

At the beginning of this year the Interim Secretariat would like to send you its best wishes for 1999. This year will be an extremely important one for the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (Bonn Convention). Firstly the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) will enter into force. The AEWA is the most ambitious Agreement ever developed under the Bonn Convention. Secondly the Bonn Convention will celebrate its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. And thirdly the 6<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties of the Bonn Convention and the first Meeting of the Parties of the AEWA will take place in November in Cape Town, South Africa. Both Secretariats will be very busy this year preparing for these meetings.

Since the fourth AEWA Newsletter the process of acceding to AEWA by Range States has continued smoothly, but not very quickly. However at the end of 1998 the required minimum number of seven Range States from Eurasia that have ratified the Agreement was reached. At present the first priority of the Interim Secretariat is to urge African countries to sign and ratify the Agreement as soon as possible so that the required number of seven ratifications from Africa can also be achieved within the next few months. As soon as this is the case the Agreement will enter into force on the first day of the third month in accordance with article XIV paragraph 1. In addition to the Interim Secretariat the Dutch Embassies will also be involved in bringing the AEWA to the attention of the responsible authorities. Of course you yourself could also, if necessary, urge your Government to speed up the process to become a Party to AEWA.

For the fifth issue of the AEWA Newsletter information has been received from: Mr Torben Klein (Denmark), Mr Habil H. Kalcheuter (Germany), Mr Valeri V. Krohov (Kazakhstan), Mr Namory Traore (Mali), Mr Jan H. Beekman (The Netherlands), Mr Andy Green (Spain), Mr John Cooper (South Africa), Mr Olivier Biber (Switzerland), Mr John Clorley (UK), Mr Nic Peet (UK). Further information was provided by Euroduck, Federation of Fieldsports Associations of the E.C. (FACE), United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the Foundation Working Group for International Waterbird and Wetlands Research (WIWO), the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation/ Migratory Birds of the Western Palearctic (CIC/ OMPO), Conservation Society of Sierra Leone, European Committee/ Directorate-General XI, Kark Klaus Stiftung, Vogelbescherming Nederland/ Birdlife Partner, Wetlands International.

The next issue will be published at the end of October. Please send information for inclusions before 15 July 1999.

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## SECRETARIAT NEWS

### **First Meeting of the Parties: Preparation**

The Interim Secretariat is currently very busy with the preparatory work for the first Meeting of the Parties. Meanwhile South Africa, who will host these meetings, has started to make the other logistical arrangements.

Thanks to the generosity of Switzerland and the Netherlands, Wetlands International could be contracted to draft the technical documents such as conservation guidelines, reviews, etc. In November 1998, during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Conference of Wetlands International, a special workshop on the AEWA took place. Approximately 100 people participated in this workshop to discuss the draft conservation guidelines on: single species action plans, identifying and tackling emergency situations, preparation of site inventories, management of critical sites, reducing crop damage and other forms of conflict between waterbirds and human activities and a waterbird monitoring protocol. In addition to the

workshop a meeting for representatives of the AEWA Range States was organised. In this session the Interim Secretariat gave an update regarding the Agreement, and a draft proposal for the establishment of the Technical Committee and for the Budget 2000-2002 was discussed. All the draft documents from these sessions are currently being reviewed.

### **An interview with the Mali Focal Point**

In the series of interviews with AEWA focal points the Interim Secretariat made contact with Mr Namory Traore of the *Direction Nationale de l'Amenagement et de L'Equipement Rural* (Department of Rural Management and Development) of Mali. As an ecologist involved in *Amenagiste de la faune et des Aires protégées* (Management of Fauna in Protected Areas), Mr Traore represents his country in the Scientific Council and in the Conference of the Parties to the Bonn Convention. He has participated in the AEWA discussions from the beginning, including the consultative meeting in Kenya in 1994 and the negotiation meeting in the Netherlands in 1995.

Mali signed the AEWA on 25 September 1997 and is now in the process of ratifying the Agreement. Mr Traore advises the Ministry of Rural Development and Water on this ratification process.

One of the benefits foreseen by Mr Traore of being a signatory to the AEWA is the possibility of obtaining some assistance to solve some of the problems in the conservation of waterbirds in the Inner Niger Delta.

After Mali signed the AEWA a vast information and awareness campaign was started. The target groups for this campaign are local communities, professional organisations and NGOs who are in some way involved in wetland management.

Mr Traore foresees possibilities for closer co-operation with the Agreement Area in particular in the framework of monitoring of waterbird populations. For the near future he expects that many countries will become a Party to the AEWA.

## **SUMMARY OF MEETINGS ATTENDED BY THE INTERIM SECRETARIAT**

### **June**

- Scientific Council of the Convention on Migratory Species in Wageningen, the Netherlands (Bert Lenten).
- Regional Meeting European Parties Ramsar Convention in Latvia; plenary presentation about the AEWA (Dr. Gerard C. Boere).

### **July**

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Parties to the EUROBATS Agreement in Bonn, Germany (Bert Lenten).
- Pan African Ramsar Meeting in Kampala, Uganda, plenary presentation about the AEWA (Bert Lenten)

### **August**

- International Wader Study Group Meeting in Cape Town; short presentation about AEWA and discussion about AEWA related projects in southern Africa (Dr. Gerard C. Boere).
- Meeting with officials from South Africa and UNEP in Pretoria and Cape Town about the organisation of the 1<sup>e</sup> MoP/AEWA (Dr. Gerard C. Boere).

### **September**

- Special AEWA Workshop in Moscow about a possible Russian signature of the AEWA (Dr. Gerard C. Boere).
- Special Seminar on the implementation of the AEWA in Germany on the island of Vilm, Germany (Bert lenten).
- First Meeting of the East Atlantic Network of Ramsar sites in Saint Valéry, France, plenary presentation on the AEWA (Bert Lenten).
- Mini-symposium in Kiev about migratory waterbirds and AEWA in the Ukraine; presentation of the "Odessa Proceedings to Vice minister Movchan (Dr. Gerard C. Boere).

### **October**

- Annual meeting of the International Wader Study Group in Hungary; special workshop about Slender Billed

Curlew (Dr. Gerard C. Boere).

- Standing Committee Ramsar Convention; several interventions about AEWA in relation to the Ramsar Convention (Dr. Gerard C. Boere).

