



**15<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE**  
*11 – 13 December 2019, Bristol, United Kingdom*

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**REGIONAL REPORT FOR THE NORTHERN AFRICA & MIDDLE EAST REGION**

**1. Number of Contracting Parties in the region / number of Range States in the region. New accessions since the previous StC meeting:**

- **Number of Contracting Parties in the Middle East and Northern Africa region is:** 8 (Jordan, Lebanon, Syrian Arab Republic, Algeria, Egypt, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Morocco and Tunisia).
- **Number of Range States in the region is:** 16 (Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, United Arab Emirates, Yemen, Algeria, Egypt, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Morocco and Tunisia).
- **New accessions since the previous StC meeting:** None

**2. Number of Range States (Contracting Parties and Non-Contracting Parties) that provided feedback for the report:**

I regret to inform you that the focal points of the Contracting Parties in the region (Middle East and North Africa) have not responded to the request for information on the implementation of AEWA in their country. Despite the explanatory letters sent by the regional representative, requesting information on the implementation of AEWA for the preparation of the regional report.

**3. Has the Regional Representative actively promoted accession to AEWA among the Range States in their region? If so, how has accession been promoted by the Regional Representative? No action for the reporting period.**

**4. Which developments regarding the implementation of AEWA have taken place in the region since the last Meeting of the Parties?**

With regard to the activities carried out at the level of the Middle East and North Africa Region, for the implementation of AEWA, it should be noted that as AEWA focal point, for Algeria and member of the Network of Mediterranean Waterbirds (ROEM), of which the five countries of the North Africa region are members, I bring you some activities carried out within this framework:

**A. Celebration of World Migratory Waterbird Day in North African countries:**

The celebration of World Migratory Waterbird Day 2019 has been an opportunity to promote bird conservation and the maintenance of their habitats around the world, especially in Africa. This year, the day was celebrated under the theme: "Protecting birds: the solution to plastic pollution". This slogan denotes the impact of plastic pollution on migratory birds and their habitats, as well as the urgent need to raise awareness about the effective preservation of this important and very fragile category of wildlife. On occasion, many awareness-raising activities have been organized in North African countries. In Algeria, the day was celebrated throughout the country with very rich activities

such as conferences, exhibitions, field trips, competitions, plantations, bird watching for schoolchildren, etc.

#### **B. Participation in international events:**

Participation of the 5 North African countries in the EBCC (European Birds Census Council) from 8 to 13 April 2019, and presentation of a poster on the results of waterbird population trends in North Africa on 28 years of study.

#### **C. Regional grouping:**

Coordinators of International Waterbird Counts met with their counterparts in the Mediterranean region as part of the Mediterranean Waterbird Network (ROEM) activities on 14-15 April 2019 in Évora, Portugal, in order to present the results of the international winter count of migratory waterbirds of 2018/2019 at the level of each country and to consider a next step to strengthen the techniques of counting and analyzing the results, also a discussion on the current scientific article (trends in waterbird populations in North Africa based on analysis of the 1970-2017 database).

The results of the counts were presented and discussed by the following representatives: Albania (Albanian Ornithology Society (AOS)), Algeria (General Directorate of Forests (DGF)), Egypt (Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency), France, (League for protection of birds)) (LPO / BirdLife France), Tour du Valat (TdV), National Office for Hunting and Wildlife (ONCFS), Greece (Hellenic Ornithological Society (HOS)), Italy (Istituto Superiore per la Protezione e Ricerca Ambientale (ISPRA)), Libya (Libyan Society for Birds), Macedonia (Republic of Macedonian Ecosystem Society (MES)), Morocco (Morocco Bird Research Group (GREPOM)), Montenegro (Natural History Museum of Montenegro), Netherlands (Wetlands International), Portugal (Instituto da Conservação da Natureza e das Florestas (ICNF)), Serbia (Bird Protection Association (AAO)), Turkey (Bird Research Center (ORC)).

#### **D. Capacity building:**

Each year, a training course on the counting of waterbirds is organized in January in Tunisia. Participants from the 5 countries of the North Africa region are designated to participate, in order to strengthen observer groups in each country on observation, counting and species identification techniques. This training is carried out thanks to the technical support of the Research Institute for the Conservation of Mediterranean Wetlands (Tour du Valat).

#### **E. International Winter Count of Migratory Waterbirds 2019 (IWC-2019):**

Each year, the international winter count of migratory waterbirds is carried out at the level of North African countries in coordination with wetlands international, these counts are made in North African countries, by either the State, associations, academics and volunteers, through government funding or by seeking funding projects to develop and support the IWC.

### **5. Overview of AEWA special activities and / or meetings:**

#### **A. Organization of the 9<sup>th</sup> International Workshop of the AEWA International Expert Group on Spoonbill from 14 to 18 November 2018 in Djerba, Tunisia / Organisation du 9<sup>ème</sup> atelier international du groupe d'experts internationaux de l'AEWA sur la Spatule du 14 au 18 novembre 2018 à Djerba, en Tunisie**

This was the first workshop of this group that took place in a wintering area of the white spoonbill. Exchanges on the latest discoveries concerning flyways and spatula behavior were the focus of the

discussions of this expert meeting, but also the opportunity to propose a better conservation of important sites for the survival of the species.

It should also be noted that several activities are being carried out by North African partners to ensure the conservation and development of the spoonbill population, such as:

- Monitoring the movements of this species through the reading of plastic rings;
- Advocacy for the prohibition of hunting in the key sites of the species, the sustainable management of its sites and the creation of protected areas;
- Monitoring and reporting of offenses against the species and its key sites.

The species is considered a wintering migrant in North Africa, the spoonbill also breeds in Morocco where in 2018, for the first time, young were banded at the nest. The Association des Amis des Oiseau in Tunisia is also evaluating the importance of Tunisian wetlands for the spatula, focusing on wintering and immature summer visitors, a study program that should be developed for Africa North, in partnership with the Tour du Valat.

## **6. Overview of special numbers that may interest the StC:**

## **7. Any other relevant information:**

### **Recommendation 1: Improved coordination between the representative of the region and the focal points of representative countries in the region:**

With regard to this recommendation, we propose that the AEWA Secretariat organize a meeting between the regional representative and the focal points of the representative countries of the region at least once during his term of office, preferably at the beginning.

This meeting should be organized in one of the countries of the region with the support of a representative of the AEWA Secretariat.

Indeed, this meeting will allow the regional representative to:

- regroup with all the focal points of his region;
- establish a work plan and coordination on the exchange of information for the implementation of the AEWA Strategic Plan at their country level;
- express the difficulties encountered;
- discuss actions to be implemented in a cross-border cooperation framework.
- facilitate preparation by the Regional Representative of a more detailed report to the Standing Committee on activities at the regional level.

### **Recommendation 2: translation of documents**

We propose to provide documents in Arabic and French especially for the intermediate versions submitted for discussion and opinion, at least one copy before the final validations of the documents as well as a copy of the final document.