



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

8- 10 July 2015, Kampala, Uganda

### REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT

#### INTRODUCTION

The current report covers the work of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat for the period between September 2013 and May 2015.

This report is divided into six sections:

1. General management, which includes recruitment of Parties and cooperation with other organizations;
2. Communications, Information Management and Outreach;
3. Implementation and Compliance;
4. Capacity Building;
5. Project Development; and
6. Other Activities and Outputs.

Activities reported in detail in other documents for the meeting are only mentioned briefly here, with a reference to the relevant substantive document where more information can be found.

The day-to-day work of the Agreement Secretariat, which includes responding to incoming mail, maintaining the Secretariat's extensive network of contacts, internal meetings with CMS, UNEP and/or UN Head of Agencies etc. are not specifically mentioned in this report.

#### 1. GENERAL MANAGEMENT

##### **Recruitment of Parties**

Burkina Faso became a Contracting Party as of 1 October 2013. Rwanda and Burundi became Contracting Parties respectively as of 1 September 2014 and 1 October 2014. Mauritania became a Contracting Party as of 1 May 2015.

Significant progress has been made in the accession process in a number of additional African countries. Details are provided in section 2.4.1 of document StC10.8 on the progress in the implementation of the African Initiative and AEWA Plan of Action for Africa.

An international conference '*New approaches towards Biodiversity conservation*' was held in Minsk, Belarus from 21 to 22 May 2015. The Executive Secretary participated in a round table discussion on AEWA chaired by the Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection. The round table recommended that Belarus join the Agreement and should enter some formal reservations.

##### **12<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the AEWA Technical Committee**

The 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Technical Committee was organized by the Secretariat at the UN Campus in Bonn, Germany, from 3 to 6 March 2015. Information about the meeting is available on the AEWA website at: <http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/meeting/12th-meeting-aewa-technical-committee>.

## **Strategic Cooperation with other Organizations**

### **Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF)**

A Resolution of Cooperation (ROC) between the CAFF and the UNEP/AEWA Secretariats was signed on 12 July 2012. The purpose of this ROC is to provide a framework for cooperation and understanding and to facilitate collaboration between the parties to further their shared goals and objectives with regard to the conservation of migratory arctic birds and their habitats. Particularly the work of the CBird working group (Circumpolar Seabird Group) is of interest to AEWA. The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat is represented in the working group by the Technical Officer. Following the signing of a similar ROC between the CAFF and UNEP/CMS Secretariat, a trilateral joint work programme CAFF/CMS/AEWA was developed.

As a first practical initiative to launch their cooperation, the organizations have been fundraising for a proposed project to develop an Arctic Breeding Migratory Bird Analysis based on the Arctic Species Trend Index (ASTI). The project aims to analyse existing trend data of populations of migratory bird breeding in the Arctic from several sources to better elucidate the patterns of decline and thus enable the identification of regions, taxa and habitats at most imminent threat and to prioritize conservation efforts. The UNEP/CMS and UNEP/AEWA Secretariats have been successful in securing funding from UNEP. The results were incorporated in the Arctic Biodiversity Assessment (ABA) published by CAFF in May 2013.

The first ever Arctic Biodiversity Congress was organized in Trondheim, Norway 2 - 4 December 2014 by the CAFF Secretariat and the Norwegian Environment Agency. The Congress was a follow-up to the ABA and brought together approximately 450 scientists, policy makers and other Arctic stakeholders to discuss the findings and key recommendations of the ABA as well as steps forward.

In addition to participating in several sessions on topics such as the role of wildlife harvest in Arctic biodiversity conservation and identifying and safeguarding protected/sensitive areas, the Secretariat facilitated the African-Eurasian Working Group under the CAFF Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative (AMBI) and the AEWA Executive Secretary took part in a panel discussion on international cooperation and global conventions and their role in addressing Arctic biodiversity.

Following the Congress, a working meeting was held on 5 December 2014 with some 25 participants to finalize the flyway programmes of work under AMBI. The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat facilitated the working session on the African-Eurasian flyway work programme which contains activities related to Guinea-Bissau, the Lesser White-fronted Goose and Icelandic afforestation.

