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FIFTH MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

30 March – 2 April 2004, Edinburgh, Scotland

PROJECT PROPOSALS FOR FUNDING BY AEWA

INTRODUCTION

The Agreement Secretariat has received, particularly during the last few months, a number of project proposals from different organisations and/or persons. As decided at the previous Technical Committee meeting, Technical Committee members should review all project proposals. The following project proposals are submitted to you herewith:

- Distribution/circulation of scientific journals/newsletter to experts and interest groups within the AEWA region;
- International demographic monitoring of waders;
- Update of the Action Plan on White-headed Duck
- Update of the Action Plan on Corncrake
- Production of a Multi-Species Action Plan for Southern African Coastal Seabirds.

Each project proposal is accompanied by a cover note by the Agreement Secretariat informing you of the Secretariat's view and the budget in place for implementation of that specific project.

COMMENTS/REMARKS OF THE UNEP/AEWA SECRETARIAT ON THE FOLLOWING PROJECT PROPOSAL:

Project title: Distribution/circulation of scientific and ornithological journals/newsletters to experts and interest groups within the AEWA region.

Proposed by: Wetlands International, The Netherlands.

General Comments/remarks: In the view of the Agreement Secretariat dissemination of information is very important. Also the AEWA Secretariat values the work done by the Wetlands International Specialist Groups. However the question is whether AEWA should cover the annual postage costs of distributing these documents to the network of Wetlands International specialist groups.

Involvement of the Secretariat: AEWA is not directly involved in the Wetlands International Specialist Groups.

Justification: Although dissemination of information is very important is it questionable whether no other means are available to disseminate this information e.g. through the Internet, thus avoiding the burden of high costs. As AEWA is not directly involved in the Specialist Groups there is limited justification in covering the annual distribution of materials to them.

Budget: The AEWA Trust Fund has no budget allocated to cover the mailing of documents from other organisations, but only for AEWA information material.

DISTRIBUTION / CIRCULATION OF SCIENTIFIC AND ORNITHOLOGICAL JOURNALS / NEWSLETTERS TO EXPERTS AND INTEREST GROUPS WITHIN THE AEWA REGION

Introduction

The importance of information dissemination cannot be overemphasised, especially with regard to waterbird species information and action. In anticipation of the work that will be done on this under the GEF African-Eurasian Flyway Project, it makes sense to already make use of the existing structure of newsletters and bulletins of major waterbird Specialist Groups. This is jointly coordinated by IUCN/SSC and Wetlands International, and comprises a source of information in the target species of AEWA. Due to the cost of distributing these valued newsletters and journals, circulation is currently limited to mainly Europe and Northern America.

Network of Specialist Groups

Wetlands International is a networking and facilitating organisation, working in partnership with other partners and a network of Specialist Groups it enables the essential delivery of wetland and wetlands species expertise in support of wetland conservation globally, most especially through information sharing, actions and capacity development. There are presently 19 Specialist Groups of which 14 are solely waterbird taxonomic, which are jointly managed with the IUCN/SSC and the other five are wetlands thematic groups. Each group has its own global coordinator with support from regional coordinators. However, this varies from group to group and general regional development is still strong on the agenda of these groups.

Proposal

In the light of the above, wetlands International is proposing to the AEWA Secretariat to cover the cost of postage of these materials annually within the AEWA region as important awareness materials and source of information to interest groups and scientists within the flyway. This would not only create awareness but may ultimately foster better integration amongst the respective country focal points as a consequence of the sharing of this information platform.

The distribution would be done quarterly in bulk mailings. Expected duration is May 2004-February 2005.

Budget (EUROS)

Staff time:	1,275 EURO (3 full days)
Extra copy Reprints:	2,500 EURO (for 12 months)
Packaging & Postage Costs:	4,722 EURO (for 12 months)
Total:	8,497 EURO

COMMENTS/ REMARKS OF THE UNEP/ AEWA SECRETARIAT ON THE FOLLOWING PROJECT PROPOSAL:

Project title: International demographic monitoring of Wader populations.

Proposed by: British Trust for Ornithology (BTO).

