



## 12<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

31 January – 01 February 2017, Paris, France

### REPORT ON THE JOINT CMS/AEWA INFORMATION MANAGEMENT, COMMUNICATION AND AWARENESS-RAISING (IMCA) UNIT

*(Reporting Period: November 2015 – December 2016)*

#### Introduction

The following report provides a summary of the main activities carried out for the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat by the Joint CMS/AEWA Information Management, Communication and Awareness-raising (IMCA) Unit during the period between November 2015 and December 2016. The report also provides an update on the latest management and institutional developments relating to the Joint Unit, since its establishment in January 2014 as a pilot in joint services between the UNEP/CMS and UNEP/AEWA Secretariats.

#### Institutional Arrangements

The institutional arrangements for the Joint IMCA Unit have evolved significantly since its initial creation in January 2014.

Through Resolution 6.22, the AEWA Meeting of the Parties requested the UNEP/AEWA and UNEP/CMS Secretariats to develop a proposal within three months after MOP6 detailing implementation arrangements for the Joint IMCA Unit including staff time and budget sharing ratios, management structure, monitoring and evaluation indicators, among others, to be approved by the Standing Committee.

Considering the importance of this issue, the Committee granted the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat additional time to prepare a detailed proposal in consultation with the UNEP/CMS Secretariat.

During this period, a method to monitor staff time allocation within the IMCA Unit was tested and assessed and the draft proposal on the future management modalities was discussed extensively with the UNEP/CMS Secretariat.

The proposal for the IMCA Unit as requested by Resolution 6.22. was circulated on 27 September and approved by the members of the StC on 24 October 2016.

#### Management of the Joint Unit

The IMCA Unit is jointly managed by the CMS Executive Secretary and the AEWA Executive Secretary, while the IMCA Coordinator (the AEWA Information Officer) has the responsibility for the day-to-day management of the team. Over the course of the past three years since the establishment of the Unit in January 2014, much progress has been made in terms of transforming the Unit into an effective shared team that serves a wide range of communication, information management and outreach needs of both the UNEP/CMS and UNEP/AEWA Secretariats. This has been achieved through a re-organization and specialization process that focused on establishing “core communications and information management capacity” within the team in the areas of 1. Website and Knowledge Management, 2. Screen and Print Design, 3. Writing & Editorial Service, 4. Press and Media (incl. social media) and 5. Campaigns and Outreach.

## Team Composition

The organigram below describes the current composition of the IMCA Unit showing the regular staff and consultant positions contributed by UNEP/CMS and UNEP/AEWA Secretariats to the Joint Unit:

### Organigram of the Joint Information Management, Communications and Awareness-raising (IMCA) Unit of the UNEP/CMS and UNEP/AEWA Secretariats (as of January 2017)