The AMBI programme of work for all flyways was adopted at the Arctic Council Ministerial meeting on 29 April 2015 with the following words in the Ministerial declaration: “[*Considering*] *the importance of the numerous Arctic breeding migratory bird species to communities in the Arctic and worldwide, welcome the Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative Action Plan, and invite all participants and observers in the Arctic Council to contribute to this initiative to improve the health of migratory bird populations and the ecosystems on which they depend*”

### **Partnership for the Conservation of Migratory Waterbirds and their Habitats (aka Post-WOW Partnership)**

The Flyway Partnership among BirdLife International, Wetlands International, the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands and the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat was formed following the conclusion of the UNEP-GEF African-Eurasian Flyways Project, Wings Over Wetlands (WOW), in 2010. Its aim is to build on the effective institutional partnerships which were forged in the context of the GEF-sponsored project and to try to translate the achievements made under WOW into a long-term, collaborative, flyway-scale programme for the conservation of migratory waterbirds and the wise use of wetlands along the African-Eurasian Flyway.

Since the first Partnership meeting in February 2011, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has taken on the role of Secretariat for the Flyway Partnership while BirdLife International has assumed the function of chair. An informal face-to-face meeting of the Flyway Partnership took place in November 2012 in Bonn hosted by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat. Options are still being explored for convening a formal meeting which should *inter alia* re-state the functions of the partnership, clarify the role of members, the chair and the Secretariat, and devise a short-term work plan.

## BirdLife International / Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)

In May 2014, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat had a meeting in the United Kingdom with BirdLife International and with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), where, amongst other things, the ideas for the Energy Task Force and the Pan-Mediterranean Task Force on Illegal Killing of Birds were conceived. The establishment of both Task Forces was agreed in November 2014 by the CMS COP11.

### **Staffing**

#### Regular Staff

Mr Bert Lenten stepped down as Executive Secretary of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat on 1 May 2011 to become the Deputy Executive Secretary of the UNEP/CMS Secretariat. Subsequently Mr Marco Barbieri was nominated as Acting Executive Secretary of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat, entering on duty on 2 May 2011 and remained Acting Executive Secretary until October 2013. Mr Bert Lenten, took over this role until May 2014. After this three-year interim period, the new Executive Secretary of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat, Mr Jacques Trouvilliez, entered on duty on 2 June 2014.

The position of the Associate Programme Officer (Coordinator of the African Initiative) was filled on 4 May 2015 after a long recruitment process. As instructed by Resolution 5.21, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat secured a voluntary contribution from the Federal Office for the Environment in Switzerland to supplement the 50% approved for this position in the core budget, to a full-time position until December 2015.

The position of the Associate Programme Officer for Single Species Action Plan Support and the coordination and implementation of the Lesser White-fronted Goose International Single Species Action Plan has been secured for an additional three years until 2017. The Secretariat is grateful to the Norwegian Environmental Agency for its continuing support of this important position.

The position of the Programme Assistant for the African Initiative has been generously funded for three years (until December 2015) by the German Ministry of Environment (BMUB).

#### Temporary Staff

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has contracted a part-time Programme Assistant to support the logistical preparation of MOP6 as well as the African Initiative coordination team from 1 July 2014 until 31 December 2015.

#### Interns

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat participates in the CMS Family Internship Programme. In the framework of this programme, the following interns have supported the work of the Secretariat in the period under consideration:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Main tasks carried out in the period</b>
Ms Jessica Roy	French	2013 - Support to the AEWA Acting Executive Secretary. French translation and document drafting.
Ms Helena Coelho	Brazilian	Production of promotion videos for WMBD 2014 and an AEWA Training of Trainers workshop in Kenya.
Mr Martin Bangratz	Austrian	Providing support to all aspects of the work related to the global WMBD 2015 campaign. Design and production of the AEWA MOP6/20 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary logo.
Ms Weiji Ma	Chinese	Providing support to the work of the Joint Information Management, Communications and Outreach Unit of the UNEP/CMS and UNEP/AEWA Secretariats, with a special focus on the work related to the global WMBD 2015 campaign.