General Comments/ remarks: The Agreement Secretariat has the feeling that this project could be considered for inclusion in the next International Implementation Priorities (IIP). Although according to BTO this project will contribute to a number of IIP 2003-2007 priorities, none of them is fully covered by this project proposal.

Involvement of the Secretariat: The Agreement Secretariat was not consulted in advance and was confronted on 17 February 2004 with the proposal as attached hereto.

Justification: It is well known that many Wader species worldwide are in decline. As indicated in the proposal, there is of course widespread concern as to the environmental consequences of climate change. This project could provide data and more insight information useful for conservation responses.

Budget: Assuming that AEWA will be the only sponsor of this project, a total amount of £ 188,830 (excl. VAT), which is equal to US \$ 366,665 has to be allocated. The Standing Committee decided at its first meeting to allocate US \$ 25,000 for 2004 for Consultancies regarding research/ surveys. It is expected that for 2005 a similar amount could be allocated. So far this budget line has been used to support surveys. Anyway funds available in 2004 are not enough to cover the costs for 2004 estimated by BTO, and this would also mean that no funds would be available for other research/ surveys.

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International demographic monitoring of migratory waders in Afro-European Flyways during the non-breeding period

Abstract

This proposal outlines a major international collaboration directly relevant to the AEWA objectives. Outputs could materially assist in aiding a number of AEWA's *Implementation Priorities* as well providing data and information of direct relevance to national and international conservation programmes. The proposed project derives from extensive international discussions to develop a feasible demographic monitoring scheme for waders. It will build on existing voluntary activities and yield data and information of relevance to conservation science and policy agendas.

There is widespread concern as to the environmental consequences of climate change. Monitoring population parameters of long-distant migrant waders provides a highly cost-effective means of assessing conditions on remote arctic breeding areas.

The work needed to set up a monitoring program throughout the flyway to provide annual indices of juvenile recruitment of a wide range of wader populations is outlined in the proposal. In the later years of the project it will work towards producing similar indices of annual survival for those species that have a high level of recaptures or resightings. This information will be essential for the development of our understanding the causes and consequences of climate impacts, as well as providing necessary information for conservation responses, as well as providing inputs to programmes aimed at improving the conservation status of waders.

Background

Waders are amongst the most migratory of birds, thus their distribution and habitat use spans the globe. There is an increasing realization that global environmental change, in particular, changing climates, may have serious impacts on wader populations, especially those that breed at high arctic latitudes (e.g. Soloviev & Tomkovich 2003). Our ability to diagnose the nature of, and the specific reasons for, such impacts are seriously compromised by our lack of sufficiently detailed knowledge of population status and demographic information for these species. Obtaining such information for arctic breeding species has recently been highlighted as a key target for international collaborative efforts (Committee for Holarctic Shorebird Monitoring 2004).

Knowledge of demography benefits wader conservation efforts. Firstly, an understanding of demographic processes can frequently be used to identify short-lists of factors that may be responsible for population change as vulnerable life history stages can be identified. This is key when effective management strategies are being formulated. Thus, "waders, with their range of specialised feeding and migration ecologies, are sensitive indicators of change in their environments. Knowledge of the status of wader populations can provide important information on the wider environment, including the effects of climate change, habitat loss, and degradation of habitat quality." (International Wader Study Group 2003).

Policy relevance



Knowledge of demographic processes is also directly relevant to fulfilling objectives of the Agreement on the conservation of African-Eurasian migratory waterbirds (AEWA). Population changes may be driven by a range of factors operating at different times and places during the annual cycle. Understanding what are the factors causing declines through demographic monitoring allows targeted and cost-effective conservation responses to be effected. Owing to their migratory nature and wide distributions, any monitoring programme that seeks to collect such data is best co-ordinated internationally.