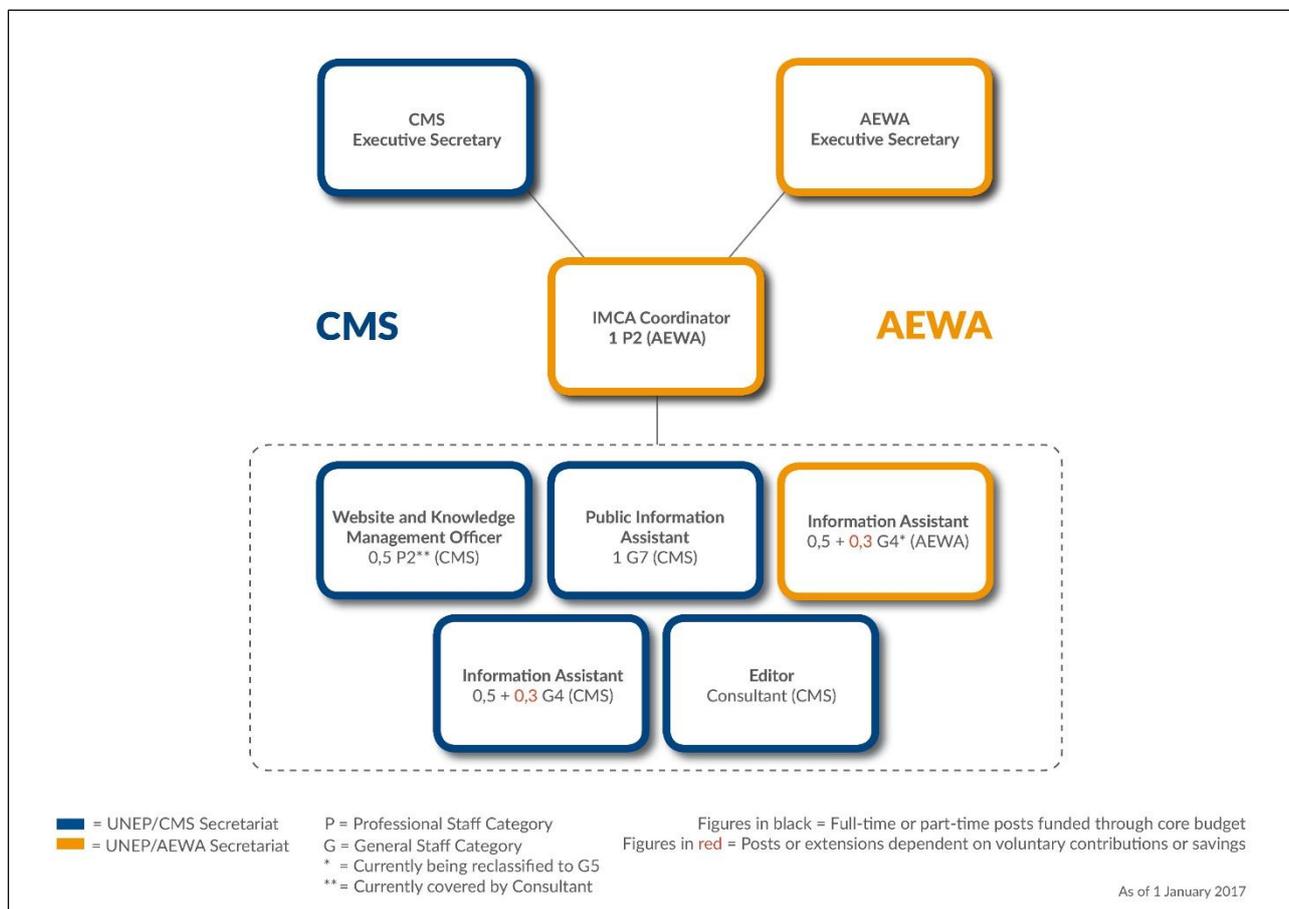


Figure 1: Organigram of Joint IMCA Unit (as of January 2017)

## Management Improvements

The IMCA Coordinator has over the past three years established a number of management tools and procedures, which have already significantly improved the operation of the Unit. These include:

- **A Communications Pipeline** – An always up-to-date table of upcoming CMS and AEWA events and activities which require communications support from the IMCA Unit. The pipeline has evolved into a useful planning and management tool for the Unit, as it defines the specific communication activities being planned (website news, press releases, social media, videos etc.) and the IMCA staff involved in each activity.
- **Regular Editorial Meetings** – The IMCA Unit holds weekly editorial meetings to coordinate and plan its work. The regular meetings are led by the IMCA Coordinator and used to discuss and review the latest Communications Pipeline.
- **Time and Task Monitoring Tool** – A time and task tracking tool has been established to be able to monitor and report on the actual work being conducted by the IMCA Unit for each Secretariat. The

online tool allows each member of the team to log their work according to pre-defined projects and activities per client (i.e. CMS, AEWA or JOINT). The tool can also produce overview reports that will aid the general management of the Unit and will help ensure that the 1/3 – 2/3 arrangement is fulfilled.

### Example Time Monitoring Report (May – December 2016)

Below is a sample report which can be produced by the tool being used ([www.toggl.com](http://www.toggl.com)). It shows all the hours logged by five of the IMCA Unit team members grouped by clients (AEWA, CMS and JOINT) over a period of eight months (May – December 2016). It should be noted that this is only an illustration of what is possible with the tool. In future, the time tracking will be done according to the main activities listed in an annual Programme of Work for the IMCA Unit approved by both the CMS and AEWA Executive Secretary (see below).



Figure 2: Example Time Tracking per Client Report for IMCA Team for Period of May - December 2016 (Copyright: Toggl.com)

## **IMCA Unit Programme of Work**

As of January 2017, the work of the IMCA Unit will be guided by an annual **Programme of Work (PoW)** specifically for the Unit that is developed by the IMCA Coordinator and approved by both the Executive Secretary of CMS and AEWA. The PoW will also improve the overall planning and help to prioritize the work being done by the IMCA Unit for each respective Secretariat on a yearly basis.