Mr Lukas Bickhove	German	Providing support to the work of the Joint Information Management, Communications and Outreach Unit of the UNEP/CMS and UNEP/AEWA Secretariats, with a special focus on the work related to the global WMBD 2015 campaign.
Mr Brendan Shepard	French/ American	Providing support to the national reporting cycle to MOP6 – verification of national reports and correspondence with the designated national respondents

### **Fundraising**

Since January 2012, a total amount of €1,285,465 has been pledged as voluntary contributions (€264,796 in 2012; €405,288 in 2013; €406,704 in 2014; €208,677 in January – May 2015).

These voluntary contributions were earmarked for the coordination and implementation of the International Single Species Action Plan for the Lesser White-fronted Goose, the coordination of the African Initiative, the organization of World Migratory Bird Day, the project with the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), the Small Grants Fund 2012, the organization of MOP6 and the production of various documents and deliverables for MOP6.

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat would like to express its appreciation for the financial support received towards the implementation of the Agreement since 2012. It should, however, be noted that this level of support is still far below the amount estimated as necessary to implement the Agreement at a satisfactory level.

Fundraising has become increasingly difficult over recent years due to the global financial crisis. Because the funds necessary for the preparation of all the mandatory documents could not be mobilized through voluntary contributions, the Secretariat had to cancel the Site Network Review and to postpone other documents which were tasked to the Technical Committee.

For the same reason, the Secretariat is attempting to produce one report in-house regarding the development and implementation of International Single Species Action and Management Plans, despite the very limited human resources available. However, small-scale funding is still needed in order to outsource some of the analysis needed for this review.

### **Preparation of MOP6**

In the absence of a host country, the 6<sup>th</sup> Session of the Meeting of the Parties to AEWA will take place 9-14 November 2015 in Bonn, Germany. Logistical preparations for this meeting are well underway. The Secretariat is pleased to be able to confirm that MOP6 will be held on the UN Campus, making use of the available conference facilities.

Thanks to voluntary contributions received from the Governments of Germany and Switzerland, the Secretariat will be able to cover all costs for the logistical preparation of the meeting and part of the costs needed to fund the participation of sponsored delegates. However, the Secretariat still needs to raise an amount of approximately €41,500 to be able to sponsor all eligible delegates, and an additional €5,000 to provide daily coverage in English and French through the Earth Negotiations Bulletin.

The slogan for the forthcoming MOP6 is: *Making Flyway Conservation Happen.*

### **Celebration of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of AEWA**

The year 2015 will not only see the 6<sup>th</sup> Session of the Meeting of the AEWA Parties, but it will also mark the Agreement's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The Secretariat plans various activities to mark this important event:

#### Logo

The Secretariat has produced a combined logo for MOP6 and the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary to mark these two special events.

### 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Website Features

Throughout the year 2015, to pay tribute to the individuals and organizations whose support underpins the Agreement, the Secretariat has instigated a rolling “*people behind the scenes*” feature on the AEWA website to highlight the work and dedication of the many government officials, NGO representatives, experts, consultants and stakeholders as well as project staff. The features can be found at <http://www.unep-aewa.org/news>

### Coffee-Table Book

On the occasion of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of AEWA, the Secretariat is planning to produce a coffee-table book illustrated with high quality pictures of 20 AEWA species.

### MOP6 Plenary Session and Reception

It is planned to dedicate part of the first meeting day of MOP6 to the celebration of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The Secretariat, in close cooperation with the Government of Germany, also plans to invite MOP6 delegates to a reception in the first evening of the Meeting in order to celebrate 20 years of AEWA.

## **2. COMMUNICATIONS, INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND OUTREACH**

With the agreement from the Chairs of the CMS and AEWA Standing Committees, on 27 January 2014, the Executive Secretary of CMS established a *Common Information Management Communication and Awareness-raising Team* (IMCA) as a pilot initiative to demonstrate the benefits of shared services between CMS and AEWA.

