

AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF AFRICAN-EURASIAN MIGRATORY WATERBIRDS Doc. AEWA/MOP 8.9 Agenda item 9d 21 September 2022

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"Strengthening Flyway Conservation in a Changing World"

# **REPORT OF THE UNEP/AEWA SECRETARIAT**

# INTRODUCTION

The present report covers the work of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat for the period from 15 December 2018 (after the closure of MOP7) to 15 September 2022.

Since March 2020, the work of the Secretariat and related meetings have been heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Secretariat had to make a shift to telecommuting mode of working and eventually to a combined telecommuting/in-person working mode, while meetings organised by UNEP and associated MEAs were reshaped to a virtual and/or hybrid mode. Despite the various challenges, obstacles and restrictions resulting from the Covid-19 related impacts, the Secretariat managed to adapt very rapidly to the new working conditions and was able to deliver its work in an efficient and effective manner as shown in this report.

The report is divided into five sections:

- 1. Organization and staffing of the Secretariat;
- 2. General Management, which includes recruitment of Parties and cooperation with other organizations;
- 3. Communication, Information Management and Outreach;
- 4. Science, Implementation and Compliance;
- 5. Capacity-Building.

Activities reported in detail in other MOP8 documents are only mentioned briefly here, with a reference to the relevant substantive document for further information.

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 the UNEP/CMS Secretariat, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and/or UN Heads of Agencies etc., are not specifically mentioned in this report.

# 1. ORGANISATION AND STAFFING OF THE SECRETARIAT

#### 1.1 Organisation of the Secretariat

The Secretariat is organized into four units which cover four broad areas of work (as described in Annex 1 – Organizational Structure and Annex II - Staff Composition of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat). The individual staff members and units work closely as a team, interacting with each other daily on cross-cutting issues. It should be noted that the AEWA Communication Unit is part of the joint Information Management, Communication and Awareness-raising Unit (IMCA) co-funded and co-managed by the Executive Secretaries of AEWA and CMS.

In 2019 UNEP approved the Secretariat's application for a Junior Professional Officer (JPO), in the framework of the UNEP JPO Programme, to support the work of the Technical Committee. Unfortunately, no Contracting Party offered a JPO to the AEWA Secretariat. The Secretariat has renewed its application annually thereafter but at the time of writing without success.

It is worth noting that the current extent of delivery of the Secretariat's mandate as currently reported, was only possible thanks to the extension of some part-time positions through voluntary contributions, the availability of some staff funded entirely through voluntary contributions and the support of interns.

# **1.2 Staffing situation**

As at 15 September 2022, the Secretariat comprises ten staff members: six Professional Staff members (P staff) and five General Staff members (G staff). Apart from these, one previously occupied P3 position has been vacant since 11 March 2021. Of the current occupied position, the core budget covers 7.3 full-time equivalent positions (FTEs), while voluntary contributions and savings have allowed the addition of 3.5 full-time equivalent positions.

The currently occupied staff positions within the Secretariat are presented in the table below, indicating the level of coverage under the core budget and by voluntary contributions and/or savings.

No.	Post Title	Covered by the core budget	Covered by voluntary contributions or other sources
1	Executive Secretary	100%	
2	Head of Science, Implementation and Compliance Unit	100%	
3	Information Officer	100%	
4	Executive Management Support Officer	100%	
5	Coordinator for the African Initiative	50%	50%
6	Administrative Assistant	100%	
7	Programme Management Assistant (SICU)	80%	20%
8	Information Assistant	50%	50%
9	Programme Management Assistant (AI)	50%	30%
10	Coordinator for the European Goose Management Platform		100%
11	Programme Management Assistant (EGMP)		100%

# Staff funded by the core budget

There have been no major changes to the team during the period covered by the report. The positions of the African Initiative Coordinator (P-2) and the African Initiative Programme Assistant (G-5) were partly funded (50 %) through the AEWA core budget 2019-2022. The Secretariat was able to maintain the P-2 position at 100 per cent and the G-5 position at 80 per cent during the intersessional period, thanks to voluntary contributions received from Germany, the United Kingdom, Luxemburg, Switzerland and the European Commission. Additional and preferably more sustainable funding beyond 2022 is required to be able to keep both AEWA African Initiative positions with the current post occupancy, given the increasing difficulty to secure funding for salary costs as well as the increasing administrative procedures entailed in processing and managing of various sources of extra-budgetary funding for salaries.

# Staff fully dependent on voluntary contributions (Fixed-term project posts)

*Programme Officer (P-3) for Species Conservation (Single Species Action Plan Support and the coordination of implementation of the Lesser White-fronted Goose International Single Species Action Plan)* 

The job description of the Associate Programme Officer (P-2) for Single Species Action Plan Support and the coordination of implementation of the Lesser White-fronted Goose International Single Species Action Plan has been reviewed and upgraded to a P3 position, following Resolution 7.12 paragraph 21. The Secretariat is grateful to the Norwegian Environment Agency for its support of this important position over the period of 2008-2021. After a competitive process of selection, Ms Nina Mikander was selected for this position and thus upgraded from a P-2 Officer to a P-3 Officer as of 1 October 2020. However, shortly afterwards, she resigned effective from 11 March 2021, and moved to another job outside of the UN system. Norway has stopped financing this position since 1 May 2021. This position, needed for more comprehensively fulfilling the mandatory task of coordinating the implementation of Species Action Plans, is included in Scenario 4 of the core budget proposal to MOP8 for 2023-2025 budgetary period (see doc <u>AEWA/MOP8.39 Corr.1</u>).

Associate Programme Officer (P-2) and Programme Management Assistant (G-5) for the AEWA European Goose Management Platform

Currently, the AEWA European Goose Management Platform (EGMP) is managed at the Secretariat level by one full-time P-2 project post and one full-time Programme Management Assistant (G-5) post. The two positions are financially secured until December 2023.

For details on the finance and administrative issues please read the <u>Report of the Secretariat on Finance and</u> <u>Administrative Issues in 2019-2022 (AEWA/MOP 8.38 Rev.1)</u>.

# 2. GENERAL MANAGEMENT

# 2.1. 25<sup>th</sup> AEWA Anniversary

Due to the COVID pandemic, the Secretariat was, unfortunately, not able to organise as planned, a ceremony with the Dutch Government, the AEWA depositary, to celebrate the signature of the Treaty in The Hague on 16 June 1995. The Secretariat however created a special webpage for this event <u>https://www.unep-aewa.org/en/aewa-25th-anniversary</u> which displays the statements of many stakeholders and a history of the negotiations leading to the treaty.