## **Communication Strategy**

At the AEWA MOP6 in November 2015, AEWA Parties adopted a new Communication Strategy for the Agreement through AEWA Resolution 6.10 and which was also acknowledged in AEWA Resolution 6.18.

The overall aim of the strategy is to guide the communication work of all the relevant AEWA stakeholders to support the implementation of the Agreement. As such, the strategy is an important (high level) document for the Secretariat and the IMCA Unit in terms of providing a strategic framework for ongoing communication efforts.

The strategy is used by both the AEWA Executive Secretary and the IMCA Coordinator (the AEWA Information Officer) to give strategic direction to the work of the IMCA Unit as it relates to AEWA. Over the past year, since its adoption, the new Communication Strategy has proven to be a useful tool and reference document, as it clearly defines AEWA's communication objectives, niche and target audiences, etc.

The AEWA Communication Strategy is available on the AEWA Website at: <http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/cepa>

## **Communication, Education and Awareness Raising (CEPA)**

As at December 2016, a total of 27 AEWA Parties had nominated National Focal Points for Communication, Education and Awareness Raising (CEPA) in accordance with AEWA Resolution 5.5. All Focal Point nominations are communicated to the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat and an up-to-date list of AEWA CEPA Focal Points is published on the AEWA website at the following location: <http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/cepa>

Information on the roles and responsibilities of CEPA Focal Points as well as a designation form can also be found on the webpage above. Parties are encouraged to continue to nominate AEWA CEPA Focal Points, despite the passing of the deadline mentioned in Resolution 5.5.

### **Thematic CEPA Expert on the AEWA Technical Committee**

In line with AEWA Resolution 5.5, Ms Oleysa Petrovych (Ukraine) was nominated as the Thematic Expert for Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) on the AEWA Technical Committee (TC) in May 2015. The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat was able to support Ms Petrovych's participation in the 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the AEWA Technical Committee, which took place from 14-17 March 2016 in Israel. At the meeting, Ms Petrovych acted as Chair of the TC Working Group (WG) on Education and Information (WG 6) which identified CEPA related activities for inclusion in the AEWA Technical Committee's Work Plan for the period 2016 – 2018.

A total of ten TC intersessional sub-tasks were identified by the Technical Committee WG on Education and Information, which are captured in detail in the AEWA Technical Committee Work Plan 2016 – 2018 (available upon request from the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat). Since the TC Meeting in March 2016, the IMCA Unit has begun to work on some of the activities for the Secretariat in 2016, for example through the promotion of the "Flight of the Swan" Flyway Campaign and the development of a draft Fact Sheet for the Bewick's Swan SSAP (Activities 6.1.8 and 6.1.9). It is expected that many of the activities of AEWA TC Working Group 6 on Education and Information will also be part of the work programme of the IMCA Unit for AEWA in 2017.

Ms Petrovych also contributed to the AEWA Strategic Plan Revision Process as the TC Thematic CEPA Expert during a workshop held from 28 – 30 June 2016 at the UN premises in Bonn, Germany.

AEWA Resolution 6.10, adopted at AEWA MOP6 in November 2015, includes a request to both the AEWA CEPA Focal Points and CEPA Expert, to provide active support to the communication work of the Agreement, for example through the identification of priority issues and partners for communication, development of communication plans, communication products and key messages.

## Report on Ongoing Activities

Below is a summary of the main communication and information management related activities carried out by the IMCA Unit for AEWA between November 2015 and December 2016:

### News Production

Approximately **60 website news articles** have been featured on the AEWA website since November 2015. The published stories report on current AEWA activities such as meetings, major events and publications and aim to keep the wider AEWA network informed of the activities of the Secretariat and other AEWA stakeholders. The articles are usually drafted by the responsible officers at the Secretariat and then edited and prepared for web publishing by the IMCA Unit. Once approved for publishing by the Executive Secretary, the news stories are featured on the front page of the AEWA website and also promoted as unique content via AEWA’s social media platforms. Each published web article can also be directly shared to other platforms by interested readers for example via Facebook, Twitter and Google + (among others).