With the agreement of the Acting Executive Secretary of AEWA at that time, the Information Officer of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat was appointed Coordinator of the new IMCA Team which has consisted of the following five staff members and consultants:

*Information Officer and Coordinator of the Joint Communications Team, UNEP/AEWA Secretariat*  
*Information Assistant, UNEP/AEWA Secretariat, part time*  
*Associate Information Officer, UNEP/CMS Secretariat (until 31 December 2014)*  
*Senior Public Information Assistant, UNEP/CMS Secretariat*  
*Consultant Editor, UNEP/CMS Secretariat.*

An IT Consultant, UNEP/CMS Secretariat was appointed for six months from April 2015 and the UNEP/CMS Executive Secretary decided to allocate a further *Information Assistant* from the UNEP/CMS Secretariat to the IMCA as of 1 June 2015.

The new team is supervised directly by the CMS Executive Secretary. Its efforts in 2014 were mainly dedicated to the CMS Family Website Project, World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) in May 2014 and the preparation of the CMS COP11 held in November 2014.

The year 2015 is mainly being dedicated to the development of the new communication strategy (Documents StC10.25 and StC10.DR.10), preparation of the AEWA MOP6 and 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of AEWA and World Migratory Bird Day 2015. World Migratory Bird Day was celebrated on 9-10 May 2015 under the central theme *Energy – make it bird-friendly!* It aimed to highlight and promote the guidelines developed by CMS and AEWA on both renewable energy and power lines.

For consideration at the CMS COP11 (Quito, Ecuador, 4-9 November 2014), an *Analysis of shared common services between CMS Family instruments* was prepared by the UNEP/CMS Secretariat and released on 5 September 2014 (UNEP/CMS/Doc16.2) after comments from the Chairs of the CMS and AEWA Standing Committees.

CMS Resolution 11.3 (StC Inf. 10.6), adopted by the CMS Parties in Quito, requests an independent analysis to be submitted to the decision-making bodies of the wider CMS Family, reporting on the legal, financial, operational, and administrative implications of actions to enhance synergies. The 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the AEWA Standing Committee and 6<sup>th</sup> Session of the Meeting of the Parties to AEWA in July and November 2015

respectively are being invited to consider the process and take a decision on the way forward as regards synergies, such as through sharing common service areas.

The Chair of the AEWA Standing Committee requested the AEWA Executive Secretary to prepare a report on the pilot of Joint Information Management, Communications and Outreach Unit of the UNEP/CMS and UNEP/AEWA Secretariats for consideration by the 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the AEWA Standing Committee. The report (Document StC10.7) gives a more detailed overview of the lessons learned from the pilot as well as recommendations and options as to how to proceed.

### Overview of AEWA Publications and Websites (October 2013 – May 2015)

#### Publications:

- AEWA Agreement Text (2012-2015) – English/French
- MOP5 Proceedings – English/French
- Accession Guidelines – Arabic/English/French/Portuguese/Russian

#### Other Information Materials

- Species banners for the Slaty Egret, Pink-footed Goose, Grey Crowned Crane and Shoebill
- Logo stickers for the AEWA International Working Groups of the Slaty Egret, White-winged Flufftail, Pink-footed Goose, Madagascar Pond-heron, Lesser Flamingo, Black-tailed Godwit, Lesser White-fronted Goose, Northern Bald Ibis, Red-breasted Goose, Sociable Lapwing, Grey Crowned Crane and Shoebill

#### World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) Information Materials

##### 2014:

- WMBD 2014 poster – English/French/Spanish/German
- WMBD 2014 postcard – English/French/Spanish
- WMBD 2014 poster sticker – English/French/Spanish
- WMBD logo sticker
- WMBD concert programme – English/German
- WMBD concert poster – English/German

##### 2015:

- WMBD 2015 poster – English/French/Spanish/German
- WMBD 2015 postcard – English/French/Spanish
- WMBD 2015 poster sticker – English/French/Spanish
- WMBD logo sticker
- WMBD concert programme – English/German
- WMBD concert poster – English/German
- WMBD concert postcard – German

