvement particularly with regard to the implementation of adopted AEWA Plans, as outlined in the [Overview of the Stage of Preparation and Implementation of AEWA International Single Species Action and Management Plans](#) presented to the 6th Session of the Meeting of the AEWA Parties in November 2015 by the AEWA Secretariat.

On the basis of the conclusions and recommendations presented therein, AEWA Parties adopted [Resolution 6.8 on the Adoption and Implementation of International Single Species and Multi-species Action and Management Plans](#). The Meeting of the Parties highlighted therein, in particular, the need to revise the current AEWA Species Action Plan format in order to accommodate for Multi-species Action and Management Plans as well as to make AEWA Plans more implementable, accessible and practical for policy-makers and implementing agencies in order to increase implementation. The need was also recognized for Action Plan activities to be even more targeted and to correspond better with the set objectives and goals, in an effort to increase their delivery.

The previous [revision of the format for AEWA International Single Species Action Plans](#) was prepared by BirdLife International and was adopted by the 4th Session of the Meeting of the Parties in 2008. This revision fundamentally streamlined the AEWA Action Plan format and served to make AEWA Species Action Plans adopted in 2008 and thereafter simpler, clearer and more focused, with the actions to be implemented following a clear logic.

Following the request from MOP6, this current revision has been facilitated by Wetlands International under the auspices of the AEWA Technical Committee and builds on the 2008 format, following the same succinct logic but revising the format so that it can be used for all International Species Plans foreseen to be developed under the Agreement (either with a recovery or management objective as well as with a single or multi-species focus) and making it even shorter, to the point, comprehensible and easier to use.

This document consists of two parts: the revised format itself in section A as well as detailed guidance regarding the facilitation of AEWA action- and management planning processes and the completion of the format outlined in section B. It is hoped that this revised format, including revised guidance, will serve to further strengthen the development of International Species Action and Management Plans under the Agreement and subsequently also assist in strengthening the level of implementation of adopted AEWA Plans.

It should be noted, however, that action- and management-planning under AEWA remains an evolving process as the Agreement bodies as well as all involved partners continue to learn and introduce improvements over time. As our experience grows, further changes to the format and guidance captured here may be required over time

A. Format

Overview:

This section lays out the actual **FORMAT**, according to which AEWA International Species Action and Management Plans shall be developed. The new revised format groups the content to be included under the following **NINE** headings:

- *Front Cover*
- *Inside Front Cover*
- *1 - Basic Data*
- *2 - Framework for Action*
- *Annex 1 – Biological Assessment*
- *Annex 2 – Problem Analysis*
- *Annex 3 – Justification of Conservation and/or Management Objectives*
- *Annex 4 – Adaptive Harvest Management Framework*
- *Annex 5 - References*

Section B. ‘Action- and Management Planning Guidelines’, contains further information and guidance on how each section of this Format is to be completed, including guidance on the facilitation of species action- and management-planning processes under the Agreement.

Front Cover

- AEWA International Single Species or Multi-Species Action or Management Plan for the [*insert: species’ English name + scientific name - also mention for which sub-species or population if relevant*];
- Portrait/picture of the species;
- Logos of the organisations leading on the production of the plan, donors supporting the planning process and MEAs or other international frameworks that adopted the Plan.

Inside Front Cover

- Titles of MEAs or other international frameworks which have adopted the Plan, organisations leading on the production of the plan and donors supporting the planning process;
- Compiler(s) including contact details;
- List of contributors (names and countries and/or organizations);
- Date of adoption (and number of edition if not the first edition);
- Lifespan of Plan;
- Milestones in the production of the Plan;
- Name and contact details of the official AEWA International Species Working/Expert Group or other existing Species Working Group(s) (if applicable) including the following text: “*Please send any additional information or comments regarding this [Action/Management] Plan to the [Working/Expert] Group, email: [xxx].*”, or specify another more appropriate contact, including an email address.
- Recommended citation, including ISBN, if applicable.

1 – BASIC DATA¹

- Species and populations covered by the Plan;
- List and map of Principal Range States;
- If applicable: list of potential Survey Range States Range States as well as potential Range States host breeding and/or non-breeding numbers below the 1% of the biogeographic population threshold as identified during the action- or management-planning process;
- Global, Regional and sub-regional Red List status;
- International legal status (as applicable, with regard to geographic range of the species/population in question):
 - AEWa Table 1 status
 - CMS
 - CITES
 - Bern Convention
 - EU Birds Directive

2 - FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

- **Goal:**
- Indicator and method of verification for goal:

- **Purpose:**
- Indicator and method of verification for purpose:

- **Action framework table** showing the **objectives** (including indicators and methods of verification for each objective), associated **results** and **actions** with their priorities, time-scales and organisations responsible for implementing them. Produce a separate table for each objective:

Table 1. Framework for Action

| <i>Objective 1:</i> | | | | |
|---------------------|--|-----------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| Result | Action | Priority | Time scale | Organisations responsible |
| Result 1.1 | 1.1.1. Description of action Applicable to: [insert range states] | | | |
| | 1.1.2. Description of action Applicable to: [insert range states] | | | |
| Result 1.2 | 1.2.1. Description of action Applicable to: [insert range states] | | | |
| | | | | |

¹ The Basic Data shall be limited to one page.

