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NEWSLETTER / SEPTEMBER 2005

THE AFRICAN-EURASIAN WATERBIRD AGREEMENT, AN AGREEMENT UNDER THE BONN CONVENTION AIMS TO CREATE A LEGAL BASIS FOR A CONCERTED CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT POLICY BY THE RANGE STATES FOR MIGRATORY WATERBIRDS SPECIES



AEWA



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Unfortunately, it was not feasible to publish two issues of the AEWA Newsletter in 2004 due to the heavy workload the Secretariat was confronted with. In that respect, the situation is even worse in 2005, which could be characterized as the 'AEWA Year of Meetings'. To start with, there is the 6th meeting of the Technical Committee (8-11 May, Flic en Flac, Mauritius), followed by the 3rd meeting of the AEWA Standing Committee (4-5 July, Bonn, Germany), and the 3rd session of the Meeting of Parties (23-27 October, Dakar, Senegal). Finally, a Workshop on sustainable hunting is tentatively planned for early December in Tunisia. On top of this, the Secretariat is strongly involved in a number of activities marking the celebration of the Agreement's 10th Anniversary. So this will certainly be a special year for the Agreement, and in particular for the Secretariat. Anyway, with the limited resources available, we have at least managed to draft this issue of the

Newsletter. The Secretariat is grateful for the information that was forwarded for inclusion in the Newsletter by: UNEP/ CMS Secretariat, Ramsar Bureau, the University of Cape Town (South Africa), Dr Harper (UK), BirdLife International, Wetlands International, the Wader Study Group, OMPO (France), Český Rozhlas (Czech Republic), Dr Jay Sheppard (USA), RSPB (UK), IUCN, RAC/ SPA Secretariat (Tunisia), the Czech Society for Ornithology, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Zoning (Croatia) and PERSGA (Saudi Arabia). The Secretariat invites the readers of this Newsletter to provide us with information that might be of interest so that it can be shared widely. The next issue of the AEWA Newsletter will be published early in 2006. Until then, information will be disseminated via E-news, an electronic abridged version of the AEWA Newsletter. The first AEWA E-news has been launched by the end of June 2005.

SECRETARIAT NEWS

NEW TEMPORARY PREMISES FOR THE AGREEMENTS

In 2003 the German Government reached an agreement with the United Nations regarding the new UN campus in Bonn. This agreement foresees that the German Government will provide two buildings to the UN namely: 1) Langer Eugen and 2) Altes Hochhaus. The latter is allocated to the Climate Change Secretariat. All other UN agencies will be based in the Langer Eugen. The 19th floor of this building is allocated to the AEWA Secretariat and will provide ample space for the Secretariat's current and future needs. Moving to these new premises is foreseen planned for second half of 2005.

To accommodate the Secretariat's short-term office space requirements for CMS and the three co-located Agreements, the German Government offered additional facilities in the so-called OBS building. Towards the end of June 2004, the EURO-BATS, ASCOBANS and AEWA Secretariats moved from Haus Castanjen to the OBS building. This 'new temporary premises', located only 2 km from Haus Castanjen, is shared with a German NGO and part of the Climate Change Secretariat.

The Secretariat is very grateful for the support provided by the German Government for moving and is happy with the 'new offices' accommodating our needs for the short term.



AEWA WELCOMES SERGEY DERELIEV AS NEW TECHNICAL OFFICER

After the recruitment process was concluded, we were happy to welcome Mr Sergey Dereliev as new Technical Officer for AEWA as of 16 August 2004. Sergey graduated from the University of Sofia (Bulgaria) with an MSc in Biology, specializing in Zoology of Vertebrates and Anthropology. He is also an alumnus of the 6th International Course on Wetland Management of WATC/RIZA (The Netherlands). Most of his professional career so far has been within the NGO sector. He was already involved in conservation work as a volunteer in 1988, and started as Local Officer for the BSPB/BirdLife Bulgaria in its Varna Regional Office in 1994. In the following years, Sergey was responsible for project management within BSPB/BirdLife Bulgaria and the Bulgarian-Swiss Biodiversity Conservation Programme. Before moving to the AEWA, he had worked as Conservation Director for the BSPB/BirdLife Bulgaria. Meanwhile, at international level, he served

on a short-term basis as a mentor for the 8th International Course on Wetland Management of WATC/RIZA (The Netherlands) and, from 2001 to 2003, as Regional Assistant for Europe at the Ramsar Convention Secretariat (Switzerland).

Sergey's main fields of expertise are waterbird survey, monitoring and conservation, wetland management planning and implementation and seedbed management. He takes a special interest in geese, particularly the Red-breasted Goose, as well as in migration and winter census of soaring and waterbirds. He was chairman of the International Red-breasted Goose Task Force, as well as a member of the IUCN/Wetlands International Goose Specialist Group, the IUCN/Wetlands International/WWT Threatened Waterfowl Specialist Group and the Goose, Swan and Duck Study Group of Northern Eurasia. Sergey is fluent in English and Russian, while his mother tongue is Bulgarian.

Sergey will be responsible for the facilitation of the work of the Technical Committee as well as the development of programs and related projects. Furthermore, he will take care of promoting interest in the Agreement, particularly in Eurasia, among Parties and non-Parties, including NGOs, and gather information relevant to the information of the Agreement. As Technical Officer, he will provide scientific and technical inputs into the elaboration of AEWA projects, particularly in relation to Management Plans and Action Plans. The AEWA Secretariat is glad to benefit from his skills and experience to enhance AEWA's work and looks forward to having him on board to complement the team and further promote the successful implementation of the Agreement.

RECRUITMENT OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

After Ms Mirna Maya, former Assistant to the Executive Secretary left the Secretariat the recruitment process for replacement started. The Secretariat is pleased to announce that Ms Marie-Therese Kämper was selected as the new Administrative Assistant. Although she formally entered on duty in July 2004, she is not a new kid on the block. Marie-Therese had already worked for the Secretariat on a temporary contract since 2003 and took over Mirna's tasks when she left. The Secretariat is therefore very pleased with the recruitment of Marie-Therese because she has already demonstrated that she has the skills and experience this job requires.

CONSULTANTS/ INTERNS COME AND GO

Also in 2003 and 2004 a number of Consultants/ Interns supported the work of the AEWA Secretariat. Given the size of the Secretariat, with its three Staff members, the support of Consultants/ Interns is extremely important, particularly to delivering what the Contracting Parties expect of the Secretariat. However, Consultants and Interns come and go, and it is always sad to say goodbye after working together for a number of months. On the other hand, the Secretariat is pleased to see that experience gained while working for the Agreement has helped the Interns to get 'real jobs' with good career prospects.

Goodbye to Yuki Itakura

We are very sad that we had to say goodbye to Ms Yuki Itakura (Japanese). Yuki started as an Intern for ASCOBANS in June 2003. In October 2003, she then changed her status to Consultant for AEWA and ASCOBANS. She helped with AEWA's information management, developed an overview of the media in the agreement area and supported the daily work of the Secretariat with general administrative tasks. She also helped a great deal with the preparation of the 5th meeting of the Technical Committee. Coming from Japan herself, she enriched the international team with her extraordinary kindness and her pleasant manner. Yuki left the Secretariat at the end of October 2004 for a longer-term appointment with a Japanese Company in Hamburg. Her academic background in "European Integration Studies" was very useful for the Secretariat's everyday work.

Goodbye to Bianca Bauch

Ms Bianca Bauch (German) came on board in 2004 as an intern with the AEWA Secretariat from January to June. She was a great help in preparing the 5th meeting of the Technical Committee. Furthermore, she handled on general administrative matters as well as preparing scientific documents. From July 2004 on, she worked as a consultant and supported the work of the Secretariat till the end of September. Bianca left our team in order to complement her studies with a Postgraduate Masters Program in Ecology and Environmental Management at the University of York, Great Britain, from October 2004 to September 2005.