#### Websites:

- Launch of the new **AEWA Website** (May 2014) as part of the CMS Family Website Project
- Upgrade of the **AEWA Technical Committee Workspace** (Drupal 7 upgrade in the context of a CMS Family Project to build work spaces for the other technical/scientific advisory bodies of CMS, ASCOBANS and EUROBATS)
- Dedicated **Bird Trapping/Illegal bird killing Website** [www.illegalbirdkilling.aewa.info](http://www.illegalbirdkilling.aewa.info) The website was set-up in-house by the AEWA Information Officer and all content for the website was developed by the ICU, which also takes care of its ongoing maintenance.
- Dedicated **World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) Websites** for the annual campaign 2014 and 2015

- **Single Species International Working Group Websites** made available for the coordinators of the different working groups. Based on the model of the dedicated website of the Lesser White-fronted Goose (<http://lesserwhitefrontedgoose.aewa.info/>), the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat made available the basic framework for dedicated websites for a number of AEWA International Single Species Working Groups, including, but not limited to, websites for the Red-breasted Goose, Pink-footed Goose and the Sociable Lapwing. Guidance on setting up the websites and on their use is provided by the Implementation and Compliance Unit.

### 3. IMPLEMENTATION AND COMPLIANCE

Following MOP5, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has been working on the implementation and development of AEWA International Single Species Action and Management Plans. Six ISSAPs are presented for the consideration of the Standing Committee (Documents StC10.11 to StC10.16). In addition, the first AEWA Multi-species Action Plan for Coastal Seabirds of the Benguela Upwelling System is in development and will be available later this year for submission to MOP6. Criteria for prioritizing AEWA Populations for Action and management planning and for the retirement of ISSAPs have been examined by TC12 (Document StC10.17).

The Secretariat will be involved as a co-funder and contributor to a project sponsored by the European Commission on action planning for European species (EuroSAP project). The project is being coordinated by BirdLife International and will run from 2015 to 2017. ISSAPs for three priority AEWA species will be developed (Dalmatian Pelican and Velvet Scoter) or revised (White-headed Duck), at flyway level, and in addition the project will produce an EU multi-species action plan for grassland-breeding waders.

Limited progress was made on the opened Implementation Review Process (IRP) cases in the Syrian Arab Republic, Montenegro and Bulgaria, either due to a worsened political situation or lack of response from the relevant authorities. A new IRP was opened, related to large-scale afforestation of lowland wader breeding habitat in Iceland. The issue has been raised in the AMBI programme and in the Bern Convention meeting, both in December 2014, so a joint AEWA, Bern Convention, Ramsar Convention and CAFF mission is tentatively planned for September 2015 in order to support Iceland in dealing with this issue.

Work has also progressed on some of the international reviews to be submitted to MOP6. However, despite a call to the Parties for funding, limited feedback has been received. As such, some choices have been made to secure some reports and postpone others.

The 6<sup>th</sup> Edition of the *Report on the Conservation Status of Migratory Waterbirds in the Agreement Area* is to be considered by the StC (Document StC 10.9). The Secretariat was obliged to postpone the *Report on the Site Network for Waterbirds in the Agreement Area* which will not be submitted to MOP6. The production of a *Review of the Implementation of AEWA International Single Species Action and Management Plans* is currently being produced internally together with the network of AEWA International Species Group coordinators, but small-scale funding is needed to outsource some of the analysis. A limited update of the *Review of the Status of Non-native Species of Waterbirds* will be produced on the basis of the National Reports submitted to MOP6 if funding is made available in order to outsource the work.

For the implementation of the power line Resolution 5.16 adopted at MOP5, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has been facilitating discussions on the options to establish a multi-stakeholder task force on the energy sector under CMS. This would cover the African-Eurasian region and involve, for example, the CMS Raptors MOU as well as other MEAs, such as the Bern Convention. The establishment of the Energy Task Force was approved by the CMS COP11 in November 2014 and efforts are already underway to convene it.

A review and guidelines on the impact of renewable energy developments on migratory species has been commissioned as a joint CMS/AEWA project, the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), and BirdLife International. The report and subsequent guidelines cover all migratory species and all renewable energy sources. Both the report and guidelines were presented at CMS COP11 in 2014 and are also submitted to StC10 for consideration (Documents StC10.23 and StC10.24). The implementation of the resolutions under CMS and AEWA are to be dealt with by the Energy Task Force when convened. As already mentioned above, this year's WMBD campaign also picked up this issue.