Annex 1. BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT²

- Distribution throughout the annual cycle;
- Habitat requirements;
- Survival and productivity;
- Description of population size and trend for each geographic population, including by country provided in Table 2.

Table 2. Population size and trend by country

| Country | Breeding numbers | Quality of data | Year(s) of the estimate | Breeding population trend in the last 10 years (or 3 generations) | Quality of data | Maximum size of migrating or non-breeding populations in the last 10 years (or 3 generations) | Quality of data | Year(s) of the estimate |
|------------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|---|-----------------|---|-----------------|-------------------------|
| <i>Country 1</i> | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Country 2</i> | | | | | | | | |
| Overall | | | | | | | | |

Annex 2: PROBLEM ANALYSIS

- General overview
- Full list of all identified threats or problems (including the name of the threat or problem; description; estimate of the scope, severity, timing and impact)
- Figure 2. Problem tree

Annex 3: JUSTIFICATION OF CONSERVATION and/or MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

- Predicted population trajectories for 25 years or 7.5 generations, whichever is longer, under (at least) the following scenarios:
 - Business-as-usual (no recovery or control measures taken)
 - Action or Management Plan implemented as planned
- Description of methodology used, including models, their parameters and assumptions.

² The Biological Assessment shall be limited to maximum one page in length (excluding table 2).

Annex 4: ADAPTIVE HARVEST MANAGEMENT PLAN³

- Assessment of the sustainability of current level of harvest
- Provisions for the set-up phase, which shall include agreement on:
 - Management objectives;
 - Management alternatives, including international agreement on harmonisation of regulatory instruments and sharing of resource (international and national quotas);
 - Predictive models to predict consequences of management actions;
 - Monitoring protocols to record population response to management action and fulfilment of management objectives.
- Provisions for the iterative phase, which shall include decisions on:
 - Follow-up monitoring, including frequency and timing of reporting
 - Frequency and timing of assessment based on comparison of predicted and observed outcomes of management actions
 - Updating of predictive models and model weights
 - Decision-making process, including decisions on (1) frequency (eg., annual, tri-annual) of the points of decision-making, (2) annual timing of events, (3) optimal harvest strategy for a period between two decision points and sharing of annual quota based on assessment, (4) communication to range states and (5) implementation of regulations in range states prior to the hunting season
 - Learning and feedback
 - Institutional learning

Annex 5. REFERENCES

- List of the most relevant literature used for the preparation of the Management or Action Plan.

³ This Annex is only applicable in the case of Management Plans as well as Action Plans under which hunting of the species or population in question may continue according to the provisions of AEWa.

B. Action- and Management-Planning Guidelines

Overview:

This section ‘B. Action- and Management Planning Guidelines’ provides guidance to support planners and compilers in the development and drafting of AEWA International Species Action and Management Plans following the AEWA format outlined above and provides explanatory notes for each section.

These guidelines are intended to support planners in developing the following types of Plans using the AEWA format:

- *International Single Species Action Plans (ISSAP),*
- *International Multi-species Action Plans (IMSAP),*
- *International Single Species Management Plans (ISSMP),*
- *International Multi-species Management Plans (IMSMP).*

In addition, this section also provides guidance related to the facilitation of action- and management-planning processes under AEWA, which are carried out in cooperation with the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat.

1. AEWA Action- and Management-Planning Process

1.1. Introduction

In addition to the Framework for AEWA International Species Action and Management Plans as outlined above, this chapter also runs through the main steps of the actual action- and management-planning process itself, which is carried out by the selected lead compiler(s) or drafting team, in close cooperation with the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat.

AEWA International Species Action and Management Plans are adopted by the Meeting of the AEWA Parties. But before a Plan reaches the stage of being presented for adoption, it has undergone a long development process beginning with the prioritization of the species/population in question for an Action or Management Plan by the AEWA Technical Committee to an internationally negotiated Plan ready for presentation to the AEWA governing bodies and adoption by the Parties.

The action- and management-planning process as described below has been developed under the Agreement in an effort to **ensure a transparent process that includes all relevant stakeholders and brings together the best available scientific knowledge**. Both of these elements – the transparent and inclusive process as well as working on the basis of best available science – are crucial steps for enabling the subsequent implementation of International Species Action as well as Management Plans once adopted.

It should be noted that action- and management-planning under AEWA remains an evolving process as the Agreement bodies as well as all involved partners continue to learn and introduce improvements over time. As these are international, consultative processes mainly dependent on the availability of external funding, the exact timetables etc. will also vary from case to case. The main steps as well as the roles and responsibilities of each of the various actors in the process, however, remain the same.

As this guidance is geared in particular towards potential International Species Action or Management compilers and/or drafting teams, the **NINE** essential steps requiring their involvement are highlighted throughout the process below.

1.2. Facilitation of Action- and Management-Planning Processes under AEWA

1.2.1. Establishing the Process

Following the prioritization of species/populations under the Agreement most urgently in need of an international Action or Management Plan by the AEWA Technical Committee, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat liaises with the various stakeholders to see which plans can be developed within which timeframe. The successful development of new plans is dependent on many factors such as the support of range state governments and the availability of species' experts. Sufficient resources - both in the form of personnel time of experts and funding - are key. The capacity of the Secretariat to organize, fundraise for and to run the process within a given time is also a crucial factor.