In addition, to mark the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Agreement, the Programme Officer for Species Conservation developed a video in collaboration with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology which showcases the importance of critical sites for migratory waterbirds across the African-Eurasian flyway, emphasising the urgent need for the protection of these sites. Prepared with input from various stakeholders throughout the flyway and highlighting AEWA priority species such as the Lesser White-fronted Goose, Sociable Lapwing, Lesser Flamingo etc. The video entitled "A Call for Cooperation: Saving the Places Migratory Birds Call Home" was launched on the date of the anniversary in both English and French. The video can be made available in other languages subject to availability of funds and the animations produced by Cornell can be made available for further use by AEWA partners via the Secretariat. The video marks the first such collaboration between Cornell and the CMS Family.

#### 2.1. Recruitment of Parties

Since MOP7, six new Contracting Parties have acceded to AEWA. These include The Central African Republic (effective from 1 January 2019), the Republic of Serbia (effective from 1 March 2019), the Republic of Malawi (effective from 1 September 2019), the Republic of Armenia (effective from 1 July 2020), Turkmenistan (effective from 1 January 2021) and Cameroon (effective from 1 October 2022), thanks to continuous efforts by the AEWA Secretariat, in collaboration with various partners, over time. This brings the total number of Parties to 83, with 39 in Africa and 44 in Eurasia (including the European Union).

In addition, significant progress has been made in the accession process of a number of African and Eurasian Non-Party Range States. The Secretariat and the Depositary updated the English, French and Arabic versions of the Agreement Text in 2019 as well as the Russian version in May 2020.

The Secretariat has been regularly communicating with Saudi Arabia on the accession process, which has significantly advance and will hopefully be concluded soon.

Efforts to recruit additional Parties in Europe and Central Asia, including Bosnia & Herzegovina, Greece, Turkey, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan are also ongoing. The Secretariat visited the last three countries in October 2019 to present to the national authorities the benefit of joining AEWA. Foreign missions of AEWA Contracting Parties were also visited to introduce the Agreement and seek support in recruiting the Range States as Parties.

In addition, after a written consultation in August 2019, the StC members agreed on the Terms of Reference for the AEWA National Focal points which are published on the AEWA Website (<u>https://www.unep-aewa.org/en/page/national-focal-points</u>).

# 2.2. Meetings of the AEWA Standing Committee

The Secretariat facilitated the logistical and substantive organisation and the running of eight meetings of the Standing Committee in 2019-2022. The high number of meetings in 2021 and 2022 is due to the pandemic and the necessity to monitor closely the situation in order to have a secure MOP.

14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee (StC14), 8 December 2018, Durban, South Africa https://www.unep-aewa.org/en/meeting/14th-meeting-aewa-standing-committee

15<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee (StC15), 11 - 13 December 2019, Bristol, UK https://www.unep-aewa.org/en/meeting/15th-meeting-aewa-standing-committee

16<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee (StC16), 4 - 6 May 2021, virtual conference format https://www.unep-aewa.org/en/meeting/16th-meeting-aewa-standing-committee

17<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee (StC17), 30 June 2021, virtual conference format https://www.unep-aewa.org/en/meeting/17th-meeting-aewa-standing-committee

18<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee (StC18), 28 July 2021, virtual conference format https://www.unep-aewa.org/en/meeting/18th-meeting-aewa-standing-committee

19<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee (StC19), 27 September 2021, virtual conference format https://www.unep-aewa.org/en/meeting/19th-meeting-aewa-standing-committee

20<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee (StC20), 2 March 2022, virtual conference format https://www.unep-aewa.org/en/meeting/20th-meeting-aewa-standing-committee

21<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee (StC21), 1 June 2022, virtual conference format https://www.unep-aewa.org/en/meeting/21st-meeting-aewa-standing-committee

For more details, please read the <u>Report from the Chair of the Standing Committee (AEWA/MOP8.6)</u>.

2.3. Meetings of the AEWA Technical Committee

The Secretariat facilitated the logistical and substantive organisation and the running of three meetings of the Technical Committee in 2019-2022.

The 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Technical Committee (TC) was held in Bonn, Germany, 9 - 11 April 2019. The meeting was convened with the aim to review and approve the programme of work of the TC and set up the working groups.

The TC15 meeting report is available at: https://www.unep-aewa.org/sites/default/files/document/aewa\_tc15\_report.pdf The 16<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the AEWA Technical Committee took place from 25 to 29 January 2021 in a virtual conference format due the Covid-19 pandemic. The meeting undertook final review and approved documents for submission to MOP8.

The TC16 meeting report is available at:

https://www.unep-aewa.org/sites/default/files/document/aewa\_tc16\_meeting\_report\_final.pdf

The 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the AEWA Technical Committee took place on 8 February 2022 also in a virtual format. The Committee planned for the finalisation of several ongoing tasks and the delivery of additional products to MOP8 which was postponed to September 2022 as well as the advancement of some other tasks that were carried over to the next triennium.

The TC17 meeting report is available at: <u>https://www.unep-aewa.org/sites/default/files/document/aewa\_tc17\_meeting\_report.pdf</u>

#### 2.4. Cooperation with UN Environment and Other Organisations

#### UN Environment and CMS Family

On 23 August 2019, the CMS Family (CMS, EUROBATS and AEWA) met the newly appointed UNEP Executive Director to discuss how to increase the programmatic cooperation and cooperation with UNEP.

On programmatic synergies, some items such as the illegal killing of birds, lead poisoning or the energy sector are now led by CMS following COP decisions broadening the mandate on these issues under the Convention. The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat is, however, still involved in all relevant Task Forces.

As a member of the CMS Multi-stakeholder Energy Task Force, the Secretariat participated in the fourth meeting on 19 - 20 September 2019 in Paris. For more information please see: https://www.cms.int/en/meeting/fourth-meeting-energy-task-force

As a member of the CMS Illegal Killing Task Force, the Secretariat participated in the third MIKT meeting on 8 - 10 May 2019 in Rome. For more information please see: https://www.cms.int/sites/default/files/document/cms\_mikt3\_meeting-report\_0.pdf

On 16 - 17 March 2019, the Secretariat also participated in a meeting of the CMS African-Eurasian Migratory Landbirds Action Plan AEMLAP (Peterborough, UK), concentrating on habitat conservation and land-use issues. AEMLAP complements the conservation agenda within the African-Eurasian region, with AEWA focusing on sites and habitats and the CMS Raptors MoU on migratory bottlenecks. This allows for better integration of conservation work into agriculture, energy and other areas of development.

#### European Union

The Secretariat attended several meetings of the EU Expert Group on the Birds and Habitats Directives (NADEG) and a member of the Technical Committee, or the Secretariat are regularly attending the meetings of the EU Expert Group on Reporting to the Nature Directives.