In addition, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has been involved in the re-launch of the *Wetlands International Waterbird Harvest Specialist Group* (WHSG), a meeting of which took place on 28 August 2013 at a special session on waterbird management at the 31<sup>st</sup> Congress of the International Union of Game Biologists (Brussels, Belgium, 27 – 29 August 2013). This included assisting with the development of the new WHSG Terms of Reference and the general concept for the group.

Re-activating the group is a response - in part - to an increase in activities related to the sustainable management of waterbirds within the AEWA region. The group will, in particular, aim to promote science-based knowledge and to act as scientific advisors in national and international processes where harvest is an issue for conservation or management of waterbird species and species populations. The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat is a member of the WHSG Board and participated in the second meeting held in Sneek, Netherlands, 15-17 October 2014.

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat continues to contribute to the *Waterbird Monitoring Partnership* hosted by Wetlands International, which was established in response to the call by Resolution 3.6 (MOP3, 2005). The Secretariat, in particular, attends meetings of the Partnership's Strategic and Policy Group.

A new project, to be coordinated by Wetlands International, on climate change adaptation was just approved by the major funder (International Climate Initiative of the German Government) and the Secretariat will be involved as a co-funder and contributor. The project is entitled "*Climate resilient site network in the African-Eurasian flyway*" and its concept evolved on the basis of the AEWA climate change agenda and mandates from the MOP and it will involve some site assessments, two pilot projects in Mali and Ethiopia, production of guidelines and training of practitioners in African Parties. The project will commence in 2015 and will run until the end of 2019.

The Secretariat is also a member of the *CMS Scientific Council Working Group on Bird Poisoning*. The Secretariat has, in particular, been leading on the issue of lead poisoning. In addition, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has been involved in the Bern Convention process on the illegal killing of birds.

In this context, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat put forward the idea to establish an inter-governmental task force to eradicate illegal killing, trapping and unsustainable use of birds in the Pan-Mediterranean region. All these common issues between CMS and AEWA were examined during the CMS COP11 and resolutions adopted (Documents StC Inf.10.7 and StC Inf.10.8).

### **Coordination and Implementation of the International Single Species Action Plan for the Lesser White-fronted Goose**

The coordination of the AEWA Lesser White-fronted Goose International Working Group continues to be facilitated by the AEWA Associate Programme Officer for Single Species Action Plan Support based at the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat. The Secretariat is a partner in the current EU LIFE+ project for the Lesser White-fronted Goose lead by BirdLife Greece. Key outcomes of the project include the adoption of a common monitoring scheme for the species as well as the decision to establish a network of critical sites.

A revision of the AEWA International Single Species Action Plan for the Lesser White-fronted Goose has been scheduled to be adopted at MOP6 in November 2015, which would include an extensive update of the Action Plan framework as well as the expansion of the Action Plan to include the Eastern main population (breeding in eastern Russia and wintering in China and Japan). Due to ongoing negotiations, however, it is possible that the revised draft will not be available in time for MOP6.

Additional projects facilitated by the Secretariat under the framework of the Working Group include monitoring missions as well as projects to lessen the impact of illegal killing in Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, the Russian Federation and the Islamic Republic of Iran. Funding for these projects has been provided by the Norwegian Environment Agency and the Finnish Ministry of the Environment.

### **The AEWA African Initiative**

Efforts have been made by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat towards advancing the implementation of the Agreement in the African region, particularly with regard to the implementation of Resolution 5.9 on the implementation of the African Initiative, and its annexed AEWA Plan of Action for Africa. Details can be

found in the report on the implementation of the African Initiative, submitted to the meeting as document StC10.8.