#### **November**

- Special AEWA workshop (full day) at the Wetlands International Conference, Senegal (Bert Lenten and Dr. Gerard C. Boere).
- International Workshop on the Hunting Management of the Dark-Bellied Brent Goose in Vannes, France, plenary presentation of the AEWA (Bert Lenten)

#### **Januari**

- Workshop on the third part of the Flyway Management Plan for the Dark-Bellied Brent Goose in Wageningen, the Netherlands, (Bert Lenten)

### **Russian Federation discusses AEWA**

The Russian Federation is an important country for the AEWA. A substantial number of the species and numbers of migratory waterbirds under the AEWA breed in the Russian Federation, in particular in the northern Arctic and sub-Arctic regions. For some time now discussions have been taking place to identify the possible problems which Russia may encounter if it becomes a Party to the AEWA.

To discuss these problems, the State Committee for Environmental Protection organised a seminar in Moscow on 28 September 1998. All relevant bodies from within Moscow were invited to the meeting which was organised by Wetlands International Moscow Office, with support from the Netherlands Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries.

Presentations were given by the AEWA Interim Secretariat; State Committee on Environmental Protection; Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Russian Academy of Sciences, other ministries (Forestry, Natural resources etc.), Russian Institute for Nature Conservation Research and several national hunting organisations.

In general the support for the Russian accession to AEWA was strong. However many practical problems were identified, which may cause considerable delay. The main problems are: reservations on many species because of large differences in hunting regulations, the difficulty of paying the international contribution from 2000 onwards and the possible costs of the implementation in the Russian Federation. Finally there is the practical problem of receiving a positive answer from the regions, which deal with these issues.

A full report of the meeting is being prepared and discussions will continue in 1999. It will still take time, but it is promising that a serious discussion took place with so many of the decision-makers involved. The Dutch Government will provide support to continue the activities.

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### **PAN-AFRICAN RAMSAR MEETING**

The Pan-African Ramsar Meeting took place from 6-10 July 1998 at Kampala, Uganda. The Interim Secretariat participated in this meeting, *inter alia*, to promote the AEWA. About 100 people from 40 different countries participated at this meeting. During the meeting the following five themes were discussed:

- 1) Ramsar and Water
- 2) National Planning for Wetland Conservation and Wise Use
- 3) Involving local people at all levels
- 4) Tools for assessing and recognising wetlands values and
- 5) The framework for regional and international co-operation

The aim of the meeting was to discuss the themes and to prepare amendments or proposals from an African point of view for the seventh Conference of the Parties of Ramsar, which will take place in 1999 in Costa Rica.

The discussion on wetlands was particularly lively. Issues such as water resource, food resource, protection of the coast, etc. are obviously more important in Africa than the wetlands as an important habitat for waterfowl. One of the recommendations to be submitted to the COP7 is to change the definition by deleting the last part "as important habitat for waterfowl". It is expected that the Ramsar Bureau also will change their strategy by focusing less on the waterbird issue.

### **International Workshop on the Hunting Management of the Dark-Bellied Brent Goose.**

From 5-7<sup>th</sup> November 1998 an International Workshop on the hunting management of the Dark-Bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla bernicla*) took place in Vannes, France. Representatives of hunting associations, research institutions and governmental organisations from seven countries where the species occurs, participated at the meeting. The Interim Secretariat of AEWA participated in order to stress once more the importance of the AEWA as vehicle for international co-operation and the development and implementation of Species Management Plans.

During the meeting the current information on the status and utilisation of the Dark-Bellied Brent Goose was reviewed. Participants discussed the recommendations of the International Flyway Management Plan of the Dark-Bellied Brent Goose, especially its discussion paper in Annex 5 f concerning options for re-opening hunting on this species. One of the main bottlenecks at present is the absence of a population model as recommended in the International Flyway Management Plan. Without such a population model the impact of the re-opening of hunting cannot be assessed. The participants called for the early development and testing of the population model and expressed a wish to assist in the finalisation of Part II of the International Flyway Management Plan. Moreover they urged that the completed Plan be presented for adoption at the first Meeting of the Parties of AEWA in November 1999, and if approved, it be implemented at the earliest opportunity.

### **First Meeting of the "East Atlantic Network of Ramsar Sites".**

The Interim Secretariat participated at the first meeting of the East Atlantic Network of Ramsar sites, which was held from 24-27 September 1998 in Saint Valéry, France. Creating a new network is part of the project that was jointly developed by the *Conservatoire du Littoral* (France) and the Ramsar Bureau. Funding for this project has been obtained from the Danone (Evian) food conglomerate, the *Fonds Français Environnement Mondial* (French GEF) together with the *Conservatoire Littoral* and the Town of Evian.

The East Atlantic Ramsar Network was set up as an experimental network under the theme 'Transfer of Know-how'. Eleven Ramsar sites or potential Ramsar sites have been selected in eight different countries, from the Netherlands down to Senegal. The co-ordination of this network and its activities is the responsibility of the *Ligue pour la Protection des Oiseaux* (French BirdLife partner). Over a period of three years (1998-2000) three workshops will be held, and bi-lateral exchanges between sites will be set up in order to aid the transfer of knowledge and methods of dealing with wetlands and waterbirds issues. Obviously migratory waterbirds are the most important link between the sites and therefore the Interim Secretariat welcomes the opportunity to promote the AEWA within this network. \_

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### **AEWA Website**

In October 1998 WCMC was contracted to draft the French version of the AEWA Website. It is expected that this version will be available in spring 1999.

## **ACTION PLAN Species Conservation**

### **Action Plan for the management of the Great Cormorant**

On 5 October 1998, on behalf of the Netherlands and Denmark, the accepted Action Plan for the Great Cormorant was sent to all Range States by the Forest and Nature Agency of Denmark. This Plan was finalised after the International expert group meeting on 25-26 September 1997 in Copenhagen.

Range States are asked to implement the recommendations outlined in the Action Plan regarding management options, education, monitoring and establishment of an Advisory Committee.

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### **Report on an meeting of the Slender-billed Curlew Working Group, 18<sup>th</sup> October 1998, Keszthely, Hungary**

The Slender-billed Curlew Working Group (SbC WG), recently established under the Convention on Migratory Species (Bonn Convention) held an informal meeting during the Wader Study Group Conference in Hungary. Gerard Boere, Chair of the SbC WG, introduced the group and its activities under the Bonn Convention. He stressed the role of the group in co-ordinating international action to save the species. Nic Peet (BirdLife International) then reported on the work that BirdLife will carry out as secretariat to the SbC WG. Its main tasks will be to collate and maintain a records database and to ensure efficient communication within the group to allow it to achieve its aims. BirdLife's work is funded for 8 weeks a year by the Bonn Convention.

Satellite tagging technology presents exciting possibilities and challenges in working with threatened species. Nicola Baccetti ( *Instituto Nazionale per la Fauna Selvatica* ) reported on informal discussions on designing experiments to test the safety and effectiveness of satellite tags for medium sized waders. In particular, he reported on possible experiments with whimbrel, as a pre-cursor to examining tagging Slender-billed Curlews. The SbC WG is of the opinion that tags must be demonstrated to be safe and effective on migratory waders of similar size to the Slender-billed Curlew, before any tagging of this species is considered.