#### Ramsar Convention

The cooperation with the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention has mainly focused on African topics. The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat, in cooperation with the Ramsar Secretariat and the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative, has organized an AEWA training-of-trainers workshop on flyway conservation for francophone countries in West and Central Africa, in Cotonou, Benin, 6-10 May 2019 with funding secured by the AEWA Secretariat from the European Commission. The AEWA Secretariat worked jointly with the Ramsar Secretariat for the Joint Ramsar Advisory Mission relating to Sebkhet Sejoumi (see details in Document AEWA/MOP 8.20, IRP case No. 8)

The Ramsar Secretariat is also a partner of the RESSOURCE project (see below) and both Secretariats cooperate in the framework of this project.

#### International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC)

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat attended the 66th General Assembly of the CIC on 1 - 4 May 2019 in Windhoek, Namibia. The meeting was held in the framework of an international conference hosted by the Namibian Ministry of Environment and Tourism: Crossroads - Leading the Way for Wildlife Conservation. On this occasion, the Executive Secretary participated in special events on migratory birds and presented the concept of adaptive management for migratory waterbirds. These meetings were also a good opportunity to present AEWA to the Minister in charge of the Environment as Namibia is not a Party. CIC is also a partner of the World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) campaign.

#### FAO and FFEM and the RESSOURCE Project

"RESSOURCE" is the acronym for the French equivalent of "Strengthening expertise in Sub -Saharan Africa on birds and their rational use for communities and their environment". The ecosystems at the core of this project are based on the Senegal River Valley, the Inner Niger Delta, Lake Chad and parts of the River Nile. These are areas upon which almost one billion people depend for agriculture, rearing of livestock, fishing and hunting, and which are equally of critical importance to millions of waterbirds.

The project aims to evaluate the sustainability of exploiting the resources represented by waterbirds thanks to its integrated approach which includes: (i) assessing the resources in terms of the numbers, distribution and socio-economic importance, especially for rural communities (ii) preserving habitats and (iii) proposing conservation measures at community level.

For further information, please see:

http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/news/conserving-waterbirds-africa%E2%80%99s-sahelo-saharan-region

The Executive Secretary attended the third Project Steering Committee (PSC) meeting of the RESSOURCE project at the FAO Headquarters on 12 - 13 June 2019, where the results of the programme of work were discussed between all partners. The Executive Secretary and African Initiative Coordinator also participated in the virtual 4<sup>th</sup> PSC meeting (June 2020) and 5<sup>th</sup> virtual PSC meeting (February 2022) which focused on assessing the project outcomes, with the latter also focusing on priorities for a potential phase II of the project. The Secretariat further worked closely with the project partners on the development of the legal analysis tool under Component 5 of the project, as well as the development of a Massive Open Online Course on waterbird surveying, targeting Northern Africa and Sahelian Africa.

#### Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative

The Secretariat continued to contribute to the implementation of the Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative (AMBI), established under the Artic Council's biodiversity-related working group CAFF (Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna). The Secretariat serves on the Steering Group for the African-Eurasian flyway and attended the Arctic Seabirds Experts Meeting on 26 - 29 March 2019 in Iceland.

#### Other Flyways:

#### East Asian-Australasian Flyway

Mr Sergey Dereliev, Head of the Science, Implementation and Compliance Unit at the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has been nominated as a member of the Technical Committee of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) in March 2018. This exchange with the partnership in the East Asian-Australasian flyway will allow for a closer cooperation and coordination between the two instruments. The Chair of the EAAFP Technical Committee and the Head of the Science Unit participated as observers to the AEWA TC meetings, April 2019, while Mr. Dereliev attended the online meetings of the EAAFP Technical Committee in April and August 2019.

#### Central Asian Flyway

At StC13, on 5th July 2018, the StC members decided that the Secretariat should invest a certain, measured amount of staff time and provide guidance to the Indian Government on bringing a proposal to AEW AMOP8 in 2021 for amendment of AEWA Annexes in order to incorporate the Central Asian Flyway (CAF) and its Action Plan. The Secretariat attended a meeting on the Indian National CAF Action Plan in November 2018, New Delhi to discuss the issue. In January 2019 a coasted roadmap leading to MOP8 in 2021 was sent to the Indian Government. The way forward will be discussed at the CAF Range Countries meeting convened by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, 19 - 20 November 2019. This meeting was organized in parallel with the "International Conference on Wetland and Migratory Waterbirds of the Asian Flyways" organized by the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) on 18 - 22 November 2019 in Lonavala, Maharashtra (https://cwamwaf.in/conference/). The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat attended both events.

This matter was then discussed at the CMS COP13 and the results were incorporated in Resolution 12.11 rev. COP13 <u>https://www.cms.int/sites/default/files/document/cms\_cop13\_res.12.11\_rev.cop13\_e.pdf</u> which says:

Para 8. Welcomes the further efforts by the Government of India to continue the collaborative process, in close consultation with the CAF Range States and with the CMS and AEWA Secretariats, to develop under the CMS an institutional framework, with the Secretariat provided by the CMS Secretariat along with a coordinating office hosted by the Government of India, to support the implementation of increased conservation action for migratory birds and their habitats in the CAF, as well as to support this initiative with resources, in coordination with the existing CMS avian-related instruments;

Para 9. Further welcomes the commitment by the Government of India to provide resources for this process including the establishment of the institutional framework, and the provision of a coordinating liaison office in India, under the umbrella of the CMS Secretariat in Bonn.

Since then the AEWA Secretariat has not participated to any other CAF-related meeting.

# 2.5. Fundraising

Please refer to the <u>Report of the Secretariat on Finance and Administrative Issues in 2019-2022 (AEWA/MOP 8.38 Rev.1)</u>.

# 2.6. MOP7 proceedings and Preparation of MOP8

The MOP7 proceedings have been published on the website and as hardcopies in English and French. The Secretariat is grateful to the BMUB (Germany) for having printed them. For the English version please follow the link:

https://www.unepaewa.org/sites/default/files/document/PROCEEDINGS%20MOP7\_FINAL\_with%20BMUB%20logo\_24\_Se p%202019.pdf

The participants to MOP7 expressed their gratitude to the Government of Hungary for having generously offered to host the  $8^{th}$  Session of the Meeting of the Parties (MOP8). The MOP was planned to be organized in the framework of the international exhibition "One with Nature" in Budapest, 25 September – 14 October 2021, but had to be postponed by Parties through <u>Resolution Ex.2</u> to 2022 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

#### 2.7. The AEWA African Initiative

The status of staff under the AEWA African Initiative Unit (one Associate Programme Officer -P2 and one Programme Assistant -G5), and related funding for the positions is covered under Section 1.2 of this report.