Nearly all action and management planning processes under AEWA require fundraising efforts by the Secretariat. The main costs are linked to the personnel time needed for the actual compilation of the draft Action/Management Plan and to the action/management planning workshop to which all relevant range states are invited. First steps to establish the action/management plan development process are therefore to secure sponsors which are typically governments or international conservation organizations as well as a chief compiler/compiling organization.

In the case of financial support from a government, the Secretariat usually requires a letter from the respective government, with a) a request to the Secretariat to initiate the action/management planning process and b) a commitment to fund the process (i.e. provide resources for the drafting of the plan and for the action/management planning workshop as well as for possible printing/translation of the plan if desired). Depending on the type of arrangement with the compiler (hired consultant or pro-bono) the Secretariat signs a contract or more informal agreement outlining the work to be delivered as well as the timeframe.

The Secretariat also informs and liaises with possible other relevant multi-lateral agreements and other legal frameworks on the development of new Action Plans under the AEWA process, such as the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), the Bern Convention and the European Commission.

COMPILER STEP 1: Discussions between the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat and potential organizations/lead experts to assess their willingness/availability to act as lead compiler for a prioritized Action/Management Plan. Contract or more informal agreement signed depending on arrangement.

1.2.2. Action- and Management-planning Workshops

A crucial component in ensuring the early involvement of all range states and possible other relevant stakeholders in any action- or management-planning process, is the organization of an inter-governmental workshop.

Once a lead compiler/compiling organization as well as sufficient funding have been secured the Secretariat therefore convenes a planning workshop to which all Principal Range States (regardless of whether they are a Contracting Party to AEWA or not) as well as possible additional international experts for the species are invited. A letter is sent to the respective AEWA Focal Points and Contact Points inviting them to send one government representative charged with the implementation of AEWA as well as one national expert on the species in question to the workshop. This allows for national policy considerations as well as biological, conservation and sustainable use aspects to be reflected in the Plan at an early stage. The active involvement of range state governments is particularly important, as they will be responsible for the implementation of the Action/Management Plan after adoption.

Based on contacts provided by the lead compiler/compiling organization, the Secretariat may recommend the attendance of a known national species expert in the workshop invitation letter. This, however, is merely

a recommendation and the final decision on who participates in the workshop lies with the respective government. In addition, invitations are sent to the organizations represented in the AEWA Technical Committee.

The agenda for the workshops is prepared by the Secretariat, the lead compiler and the host government, if applicable. If capacity allows, a biological assessment as well as an initial threat assessment are also prepared before the workshop. The facilitation of the workshop is carried out by the Secretariat and/or another international expert of species action/management planning in cooperation with the lead compiler. Workshops may include an introductory presentation on the international status of the species followed by brief presentations by the national representatives on the current status, main threats, and/or use of the species in their country. This is usually followed by brainstorming sessions on the threats, objectives, results and activities with their associated indicators as well as knowledge gaps. Discussions are also held on possible urgent activities that may need to be implemented immediately before a formal adoption of the Plan.

It should be noted that Species Action and Management Plans are international frameworks for the coordinated conservation and management of species/populations – not scientific papers for peer-review. Although Action and Management Plans should include the best scientific knowledge available at the time of development, gaps in scientific knowledge should not be seen as a reason for delaying the development and subsequent adoption of a Plan. Instead such knowledge gaps and assumptions made in the absence of hard data should be duly noted in the Plan and activities to close such gaps in cooperation amongst all relevant range states should be added.

COMPILER - STEP 2: Provide the Secretariat with a list of known species experts (name, affiliation, email address) from each Range State, to be included in the workshop invitations.

COMPILER - STEP 3: Undertake, before the workshop, desk research and data collation of the latest available information relevant for the Annexes 1-4 (biological assessment, problem analysis, demographic analysis and predictions, population estimates) of the Plan (as appropriate). Consider the need to develop and disseminate a questionnaire to all Range States (via the Secretariat) to gather more information, for example on national status and trends as well as drivers of decline.

COMPILER STEP 4: Produce, before the workshop, the draft biological assessment, demographic analysis and problem analysis. Send drafts to all invited workshop participants. This information should include the draft texts for the Annexes, draft problem tree and supporting information (eg. a population viability analysis).

COMPILER STEP 5: Carry out the action- or management-planning workshop in cooperation with the Secretariat and possible other partners covering: a review of the collected data and draft texts; a validation of the problem analysis; agreement on the geographic scope as well as the goal, purpose, objectives, results, actions and corresponding timelines and responsibilities.

1.2.3. Consultations of the draft Action/Management Plan

After the action/management planning workshop the lead compiler has the task of drafting the action plan based on the workshop outcomes in cooperation with the Secretariat. Depending on the time available, this usually takes between two and four months. This first draft is then circulated to the workshop participants as well as those government representatives and national experts that were invited but not able to attend. This first consultation round is meant to ensure that all the necessary substantive details as well as actions for the species are reflected as discussed at the workshop. Following the feedback from the workshop participants, the lead compiler prepares a new draft which is submitted to the AEWA Technical Committee for comments by the Secretariat.