Country reports were received on the Ukraine from Alexander Mikityuk (Ukrainian Union for Bird Conservation), on Russia from Vladimir Morozov and Elena Lebedeva (Zoological Museum, Moscow & Russian Bird Conservation Union respectively), and on Hungary from Janos Olah (Hungarian Rarities Committee). The need to improve site coverage in the Ukraine and to train local ornithologists in identification of the Slender-billed Curlew was the main thrust of Alexander Mikityuk's talk. A summary of expeditions in Russia, to attempt to locate the breeding grounds of

the species, identified sites already searched in Siberia and the sites that are priorities for future expeditions. The update of recent records from Hungary identified the Hortobagy fishpond complex as the site of most recent records. There is clearly a need to ensure protection of the entire site.

Discussion during the meeting covered a number of issues. The meeting supported the idea that Slender-billed Curlews should not be satellite tagged until appropriate experiments had been conducted on similar species. It was felt that training in identification, using photographs, taped calls, and museum specimens, is a priority in a number of range states. Hunting and habitat destruction were identified as major problems for Mediterranean sites historically used by the species.

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

In 1996, the Netherlands drafted an international species action plan for the Dark-bellied Brent Goose. A Flyway Management Plan was then produced and discussed at an international workshop (Texel, January 1997). An international Action Plan is now to be added to the Flyway Management Plan and this will form a basis for concrete and effective management measures in the range states involved.

A multi-disciplinary team from the Institute for Forestry and Nature Research (IBN-DLO) is currently working on the formulation of an International Action Plan for the Dark-bellied Brent Goose. The team intends to develop a framework for practical action. The challenge is to make an Action Plan that can serve a two-fold-objective: protect the Brent Goose and solve the current conflicts between the need to maintain a stable Brent Goose population level and other societal goals.

Mutual support and cooperation between the range states involved is essential for effective management of the species at the Flyway level. Therefore, the Action Plan will include clear implementing guidelines for communication, monitoring and control aspects.

A constructive start-up meeting was held with the project team, the funding organisation and a number of participants from Non-Government Organisations on 8 January 1999. A draft of the Action Plan will be finished early in the spring of 1999. The Ministry of Agriculture Nature Management and Fisheries will then initiate a wider consultation-round with the range states. It is expected that the Action Plan can be presented at the first Meeting of the Parties to the AEWA in November 1999.

### **ACTION PLAN Habitat conservation**

#### **Euroducks International**

Ten years ago the ideas of the successful American conservation organisation "Ducks Unlimited" first reached the Old World, primarily initiated by conservation-minded hunters who wanted to follow their American colleagues' example.

Euroducks International and its national chapters promote wetlands conservation and the wise use of waterfowl populations. Of the national chapters, Euroduck Spain in particular has successfully launched several wetlands projects.

A lot of effort goes into fundraising and into trying to convince landowners to conserve or restore wetlands on their estates. Euroducks aims to establish close working ties with Wetlands International in order to address the technical aspects of management. The latest Euroducks Newsletter (1998) reports on progress and future activities.

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## **ACTION PLAN research and monitoring**

### **Wetland Surveys of Southern Africa**

The University of Cape Town, Avian Demography Unit has received a small grant from the Dutch Embassy to collect scientific data on migratory waterbirds in four Wetlands in southern Africa. This project is focused on Wetland and Coastline Studies of waders, terns and storm petrels in Central Namibia, Conservation Studies of palustrine wetlands and their birds, particularly Rallidae in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Zambia and on exploratory wetland surveys in central Mozambique.

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### **RECMAB Workshop, Helsinki, Finland, 2-4 April 1998**

The Finnish Environment Institute organised the first RECMAB workshop in Helsinki which was attended by ornithologists active in migration studies from Russia, Estonia, Finland, Denmark and the Netherlands. RECMAB is an acronym for Research, Conservation and Monitoring of Arctic migratory Birds in the Baltic and White Sea. About 20 scientists participated and reviewed current research activities and discussed future research plans and fundraising. Different research groups presented important results on the migration patterns of different groups of waterfowl, such as divers, seaducks, Branta geese and also northern swans (i.e. Bewick's and Whooper Swans). There was general agreement on the value of a flyway-based research approach for the future, both with respect to international co-operation and to the integration of regional studies under an all-encompassing umbrella regarding migration strategies of arctic birds. Ecological studies in key staging areas (both terrestrial and aquatic) should elucidate the unique importance of individual sites in the chain of 'stepping stones' (wetlands and marine habitats used for replenishing body stores) for each species, as well as potential threats to the environment. Such studies are widely regarded as crucial to the conservation of waterfowl populations in areas under AEWA. The Finnish Environment Institute has agreed to accommodate the RECMAB Secretariat (Mr. Timo Asanti, Finnish Environment Institute, fax +358 9 40300791, e-mail timo.asanti@vyh.fi).

One plan was worked out in more detail: the NW-European population of Bewick's Swans has been shown to rely heavily on submerged vegetation during migration, and shallow aquatic habitats are highly susceptible to change in water quality (pollution, eutrophication etc.). Scientists from Russia, Estonia and the Netherlands discussed gaps in the knowledge on stop-over site locations for both spring and autumn migrations, and agreed to set up a joint international project to simultaneously monitor different stop-over sites of Bewick's Swans in the Baltic Republics, Finnish Gulf, Russian Karelia and the White Sea region over the next two years, using repeated aerial surveys. Ground-based studies are also envisaged. The Netherlands took on the task of acquiring funding for this project. Ornithologists from St.Petersburg and Petrozavodsk provided new facts on stop-over sites in the Finnish Gulf and inland lakes in NW-Russia (e.g. Lakes Ladoga and Onega). However, the conclusion was that there is still much that we do not know about phenology of migration and peak numbers, as well as stop-over ecology, for the autumn migration period. It is vital that such stop-over sites are identified and protected without delay if conservation efforts for Bewick's Swans (a Red Book species) are to have any success.

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### **Russian Waterbird Counts in Database Serving AEWA Population Estimates.**

Central West Siberia, generally speaking the area between Novosibirsk, Omsk and the Chinese/Mongolian borders, has a large number of internationally important wetlands with substantial populations of waterbirds. The Ornithological Department of the Ecological Institute in Novosibirsk has collected large amounts of data on breeding and migrating waterbirds in many of the wetlands. These data have only ever been made available for international conservation on a restricted basis, e.g. the International Waterbird Census. This situation is changing for the better.