# 2.7.1) Coordination of the AEWA African Initiative:

The coordination of activities under the AEWA AI continued to be assured by triple coordination mechanism established by Resolution 5.9 - i.e., AI Unit within the Secretariat, the Technical Support Unit (TSU) and Sub-Regional Focal Point Coordinators (SRFPCs). Activities conducted by the AEWA Secretariat are reported in the sub-sections below. Activities conducted by the TSU during the current reporting period have been related mainly to the RESSOURCE Project (see section 2.4 of the current report). In addition, a video released by the TSU in 2019 entitled, "Waterbird Monitoring in Africa: The Chad Experience", was promoted on the AEWA website, as well as another film on steps in the designation of the Khor Abu Habil wetland in Sudan as a Ramsar Site in Sudan.

Based on the revised Terms of Reference (ToRs) for the AEWA Sub-Regional Focal Point Coordinators (SRFPCs) in Africa adopted through Resolution 7.1, new SRFPCs for Northern, Eastern, Southern and Western Africa have been confirmed and have been in place since MOP7. In line with the ToRs, the Secretariat liaised with the Central African sub-region for the nomination of a SRFPC in the absence of an StC representative or alternate from the sub-region, with the NFP for Central African Republic (CAR) confirmed for this role in April 2022.

#### 2.7.2) Secretariat activities relating to the implementation of the African Initiative and PoAA

**2.7.2***a*) *Process for reporting on the implementation of the PoAA:* In line with Resolution 7.1, the draft template for the AEWA PoAA reporting module for the period of 2019-2020 was prepared by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat. It was reviewed by the AEWA TC in September 2020, and by the AEWA StC in

October 2020, with the latter approving the development of the online PoAA module for reporting to AEWA MOP8 based on the approved PoAA reporting template. The online module was developed rolled out in December 2020 for the purpose of reporting MOP8, with the submission deadline of 7 February 2021 in line with Resolution 7.1 (i.e., 240 days before the opening date of MOP8, when scheduled for 2021). By the submission deadline of 7 February, only 5 out of 38 expected PoAA reports had been submitted in the online system, equivalent to a 13% submission rate. As such, the submission deadline was extended initially to 19 February 2021 and eventually to 24 March 2021 (the latter being the cut-off date after which PoAA reports were extracted from the Online Reporting System to initiate the analysis). The Secretariat provided advisory serviced throughout the reporting exercise and additionally substantive feedback on reports submitted on time, with the aim to improve the quality of the reports. By the cut-off date of 24 March 2021, 20 out of the expected 38 reports had been submitted/re-submitted, resulting in a 53% submission rate for this first ever reporting cycle for the AEWA PoAA. The analysis of the reports was outsourced to UNEP-WCMC, was made possible thanks to a voluntary financial contribution from the United Kingdom. The detailed analysis is provided in Document AEWA/MOP 8.15. In January 2021, the AEWA Secretariat prepared the draft template for reporting on the AEWA PoAA over the period of 2021-2023 for the purpose of developing the PoAA reporting module to AEWA MOP9. This draft was submitted to the 16<sup>th</sup> meeting of the AEWA TC in January 2021 for review and comments, with a revised draft shared on the AEWA TC workspace for further comments as recommended by the TC16 meeting. A final revised draft was submitted to the 16<sup>th</sup> meeting of the AEWA StC in May 2021 for review and approval for submission to MOP8 (see Document AEWA/MOP 8.16).

The PoAA National Reports only assesses implementation of the 156 activities and processes to be delivered at the national level, while the remaining 112 activities to be delivered at the Agreement level require further assessment in order to ensure a complete and holistic assessment of the status of delivery of the PoAA. In this regard, the Secretariat developed a brief concept on the approach and methodology to be used for assessing and reporting on the delivery of the AEWA Plan of Action for Africa (PoAA), which was submitted to the AEWA TC for review and comments in July 2021 and to the AEWA StC for review and approval for use in March 2022 (pending the development of PoAA action-level indicators to permit conducting such an assessment. Unfortunately, due to limited human resources with the Secretariat, the development of PoAA indicators and subsequent PoAA assessment of the PoAA delivery could not be conducted, and has been postponed for delivery to MOP9, pending the availability of resources to outsource the process.

#### 2.7.2b) Implementation of International Single/Multi-Species Action Plans

While details on the coordination and implementation of AEWA ISSAPs and species International Working Groups is provided in document AEWA/MOP 8.22, information on various projects/activities conducted/supported by the Secretariat for some ISSAPs relevant for Africa is accounted below.

<u>White-winged Flufftail (WwF)</u>: In the framework of a project funded under the European Commission (EC) Global Public Goods and Challenges (GPGC) Thematic Programme Cooperation Agreement with UNEP (valid for the period of 2015-2020 and recently extended to 2021), and with co-funding from the United Kingdom over the period of 2019-2021, the Secretariat, in collaboration with BirdLife South Africa and the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA), has been conducting activities to promote Communitybased conservation and sustainable use of the Berga wetland in Ethiopia as well as its designation as a Protected Area under national legislation. Among the project outputs are the development of a Community Based Conservation Programme (CBCP) document through a highly consultative process, to guide the sustainable use and management of the Upper Berga Floodplain with the involvement of the local communities, while contributing to safeguarding the site as a suitable breeding habitat for the White-winged Flufftail. The CPCP document is now pending final review and consolidation through a multi-stakeholder process, which has been delayed due to Covid restrictions, but also constituted the basis for the traditional bylaws validated by the local communities and law enforcement offices at a meeting in Inchini Town in July 2021, as immediate guidance for the sustainable use of the wetland. Two stakeholder consultation meetings held in Ambo Town and Holeta Town (July 2021) resulted in consensus for the designation of the Upper Berga floodplain as a Protected Area under regional administration, followed by the participative demarcation and delineation of the Protected Area boundaries and its mapping by an assigned multi-stakeholder committee. Based on updated information provided on the extent of the species' dispersion in the wetland, further stakeholder consultations will be conducted for the purpose of extending the surface area for demarcated Protected Area, in the framework of another UK-funded project.

<u>Grey Crowned-crane (GCC)</u>: see section 4.2 of the urrent report for information on the first Meeting of the AEWA Grey Crowned-crane International Working Group (IWG) in July 2019 in Entebbe, Uganda.

<u>Slaty Egret</u>: In the framework of another EC-GPGC funded project for the period of 2020-2023, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat initiated activities to organise the first meeting of the AEWA Slaty Egret International Working Group, which is scheduled to take place in 2023 or 2024, under the kind invitation of the Government of Botswana. The project includes the provision of seed-grants to support at least two projects on the ground in contribution to implementation of the ISSAP. International Coordination for the ISSAP was also boosted with reconfirmation by the Coordinating organisation (BirdLife Botswana - BLB) to re-establish its role and the nomination of a new IWG coordinator within BLB.

