



IX Spoonbill Workshop

AEWA Eurasian Spoonbill International Expert Group (ESIEG)

Djerba, Tunisia

14 – 18 November 2018

Conclusions

WORKSHOP

1. 24 participants from 10 countries attended the workshop. Tunisia hosts important numbers of wintering spoonbills along the more than 40 Ramsar sites. Organizing the ESIEG workshop in Tunisia was a long-standing wish of former coordinators to strengthen the network in North Africa. We acknowledge the great organization by l'Association des Amis des Oiseaux/Birdlife Tunisia (AAO) and Tour du Valat that allowed the success of the workshop.
2. ESIEG regrets the lack of means that prevents the participation of more representatives, especially from Eastern Europe, Asia, and Africa. Financial support of sponsors (Euronatur, Cotusal, and CMB2) allowed the venue of representatives from Hungary, Croatia, Tunisia, Senegal, and Morocco.
3. ESIEG expresses its disappointment to AEWA regarding the ESIEG proposal to split Central Europe and South East European flyways. The proposal was written by the experts on the species and submitted in 2017 accordingly to the AEWA procedure. Nevertheless, it has been not submitted to the technical committee for evaluation and was rejected. ESIEG feels that its expertise was undermined.
4. The AEWA Action Plan for the spoonbill was evaluated 10 years after its implementation. An evaluation of achievements was performed. Realistic objectives on each flyway were proposed for the next three years.
5. A database on mortality cases reported for spoonbill including poisoning, illegal killing and, collisions will be implemented in order to identify main threats to the species.

TRENDS AND MAIN RESULTS

6. East Atlantic flyway
 - a. While the East Atlantic population is increasing on many sites (including establishment of a new colony in UK), monitoring and participation of representatives of the flyway are challenged by the decrease of interest (and funds)

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in Eurasian spoonbill in most policy agendas.

- b. The lack of information gathered prevented estimation of the Atlantic flyway population size.
- c. A new colour-ringing project was launched in Morocco

7. Central European flyway

- a. The Central European population seems stable, or with a moderate decline. Monitoring of wintering birds in Tunisia showed decreasing unexplained trend. It is plan to analyse the trend of Central European flyway using available breeding data of the Carpathian Basin population, Czech and Italian populations and compare it with wintering population trend.
- b. A comparative analysis on the survival of East Atlantic and Central European flyway should be initiated. Differences in survival may help in understanding why Central European population is not increasing.

8. South East European flyway

- a. No representative of this flyway was present, preventing update of the knowledge on this region.
- b. We encourage and support colour-marking and tracking studies in the SE European flyway including Greece and Danube delta, using available funds.
- c. A project using GPS tracker will be submitted to delineate limits of SE European flyway.

9. *P. l. archeri*

- a. A representative from Sudan allowed focusing on the status of the *Archeri* subpopulation in this region and planning actions for its better monitoring.

10. *P. l. balsaci*

- a. There was, unfortunately, no representative of Mauritania to discuss the present status of this subspecies, and any update from the last workshop was impossible.
- b. There is a need to encourage local people to count the nests in all colonies to estimate population size. A lack of funding prevents monitoring the annual breeding success of the Banc d' Arguin colonies and resighting marked birds on the colonies to perform survival analysis.
- c. The total number of spoonbills in the Banc d'Arguin during the non-breeding season has been more or less stable over the past 10 years, but distinguishing *P. l. balsaci* from *P. l. leucorodia* is difficult.



COMMUNICATION

11. Thanks to l'Association des Amis des Oiseaux, the workshop benefited from large media coverage with regional radio and national television reports.
12. It has been decided to increase the number of contributors to increase the visibility of the group on the ESIEG Facebook page.
13. A diffusion list was created to facilitate internal communication among ESIEG members.
14. A logo of the group will be created.

ESIEG ORGANISATION

15. In order to improve the visibility of ESIEG and implementation of the Action Plan two groups were formed: the communication group included Petra de Goeij, Hichem Azafzaf and Francisco Hortas, and the fundraising group included Jocelyn Champagnon, Mohamed Ali Dakhli and Petra de Goeij.
16. Juan Navedo, current chair of ESIEG announced its resignation. ESIEG suggested Jelena Kralj from the Institute of Ornithology of Croatia, as the new coordinator of the group and Jocelyn Champagnon, current coordinator, to become the chair of the group. We deeply acknowledge Juan Navedo for his leadership of the ESIEG over the last years.

NEXT STEP

17. Next ESIEG workshop will be organized in 2021 in the core of the Central European flyway in Croatia by the Croatian Society for Birds and Nature Protection.

Djerba island, Tunisia, 18th November 2018

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