Goodbye to Ina von Frantzius

Ms Ina von Frantzius (German) started as an intern with CMS from October 2003 until the end of March 2004. From April 2004 on, she was Consultant with AEWA and CMS for similar tasks. With her academic background in environmental law, she greatly supported the Agreement in developing "Guidelines for Accession to AEWA" and took care of membership development. In addition, she also helped to draft this Newsletter and assisted the Secretariat in various administrative tasks. Ina left the AEWA Secretariat at the end of July 2004 to join the European Commission.

Goodbye to Tim Jansen

Mr Tim Jansen (German) joined the Secretariat as an intern for two months in December 2004. Having graduated in French and Biology he supported the Technical Officer in drafting the "International Implementation Priorities Plan 2006 – 2010" and helped with the preparations of the "Migratory Waterbird Day". Tim left the Secretariat to start his preparatory service as a teacher in Cologne.

Welcome to Catherine Lehmann

We are happy to have Ms Catherine Lehmann on board since 1 January. Catherine has been working for CMS and EUROBATS since February 2003 and joined our team on a part-time basis for one year. Being French, she is of great help to the Executive Secretary in preparing the 3rd Meeting of the Parties to be held in Dakar, Senegal, and is also in charge of the production of a booklet and the organization of an exhibition for the 10th Anniversary of AEWA. And with her academic background in Law, Catherine is going to revise the Guideline on national legislation of waterbirds and their habitats.

Welcome to Florian Keil

Mr Florian Keil (German), the designer and Webmaster of the CMS website, came on board in September 2004 to assist the AEWA Secretariat in the redesign and reorganization of the new AEWA website. For two months, Florian worked on improving the usability and design of the AEWA website, giving it an entirely new "look" as well as an improved file structure and navigation. Florian brought with him many years of website design and management experience within "the CMS Family" and a very international educational background. He holds a B.A. degree in International Relations from Brown University and is currently completing his second degree (Masters) in Media Studies, Political Science and

Ethnology at the University of Bonn. Later this year, Florian will develop an electronic Newsletter.

Welcome to Ayhan Polat

Ms Ayhan Polat (German; original from the Kurdish part of Turkey) joined the AEWA team as a Consultant on a part-time basis as of 1 March 2005. Ayhan will support the Secretariat and, in particular, help with our administrative work relating to meetings of the Technical Committee, the Standing Committee and MOP3. Since 1 December, 2003 Ayhan has been working part-time for the EUROBATS Secretariat, where she gained a lot of experience with



administrative work for a Secretariat administered by UNEP. She combines her part-time job for AEWA with her part-time job with EUROBATS. She obtained a master in Political Science and in Contemporary History and Islamic Sciences. In the course of her studies, Ayhan dealt intensively with topics such as the United Nations and the European Union, and in particular, the progress and setbacks of Turkey's way into the European Union.

10TH ANNIVERSARY OF AEWA

On 16 June 1995, AEWA was concluded at the end of the Negotiation Meeting, which took place in The Hague, The Netherlands. This means that in 2005, the Agreement has been in existence for ten years. Although the AEWA was concluded in 1995, it took till 1 November 1999 before it entered into force, having been ratified by the required number of Range States.

All Range States, but in particular Contracting Parties and Partner Organizations, e.g. Wetlands International, BirdLife International, etc., are encouraged to pay attention to the 10th Anniversary of the Agreement.

To celebrate the 10th Anniversary, the following activities are foreseen by the Secretariat:

Launch of a new Website and Logo

The Secretariat has noticed that the old website contains a large amount of information that is not easily accessible. Therefore, at the end of 2004 the whole Website was revamped by Florian Keil. It is our intention to update the existing information more regularly, and if time and resources permit, to translate the general information into French as well. In addition to the new Website, it has been decided to design a new Logo. The old Logo used so far is not easily reproducible.



AEWA Migratory Waterbird Days: 09-10 April 2005

To mark the 10th Anniversary of AEWA the Standing Committee declared the second weekend of April (09-10 April 2005) as the Migratory Waterbirds Days (MWDs). We believe that this new international event within the AEWA area will become popular, raise awareness on the conservation needs of migratory waterbirds and be celebrated annually throughout Europe, Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia. The idea behind the MWDs is to draw the attention of the public and the authorities to the importance of conservation at local and national levels as an integral part of the flyway conservation of migratory waterbird species. The leading topic of this year's celebrations will be the 10th anniversary of the Agreement. The Secretariat has prepared a poster to feature the history of the Agreement to date, which is to be distributed mainly during the MWDs. Many state institutions and NGOs in AEWA Contracting and non-Contracting Parties have expressed an interest in printing the poster in their own languages. For this purpose, the Secretariat has provided small grants to some countries.

Organizations in more than 20 countries have pledged to organize various events locally and/or nationally, such as press conferences, birdwatching outings, etc. The reports we will receive from those events at the Secretariat will be publicized on the Agreement's website. Keep an eye on it and if for some reason you cannot take part in the MWDs this

year, please already make a note of the MWDs in 2006 - 08-09 April - in your calendars. We wish you all a festive celebration!

AEWA Conservation Award: Call for Nomination for Cycle 2005

As a further way of marking the 10th anniversary of the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA), the Standing Committee of AEWA has established the AEWA Waterbird Conservation Award in order to recognize and honour institutions and individuals within the Agreement area that have significantly contributed towards the conservation and sustainable use of waterbirds. The award will be presented triennially at each ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties. The first round is to take place in 2005, and the first prizes will be awarded at the opening ceremony of the 3rd Session of the Meeting of the Parties in Dakar, Senegal, in late October 2005.

As decided by the Standing Committee, the AEWA Award 2005 will be presented in two categories – institutional and individual, and in addition each of the winners will receive a cash prize of US \$5,000. We welcome nominations of government and non-government organizations, enterprises and individuals that have made a significant contribution towards long-term conservation and sustainable use of waterbirds, especially pioneer initiatives or ones that serve as models for others.

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat should receive nominations not later than 30 April 2005. All nominations should be submitted using AEWA Award Nomination Form, which can be downloaded from the News section of the AEWA Website. Also information on criteria and procedures can be found there. The Standing Committee will make the final decision on the award winners.

AEWA 10th Anniversary Booklet

It is also planned to produce a Booklet on ten years of experience with AEWA. This Booklet will contain articles of ten different representatives from Contracting Parties and Partner Organisations giving their view of what has been achieved over the last 10 years and the challenges lying ahead for the next decade. Furthermore the booklet will contain descriptions of ten different projects that were implemented by the Agreement.

Once again the Secretariat would welcome any initiative from Contracting Parties or (international) NGOs paying attention to the 10th Anniversary of AEWA. Please inform the Secretariat on any events organized to enable us to announce it on our Website.



LUXEMBOURG SUPPORTS PRINTING OF SEVERAL AEWA OUTREACH MATERIALS

On Monday, 28 February 2005, Lucien Lux, Minister of Environment of Luxembourg and President-in-office of the EU Environment Council, received an official delegation of the Secretariat of the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA). During this official visit Minister Lucien Lux handed over to AEWA Executive Secretary Bert Lenten the first copies of the Accession Guide, reference CD-ROMs, stickers with the new logo, five different stickers with pictures of AEWA species, the Common Crane poster, the Black Stork poster and pins with the Agreements logo.

Minister Lucien Lux congratulated Mr Lenten on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the AEWA, coinciding with the Luxembourg Presidency of the European Union. He also promised to look into the matter of whether the EU could ratify the AEWA during Luxembourg's Presidency.