A revised draft is then again prepared by the lead compiler and submitted by the Secretariat to all Focal Points and Contact Points in the relevant range states for official government consultation. The timeframe for the official consultation is ideally three months. Within the framework of the official consultation the Focal Points and Contact Points are expected to circulate the draft to all relevant national bodies and stakeholders for comments in accordance with their respective established national procedures and to submit the consolidated national comments to the Secretariat by the given deadline. If no comments are submitted by the deadline, the Secretariat assumes that Range States are in agreement with the Plan. Possible extensions of the deadline for submitting national comments can be requested of the Secretariat.

The Secretariat is responsible for the overall final editing (both language and layout) of the draft plan. In order to avoid unnecessary delays throughout the drafting process, this task is usually carried out towards the end of the consultation process.

COMPILER STEP 6: Prepare first draft of the Action or Management Plan in consultation with Secretariat and send out for consultation to workshop invitees.

COMPILER- STEP 7: Incorporate comments from consultation, produce a second draft and provide to the Secretariat for submission to the AEWA Technical Committee.

COMPILER STEP- 8: Incorporate comments from AEWA Technical Committee and provide a third draft to the Secretariat for the official consultation with the Range State governments.

1.2.4. Review by the AEWA bodies and adoption

Following the formal national consultation, a final draft is prepared and submitted to the Technical Committee and, following their consent, to the Standing Committee for approval for submission to the next Meeting of the Parties. Following the positive recommendations from both the Technical and the Standing Committee, the Meeting of the Parties is then requested to adopt the Plan at its next session.

Following the adoption of new Action and Management Plans by the Meeting of the Parties, the Secretariat prepares final versions of the Plans, and makes them available on the AEWA website. Only Plans for which additional funding has been made available are printed. Once Plans are available in their final form the Secretariat informs all Focal Points and Contact Points in the relevant range states.

In some cases, Action Plans may be ready for approval between Sessions of the Meetings of the Parties. MOP3 gave the Standing Committee the mandate to approve Action Plans on an interim basis in Resolution 3.12. Following approval by the Standing Committee on an interim basis, range states can already start implementing the approved Plan inter-sessionally, and do not have to wait for the final adoption by the Meeting of the Parties.

COMPILER STEP - 9: Incorporate comments from the official Range State consultation and submit the draft Plan – through the Secretariat - for official endorsement by the AEWA Technical and Standing Committees and subsequent adoption by the AEWA Meeting of the Parties.

Table I: The various main steps of the AEWA Action/Management Planning Process. Note that no action/management planning process is the same and that both the facilitation and the timetable may be adapted by the Secretariat depending in particular on the resources available as well as the meeting schedules of the AEWA governing bodies.

| Action/Management Planning Process under AEWA | |
|---|--|
| STEPS | LEAD & MAIN PLAYERS |
| Prioritization of species in urgent need of coordinated international conservation and/or management efforts | AEWA Technical Committee |
| Start and facilitation of the action/management planning process (i.e. identifying a lead compiler or drafting team; sourcing funding for compilation and workshop etc.) | AEWA Secretariat |
| Inter-governmental workshop for all range states and relevant stakeholders | AEWA Secretariat together with lead compiler/drafting team and possible host government, National Focal points and Contact Points |
| Workshop participants provide comments on 1 st draft | Lead compiler, AEWA Secretariat, workshop participants |
| AEWA Technical Committee provides technical evaluation/clearance on 2 nd draft | Lead compiler, AEWA Secretariat, AEWA Technical Committee |
| Formal government consultation of 3 rd draft with all species range states | Lead compiler, AEWA Secretariat, National Focal Points and Contact Points |
| 4 th draft is submitted to the AEWA Technical Committee for sign-off before approval by the Parties | AEWA Technical Committee |
| Final draft is submitted to the AEWA Standing Committee for preliminary approval OR approval for submission to the Meeting of the Parties | AEWA Standing Committee |
| Final consulted draft is adopted at the next Session of the Meeting of the Parties | Meeting of the Parties |
| Final Action/Management Plan is prepared by the Secretariat together with the chief compiler and posted online (printed only if funding is available). Link to (or copy of) the plan is sent to all Focal Points and Contact points in the relevant range states with the invitation to implement the plan. | AEWA Secretariat |

2. Action and Management Planning Format - *Guidance*

2.1. Introduction

This section provides additional instructions and guidance directed particularly at compilers or drafting teams on the use of the AEWA International Species Action and Management Plan Format outlined above in section A. Wherever possible, concrete wording samples are also provided as further guidance, but it should be noted that these merely serve as examples to illustrate the logical linkages between the various parts of the format and are not necessarily meant to be transposed verbatim into each AEWA Action or Management Plan.

It should also be noted that although the same format shall be applied to both Action and Management Plans with a recovery objective as well as Management Plans with a management objective and for Single as well as Multi-species Plans, subtle differences exist with the regard to the use of some parts of the format depending on the kind of Plan in question. These are outlined below, where applicable.

2.2. Front Cover

Apply format as outlined above on page 3.

2.3. Inside Front Cover

Apply format as outlined above on page 3.