<u>Northern Bald Ibis</u>: Also, under the EC-GPGC 2020-2023 project, funds have been allocated for a feasibility assessment of the Northern Bald Ibis reintroduction in Algeria as well as to improve and enlarge nesting ledges for the species in Morocco. Both activities are on-going with the support of several key implementing partners.

<u>Lesser Flamingo</u>: The Secretariat, under the CBD Bio-Bridge Initiative (BBI) supported the transfer of knowledge and expertise to local experts in Senegal and Mauritania on satellite tagging and ringing of Lesser Flamingos, and subsequent monitoring of their spatial and temporal distribution in breeding and non-breeding sites. This was done through a training course, organized in collaboration with the Senegal Directorate of National Parks (DPN) and the French-based research institute, Tour du Valat in Djoudj, Senegal, in <u>December 2021</u>, which brought together 15 experts from various institutions in Senegal and Mauritania. Three out of the four satellite transmitters purchased under the project were successfully installed on three Lesser Flamingos and are currently being monitored for their spatial and temporal movements. International coordination of the Lesser Flamingo ISSAP was resumed with BirdLife South Africa as the Coordinating Institution, thanks to an MOU signed with the Secretariat in early 2022.

<u>Madagascar Pond-heron</u>: Thanks to two grants from the United Kingdom for the period of 2021 and 2022, activities were supported in Madagascar to advance implementation of the Madagascar Pond-heron ISSAP. This aimed at obtaining data on breeding of the species at River Loza and Lake Tseny sites as well as on the status of threats and land use at these sites, while initiating the process for community-based protection and management for the River Loza site as well as initiating the process for its designation as a Ramsar Site. International coordination for the implementation of the ISSAP was boosted the conclusion of an MoU between the Secretariat and the new IWG Coordinating organisation (Asity Madagascar, national BirdLife Partner in Madagascar) and the subsequent nomination of the IWG Coordinator within Asity Madagascar.

<u>Benguela Coastal Seabirds:</u> see section 4.2 of this report for the virtual and 1<sup>st</sup> <u>meeting of the AEWA Benguela</u> <u>Coastal Seabirds IWG (March 2021)</u>.

# 2.7.3) Capacity Building / CEPA in Africa:

# 2.7.3a) Training / capacity enhancement:

Thanks for funding from the governments of Switzerland and Germany, the Secretariat organised a virtual African preparatory meeting for the AEWA MOP8 in July 2022. This brought together some 53 AEWA NFPs and/or their representatives, collaborators and partners from 30 AEWA African Contracting Parties, permitting them to discuss and deliberate on key issues to be addressed at MOP8, consolidate regional positions to be defended at MOP8, share experience and enhance knowledge and skills on various aspects of AEWA implementation and meeting preparations, including on negotiation skills for MEAs.

The Secretariat organized a five-day Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop on flyway conservation, jointly with the Directorate General of Water, Forests and Hunting (DGEFC) of Benin, and in cooperation with the Ramsar Secretariat and the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative (WSFI), from 6 to 10 May 2019 in Benin. It was made possible thanks to financial and in-kind support from the EC GPGC, the WSFI and the Government of Benin. Forty-four technical experts were trained from 18 Francophone West and Central Africa range states as well as from four relevant regional wildlife-related training institutions in these countries. Following the regional ToT course, seven countries reported having designed and organized follow-up national training courses, one of which benefited from financial and in-kind support from the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative. Meanwhile other countries have conducted report-back information sessions, awareness-raising campaigns, field activities or incorporate flyway conservation in educational curricula. Thanks to funding udner the 2020-2023 EC GPGC project, the Secretariat is in the process of organizing a similar flyway conservation ToT course for Small Island Developing States of the Indian Ocean, kindly hosted by the Government of Mauritius and scheduled to take place from 6-10 February 2023.

In December 2021, a 4-day training workshop on the integration of waterbird conservation objectives in Climate Change Adaptation, as well as guiding practical application of the AEWA complementary guidelines on climate change adaptation measure for waterbirds, took place from 13-16 December 2021. The workshop, organised by Wetlands International in collaboration with the Secretariat, provided practical, hands-on training for technical experts from 14 anglophone AEWA Parties, as part of the wider African-Eurasian Climate Resilient Flyways (CRF) project, funded by the International Climate Initiative (IKI) of the German government and co-funded by the governments of Luxembourg and Switzerland

#### 2.7.3b) Visibility:

In February 2022, a brief and captivating publication the "AEWA African Initiative – Highlights <u>2021 & 2022</u>" was prepared and disseminated by the Secretariat, to stimulate interest and raise awareness which had been limited during the 2020-2021 period due to covid restrictions. In June 2020, the Secretariat prepared a professional and vibrant <u>layout for the newly adopted AEWA PoAA</u>, 2019-2027 to make it appealing and user-friendly for the wide range of stakeholders involved in its implementation, as per requests from the African Parties. This document was printed and is available for distribution thanks to financial support from the government of Germany in November 2020. In July 2020, the content and layout for the AEWA <u>African Initiative web pages</u> were updated, to improve and facilitate communication to the wide range of stakeholders/users.

Visibility for AEWA and its African Initiative was also promoted through a number of presentations delivered by the AEWA AI Coordinator and Executive Secretary at different events of key partners, including: the BirdLife International WMBD Webinar in October 2020 entitled Bird connect people along the East Atlantic Flyway; a WMBD Webinar organised by Association Les Amies des Oiseaux" in Tunisia, in collaboration with the Forestry Department; BirdLife Africa WMBD Webinar in May 2021, 2021 Wadden Sea Day under the theme "global cooperation in a changing world"; contribution towards the development and organisation of an <u>online training course on Multilateral Environmental Agreements</u>, organized by the UNEP Law Division team at the Centre for Governance and Sustainability of the University of Massachusetts Boston (November 2020); participation at the East Atlantic Youth Forum, (September 2021), organized by several stakeholders including the Youth Engaged in Wetlands (YEW), Wildflow and Wetlands Trust, Common Wadden Sea Secretariat and International Wadden Sea School.

#### 2.7.4) Operation of the AEWA Small Grants Fund (SGF):

The Secretariat monitored and provided guidance towards the implementation of the last ongoing SGF projects from the 2014 and 2015 project cycles. In 2019, three SGF projects from the 2015 cycle were completed (in Kenya4, Nigeria and Zimbabwe) as well as one from the 2014 project cycle (in Côte d'Ivoire). At the end of 2018, the 2015 cycle project from Mauritania5 was completed, thus bringing a successful completion to all AEWA SGF projects. With no funding earmarked in the AEWA Core Budget towards SGF projects since 2016 and no voluntary contributions received to this end, no additional SGF project cycle have been operated by the Secretariat since the 2015 project cycle.