For a full overview of news articles published on the AEWA website since November 2015, please visit the following link:

<http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/news>

### Highlights

Over the past twelve months, the following AEWA website news stories had a particularly wide exposure and social media reach:

Title	Link	Likes on Facebook	No. of direct Website Hits
EU LIFE+ Project for Globally Threatened Lesser White-fronted Goose Wins European Natura 2000 Award	<a href="http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/news/eu-life-project-globally-threatened-lesser-white-fronted-goose-wins-european-natura-2000-award">http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/news/eu-life-project-globally-threatened-lesser-white-fronted-goose-wins-european-natura-2000-award</a>	155	367
“Flight of the Swans” Highlights Conservation Efforts in Estonia	<a href="http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/news/%E2%80%9Cflight-swans%E2%80%9D-highlights-conservation-efforts-estonia">http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/news/%E2%80%9Cflight-swans%E2%80%9D-highlights-conservation-efforts-estonia</a>	197	313
AEWA Adriatic Flyway Workshop in Samobor, Croatia	<a href="http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/news/aewa-adriatic-flyway-workshop-samobor-croatia">http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/news/aewa-adriatic-flyway-workshop-samobor-croatia</a>	27	178
AEWA Small Grants Fund - 2015 Call for Proposals	<a href="http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/news/aewa-small-grants-fund-2015-call-proposals">http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/news/aewa-small-grants-fund-2015-call-proposals</a>	72	2448
New Journal Article Highlights AEWA’s Unique Place in International Environmental Law	<a href="http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/news/new-journal-article-highlights-aewa%E2%80%99s-unique-place-international-environmental-law">http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/news/new-journal-article-highlights-aewa%E2%80%99s-unique-place-international-environmental-law</a>	56	106

## Electronic Newsletter

An Electronic Newsletter, the so-called AEWA E-Newsletter, is prepared and disseminated by the IMCA Unit to ca. 3000 AEWA contacts via email on a regular basis. The E-Newsletter is a selection of the main AEWA news stories from a period covering 3-4 months arranged in an HTML enriched email. The E-Newsletter is produced in-house using a custom E-Newsletter building tool (part of the CMS Family Website Infrastructure) and sent out in both English and French language. Since November, 2015 a total of three AEWA E-Newsletters have been prepared and disseminated to the AEWA network. All AEWA E-Newsletters can also be found on the AEWA website at the following location: <http://www.unep-awea.org/en/publications/newsletter>

- **AEWA E-Newsletter – Issue # 45 / November 2016** [<http://www.unep-awea.org/en/node/3651>]
- **AEWA E-Newsletter – Issue # 44 / June 2016** [<http://www.unep-awea.org/en/node/3570>]
- **AEWA E-Newsletter – Issue # 43 / December 2015** [<http://www.unep-awea.org/en/simplenews/awea-e-newsletter-43-december-2015>]

## Website & Knowledge Management

The IMCA Unit technically manages and maintains all external websites and online tools of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat. This includes the management of the official AEWA website, the AEWA Technical Committee Workspace and a number of AEWA Single Species Action Plan Working Group websites. In addition, the IMCA Unit is in charge of the technical management of the Online National Reporting System (ORS), the Online Meeting Registration System and Contacts Database, all of which are used by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat and other CMS Family Instruments collectively.

While the development, hosting and technical maintenance of some of the tools continues to be done in cooperation with external web developers to a limited extent, the in-house website management capacity within the IMCA Unit has increased significantly with the hiring of a CMS Website and Knowledge Management Consultant, which is also clearly benefitting the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat.

The IMCA Website Consultant is able to tackle many of the technical issues which previously required the expertise and support of external developers and fulfils many important day-to-day functions in the area of knowledge and website management for both the UNEP/AEWA and UNEP/CMS Secretariats (and the wider CMS Family), from bug fixing, to helpdesk and training of staff, establishment of web publishing norms and work flows, to web design, data management and usability improvements.

## Website Improvements in 2016

- **Document Management:** Development of a dynamic, searchable list of AEWA Resolutions and Reports and a dynamic list page for editors of documents (bulk operations);
- **Parties by Region:** A dynamic page which allows the sorting of AEWA Parties and Range States by Region has been added;
- **Home Page:** Creation of a new and improved front page (mockup) design for the CMS Family Websites, also for potential use by AEWA. The mockup is currently in development and will be made live after it has been reviewed and approved by each Secretariat;
- **Custom Displays** which bring together multi-media content (text, video, photo galleries, social media feeds etc.) have been developed for AEWA MOP6 and the Flight of the Swans Campaign on the AEWA Website;
- **Thematic Pages:** Preliminary work has been done on the development of a template for the creation of thematic webpages;
- **AEWA Parties Map:** The AEWA Agreement Area has been added to the interactive Range State and Party Map on the AEWA Website;
- **Optimization** of the presentation of AEWA website content across the website (static pages, news items, E-Newsletter etc.)