## **Publications**

The following publications have been produced in the framework of the AEWA Technical Series:

- Technical Series 33: Update Report on the Use of Non-toxic Shot for Hunting in Wetlands;
- Technical Series 43: International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Slaty Egret;
- Technical Series 44: International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Northwest European Population of the Bewick's Swan;
- Technical Series 45: International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Greenland White-fronted Goose;
- Technical Series 47: International Single Species Action Plan for the Sociable Lapwing;
- Technical Series 48: International Species Management Plan for the Svalbard Population for the Pink-footed Goose;
- Technical Series 49 Guidelines for the Translocation of Waterbirds for Conservation Purposes: Complementing the IUCN Guidelines;
- Technical Series 50: Guidelines on How to Avoid or Mitigate Impact of Electricity Power Grids on Migratory Birds – English/French; and
- Technical Series 51: International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Shoebill.

The [Plan of Action to Address Bird Trapping](#) along the Mediterranean Coasts of Egypt and Libya was also produced.

## **4. CAPACITY BUILDING**

As follow-up on Complementary Target 5.1 of the AEWA Plan of Action for Africa, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat is currently organizing an African preparatory meeting for the 6<sup>th</sup> Session of the AEWA Meeting of Parties (pre-MOP6). The host government was confirmed in May 2015 and the meeting preparations are well underway. The meeting will bring together AEWA National Focal Points from the 35 African Contracting Parties, in order to enable them to deliberate on key issues which will be addressed by the AEWA MOP6 and which will be of relevance for the region.

It will also permit them to negotiate common regional positions to be presented at the MOP, thereby offering the possibility for an improved participation of the region at the MOP. The AEWA African pre-MOP6 meeting will be organized in South Africa back to back with a joint CMS/AEWA workshop for the Southern African sub-region on the implementation of CMS Resolution 11.5 on preventing poisoning of migratory birds. The organization of this meeting and workshop has been made possible thanks to funding secured in the framework of the joint AEWA/CMS capacity-building project supported by the European Commission (further details on this project are provided in section 5 below).

In partnership with EuroNatur – a Germany-based NGO – which will be providing financial and logistical support, a training workshop will be organized for the national administrative and technical focal points of the AEWA Parties from the Adriatic flyway (Albania, Croatia, Montenegro, Slovenia and the FYR of Macedonia.). The event is tentatively scheduled for the first week of October 2015 and its format will follow that of the pre-MOP meeting for African Parties in August. In addition, if accepted by the Parties, EuroNatur will offer part-time staffing to support the national focal points in each country in coordinating implementation of the Agreement.

## **5. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT**

## **Project on “Effective Implementation of CMS, AEWA and other CMS-Family Instruments across Various Regions and Languages through Capacity Building”**

Addressing the need for improving the capacity of institutions responsible for implementing CMS and AEWA (as laid down in the CMS Strategic Plan 2012-2014, CMS COP10 Capacity-building Work Plan for 2012-2014 and the AEWA Action Plan and Strategic Plan 2009-2017), the UNEP/CMS and UNEP/AEWA Secretariats developed and submitted a project proposal which was approved for a €500,000 grant under the Thematic Programme for Environment and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources including Energy (ENRTP) Strategic Cooperation Agreement (SCA) between the European Commission - DG Environment and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The funds for the initial proposal were approved in December 2011.

The UNEP/AEWA and UNEP/CMS Secretariats further developed a proposal for some complementary activities to be implemented under Phase 2 of this project, entitled “Capacity-building Related to Multilateral Environmental Agreements in ACP<sup>1</sup> countries (ACP/MEAs 2)”. In August 2014, an additional €50,000 was further approved to co-fund the implementation of the African preparatory meeting for the AEWA MOP6, under this second phase of the project. It is planned for August 2015 in South Africa. A CMS/AEWA meeting for the sub-region on the poisoning issue will be held back to back to the AEWA African pre-MOP6 meeting. Preparatory work for both meetings is fully underway.

The project focuses on the African region and aims to improve institutional capacity for the implementation of CMS, AEWA and other CMS instruments. It is currently being implemented by the UNEP/CMS and UNEP/AEWA Secretariats. One of the activities implemented during the current reporting period aims at improving knowledge on waterbird and wetland conservation and improved capacity for training at the national level in Africa, through two Training of Trainers (ToT) courses using the WOW Flyway Training Kit and other existing training tools such as the ONCFS training module on waterbirds survey and monitoring in sub-Saharan Africa and BirdLife International’s IBA monitoring methodology. These ToTs targeted Anglophone countries in Southern and Eastern Africa and Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa). Progress in the accomplishment of this component is also reported in section 2.4.3 of document StC10.8.