2.7.5) Partnership: see section 2.4 of this report for details.

2.7.6) Expanding membership in Africa: see details reported under section 2.1 of this report for details.

# 3. COMMUNICATIONS, INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND OUTREACH

Please read the <u>Report on the implementation of the Communication Strategy (AEWA/MOP8.17)</u> and the <u>Report on the Joint CMS/AEWA Information Management, Communication and Awareness-raising unit</u> (<u>AEWA/MOP8.18</u>) for detailed information on communications, information management and outreach.

# 4. SCIENCE, IMPLEMENTATION AND COMPLIANCE

#### 4.1. Facilitation of the Technical Committee

The Science, Implementation and Compliance Unit (SICU) is responsible, amongst other things, for the facilitation of the Technical Committee (TC) and over the period 2019-2022 it has organised three meetings of the Committee, including drafting a considerable number of documents, many of which were also submitted to MOP8. In addition, the Secretariat fundraised for the implementation of several TC tasks which needed to be outsourced. The Secretariat supported the leads of TC Working Groups in the intersessional period and has also been moderating the Technical Committee Workspace which is the online communication and work platform of the Committee. The facilitation of the TC work is one of the most human capacity demanding tasks of SICU.

# 4.2. Development and coordination of AEWA International Species Action and Management Plans and AEWA International Species Working Groups

Five International Species Action and Management Plans were adopted at MOP7 and one was retired bringing the total of Action and Management Plans to 30 including the Multi-Species Action Plan for Benguela Upwelling System Coastal Seabirds. An overview on the current status of the establishment and coordination of AEWA International Species Expert and Working Groups is provided in document AEWA/MOP 8.22 document.

In the period 2019-2022 the Secretariat facilitated the development of one new International Single Species Action Plan for the Common Eider (*Somateria mollissima*) which was submitted to MOP8 for adoption. The action-planning process was supported by the Finnish Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry as well as the Regional Government of Äland.

Several meetings of AEWA International Species Working Groups were organised in the period 2019-2022 with the close involvement of the Secretariat. In addition, funding was raised for projects to advance the implementation of species action plans.

#### AEWA Lesser White-fronted Goose (Anser erythropus) International Working Group

The 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the International Working Group took place on 11-13 November 2019 in Bucharest, Romania hosted by the Romanian Ministry of Environment and together with the Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds in the framework of the EU LIFE Red-breasted Goose project.

The EU LIFE project "Providing a climate-resilient network of critical sites for the Lesser White-fronted Goose in Europe" was approved for funding by the European Commission in November 2020 and will run until August 2025. The lead partner is the Lithuanian Ornithological Society and the AEWA Secretariat is a project partner and co-beneficiary. For more details, see <a href="https://www.unep-aewa.org/en/news/new-lesser-white-fronted-goose-flyway-project-approved-under-eu-life">https://www.unep-aewa.org/en/news/new-lesser-white-fronted-goose-flyway-project-approved-under-eu-life</a>

#### AEWA Red-breasted Goose (Branta ruficollis) International Working Group

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the International Working Group took place on 13-15 November 2019 in Bucharest, Romania hosted by the Romanian Ministry of Environment and organized together with the Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds in the framework of the EU LIFE Red-breasted Goose project.

A joint expedition on estimating the numbers of the Red-breasted and Lesser White-fronted Goose to Kazakhstan in 2021 was co-funded by the Secretariat with resources provided by the Norwegian Environment Agency.

#### AEWA Grey Crowned-crane (Balearica regulorum) International Working Group

The first meeting of the IWG was hosted by the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities of the Republic of Uganda in Entebbe on 24-26 July 2019 and was organised with the support of the European Commission. A concrete implementation plan for advancing the International Single Species Action Plan was elaborated and adopted.

# AEWA Eurasian Curlew (Numenius arquata) International Working Group

In the framework of the AEWA Eurasian Curlew International Working Group, the north and west European Range States present during a meeting hosted by the French Ministry for the Ecological and Inclusive Transition, Paris, 18 September 2019, agreed to launch the development of an Adaptive Harvest Management Programme.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Regional Meeting of the Breeding Range States under the AEWA Eurasian Curlew International Working Group was organised remotely by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat and the RSPB on 10 November 2020.

#### AEWA Black-tailed Godwit (Limosa limosa) International Working Group

The 2nd Regional Meeting of the Eastern European breeding Range States under the AEWA Black-tailed Godwit International Working Group was organised remotely by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat and Sovon on 25 August 2020.

# AEWA White-winged Flufftail (Sarothrura ayresi) International Working Group

The 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the International Working Group took place in Dullstroom, South Africa on 5-7 November 2019 at the invitation of the National Department of Environmental Affairs of South Africa. At the meeting the Range States developed and agreed on its implementation plan for 2020-2022.

With the support of the European Commission and the Government of the United Kingdom, projects were commissioned to develop a community-based Conservation Programme for the main breeding site of the species in Ethiopia (Berga floodplain) and to designate the site as a protected area.

# AEWA European Seaduck International Working Group

The 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the AEWA European Seaduck International Working Group, took place as an online meeting from 9-10 December 2020, hosted by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety and the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation. The Working Group is tasked with coordinating the implementation of the AEWA International Single Species Action Plans for the Long-tailed Duck (*Clangula hyemalis*) and the Velvet Scoter (*Melanitta fusca*).

#### AEWA Benguela Coastal Seabirds International Working Group

The 1st Meeting of the AEWA Benguela Coastal Seabirds International Working Group took place online from 3-4 March 2021. The meeting was organised by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat in collaboration with BirdLife South Africa with funding provided by the Government of the United Kingdom through its Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). The participants agreed on critical conservation activities to be implemented as a matter of priority.

In the framework of the IMSAP for the Conservation of Benguela Current Upwelling System Coastal Seabirds, the Benguela Current Forage Fish Workshop was facilitated online by the Secretariat from 2-4 November 2020 hosted by the South African Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF). The workshop was organised in collaboration with the Benguela Current Convention (BCC) and BirdLife South Africa (BLSA) with funding provided by the Government of the United Kingdom through Defra.

#### AEWA Slaty Egret (Egretta vinaceigula) International Working Group

With the support of the European Commission the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Working Group was planned to take place in Maun to be hosted by the Government of Botswana, but due to the Covid-19 pandemic it was now postponed to 2023. Seed funding for projects in Range States was also secured.

# AEWA Madagascar Pond-heron (Ardeola idae) International Working Group

With the support of the Government of the United Kingdom a conservation project was funded in Madagascar.

# AEWA Northen Bald Ibis (Geronticus eremita) International Working Group

The 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the International Working Group was panned as a virtual event earlier in 2022 and has now been postponed to 25-26 October 2022. With the support of the European Commission two conservation projects were funded in Morocco and Algeria.