In 2005, AEWA celebrates its 10th Anniversary. Outreach material is needed for the activities planned to take place in 2005. Therefore, the Agreement Secretariat is very grateful that the Government of Luxembourg has so generously supported the printing of this material. Copies of it can be ordered free of charge from the Secretariat.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE JOINT WORK PROGRAMME BETWEEN CMS-AEWA-WETLANDS INTERNATIONAL

In March 2003, the Joint Work Programme (JWP) between CMS, AEWA and Wetlands International was signed. The first progress meeting in the framework of this JWP took place in June 2003. On the occasion of the first AEWA Standing Committee Meeting, the second Joint Work Programme meeting was held in the UN premises of CMS and AEWA in Bonn on 25 November 2003. The discussions included both organizational issues - websites, reporting on meetings of common interest, development of strategic plans - and activities related to the implementation of the convention and agreement. Specific activities

that were discussed include the Central Asian Flyway initiative, which all three parties of the JWP are greatly interested in. Of course the Global Flyway Conference was discussed, in which CMS and AEWA actively participate and to which they contribute. Species activities on the Aquatic Warbler, White-headed Duck and Lesser white-fronted Goose were touched on. With regard to CMS, attention was given to activities in South America. The hope was expressed that Wetlands International could, through its activities, help place and promote CMS in that part of the world.

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MULTI-SPECIES ACTION PLAN FOR SOUTHERN AFRICAN SEABIRDS

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In February 2002 the Conservation, Assessment and Management Plan (CAMP) Workshop for southern African coastal seabirds took place in Cape Town South, Africa. As a follow-up to this workshop towards the end of 2004, the Secretariat contracted out the drafting of a multi-species Action Plan to the Avian Demographic Unit of the University of Cape Town, South Africa. It is expected that the final draft of this Action Plan will be submitted for adoption at MOP3, which is to take place in October 2005.

REVISING THE WHITE-HEADED DUCK ACTION PLAN

A European Species Action Plan was drafted in 1996 and approved by the EC ORNIS Committee and the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention. This Action Plan triggered certain actions critical to the species' conservation, especially with regard to the eradication of the Ruddy Duck.

In October 2003, the DG Environment of the European Commission contracted BirdLife International to revise the White-headed Duck Action Plan. The scope of the contract only included the 25 EU countries. Agreement was reached between BirdLife International, CMS and AEWA to broaden the geographical scope of this Action Plan so that it encompasses the whole flyway for this species. The costs of additional work are covered by CMS and AEWA. It is foreseen that the revised Action Plan could be submitted to MOP3 for adoption.

REVISING THE CORN CRAKE ACTION PLAN

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Again, BirdLife International was contracted by DG Environment to revise the existing Action Plan for this species. Similar arrangements to those for the White-headed Duck were made by CMS and AEWA. Also, this revised Action Plan will be submitted to MOP3 for adoption.

ACTION PLANS UNDER PREPARATION FOR NORTHERN BALD IBIS, FERRUGINOUS DUCK AND LIGHT-BELLIED BRENT GOOSE.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

UNEP/ AEWA SECRETARIAT

As mentioned in the previous Newsletter issue no. 9, an International Single Species Action Plan has been drafted for the Bald Ibis (*Geronticus eremita*), the Ferruginous Duck (*Aythya nyroca*) and the East Canadian High Arctic population of the Light-bellied Brent Goose (*Brant bernicla hrota*). The drafting of these Action Plans is in its final stages, and it is expected that both Plans could be submitted to MOP3 for adoption.

FLAMINGO CONSERVATION AT LAKE BOGORIA IN KENYA

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The University of Leicester, in association with Earthwatch Institute (Europe), has received Darwin Initiative funding from the British Government for three years from July 2003 on to further the conservation of lesser flamingo at Lake Bogoria National Reserve.

Lake Bogoria was designated as a Ramsar site. The development of a management plan for this site is exceedingly difficult, as there is almost no scientific information concerning the lake's ecology. The lake is a vital feeding site for the near-threatened lesser flamingo (*Phoenicopus minor*) and an important Kenyan site for the black-necked grebe (*Podiceps nigricollis*) and the Cape teal (*Anas capensis*). Understanding the interaction between these species and between them and the lake ecology is critical to their conservation and development of a sound management plan for Lake Bogoria. The project will identify the essential lake ecosystem properties that sustain these important populations of water birds and collect the baseline data needed to help understand the bird's response to changes in these properties.

ACTION PLAN RESEARCH AND MONITORING

RESEARCH AND MONITORING

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

UNEP/ AEWA SECRETARIAT

Slender-billed Curlew Surveys

Agreement has been reached between the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (RAC/ SPA) and the UNEP/ AEWA Secretariat to cooperate in the implementation of the Mediterranean Action Plan/ Action Plan on Birds by organizing surveys in Albania and Libya. The aim of these surveys, which took place early 2005, was to search for Slender-billed Curlews and other species included in the Action Plan on Birds. A team composed of a RAC/ SPA consultant and representatives of RAC/ SPA partners carried out this fieldwork and provided advice on habitat conservation measures for wetlands sites visited and assisted the authorities in establishing appropriate structures for monitoring and study of birds.

STUDY ON SOCIABLE LAPWING

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In 2004 a project was contracted out by the UNEP/ AEWA Secretariat to BirdLife International, European Division Office, to identify the factors causing the decline in the globally threatened Sociable Lapwing. The project focused on two of only three known remaining breeding sites of Sociable Lapwings in Kazakhstan. During four months of fieldwork, an initial assessment was made of the breeding productivity and factors that may be affecting it. The results of this study will be used as part of a proposal to be submitted to the Darwin Initiative to seek funding for a larger-scale conservation research and management project to understand and halt the global decline of the Sociable Lapwing.

SMALL GRANT FOR IWC

On request of Wetlands International, a small grant was given to International Waterfowl Census in 2004. The grant was used to support mid-winter counts in Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cape Verde, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo (Brazzaville), Congo (Kinshasa), Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome & Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Rwanda, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

NORTHERN LAPWING AND EURASIAN GOLDEN PLOVER WINTERING CENSUS

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The French Wildfowling Association (ANCGE) has conducted a wintering census of *Vanellus vanellus* and *Pluvialis apricaria* on January 17, 2004. These two species have not been counted properly on an international scale so far as in winter they do not frequent wetlands but, exclusively, cultivated lands and meadows. The last estimations by Wetlands International have been updated in 2002. In this report, the wintering population of lapwings was estimated at 2.8 million individuals in 2002 (7 millions in 1997). The golden plover was estimated at 1 million individuals in 2002 (1.8 millions in 1997). These numbers indicate an alarming decline in the populations of these species. The protocol of the ANCGE census in 2004 was established by OMPO. The intention of this census was to count the lapwings and golden plovers that winter in France, focusing particularly on non-coastal zones, and to identify the sites of national and international importance for the species. This operation was made possible through the major support of local ANCGE members that volunteered. On



17 January 2004, 1,570 sites in 49 departments were surveyed. In total, 412,076 lapwings and 65,341 golden plovers were counted. Not all departments were covered by the census. The temperature at the moment of counting was mild, preceded by a cold period in December that provoked the departure of a considerable number of lapwings. According to the field specialists, the numbers of wintering individuals were 25% higher in mid-December 2003. Because of the before mentioned difficulties, the 2004 census cannot be taken as a reference year as the numbers are incomplete. The complete report can be obtained from OMPO.

TRACKING BLACK STORK FROM RUSSIA TO INDIA

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A team from the Czech Republic has undertaken an interesting satellite tracking study. This study helps to decipher the migration of the black stork (*Ciconia nigra*) from the breeding grounds in southern Russia to India. This work is very valuable in getting a precise understanding of the migration routes, key staging areas and non-breeding sites of waterbirds in the Central Asian Flyway and forms the basis of developing conservation plans for these species and their habitats. Via internet (<http://rozhlas.cz/odysea/mapy>), the migration of a male and female stork can be followed.