The proposal outlines a major international collaboration directly relevant to the objectives of AEWA. The suggested project is cross-cutting, and outputs would contribute data and information to a number of the Agreement's *Implementation Priorities* for 2003-2007, notably:

- contributions to the enhancement and international co-ordination of ringing (**Priorities 20 & 21**);
- informing reporting on the status and trends of migratory waterbirds (**24**);
- developing a better understanding of the causes of population trends in migratory waterbirds (**27**);
- directly contributing to the monitoring of expected climate change impacts on migratory waterbirds (**28**) in a way that will provide data and information of wider relevance;
- information on the use of wetland sites by migratory waterbirds (**32**); and
- the use of migratory waterbirds as indicators (in this case of climate change impacts in the arctic) (**33**).

The programme will also provide data and information of direct relevance to national and international conservation programmes.

Rationale

Monitoring of waders directly on their arctic breeding grounds presents many severe logistical and technical difficulties due to their extremely low density and the harshness and remoteness of the environment. Monitoring these birds on their passage or wintering grounds, where the technical infrastructure and personnel already exist is much more a cost-effective way to gather this critical information.

Two key demographic parameters can be monitored on the non-breeding grounds: juvenile recruitment into the wintering population (which will be a proxy for overall population productivity, including post-hatching mortality) and annual survival. In long-lived species, such as waders, changes in demographic rates may be detected in advance of changes in population size. They may thus serve to provide early warning of impending problems (Baillie *et al.* 1999). Both annual survival and juvenile recruitment can be measured by catching birds and fitting uniquely numbered rings allowing re-trapping events to be identified, and it may be possible to measure the latter using visual survey data, for those species where juveniles are distinguishable from adults in the field.

Many groups of wader researchers have been involved in long-term ringing programmes, some since the 1960s. These were initially aimed at understanding migration routes, but increasingly the focus is shifting to measuring demographic parameters (Wernham *et al.* 2002). Recruitment into the wintering population has been assessed using the proportion of juveniles caught (*e.g.* Underhill *et al.* 1989) and survival rates through re-trapping of ringed individuals (Insley *et al.* 1997; Sandercock 2003), field resighting of colour marked birds (Burton & Evans 1997, Burton 2000, Gill *et al.* 2001) or recoveries of dead birds (Atkinson *et al.* 2003). For some species, similar data may be available from field sightings (*e.g.* Fox *et al.* 1987). This approach has proved particularly useful in informing



management decisions when both can be measured simultaneously (e.g. Atkinson *et al.* 2003). However, many of these local studies have suffered from a lack of strategic focus and direction. Differences between sites means that any one site is unlikely to provide a representative distribution of birds within a population (e.g. Clark 1983). In order to effectively monitor demography on a large scale, a protocol for focused ringing at many dispersed sites is required.

In the UK, a very successful constant effort ringing scheme has been developed for passerines (Peach *et al.* 1996). Such constant effort type ringing has proven very useful for demographic monitoring (Baillie *et al.* 1999). Under this protocol, a similar, standard catching effort is employed each year at a range of sites (which need not each contribute in every year) allowing results to be readily compared between years. This scheme has been subsequently adopted, with local adaptations, across Europe, with more than 10 schemes now in operation, and in North America (the MAPS scheme, De Sante *et al.* 1985).

This proposal is to develop an international network of sites within the East Atlantic Afro-European flyway at which demographic data can be collected by encouraging the use of constant effort wader catching and, where appropriate, standardized visual survey data. We intend that this should be an international project involving the International Wader Study Group, EURING (the Union of European Ringing Schemes) and AFRING (African Ringing Schemes). We have already had positive discussions with a senior people within these organizations prior to the development of this proposal. In addition international colleagues, many of whom have made very useful contributions to the discussions about wader monitoring, will be kept fully informed and involved in the work.

Key Aims

1. Develop a network of sites to monitor demographic rates of waders from data collected in the non-breeding season.
2. Produce estimates of juvenile recruitment into the post-breeding population for a range of representative species within the East Atlantic flyway.
3. To develop a network of sites capable of providing sufficient data for annual monitoring of wader survival rates.