## Online National Reporting System (ORS)

The IMCA Unit continues to work closely with the IT and Species Units at UNEP-WCMC to optimize the use of the Online Reporting System (ORS). Thanks to a UNEP DELC / EU ACP funded project, the original ORS which was used for reporting to both AEWA MOP5 and MOP6, has been significantly improved by UNEP-WCMC in close cooperation with the IMCA Unit in terms of its usability and interoperability in 2016. The active participation in the further development process of the ORS by the IMCA Unit is a direct continuation of the pioneering role that the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has played in the development of the first version of the ORS. Meanwhile, the early vision of creating a single, highly sophisticated online national reporting tool for use by multiple Multilateral Environment Agreements (MEAs) has become a reality, with several MEAs using the ORS for their national reporting processes. Users of the ORS include AEWA, CMS, EUROBATS, Bern Convention, CITES, RAMSAR, PLANT TREATY, and a number of other MEAs have expressed their interest.

For more information on the ORS please see: <http://www.ors.ngo/>

## Press and Media

The IMCA Unit coordinates the production of press releases, media advisories and op-eds to highlight major AEWA achievements, reports and special events such as MOP6 and World Migratory Bird Day. On the occasion of MOP6, a special “Media Room” was created with news articles, interviews, feature articles and videos to provide an insight into various topics. The IMCA team works with the UN Department of Public Information, UNEP DCPI, UNEP Regional Offices and Deutsche Welle (German International Broadcaster) and other media outlets to try to enhance coverage of AEWA in the media. In this context, it has facilitated interviews with UN Radio and other broadcasting stations in Europe and Africa with the AEWA Executive Secretary and with other relevant experts. Op-eds are prepared and placed in targeted media outlets to emphasize the importance of conserving migratory birds and to highlight important issues relating to AEWA and flyway conservation in general.

## Social Media

The IMCA Unit maintains both a Facebook and a Twitter account for the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat. The Facebook account was established in December 2014 and the Twitter account in September 2015. To date, the Twitter account has **661 followers**, while the Facebook account is being followed by **1136 facebook fans**. The social media accounts are primarily used to promote AEWA activities and to build an online community. In terms of content, the focus clearly lies on promoting AEWA’s own unique content through crafted tweets and posts which direct traffic to articles published on the AEWA website. It is important to note that the accounts are not being promoted through any paid service, so the user base has grown organically and represents genuine, i.e. interested followers.

## Social Media Highlights in 2016

The IMCA Unit pursued a very successful global social media and website strategy in the context of the World Migratory Bird Day 2016 campaign, which focused on the illegal killing of migratory birds. As a result, the use and promotion of the official campaign hashtag **#WorldMigratoryBirdDay** helped generate more than **58 million tweet impressions and reached more than 18 million users**, while more than 210,000 users were reached on Facebook. In addition, the official website received more than 55,000 page views from 181 countries. The UN website and several UN social media accounts contributed significantly to the massive social media reach. For example, three WMBD-related tweets were posted by the main UN Twitter account to the accounts of more than seven million followers and 10% of the overall WMBD website traffic was driven by a featured WMBD article on the main UN website ([www.un.org](http://www.un.org)).

## Audiovisual (AV)

A number of video statements and interviews were prepared by the IMCA Unit for the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat between November 2015 and December 2016. During AEWA MOP6, video interviews were conducted on-site with a selection of key experts attending the meeting, such as with Dr. Ross Wanless on

seabirds, Prof. Dr. Martin Wikelski on ICARUS and Ms Kerryn Morrison on the Grey Crowned-crane ISSAP. In addition, a number of other videos were produced and published on the AEWA YouTube Channel and promoted via the AEWA Website and Social Media Channels by the IMCA Unit over the course of 2016:

- Video Message by the AEWA Executive Secretary on the Flight of the Swans Campaign (December 2016)
- World Migratory Bird Day 2016 Statement by the AEWA Executive Secretary (May 2016)
- Video Coverage of the AEWA Technical Committee Meeting in Israel (March 2016)

