



FIFTH MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

30th March – 2nd April 2004, North Berwick near Edinburgh, Scotland

WORK PROGRAMME OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

INTRODUCTION

At the 4th Meeting of the Technical Committee, which took place from 12-13 May 2003 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, an intersessional working group (WG) was established to examine the role of the TC in the implementation of AEW. Ms Rachel Adams (Chair), Mr David Stroud, Mr Christoph Zöckler and Mr Bert Lenten participated in this WG.

The view of the WG is that any discussion on the future role of the TC has to be based on the TC's role as stipulated in the Agreement. The Agreement's provisions regarding the TC constitute the baseline regarding its formal, legal duties.

According to Article VII, paragraph 3 of the Agreement the Technical Committee shall:

- (a) provide scientific and technical advice and information to the Meeting of the Parties and, through the Agreement secretariat, to Parties;
- (b) make recommendations to the Meeting of the Parties concerning the Action Plan, implementation of the Agreement and further research to be carried out;
- (c) prepare for each ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties a report on its activities, which shall be submitted to the Agreement secretariat not less than one hundred and twenty days before the session of the Meeting of the Parties, and copies shall be circulated forthwith by the Agreement secretariat to the Parties; and
- (d) carry out any other task referred to it by the Meeting of the Parties.

The TC is obliged to perform the functions assigned to it by the Agreement. Article VII, paragraph 3 states that "The Technical Committee shall ... stress that this is an obligation."

The WG noted that the wording used in Article VII, paragraph 3 (d) indicated that the TC can, if it chooses, take a proactive role in the implementation of the AEW. However, based on the documentation of meetings of both MOP and the TC, the TC's role under AEW has in the past been for reactive, i.e. the TC's work has been determined by the MOP's recommendations and resolutions, requiring it to carry out specific tasks.

DISCUSSION POINTS

The question that arises now, in the intersessional period between MOP2 and MOP3, is how members of the TC view the TC's role in implementing the Agreement. Should the TC continue, as it has done so far, to limit itself to those tasks imposed upon it by the MOP, or should it take a more proactive role?

As an example: document AEWA/ TC inf. 4.4., proposes a procedure for the “evaluation and quality control of AEWA projects”. The background for this document was the feeling shared by several TC members that they should have more input in projects financed or sponsored by AEWA. Looking at the TC’s duties as defined in Article VII, paragraph 3 (a) and (b), the procedure proposed in the above-mentioned document can be seen as not voluntary but as obligatory. The view of the WG is that in order to ensure that the TC fulfils its obligations under Article VII, the members of the TC must take an active role in all stages of AEWA projects, starting from the initial approval of the project proposal to the final signing off of projects.

In the view of the WG the TC should have its own work programme. A first draft, as attached to this document as Annex 1, has been prepared setting out the work programme from TC4 until MOP3. The WG proposed reviewing this work programme during TC5 meeting. At TC6 the committee should finalise its work programme for the period between MOP3 and MOP4. This work programme should be submitted to the third session of the Meeting of the Parties for approval.

The issue of national reports can demonstrate an example of the TC taking a proactive role in implementing AEWA. National reports are a cutting edge issue in international environmental law today, and much work has been devoted to this issue by many other conventions. They are a critical tool in evaluating implementation. In light of its function of making recommendation to the MOP concerning implementation of the Agreement, the TC could decide to bring this up as an issue for discussion at TC5 and TC6, the goal being to submit a recommendation concerning national reports to MOP3. Issues to explore, for example, could be the format of national reports, a final date for submission, and - most important of all - synergies with national reporting commitments by other conventions, such as CBD and Ramsar.

Of course, before taking any decision concerning the TC’s role, consideration must be given to factors such as the limited resources available: human resources, time and budget. However the WG would like to emphasize that the TC can take a leading role in the development of AEWA, and contribute to turning it into a major player in the realm of biodiversity-related conventions. In light of the fact that AEWA is still a young agreement at the beginning of its life, now is the time to consider such issues. Because of the implications for the future of AEWA, defining the TC’s role in AEWA should be a major priority for TC5.

The above is a preliminary attempt to give an overview of the issue. The WG proposes a discussion in plenary on the future role of the TC as addressed in this document, including the draft work programme.

Broad issue	Tech Comm 4; <i>Tashkent May 2003</i>	Intersessional 2003/4	Tech Comm 5; <i>Edinburgh April 2004</i>	Intersessional 2004/5
Mode of working	Establish Working Groups (Agreement Art. VII.5) [Started process of establishing inter-sessional working]		Establish further Groups to take forward work on international reviews and draft relevant Resolutions for consideration at TC6	
	Agreement of proposals for project evaluation, peer review and quality control issues first considered at TC2	Establish Register of expertise on TC	Establish Working Group to review <i>modus operandi</i> of TC and report to TC6	Discussion paper on means of improving effectiveness of TC activity
		Development of post-project evaluation guidelines	Start to evaluate previously funded projects as possible and relevant	
			Review progress with establishment of national TC focal points	
			Discussion as to how to enhance liaison between Regional Representatives and relevant Contracting Parties	