Objectives

1. To develop a network of sites across the flyway at which demographic monitoring data may be collected using “constant effort” style wader ringing. (Aim 1)
2. To develop a complementary network of sites using standardized visual field surveys to provide additional data on age ratios. (Aim 1)
3. To provide a point of focus for encouraging more systematic recording amongst groups, through participation in an international, collaborative project to which they can make a valuable contribution. (Aim 1)
4. To provide annual estimates of recruitment into the wintering population for a range of suitable species, including Dunlin *Calidris alpina*, Redshank *Tringa totanus*, Knot *Calidris*

canutus, Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*, Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus* and Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*¹. (Aim 2)



5. To collate available historical data to provide past context to future observations. (Aim 2)
6. To investigate the potential of such a network to produce annual indices of survival for a range of appropriate species. (Aim 3)
7. To provide annual indices of population parameters for a range of wader species. These indices will be disseminated through the Web, popular articles and scientific peer-reviewed papers (Aims 1 & 2).

Work Programme

1. Initial selection of species and sites (Objective 1)

Species vary in their suitability for monitoring across the flyway, according to migration routes and schedules, the degree of population mixing and ability to catch or survey sufficient numbers and the ability to age individuals in the hand or field as appropriate. An initial review to identify those species and populations that are most suitable for this programme and a set of sites is already underway. This will ensure that data are collected from the start of the project in a way that will be suitable for future analyses.

A network of sites across the flyway will need to be identified that will enable a wide range of populations to be monitored. This network will enable populations from a wide range of breeding habitats and latitudes to be monitored. Where monitoring is not occurring at present, contacts will be made with experts in the local area with the aim of establishing long term monitoring there. These sites will need to support sufficient numbers of waders and have sufficiently motivated recorders to ensure long-term monitoring. It is envisaged site visits will need to be made to assess site suitability and advise local recorders on some sites.

2. Refine field protocols (Objectives 1 & 2)

Through the work that has already been undertaken, outline protocols have been developed. At the start of the project, these guidelines on monitoring through catching and visual survey will need to be refined to guide local recorders. This will include advice on issues such as sample sizes and timing of catches or sizes of visual samples. These may need to take into account of local factors. Site visits will be made and the protocols developed in the light of this experience. We will disseminate the methodology within the scientific community through the production of papers submitted to peer reviewed journals.

3. Maintain and develop the volunteer network (Objective 3)

This will be ongoing through the project. Previous experience at the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) with projects based on local recorders has shown the importance of maintaining an active feedback to those involved. Reports will be published in *Wader Study*

¹ The populations of these species to be monitored derive from a range of different geographic areas, and thus the information collected will be of value in providing wider contexts.

Group Bulletin and an annual newsletter will be produced for participants to stimulate and encourage their efforts. The newsletter will also help participants share information on developments in techniques and other related matters. .



To consolidate the network, encourage participation and catalyse links between groups a web forum will be set up for the project. This has proven a very successful way of getting ringers on BTO and international projects to communicate with each other and provide a sense community.

In addition, site visits will be carried out to offer continued advice to recorders and to enthuse local teams.

4. Develop analysis protocols to produce annual flyway indices (Objective 4)

We will be able to provide indices for some populations from the first year. However, analyses will have to be developed to maximize the range of populations that can be monitored as the project develops. These analyses are likely to provide a significant number of challenges as the data are unlikely to follow standard statistical forms, and combining such multi-site data may require the development of new techniques. In Year 4, we will investigate incorporating the indices generated into an ‘alerting’ framework. The BTO already has considerable expertise in developing these, but experience of the level and variability of these indices will be required in order to do this effectively.

5. Annual Reporting (Objectives 3 & 4)

Annual reports on the flyway indices of juvenile recruitment into the wintering population, from (4) above, will be produced on the Web and reported in *Wader Study Group Bulletin*. An annual newsletter will also be produced for participants (see 3).

6. Collate historical data (Objective 5)

Some sites have been operating in a systematic fashion for many years and data already collected may be incorporated into the programme, providing past context. Efforts will be made to collate these data (electronically) to integrate into the analysis,

7. Focus catching methods on survival monitoring (Objective 6)

Given between-site differences in environmental factors, the production of survival estimates is likely to hinge on a sufficient number of birds being caught at each site, and, more importantly, a sufficient number of recaptures of marked birds (retraps). This is likely to be greater than the number needed for age-ratio monitoring. After the second year of monitoring, we will begin to focus groups on the need to collect data in a more standardised way, to assist with the use of the data for annual survival monitoring. This will either take the form of ensuring that sufficient birds are recaptured each year or encouraging the colour-marking of samples so a large number of resightings can be achieved each year. In most cases the number of multiple sightings of an individual has more influence on estimate precision than solely numbers ringed.