Dr. Yurlov, Head of the Ornithological Department will be in the Netherlands during the period 16 January - 22 February to enter the data of at least 10 years of waterbird counts in many areas into the IWC database and to familiarise himself with the database software. The analyses will also lead to the designation of new Ramsar sites. Dr. Yurlov will be a guest of Wetlands International in Wageningen and his project is supported by a research grant from the Science Directorate (DLO) of the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries.

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### **Fifth Woodcock and Snipe Workshop**

The Fifth Woodcock and Snipe Workshop was a joint effort by Wetlands International, the Migratory Bird Commission of the CIC and the European Wildlife Research Institute of the Agricultural University of Poznan. The workshop was held on 3-5 May 1998 at the Research Station of the Polish Hunters Association in Czempin, Poland. Participants from eight European countries and one African country held 24 presentations of research projects on Woodcock ( *Scolopax rusticola*), *S. minor*, Jack Snipe ( *Limnocyptes minimus*), Common Snipe ( *Gallinago gallinago*),

Great Snipe (*G. media*), African Snipe (*G. nigripennis*). These projects mostly covered the territory of the former USSR and the main breeding range of the European woodcock and snipe species. Continuous wing sampling and a remarkable increase in ringing results, thanks to the activities of the French Office National de la Chasse during the recent years, have given us new insight into several biological aspects of these secretive species; regarding for example, age-related migration patterns, moult sequences or reproduction rates. Telemetric and nutritional studies revealed habitat and dietary preferences, thus providing guidelines for habitat management. The paper will be published in the proceedings.

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### **Topic: Introducing Sierra Leone's National Waterfowl Census Co-ordinating Committee.**

In accordance with the recommendations of the African Waterfowl Census Review and Development Workshop in Djoudj, Senegal, 6-10 February 1996, Sierra Leone established an NWCCC with support from the Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL). It was the first African country to do so. Membership to the Committee is free and presently includes representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and the Environment; the University of Sierra Leone's constituent colleges (Fourah Bay College and Njala University College); NGOs; schools; and the general public. The Committee's original aim was to relaunch the AfWC programme in Sierra Leone. The aim now is to sustain and broaden the scope of the Census and use it as a tool for promoting wise use and conservation of the country's wetland-waterbirds and, more importantly, to urge the government of Sierra Leone to sign and ratify relevant international conventions and agreements such as Ramsar, Bonn and the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA). The Committee's activities to date include, participation of two of its members in wetland and waterbird inventories and training in Gambia; local training of AFWC surveyors, training a National Co-ordinator in the regional wetland-waterbird management course in Senegal; and last but not least relaunching the AfWC in July. The establishment and functions of the NWCCC presents new challenges and brighter prospects for Sierra Leone with regards to waterbird-wetland monitoring and conservation.

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### **Recent activities regarding the study of certain groups of wintering waterbirds in Morocco**

Since 1983, the Rabat Scientific Institute and the Department for Water and Forests have encouraged regular waterbird counts in Morocco. Since then, they have found that a significant number of wet zones in Morocco are important to waterbird populations.

The results of the counts are regularly published in the periodical "Documents de l'Institut Scientifique". A computer database maintained by the Centre d'Etude des Migration des Oiseaux (CEMO, Centre for Bird Migration Studies), situated in the Rabat Scientific Institute enables raw data to be processed, harmonized and managed continuously. The existence of this database has enabled a major research project on wintering waterbirds in Morocco. A study carried out near Anatides has been completed and another study on a group of waterbirds in Limicoles is in preparation.

Thus far, one of the major consequences of this project has been the designation of 16 and 7 zones of international significance for wintering waterbirds near Anatides and Limicoles, respectively.

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**Update on Marbled teal ( *Marmaronetta angustirostris*) in Spain**

A count in July 1998 yielded a new all-time high for the globally threatened Marbled Teal at El Hondo, Alicante, Spain (the main site for the species in the European Community): 750 birds were counted by the Conselleria de Medio Ambiente.

This is the third successive year that Alicante numbers have rocketed. We attribute much of this increase to the partial hunting ban imposed on the site in the last two winters, following an international campaign in which many of you participated. The growing population is probably also related to the recent rescues of broods trapped in drainage canals, which were later re-released into the wild. The White-headed Duck population at El Hondo is also very high: 201 were counted on 20-21 August last.

On 14 September 1998 the Valencian Government announced a provisional decision to ban hunting in the reservoir area ("los embalses de Levante y Poniente") of El Hondo for the coming '98-'99 season. However, this decision will be reviewed at the end of this year.

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**ACTION PLAN** information and education

**Conservation Action for the Slender-Billed Curlew**

For the LIFE Project "Conservation action for the Slender-billed Curlew" (see AEWA-newsletter issue 4, June 1998), the Federation of Hunters' Associations of the EU (FACE), has taken on the task of developing a Slender-billed Curlew awareness and education programme for hunters. FACE recently published a special information booklet in English, Italian, French and Greek. A Russian translation will be available soon. The booklet specifically addresses hunters.

The information is presented in an attractive lay-out and supplemented with various colour illustrations (e.g. to aid correct identification of the species). It is hoped that the booklet will help boost hunter awareness. This small but informative guide on the Slender-Billed Curlew also offers tips and explanations on how responsible hunters can contribute to the conservation of the species.

To further foster this awareness campaign, an international workshop sponsored by the project partners in co-operation with the European Commission is planned for 19-21 November 1998 in Alexandroupolis (Greece). The aim of this workshop is to exchange data and discuss the results of the three-year project. Conservationists, site managers, hunters, experts and scientists from different countries will come together to develop continuation strategies and concrete proposals for further conservation efforts for the Slender-billed Curlew.

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### **AEWA Postcards and stamp**

As publicity material a set of ten postcards have been printed. For these postcards the Interim Secretariat selected pictures of the following species: Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla bernicla*), Caspian Tern (*Sterna caspia*), Pygmy Goose (*Nettion auritus*), Garganey (*Anas querquedula*), Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*), Dalmatian Pelican (*Pelecanus crispus*), Ruddy Shelduck (*Tadorna ferruginea*), Eurasian Spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*), Bewick's Swan (*Cygnus columbianus bewickii*) and Red Knot (*Calidris canutus*). The set of postcards will be distributed to the Focalpoints for the AEWA and at the first Meeting of the Parties in Cape Town.

To celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Bonn Convention the Dutch Post Service decided to issue, on February 2, 1999, a special stamp on the AEWA. Although it is a special stamp it will be used by the general public to mail their letters and postcards. The design pictured the AEWA map, taken from the Final Act, flying tern, a small photo of the Waddensea and a general flyway arrow. The value is 80 (cents) ct (the letters "ct" are on the map, see picture, where Cape Town is situated!).