- The **lifespan** of the Action or Management Plan is generally set at 10 years from the date of its adoption. The rationale behind this time-span is pragmatic. Official adoption and endorsement of Action and Management Plans often takes from several months to more than a year, and the implementation of some measures may require even longer periods (*eg* legislation and policy changes, implementation of large projects such as LIFE in the EU, etc). Experience shows that there have been difficulties in keeping up to date with monitoring and revision of action plans as their number increases. There is also a trade-off between the time and effort needed to update the plans and that needed to implement them. Therefore, a longer period than the initially intended 3-5 years is deemed necessary.
- **Milestones in the production** of the Plan shall include details of any workshops held, dates of each draft, dates of approval by the AEWA Technical Committee, notes on special opinions or dissent from Contracting Parties, date of adoption by AEWA MOP as well as any additional international Agreements or Conventions, if applicable.

2.4. Basic Data

Apply format as outlined above on page 4, limit to maximum one page.

2.5. Framework for Action

2.5.1. Introduction

This is the core part of the plan – it spells out its goal, purpose, objectives, results and actions. The goal, purpose and objectives **set the biological targets for the recovery of the population**. The results correspond to those factors which need to be in place in order to eliminate the threats and improve the situation for the species. The actions necessary to achieve these results, along with their priority ratings, timescales and implementing organisations are also presented here.

The objectives, result, actions, priorities, timescales and implementing organisations should be included in Table 3. Under each action, the Range States for which implementation is relevant should be listed (using [ISO codes](#) for short).

Standardization of terminology is necessary in order to maintain coherence between different plans and to help implementation, evaluation and revision. The following terminology is considered to be the most appropriate for the Plans covered by this Format and ensuing Guidance.

2.5.2. Goal

- This is the **overall long-term aim** to which the Plan will contribute, but will not achieve within its time-span.
- In cases of **Species Action Plans** or **Species Management Plans with recovery objectives**, one of the two following two types of goals can be used:

Example:

a) If the species is on the global/regional IUCN Red List: *“restore the species/population to Least Concern status”*

b) If the population is listed in Column A or in Category 2 of Column B of Table 1 of the AEWA Action Plan for other reason than its Red List status: *“restore the species/population to Favourable Conservation status”*.

- In cases of **Species Management Plans** that aim to resolve human-wildlife conflicts, the goal could be expressed either as:
 - a) A target population level which corresponds to agreed ecological, scientific and cultural requirements, while taking account of economic and recreational requirements.
 - b) A target level for the damages or risks imposed by the species/population.
- **Indicators and methods of verification for the goal:** the goal should be expressed in terms of one or more measurable attributes (e.g. population size, growth rate, range extent) and include some time by which it should be achieved and well as what the methods of verification will be.

2.5.3. Purpose

- This is **what the plan aims to achieve by the end of its validity**. It is very important to define the purpose **realistically** taking into account what will happen to the population before actions are implemented and how long it takes that the measures take effect.
- **Indicators for the purpose and methods of verification:** Ideally, use the same indicators as for the goal but with target values that can be realistically achieved by the end of the validity of the plan.

2.5.4. Objectives

- In case of **Plans that aim to restore populations to a more favourable conservation status**, objectives relate to direct threats that drive the population decline. The objectives should express a reduction in the impact of the threat.
- In case of **Plans that aim to resolve human-wildlife conflicts**, the objective should express a target for reducing a particular problem that contributes to the conflict.
- Objectives can also be planned for addressing important organisational or research issues.
- Objectives should be **SMART** (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound).

2.5.5. Results

- Results are the underlying conditions that need to be achieved in order to accomplish each objective.
- Results are the direct consequences of successfully implemented actions.
- Results should address each important threat or problems identified in the problem analysis.
- To avoid poorly focused plans, it is recommended to limit the number of results to 3 – 6 per objective.
- Results should be ranked to follow a descending order of priority within each objective, which should reflect the importance of the threat they are addressing.

2.5.6. Actions

- Actions are implemented in order to achieve the results. Justification for each action should be self-evident from the way it is formulated.
- As with threats, a priority for each action should be stated (Essential, High, Medium, Low), using an agreed priority ranking process and the results of the action- or management-planning workshop.
- Deciding on the priority order of actions: To avoid overloading stakeholders with a large number of actions, the Action or Management Plan should include actions that are **necessary to achieve the related result** and that are **technically, socially and financially feasible**. Actions should be prioritized at the planning workshop based on their expected contribution to the recovery of the population.
- **Time scales** should be attached to each Action using the following scale:
 - Immediate launched within the next year.
 - Short: launched within the next 3 years.
 - Medium: launched within the next 5 years.
 - Long: launched within the next >5 years.
 - Ongoing: currently being implemented and should continue
 - Rolling to be implemented perpetually (any action above from immediate to ongoing can be also qualified as rolling)

EXAMPLE Table 1. Example actions corresponding to the objective and result, ranked according to their importance, following the problem tree.

| Objective 1: Negative population trend reversed to positive. | | | | |
|---|---|-----------------|-------------------|--|
| <i>Result</i> | <i>Action</i> | <i>Priority</i> | <i>Time scale</i> | <i>Organisations responsible</i> |
| 1.1. Mortality of chicks in the breeding areas is reduced by 20%. | 1.1.1. Advertise widely actions to reduce clutch and chick mortality to farmers/land-users, in protected areas as a first step. Applicable to: AU, HU, CZ, SK | High | Short/rolling | Research institutes and governmental agencies developing agri-environmental measures |
| | 1.1.2. Introduce system to manage grazing pressure in protected areas within tolerance limits of species (1,5 LU/ha) Applicable to: AU, HU, CZ, SK | Medium | Medium | Managers of Protected Areas |
| | 1.1.3. Support favourable habitat management in breeding areas through agri-environmental schemes. Applicable to: All countries with breeding populations | Low | Medium/rolling | Ministries of Agriculture and Environment |

2.6. Annex 1: Biological Assessment

As mentioned above within the Format, this Annex should be kept to **one page**, excluding the national population estimates provided in Table 2.