8. Develop techniques for monitoring survival (Objective 6)

Much of those data collected under the catching part protocols are likely to be suitable for survival analyses. In year 2, we will investigate the possibility of developing these. Combining survival estimates from a number of sites will prove challenging, though reductions in capture heterogeneity through adopting a constant effort type protocol should reduce these. We will produce survival indices for those groups of sites that enable such analyses to be carried out.

Outputs

- Annual reports produced in *Wader Study Group Bulletin*.
- Annual newsletter to participants to provide feedback and to provide a forum for communication.
- The report and newsletters will also be made available on a regularly updated web page.
- An email-based web forum. This will help develop a sense of community and participation and will be modelled closely on the extremely successful web fora already established for other ringing projects.
- A series of papers submitted to international peer-reviewed journals. The protocols, analytical methods and results developed as part of this project are likely to be sufficiently novel to be of wider interest in the scientific community.

A series of popular articles and talks designed to encourage participation and present the results of the project to a wider audience.

Project Team

The Project Team will be lead by Dr Robert Robinson (BTO Senior Population Biologist – Ringing) who has wide experience of demographic analyses and a special interest in waders. Dr Robinson will oversee the analysis within the project. The data collection and collation will be overseen Ms Jacquie Clark (BTO Head of Ringing Unit). Ms Clark has extensive experience of the curation and use of large ringing data sets and has a long-term volunteer and research interest in wader biology. Dr Nigel Clark (BTO Head of Projects) will advise on the project and on field data collection drawing on his extensive experience of wader data collection and analysis. Other members of the team will be drawn from BTO staff who have considerable voluntary interest in wader ringing and wader biology.

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Resources

Days of time



	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
Scientist, Grade L5	13	13	13	11	11	61
Scientist, Grade L4	49	54	51	49	49	255
Assistant Scientist, Grade L2	52	50	51	60	60	273
Total days	114	117	115	120	120	589

Milestones

Month 3	Initial guidelines produced
Month 12	First report produced on the Web and in WSG Bulletin
Month 24	Second report produced on the Web and in WSG Bulletin
Month 36	Example annual survival monitoring incorporated for the first time
Month 36	Third report produced on the Web and in WSG Bulletin
Month 48	Alerts methodology incorporated into the report for the first time
Month 48	Fourth report produced on the Web and in WSG Bulletin
Month 60	Fifth report produced on the Web and in WSG Bulletin

Costs

It is anticipated that the project will start on 1 June 2004. Project years are from 1 June to 31 May.

Year 1	£35,029
Year 2	£37,206
Year 3	£39,017
Year 4	£38,310
Year 5	£39,268

All costs are at 2004/05 rates and exclude VAT which may be payable (if funded by an EU country)

Nigel A Clark
Head of Projects
17 February 2004

COMMENTS/ REMARKS OF THE UNEP/ AEWA SECRETARIAT ON THE FOLLOWING PROJECT PROPOSAL:

Project title: Updating of the International Species Action Plan on White-headed Duck (*Oxyura leucocephala*).

Proposed by: BirdLife International - European Division.

General Comments/ remarks: On several occasions the Agreement Secretariat has urged BirdLife International to draft International Single Species Action Plans for species. The European Commission/ DG Environment has requested BirdLife International to update the 'Blue Book (*Globally Threatened Birds in Europe. Action Plans*)'. The geographical scope of these Action Plans is limited to the Range States of the Council of Europe. The following Range States of the species are not included in the 'Blue Book': Afghanistan², Algeria, Azerbaijan, India, Iraq, Iran, Israel, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Libya, Mongolia, Morocco, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and probably northwest China. The countries in bold are AEWA Range States.

The *Oxyura leucocephala* is one of the Appendix I species of CMS and that is why CMS should also be requested to support this project.