ACTION PLAN EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

LAUNCH OF NEW ONLINE DATABASE FOR ORNITHOLOGISTS

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A new online bibliographic database for ornithologists, Worldwide Ornithological Literature (OWL), has been launched by the British Ornithologists' Union, together with the American Ornithologists' Union (AOU) and Birds Australia (BA). The new database replaces Recent Ornithological Literature (ROL). It is accessible free of charge at www.birdlit.org

BIRDS IN RUSSIA – NEW DISCUSSION GROUP INITIATED

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A new discussion group has been initiated for information and discussion on all aspects of biology, ecology, behaviour, number, distribution, migrations and conservation etc. of all bird species of Eastern Europe and Northern Asia (within the borders of ex-USSR). So far, serious literature has mainly been published in Russian, limiting exchange of information on bird populations in this area. The discussion group will help overcome this language barrier. The group is open to anybody seriously interested in the birds of Eastern Europe and Northern Asia.

To subscribe, please send empty (blank) message to: BirdsinRussia-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Or go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BirdsinRussia/>

RAMSAR SITES DATABASE NOW ONLINE

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HTM

Wetlands International manages and develops the Ramsar Sites Database under contract to the Ramsar Convention Secretariat. This database is now accessible through the internet. A search facility makes it possible to find one or more Ramsar sites by selecting on nearly any combination of criteria. Reporting includes a Site Overview, the original Ramsar Information Sheet and the Ramsar Site Directory Report.

PROJECTS

SATELLITE TAGS FOR MOROCCO'S NORTHERN BALD IBIS

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A team from SEO/BirdLife (BirdLife in Spain) and staff from Souss-Massa National Park, with collaboration from Spain's Ministry of the Environment, have succeeded for the first time ever in trapping and fitting three Northern Bald Ibis with satellite tracking devices.

Souss-Massa National Park was officially designated in 1991, with the conservation of the Northern Bald Ibis as a primary aim. An intensive monitoring and conservation programme was launched in 1998, with the participation of local communities and support from the RSPB (BirdLife in the UK). Spain's Agency for International Cooperation (AECI) and the African Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) have supported different parts of the project. Seven wardens, contracted by SEO/BirdLife, have reinforced the National Park's staff.

Most of the world's Northern Bald Ibis *Geronticus eremita* breed in Morocco's Souss-Massa National Park. But outside the breeding season little is known about the birds' movements, and without this information it has been impossible to identify measures for the year-round conservation of this Critically Endangered species. "At present, we have data on breeding, habitat selection, feeding, etc., but many of the birds disappear for weeks at a time outside the breeding season, and we know very little about where they go," said SEO's Research Director, Ramón Martí. "The satellite transmitters fixed to these three individuals – two adults and a 2004 juvenile – will make it possible to monitor their movements during the coming months. This information is key to identifying suitable conservation measures outside the breeding area, when the birds face unknown threats."

INTERNATIONAL WADER STUDY GROUP/WETLANDS INTERNATIONAL'S ATLAS OF WADER POPULATIONS IN AFRICA AND WEST EURASIA – PROGRESS REPORT

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Another major publication Wetlands International is producing in close collaboration with the International Wader Study Group is the so-called Wader Atlas. This book will be a companion to the Atlas of Anatidae populations in Africa and west Eurasia published in 1996. The project started in 1998, and about half of the publication was written by members of the Wader Study Group in subsequent years. Financial difficulties caused significant delays, but a new injection of funds in 2003 is allowing updating and completion of the analysis and writing, although Wetlands International is still looking for funds to publish the book.

Work on the wader atlas undertaken by the Wader Study Group and Wetlands International is progressing well after delays caused mainly by restructuring of Wetlands International. Phase 1 and Phase 2, produced in 1999 and 2001 respectively, have been merged and updated, and much newly-

published material has been incorporated into the draft. Wetlands International has also been working on the extensive International Waterbird Census (IWC) data holdings to ensure that the most up-to-date data are included. A time-consuming but important development has been the plotting of all waterbird count sites on maps, so that it will be possible to produce maps showing annual January distribution of all our waders, as revealed by counts undertaken for IWC. This is a particularly exciting development for the African data, since the numerical distribution of many species is being plotted in detail on maps of the continent for the first time.

Publishing of the comprehensive atlas showing the breeding ranges, plotted waterbird count data and flyway boundaries of the 218 bio geographic populations of 88 species of wader found in the AEWA region is scheduled for 2005.

GENERAL INFORMATION

MODERN FARMING THREATENS COMMON BIRD SPECIES

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT THE

BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL WEBSITE:

[HTTP://WWW.BIRDLIFE.NET](http://www.birdlife.net)

Modern farming in Europe has reduced the numbers of 24 common bird species by a third in a quarter of a century, a report by European ornithologists says. According to the study on the population trends of wild birds by the RSPB, BirdLife and the European Bird Census Council (known as the farmland bird indicator), the declines were steepest in countries in northwest Europe, the regions of most intensive agriculture. The study includes information for 24 common and widespread species of farmland birds from eleven present members of the EU, five of whom joined in May 2004, and Norway and Switzerland. The indicator shows that across Europe, from Spain to Poland (including the UK), the species' numbers, including skylarks, lapwings and yel-

lowhammers, have crashed by a third since 1980, and says this is because of intensive farming. BirdLife members are urging the European Commission and governments of EU member states to put the environment and wildlife at the heart of farming policy. The RSPB says that 150 out of the 453 birds regularly found in Europe rely on sustainable farming to survive. "Birds at most immediate risk are those particularly vulnerable to intensive agriculture, such as the corncrake, the red-backed shrike and the great bustard. Currently, eastern European states have significant populations of these birds. If the new EU members do not act on this warning, there will be further massive declines or even extinctions of wildlife".

OUTCOME OF THE CONFERENCE “25 YEARS OF THE BIRD DIRECTIVE”.

From 7 to 9 November 2004 the Conference “25 years of the Bird Directive: Challenges for 25 Countries” was held in Bergen op Zoom, The Netherlands. The aim of the Conference was to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the Bird Directive, to reflect on its achievements, to identify remaining gaps in its implementation and to focus on priorities for future action, especially in the light of recent call of the EU heads of states and governments to accelerate action to meet the 2010 objective.

The general message that came across was that significant progress has been made in the implementation of the Bird Directive. Notwithstanding this achievement the latest scientific evidence confirms that many common bird populations continue to decline, especially those dependent on rural landscapes as well as long-distance migrants. This means that the overall aims of the Bird Directive to safeguard Europe’s wild Birds and their habitats have still not been fully realized.

The Conference was concluded with the adoption of the following 10 recommendations:

- 1) Urgently complete the terrestrial network of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) by 2005, fully extend it to the marine environment by 2008 and establish an effective protection regime for all SPAs, with management objectives in place and initiated for all sites by 2010;
- 2) Ensure that the overall SPA network is functionally coherent and resilient to future changes and pressures, including the development and implementation where appropriate of tools for achieving ecological connection;
- 3) Take urgent action for species under threat, including the implementation of international action plans and national measures;
- 4) Ensure that opportunities to integrate the requirements of the Bird Directive into all relevant EU policy areas and Community instruments are fully realized, including the development of agri-environment and forest-environment measures (actions) that deliver measurable benefits for birds and other wildlife;
- 5) Work towards a common approach for Natura 2000 (for both SPAs and SACs) take care that use and other human activities within and outside classi-

fied areas are sustainable and compatible with bird conservation requirements, and promote and implement proportionally the ‘wise use’ principle with respect to birds and their habitats;

- 6) Implement by 2006 a set of bird conservation indicators to monitor and evaluate the efficiency of measures taken under the Directive and in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Strategy, in particular to achieve the 2010 biodiversity target, with the potential to communicate bird conservation problems effectively to the general public and to decision-makers and provoke appropriate and effective policy responses;
- 7) Strengthen research that is focused on achieving the objectives of the Bird Directive and the 2010 target and that is robust and responsive to future challenges, and reflects this through the appropriate revision of Annex V of the Bird Directive;
- 8) Reinforce measures for communication and awareness raising with respect to bird conservation, including public participation and stakeholders’ involvement in managing SPAs;
- 9) Ensure adequate EU and national financial support for bird conservation policy and the implementation of the necessary actions;
- 10) Strengthen EU commitments and action for Pan-European and global bird conservation and maximise the contribution the Bird Directive makes to this.