### **Print and Screen Design**

Over the course of 2016, the IMCA Unit has provided in-house design services for the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat with regard to both print and digital products. Thanks to the design and desktop publishing skills within the Unit, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat does not have to go through time-consuming administrative procedures to hire external designers for design work needed for basic layouts and publications. For example, design work conducted by the IMCA Unit has resulted in the creation, cropping and arrangement of customized graphics and images used to enhance the presentation of both AEWA website and social media content. In addition, the in-house IMCA Unit desk top publishing service has been used to create a number of cover designs and smaller AEWA publications:

- MOP6 Proceedings cover in English and French
- Agreement Text cover in English and French
- ISSAP covers for the Taiga Bean Goose, Bewick's Swan, Long-tailed Duck, Northern Bald Ibis, Grey-crowned Crane
- Cover for the International Multi-species Action Plan for the Conservation of Benguela Current Upwelling System Coastal Seabirds
- Cover for Conservation Guideline No. 5
- Cover for the 5<sup>th</sup> Edition of the Report on the Conservation Status of Migratory Waterbirds in the Agreement Area
- Fact Sheets for the Bewick's Swan, World Migratory Bird Day (Topic: Energy Installations)
- Concert poster and flyer for World Migratory Bird Day 2016
- Cover for the AEWA Communication Strategy
- Cover for the World Migratory Bird Day Scoping Paper
- Season's Greetings for 2015 and 2016 (Mass mailing Email)

### **Campaigns and Events**

The IMCA Unit is charged with managing the public outreach and awareness-raising activities of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat. These include yearly events such as participation in the UN Day Celebrations in Bonn and other public events conducted by the AEWA Secretariat throughout the year. However, the primary outreach campaign for AEWA (and CMS) being led by the IMCA Unit continues to be World Migratory Bird Day.

#### **World Migratory Bird Day 2016**

2016 marked the 10th anniversary of the World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) campaign, which has grown into a flagship global awareness campaign jointly run by the UNEP/AEWA and UNEP/CMS Secretariats through the IMCA Unit. With 319 events registered in 85 countries, the event registration figures have shown an increase by 50% in the number of registered events and an increase by more than 20% in terms of countries involved compared with the previous year. With the theme “... **and when the skies fall silent? Stop the illegal killing, taking and trade!**”, World Migratory Bird Day 2016 highlighted the large numbers of migratory birds which are illegally killed or taken across the Mediterranean. The 2016 campaign also indirectly

supported the launch of the Intergovernmental Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean (MIKT), created under CMS Resolution 11.16.

The World Migratory Bird Day campaign has become widely recognized as an effective means for increasing understanding of and raising awareness on the need for conserving migratory birds, including in the African region. For example, celebrations of World Migratory Bird Day were particularly vibrant this year in Togo, which hosted a major regional WMBD 2016 event for Western Africa, collaborating with Benin and Ghana.

In the Middle East, the Dubai Municipality also took a significant step in raising awareness about the challenges faced by migratory birds, bringing well-known conservation practitioners in the United Arab Emirates and across the Middle East to speak at a special WMBD seminar organized on 10 May 2016.

The organization of the global World Migratory Bird Day campaign in 2016, was made possible thanks to a voluntary contribution to AEWA from the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB). Additional BMUB support also facilitated the organization of a charity concert for migratory birds in Bonn to mark WMBD 2016.

### **WMBD Scoping Paper**

In January 2016, the IMCA Unit worked closely with CMS and AEWA management to prepare a Scoping Paper outlining the future direction and vision for the World Migratory Bird Day Campaign. The paper helps define the goals and vision for the campaign and outlines a number of activities which aim to help the campaign grow in the future.

The Scoping Paper proved to be a good basis for forming a common understanding of a stronger partnership around WMBD and to provide guidance on how to develop future WMBD campaigns. With coordinated actions and activities planned well in advance, the aim is to increase and strengthen the collective communications efforts of all partners around World Migratory Bird Day. The WMBD Scoping Paper is available from the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat upon request.

### **Preparations for WMBD 2017**

With the theme “**Their Future is our Future**”, World Migratory Bird Day 2017 will be strategically aligned with the theme of the upcoming CMS COP12 due to take place in Manila, the Philippines in October 2017. Linked to the global UN Sustainable Development Agenda, WMBD 2017 and CMS COP12 will focus on highlighting the links between sustainable development and the protection of the environment globally. The aim is to raise awareness on the interdependence of people and nature, and more specifically between people and migratory animals which share the same planet and its limited resources. Thus the 2017 WMBD campaign will emphasize the need for a sustainable management of the world’s natural resources, demonstrating that also international migratory bird conservation is key for the future of humankind.