Involvement of the Secretariat: The Agreement Secretariat was not requested in advance to consider supporting this project.

Justification: Three populations of *Oxyura leucocephala* were identified and all are listed in Column A category 1a, 1b and 1c. This means that the species is listed in Appendix I of CMS, is listed as threatened in the Threatened Birds of the World (BirdLife International, 2000) and that the population numbers less than 10,000 individuals.

The update of the current Action Plan is again intended to raise awareness of the species among Range States and encourage them to take the necessary steps regarding conservation of the species. This is of interest for AEWA. From a strategic point of view it would be useful to cooperate on this project with EC/DG Environment and with the Council of Europe.

Budget: Assuming that both CMS and AEWA sponsor this project, AEWA must allocate EURO 2,000. The budget line dealing with Consultancies for MOP could easily cover these costs.

² White-headed Duck breeds in the underlined countries.

Proposal to draft a Single Species Action Plan for White-headed Duck *Oxyura leucocephala*

Background

The White-headed Duck is classified as globally endangered by IUCN (BirdLife International 2000). The species is listed in Annex I of the Convention of Migratory Species and in Column A of Table 1 to the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement.

A European Species Action Plan (Green and Hughes 1996) was produced by the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust and BirdLife International in 1996 and was 'approved' by the EC ORNIS Committee and the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention. The action plan triggered certain actions critical for the species' conservation, especially with regards to the eradication of the Ruddy Duck.

In October 2003, the DG Environment of the European Commission contracted BirdLife International to revise the White-headed Duck Action Plan. The scope of the contract only includes the 15 current and the ten new member states of the EU.

AEWA co-funding to cover the full range of the species

The European Action Plan for White-headed Duck has not been revised since 1996 despite significant changes in the species' situation and the fact that more scientific knowledge has become available in recent years.

The EU member states cover only a small part of the species' range and do not include most of the main central Asian breeding and wintering areas. It is crucial for the effective conservation of the species that all range states are included in a single action plan in order to ensure coordination of conservation actions across the range of the species.

Budget summary:

Estimated total cost:	8,000 Euro
Available funding	
From DG Env. :	2,000 Euro
From WWT:	2,000 Euro
Requested from AEWA:	4,000 Euro

Wageningen, 19 January 2004

Szabolcs Nagy
European Conservation Manager
BirdLife International

COMMENTS/ REMARKS OF THE UNEP/ AEWA SECRETARIAT ON THE FOLLOWING PROJECT PROPOSAL:

Project title: Updating of the International Species Action Plan on Corncrake (*Crex crex*).

Proposed by: BirdLife International-European Division.

General Comments/ remarks: On several occasions the Agreement Secretariat has urged BirdLife International to draft International Single Species Action Plans for species. The European Commission/ DG Environment has requested BirdLife International to update the 'Blue Book' (*Globally Threatened Birds in Europe. Action Plans*). The geographical scope of these Action Plans is limited to the Range States of the Council of Europe. The following Range States of the species are not included in the 'Blue Book': Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Armenia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Algeria, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iraq, Israel, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Sudan, Tunisia, Yemen, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Congo, Malawi, Tanzania, South Africa, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe. This means that the contribution of AEWA and CMS will be used to include updates on the current conservation status in these countries.

Involvement of the Secretariat: The Agreement was not requested in advance to consider supporting this project.

Justification: The *Crex crex* is listed in Column A category 1b, which means that the species is listed as threatened in the Threatened Birds of the World (BirdLife International, 2000). Furthermore, the species is listed in Column B, category 2c, indicating that the species is dependent on a habitat type that is under severe threat. The update of the current Action Plan is again intended to raise awareness of the species among Range States and encourage them to take the necessary steps regarding conservation of the species. This is of interest for AEWA. From a strategic point of view it would be useful to cooperate on this project with EC/DG Environment and with the Council of Europe.

Budget: Assuming that both CMS and AEWA sponsor this project, AEWA must allocate EURO 2,500. The budget line dealing with Consultancies for MOP could easily cover these costs.