The AEWA Secretariat is very pleased with the outcome of this Conference. Many of the recommendations for actions as listed above are of interest for the Agreement, particularly the last one. A number of actions are foreseen for each recommendation. Going back to the last recommendation the following actions are foreseen: to ratify AEWA; to promote and support coordinated actions to strengthen the flyway management and long-term monitoring of waterbirds and other long distance migrants, to cooperate with relevant international Conventions including AEWA, etc. These recommendations supported by the Secretariat will certainly lead to strengthen the cooperation between the EU and AEWA and also, hopefully, will lead to some support for the conservation of AEWA species outside EU territory.

SUSTAINABLE USE PRINCIPLES ADOPTED AT CBD COP 7

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT:
[HTTP://IUCN.ORG/THEMES/SSC/SUSG/](http://IUCN.ORG/THEMES/SSC/SUSG/)

The importance of Sustainable Use gained increased official recognition with the adoption of the "Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity" (AAPGs) at the 7th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. CBD embarked on a process to create detailed principles that would be applicable to all components of biodiversity. The resulting practical set of 14 Principles and Guidelines was developed in a series of regional workshops, and the outcomes were synthesized in May 2003 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The IUCN Sustainable Use Specialist Group will take a leading role in testing these Principles and in advising governments, policy makers, resource managers and all stakeholders on how to implement them. In the final decision, the COP stressed the interlinkages between the AAPGs and the Ecosystem Approach, which it identifies as the primary framework for action under the CBD. It recognized the need to further elaborate the Principles and Guidelines, specifically with respect to domesticated species, breeds and varieties in the context of the work programme on agricultural biodiversity, and emphasized the need for technology transfer and cooperation, and for capacity building.

Parties are now invited to implement the AAPGs at the national and local levels, taking into account obligations under other international agreements and existing frameworks of sustainable use. Having adopted this guiding instrument, the Parties are in a position to play a leading role in fostering sustainable use of biological diversity within a clear policy framework. They can also take a significant step forward in achieving one of the Millennium Development Goals, which aims to ensure environmental sustainability by "integrating the principles of sustainable development into country policies to reverse loss of environmental resources", which is vital to sustainable development. The pre-ambule of the AEWA Agreement text mentions that any taking of migratory waterbirds must be conducted on a sustainable basis. The AAPGs principles refer inter alia to wise use of biodiversity components, adaptive management and international cooperation for transboundary resources (such as migratory birds). Therefore their adoption is of significance to AEWA. The AAPGs could be an important and helpful tool for the AEWA Contracting Parties to assess if the taking of migratory waterbirds in their country is conducted on a sustainable basis.

CLIMATE CHANGE BIGGEST NEW EXTINCTION THREAT

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT:
[HTTP://WWW.NATURE.COM](http://WWW.NATURE.COM)

As published in *Nature* (2004) vol. 427, pages 145-148, climate change may drive a quarter of land animals and plants extinct unless greenhouse gas emissions are drastically reduced, according to a major new study by C.D. Thomas published in *Nature*. The study found that 15 to 37% of all species in the regions considered could be driven extinct from the climate change that is likely to occur between now and 2050 (i.e., for mid-range climate warming scenarios). "If the projections can be extrapolated globally, and to other groups of land animals and plants, our analyses suggest that well over a million species could be threatened with extinction as a result of climate change," said lead author Chris Thomas of the University of Leeds, England. "This study makes clear that climate change is the biggest new extinction threat," said co-author Lee Hannah, at Conservation International (CI) in Washington DC. "The combination of increasing habitat loss and climate change together is particularly

worrying. Increases in temperature can force a species to move toward its preferred, usually cooler, climate range. If habitat destruction has already altered those habitats, the species will have no safe haven." The study concluded that "Minimum expected (i.e., inevitable) climate change scenarios for 2050 produce fewer projected extinctions (18% averaging across the different methods) than mid-range projections (24%), and about half those predicted under maximum expected climate change (35%)." Thus, 15-20% of all land species could potentially be saved from extinction if minimum, rather than maximum, climate warming is achieved. "An immediate and progressive switch to technologies that produce little or no new greenhouse gases, combined with active removal of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, could save a million or more species from extinction," said Thomas.

6TH MEETING OF THE NATIONAL FOCAL POINTS FOR SPECIALLY PROTECTED AREAS

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The Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (RAC/SPA) held its 6th meeting in Marseilles, from 17 to 20 June 2003. The agenda included country reports on conservation of natural sites and species, new action plans for species including some Waterbird Species, strategic action plan for the conservation of biological diversity in the Mediterranean region (SAP BIO),

the development of marine and coastal protected areas, the implementation of the action plans for the conservation of species adopted with MAP, evaluation of RAC/SPA and new orientations for its activities and structure. The UNEP/ AEWA Secretariat participated in this meeting and gave input in the discussion on the Waterbird Species Action Plans

WATERBIRDS AROUND THE WORLD – INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND, 3-8 APRIL 2004

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT:

HTTP://WWW.WETLANDS.ORG

The meeting “Waterbirds Around The World” was organized by Wetlands International and jointly hosted by the Governments of the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, with support from the CMS, AEWA, the Convention on Wetlands, BirdLife International, US Fish and Wildlife Service, North American Waterbird Conservation Plan, CIC, FACE, Waterbird Society, CAFF, Pacific Seabird Group and many other national and international organizations. “Waterbirds Around the World” focused on the major themes and developments related to the global

conservation of waterbird flyways during their full annual cycle, such as: breeding areas, stop-over sites and wintering areas, harvest of waterbirds, site networks, flyway monitoring, flyway management plans, climate change and flyways, nomadic migration and many more. It addressed achievements of the last 40 years and formulated gaps and needs for initiatives to stimulate future conservation of the world’s flyways and the species and habitats involved.

SIBERIAN CRANE RANGE STATES MEETING IN MOSCOW

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The Fifth Meeting of Signatory States to the CMS Siberian Crane Memorandum of Understanding concluded successfully on 29 April 2004 with the adoption of revised Conservation Plans for the Western, Central and Eastern populations of this endangered species.

Representatives of ten of the eleven Range States, together with specialists from numerous scientific institutes and non-governmental organizations, attended the meeting in Moscow, which was hosted by the Russian Ministry of Natural Resources and organized by the International Crane Foundation on behalf of CMS.

The Meeting agreed on the establishment of a network of sites critical to Siberian Cranes of the Western and Central Flyways which will promote training, capacity-building, exchange programmes, education and public awareness, site monitoring, and information exchange. The site network will be coordinated with related initiatives including the Central Asian Flyway project, the North East Asia Crane Site Network,

the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement GEF Project and the GEF Econet project.

It was recognized that the recovery of both the Western and Central populations, which have collapsed over the past two decades, depends on reducing high hunting pressure. The meeting identified strategies for more effective enforcement of hunting regulations and techniques for educating hunters. Efforts in these flyways will also focus on innovative reintroduction methods. Taking a cue from successful efforts by Operation Migration and other partners to reintroduce Whooping cranes in North America, by training young birds to follow ultra-light aircraft, researchers in Russia plan to adapt the methodology for use with hang-gliders in coming years.

Furthermore the meeting was informed about successful and inspiring Crane Day celebrations in several countries, on latest mid-winter counts of the Eastern population in China that suggests that the population might as many as 4,000 birds, on the successful release of a captive-reared Siberian Crane in Iran, etc.