Further meetings were organised, and implementation work has been coordinated for one another species action plan and three species management plans under the European Goose Management Platform (see next section).

# 4.3. AEWA European Goose Management Platform

The EGMP has 16 participating Range States, 15 national governments and the European Commission: Belarus, Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, EU, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Ukraine and United Kingdom. Ireland was the latest country joining the EGM IWG, in June 2021. Spain is participating in the Greylag Goose implementation process through data provision. Poland has designated a national expert to participate in the Taiga Bean Goose Task Force. Spain, Lithuania, Poland and Russia officially remain non-participating Range States of the EGMP.

The coordination of the AEWA European Goose Management Platform (EGMP) continues to be facilitated by the EGMP Coordinator and Programme Management Assistant based at the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat in close collaboration with Aarhus University, functioning as the EGMP Data Centre. Under the coordination of the EGMP Data Centre, the International Modelling Consortium, consisting of an international partnership of scientific institutions, collaborates on the development of population models.

Currently, there are six Task Forces operating under the EGMP:

- Pink-footed Goose Task Force
- Taiga Bean Goose Task Force
- Agriculture Task Force
- Barnacle Goose Task Force for Russia/ Germany & the Netherlands Population
- Barnacle Goose Task Force for E. Greenland/Scotland & Ireland and Svalbard/SW Scotland Populations
- Greylag Goose Task Force for NW/SW European Population

The Task Forces are aimed to support the EGM IWG in coordination and facilitation of the respective ISSAP and ISSMP implementation. The meetings of the EGMP Task Forces were held online (via GoToMeeting online platform) involving the Task Force Coordinators and members, together with the EGMP Secretariat and Data Centre.

The EGM IWG4 took place on 18-20 June 2019 in Perth, Scotland, UK, at the kind invitation of Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH). A full day was dedicated to the EGMP Task Forces for a face-to-face meeting on the 17 June 2019, at the same venue. The EGM IWG4 report is available on the <u>meeting website</u>.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, the 5<sup>th</sup> and the 6<sup>th</sup> Meetings of the European Goose Management International Working Group (EGM IWG5 and EGM IWG6) took place in an online conference format. The reports of the meeting are available on the meeting websites EGM <u>IWG5</u> and <u>EGM IWG6</u>.

The 7th Meeting of the European Goose Management International Working Group (EGM IWG7) took place in Helsinki, Finland on 21-23 June 2022, at the kind invitation of the Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Finland. A meeting of the EGMP Task Forces was held back-to-back on the 20<sup>th</sup> June 2022. The report of the meeting will be made available at the <u>meeting website</u>.

The 8th Meeting of the EGM IWG (EGM IWG8) is scheduled to take place in June 2023, host to be confirmed, back-to-back with the meeting of the EGMP Task Forces.

Table: Overview of populations and Management Units (MUs) covered by the EGMP and relevant documents:

Overview of populations and Manageme documents	nt Units (M	Us) covered u	inder the EG	MP and relevar	nt managemen	nt
Population	Management/Action Plan (ISSMP/ISSAP)		Adaptive Flyway Management Plan (AFMP)			
	Link	Adopted	Review	Link	Adopted	Review
Svalbard population of Pink-footed	<b>ISSMP</b>	2012	2024	Not	-	-
Goose				developed		

Taiga Bean Goose consisting of 4	ISSAP	2015	2025	Not	-	-
MUs; Western, Central, Eastern1				developed		
and Eastern2						
NW/SW European population of	<b>ISSMP</b>	2018	2028	AFMP	2020	2026
Greylag Goose consisting of 2						
MUs; MU1 (migratory) and MU2						
(sedentary)						
Russia/Germany and Netherlands	<b>ISSMP</b>	2018	2028	AFMP	2020	2026
population of Barnacle Goose						
consisting of 3 MUs; MU1 (Arctic),						
MU2 (Baltic) and MU3 (North Sea)						
E. Greenland/Scotland & Ireland	<b>ISSMP</b>	2018	2028	AFMP	2020	2026
population of Barnacle Goose						
Svalbard/SW Scotland population	<b>ISSMP</b>	2018	2028	Not	-	-
of Barnacle Goose				developed		

The ISSMP has mandated the EGM IWG to develop Adaptive Flyway Management Programmes (AFMPs) for some populations and set the Favourable Reference Values (FRVs) in the AFMP for the breeding and nonbreeding seasons. The FRVs represent the minimum levels of population size, range and habitat necessary to consider a population being in Favourable Conservation Status (FCS) More information on the definition of FRVs can be found on the EGMP website, for example for the case of the <u>Greylag Goose</u>.

All ISSAP's, ISSMP's and its corresponding AFMP's are currently in the implementation phase.

The EGMP runs its own website and social media channels. All documents, information sheets, meeting reports, resources and data can be accessed via the website.

Funding towards the functioning the EGMP, including the staffing costs as well as the implementation of projects has been jointly provided by the EGMP Range States.

# 4.4. Implementation Review Process

The Secretariat also supports the Standing Committee in undertaking the Implementation Review Process. More information on the IRP is available in document AEWA/MOP 8.20. In addition, the Secretariat took part in a joint on-the-spot assessment mission together with the Secretariats of the Bern Convention and the Convention on Migratory Species to Albania on 30 August – 1 September 2022 in relation to IRP case file No. 11 (airport construction at Vjosa-Narta Protected Landscape).

# 4.5. Climate Resilient Site Network Project

The project "Climate resilient site network in the African-Eurasian flyway" launched at MOP6 in November 2015 is funded by the International Climate Initiative of the German Government and coordinated by Wetlands International. The project's concept was developed on the basis of the AEWA climate change agenda and mandates from the MOP. It involves some site assessments, two pilot projects in Mali and Ethiopia, production of guidelines and training of practitioners in African Parties. After MOP7 the AEWA Secretariat maintained its involvement in the project Steering Committee. In December 2021 the Secretariat convened together with Wetlands International and co-funding from the Government of Luxembourg a training workshop for Anglophone Contracting Parties in Africa on the basis of the guidelines produced in the framework of the project.

#### 4.6. Phase out of lead in hunting ammunition and fishing weights in the EU

In 2016, at the request of the European Commission, the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) initiated a process of compiling a report and draft regulation, in order to implement the AEWA provisions to phase out the use of lead shot for hunting in wetlands. In 2020, until the final adoption of the regulation, the Secretariat was actively involved in the ECGHA process and was actively communicating on the lead issue in wetlands using in particular social media, as well as participating in a video produced by the WWT (https://vimeo.com/472273518/84e1c9a357) and published op-ed on our website ("It is Time to Let Go of Lead" https://www.unep-aewa.org/en/news/it-time-let-go-lead) and on the website of Open Access Government (https://www.openaccessgovernment.org/lead-out-of-the-environment/89098/). The new regulation was adopted in December 2020 and entered into force in 2021.