Proposal to draft a Single Species Action Plan for Corncrake *Crex crex*

Background

The Corncrake is classified as globally vulnerable by IUCN (BirdLife International 2000). The species is listed in Annex II of the Convention of Migratory Species.

A European Species Action Plan (Crockford et al. 1996) was produced by BirdLife International in 1996. The 1996 BirdLife Action Plan was primarily intended for implementation in member states of the European Union and of the Council of Europe. As such, the BirdLife Action Plan was endorsed by the EC ORNIS Committee and by the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention (Council of Europe). In 2000 BirdLife International prepared an Action Plan for CMS to expand the action plan process to cover range states lying outside the European Union and states that are not members of the Council of Europe. This effectively extends conservation action for the Corncrake to its global range, vitally important for a wide-ranging migratory species. However, the CMS Action Plan does not replace or update the 1996 BirdLife Action Plan for member states of the EU or the Council of Europe.

In October 2003, the DG Environment of the European Commission contracted BirdLife International to revise the EU Corncrake Action Plan with regards to the substantial changes in the species status since 1996. The scope of the contract only includes the 15 current and the ten new member states of the EU.

AEWA co-funding to cover the full range of the species

The European Action Plan for Corncrake has not been revised since 1996, despite significant changes in the species' situation and the fact that more scientific knowledge has become available in recent years. The CMS action plan only added new information with regards to range states not covered by the previous action plan.

The EU member states cover only a small part of the species' range and do not include wintering and passage areas. It is crucial for the effective conservation of the species that all range states are included in a single action plan in order to ensure coordination of conservation actions across the range of the species.

In addition, the CMS action plan is already three years old and therefore would require a revision.

Budget summary

Estimated total cost: 7,000 Euro

Available funding

From DG Env. : 2,000 Euro

Requested from CMS/AEWA: 5,000 Euro

Wageningen, 29 January 2004

Szabolcs Nagy
European Conservation Manager

BirdLife International

COMMENTS/ REMARKS OF THE UNEP/ AEWA SECRETARIAT ON THE FOLLOWING PROJECT PROPOSAL:

Project title: Multi-species Action Plan for southern African Coastal Seabirds.

Proposed by: Avian Demographic Unit, University of Cape Town.

General Comments/ remarks: Project fits into the International Implementation Priorities AEWA 2003-2007 under priority 2.

Involvement of the Secretariat: Project is a follow up of a workshop (February 2002, South Africa), in which the UNEP/ AEWA Secretariat participated. During this workshop agreement was reached not to develop a separate Memorandum of Understanding under CMS for the southern African coastal seabirds, but to propose inclusion of the species in AEWA. By Resolution 2.1. adopted at MOP2 the following species were added to Annex 2: African Penguin *Sphenicus demersus*, Cape Gannet *Sula capensis*, Crowned Cormorant *Phalacrocorax coronatus*, Bank Cormorant *P. neglectus*, White-breasted Cormorant *P. carbo lucidus*, Cape Cormorant *P. capensis*, African Black Oystercatcher *Haematopus moquini*, Kelp Gull *Larus dominicanus vetula*, Grey-headed Gull *L. cirrocephalus poiocephalus*, Hartlaub's Gull *L. hartlaubii* and Antarctic Tern *Sterna vittata*.

Justification: Of the eleven species mentioned above, seven are endemic in southern Africa. Of conservation concern are the African Penguin, Cape Gannet, Crowned Cormorant, Bank Cormorant, White-breasted Cormorant, African Black Oystercatcher and the Antarctic Tern.

Budget: The Standing Committee decided at its first meeting to allocate US \$ 30,000 for the development of International Species Action Plans. This means that budget is in place should the TC decide to approve this project.

PRODUCTION OF A MULTI-SPECIES ACTION PLAN FOR SOUTHERN AFRICAN COASTAL SEABIRDS

Project description

Produce a multi-species action plan for those breeding and non-breeding seabirds listed within the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement that co-occur within the coastal zones of Angola, Namibia and South Africa.

Scope

Following on from the Conservation Assessment and Management Plan (CAMP) Workshop held for southern African coastal seabirds in Cape Town in February 2002, and the expected addition of these species to AEWA in September, there is a need to produce a multi-species action plan.

