



PROJECT SUMMARY SHEET: STRENGTHENING WATERBIRD AND WETLAND CONSERVATION CAPACITIES IN NORTH AFRICA (WETCAP)

Project developed by the Secretariat of the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (UNEP/AEWA)

Introduction

The project on “Strengthening waterbird and wetland conservation capacities in North Africa” (WetCap) has been developed in close cooperation with the donor agency, the Spanish agency for international development cooperation “Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo” (AECID) and in consultation with the national Spanish BirdLife partner SEO, the BirdLife Africa Partnership, BirdLife International, Wetlands International, the Bureau of the Ramsar Convention and the WOW Project Coordination Unit.

Confirmation has meanwhile been received that AECID supports the implementation of the first year of the 3-year project. An official Letter of Agreement between AECID and the AEWA Secretariat is currently being prepared and will be signed in due course.

Brief description of the project

Project countries: Algeria, Egypt, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia
Duration: 36 months
Total costs: 1.639,000 €+ in-kind funding through the WOW project

WetCap will assist the targeted countries in implementing the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) concerned with waterbird and wetland conservation, namely the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (UNEP/AEWA) and the Ramsar Convention. WetCap specifically aims for 1. strengthening the capacities for waterbird and wetland conservation of all important stakeholders in the region (Component 1), 2. building knowledge and providing better access to information on the critical network of sites required by migratory waterbirds (Component 2), and 3. supporting local waterbird and wetland conservation projects (Component 3). Tied up to the ongoing UNEP-GEF African-Eurasian Flyways Project “Wings over Wetlands” (WOW)¹ this project will significantly contribute to the success of WOW in North Africa through the implementation of complementary and “follow-up” activities especially designed for this region. A few of the activities included in WetCap moreover match those of the WOW project.

¹ The WOW flyway project aims at establishing a basis for strengthening decision-making and technical capacity for wetland and migratory waterbird conservation.

1. Component: Capacity building – training and awareness-raising

WOW:

a) Development of a framework Programme for Training and Awareness Raising; Adaptation of the Programme to neighbour regions of North Africa (e.g. West Africa, Middle East)

Stakeholders involved in the conservation of wetlands and migratory waterbirds must have a common level of understanding of key issues and practices in order to be able to communicate effectively with one another across the flyway. For this purpose a transferable framework for training and awareness raising programmes is being produced under WOW, which provides a generic structure and content designed to strengthen capacity for the conservation of migratory waterbirds and wetlands. The model is being designed to ensure that sub-regional stakeholder agencies are integrally involved in the development of corresponding programmes. These programmes are made available for adaptation and implementation across the AEWA region. *An adapted Programme for North Africa, however, is not foreseen under WOW, neither is the implementation of such adapted programmes.* This gap will be filled by WetCap:

WetCap:

b) Adaptation of the framework Programme for Training and Awareness Raising to North Africa

- **Regional workshop** for 3 experts from each country representing the government, national NGOs and/or related institutions, as well as representatives of the key international organisations (appr. 20 participants), **aiming at** 1) reviewing the framework modules and already adapted programmes (e.g. Middle East, West Africa), and elaborating a programme for North Africa; 2) establishing a 10-member Training Board, consisting of representatives of all countries, which will proceed with the tasks related to the adaptation of the training programme as identified by the workshop; 3) identifying an institution (e.g. national BirdLife partner or wetland centre) which – staffed with a regional coordinator - will function as regional hub for the promotion of AEWA and the Ramsar Convention and facilitate the implementation of WetCap.
- **Regional adaptation process:** The Training Board will provide for the adaptation of the Programme.
- **National adaptation process:** The Programme will be further adapted on the national level, if needed.

c) Implementation of the Training and Awareness Raising Programme

- **Regional workshop:** Training of trainers, being key persons and national AEWA/ Ramsar representatives from the governments, national NGOs and other institutions, who will be enabled to transfer the gained knowledge into their countries through national workshops organised under this project. The proposed modules are: 1) Understanding the flyway approach²; 2) Applying the flyway approach³; 3) Communicating the flyway approach⁴.
- **National training** in each country: 2 training workshops, undertaken by the trained trainers and on the national level in each country, will be targeted both at existing practitioners whose skills need to be improved and at those with currently very limited or no skills.
- **Translation of key documents** of AEWA and the Ramsar Convention into Arabic.⁵

² That implies generic introduction to bird migration, understanding the key factors influencing the population dynamics of migratory waterbirds, monitoring as an early warning system and the roles of the International Waterbird Census (IWC) and Important Bird Areas (IBA) monitoring etc.