The chosen theme for 2017 is also in line with the upcoming activities of the main WMBD partners BirdLife International, the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP), Wetlands International, the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC) and UN Environment (UNEP).

With a First Meeting of Partners held on 21 September 2016, discussions started timely and an agreement on the theme could be reached at the Second Meeting of Partners which took place on 27 October 2016.

## Cooperation with other Partners

In addition to coordinating the day-to-day information management, communications and outreach activities of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat, the IMCA Unit has actively contributed to enhancing cooperation between AEWA and other external partners and organizations in 2016:

### Flight of the Swans

In 2016, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat engaged strongly to help promote the “Flight of the Swans” campaign – an extraordinary flyway-scale awareness-raising campaign for the Bewick’s Swan (*Cygnus columbianus bewickii*) being led by WWT. The unique flyway engagement efforts were highlighted on the AEWA website through a thematic page on the campaign and several news announcements, including one on a national Bewick’s Swan action planning workshop which took place in the framework of the “Flight of the Swans” campaign in Estonia. The flyway campaign was also supported through active social media and the production of a video statement by the AEWA Executive Secretary. Please visit the following links for further information:

- “Flight of the Swans” Highlights Conservation Efforts in Estonia (October 2016): <http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/news/%E2%80%9Cflight-swans%E2%80%9D-highlights-conservation-efforts-estonia>
- Flight of the Swans – Video Message by Jacques Trouvilliez, AEWA Executive Secretary (December 2016): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2D2COLkYC98&feature=youtu.be>

### UNEP Information and Knowledge Management (IKM) Initiative

AEWA is one of the 43 international and regionally binding environment treaties actively contributing to the MEA Information and Knowledge Management (IKM) Initiative facilitated by UNEP. The flagship product of the initiative is [www.InforMEA.org](http://www.InforMEA.org), a sophisticated information portal which harvests COP and MOP decisions and resolutions, news, events, national focal point contacts, national reports and implementation plans from all participating MEA Secretariats and organizes this information around a set of agreed terms. The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat benefitted greatly from this initiative, both with regards to exchange of knowledge with other MEA Secretariats and in terms of financial support from the project to improve the interoperability and overall management of the AEWA website. The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat (and wider CMS Family) is represented at the IKM Steering Committee by the IMCA Coordinator. Among other things, he is chair of the IKM working group on outreach and communication as well actively promoting enhanced cooperation between MEAs with regard to national reporting and the use of the ORS as a common reporting tool for MEAs. For more information on the IKM Initiative please see:

- InforMEA Website: <https://www.informea.org/en>
- InforMEA Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?list=PLq-dwpj8XoR-ThtIFSCzd2wXo0Y7NrcJ1&v=bKmNindEWFg>

### UN Bonn Communications Group (UNCG)

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat (and wider CMS Family) is represented at the UN Bonn Communications Group (UNCG) by the IMCA Coordinator. UNCG brings together all Communications Focal Points at the UN Campus to coordinate and exchange on outreach and communications efforts of UN Bonn Entities. Participation in the UNCG and events such as UN Day in Bonn, the Deutsche Welle Global Media Forum and other UN Bonn related outreach events help maintain and improve recognition of AEWA as one of the UN entities operating from Bonn, Germany. Participation in UN Bonn related events such as UN Day are also important for acknowledging both the Host City (Bonn) and Host Country (Germany) of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat. For more information, please visit: [www.unbonn.org](http://www.unbonn.org)

## **Support to CITES COP17 in Johannesburg**

As a result of a request from the Secretary General of CITES to the UNEP/CMS and UNEP/AEWA Secretariats, the Coordinator of the IMCA Unit (the AEWA Information Officer) was released by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat at short notice to support the CITES Secretariat with the organization of CITES COP17 from 21-30 September 2016. The purpose was to fill a temporary gap within the CITES Secretariat to assist the Secretary General with social media work and photo coverage of COP17. All costs for the assignment were covered by the CITES Secretariat and the agreement was that CITES would release a staff member to support CMS and AEWA upon similar request in future. In a thank you note to the Secretariats the Secretary General of CITES described the arrangement as “clearly being of benefit to our respective Conventions (CITES, CMS and AEWA) and [...] a good example of the sort of practical collaboration that is encouraged by the Parties”.