Data sources

Published (including “grey”) and unpublished literature will be reviewed using the extensive collections of the Niven Library, University of Cape Town and personal contacts. The relevant legislation and existing management plans will be consulted.

Work plan and staffing

The project will be undertaken at the Avian Demography Unit, University of Cape Town under the project leadership of John Cooper, a Chief Research Officer within the unit and Manager of its Seabird Conservation Programme. A Research Officer will be employed full-time for one year to work under his direction.

Following on from the drafting of the action plan, it will be sent out for review by selected experts on the species included and by the various environmental agencies at both provincial and central governmental level. Based on comments received, a revised version will be produced that will then be released for public comment and for discussion at a stakeholders’ workshop to be held in Cape Town. Thereafter a final version will be produced for consideration by the Technical Committee of AEWA, the 3rd Meeting of Parties of the Agreement and ultimately for adoption by the authorities of the countries concerned.

Project timing

It is intended to recruit a Research Officer as soon as possible from the date of project award, preferably before or by the end of 2002. It is envisaged that the project will take a full year from the date of inception, although formal consideration by AEWA may only follow subsequently.

Costing

Note: the budget is given in US dollars

Personpower

Project Leader, John Cooper, 20% of time, 12 months \$ 5000
Research Officer, 100% of time, 12 months \$ 12 500
ADU administrative support \$ 600

Capital items

Computer and printer for Research Officer \$ 1500

Running Expenses

Office equipment and supplies \$ 550

Communications (phone, fax, postage, p/copying, etc.) \$ 550

Stake holder's meeting \$ 1000

Report production (DTP, graphics, printing): \$ 1000

SUBTOTAL: \$ 22 700

University Research Levy (10%) \$ 2270

OVERALL TOTAL: \$24 970

Contact person:

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COMMENTS/ REMARKS OF THE UNEP/ AEWA SECRETARIAT ON THE FOLLOWING PROJECT PROPOSAL:

Project title: Ecological Atlas of the East Atlantic Flyway.

Proposed by: Wetlands International, The Netherlands.

General Comments/ remarks: The Wadden Sea is one of the most important breeding, staging and wintering areas in the Agreement area. By translating the current publication into English a broader audience could be reached.

Involvement of the Secretariat: AEWA has not been involved in drafting the current Dutch version of the Atlas.

Justification: Dissemination of information on important sites such as the Wadden Sea is very important for AEWA. The question is whether the inclusion of the AEWA logo is sufficient justification for supporting this project with a small grant.

Budget: No funds have been allocated for this. However, taking into account that an amount of EURO 5,000 is requested, this could be accommodated in the current budget.

ECOLOGICAL ATLAS OF THE EAST ATLANTIC FLYWAY

Mr Gerard C. Boere of Wetlands International has been approached by the director of the publishing house of the Dutch Royal Society of Natural History (society for field research, monitoring and survey of Dutch flora and fauna). They publish a regular stream of well-edited and well-designed books on Dutch flora and fauna and related issues.

The series is planned to include the publication of an English translation of the Wadden Sea Atlas, re-edited to: "Ecological Atlas of the East Atlantic Flyway". The book contains a wealth of information at the actual flyway level, with hundreds of photographs from Jan van der Kam, the famous Dutch bird photographer. He has captured the same migratory species in their breeding, staging and wintering areas throughout the flyway. The Atlas will have 340 pages and be printed in full colour with many maps, graphs, tables, etc. The authors of the original Dutch language version and this English translation/update are a team of well-known Dutch wader researchers: Theunis Piersma, Bruno Ens and Leo Zwarts.

The publisher is fundraising for the final EURO 10,000,- to publish the book. If the Conference Steering Committee of the Global Flyway Conference is able to raise this amount, he is offering a free copy to all participants at the conference (calculating on the basis of 400 participants and a price of EURO 25,- per book, half the expected bookshop price).

The UNEP/ AEWA Secretariat has been requested by Mr Boere to consider contributing up to EURO 5,000 for the publication of this Atlas in English.

More information from the publisher on the Atlas is attached.