## **ACTION PLAN Implementation**

### **REPORT ON THE PROGRESS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AEWA 1997-1999**

In the previous newsletter it was indicated that on 21 August 1997 a letter was sent to all the national focal points of the 116 Range States enclosing the AEWA 1997-1999 Implementation. Since then contact was made with some of the Range States to encourage them to provide some support to this Plan. In February 1998 a second letter was sent to the national focal points to inform them about the actual situation regarding to this Implementation Plan.

The actual situation regarding support for the activities mentioned in the AEWA Implementation Plan 1997-1999 is as follows:

## **SUPPORT FROM THE NETHERLANDS**

Activity 1: Amendments to the Action Plan to include all 170 species of migratory waterbirds listed in Annex 2.

Activity 2: Report on the conservation status of all waterbirds covered by the Agreement.

Activity 3 a: Review of existing single species action plans in the Agreement area, and development of guidelines for the preparation of such plans.

3 b: Guidelines for identifying and tackling emergency situations.

3 c: Guidelines for the preparation of site inventories.

3 d: Guidelines for the management of critical sites for waterbirds.

3 f: Guidelines for regulating trade in waterbirds.

3 i: Guidelines for a waterbird monitoring protocol.

Activity 5: Preparation of atlases of wader populations covered by the Agreement Area (first phase).

Activity 9: Three regional Workshops: waterbird survey and monitoring.

Activity 10: Technical Review Workshop held in Senegal in November 1998.

For 1998/1999 the Netherlands has allocated a budget of \$325,000 for this support. In addition the Netherlands has decided to support the first phase of the preparation of atlases of wader populations covered by the Agreement Area (activity 5) by allocating US \$50,000 for this purpose.

## **SUPPORT FROM SWITZERLAND**

Activity 3: Preparation of one of the remaining guidelines (activity 3 e, 3 g or 3 h). For the drafting of the Guideline and for (partial) support of the activity mentioned below a budget of US \$40,000 has been allocated.

## **SUPPORT FROM SWITZERLAND AND THE NETHERLANDS**

Activity 8: Analysis of training needs for wetland survey and waterbird monitoring, and review of existing training bodies.

## **SUPPORT FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM**

Activity 7: Review of the status of introduced non-native waterbird species in the Agreement Area. For this review the UK has allocated a budget of US \$20,000

In addition to this generous funding from the Netherlands, Switzerland and United Kingdom, the European Union has indicated its interest in giving some support. The Interim Secretariat welcomes any additional support from Range States particularly for the activities for which no budget is available.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

**MR BERT LENTEN**

INTERIM SECRETARIAT OF THE AFRICAN-EURASIAN WATERBIRD AGREEMENT

c/o Department of Nature Management (Room 3500)

PO BOX 20401, 2500 THE HAGUE

THE NETHERLANDS

TEL: (+31) 70 3784982, FAX: (+31) 70 3786146

E-MAIL: b.lenten@n.agro.nl

## **STATUS OF INTRODUCED NON-NATIVE SPECIES IN THE AGREEMENT AREA**

**As part of its contribution to the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement, the UK has recently contracted a consortium of the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) and the Central Science Laboratory (CSL) to review the status of introduced non-native waterbird species in the AEWA Agreement area. This project is a vital first step to identifying the likely long-term problems posed by introduced waterbirds.**

Non-native species have entered new environments through various means: as a result of escaping from captivity; by using man as an unwitting form of transport; or by being introduced for naturalisation. Unfortunately, the consequences of introduction have been mostly negative, ranging from the transmission of disease to causing extinction of indigenous species. The threat caused by the North American Ruddy Duck to the Spanish population of the White-headed Duck is a clear example of the potential dangers.

To combat this, the International Implementation Plan for AEWA identified a need for parties to prohibit the deliberate introduction of non-native waterbird species into the environment, to take measures to prevent the unintentional release of such species, and to take measures to prevent already introduced non-native waterbird species from becoming threats to indigenous species.

The BTO/CSL consortium will undertake a review of the status of introduced non-native waterbird species in the Agreement area and assess the extent to which these species may adversely affect native species. The lack of information relating to introduced species in certain parts of the agreement area is likely to be a major constraint and we look to Range States to co-operate with the contractors to enable them to achieve the best possible results. The report of the review findings will be available in November 1999.

*For more information contact:*

**Mr John Clorley**

European Wildlife Division, Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, UK.

Tel: (+44) 0117 987 8700

Fax: (+44) 0117 987 8182

E-mail: european.wildlife@doe.gtnet.gov.uk

### **Development of the Wader Atlas.**

At the end of October 1998 Wetlands International was contracted by the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries to start with Phase 1 of the Development of an Atlas of Wader Populations in the African-Eurasian region. The Wader Atlas aims to provide policy makers, managers of reserves, etc. with the necessary background documentation for the conservation and sustainable management of a number of wader species included in the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement.

The total budget needed to draft this Atlas is estimated to be about US \$350.000. For the first phase the Netherlands has allocated US \$50.000. Hopefully AEWA Range States will consider (co)-funding one of the follow-up phases.

*For more information contact:*

Wetlands International

**Mrs. Janine van Vessem**

P.O. Box 7002

6700 CA Wageningen

The Netherlands

Tel (+31) 317 478884, fax: (+31) 317 478885

E-mail: vessem@wetlands.agro.nl

## **AEWA and Switzerland**

Switzerland was one of the first States to ratify the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds on 15 October 1997. The Swiss Government wished not only to support conservation and help restore the habitats of migratory waterbirds but also demonstrate international solidarity, particularly with developing countries where a large number of migratory species hibernate. The Agreement gives concrete shape to the very general provisions under the Bonn Convention; it constitutes one more step towards the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.

To a large extent migratory waterbirds and their habitats were already protected by existing Swiss law. However, as a follow up to the commitment taken when the Agreement was ratified and in anticipation of its formal implementation, the law on hunting and protection of mammals and wild birds was amended on 1 April 1998. By passing this amendment, the Swiss government has now given total protection to the Ferruginous Duck (*Aythya nyroca*), which had previously been hunted, and has banned the use of lead shot in areas of shallow water, in order to prevent the poisoning of waterbirds through ingestion of this type of ammunition with their food. Since 1967 monitoring programmes have been put in place to ensure the scientific monitoring of waterbirds and wetlands of international importance.

Switzerland places special importance on the speedy implementation of the Agreement. In May 1998 it decided to make a financial contribution to the realisation of the 1997-1999, AEWA implementation plan, specifically for the preparation of guidelines for conservation and for work associated with training for monitoring migratory waterbirds.