## **6. OTHER ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS**

### **Policy-related Developments**

Some policy-related developments which are of potential significant interest for the future of the Agreement, are taking place within the AEWA region:

#### **Working Group on Migratory Landbirds in the African-Eurasian Region**

The Working Group has been established under the CMS Scientific Council, with the purpose of steering the production and subsequent implementation of an Action Plan to “Improve the Conservation Status of Migratory Landbirds in the African Eurasian Region”. The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat is represented in the Working Group by the Technical Officer. The UNEP/CMS and UNEP/AEWA Secretariats have also closely collaborated in the organization of the workshop *Improving the Conservation Status of Migratory Landbirds in the African-Eurasian Region* which was held in Accra, Ghana, 31 August-2 September 2012, back to back with the 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the AEWA Technical Committee. The Landbirds Action Plan developed by the Working Group was adopted by the CMS COP11.

#### **Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023**

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has been closely following the development within the framework of CMS of the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023. This included participation as an observer in the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Strategic Plan Working Group (Bonn, 5-6 November 2012), and providing comments to reviews and draft versions of the Strategic Plan (cf. StC Inf 10.5 for the Strategic Plan approved by CMS COP11).

#### **Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)**

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<sup>1</sup> Africa, Caribbean and Pacific

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has been following the process of the establishment and operationalization of IPBES. The Secretariat obtained observer status to the IPBES Plenary, and attended the first meeting of the Plenary (IPBES-1), held in Bonn, Germany, 21-26 January 2013.

Pursuant to IPBES-1, the IPBES Interim Secretariat called for the submission of requests to IPBES on scientific and technical matters that require the Platform's attention. In response to this call for submissions, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat collaborated with the UNEP/CMS Secretariat and the secretariats of other CMS Agreements in the drafting of proposals for scientific assessments to be considered by the Platform for inclusion in its programme of work (particularly an assessment of the economics of ecosystem services provided by migratory species) but these proposals were not accepted.

The Secretariat attended the third meeting of the Plenary (IPBES-3) held in Bonn, 12-17 January 2015 and delivered a joint statement on behalf of CMS Family (see <http://www.unep-awea.org/en/node/2759>). There is a great potential for the MEAs to use the regional and thematic assessments. The UNEP/CMS Secretariat represents AEWA in other bodies of the Platform.

#### Synergies among Biodiversity-related Conventions

The UNEP project *“Improving the effectiveness of and cooperation among biodiversity-related conventions and exploring opportunities for further synergies”* aims to address the mandate given in 2012 from the UNEP Governing Council to undertake *“activities to improve the effectiveness of and cooperation among multilateral environmental agreements, taking into account the autonomous decision-making authority of the conferences of the parties”* and *“explore the opportunities for further synergies in the administrative functions of the multilateral environmental agreement secretariats administered by the United Nations Environment Programme and to provide advice on such opportunities to the governing bodies of those multilateral environmental agreements”*.

This project may also help States address the decisions on related issues by the Conferences and Meetings of the Parties to the biodiversity-related MEAs. It will explore options for further synergies at all levels of the major biodiversity-related MEAs, with a view to identifying options for making additional improvements in efficient and effective implementation of the MEAs through enhanced collaboration and cooperation. The ultimate output of this project will be a set of recommendations for the UNEP Executive Director to present to the second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) in 2016, responding directly to the UNEP Governing Council decision above.

A first meeting was organized in Interlaken, Switzerland, 26-28 August 2014 and the AEWA Executive Secretary participated on behalf of the CMS Executive Secretary. Based on the outcomes of this expert meeting, a paper outlining draft options for enhanced collaboration and coordination at the global level across the biodiversity-related MEAs provided the basis for discussion at a second expert meeting which was held in Switzerland, 13-15 May 2015. The AEWA Executive Secretary stressed the importance of synergies at the national level, using the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan developed under the Convention on Biological Diversity to promote these synergies. AEWA and CMS also gave examples of their collaboration and joint programme of work with other MEAs.