PAN-ARCTIC WADER MONITORING AND RESEARCH WORKSHOP KARREBÆKSMINDE, DENMARK, 3-6 DECEMBER 2003

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT:

[HTTP://WWW.WETLANDS.ORG/NEWS&NEWS](http://www.wetlands.org/news&news)

[ARC/NEWS2003-11-12.HTM](http://www.wetlands.org/news&news/arc/news2003-11-12.htm)

Around 30 experts who study Arctic nesting waders in their breeding grounds, as well as in staging and "wintering" areas all over the world, held a ground-breaking workshop on the Baltic shore of Denmark in December 2003. A large number of data sets from the breeding grounds as well as from staging and wintering areas were compared and analyzed. The main conclusions were that Arctic shorebirds are sensitive to climate change on the breeding grounds as well as on staging and wintering areas. Predicted warming of the Arctic may initially benefit Arctic shorebirds in most breeding areas, whereas other areas may become less suitable due to more snow, summer dryness and less predictable food resources for adults as well as chicks. However, in the longer term the High Arctic zone may be severely diminished and large areas of the Low Arctic zone may turn into sub-Arctic scrub. On top of this come problems such as sea level rise, which may reduce staging and wintering areas considerably. That Arctic shorebirds may suffer severe population reductions is supported by molecular analyses, which point to

serious population bottlenecks having occurred during earlier climatic perturbations.

Presently, many Arctic shorebird populations are decreasing. Based on present knowledge on population trends (known for 52 per cent of the 100 biogeographically populations of 37 species recognized in the Arctic), 12 per cent are increasing, 42 per cent are stable, and 44 per cent are decreasing, while 2 per cent are possibly extinct. Anthropogenic factors are to a varying extent suspected to be involved in this overweight of declining populations. A set of recommendations was adopted that deals with the need for improved monitoring inside as well as outside the Arctic, primarily by building on existing programmes. The recommendations are addressed to the Arctic Council's CAFF programme, the relevant flyway agreements and conventions, as well as funding agencies. The scientific results of the workshop will be published in relevant journals.

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE GOOSE SPECIALIST GROUP

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[HTTP://WWW.WETLANDS.ORG/NETWORKS/](http://www.wetlands.org/networks/)

[GOOSE/GOOSE.HTM](http://www.wetlands.org/networks/goose/goose.htm)

This 8th annual meeting of the Goose Specialist Group of Wetlands International, which took place from 5-10 March 2004 in Odessa (Ukraine), was attended by 70 people from 16 different countries (Belgium, Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Kazakhstan, Netherlands, Norway, Russia, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine). The focus was on the three goose species that winter along the Black Sea coast; Greater White-fronted Geese, Red-breasted Geese and Greylag Geese. The latter species also nests in Ukraine. Also, the rare Lesser White-fronted Goose, Bean Geese in Germany, Dark-bellied Brent Geese in France, Bar-headed Geese wintering in Myanmar and India, and Pink-footed Geese that nest on Spitsbergen (Svalbard) were on the agenda.

To solve the internal problems around the topic of re-introduction within the Lesser White-fronted Goose Working Group, a new troika consisting of Ivan Rusev (Ukraine), Maire Toming (Estonia) and Åke

Andersson (Sweden) were appointed, and in close cooperation with the IUCN/SSC Re-introduction Specialist Group (Pritpal S. Soorae), they will try to join forces in order to safeguard the future of this threatened goose species.

Many reports stressed the high pressure of hunting and poaching on the geese that migrate from eastern Europe along the Black Sea coast, and there is a clear need for improved monitoring of goose numbers in this area. One of the important staging areas is Manych Lake. Also, several plans threatening coastal areas near Odessa (Dniester delta) and the Biosphere reserve in the Danube delta were discussed.

A successfully coordinated simultaneous mid-winter count in Bulgaria, Romania and Ukraine yielded a total of 52,000 Red-breasted Geese.

The next meeting will be held in Sopron, Hungary in early November 2005.

WETLANDS INTERNATIONAL APPOINTS NEW CEO

Since March 2004, Wetlands International has had Jane Madgwick as new CEO. Originally from south-west England, Jane joined the organization in March 2004, following nearly seven years of working for



WWF. Jane has focused on freshwater and wetlands during her career, gaining practical experience in most continents, initially in ecological research and then in the policy and practice of conservation. Working the last three years for WWF in Western Australia, she developed an integrated policy and field programme to address threats to a range of globally significant marine, freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems. She previously worked for WWF International and directed the Freshwater Programme for Europe, North Africa and the Middle East, coordinating a multi-cultural team of 26 officers and NGO partners across the continent. Jane joins Wetlands International with strong enthusiasm and ambitions for the organization, which has a distinct and vital role to play alongside its partners, that of ensuring the conservation and restoration of wetlands for the benefit of nature and people. Wetlands International is one of the technical coordinators for the AEWA-GEF project and is currently working hard to bring this project to fruition. It is a strong partner in the development and implementation of AEWA and will bring key technical contributions to the next Meeting of Parties.

ARCTIC BIRDS BREEDING CONDITIONS

The first portion of data on bird breeding conditions in the Arctic in 2003 was published on the website of the Arctic Birds Breeding Conditions Survey (ABBCS) at: www.arcticbirds.ru. Also, the last issue of the breeding conditions newsletter ("Arctic Birds" #5) is available for down-

load from the project website. An overview of wader breeding conditions in the Arctic during the period of 1989-2003 is scheduled for publication in early 2005.

BIRD NAMES IN KISWAHILI

Two Tanzanian birders, Etienne Sion and Charles Mlingwa (member of the AEWA Technical Committee), have compiled a list with suggestions for bird names in the national language in Tanzania and Kenya. The proposals for further discussion are now added to their web page

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[HTTP://WWW.TANZANIABIRDTLAS.COM/SW](http://WWW.TANZANIABIRDTLAS.COM/SW)
AHILI.HTM

MAJOR NEW ANALYSIS OF WADER POPULATION STATUS IN AFRICA AND WESTERN EURASIA PUBLISHED

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT:

[HTTP://WWW.WADERSTUDYGROUP.ORG](http://www.waderstudygroup.org)

The International Wader Study Group has published its major review of the status of 131 populations of 55 species of migratory waders (shorebirds) in Africa and Western Eurasia in its occasional series *International Wader Studies*.

For the East Atlantic Flyway, the review updates the assessment made by Cor Smit & Theunis Piersma in the 1980s and published in 1989. For other flyway systems in Africa and Western Eurasia, the review provides the first systematic population reviews. The publication contains accounts for each of the species and their populations, summarizing current knowledge of population status and trends. Extensive analyses consider thematic, taxonomic and geographic status and issues. The 259-page review and supporting data can be found on WSG's web-site www.waderstudygroup.org. It will provide a major source of information for conservationists and researchers.

Amongst the review's many conclusions are:

- Of the 131 populations, 45 are of significant conservation concern because their populations are in decline and/or are small. Some of these are threatened with extinction. Others are in very rapid decline.
- Of those populations for which there are definite or probable trends, nearly four times as many populations are in decline as are increasing.
- Of the three major flyway systems, populations using the East Atlantic Flyway are the most well-known - with little over a third in decline. In contrast, not only is knowledge of populations on the other two flyways worse, but their status is much poorer — of populations with known trends, 53% of those on the West Asian/East Africa Flyway are in decline, as are 55% of those on the Black Sea/Mediterranean Flyway.
- Geographic analysis shows that the area with the largest number of declining waders is Western Europe. As this is also the area with the greatest extent of international nature conservation legislation, this suggests there is an urgent need to refocus the implementation of this legislation.
- Whilst there has been welcome improvement of knowledge of status and trends, major gaps remain in our knowledge: for 60% of populations considered, monitoring is insufficient to provide even the most basic information on trends.
- Recommendations are made as to future priorities for the development of wader monitoring in Africa and Western Eurasia.