For more information contact:

Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape

**Mr Olivier Biber**

CH-3003 Bern

Switzerland

Tel: (+41) 31 3230663, Fax: (+41) 31 3247579

E-mail: [olivier.biber@buwal.admin.ch](mailto:olivier.biber@buwal.admin.ch)

## **PROJECTS**

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Vogelbescherming Nederland: 100 years young**

Vogelbescherming Nederland (the Dutch Society for the Protection of Birds) will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 1999. The Society was established to try and stop the killing of terns which were used to spruce up ladies' hats, a common fashion at the end of the last century. Today, the organisation is one of the key players in the Dutch nature conservation and lobby movement, with currently 110,000 members and clear links to both local bird conservation groups and international conservation work via BirdLife International. Next to the RSPB, the UK BirdLife Partner, and NABU, the German BirdLife Partner that is also celebrating its 100th anniversary in 1999, Vogelbescherming Nederland is one of the oldest nature conservation organisations in Europe.

In 1999, a series of celebrations and events will be held to attract the public's attention towards bird and conservation issues. These will include a series of television broadcasts on bird conservation successes in and outside the Netherlands. Furthermore last September, Vogelbescherming Nederland, started a fundraising campaign among its members for bird conservation projects in central and Southern Europe., such as the compilation and implementation of a national action plan for the White Stork in Czech Republic by the Czech Birdlife Partner.

For more information please contact:

Vogelbescherming Nederland

Driebergseweg 16c

3708 JB Zeist

Netherlands  
Tel: (+31) 30 6937700  
Fax: (+31) 30 6918844  
E-mail: birdlife@antenna.nl

### **Society of bird lovers "Remez" in Kazakhstan.**

In March 1997 a Society for bird lovers was established in Kazakhstan. This Society is funded by grants and from various charitable foundations and private voluntary donations.

Its main goals are to bring together the knowledge and experience of qualified scientists and amateur ornithologists in the conservation of birds and their habitat; to help the society's members in the organisation of their research; dissemination and propagation of knowledge of latest achievements in ornithological science; development of international co-operation in the field of study, conservation and practical use of birds.

To achieve these goals the following methods are used: Undertaking various projects, consultations, ornithological expeditions and excursions, information and publishing activities, organisation of exhibitions and competitions. Finally the Society is divided into six sections, namely: singing birds, birds of prey, waterfowl, ornamental birds, sport pigeon-breeding; ecological, study and conservation of birds.

For more information contact:

**Dr.V.V. Khrokov**  
Aksai-2,25-21. Almaty 480031  
Kazakhstan  
Tel.: +3272-23-08-35  
E-mail: chuk@remez.almaty.kz

### **SAFRING 50 years old**

This year marks the 50<sup>th</sup> year of bird-ringing in southern Africa. In 1946 Dr Austin Roberts discussed the start of a campaign to ring birds in southern Africa. In the last two decades, bird ringing has increased from 17,000 to 70,000 birds annually. Registration systems that used to be adequate are straining under the rapid growth in the number of ringed birds. In this commemorative year SAFRING is upgrading the database to contain all ringing records, retraps and recoveries.

With the financial support of the Netherlands the waterbird ringing recoveries in southern Africa from 1948-1998 will be reviewed and published

For more information please contact:

**Mr Dieter Oschadleurs**  
SAFRING  
Tel: + 21 650 2421/2  
E-mail: dieter@maths.uct.ac.za

### **Amendments to the Migratory Birds Regulations of Canada**

In 1997, in response to mounting scientific evidence of the harmful effects of lead shot on wildlife, the Canadian Migratory Birds Regulations were amended to ban the possession and use of lead shot for hunting most migratory birds. The ban came into effect on 1 September, 1997 in areas within 200 metres of any course or body of water, and will apply to all parts of Canada as of 1 September, 1999.

Currently, the Migratory Birds Regulations define non-toxic shot as steel shot, tungsten-iron shot, bismuth shot, or tungsten-polymer shot. This amendment, announced in the Canada Gazette Part II, Vol.132, No. 19 dd. 16

September 1998, will cause several minor adjustments to the definition of non-toxic shot, and tin shot and tungsten-matrix shot will be added to the regulation as additionally approved shot types.

For more information, contact:

**Mr Stephen Wendt**

Chief, Migratory Birds Conservation  
Canadian Wildlife Service  
Environment Canada  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0H3  
Tel: (+1) 819 953 1422

**A Bulletin Board for European Threatened Anatidae**

Some time ago, the Threatened Waterfowl Specialist Group (TWSG) established BBETA, the Bulletin Board for European Threatened Anatidae, a list-server maintained by The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust at Slimbridge (UK), in order to exchange news.

TWSG is now expanding the scope of this list-server, which is to be renamed TWSG-Forum and used for on-line exchange of news about globally threatened or near threatened Anatidae anywhere in the world. All interested in threatened waterbirds are encouraged to subscribe and to submit any new information on these species.

For more information please contact:

**Mr Andy Green**

Donana Biological Station  
Avenida Maria Luisa  
Pabellon del Peru  
41013 Sevilla  
Spain  
Ph.: (+34) 954232340  
Fax: (+34) 954621125  
E-mail: andy@ebd03.ebd.csic.es

**Conferences . Meetings of interest**

**February, 24-26, 1999**

A Strategy for wetland conservation in the Russian Federation, Moscow, Russia.  
Info: Wetlands International-Russia Programme Officer, P.O. Box 55, Moscow 125319, Russia. Tel/Fax: (+7) 095 1904655, E-mail: ikamennova@wwfnet.org

**April 26-29, 1999**

7<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) Working Group, Yellowknife, Canada  
Info: CAFF International Secretariat, Hafnarstraeti 97, 600 Akureyri, Iceland, Tel: (+354) 462 3350, Fax: (+354) 462 3390, E-mail: CAFF@nattfs.is

**May 17-19, 1999**

Meeting of the Group of Experts on conservation of birds, organised by the Bern Convention, Strasbourg, France  
Info: Mrs. Sandra Jen, Environment and Management Division, Council of Europe, F 67075 Strasbourg Cedex, France  
Tel: (+33) 388412256, Fax: (+33) 388413751

**May 10-18, 1999**

7<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Ramsar Convention, San José, Costa Rica  
INFO: Ramsar Bureau  
Rue Mauverney 28, CH-1196 Gland, Switzerland  
Tel: (+41) 22 999 0170, Fax: (+41) 22 999 0169  
E-mail: ramsar@hq.iucn.org

**May 24-28, 1999**

7<sup>th</sup> EUCC International Conference "Coastlines 1999", Szczecin/ Gdansk, Poland  
Info: EUCC-Poland, P.O. Box 9, 72-112 Stepnica, Poland, Tel/Fax: (+48)226481852