2.6.1. Distribution throughout the annual cycle

- Very brief description and map of distribution and movements, including info on timing and location of breeding, spring migration and moulting etc.

2.6.2. Habitat requirements

- Very brief description of the habitat used by the species during breeding (including nest site) and non-breeding habitats, feeding habitats and diet.

2.6.3. Survival and productivity

- Brief summary of available information on generation length, age of first breeding, clutch size, productivity, survival of the age classes (adult, juvenile, chick, nest) and factors affecting them.

2.6.4. Population size and trend

- Ideally for each biogeographic population the current population estimate as well as historical and recent trends in population size and range (breeding, wintering, migration) should be provided.
- National estimates should be provided in Table 2.

2.7. Annex 2: Problem Analysis

2.7.1. Introduction

This section of the International Species Action or Management Plan describes the identified problems and threats or management issues of concern as well as their impact at species/population level. It should be noted that the perspective with which to approach this analysis is different, depending on whether dealing with an International Species Action or Management Plan with a recovery objective or whether dealing with an International Species Management Plan for a species/population with a management objective.

2.7.2. Problem analysis for Plans with a recovery or management objective

In the case of recovery plans the problem analysis focuses on the **direct threats to the species/population**. In case of management plans which aim to address human-wildlife conflicts, the problem analysis should focus on the **damages and risks caused by the species**.

In case of plans for single species, problems should be identified together but evaluated for each population separately. In case of multi-species plans, problems should be assessed for each species separately and summarised as described above.

In the case of recovery plans, threats should be listed if they are known (or have the realistic potential) to cause population decline. Only those threats for which specific actions will be developed should be described in the Action or Management Plan. Threats of a more global character (e.g. climate change, avian influenza and others) - if important - should be mentioned in the threats overview paragraph. However, the Action or Management Plan itself has a limited role to play in addressing such large-scale environmental changes and usually it is not practical to include general policy actions into the Plans.

In the case of International Species Management Plans focusing on human-wildlife conflicts, the focus should be on the management concerns which triggered the production of the Management Plan (e.g. damages to crops, livestock, fisheries, or risk to public safety).

The identified threats or management concerns should be presented in descending order of priority according to their impact on the population or the management situation. Hence, their listing in the Plan is a result of the threat or management concern prioritisation process which took part during the development of the Action or Management Plan - especially during the action- or management-planning workshop.

2.7.3. Developing the assessment of threats or management concerns

A preliminary **problem assessment**, including the development of a preliminary **problem tree** should be compiled prior to the action- or management planning workshop by the Action or Management Plan compiler. As described above under the AEWAs action- and management-planning process, this initial

assessment should be based on current knowledge collected from literature, (possible) national questionnaires sent to the Range States as well as additional expert input where available.

At the workshop, the identified problems should be validated, their impact should be assessed and the causes of the most important problems should be defined using a **participatory problem-tree analysis** that will focus the Action or Management Plan on tackling the main threats or management concerns, as applicable.

Common sense and best available information should guide the decision-making process when ranking threats and management concerns. Ideally, **threats** should be ranked using a quantitative system describing the scope, severity and timing of the threat following the [threat assessment methodology of BirdLife International](#). Specific guidance on the **ranking of the management concerns** is to be developed. These assessments should be based on best available data and expert judgement. Ensuring that the ranking is consistent and correct in relative terms is the most important point.

It should not be forgotten that threats or management concerns often act in a synergistic way and may have a cumulative effect (e.g. mortality caused by by-catch and hunting might have a low impact on their own, but their cumulative impact may add up). The Plan should specifically highlight cases of cumulative impact.

If gaps in knowledge are likely to affect the understanding of the impact of threats or management concerns, these should be reflected as research actions and should be clarified when revisions of the Plan are made. A measure of the level of uncertainty involved with each threat should be indicated in its description.