³ The module includes preparing and implementing species action plans, conservation measures, principals of wise-use of migratory waterbird population, setting up and maintaining waterbird population monitoring schemes, techniques for studying migration and relation between sites, collaboration between IGOs, NGOs, academic stakeholders and local communities, and using the Critical site tool (compare Component 2).

⁴ The module will help to understand the role of communication and advocacy in the flyway approach, to better address the role of stakeholders, and to use advocacy techniques more effectively.

⁵ Arabic is not an official language and therefore not provided under the MEAs.

2. Component: Increasing knowledge on waterbirds and wetlands

WOW:

a) Development of a critical sites network tool (CSN)

One of the most innovative activities under WOW is the creation of the Critical Site Network Tool, combining currently dispersed data found in the International Waterbird Census, Important Bird Areas Database, the Ramsar Sites Information Service and the World Database on Protected Areas in a central information portal on waterbird species, their migratory routes, key wetland areas and ecological sites. The CSN tool will help all stakeholders involved in the transboundary conservation of waterbirds to target their efforts in fulfilling their obligations under relevant international treaties, i.e. including the Ramsar Convention and AEWA. Thus the tool will, for example, help identify potential Ramsar sites, provide information for environmental impact assessments, help identify gaps of knowledge on wetlands and waterbirds and assist in the development of International Single Species Action Plans.

WetCap:

b) Regional workshop for representatives of all countries, working in the field of site designation/ conservation and having the relevant technical know-how; aim: review of data of the CSN tool and identification of key sites and gaps⁶.

c) 4 gap-filling surveys in each country; selected by the WetCap Steering Committee and based on the results and recommendations of the workshop. The surveys will be undertaken by local authorities and organizations and in close coordination with the AEWA Secretariat, the regional coordinator and sub-contracted organizations.

d) Monitoring the status of 4 identified key sites per country, possibly integrated in an existing monitoring framework.

⁶ The use of the CSN tool is part of the Training and Awareness Programme undertaken under Component 1.

3. Component: Pilot projects on waterbird and wetland management and monitoring

This component will directly benefit two community projects in each country that focus on waterbird and wetland conservation, e.g. supporting wetland/ habitat restoration or local ecotourism. Eligible projects could, for example, concentrate on the training of local wetland site wardens, bird guides or national park staff. Ideally such projects would at the same time contribute to the implementation of AEWA single species action plans.

- a) Call for tender and **application process** for local projects
- b) **Selection of 2 funded projects** in each country (10 projects)
- c) **Implementation** of projects

Overarching activities

- a) Identification of a regional hub, facilitating the implementation of the WetCap project and functioning as centre of knowledge for AEWA and Ramsar-related matters in the long term
- b) Recruitment of a regional coordinator
- c) General information management
 - Development and maintenance of a project website
 - Development of information material (brochure, leaflets, posters)
 - Regular project e-newsletter
- d) Administrative and financial management
- e) Annual Steering Committee meetings



Time schedule
Year 1
Steering Committee meeting
Component 1
Regional workshop: Adaptation of the WOW training and awareness raising programme to the region; objectives: review training modules; identify regional hub; establish a Training Board
Regional and national adaptation of training and awareness raising material
Component 3
Call for tender and application process
Overarching activities
Development of a project website and other information material (e.g. an informative brochure)
Recruitment of a regional coordinator
Translation of key MEA documents
Year 2
Steering Committee meeting
Component 1
Implementation of the training and awareness raising programme – phase 1: Regional training of trainers
Component 2
Regional workshop: Review of data obtained through CSN tool and identification of gaps (may also be linked to Activity Component 1, Year 2)
Selection of field survey missions in each country
First 2 surveys undertaken in each country
First 2 monitoring field missions in each country
Component 3
Selection of funded projects and implementation of local projects
Overarching activities
Information management (e.g. maintenance of website, development of leaflets, e-news)
Year 3
Steering Committee meeting
Component 1
Implementation of the training and awareness raising programme – phase 2: National training in each country
Component 2
Second 2 surveys undertaken in each country
Second 2 monitoring field missions in each country
Component 3
Implementation of local projects
Overarching activities
Information management (e.g. maintenance of website, development of leaflets, e-news)