**June 1999**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> International Wildlife Management Congress, Gödöllő, Hungary  
For more information contact: FACE, 82 rue Pelletier, B-1030 Brussels, Belgium  
tel: (+32) 2 7326900, fax: (+32) 27327072, E-mail: faceeurope@infoboard.be

**September 30-October 4, 1999**

International Conference on results and Perspectives of Bird Ringing, island Helgoland, Germany.  
Info: Prof. Dr. Franz Bairlein, Intsitut fur Vogelforschung, Vogelwarte Helgoland, an der Vogelwarte 21, D-26386  
Wilhelmshaven, Germany, Tel: (+49) 4421 96890, Fax: (+49) 4421 968955, E-mail: bairlein@ifv-terramare.fh-  
wilhelmshaven.de

**November 7-9, 1999**

1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Parties of AEWA, Cape Town, South Africa  
Info: Bert Lenten, Interim Secretariat AEWA, c/o Department of Nature Management, P.O. Box 20401, 2500 The  
Hague, The Netherlands, Tel: (+31) 70 378 4982, Fax: (+31) 378 6146, E-mail: b.lenten@n.agro.nl,  
<http://www.wcmc.org.uk/AEWA>

**November 10-16, 1999**

6<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS),  
Cape Town, South Africa.  
Info: UNEP/CMS Secretariat, Martin Luther-King Str. 8, D-53175 Bonn, Germany, Tel: (+49) 228 815 2401/02, Fax:  
(+49) 228 815 2449, E-mail: cms@unep.de, <http://www.wcmc.org.uk/cms>

**PUBLICATIONS**

**West African Waterbirds: An identification Guide**

FACE, with its French delegation, the *Union National des Chasseurs*, as well as the *Office National de la Chasse* and *OMPO ( Oiseaux Migrateurs du Paléarctique Occidental)* has co-edited an identification guide for West African Waterbird species. This field guide describes 112 of the main Pelican, Cormorant, Heron, Egret, Stork, Duck and Wader Species frequenting the region, from Senegal to Chad and from the Sahara to the Congo. For each species the identification criteria are described and birds are illustrated roosting and in flight. The guide also provides much practical advice for field watchers, counting techniques, confusion risks, etc. Unfortunately the guide is only available in French.

For more information contact:

**OMPO**

5, Avenue des Chasseurs, 75017 Paris, France  
Tel: (+33) 1 44010510, Fax: (+33) 144010511  
E-mail: ompo@dyadel.net

**Brochure on the Lena-Delta and New Siberian Islands.**

In December 1998 a brochure of WWF on the Lena-Delta and New Siberian Islands has been published. The brochure written in German, Russian and English gives a good overview of the value of this Gift to the Earth lying in a remote area of the Russian Republic Sakha (Yakutia). Information can be found on Geological Processes at Many Scales, Birds, Fish and Mammals, the People of the Delta and on the International Biological Station "Lena-Nordenskiöld". Finally this publication was made possible through financial support of the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries of the Netherlands.

For more information contact:

**WWF-Norway**

Kristan Augustsgt. 7 A

Postboks 6784 St Olavs Pl

N-0130 Oslo, Norway

Tel: (+47) 22 03 65 17

Fax: (+47) 22 20 06 66

E-mail: [wwfap@online.no](mailto:wwfap@online.no)

Website: [ngo.grida.no/wwfap](http://ngo.grida.no/wwfap)

**Goose Populations of the Western Palearctic;** a review of status and distribution (Wetlands International Publication 48).

The book, edited by Jesper Madsen, Gill Cracknell and Tony Fox, review the status, trends, distribution, ecology, conservation and management of 23 populations of geese breeding and wintering in the Western Palearctic. It synthesises monitoring data and research results compiled by the Goose Specialist Group of Wetlands International since 1950s. Each population chapter contains a population review and a description of numbers, distribution and conservation management in each of the flyway Range States. The book is written as a source of reference for the international goose research and nature conservation and management community as well as for a wider audience interested in geese.

For more information or to order the book contact:

**The National Environmental Research Institute**

Kalø, Grenaaavej 12

DK-8410 Rønde

Denmark

Tel: (+45) 89201700, Fax: (+45) 89201515

E-mail: [tpe@dmu.dk](mailto:tpe@dmu.dk)

**FAO, Fisheries Report No. 584**

Delegations from 54 members of the Organisation and observers from eight intergovernmental and international non-governmental organisations met at FAO headquarters from 23 to 24 July 1998 to prepare for the Consultation on the Management of Fishing Capacity, Shark Fisheries and Incidental Catch of Seabirds in Long-line Fisheries. Draft plans of action for the conservation and management of sharks and for the reduction of incidental catch of seabirds in long-line fisheries were discussed, as well as a draft plan of action for the management of fisheries capacity. The report contains recommendations for documents to be presented to the Consultation proper (26 to 30 October 1998).

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**Waders and other Waterbirds in the United Arab Emirates- (WIWO report no. 62)**

In autumn 1994, winter 1994-1995 and spring 1995 coastal wetlands in the United Arab Emirates were surveyed for waders and other waterbirds. Special attention was paid to waders in Khor Dubai, a shallow lagoon near Dubai city. In

this area, about 4,000 waders were counted in autumn and spring, and about 12,000 in winter. At one time during migration, up to 100,000 waders can be present in the UAE; Kentish and Lesser Sandplover, Dunlin and Bartailed Godwit are the most numerous wader species. The UAE has internationally important numbers of Socotra Cormorants, Grey Heron, Western Reef Egret. Most waders species, Sooty Gull and several Tern species are present for most of the year. Numbers of Broad-billed Sandpipers were found to be very low compared to counts in Khor Dubai during the mid-1980s.

In this report, data is presented on migration, biometry, and the dietary intake of waders feeding on ragworms.

### **Waterbirds in the Sine-Saloum Delta and Petit Côte, Senegal, January 1997 (WIWO report 63)**

In January 1997, an all-encompassing bird census was held along the Senegalese coast between Dakar and the Gambian border, specifically the Sine-Saloum Delta and Petit Côte. The extended wetland coastline here attracts thousands of palearctic and African birds. This report presents the results of the first complete census of this region: species, numbers and distribution.

This report contains supplementary information on the region, habitats, methods used, threats to the bird populations and recommendations for the future.

### **Breeding birds of the Albanian wetlands, spring 1996 (WIWO report no. 64)**

Report no. 64 presents the information about the breeding birds of 16 Albanian wetlands visited during the spring of 1996. Special attention was given to the threatened species Ferruginous Duck, Pygmy Cormorant and Dalmatian Pelican. Each wetland is discussed separately. Nearly 5000 avifauna records of 235 species were collected during the visit to Albania and are presented in the report. For most species a distribution map gives the possible breeding distribution in the areas visited.