2.7.4. Developing the Problem Tree

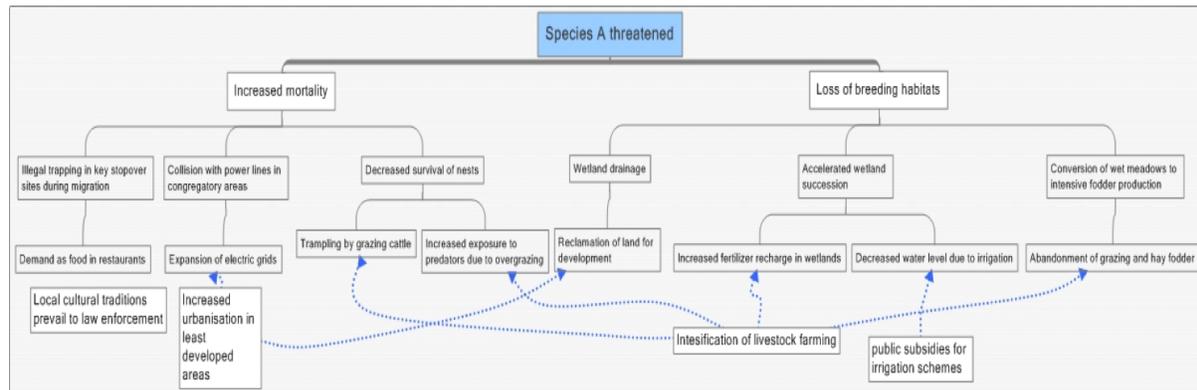
The problem tree helps to explain how threats or management concerns affect the population and how they are related to their root causes. The tree is built using the cause-effect relationships of threats or management concerns and their impacts. The workshop participants should review and confirm the draft problem analysis to make sure it reflects the common understanding on the range and importance of threats by the relevant experts. The box below provides a generalised example of a problem tree.

The Action or Management workshop discussions on the draft problem tree aim to reveal the key threats or management concerns affecting the species. Once these have been agreed, the root causes of all of the effects should be determined, which may for example include socio-economic factors, acting policies or political processes. Although habitat loss and degradation are the major causes for the decline of many populations, this form of analysis often indicates that the immediate reasons for the decline are different. Therefore, indirect threats may manifest themselves by affecting one or the other demographic parameters, such as increased mortality rate among adults or young, reduced productivity or low recruitment of immature individuals.

Some root causes such as policy issues do not directly relate to the threats, because their mechanisms are complex and indirect. Therefore, in the problem analysis compilers should encourage the use of relevant policy specialists (such as agriculture, fisheries, forestry or rural development experts etc.).

The final problem tree should be included as Figure 2 in the Action or Management Plan.

Example: Problem Tree



Level 1: Mechanism through which the threats operate (increased mortality etc.)

Level 2: Specific threats (illegal trapping)

Level 3: Immediate causes of threats (demand as food in restaurants)

Level 4: Root causes of threats (local cultural traditions prevail over law enforcement)

2.8. Annex 3 - Justification of Conservation/Management Objectives

2.8.1. Introduction

The ultimate measure of success for International Species Action and Management Plans is whether they have delivered the changes in the status of the species or populations they promised. Plans can fail to deliver the expected results because of:

- Inadequate execution of the Plan;
- Faulty intervention logic;
- Unrealistic assumptions concerning the impact of the actions;
- Unclear objectives, and,
- Lack of adequate follow-up monitoring.

In order to improve the development and particularly the subsequent implementation of International Species Action and Management Plans it is therefore suggested to develop and include various scenarios as well as a population viability analysis in Annex 3. of the Action and Management Plans.

2.8.2. Scenarios predicting population changes

Presenting a **'business-as-usual' scenario** is important because this presents how the population would change in the absence of the foreseen conservation or management actions. This can demonstrate how the conservation status of a declining species is likely to deteriorate in the future and how that may affect its use, if there is any. In case of species that cause human-wildlife conflicts, it can show how the problems are expected to increase. This can emphasise the urgency of implementing the Plan and this can be used effectively to inform donors and other decision-makers.

Developing an **‘implementation’ scenario** helps to establish realistic conservation and management targets both in terms of population parameters and in terms of the scale of intervention needed to achieve the desired future state of the population. During the planning phase, different scenarios can be used to assess the (cost-)effectiveness of different conservation and management scenarios and help choosing the most effective conservation or management strategy.

2.8.3. Population Viability Analysis (PVA)

A PVA can be very helpful in assessing the demographic impact of threats and problems as well as conservation and management actions. They can be used to quantify assumptions and their impact on the future of the populations concerned.

- If a PVA is to be used, it should be obtained from a relevant scientific source and ideally developed for the species/population prior to the action- or management-planning workshop.
- The simplest PVA sufficient for the problem in question should be used.
- PVA can also highlight knowledge gaps about the population parameters or species biology that can be further researched/monitored.

2.9. Annex 4: Adaptive Harvest Management Plan

2.9.1. Introduction

As noted above, the Adaptive Harvest Management Plan foreseen in Annex 4 is only applicable in the case of International Species Management or Action Plans under which hunting of the species or population in question may continue according to the provisions of the Agreement.

Adaptive Harvest Management is primarily used for populations where structural uncertainties in the understanding of the biological system, observability and controllability of management actions prevail and where management decisions need to be repeated on a regular basis, fine-tuning management actions on the basis of updated knowledge to ensure that management objectives are reached.

The **management objectives** are defined in the main body of the Plans in question under the Framework for Action. The Adaptive Harvest Management Plan consists, in addition to the management objectives, of the following three key elements:

- assessment of the sustainability of current level of harvest;
- the provisions for the set-up phase of adaptive harvest management;
- the provisions for the iterative phase of adaptive harvest management;

which need to be iterated and agreed in the Adaptive Harvest Management Plan in Annex 4.

2.9.2. Assessment of the sustainability of current level of harvest

In the case of huntable species, it is important to assess the sustainability of the current level of harvest to inform further discussions during the action- or management planning process.