Broad issue	Tech Comm 4; <i>Tashkent May 2003</i>	Intersessional 2003/4	Tech Comm 5; <i>Edinburgh April 2004</i>	Intersessional 2004/5
Development of AEWA guidance		Ensure Ramsar 'Toolkit' is flagged with relevant AEWA Guidance documents		
	Consideration of draft guidance on avoidance of introduction of alien species	Comments due by end May		
	Consideration of draft guidance on legislation	Comments due by end May		
TC report to MoP3 (Agreement Art. VII.3c)			Consider what TC encouragement can be given to enhance rate of national reporting for MoP3	Chairman to draft TC report to MoP3 for discussion at TC6

Broad issue	Tech Comm 4; <i>Tashkent May 2003</i>	Intersessional 2003/4	Tech Comm 5; <i>Edinburgh April 2004</i>	Intersessional 2004/5
MoP2 tasks for TC	Review Eider population status and trends [Done]			
	Review Pintail population status and trends [initial discussion, analysis to be undertaken in context of ringing project by ADU]	Analysis to be undertaken in context of ringing project by ADU	Check progress of ADU project	
	Review Mallard population status and trends [Initial discussion]	PC to further review European Mallard data and report to TC5	Decision on Mallard population trends	
	Expansion of taxonomic scope of AEWA [Working Group established to consider]	Working Group to draft Discussion paper outlining issues for consideration for TC5	Consideration of Discussion paper and decision on recommendation to MoP3 (or at TC6)	
	Definition of term "long-term decline"	UK to circulate current relevant work on this issue and prepare discussion paper for TC5	Consideration of Discussion paper and decision on recommendation to MoP3 (or at TC6)	
	Definition of "biogeographic population" [Working Group established]	Working Group to draft Discussion paper outlining issues for consideration for TC5	Consideration of Discussion paper and decision on recommendation to MoP3 (or at TC6)	
			Review current status of Small Grants Fund and procedures for evaluating projects submitted for funding	

Broad issue	Tech Comm 4; <i>Tashkent May 2003</i>	Intersessional 2003/4	Tech Comm 5; <i>Edinburgh April 2004</i>	Intersessional 2004/5
	Review of policies on phasing out use of lead gunshot from wetlands		Consider guidance for MoP3 if Wetlands International's international review completed - otherwise consider at TC6	
International Status reviews (Action Plan 7.4)	<p>Issue raised regarding Tech Comm requirement to provide international status reviews to each MoP</p> <p>Population status report (AP 7.4a) [Initial discussion of enhancement of analytical content; agreement to produce major review every three years with a more user-friendly document for each MoP. Working Group established]</p>	<p>UK to circulate proposals for enhanced analytical content to WG</p> <p>(Discussion with D Pritchard re commonality within parallel performance indicators work for the Ramsar Convention)</p> <p>Discussion and agreement of proposed format intersessionally</p>		

Broad issue	Tech Comm 4; <i>Tashkent May 2003</i>	Intersessional 2003/4	Tech Comm 5; <i>Edinburgh April 2004</i>	Intersessional 2004/5
		Contract placed with Wetlands International to draft Status Review for MoP3	Progress report from Wetlands International	Draft Status review to be circulated in advance of TC6
	International review of gaps in information from surveys (AP 7.4b)		Agree how to progress review for submission to MoP3: include with status and trends report (7.4a)?	Draft review to be circulated in advance of TC6
	International review of networks of sites used by each waterbird population and protection status of these sites (AP 7.4c)		Agree how to progress review for submission to MoP3: analysis of IBA database would give some of this information	Draft review to be circulated in advance of TC6
	International review of hunting and trade legislation in each country (AP 7.4d)		Agree how to progress review for submission to MoP3: contract to IUCN Law Centre	Draft review to be circulated in advance of TC6
	International review of preparation and implementation of single species action plans (AP 7.4e)		Agree how to progress review for submission to MoP3: start by collating information from national reports?	Draft review to be circulated in advance of TC6
	International review of re-establishment projects (AP 7.4f)		Agree how to progress review for submission to MoP3: start by collating information from national reports?	Draft review to be circulated in advance of TC6
	International review of status of non-native waterbird species in the Agreement area (AP 7.4g)		Agree how to progress review for submission to MoP3: start by collating information from national reports?	Draft review to be circulated in advance of TC6

Broad issue	Tech Comm 4; <i>Tashkent May 2003</i>	Intersessional 2003/4	Tech Comm 5; <i>Edinburgh April 2004</i>	Intersessional 2004/5
AEWA funded projects	<p data-bbox="365 505 758 565">Discussion on project proposal for pilot review of waterbird ringing data</p> <p data-bbox="365 586 772 646">Discussion on project proposal for development of AFRING</p>	<p data-bbox="806 367 1121 394">Draft Communications Strategy</p> <p data-bbox="806 505 1100 532">Project proposal to be revised</p> <p data-bbox="806 586 1100 613">Project proposal to be revised</p>	<p data-bbox="1199 367 1604 427">Project to report to TC and be subject to post-project evaluation</p>	