30 YEARS OF CONSERVATION IN DENMARK

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT:

[HTTP://RAMSAR.ORG/W.N.NORDIC_BOOK.HTM](http://ramsar.org/w.n.nordic_book.htm)

The Nordic Council of Ministers has recently published a book entitled „Nordic Wetland Conservation“, covering 30 years of conservation experience in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden and including self-governing territories like Greenland, Åland, and the Faeroes. Available from bookstores in Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, and English versions, it provides superb coverage of the general wetland issues, the wise use concept, the Ramsar Convention and other international regimes, and the status of wetlands in each of the Nordic countries.

NEW STUDY ON WATERBIRDS IN SPAIN PUBLISHED

FOR INFORMATION PLEASE VISIT:

[HTTP://WWW.MMA.ES](http://www.mma.es)

The Spanish ministry of environment and national parks has published all waterbird winter census data in Spain between 1980 and 2001. The data permits an analysis of the status and the dynamics of waterbirds wintering in Spain, as well as those of Spanish wetlands that host the species. The report in Spanish is a valuable instrument for the evaluation of the status of these species; it provides a basis for the development sustainable management programmes of those ecosystems.

BIRD AND HABITAT CONSERVATION IN ASIA

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"Saving Asia's threatened birds" sets out the priorities for the conservation of birds and habitats in Asia, based upon the comprehensive scientific research published in "Threatened birds of Asia: the BirdLife International Red Data Book", 2001. It presents the main conclusions of the Red Data Book to decision-makers in a clear and highly visual form, with many maps and photographs of Asia's threatened birds, their habitats and important conservation issues. The book has a particular focus on habitat conservation, because habitat loss is by far the most important threat to Asia's birds. It highlights the issues that could cause species extinctions in Asia in the short to medium term, and identifies the conservation actions that must be taken to prevent this. It identifies the most important sites for threatened birds in the region, and priorities for survey and research. It includes proposals for action through the international conventions such as Ramsar and the Convention on Biological Diversity. In addition to the book, more detailed material will be available using a map-based interface on CD-ROM and on <http://www.birdlife.net>

NEW REVIEW ON HIGH TIDE ROOSTS IN THE WADDEN SEA

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT:

[HTTP://WWW.WADDENSEA-](http://www.waddensea-secretariat.org/management/roosting-sites/roosting-report.html)

[SECRETARIAT.ORG/MANAGEMENT/ROOSTING-SITES/ROOSTING-REPORT.HTML](http://www.waddensea-secretariat.org/management/roosting-sites/roosting-report.html)



The Common Wadden Sea Secretariat has published a review on high tide roosts in the Wadden Sea ("High Tide Roosts in the Wadden Sea – A Review of Bird Distribution, Protection Regimes and Potential Sources of Anthropogenic Disturbance", Wadden Sea Ecosystem No. 16 – 2003, Common Wadden Sea Secretariat, Trilateral Monitoring and Assessment Group, Joint Monitoring Group of Migratory Birds in the Wadden Sea). A project on roosting sites was carried out by The Netherlands to investigate the status of high tide roosts for migratory waterbirds in the trilateral Wadden Sea in relation to the need for undisturbed roosting sites for these species. The report consists of a detailed overview of the distribution of waterbirds in the entire Wadden Sea during high tide and an inventory of protection regimes and potential sources of anthropogenic disturbances for each site.

REPORT ON BREEDING SEABIRDS IN THE RED SEA AND GULF OF ADEN

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A report on breeding seabirds in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden (RSGA) was published in November 2003. The RSGA represents a complex and unique tropical marine ecosystem. The region has a remarkably high biological diversity and a high degree of endemism particularly for fish and corals. In most countries of the region, seabird conservation is not considered a priority for the conservation of the marine environment. For better protection of seabirds it is necessary to strengthen the capacity for their conservation, to improve the protection of

seabird breeding areas and to develop a conservation action plan for the seabirds breeding in the region, which should include research and monitoring, legislation and awareness. The objectives of this report are to present the current status of knowledge of breeding seabirds in the RSGA, the threats facing seabirds and their habitats in the RSGA and the conservation requirements for breeding seabirds in the region and thereby contribute towards the development of a regional action plan for seabird conservation.

PUBLICATIONS OF “BRETAGNE VIVANTE”

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The programme “Archipelagos and marine islands in Brittany” promotes sustainable conservation management of these island ecosystems in Brittany. On 16 pages, the publication “Archipels et îlots marins de Bretagne – Recueil d’expériences” explains the project, the importance of conservation and actions taken for effective management of the island areas of the marine islands in Brittany.

The programme is a very educative project which aims at conserving the biodiversity and habitats of these archipelagos by involving the public. The conservation of these archipelagos is of special importance to AEWA because they serve as nesting and roosting sites for many migratory birds, among them species like the Little Tern, the Common Tern, the Roseate and the Sandwich Tern.

GARGANEY AND SHOVELER IN THE BALTIC STATES AND BELARUS

OMPO (Migratory Birds of the Western Palearctic) published a new survey on “The Garganey and Shoveler in the Baltic States and Belarus”. It provides information on Garganey and Shoveler populations in the Baltic States and Belarus. Belarus is one of the most important territories for waterfowl in Europe, particularly during the breeding season. The decrease in the area of breeding habitats for waterbirds caused by large-scale drainage carried out in Belarus in the second half of the 20th century, as well as by withdrawal of land from nature for agricultural use, has had a negative impact on the population numbers of waterbirds. Waterfowl population estimates during breeding period were previously only published in some papers dealing with fauna. However, data on the density of breeding pairs has been lacking so far, including data on breeding ecology of the two afore-mentioned species which are sharing similar habitats. This report also contains information on the population estimates as well as the breeding ecology and density of breeding pairs of both species. Population estimates and trends of Garganey, Shoveler and of other waterbird species in Eastern and Central Europe were discussed during a workshop organized by OMPO in Odessa, Ukraine, in April 2003.

WETLANDS IN BELARUS, LITHUANIA AND THE KALININGRAD REGION

A new publication by OMPO illustrates essential information on nine important wetland areas situated on international borders: six of them shared between the Republic of Lithuania and the Republic of Belarus, and three of them shared between the Kaliningrad region of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Lithuania. The report “Important transboundary Belarusian-Lithuanian and Lithuanian-Russian Wetlands” concretises the joint efforts of several organizations and many experts from several countries. These territories are in the no man’s lands of trans-border areas re-established after the dissolution of the former USSR. OMPO has succeeded in creating a synergy between the researchers and authorities responsible for wetland management on both sides of the borders. It draws on information from the database of transboundary wetlands.

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WEBS REPORT 1999-2000

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT:

**[HTTP://WWW.BTO.ORG/SURVEY/WEBS/WEB
S-DOWNLOADS.HTM](http://www.bto.org/survey/webs/web-s-downloads.htm)**

“The Wetland Bird Survey 2000-01 Wildfowl and Wader Counts” (WeBS) is a joint scheme of the Wildfowl & Wetland Trust, the British Trust For Ornithology, and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and Joint Nature Conservation Committee to monitor non-breeding waterbirds in the UK. The scheme’s principal aims are to identify population sizes, determine trends in numbers and distribution, and to identify important sites for waterbirds. This report presents total numbers counted for all species in Great Britain and Northern Ireland during 1999-2000 and previous years.