2.9.3. Provisions for the set-up phase

- **Management alternatives:** Adaptive decision-making requires the clear identification of a set of potential alternatives from which to select an action at each decision point. Some actions might affect the resource directly; others might have indirect effects. Learning and decision-making both depend on our ability to recognize differences in the consequences of different actions, which in turn offers the possibility of comparing and contrasting them in order to choose the best action.
- **Predictive models:** Models play a critical role in adaptive management, as expressions of our understanding of the resource, as engines of ecological inference, and as indicators of the benefits, costs, and consequences of alternative management strategies. Importantly, they can represent uncertainty about the resource system. Models are used to characterize resource changes over time, as the resource responds to fluctuating environmental conditions and management actions. Where data allow, predictive models may be complex, but in situations where data are more fragmentary models may simply be conceptual and reflecting professional judgment.
- **Monitoring protocols:** Monitoring provides the information needed for both learning and evaluation of management effectiveness. The value of monitoring in adaptive management is inherited from its contribution to decision-making. To make monitoring useful, choices of what ecological and socio-economic variables to monitor and how to monitor them (frequency, extent, intensity, etc.), must be linked closely to the management situation, objectives and targets that motivate the monitoring in the first place, as well as practical limits on staff and funding. While monitoring the ecological sustainability has been an integral part of the development of the adaptive management approach, monitoring the effect of decision-making on social and economic sustainability is also an important part of the process to ensure that decisions can be successfully implemented and are socially acceptable.

2.9.4. Provisions for the iterative phase

- **Decision-making process:** The actual process of adaptive decision-making entails decisions at recurring points in time that reflect the current level of understanding and take into account future scenarios and consequences of decisions. Decision-making at each decision point considers management objectives, resource status, and knowledge about consequences of potential actions. Decisions are then implemented by means of management actions on the ground. The plan should define who takes decisions and at which intervals.
- **Follow-up monitoring:** Monitoring provides information to estimate resource status, underpin decision-making, and facilitate evaluation and learning after decisions are made. Monitoring is an on-going activity, conducted according to the protocols developed in the set-up phase. The plan should include key arrangements for implementing and reporting the results of monitoring activities defined in the monitoring protocol.
- **Assessment:** The data produced by monitoring are used, along with other information, to evaluate management effectiveness, understand resource status, and reduce uncertainty about management effects. Learning is promoted by comparing predictions generated by the models with monitoring based estimates of actual responses. Monitoring data can also be compared with targets representing desired outcomes, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of management and measure its success in attaining management objectives. The plan should define who is responsible for conducting the assessment, the key assessment questions and arrangements for reporting.

- **Learning and feedback:** The understanding gained from monitoring and assessment helps in selecting future management actions. The iterative cycle of decision-making, monitoring, and assessment, repeated over the course of a project, leads gradually to a better understanding of resource dynamics and an adjusted and improved management strategy based on what is learned. The plan should also include provisions how to improve predictive models and adjust targets.
- **Institutional learning:** Periodically it is useful to interrupt the technical cycle of decision-making, monitoring, assessment, and feedback in order to reconsider project objectives, targets, management alternatives, trade-offs, cost-benefits of the plan process and other elements of the set-up phase. This may be necessary because the socio-ecological system changes in a direction that was not originally foreseen and it may require a change in the stakeholders involved in the process. This reconsideration constitutes an institutional learning cycle that complements, but differs from, the cycle of technical learning. In combination, the two cycles are referred to as “double-loop” learning. In case of the AEWA Management Plans this institutional learning is linked to the revision of the Plan, following the end its tenure, if necessary.

2.10. Annex 6: References

The reference list, in alphabetical order following the format given below, should contain only the key documents referred to in the International Species Action or Management plan text, not general literature on the species. Titles of journals should be given in full.

Ideally, information from peer-reviewed sources should be preferred over “grey literature” and personal contributions or comments. This will enhance the credibility and objectivity of the Action or Management Plan.

However, not all information needed for Action and Management Plans is officially published. In such cases compilers should judge the available information carefully and responsibly and clearly indicate that the sources used are such in the Action or Management Plan text itself.

Information stored in institutional databases should also be included in the list of references, with indication of the source and date of access to the database.

Example:

Aunins, A. 2001a. Changes of lekking activity of Great Snipe during course of night and season in Latvia: recommendations for methods of searching for Great snipe leks and estimating lek size. *Putni daba Supplement 1*: 13 – 26

Aunins, A. 2001b. Territorial distribution, numbers and habitat selection of Great Snipe in Latvia: historical information and the current situation (1999 - 2001). *Putni daba Supplement 1*: 4 - 12.

BirdLife International. 2000. *Threatened Birds of the World*. Spain and Cambridge, U.K.

Devort, M. 2000. Some methodological aspects of snipe research: The contribution of long term wing collection and analysis of Common snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*), Jack snipe (*Lymnocyptes minimus*) and Great snipe (*Gallinago media*) to the monitoring of their populations. *OMPO Newsletter No 21*: 5 – 24.

Garvis, G. 2000. The National Action Plan for the Great Snipe (*Gallinago media*) conservation in Ukraine. In: The National Action Plans for the Globally threatened bird species. Ukrainian Society for the Protection of Birds (USPB). SoftArt Press, Kyiv. pp. 180-189. (in Ukrainian).