

Conclusions and recommendations of the AEWA Promotion Workshop for the Russian Federation

30-31 March 2010, Moscow, Russian Federation

The Secretariat of the Agreement for the Conservation of African–Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (UNEP/AEWA) and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation have together organized the international workshop:

Possibilities for accession of the Russian Federation to the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA)

The aim and goal of the workshop was to exchange information about waterbirds and flyways (status, sustainable use, habitat protection, etc.) in the AEWA region on the national and international level and to explore the possibilities for an accession of the Russian Federation to AEWA.

The workshop took place on 30 and 31 March 2010 at the Moscow Zoo and it was attended by representatives of a wide range national and international organizations (see the attached list of participants in Annex 3).

Presentations were given (see Annex 1 for the complete workshop program) on a number of issues such as: aspects of hunting and sustainable management of waterbirds in the Russian Federation, status and conservation of waterbirds in the Russian Federation, already ongoing international cooperation in the Russian Federation on waterbirds; the presentations paid attention to aspects in relation to AEWA. Other presentations addressed, *inter-alia*, ongoing international cooperation within AEWA, benefits of being a Party to AEWA and the GEF- funded Wings Over Wetlands project.

The information presented at the workshop, noted, emphasized and concluded the following:

- For effective conservation of migratory waterbirds breeding in the Russian Federation international flyway cooperation is a must taking into account that they spend 2/3 of their annual cycle outside of the Russian Federation;
- The Russian Federation has globally very important populations of breeding, migratory and wintering waterbirds both in species variety but in particularly in numbers of many species, going into the millions, which are an essential and substantial element of the global biodiversity;
- Among the waterbird species breeding within the Russian Federation are a number of globally threatened species which are in need of special attention; to name but a few: Siberian Crane *Grus leucogeranus*, Red-breasted Goose *Branta ruficollis*, Sociable Lapwing *Vanellus gregarius*, White-headed Duck *Oxyura leucocephala*, Dalmatian Pelican *Pelecanus crispus* and Lesser White-fronted Goose *Anser erythropus*, for some of these species International Single Species Action Plans were developed and adopted under AEWA. These international Single Species Action Plans may represent a helpful tool for those involved in implementation, if they are available in the Russian language;

- Globally a number of waterbird flyways are recognized (see Annex 2) and a substantial part of them have their origin in the Arctic regions of the Russian Federation, making the Russian Federation an important partner in almost all of them;
- Hunting of waterbirds is common practice within the Russian Federation and is regulated by the laws of the Russian Federation. It is a socially significant element of the society. Sustainable hunting is not in conflict with the aims and goals of AEWA;
- Large scale habitat protection is an important conservation policy within the Russian Federation. The protected areas systems of the Russian Federation such as Zapovedniks, Zakazniks and National Parks are well organized, well known, also internationally, and include large areas of wetlands and other waterbird habitat;
- The Russian Federation is an active participant in the Memorandum of Understanding for the Siberian Crane *Grus leucogeranus* under the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS);
- The Russian Federation is also a signatory to the Memorandum of Understanding for the Saiga Antelope, *Saiga tatarica tatarica* under CMS;
- Scientists of the Russian Federation, through the coordination role of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat, participate in the conservation and research activities concerning the Single Species Action Plan for the globally threatened Lesser White-fronted Goose *Anser erythropus*;
- The CMS MoU for the critically endangered Slender-billed Curlew *Numenius tenuirostris*, for which the Russian Federation probably is the only remaining breeding area, is now part of the activities of AEWA;
- The Russian Federation has a number of bilateral agreements with countries for the conservation, research and management of migrating and wintering waterbirds coming from the Russian Federation; *inter-alia* such formal agreements exist with the USA, India, South Korea, North Korea and Japan;
- Similar arrangements on research, conservation and management of migratory waterbirds are part of the bilateral cooperation of a number of institutes and organizations within the Russian Federation, in the general field of nature conservation and environment with a number of countries: *inter-alia*, USA, Norway, Sweden, Germany, The Netherlands and France. This cooperation with broad and active participation by Russian scientists, notably in the Arctic breeding areas, has been very successful for all parties involved and is worth to be continued;
- The results and outputs, of the UNEP/GEF Wings over Wetlands project supporting the implementation of AEWA, in the period 2006-2010. The Critical Site Network tool and the Flyway Training Kit could substantially increase information exchange and general awareness concerning migratory waterbirds in the Russian Federation provided that they are translated into Russian;
- The Russian Federation is a long term and active Party to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterbird Habitats;

- Ramsar/COP10, 28 October–4 November 2008 in the Republic of Korea, adopted Resolution X.22 on 'Promoting international cooperation on the conservation of waterbird flyways' which accepted at the same time the 2004 Edinburgh Declaration on waterbird flyways as a guidance;
- Scientists from the Russian Federation were well represented at the "Waterbird Around the World" Flyway Conference, Edinburgh April 2004, both with oral and poster presentations on a wide range of waterbird related issues and endorsed as well the Edinburgh Declaration on priorities for conservation of waterbirds and their flyways;
- The Russian Federation participates in the work the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAF) and facilitates research and conservation activities on a number of species on their breeding grounds within the Russian Federation;
- The Russian Federation participates in the ongoing discussions, coordinated by the UNEP/CMS Secretariat, to establish an international instrument for the conservation, research and management of waterbirds within the Central Asian Flyway (CAF);
- The Russian Federation and its national hunting organizations have close contacts and good cooperation with the international hunting organizations such as the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC) and Migratory Birds of the Western Palearctic (OMPO);
- The Russian Federation participated from the beginning in various working groups which guided the process to develop AEWA such as the first Working Group meeting on AEWA's development in February 1990 when it was still known as the "Western Palearctic Waterbird Agreement" and the formal Consultation Meeting on AEWA in 1994 in Nairobi;
- Experts from the Russian Federation are already closely involved in a number of activities on species which are included in AEWA and that the Russian Federation's great importance for international waterbird conservation, research, monitoring and management, in fact requires its continuous and increased involvement in, *inter-alia*, AEWA's rapidly growing activities.

THE PARTICIPANTS of the WORKSHOP RECOMMEND THAT:

- The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat to continue consultations to set further steps towards the accession of the Russian Federation to AEWA, *inter alia*, to further elaborate on legal and social-economic impacts and the assessing the need for reservations; from the Russian side the coordination, scientific and technical support will be provided by the All-Russian Research Institute for Nature Conservation;
- The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat considers supporting further studies, if needed and funding permitting, to assist in solving existing problems of an administrative and substance nature;
- The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat jointly facilitate and support, within their financial possibilities and close in cooperation with other AEWA Parties, conservation, research and management of migratory waterbirds and their habitats in the above named flyways; including the

Russian Arctic region which is so important as the origin of large numbers of breeding waterbirds migrating within the geographical range of AEWA, CAF and EAAF, especially considering that the Arctic is also more than other habitats subject to the predicted effects of climate change and deserves special attention on the flyway level;

- The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat will continue to invite the Russian Federation to participate in relevant AEWA related meetings;
- The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat shall communicate the results of this workshop to the appropriate authorities and stakeholders within the Russian Federation, to the AEWA Parties and the relevant national and international organizations;
- The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat and the All-Russian Research Institute for Nature Conservation report to the workshop participants on the implementation of these recommendations by the end of 2010;

These conclusions and recommendations were agreed by consensus by all workshop participants.

As witnessed and signed by the workshop chair, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat and the All-Russian Research Institute for Nature Conservation:

Dr. Gerard C. Boere
Workshop Chair


31 March 2010
Moscow, Russian Federation

Bert Lenten
AEWA Executive Secretary



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