The European Commission (EC), in a letter dated 16 July 2019 to the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) has requested the agency to prepare a proposal addressing the risk to wildlife and humans from lead in all hunting ammunition (shot and bullets). Lead in fishing weights are also included in the request. The Secretariat, accompanied by the Technical Committee chair, has been involved as an invited expert in the work of the two ECHA Committees on Risk Assessment and Socio-economic Assessment, which are reviewing the dossier compiled by the ECHA Secretariat and are developing opinions to be presented to the European Commission.

# 4.7. Flyway site network inventory

Following the establishment by the Technical Committee of framework for the review and reconfirmation of the AEWA flyway site network inventory, with the expert support of Wetlands International the Secretariat launched in 2020 a process and submitted to all Contracting Parties and Non-Party Range States customised requests and supporting material for national review and reconfirmation of the sites forming the flyway network. The Secretariat has been extending the deadline and is continuing to pursue submissions from Parties and Non-Party Range States.

# 4.8. Waterbird Monitoring

The Secretariat remains involved in the Strategic Group of the African-Eurasian Waterbird Monitoring Partnership which guides the development of waterbird monitoring within the AEWA area. The partnership is coordinated by Wetlands International. A report on the waterbird monitoring development is available as document AEWA/MOP 8.26.

#### 4.9. Reporting and monitoring of implementation

The Secretariat lunched and facilitated two general national reporting processes after MOP7; both reporting processes utilised the AEWA Online Reporting System (part of the CMS Family Online Reporting System). The first one concerned the status of populations of waterbirds in each Contracting Party, which process was aligned with the EU Article 12 reporting under the Birds Directive which exempted the EU Member States from submitting reports to AEWA. This reporting cycle was concluded in mid-2020 for feeding the data into the preparation of the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of the Conservation Status Report.

The second reporting process was the one on the implementation by the Contracting Parties of the Agreement and its Strategic Plan as required by the text of the treaty with a deadline of 180 days before MOP8.

Based on the national reports submitted, with the financial support of the Governments of Switzerland and Germany, the Secretariat commissioned an analysis and synthesis of national reports, which is available as document AEWA/MOP 8.13.

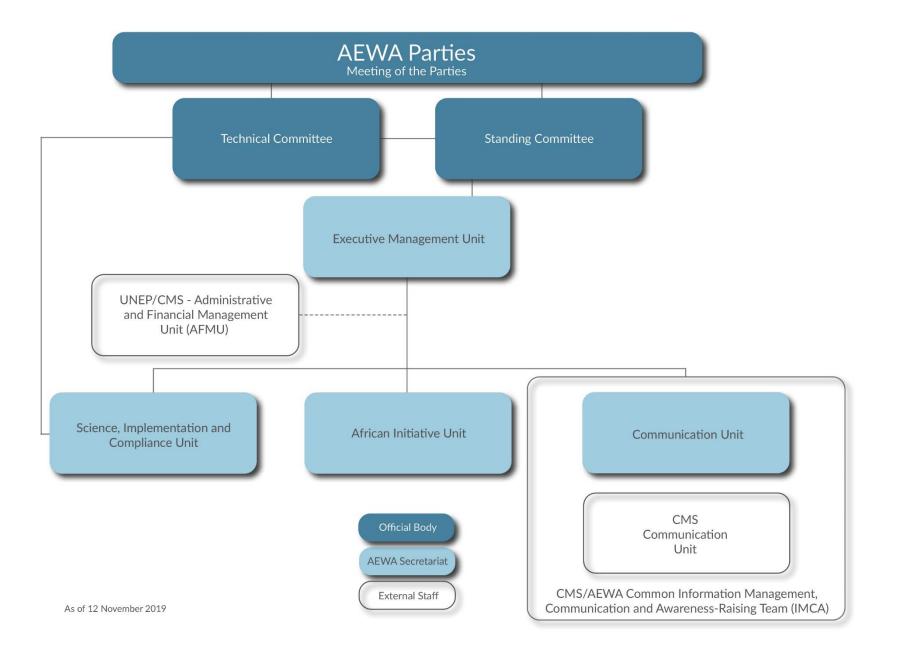
Using the analysis of national reports and other information sources, the Secretariat compiled on behalf of the Standing Committee a progress report on the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2019-2027 which is available as document AEWA/MOP 8.11.

# 5. CAPACITY BUILDING

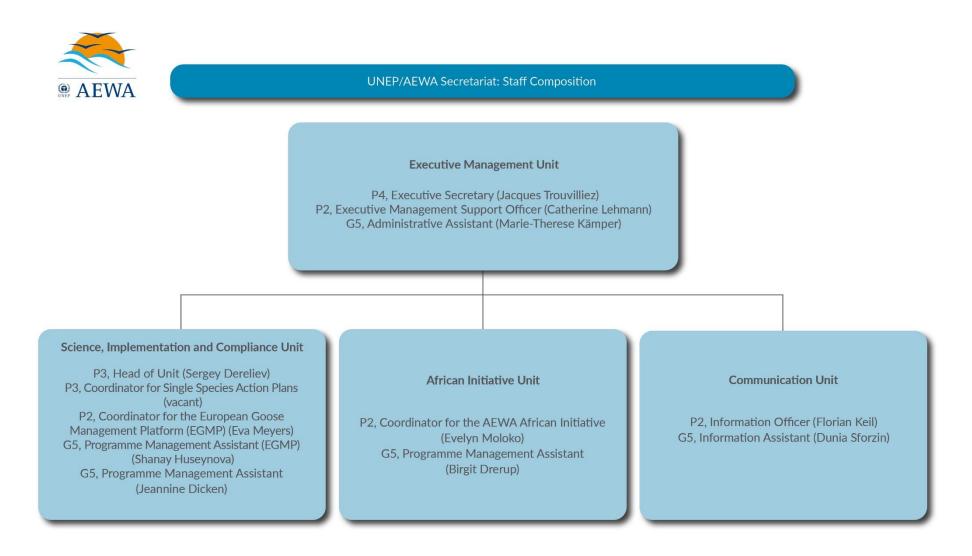
Capacity Building activities for the period mainly focused on the African region.

The major activity to be reported as already mentioned above is the organization in collaboration with the Ramsar Secretariat and the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative of a training-of-trainers workshop on flyway conservation for francophone West and Central Africa, in Cotonou, Benin, 6 - 10 May 2019 with funding secured by AEWA from the European Commission.

# ANNEX I - Organizational Structure of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat



# ANNEX II - Staff Composition of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat



P = Professional Staff Category

G = General Staff Category

As of 20 September 2022