RED DATA BOOK OF BIRDS IN CROATIA PUBLISHED

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In the last decade, the knowledge of Croatian birds has significantly grown, due to strengthening and popularization of ornithology. The “Red data book of birds in Croatia” finally provides a comprehensive overview of the conservation status of birds in Croatia. It gives an idea of the importance of its ornithofauna on European and global level. It reveals the high level of threat, which is mostly connected to degradation of habitats. The most threatened habitats from the ornithological point of view are wetlands. Out of 375 bird species recorded for Croatia, 180 are on its Red List. The latter can be downloaded from www.hidra.hr/sdrhe/elektron/h.htm

NEW STUDY ON THE STATE OF THE WORLD’S BIRDS

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT:

[WWW.BIRDLIFE.NET](http://www.birdlife.net)

The new BirdLife study “State of the World’s Birds” examines what birds can tell us about the state of biodiversity, the pressures upon it, and the solutions that are being, or should be, put in place. It is a synthesis of BirdLife’s knowledge in 2004 and provides a benchmark against which efforts to conserve biodiversity in future can be assessed. Birds play a special role as environmental indicators for many reasons, not least because of their enormous public appeal. A global network of birdwatchers and ornithologists continues to provide a huge amount of information about birds—information largely lacking for other species. Birds show that our global environment is under serious strain, with a massive and still increasing haemorrhage of biodiversity. They show that these losses are caused directly or indirectly by our expanding demands on the biosphere, driven by deeper problems that include widespread social inequities and distorted value systems. They show that there are solutions to both the immediate threats and their deeper causes. They show also that there is no time to waste: our options for conserving biodiversity are narrowing fast. In total, 1,211 bird species (12% of the total) are globally threatened. Of these, 179 are now Critically Endangered—facing imminent extinction. Only for birds do we have comprehensive information on global trends over recent decades. The Red List Index for birds shows that they have become more threatened since 1988, with more species slipping closer to extinction. Seabirds and Asian forest birds have shown particularly severe declines. Threatened species occur across the world, but they are concentrated in the tropics and especially in moist tropical forests. Many other species are geographically concentrated, and often confined to distinctive habitats. More than one-quarter of bird species have very small breeding ranges. Most of these occur together in places called Endemic Bird Areas—mainly in the tropics and subtropics—that cover just 5% of the Earth’s land surface. A further 10% of bird species congregate in large numbers at a few special sites at particular times in their life cycles. The BirdLife Partnership is working to tackle these issues in more than 100 countries around the world. The companion publications to this document, “Working together for birds and people” and “A strategy for birds and people”, respectively set out the current actions of the BirdLife Partnership and BirdLife’s strategy until 2015.

PALESTINE WILDLIFE FIELD GUIDE

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT:

[HTTP://WWW.WILDLIFE-PAL.ORG](http://www.wildlife-pal.org)

The Palestine Wildlife Society (PWLS) has published a book named “Wildlife Field Guide of Wadi Gaza”. It was prepared and photographed by Imad Atrash with support from PWLS and BirdLife International. It was funded by the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation through the United Nations Development Programme East-Jerusalem, in cooperation with the Environmental Quality Authority (PNA) and BirdLife International-Middle East Division, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and Medwet Coast.

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGERS FINANCE GUIDE DEVELOPED

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT:

[WWW.CONSERVATIONFINANCE.ORG](http://www.conservationfinance.org)

The Ramsar Convention on Wetland's Conservation Finance Alliance (CFA) has developed a guide for environmental managers that elaborates a large number of financing mechanisms for nature conservation in general, but with a special focus on protected area management. The guide wants to point out the many ways to achieve the ends of nature conservation and makes a link between conservation finance work and poverty alleviation concerns. The CFA was created to catalyze increased and sustainable public and private financing for biodiversity conservation to support the effective implementation of global commitments to conservation.

6-9 October 2005

3rd International Symposium on Anseriformes of northern Eurasia

Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation
INFO: Eugene A. Kretchmar
Tel: +7 812 328 9689
E-mail: waterfowl05@land.ru

23-27 October 2005

Third Session of the Meeting of Parties to AEWA (MOP3)

Dakar, Senegal
INFO: UNEP/ AEWA Secretariat

7-15 November 2005

9th Conference of the Parties to the Ramsar Convention

Kampala, Uganda
INFO: Ramsar Bureau
E-mail: ramsar@ramsar.org

16-19 November 2005

13th Meeting of the Scientific Council of CMS

Nairobi, Kenya
INFO: UNEP/ CMS Secretariat
E-mail: cms@cms.int

20-25 November 2005

8th Conference of the Parties to CMS

Nairobi, Kenya
INFO: UNEP/ CMS Secretariat
E-mail: cms@cms.int

20-31 March 2006

8th Conference of the Parties to CBD

Brazil
INFO: CBD Secretariat
<http://www.biodiv.org>

13-19 August 2006

24th International Ornithological Congress

Hamburg, Germany
INFO: <http://www.i-o-c.org/>

EUROPEAN TRENDS OF COMMON BIRD SPECIES

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT:

PETR VORISEK

PAN-EUROPEAN COMMON BIRD MONITORING

COORDINATOR

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TEL: +420-274780601

HTTP://WWW.BIRDLIFE.CZ

The European trends of 48 common bird species are now available at the Czech Society for Ornithology (CSO) website.

The trends and indices are results are based on data collation and analysis in 2003. Trends are summarized in two tables. If you click on a species' scientific name, you will get directly to a species' one-page sheet, which also contains a graph with indices. You can download the whole report in pdf format there, too.

PECHORA RIVER BASIN INTEGRATED SYSTEM MANAGEMENT (PRISM)

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

MS MARINA DE VRIES

PRISM - PARTNERS FOR WATER PROJECT

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THE NETHERLANDS

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HTTP://WWW.PRISM-PECHORA.NL

The PRISM website is ready and will serve as platform where general information can be found about the PRISM project. A full project description, back issues of the newsletters, links to partner organizations and other relevant websites and general information about the area can be found here.

The Pechora River (Northeast European Russia) is the only European River comparable in dimensions with the Rhine that is still largely untouched by human influences. The Delta is an important breeding area and stopover site for migratory birds wintering in western Europe and Africa. For example, 50% of the flyway population of Bewick's Swans breed in the Pechora delta. Also, significant proportions of populations of ducks, geese and wader birds breed in the Pechora floodplains and delta.

MEDWETCOAST DISCUSSION FORUM

MedWet, in cooperation with WWF, has launched a network of NGOs working on wetlands in the Mediterranean. Information is available on www.medwet.org/ngo/ngo.html.

Furthermore, the MedWetCoast regional website has initiated a discussion forum on several issues. Contributions are welcome under www.medwetcoast.com, discussion forums.

THE AFRICAN-EURASIAN WATERBIRD AGREEMENT (AEWA) WAS OPEN FOR SIGNING AT THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN THE HAGUE (THE NETHERLANDS) FROM 15 AUGUST 1996 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 1999. BY 31 AUGUST 1999 THE REQUIREMENTS HAD BEEN MET FOR THE AGREEMENT'S ENTRY INTO FORCE. IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE XIV, PARAGRAPH 1, THE AGREEMENT ENTERED INTO FORCE ON 1 NOVEMBER 1999. THE FOLLOWING RANGE STATES RATIFIED, ACCEPTED OR APPROVED THE AGREEMENT AND BECAME A CONTRACTING PARTY: ALBANIA, BENIN, BULGARIA, CONGO, CROATIA, DENMARK, DJIBOUTI, EGYPT, EQUATORIAL GUINEA, FRANCE, FINLAND, GAMBIA, GHANA, GERMANY, GEORGIA, GUINEA, HUNGARY, ISRAEL, JORDAN, KENYA, LEBANON, LIBYA, LITHUANIA, LUXEMBOURG, FYR OF MACEDONIA, MALI, MAURITIUS, MOLDOVA, MONACO, NIGER, NIGERIA, PORTUGAL, ROMANIA, SENEGAL, SLOVAKIA, SLOVENIA, SOUTH AFRICA, SPAIN, SWEDEN, SUDAN, SWITZERLAND, SYRIA, TANZANIA, THE EUROPEAN UNION, THE NETHERLANDS, TOGO, UGANDA, UKRAINE, THE UNITED KINGDOM AND NORTHERN IRELAND, UZBEKISTAN.

SIGNATORIES THAT MADE A RESERVATION IN RESPECT OF RATIFICATION, ACCEPTANCE OR APPROVAL ARE: BELGIUM (29-10-'99), GREECE (14-5-'98) AND MOROCCO (19-11-'97).