### **Waders and Waterfowl in the Floodplain of the Logone, Cameroon, January 1993 (WIWO report no. 67)**

The report presents the information on waders and waterfowl collected in January and February 1993 in the floodplains of the Logone river in Cameroon. A description is given of the area visited, the methodology used, the results and an evaluation of the methodology.

For more information contact:

WIWO, Van Stuivenbergweg 4

664 AB Ewijk

The Netherlands

PH.: (+31) 8872 2462

### **Brochure: Bird-compatible overhead transmission lines**

Wherever electricity transmissions lines are led freely across the landscape, the conductors and towers are liable to become deadly traps for big birds such as White Storks (*Ciconia ciconia*). These birds suffer injuries and electric shocks when they hit the conductors or towers. Conservationists are concerned about the impact of these man-made obstacles to migratory birds. The Karl Kaus Stiftung (Germany) has compiled a brochure with recommendations to avoid these hazards. The brochure was published earlier this year and hopefully those who are in a position to do so will implement the recommendations made in this brochure for the benefit of migratory bird species.

For more information or to order a copy of the brochure please contact:

Kark Klaus Stiftung  
Naturschutzzentrum  
Mühlbachstrasse 2  
D-878315 Radolfzell  
Germany

### **LIFE-Nature Guide**

The second edition of the guide 'Financial instruments for the Natura 2000 Network and nature conservation' has just been published by the TERRA environmental policy centre in Madrid. The publication was funded by the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries and DGXI of the European Commission. The guide is recommended for those wishing to gain a working knowledge of European Union financial mechanisms for nature conservation.

The guide is a concise and easy-to-read introduction to the LIFE instrument, the Structural Funds, Cohesion Fund and CAP accompanying measures, and includes examples of field implementation. It is available in English and Spanish.

For more information contact:  
European Committee  
Directorate-General XI, D2  
Wetstraat 200,  
B-1049 Brussels, Belgium  
Fax: (+32 2) 296 9556  
<http://europa.eu.int/en/comm/life/home.htm>

### **BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL'S SEABIRD CONSERVATION PROGRAMME**

Urged on by growing concerns about new threats to the World's seabirds - from fisheries, alien predators and the effects of global warming and pollution - BirdLife International established a Seabird Conservation Programme in 1997. The Programme, funded for its first two years by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, the United Kingdom BirdLife International Partner, is based in South Africa, but takes a global perspective. The programme's first project is a review of the effects of long-line fisheries on seabird mortality: this is a serious threat to the conservation status of, in particular, albatrosses and petrels.

The Programme sometimes overlaps the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement since AEWA also covers some bird families which are considered seabirds, such as cormorants and pelicans (Family Phalacrocoracidae), and gulls and terns (Laridae). However, both the Seabird Conservation Programme and AEWA can benefit from the exchange of information and ideas. BLI's Seabird Conservation Programme, as a subsidiary of a global organisation with partners in 61 countries, is willing to offer specialist advice to AEWA,

For more information contact:

JOHN COOPER  
Seabird Conservation Programme  
Birdlife International  
Avian Demography Unit  
University of Cape Town  
Rondebosch 7701  
South Africa  
ph.: (+27) 21 650 3426

fax: (+27) 21 650 3295  
e-mail: jcooper@botzoo.uct.ac.za  
website: www.uct.ac.za/depts/stats/adu/seabirds

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## Websites

### **CMS WEBSITE**

A completely renovated version of the Website of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) was posted on the internet last September. This site contains a wealth of information on CMS and related Agreements. The site could be found at: <http://www/wcmc.org.uk/cms>

### **Interested in waterbird conservation?**

Why not check out the bulletin of the Threatened Waterfowl Specialist Group at:  
<http://www.greenchannel.com/wwt/research/publications/twsg>

See also our project on dispersion of plants and zooplankton by Anatidae at:  
<http://www.cluwrr.ncl.ac.uk/LAKES/LAKES.htm>

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## COLOPHON

THE AFRICAN-EURASIAN WATERBIRD AGREEMENT (AEWA) IS AN AGREEMENT UNDER THE CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF MIGRATORY SPECIES OF WILD ANIMALS COMMONLY REFERRED TO AS THE BONN CONVENTION. AEWA AIMS TO CREATE A LEGAL BASIS FOR A CONCERTED CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT POLICY BY RANGE STATES FOR MIGRATORY WATERBIRD SPECIES.

AEWA HAS AN ACTION PLAN, WHICH SPECIFIES ACTION PARTIES SHALL UNDERTAKEN IN RELATION TO PRIORITY SPECIES AND ISSUES.

THE NEWSLETTER INFORMS OF THE LATEST NEWS ON AEWA. THE NEXT NEWSLETTER WILL BE PUBLISHED IN OCTOBER 1999.

THIS NEWSLETTER IS ALSO AVAILABLE IN FRENCH.

### **THE NEWSLETTER WAS PUBLISHED BY THE:**

INTERIM SECRETARIAT OF  
THE AFRICAN-EURASIAN WATERBIRD AGREEMENT  
C/O MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, NATURE MANAGEMENT AND FISHERIES  
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**PRINTED BY:** ALBANI DRUKKERS, THE HAGUE

## AGREEMENT UPDATE

The African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) has been open for signing at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in The Hague (the Netherlands) since August 15, 1996. At present, the following Range States have signed the Agreement with reservations with respect to ratification: United Kingdom and Northern Ireland (23-9-'96), Ireland (27-9-'96), Egypt (20-8-'97) the European Union (1-9-'97), Mali (25-9-'97), Luxemburg (27-10-'97), Morocco (19-11-'97), Togo (2-2-'98), Spain (20-2-'98), Greece (14-5-'98) and the Ukraine(16-10-'98). The Netherlands (15-8-'96), Guinea, Gambia, Switzerland (15-10-'96), Sudan (31-12-'96), Jordan (12-3-'97), Equatorial Guinea, Romania (7-8-'98), Sweden (5-10-'98), France (25-11-'98) and Germany (9-12-'98) ratified or signed without needing ratification.

On the basis of information from the AEWA focal points, regularly passed on to the Interim Secretariat, we expect to achieve the required seven ratifications for Eurasia by the end of 1998. The outlook is rather more worrying for the African region. We hope to have seven ratifications by mid 1999 so that AEWA will come into effect.

If the Agreement takes effect in the middle of this year, the first Meeting of the Parties will take place from 7 to 9 November 1999 in Cape Town, South Africa. This meeting will be organised back to back with the Sixth Conference of the Parties of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS).